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CONQUEST

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CONQUEST

PART ONE

I.

THE old white pony, wall-eyed but sure-footed, ambled slowly down the hill. On Thursdays for twenty-two years he had borne Father Pat Daly to the market at Lisgeela. When Father Pat had controlled the pony they covered the four and a half miles from Drisheen in half an hour; but for many years the pony had taken control, and drew up at the door of the Presbytery at Lisgeela exactly an hour after Father Pat had made his sole contribution to the journey in a jerk of the reins and a "Go on, will you, Whitey!" in the yard of his house at Drisheen. At eleven they started; at half-past eleven Whitey had finished his drink at the stream by Phooca cross-roads, and Father Pat had appraised his cattle out on grass on Devoy's farm beyond the stream; at Devoy's farmhouse the old, crazy, open weighted clock in the kitchen, which through the week was roughly set by the sun, was corrected to the infallibly right time as Father Pat shouted, in passing, a stern "God save you all," to the open doorway; and as the Cathedral bell tolled the Angelus at twelve Whitey was licking a tired fetlock beside the kerb in front of the Lisgeela Presbytery, while Father Pat, standing on the footwalk, his white head bared and bent, said the Angelus.

To-day, till Whitey was at the foot of Hill Street, the

most bedraggled of all the frowsy approaches to Lisgeela, nothing very unusual happened.

Father Pat's old housekeeper, Julia Feeney, had harnessed the pony, renewing the splice on the left trace with a fresh piece of string, "for fear it'd give on the way."

"It's a queer turn-out for a man of God," she said, her arms akimbo, including, with a single disapproving sweep of her hard grey eyes, the pony, the harness, the trap, and the priest himself.

"Whist, woman!" Father Pat said sternly.

His eyes wandered slowly over his once black clothes, now green and threadbare from much wear—the clerical coat and waistcoat yellowed in front by snuff, the trousers baggy at the knees, and shrunk at the frayed ends almost to the tops of the patched and shapeless elastic-sided boots. He took off his silk hat, discoloured a greenish-brown, ruffled where it was not napless, looked at it whimsically and rubbed it with his sleeve.

"What the dint of brushing could do for it, I done," Julia said reproachfully. "'Tis I'd turn you out clean and decent if you'd only put it in my power. But what can a woman do and you not getting a stitch of new clothes this twenty year? Don't I put a shine on your boots that you could see yourself in? And your shirt and collar is as white as the driven snow; and sorra one'd know they're badly gone without looking close at 'em."

"Amn't I well enough?" he said, with a shrug of his broad shoulders.

"Is it with that old garron of a beast?" she said, shrilly contemptuous.

"Poor old Whitey," he said gently, patting the pony's neck. "He's almost as faithful as you are, Julia—and—and he's dumb," he added hesitatingly, with a wry smile.

"You grudge me the bit o' blacking I put on your boots and the trifle of starch for your collars, and now you're

grudging me my tongue, that don't cost you anything," she said angrily, wiping away an imaginary tear with a corner of her apron.

He winced, and gathered up the reins preparatory to mounting into the trap.

"Maybe to stumble, and you getting into the car with them in your hand," she said, snatching roughly at the reins. "Let me hand 'em up to you. The poor dumb beast!" she went on. "It's well for him that it's dumb he is, for if he had the use of the tongue like a Christian, he couldn't contain himself at all at all, meeting the whole world within in the market of Lisgeela, with them winkers and a crupper that's tied up with tin-tacks, and his collar all patches with me striving to keep the hair inside it, and a piece of rope and string here and there; and never a clippers put near him in the memory of man, and only a lick of a currycomb when I'm not pressed. And he to have trapesing behind him that jingling skeleton of old iron and dirt, that a tinker wouldn't misname by calling it a car. You poor animal, you! it's ashamed you'd be to be seen dead in a ditch with it, let alone passing a throng of decent people in and out of the market, and you alive."

"It is a bit outlandish," the priest said moodily, rubbing his chin with his forefinger. "I must get it repai——" He hesitated, and added, "I must throw a few buckets of water on it when I come home."

"Is it to expose the nakedness of it by taking the blessed mud off it you'd be? And it hidjng the shame of the old pieces of tin cans I nail't on to the sides and to the dashboards till they cried out against it and wouldn't hold another nail. Glory be to God, you're that close that you'd make two meals off a wren. Wouldn't I wash it myself only for the shame I'd bring on it?"

A swarthy flush overspread his face. His lips twitched. He straightened his heavy body to its full height of over six

feet and frowned at her sternly. She faced him resolutely, her hands again resting on her hips.

"And you a priest of God, too!" she threw at him vengefully.

His features relaxed and the frown passed off. With a half shamefaced smile he said: "Whitey and the old trap are good enough for me, and they'll last my time. Anyway, the Son of God hadn't even an ass and cart under Him."

"The pride of the man," she said with a gasp, "likening himself to the Lord God. But sure it's kind for you, and you with the pure blood of the Dalys in you," she added proudly.

"None of that," he said angrily. With a contemptuous look, he climbed laboriously into the trap.

She quailed under his eyes, but shrugged her shoulders, and muttered as he turned his back: "And him not forgetting it for a minute, night or morning. There he goes now, the handsomest man in seven counties. If it wasn't for the saint he always was, it's the devil's play he'd have with the women—hussies they are! Him with the pride of Lucifer in his eye and the way he holds himself. Sure it's in rags he could go and not a bishop in the land could hold a candle to him. And him that big a skinflint of a miser that he'd skin a flea to sell the fat. And him, too, that wouldn't wrong man, woman or child, or the brute beast, and wears out the knees of his breeches with the dint of praying. It's a contradictory world, glory be to the Almighty, and it's Father Pat himself is the queerest man in it."

When he had settled himself into the seat she handed him the reins. "You might bring home a scrag end of mutton in the car with you. I could cook a chop of it for your dinner," she said doubtfully.

"I might then, if it wasn't a conference day. But I'll be dining with his lordship and all the priests. Such a waste of meat and drink," he muttered thoughtfully, "and we have to pay dear for it, five shillings a head and vail of a

shilling to the servants. Enough to support a man in luxury for a week."

"Sure we'll be in need of the meat for to-morrow," she persisted.

"Hear the woman now, and to-morrow a Friday. Is it heathens you'd be making of us, Julia Feeney?"

"There's the long week before us, and not a scrap of butcher's meat darkened the door since the bishop was here for the Confirmation," she said with failing confidence. "Nine months ago it was."

"We had enough then to last us a twelvemonth, feasting every day for ten days we were on what was left over."

"You'll have your fill to-day, anyhow," she said angrily.

"It's on the point of eleven, and I must be going," he said evasively. "I suppose I'll eat it as I'll have to pay for it," he added to himself. "But every bite'll near choke me, knowing the cost of it."

He looked round the yard, at the tumbled-down out-houses, at the worm-eaten doors, and again at the horse.

"Whitey's been a good friend to me, Julia Feeney," he said gently, his eyes softening as he looked at the old woman. "But you've been a better. Five and thirty years you have served me in fair weather and foul, and there isn't a better servant living this day."

The old woman fingered her apron nervously, curtsied, her yellow parchment face flushed. She tugged at the strings of her white goffered cap, as she said, "Sure I never hoped to live to hear your reverence give me such praise as all that. There isn't the likes of you in all the living earth."

He looked troubled and lifted up the reins as if to give them a jerk.

He hesitated. A generous look came into the hard eyes under his white, bushy eyebrows.

"I might bring that scrag," he said.

"And why would you, your reverence?" she said eagerly.

"Sure there's plenty of fine food in the house, a scrap of bacon no less. And there's sure to be an egg before the night, or maybe two."

"That's true," he said in a relieved tone. "Butcher's meat is a sinful waste, and all that fine food about. You might pull up a stalk of the new potatoes—they're ripe by this—for your dinner. And take a trifle of butter with 'em. Not much," he added, pursing his lips. "It's a rich food and goes to the head."

"You can trust me to go slow on it, your reverence," she said gratefully.

He jerked the reins. "Go on, will you, Whitey!" he said mechanically. The pony started after a strained pull. The old woman ran to the rickety gate and held it open.

"And Julia, as the day is hot, and there won't be much cooking to do, you might be sparing on the turf."

"Out the fire'll go, when the praties is boiled. And you'll be careful of your health, Father Pat, agra," she said anxiously. "There's a flushed look on you for some days past that can't be wholesome."

"Nonsense, woman," he said, sitting upright. "I feel as sweet as that hawthorn bush in the hedge beyond."

"Good luck to you, and a good price on the bullocks," she shouted after him.

"I told Devoy not to let 'em go at a penny under nineteen five," he said over his shoulder.

"There's a farmer for you!" she shouted admiringly. "Not another man in the barony'd have the courage to ask eighteen pounds for 'em. But then they haven't his eye for a beast. And he'll get it too; and the odd five shillings to cover the luck penny. It's generous he always was in luck pennies."

The voice became indistinct and trailed off. The reference to luck pennies annoyed him. Half-a-crown would be ample. And Devoy said he'd run the risk of losing the sale because

of the extra five shillings. But a pound couldn't be broken for a luck penny; and his pride wouldn't let him give less than five shillings. The Dalys never gave less. And wasn't he a real Daly? The whole world knew it. Wasn't he born in Dalyhouse? He fumbled in his waistcoat pocket and took out a gold hunter watch and looked with glowing eyes on the crest, a wolf dog, and the motto "Dum spiro spero." The watch was nearly all that was left of three parishes and the town of Lisgeela. But there was the motto. Aye, while there was life there was hope. And he was only seventy. He put back the watch in his pocket. The pony jogged along. The soft summer air was heavy with the scent of spirea and privet. He drew in a deep breath. There used to be a privet hedge along the sunk fence at Dalyhouse. How well he remembered it, though he hadn't seen it since '35, sixty-one years ago, and he only nine years old. And his grand-nephew, Jim, was nine years old this very June. To-morrow was it? Yes! he must give him a present. He shuffled in his seat and frowned. He sniffed the delicate scent of new-mown hay.

"You've kept it standing two days too long, Richard," he shouted over the hedge.

"That's God's truth, your reverence. 'Tis you have the eyes on you, Father Pat. And how is the health, sir?"

"Never felt younger or better in my life. A good crop to you."

"And the best of every good luck to your reverence. Sure 'tis you that deserves it."

Whitey kept his even pace, raising a trail of white dust on the soft limestone road. The priest flicked neatly a horse-fly off the pony's neck and replaced the whip in its rest. No, he wouldn't give Jim a present. There was nothing good enough for him in Lisgeela, and Dublin was too far away, and a present would cost too much. He couldn't afford it. Besides, Jim would have everything one day.

He had the Daly nose and chin, and was a fine upstanding lad. But had he the spirit? The boy's father had it. If Jim only turned out to have the go and courage of his father, Theobald? He was a man for you, a Daly of the Dalys. If Theobald had only had a fair chance? But he hadn't—and to die at thirty-four! Thank God he died like a gentleman, broke his neck taking the sunk fence in the Dalymore demesne, and he following the hounds on a spavined horse. And they called him a peasant. Scovell had sneered at him in the coffee room of the Daly Arms at Lisgeela, and at his mount, had called him "the peasant Daly." Scovell, the grandson of the upstart who had foreclosed the mortgage in '35 and taken Dalymore and every acre and chattel that the Dalys had to their name, except a hundred acre farm Pierce the Rake's wife was able to hold on to—Scovell, a mere Cromwellian settler.

He leant forward in the trap as Whitey climbed the short hill at Culleen. It would be a bad job if the harness went; but there was the hammer and tacks and bundle of string in the bottom of the trap in case of accidents. How cool the Lissyfad woods looked. The day was a scorcher to be sure. And he was feeling the heat. He took off his hat and wiped his forehead with a red bandanna handkerchief. That was a queer throbbing in his temples. He looked at his hat with a wry smile. He had seen better on a scarecrow. And all his scraping and gathering had been for Theobald; and Theobald was dead. He hadn't given him the money, but he would have, had Theobald not been killed. A furtive look crossed his face, and he shrank from the thought as if he were afraid. He would have given it the moment it could have been useful. Theobald was a man. Hadn't he snatched Arabella Levin of Lissyfad from under Derek Scovell's nose? Eloped with her to Dublin, where she became a Catholic and married him. How the Orange pack raged and shut their doors on her—left her to stew in her

Papist peasant muck was how her father, Dick Levin, put it. Arabella might have been a Daly in blood she held her head so high in the little house at Scarty. And the Levins had only come to Ireland in the train of Dutch William—upstarts of yesterday.

According to custom, Whitey stood for a few minutes on the level, and nibbled at the lush June grass on the roadside. Away on the left, in the woods, beyond Lisgeela, a great whitish-grey limestone house faced the sun. The old man's eyes blurred. He took out his Book of Hours. As there was a conference he would anticipate Vespers and Compline. He held the book open, but he could not read the print. What matter, he knew it all by heart. He mumbled the prayers till Whitey started again, but his mind was back sixty-one years. From that time to this, except from the top of Culleen Hill, he had never seen Dalyhouse. What had come over him to-day? The house seemed gaunt and forbidding. Had he been wrong in his attachment to it? . . . His grandfather had begun the trouble by breaking the entail. But it was his father, Pierce the Rake, who mortgaged everything and played the fool. He was Pierce the Rake at Dalyhouse, and he was Pierce the Rake afterwards at Scarty; only instead of getting drunk on wine, he got drunk on poteen whisky. He used to sit in the shebeen near Scarty and sell the trees, one by one, for drink, and boast of the days when he rollicked with the Regent. And his poor mother stuck in the house, ashamed to be at home to the few callers who remembered her in misfortune, spending her time praying at the little altar in her bedroom, or sitting in the parlour discussing the inferiority of the Scovells. . . .

Whitey had his drink at the Phoooca cross-roads. Father Pat, without looking at the house, said, "God save you all" in passing Devoy's. Mrs. Devoy ran out into the road and shouted after him, "Tom got the nineteen five for the

bullocks, your reverence;" but he never turned his head "That's two hundred and eleven pounds clear profit on 'em," he murmured listlessly to himself; and in a moment he was thinking of his brother Pierce, who was only five when they left Dalynhouse. Young Pierce had no memories of the place after a few years and worked at Scarty like a farm hand. By the time he was sixteen he was running the farm, weighed down by his father's debts and his, Pat's, expenses at Maynooth. It was queer that Pierce, who hadn't a drop of peasant blood in him, had no pride in his Daly blood, took naturally to the ways of a peasant, and married Ann Driscoll, the daughter of a tenant farmer; while Theobald, in spite of his mother's blood, was a throw-back to the pure-bred Daly. . . .

And now up at Scarty were his brother Pierce, Arabella and Jim. Three generations of 'em without maybe a thought of the Daly name. Theobald had it. But Theobald was dead. Jim must have it—he must be made to have it. He mustn't grow up a peasant and be led astray by his grandfather. . . .

He had intended to help Theobald. Who was it saying that he hadn't helped him? It was true that he had refused to lend him fifty pounds to buy a horse, although he encouraged him to hunt. But it was all for his good. He was to have had all the money one day when he could strike a blow for the Daly name. What was the cold sweat on his forehead? And Theobald had been killed by an old spavined horse gone in the knees. . . .

He wasn't a miser. Careful maybe. And who wouldn't with such an end in view? Maybe to make the Dalys once more a power in the land? Jim'd do it. Jim must do it. And he'd help him. Not at once perhaps. But when the right day came there'd be all the more for Jim to get. There was no use in wasting money. And Jim'd have it all one day or another—every penny. There were still things he

could cut down. Piles and piles of money he could make by saving—enough to buy back Dalyhouse, to keep twenty horses in the stables. . . .

Whitey ambled slowly down the hill. The priest's eyes were fixed on the grass and wild mustard that crowned the dilapidated thatched cottages on his right—a sea of gold they seemed to his gloating eyes; a sea of gold coins rolling in billows to his feet. . . .

At the foot of the hill there was a check on the reins. Whitey hesitated. It was opposite Mallon the grocer's, where he had sometimes stopped on the way home. There was no repetition of the check, so he ambled on and halted at the Presbytery door.

The Angelus bell tolled. A priest on his way to the conference stood and prayed beside the trap. His eyes strayed to Father Pat still seated, his head thrown slightly back. He stared at him as if fascinated for a few seconds, muttering a "Hail Mary," then jumped forward, caught his hand, and turning round, said, "May God have mercy on his soul."

2.

The Most Reverend Dr. Deehan, Bishop of Lisgella, knelt on the dining-room armchair in which he was afterwards to preside at the conference. The priests of the conference district knelt in varied attitudes on chairs all round the long dining table, now merely a desk for tattered copies of Gury's *Theologia Moralis*. The lower end of the table, farthest from his lordship, was congested. The bishop had finished the Angelus and had begun to call on the Holy Ghost to assist at the conference when the door of the room was violently shoved open. A priest rushed in, pale of face, and in a scared voice said :

"My lord, my lord, Father Pat Daly is dead in his car at the door."

Every eye in the room was fixed on the herald of death. Mouths hung open. Father Tom Nulty felt that for once he had gained the ear of the bishop who always snubbed him, and of his fellows who treated him as a butt. His face flushed with excitement.

"The Angelus bell caught me—I'm sorry I was so late, my lord—beside his car, and I off with my hat and I hadn't 'The Angel of the Lord' out of me when I saw there was something wrong. There he was leaning back like a drunken man, and he doesn't take a sup, the pale face of him as purple as your lordship's soutane, and his eyes staring out of his head. I thought at first it was only a fit, but when I caught hold of him he was stone dead."

The florid face of the bishop went pale under the eyes. He put his hand to his heart. Reassured, he said solemnly :

"May the Lord have mercy on his soul."

"Amen, Amen, Amen," responded from all over the room.

There was a clattering of chairs as the priests hastily got to their feet. The bishop dropped heavily into his chair at the head of the table. The younger priests at the end of the table crowded round the two front windows and gazed at the dead man in the trap.

"That puts the lid on any work at this conference, thank God," Father Dunphy said, in a low but relieved tone.

"Aye, begannies," Father Crehan said, rubbing his hands. "And the lord'd have downed me to-day in the Justice tract as sure as a gun. He fixed me with his glary eye as soon as he came into the room. How funny old Pat Daly looks with his old topper cocked like that."

A tall, thin priest, in a caped soutane, his thick brown hair turning grey at the temples, pushed Father Crehan aside, saying :

"If you have no feeling, at least have some dignity—if you can," and he pulled down the thin holland blind. As he

made his way, with difficulty, to the second window, Crehan looked at him malevolently and said :

“Lysaght is too big a boss.”

“He’s the Administrator anyway, and it’s his house,” Dunphy said, good-humouredly, “and no doubt he wants to get into the lord’s eye so as to be in the running for Drisheen. Anyhow, to give him his due he was a friend of old Pat’s.”

“Friend in my eye,” Crehan said bitterly. “Could anyone be the friend of a man who never proffered a soul a glass of punch except at a Confirmation—when he had to? You hit the right nail on the head at first, Dunphy. It’s after Drisheen Lysaght is.”

“You’re a bitter devil, Crehan,” Dunphy said amiably. “Lysaght isn’t that kind, and old Pat Daly was as straight a friend as ever walked. No doubt you’re after Drisheen yourself.”

“And if I am, who has a better right?” Crehan said, drawing himself up pompously. “Lysaght is only an Administrator and I’ve been a P.P. for seven years—in a poor parish with only half the dues of Drisheen, and I’ve the right of grass for only nine bullocks agin thirty-five in Drisheen. If there’s any fairness in man I’ll get it.”

“Let old Pat get cold first anyway,” Dunphy said, with a shrug.

“If you take your seats, gentlemen,” Father Lysaght said firmly, “I’ll see to poor Father Pat. Would you come with me, Father Breslin and Father Brophy?”

Three priests left the room. The others took their seats.

“Poor, indeed—and him with the grass of thirty-five bullocks,” Father Crehan mumbled.

The bishop drummed the table unconsciously with the fingers of his left hand while he tugged his limp Roman collar away from his wet neck with his right. His face was as purple as his stock. His undershot lower jaw hung open,

exposing gaps in his big yellow teeth. His eyes were fixed vacantly on an engraving of Robert Emmett making his dying speech.

"Father Pat had the better of me by three years—I'm only sixty-seven and a young man yet," a fat, undersized priest said querulously, adding hastily, in afterthought, "God rest his soul."

"Oh, but, Father Lynch, the corpse, God give him a soft bed, was two stone lighter than you, and near a foot taller," a spare old man with grizzled hair said brutally. "There's death, maybe, for a fat man in every step he takes," he added, with a calculating glance round the table.

There was shuffling of many feet. Father Lynch's pendulous cheeks shook. His protuberant waistcoat rose and fell to his short pants for breath.

"There's no fear of me—not for ten years to come," he quavered valorously, wetting his lips with his tongue. He looked round for sympathy and found the spare old man's eyes fixed on him appraisingly.

"A watched pot takes a long time to boil," he wheezed, pulling himself together. "Father Griffin always had a liking for my parish, my lord. But sure it's the lean men often goes first—the heart it is. A sort of worm gnawing at their innards—and flop, off they go."

This cryptic excursion into physiology relieved the tension. There was a general laugh.

The bishop sighed, rapped the table loudly, and said :

"Order, order, gentlemen."

"You're a fine, full man yourself, my lord, may God bless you. But there's little fear of you yet," Father Lynch said ingratiatingly.

"Tut, tut, I'm a young man," the bishop said, in an annoyed tone, opening the top buttons of his soutane, and mopping his forehead with his handkerchief.

"He's fat and red about the gills," Father Griffin muttered gloomily to the table. "I wouldn't give much for the chances of a man of fifty-nine with *his* lining."

"What's that, Father Griffin?" the bishop said sternly.

"Only that you're likely to live down the youngest of us, my lord," Father Griffin said morosely.

"Hum, hum," the bishop said, drumming the table nervously. "The sudden death of Father Daly, gentlemen, in the fulness of years and priestly virtue though it be, is a lesson to all of us. Death comes like a thief in the night—but I needn't labour the point to men who always live in the presence of God. Father Daly died in harness."

There were sounds of much trampling of feet in the hall, as of men bearing a burthen.

"He had thirty-five bullocks in the market this morning," Father Crehan murmured enviously.

"As I said," the bishop resumed, "he died in harness, doing the work of God. Father Daly came to the conference and has gone to his reward. He was an example to all of us. A man of very old family, he had all the humility of the humblest of us. In his obedience to my slightest wish he was a true son of holy church. In his, ahem, frugality of life he was a beautiful example of holy poverty."

"He was saving up, you may be sure, for the new Cathedral, my lord," Father Lynch said unctuously.

"Being a man of God, I've no doubt he has remembered the house of God generously," the bishop said, with equal unctiousness, his thick lips relaxing to a smile.

"Any man with Drisheen parish would," Father Crehan said piously.

"Any priest of any parish in the diocese should," the bishop said sharply. "It is easy to be generous with other people's money," he added, with a pointed look at Father Crehan.

Father Crehan blushed, fiddled with the gold cross on his

watchchain, hesitated, as if drawing back on the point of making a plunge, made up his mind and said with an air of reckless courage :

"I was going to tell your lordship later that I'm going to give another hundred to the building fund. If I only had the means," he added significantly, "it might be five times as much—but Leemagh is a poor parish, my lord."

The bishop's grey-brown eyes gleamed.

"Make a note of that, Father Carberry," he said drily, to his secretary. "Father Crehan promises a hundred pounds to the Cathedral building fund."

"Crehan couldn't play a pinkeen let alone a big fish like the lord," Father Griffin said gloomily.

"Diddled," Dunphy giggled.

"You're lucky to have such a rich parish as Leemagh, Father Crehan," the bishop said suavely. "If I were a man of your status and had such a parish I'd expect to stay there for—" he pursed his lips and frowned thoughtfully, "well—for ten years at least. But to come back to Father Daly."

"I hope to God Daly'll do the bastard in the eye," Crehan muttered savagely, with no care for the accuracy of his epithet.

"Out of respect for the dead we'll do no business to-day," the bishop went on, "except dinner, which will, of course, be at the usual hour. The deceased deserves all the consideration we can show him. The body will be taken to the Cathedral to-day and will lie there in state till the Requiem at 9 on Saturday."

"The lord must have wind of the will. He's getting a big wad, no doubt," Father Griffin muttered.

"There is a will, I suppose, my lord?" Father Lynch asked innocently.

All ears were pricked. The bishop gave a self-satisfied smile.

"Certainly. Father Daly was punctilious in regard to

the diocesan regulations—in everything indeed. As are all your wills, it is lodged with me. You might fetch it, Father Carberry, from the palace. This is a suitable occasion to open and read it.”

“As if he hadn’t steamed it and read it long ago,” Father Crehan muttered.

“He; he, he,” Father Lynch laughed. “It’d be a joke if it was like mine—a blank sheet of paper. The bulk of ’em are I believe.”

There was a titter among the group within hearing of the whisper.

“No levity, gentlemen, on so solemn an occasion,” the bishop said sharply.

“I wonder how much he left, my lord?” Father Lynch asked eagerly.

“I’ve no idea,” the bishop said, in a tone that invited discussion, curiosity in his eyes.

“He got Drisheen—let me see—it was the year of the Deasy Land Act I think—or was it the year after? Yes, thirty-five years ago it was,” Father Griffin said meditatively, in morose enjoyment, “and it was then he took that miserly turn.”

“Frugal, Father Griffin, frugal is the more fitting word—in a priest,” the bishop said gently.

“Would you believe it, my lord, he gave up drinking and smoking—there was a hero for you,” Father Lynch said, in ecstatic wonder.

“Two hundred a year clear off the grass alone,” Father Crehan, drawn back to Drisheen as by a magnet, calculated, “and thirty-five times that is seven thousand, and then there was interest, and interest on interest and what not—on the score of the grass and the bullocks alone there must be at least twelve thousand.”

“And all that only an extra as it were,” Father Griffin said gloomily. “There were the dues and the masses and

the regular pickings in births, marriages and funerals—Drisheen is no barren cow.”

“There was his upkeep to be taken out of that,” Father Crehan said carelessly, with an effort to conceal his anxiety.

Father Lynch laughed shrilly. “An old nanny goat’d cost more to keep,” he wheezed. “Whitey was fed on the parish—Lenihan gave him the lock of oats and hay free. Julia Feeney had about four pounds a year for most of her life—maybe six or eight or ten latterly. And the food! I wouldn’t be surprised if old Pat didn’t make a profit on the presents he got. And the house cost him nothing. It’s as rich as Cræsus the old miser was, and if he’d only the sense to take a glass o’ punch or two a night it’s alive maybe he’d be now to enjoy it.”

“Put it at thirty thousand altogether at the underside,” Father Griffin said moodily.

“Compound interest and all, it’s more I tell you,” Father Lynch said, combatively.

The whole room held its breath. Father Crehan emitted his in a long, deep sigh.

The bishop gazed at the ceiling abstractedly. “Drisheen is a very desirable parish,” he said, after a long pause.

“You bid too low, Crehan, my boy,” Dunphy whispered, with a chuckle.

“Whist, can’t you? He might give a hint as to how the land lies,” Crehan murmured excitedly.

“It’s not in your direction, anyhow,” Dunphy said consolingly. “You headed yourself off it, sonny. And he didn’t even say ‘thank you,’ for the ha’porth of tar.”

“It’s time Father Carberry was back,” the bishop said, looking at his watch. “I must take advantage of the unexpected respite to clear off some work before dinner. And no doubt,” jocosely, “some of you rich farmers will like to have a look at the market. I seem to be the only poor man among you.”

He smiled broadly, and added, with a nice mixture of fun and seriousness. "If you are making such large revenues I think your contribution to me should be increased."

There was some hollowness in the laughter that greeted the episcopal sally. Legs and arms wriggled uneasily.

"Sure all rivers flow into the sea in the end, my lord," Father Lynch said, with enthusiasm. "No doubt Father Pat has remembered you handsomely. It's a temptation we'd all have in making our wills. No doubt he's left us all a little solatium to say masses for the good of his soul, but the bulk of it is sure to go to your lordship."

"He was a good priest," the bishop said blandly.

"He might have thought of his family," Father Griffin said lugubriously.

"His family!" Father Lynch said hotly. "He never gave 'em a stiver and he alive, and it's thinking of his soul he'd be and he dead. No fear. Did he do a hand's turn for his brother, young Pierce, and he up to his neck in Scarty with Pierce the Rake's debts? And Theobald that he doted on—he wouldn't give him a five-pound note to save him from hell—saving your pardon, my lord. No, take my word for it, it'll all go to God—to his lordship here and to the building fund and to the Seminary, and a little lock to us for the masses that'll keep his soul easy."

The door opened and all eyes turned eagerly, but it was only Father Lysaght.

"Well?" the bishop asked.

Father Lysaght took his seat. "Apoplexy and a weak heart," he said quietly. "The doctor thinks an inquest unnecessary. I've seen the police inspector and he agrees."

"Of course," the bishop nodded approval. "That was to be expected—fitting deference to the Church. The authorities are always to be relied on."

"I'll consult the family before making arrangements for the funeral and——"

Father Lysaght began, but the bishop interrupted caustically :

"The family are of no importance. I have made the arrangements. Father Carberry will give you the details. He should be here now with the will."

"Surely the family——" Father Lysaght said, with a frown.

The bishop interrupted him sharply :

"I don't need to remind you that I am the bishop—but here is Father Carberry."

Father Lysaght shrugged his shoulders and gazed grimly at the polished table.

The bishop tore open the envelope, and unfolded the single sheet of foolscap. Gradually a heavy frown gathered on his brow. His purple face paled, then went a deeper purple. The paper shook a little in his hands. He continued to gaze at it in horror long after he had finished reading it. He rose abruptly from his seat, crumpling the will between nervous fingers. Seizing his biretta, he threw the will on the table, said roughly : "Read it to them you, Father Carberry," and stalked, as majestically as his angry bulk allowed, out of the room, slamming the door behind him.

"What the hell's wrong with the old man?" lisped Father Carberry, a fair, slim young man, in a very high clerical collar and very long white cuffs.

"Read it, man—read it, read it," Father Lynch said, rising in his seat.

"The will—the will!" was shouted from all round the table.

Father Carberry took up the will gingerly, pushed up his cuffs, smiled tolerantly at a "Damn the ass, why doesn't he read it?" and ran his eyes quickly over the paper.

"Why don't you read it aloud, man?" Father Lynch said vehemently, stretching out his hand as if to grab.

"No, you don't," Carberry said quietly, stepping back a pace. "There's nothing to fuss about really," with a surprised look at the eager face. "It's all quite simple. Everything goes to the boy, Jim Daly. His mother and Lysaght there are executors."

The flies, buzzing about the room, could have freely entered a score of priestly mouths.

"Nothing to the bishop or the Cathedral or the Seminary?" Father Lynch said, in a series of gasps.

"Not a rap. He mentions the Cathedral rather funnily. Says it's an eyesore and unnecessary and a reflection on the Dalys who built the old one, and recommends Jim to subscribe towards pulling it down if he ever gets the chance."

"There's some sense in that anyway," Father Griffin said with a dreary chuckle.

"No trifle even for masses?" Father Lynch said in an exhausted tone.

"He says he's sure you'll all say them for him of your charity," Carberry said with a grin.

"The bloody miser," Father Lynch managed to say, with a last effort.

"Dinner at three, gentlemen," Father Lysaght said coldly.

3.

The Oweybeg river, emerging from the hills through Rathvalley Glen, descended by gently sloping uplands to the rich plain that stretched south to Lisgeela. At the juncture of plain and upland, on the right bank of the river, the Dalyhouse demesne ran upwards, the house standing about a mile and a half from the Lisgeela gate. Across the river on the left bank, marching with the river and alto-

gether in the plain, was Scarty farm. The main road from Tubber to Lisgeela had Dalyhouse on its left, crossed the river and had Scarty on its right. A good thrower could cast a stone from the white wooden gate of Scarty cottage to the limestone wolf-hounds that surmounted the pillars of the wrought-iron gates of the Lisgeela avenue of Dalyhouse.

Most people who passed by Scarty called it a charming cottage. It stood back about sixty yards from the gate, was thatched and had mansard windows in the roof. In June the front of the house was a mass of roses. Thirty yards from the entrance the short drive forked off on the right to the farm yard which was hidden by a thick hedge of juniper. Since Theobald Daly's death the drive to the yard was practically unused and grass-grown; the farm, except the lawn and garden, having been let at three pounds ten an acre to a Lisgeela butcher for grass fattening. The cottage was four-square with a diminutive open court in the centre. On three sides the house gave on the lawn, which ran to the river on the side opposite the main entrance—a ridiculous little Gothic porch trellised in roses.

Two old cedar trees, with wide-spreading branches, stood between the house and the river, and under the shade of one of them, in an old wicker chair, Pierce Daly sat, reading the *Freeman's Journal*. In a similar chair, only more decrepit, a few feet distant from him, sat Arabella, his daughter-in-law, busily tacking a boy's navy blue pants which she had apparently just cut out on the small deal table in front of her.

"I seem to make them and make them," she said, with a smile, half cynical but wholly tender, on her curved lips.

"You do then," he said gently, laying the paper on his knees and looking at the river. "Sure they run through a power of 'em at his age. Stick to the corduroy, Arabella. It lasts."

He glanced approvingly at his own corduroy knee

breeches, grey woollen stockings and black brogues, soiled with garden clay.

She bit off an end of tacking thread, held up the garment, and screwed her sad but smiling face to take in the proportions.

"I always get it wrong—the right leg is longer than the left. Why, you bought the stuff yourself, father."

"Did I then? Well, well. He's a fair caution, that gossoon. A good licking with an ash plant he wants. What did he do yesterday morning before you were up but climb the big elm beyond to the nest on the top."

"Oh," she said, with a little shiver. "I hope you spanked him well."

"He was that disappointed that the young ones had gone away that I hadn't the heart to do it," he said shamefacedly. "And, would you believe it, Arabella?" pleasure and pride creeping into his voice, "I used to try for the nest on the top of that very tree when I was his age and sorra one of me could do it—not till I was near twelve. And I was no bad hand at them kind of tricks. And it's not any the easier with the growth there's on it since."

"He's a handful," she said, in a resigned tone.

"You're too soft with him, Arabella, too soft. We must be severe. It's the only way in the long run. What's keeping the boy at all? He ought to be home long ago. I must go and trim up that row o' peas."

She sewed steadily. He took up the paper again, read a few lines, put it down, and got up restlessly.

"I think I'll have a look down the road to see if he's coming," he said apologetically.

"Do. But he's all right. And we'd hear the pony, anyhow."

She put her sewing on her lap and watched him walk across the green turf to the copper beech from which there was a view of the Lisgeela Road. He was the best looking

of the handsome Dalys. An icy hand seemed to touch her. She shivered and crouched a little in her seat. She clenched her hand resolutely. She must train herself to think of Theobald without this—and after four years too. Yes, Theobald would have been like his father. Father Pat was a handsome man but they were slimmer and harder. What would Jim——

She heard a faint sound of galloping hoofs and smiled. The old man hurried back, the ends of his white flannel bawneen loose and flapping. His blue eyes gleamed above a complexion fresh as a boy's, shaded to the tip of his fine nose by an old rush hat.

"He's coming," he said carelessly, sitting again, and taking up the paper.

"He was told not to gallop on the road," she said severely.

"It's a way childre have of forgetting things," he said, wriggling uneasily.

And he was a stern old man, too, not really old, of course, she thought, placidly sewing her thoughts into the stuff. He was still lithe and active. He had been strict and stern with Theobald to the end. But never with her. And with Jim? That was a great joke. Were all strict fathers weak with their grandchildren?

"What!" she said aloud, in amazement.

A pony came round the corner of the house at full gallop, took the path leading to the vegetable garden and the herbaceous border in a flying leap, shedding a boy's cap on the top of a brilliant anchusa. The fore feet stopped dead within a foot of the table.

"Really, Jim, this is going beyond the beyonds," his mother said angrily.

"It's—it's a bit uncalled for," his grandfather muttered, with an admiring look at the flushed boy.

"What is, mother?" the boy asked, his blue eyes opening in wide innocence.

The blend of surprise, mild worry, and entire unconsciousness of any offence made it a struggle to maintain her sternness.

"You know it's not allowed—and all your grandfather's trouble with the flower beds."

"Oh—I forgot."

There was sorrow in his voice and look. Then, to his grandfather, in protest:

"As if Crabbit *could* make a mistake!"

"He cleared it by at least two feet," his grandfather said proudly.

"There, mother," Jim said, without too much triumph.

She held him by love. When she gave reasons she failed, she meditated, her eyes drinking in the colour at the nape of his neck, where the light gold of the short silky hair shone on the brown-gold of the tan. She passed her fingers through the thick tousled hair falling anyhow over his forehead.

"There, now. I forgot with all the fuss," he said abruptly, excitement in his eyes. "I wouldn't have galloped on the grass, of course, only for that. Uncle Pat is dead. The whole town is full of it. Died sitting in his trap in front of Father Lysaght's door. They had it in the college before play-time. Tom Dillon whispered it to me at French lesson. And at play-time a lot of the boys ran down the town to catch a sight of him, but they had him gone. The funeral's on Saturday. I didn't go down to see 'cause you told me not to be gallivanting round, grandfather. Father Macdonald came in for a Latin lesson after play-time and he called me up and told me. 'You, young shaver,' he said, 'you're left a pot of money.'"

"Poor Father Pat. So sudden, too," his mother said.

His grandfather stared at the river with a set face, and said nothing.

"It was sudden, Father Macdonald said, but, of course.

being a priest, not unprovided," Jim continued eagerly, treating the "unprovided" with care and watching his mother to see how she took it. As it seemed all right, he went on breathlessly: "And Mr. Mallon, the grocer, ran out and caught Crabbit by the reins and I passing home, and said, as sure as death, he was the only one that saw it happen through the corner of his eye through the shop window, only it didn't strike him at the time. He saw Father Pat fall back a little over the back rest of the trap, and Whitey make as if to stop. And he said to himself it's a queer thing to stop and he only coming into town. And then he bethought him that it was only last week he had the half pound of tea and the two pounds of sugar, and that he wasn't due for a month again—the custom being hardly worth handling only for the honour of serving a Daly and he a priest too. And just at that very minute he got a big order for bacon and took his eyes off the street, and when he looked again Whitey was gone, and, in the hurry of the market, the whole thing passed from his mind. And he'll regret to his dying day, he said, the chance that Providence proffered him of being the first to discover him lying there dead in the car. And he said, too, that I was left heaps of money and the whole town was glad of it, though the bishop took it badly. But what could you expect of a man, though he was a bishop itself, that dealt for the bulk of his things at MacGinty's—and the less said about MacGinty's groceries the better."

He paused, conscious of inattention. He looked, a little resentfully, first at his mother, then at his grandfather; but his mother's sad eyes were fixed on his grandfather, and his grandfather was staring at the river, neither, seemingly, listening to a word he said.

He pitched his voice higher: "And I passed Father Lysaght on the road, driving out here on Fagan's side-car."

"Did he give you any particulars?" his mother asked.

"I asked him if he was bringing me out the pot of money, but he only said: 'Trot on home, you young gadfly,' and of course I galloped, and that's why I tore across the lawn and jumped the beds."

His mother kissed his firm cheek at the ear, brushing the soft down lightly with her lips. She drew him to her and buried her face for a moment in his hair sticky with sweat.

"Run away now," she said, with a sudden push, as if she had to wrench herself from him. "Put up Crabbit, and have your meal. You may have a cup of tea with us here afterwards, and tell Susan to bring a cup for Father Lysaght."

"Do you think, mother, that he has the pot of money in the car?"

"Run away, now, child," she said firmly.

He looked expectantly at his grandfather, but seeing no encouragement there, sighed deeply, gathered up the reins and led Crabbit across the grass.

She looked again at her father-in-law but he had not moved. She took up her sewing and stitched rapidly. Theobald was like that—he thought a thing out and then he might speak or he mightn't. The Levins talked first and thought, if they thought at all, afterwards. She was happy—as happy as she could ever be without Theobald. But if there was that money? She wished Father Lysaght would come. Would it be enough to send Jim to a good school? He was wasting his time at that ridiculous college at Lisgeela where Father Macdonald, who couldn't pronounce a word of it properly, taught French—and Latin, and other things. She supposed he knew Latin—there was such a lot of it in the mass. But to call it a college—it was more like a hedge school.

"I think I'll go now and do them peas," Pierce Daly said, without moving.

"Do. Unless you wait and have tea first. Father Lysaght is coming," she said gently.

"Poor Pat, 'tis he was always the queer fellow. He was a good man enough but he had no proper pride in him," he said meditatively.

She laughed: "He was the proudest man I ever knew. With him a Daly ranked above the Cherubim—if not higher," she said slyly.

"Pooh," he said, half tolerantly, half contemptuously. "Scraping and gathering he didn't well know for what, till in the end he was fonder of a sovereign than he was of the name and blood he was toiling and moiling for. What did he ever do for it except to get the name of a miser? God knows I had more respect for my father that often wasted near as much in a year as Pat gathered in a life-time. He had the open hand of the Dalys. What matter if he drank himself to death? He used to sit there despising me for the way I worked early and late to keep a roof over his head, and not caring a thraneen for all he had lost. And old Bertram Scovell was afeared of him, and gave him the road till the day of his death. Poor Pat's pride! It never led to anything but to make a scarecrow of himself to frighten the birds with between Drisheen and Lisgeela, with his old hat and his old pony, and he afraid to look at a beefsteak for fear he'd be tempted to buy it. May God forgive me for speaking light of the dead—the Lord have mercy on him. And, sure, if he hadn't any real pride in him, he'll have the less to answer for before the Throne of God. You wouldn't think I had any pride in me, Arabella?" he added, after a pause.

"I'm not so sure," she said gently, with an affectionate smile, letting her eyes wander over the unbent figure, the long, straight nose with slightly curved nostrils, the taut muscles of the bronzed throat, unrestrained by a collar.

"Being full of proper pride yourself, of course you'd understand," he said admiringly. "Well, I have—I'm as chock full of it as an egg is full of meat. Poor Pat'd have

been Daly of Dalyhouse and he did nothing all his life but whistle down the wind after it. But I had the solid earth of Scarty under my feet and I tried to make the most of it. I had my own freehold, but I made up my mind to be a peasant and cock of my own dunghill, and not be hanging on the skirts of the gentry. I was one of 'em, you see, so it didn't hurt me to despise 'em. My mother, God rest her, used to have fits over my way of talking that I picked up from a servant man we had by the name of Paudheen Mick—Herlihy I believe his real name was—and it soon became second nature to me. I wore a flannel bawneen instead of a coat, except on Sundays or maybe at a Fair, and the same with a collar. I married Ann Driscoll, the rose of Dunkerrin they called her, and a good wife she made for me. It was in her blood to hate the landlords and the English—they were all one to her. With myself I never rightly knew whether it was love of Ireland or hatred of the Scovells that moved me most, for I never forgot the dirty trick Bertram Scovell played on my father over the mortgage, and they bosom friends as it were. Within in the parlour you see hanging up the Act of Parliament of Queen Anne's time indemnifying the Dalys agin the penal laws because of their kindness to poor Protestants in the Jacobite wars before Dutch William could come to their aid. It was how the Daly of that time took over Tullyfin, the property that Cromwell had made a grant of to the Scovells, and handed it back to 'em without a penny missing when the troubled times were over—all through friendship. Thick as thieves they were, and sure, it's little better than thieves either the Dalys or Scovells were in them days, but fast friends for all that. If the Dalys lent a hand to the Scovells in the reign of James, the Scovells did the same by the Dalys in the reign of Anne. And so on down to '35, when a bad strain showed in Bertram Scovell. It wasn't the loss of Dalyhouse for a song my father minded, for sure he had his day, but the heart-scald of a friend going

back on him. There was a trifle, I believe, of my father beating out Bertram Scovell over my mother in the way of marriage. My father made light of it and was as friendly as ever, but Bertram nursed his grievance in his black heart and struck when he got the chance. And my father never made any effort to gather the money to meet the blow of the foreclosure, not believing it could happen till it was all over. My father soon forgot it all in the fumes of poteen, and my mother and Pat talked and talked but broke no bones. But from the day that I was able to think for myself—and I began it early—I've been paying back the Scovell score. Never in the way of meanness or trickery, for I'd scorn the like, but always in open fight. Three generations of 'em I've been up against and now the fourth is growing around Derek Scovell's knees. I've hurt 'em in their pride and in their pocket, in their politics and their religion—wherever I thought one of 'em'd feel the blow most. I used to go to Repeal Meetings and I hardly able to walk the ten miles to Tubber and back because Scovell tried to keep the people from going. I was a Young Irelander in '48, and a Fenian in '65. Well I remember how young Bertram, who ruled there then, had Dalyhouse barricaded with iron shutters. He was near out of his mind with terror, and the people laughing at him, knowing well that no matter what happened I wouldn't let a stone of Dalyhouse be touched. I tell you we put the fear of God into the English, but it was their garrison here, the Scovells and the Levins and the like, that had to bear the brunt of it—no doubt you heard tell of it in your father's house—and wherever there was trouble for the English or a landlord I was at the head and front of it, and glad the people were to have a Daly for a leader. Poor Pat'd never have got the pleasure out of Dalyhouse that I got out of Scarty. The Scovells hated us to be in it from the very first. There we were sitting at their gate, as it were, and holding our heads higher than ever they

could lift theirs as far as the people were concerned. I made the house and place an eyesore to them. I learnt thatching and a power about flowers and I grew the things they couldn't grow just to spite 'em. If scowls could wither the place it'd be blasted long ago, and their eyes never off it and they in and out to Lisgeela. And when young Bertram—you remember the crooked nose he had to the day of his death? I gave him that in fair fight and I about Jim's age. Well, when he married Lady Alice Travers that was great at the proselytizing, I put up that statue of the Blessed Virgin in the niche in our wall near the bridge, and Ann Driscoll, God be good to her, used to put fresh flowers in front of it every day. For many a year Lady Alice couldn't bear the look of it and used to drive into Lisgeela by the Tubber Gate and go by Lisheen, a round of six miles and a bad road.

"But these were small things. It was over the land that I got back on them most. Davitt or Parnell or Dillon or O'Brien, whichever of 'em struck the hardest blow I favoured, and I carried the people with me. The Daly-house tenants always abided by my word and the Scovells' own old tenants at Tullyfin weren't backward. I couldn't tell you how many years' rent the Scovells lost through the Plan of Campaign and the like. It wasn't the money they felt so much, for they had plenty of it, but the blow to their pride and the breaking of their power, and the knowledge they had that I was in it all. That's no bad record, Arabella, but the hardest blow ever struck by a Daly on a Scovell was when Theobald brought you in here on the floor to me. I felt, with the heart-break it was to Derek Scovell, that God in His goodness could hardly do any more for me."

His blazing eyes softened as they rested upon her.

"So I was just a red rag to the Scovells," she said, with a slight shudder.

"You were all that," he said grimly. "But sorra much

Theobald thought about it and he head over ears in love with you. And, God forgive me, it's little enough I thought about it after the first month or two and you the best daughter ever a man had. But that must be Father Lysaght coming—I'd know the Saturday canter of Fagan's old mare anywhere. Poor Pat—poor Pat! I mind once when he gave me his old pen-knife with the broken blade that I had for twenty year, and he not having another. 'Tis he was the generous lad."

Arabella folded up her sewing, her eyes on a turbulent little stream that merged quietly near the bridge into the broad, smooth-flowing Owneybeg. It was so that hatred sometimes lost itself in love, gently, almost without effort. How she had ignored Theobald, despised him, hated him—and then? There was her father-in-law with his little bundle of hates; and her own father at Lissyfad with his: mere bundles of Green and Orange misunderstandings and pitiful spites. They were blind and couldn't see. How alike they were, too, in all essentials, generous, lovable, different though they thought themselves. Would love, the solvent, ever do for them what it had done for her?

"I must go and find out what's keeping Susan with the tea," she said, with a mothering smile at the old man.

4.

Jim Daly stormed into the kitchen where Susan Roche, her overflowing body mainly kept together by her tight apron-strings, was "lifting" a crisp cake from a bastable on the open hearth.

"You near made it drop from my hands, you young ruffian, you," she said amiably.

"My! What a scrump, Susan, and raisins in it," he said breathlessly, wriggling on one foot, and sniffing

appreciatively. "I can have a piece with my dinner, can't I, Susan?"

"Is it me to broach it, and under the eyes of the Missis too," she said severely.

"Oh," he said dejectedly, making a quick change to the other foot.

"But maybe," she said with a relenting smile, "if you'd ate your dinner hearty, it's a young puppy of a cake that I baked all for yourself on top of the cover, that you'd be finding on the corner of the dresser beyond."

He made a jump for the dresser, gave a long-drawn "Oh, Susan—thanks, thanks," seized the cake, and, admiringly, held it up level with his eyes. "Now that I've a pot of money, we'll have plum cake every day," he said, nibbling a raisin.

"Whatever is the boy romancing about?" Susan said, busying herself with a covered dish beside the fire. "Run away into the room, now, and don't be keeping the fine dinner cold that I'm bringing into you this blessed minute."

"'Bold Robert Emmett, the hero of Ireland,'" he sang with thoughtful slowness. "And I tell you what, Susan," he broke into prose, "I'll buy the black and white rabbits Dick Kavanagh reared, even if he charges sixpence apiece for 'em, and a hat for my mother, and maybe a shawl for you, and some books about the traitor English for my grandfather. There's sure to be enough money for all that," he added doubtfully.

"More power to my young Fenian," Susan said delightedly, her red face glowing over the dish which she held in her hands. "Sure 'tis you'll give the dirty English a dig in the ribs one day—and it's richly they'll be deserving of it. And isn't it kind grandfather for you to be down on 'em—the cowardly priest hunters. But come along now, agra, and be eating your dinner. You, with your talk of spending all that money, and there's neither sight nor

leavings of your tuppence a week the evening of the day you get it. A shawl for me indeed! But sure it was the good heart in you that thought of me though you hadn't the money itself. And I didn't stick another lock of raisins in your cakeen beyond what I mixed in the dough."

"My Uncle Pat is dead," he said absently, examining the cake.

She opened wide her mouth and eyes and gave a deep sigh. "The best of news is bad for a weak heart," she said, releasing one hand from the dish and supporting her heaving bosom. "You ought to have told me at the first go off, and not break it to me all of a sudden. The poor man! May heaven be his bed this night. To think of him doing anything half so decent as to die in the end. And to leave his money to his own kin too, and not for baptizing naygurs in foreign parts. I don't grudge him the shilling he never left in my palm, and he going in and out of this house as long as I can remember. Sure it's the grand funeral he'll have, and all the Scovell tenants marching behind him, just as if they was his own, as heaven knows they ought to be if he only had his rights, with the makings of a linen shirt on their shoulders, and a yard of handkerchief round their hats in respect for the dead. It'll be a great sight, glory be to God. But come on, agra—a dinner, and it off the fire, won't keep hot for the living or the dead."

Jim raced through his meal with intense excitement. He ate plum cake with meat with evident enjoyment. He decided, if the pot of money hadn't come by them, to deposit his pen-knife with Dick Kavanagh early on the morrow as a lien on the rabbits. He rushed out into the kitchen to warn Susan that Father Lysaght was coming for tea, and wondered, as he said a hurried "Thank God for a good dinner," why people wore the makings of shirts on their shoulders, in respect for the dead.

Munching the remains of his cake, he ran to the front gate

to await Father Lysaght. He swung the gate in and out to test its swing. He then swung himself nimbly over the top bar, held on to it by his toes, his head close to the ground, and swung briskly to and fro. The game was to jerk the gate open again between the warning click of the fastening and the actual catch. He had scored eleven when with an "Off that, you young imp," Father Lysaght lifted him by the neck and dropped him on to his feet.

"Have you the pot?" Jim asked eagerly, shoving back his hair from a highly congested forehead.

"You callous young brute," Father Lysaght said with a smile, patting the tousled hair, "and your uncle lying dead."

"Oh, but Father James, do tell me. Really and truly have you?" Jim wheedled excitedly. "I'm very sorry and all that of course."

"Cut away now," the priest said with a laugh. "You needn't put up the horse, Dempsey, I'm driving to Drisheen in a few minutes."

"For the pot? Can I go with you, Father James?" Jim said in an awed tone.

"The boy is a young savage," the priest said with a half admiring shrug. "Where are your mother and grandfather?"

"Under the big cedar. It's that the rabbits may be gone; or he mayn't hold 'em for the penknife," Jim said thoughtfully.

The priest considered this and said gravely, "Of course that *is* a reason. Perhaps you may be let come. We'll see."

"Oh, you'll manage it, Father James," Jim said confidently, hanging on to the priest's arm as they turned the corner of the house on to the river front. "They know all about it, I've told 'em of course," he added with a nod towards the cedars.

"That's good," Father Lysaght said in a relieved tone.

His mind set at ease by this mark of approval, in an

outburst of gratitude Jim whispered, "I'll show you two late nests before we go—if we have the time—it's a little way off," he added doubtfully, a fear of missing the drive to Drisheen oppressing him.

"We'll have more time another day," the priest said with an understanding smile. "No, don't get up, Mr. Daly. This was all very sudden. Jim says he told you," he added, shaking hands with Pierce and Arabella. He sat on the wooden seat, close to the tree trunk, took a cup of tea from Arabella, with a nod of thanks, and said:

"We haven't troubled you about the funeral arrangements—it was the least we could do for one of our own cloth. The bishop thought first of mass in the Cathedral, but later he changed his mind. Drisheen, Father Pat's own church, is certainly more suitable. The Drisheen people will expect it. With all his——" he hesitated a moment to find a word.

"With all his reserve," he said tentatively.

"Humph," Pierce said grimly.

"The people loved him," the priest said firmly.

"Pat had his good points," Pierce conceded. "He was a good farmer for one thing—better than me and that's saying a good deal. And he wasn't saving in advice anyway, and the people profited by it."

"He took what they gave perhaps," Father Lysaght said defensively. "But he never pressed them. The dues were low—he never raised them the whole time he was there. He might have been hard on himself, but he was never hard on the people, and he was at their service night and day. No priest in the diocese did his duty as well as he did his."

"He did all that," Pierce said grudgingly. "But it was the least that was to be expected of a Daly."

"And having taken the body to Drisheen, and the mass being there, the bishop thinks it will be more suitable to have him buried there—among his own people. It would certainly be more convenient than to bring him back again

all the way to Lisgeela," Father Lysaght said with the air of making a case and being doubtful of the result.

"He will not be buried there," Pierce said decisively.

"But the bishop?"

"Bishop or no bishop, he will not, I say. Take his body to Drisheen if ye like and wake it there. He'll feel more at home being waked in his own little chapel than in that big raw barn of a new Cathedral. And have the mass at Drisheen—all that is fitting. But buried he'll be in the Daly tomb in the old Cathedral at Lisgeela if he had to be brought by road a hundred miles to it. And carried too on willing shoulders, you'll find he'll be, every step of the way. He was head of the Dalys and it's his due—it's to turn in his grave he would if he was laid anywhere else. And I'm head of the house now, as Jim here'll be after me, and I'll see that it's done."

"The bishop," Father Lysaght insisted doubtfully.

"The bishop! Who's the bishop?" Pierce said contemptuously.

Father Lysaght looked meditatively at the handsome, fiery old man, at the old rush hat, the flannel bawneen, the collarless flannel shirt, open and thrown back at the neck, at the horny, toil-stained hands, at the stern face.

"Well, that's rather a feudal idea, Mr. Daly, isn't it? And you're a great democrat," he said with a suspicion of a smile at the corners of his lips.

"Democracy's all right in its own place, and I'm all for it, but in Lisgeela he'll be buried," Pierce said calmly. "And talking of feudalism," he went on argumentatively, "why it's the church——"

"Oh, I'm sure the bishop will give way at once, when he knows your feelings in the matter," Father Lysaght interrupted hurriedly.

"Give way or no, it's settled here and now," the old man said autocratically.

Father Lysaght bowed and held out his cup for more tea.

"Can I do anything?" Arabella asked.

"I think not," Father Lysaght said gently. "You and I are the executors, but there's no reason why you should be troubled now. Everything's left to Jim."

Jim, who had been steadily munching cake, pricked his ears attentively.

"How much is there?" Arabella asked carelessly, her heart beating fast. "Enough to send him to a good school?"

"Enough and more, I should say."

"And to the University?"

"Why not?"

Her sad eyes glowed and a faint pink tinged her pale and somewhat worn cheeks.

"There's no use in hoping that there would be enough to put him in the Diplomatic Service? A Levin was always in it. Uncle Silas is. And he's my only relative who hasn't thrown me over. He lives out of Ireland you see. He could get him a nomination. I used to dream of this," she trailed off, the sad look again in her brown eyes.

"I've no doubt it could be done, if you think it best for him," the priest said with a quick look at the old man who was gazing sternly at the river.

"But it takes four hundred a year?"

"Even so."

She sighed contentedly. Pierce grunted half angrily. Jim thought it all very disappointing. It didn't seem to bring him any nearer to the rabbits. And wasn't he already at the best school in Ireland? The college at Liskeilly was that. Father Macdonald said so. There was nothing higher except Maynooth, but that was for priests, and he wasn't going to be one, his mother had said. He wasn't quite sure yet what he'd be. The engine driver of a train

had a fine life with no one to say a cross word to him, no matter how black his face was. And the Sub-Inspector of Police at Liskegela, when he rode with sword and helmet and blew his silver whistle—but his grandfather had put an end to that dream. The police were in English pay, and of course no one could take blood money. Then there was the drum-major of the Liskegela brass band.

“I’m driving on to Drisheen now,” Father Lysaght said after a pause. “There’s no one in the house but his old servant. I have his keys. He may have left some instructions besides the will. I’d like one of the family to be present—I hope you’ll be able to come, Mr. Daly.”

“Sorra foot’ll I go,” the old man said vehemently. “I’ll go to the mass and I’ll go to the funeral, and drive first behind the corpse, with Arabella and the boy in Fagan’s old mourning coach. And we’ll have the pair of horses, though that spavined hack you drove out on is a holy sight and not fit to be seen in a Christian funeral. But next or nigh his house I won’t go. Though he came in and out here at his will, and was always welcome to a bed and whatever was going, he never asked me to a bite or sup at Drisheen; and once when I called after a League meeting he never asked me had I a mouth on me. Where I wasn’t welcome and he alive, I won’t be found scavenging round and he dead. And if you take my advice, Father Lysaght, you’ll put whatever money you find in Pat’s house in a sack, and tie a rock round it, and sink it in the bottomless pool of the Oweybeg below the Liskegela waterfall. No luck’ll come of it to this house, or to anyone in it. For myself, I’d rather be dead than touch it with a hay rake. Aren’t you happy without it, Arabella? and what good’ll it do for Jim? What’s the difference between a good school and a bad school, and no school at all, except to make a man have a bigger conceit of himself? And to think of putting the boy into the service of England to learn tricks and deceit. I never

heard the like. Would you let 'em turn you into an Englishman, boy?" he added fiercely, turning to Jim.

"Never," Jim said sturdily. "And say, grandfather, it's a great idea to put the money in a sack—it's nearly as good as a pot. But there's no sense in throwing it into the river; and I want to buy some rabbits with it to-morrow from Dick Kavanagh. I'm sure he wouldn't have the face to stick out for more than two shillings," he added pleadingly.

"After all, the money is Jim's," Father Lysaght said drily. "And boys are sometimes wiser than their grandfathers."

The old man's lips twitched and his eyes twinkled as he tried to frown.

"I'd better take Jim with me to Drisheen," Father Lysaght added.

"Say yes, mother; say yes, grandfather," Jim said excitedly, hopping now on one foot, now on the other.

"Must he go?" Arabella asked doubtfully.

"It'll do him no harm," Father Lysaght said, standing up. "Come Jim, look lively."

Jim made a spring for the herbaceous border, and rescued his cap from off the anchusa.

"Come along, Father James, hurry. I'm ready now," he shouted.

"I wash my hands of the whole of ye," Pierce said moodily. "I must go and do them peas."

He stood up. Arabella sprung lightly to his side, and, standing on tiptoe, kissed his chin. "Neither money nor anything else will ever come between us, father," she said earnestly.

He patted her brown hair. "As it's a long drive to Drisheen with that old broken-down horse, and the boy might be out in the night air, you'd better put a coat in the car for him," he said, patting her hair again.

She ran towards the house.

"What's keeping you, Father James? We'll be hours

and hours late," Jim shouted from somewhere in front of the house.

Pierce shook hands with the priest, saying, "No priest should ever leave a penny piece."

Father Lysaght shrugged his shoulders.

"I suppose that's not all that hurts me, though it's part of it," Pierce said, answering some criticism in the priest's eyes. "It's that I can't bear herself or the boy to be beholden to anyone else in the world except myself—not even to Pat. Not that I think they're beholden to me—it's the other way round."

5.

More than once on the way to Drisheen Father Lysaght was tempted to regret having brought the boy. They sat together on one side of the jaunting car, the driver on the other. Before they were half way to Lisgeela the priest wished that he had put Jim on the opposite side and Dempsey on the dicky. He had no desire to bring the boy home a corpse, and, among other things, Jim seemed bent on breaking his neck. Jaunting cars were not the safest vehicles in which to do trick riding, and Fagan's car was a terror even to the experienced. Whatever chance there was of bringing Jim home alive was by keeping him where he could be clutched in crises of extreme peril. The seat inclined lengthwise to the back at an angle of forty-five degrees, and also sloped outwards. Safety lay as a rule in sitting steadily with feet firmly pressed on the footboard, hands clasping the end rail. Not for a moment did Jim sit steady, his feet did not reach the footboard, and he disdained the rail. He broke all rules by not breaking his neck. He bumped into Father Lysaght, slid off the seat on to the footboard, yet the car, swaying like a small boat in a choppy sea, never succeeded in pitching him on to the road. His mind was as

restless as his body. The priest blessed his stars and his celibacy. Life wouldn't be worth living with a son who was an endless series of interrogation marks. Yet—now and then perhaps. He was always such a jolly little chap. What was the proper price of black and white rabbits? Why were bishops nearly always fat? Did all Orangemen hate Catholics? Was it wrong to bathe six times in one day in the Owneybeg when one's mother said once only and sewed up one's shirt cuffs tight, not because she didn't trust, but just for fear, and there was no harm done, mothers knowing little about bathing, and not even the tiny weeniest of a lie spoken, Susan sewing up the cuffs again with the same thread so that no one would dream of suspecting, and advising strongly the least said the soonest mended? Was Parnell a bad man or the best man that ever lived? How could he be a good man and he a Protestant? Was divorce a worse sin than being a Protestant? Was it only Orangemen who were fried in hell?

Father Lysaght was glad of a short respite at Lisgeela while he quietly but firmly argued a stormy and disgusted bishop into again changing his mind as to the burial place of Father Pat. The bishop said that he had already spoken and that that was the end of it. Father Lysaght was placidly afraid that the end was only the beginning of this particular difficulty: Pierce Daly had also spoken, and he was a violent man when roused. The bishop, not to be outdone even in violence, didn't give a snap of his fingers for all the Pierce Dalys in the universe—besides, Pierce Daly was a Catholic and knew his duty to his bishop. In calm moments no doubt, Father Lysaght agreed, but who could count on a Daly to be calm. Moreover, Pierce Daly had a big following among the Leaguers, and his lordship had that little dispute with the League over the nuns' grass lands at Brehony. If a conflict arose, say, in the church after the mass for the possession of the body—Father

Lysaght shrugged his shoulders and watched with absorbed interest the brilliant colours of the bishop's turkey carpet as the westering sun penetrated the half open slats of the drawn venetian blinds of the study windows. The bishop bit his nails but did not find them to his taste, walked with rapid stride up and down the long room, his hands clasped behind his back, and cooled his temper by heating his body. He stopped abruptly, said that he had a cold coming on him and would probably be in his bed on Saturday. The Vicar General could preside at the mass. Anyhow he was glad to wash his hands of the whole business, being sick of people who were neither one thing nor another but who gave more trouble than a duke or a thousand ordinary people.

When the priest got back to his car, Jim, with a demure look, was sitting unusually quiet.

"I'm sorry I kept you so long," Father Lysaght said pleasantly, "but I succeeded all right. You become a bishop, Jim, by swallowing facts, no matter how much you dislike them."

"Rabbits like milk thistles," Jim said, with a glance at the well of the car.

"As quickly as you can now to Drisheen, Dempsey," the priest said, taking his seat. "You sat in the car all the time?" he added, with a suspicious look at Jim, who was gazing thoughtfully at the kerbstone.

"Well—not *all* the time," Jim replied modestly.

"What mischief were you up to, then?"

"Oh, no mischief at all. I thought I might as well be doing something while you were in with the bishop. I only intended just to see the rabbits—just to make sure that they were there. So I pelted off, and luck of luck Dick Kavanagh was at home. And hadn't he heard all about Father Pat, and me having tons of money. Say, Father James, isn't it a fine thing to be rich even if you haven't a penny in your pocket? Dick almost forced the five rabbits on me, and

himself mentioned two shillings, or even less if I thought it too much, though he was asking half a crown as late as playtime to-day, and I had my mind made up to it—and he wouldn't even take the penknife in pledge."

"Where are they?" the priest asked severely.

"In the well of the car. Won't you ask Dempsey to stop, and have a look at 'em? Do, Father James. I'm sure you're aching to see 'em."

"Are they all right there, Dempsey?" the priest said, with a frown.

"As snug as a mouse in a haycock, your reverence," the driver said, with a grin.

"As if I didn't know how to look after rabbits!" Jim said, aggrieved. "I brought two up from Dick's in my pockets and the rest in my cap. I was just getting Dempsey to spread out the feed of oats in the bottom of the well and put the sack on top of it for a bed for them when I thought of the bishop's hay. I ran round to his yard—you see you delayed so long—and took some out of the stable, and the garden gate being open I pulled some carrots for a feed, and as luck would have it, on my way back through the yard, there I saw some milk thistles. There was plenty of time and I had 'em bedded and fed easily by the time you were back. Do let's have a look at 'em, Father James—just to see how they're getting on?" Then doubtfully: "I suppose the bishop wouldn't mind about the carrots—not, anyway, if he knew they were for the rabbits?"

"Certainly not if he knew it was a Daly took 'em—he's loving you all so much to-day," Father Lysaght said, with a snap.

"How is it rabbits never need water? Do let's have a look at 'em, Father James. They may get hurt with the jolting of the car."

"Sorra bit of 'em," Dempsey said.

"Anyhow, you should have thought of that before putting

them there," the priest said, making a desperate plunge at a moral lesson.

"Is it to leave them behind when I had such a chance?" Jim said, surprised by the priest's lack of sense.

Father Lysaght took out his breviary. "Not another word now, till I have read Matins and Lauds for tomorrow," he said severely. "Not one syllable, mind."

Jim sighed disconsolately, but watched two cocks fighting till the mare shook off the strain of the climb up Hill Street and began her canter. He tried balancing on the edge of the seat, his feet in the air, but this soon palled. He thought again of the money which everybody said was his. Indeed, from the way Dick Kavanagh acted, there was no doubt about it. Lots of it too. He fingered in his pocket, his knife, two glass marbles, the case of an old silver watch, a pencil, a piece of sealing-wax, and felt round for a farthing which he had clung to for weeks in the hope of another farthing turning up—nothing less than a ha'penny was a negotiable coin for a boy of nine. With lots of money he'd perhaps have shillings in his pockets. He saw a vision of Andrews' confectionery shop in the Main street, of the beautiful wedding cake in the glass case in the window, of the rows of little glass dishes on the glass shelves and their burthens of cakes and sweets and buns. The dark red, square-cut jujubes lasted longest: and the Lisgeela Beauty, a bun with large, succulent, stoneless raisins, always piping hot out of the oven at three on Thursdays and Mondays, made one's mouth water even to think of. And he had been able to go to Andrews' only once a week, and not even then if there were other things to buy for his twopence. And it was always a struggle between an ounce of jujubes which took the whole twopence and a bun which left a ha'penny over, and one couldn't ask for a ha'porth at Andrews', though one could at Curley's. It was foolish of Father Macdonald to try and make the boys spend their money at Curley's when

the whole world knew their things were stodge, the Miss Gurleys being always playing the piano and singing songs with Father Macdonald, or driving down to the sea with him to Beekawn all through the summer. If the Miss Curleys brought their own cakes what a stodge the tea must be. There wasn't a boy in the College that didn't prefer the Protestant cakes at Andrews', and have them too, except Mick Tuohy, who was a voteen, and said that Protestant cakes always stuck in his throat while Catholic cakes went down like butter—like bad butter, Dick Kavanagh, who always paid a visit to Andrews' at playtime, said. And now, perhaps, he'd be able to go to Andrews' at playtime instead of eating, day after day, in the corner of the playground the bread and butter sandwiches his mother made up for him. They were good, of course, because she made 'em, but one got tired of good things, and they weren't Andrews'. And, of course, the very first thing, he'd buy ounces and ounces of jujubes and a whole paper bag full of cakes for his mother. He took out the old broken watch-case and wondered whether he'd have a real watch of his own. He wriggled and wriggled and watched Father Lysaght. Why did Father James always read his office just at the most interesting times? He looked hopeful as the priest, as if making a dash for the winning post, said: "per omnia sæcula sæculorum." But there was only a look out of the corner of his eye and a smile and he went on again in a steady murmur, his eyes fixed on his breviary. Money or no money, to-morrow would be a great day. On birthdays there was always a surprise, one greater than another, from his mother, and a half-crown tip from his grandfather, and Susan made a cake that nothing, even from Andrews', could equal. Was the surprise going to be a fishing rod this time? There were signs that it was, but there was no knowing.

"Stop! stop! Draw up th' old mare I'm telling you, Patsy Dempsey. And I wanting to speak to his reverence,

It's a regular racer old Saturday's turning into," an elderly man with a scraggy grey beard shouted, rushing out from the Devoy farmyard.

"Amn't I pulling her up as fast as I can, Mr. Devoy," Dempsey said, with a show of restraining the only too willing horse.

"It's ginger you put under her tail out of respect of his reverence, no doubt," Devoy said sarcastically.

"It isn't then. It's the nature of the beast to have great speed in her," Dempsey said, aggrieved.

Father Lysaght took a verse of a psalm in a flying leap, sighed, arranged a marker and shut his book with a sigh.

"Sure I wouldn't be interrupting your reverence for all the world in the blessed office, but there's a trifle of business that I wanted to talk to you about," Devoy said, lowering his tone. "It's here in my inside pocket this minute—a matter of six hundred and sixty-five pound all in notes, the price of the bullocks I sold for Father Pat this morning, not counting the eight pounds fifteen I gave back in luck penny. I used always hand him anything of the kind and he passing home of an evening, but sure to-night," he shook his head sadly, "it's a sight better occupied he is elsewhere I hope—though it is a good price, sorra better in the market. And if he liked the money itself, it was the honour and glory of being the top price that warmed him most. Wasn't he a Daly first and last when all is said? His grandfather, the story goes——"

"That's all right, Mr. Devoy," Father Lysaght interrupted hastily. "If you take it to the National Bank and lodge it to his account I'd be obliged."

"Whatever you say is law, Father James, and you having the management of things with the mother for the boy there, I'm told," Devoy said, grasping the rail of the car firmly, the light of gossip in his eyes. "It's the black night this'll be for the parish of Drisheen, and the best priest that ever

reigned over it gone to his reward. 'Tis he that could speak comfort to the dying, or warn a young girl without hurting her feelings, and come down with a heavy hand on the drink without taking the bread altogether out of the mouths of the publicans—moderation he preached, and it's a great thing, glory be to God, for them that have the courage for it. And if he met a young couple coming along the road in decency 'tis he could look the other way as well as another. And no woman that ever handled a rolling pin had a lighter hand for the money. The grass of four bullocks he had off me, and when the good times came, what with the reduction in the Court and the Arrears Act and the like that your grandfather, Mister Jim, and more power to him for it, helped to squeeze out of the grasping English, I proffered him the grass of another bullock. 'No, Tom,' he said. 'Four is my right and four I'll have,' he said, 'and not a beast more. And I'll see with my own eyes that you put 'em on the best grass too,' he said, with that in his eye that you never knew whether it was serious he was or joking. As if it wouldn't be a sin past forgiving not to give the best grass to the stores he chose that'd put on fat on thistles, not to say what they did on the best grass I could give 'em. Take no less than such and such, Tom, he'd say, never in his life bothering to see a beast of his sold. And sure enough I'd get it. But he was the devil and all, God forgive me for swearing before your reverence, to please, and he buying the stores. He always left the price to me, but baste after baste he'd cast for this point or that that another man in the fair couldn't see. Your grandfather has a bit of the same gift, Mister Jim, but he was never in the same street as Father Pat. His only weak point was politics, but sure your grandfather shone there bright enough for both of 'em. A great man he was, God rest his soul this night. Sure it'd be easier to grow a score o' bishops than to find his like again for Drisheen parish."

"I have five rabbits in the well of the car," Jim said proudly.

For once Father Lysaght welcomed the rabbits and said with a sigh of relief: "We've a lot to do and must be hurrying on. Many thanks, Mr. Devoy."

"You haven't then?" Devoy said, his mouth wide open, volubility gone in astonishment.

"Oh, but I have. Black and white. Would you like to see them?"

"Good-bye, Mr. Devoy. Drive on, Dempsey," Father Lysaght said firmly.

"Beauties they are sure enough," Devoy said, lifting the well board. "God grant it's the same eye for a baste you'll have as your granduncle."

The horse moved off. Devoy replaced the well-board reluctantly, and continued to hang on to the car, gasping as he ran:

"I'm off this minute to lodge that money with Mr. Murphy—it's after hours but he'll take it from me. It's uneasy the dead might rest to-night and he thinking it was knocking about in any loose place."

Father Lysaght waved a hand, said "thanks" and busied himself again with his breviary.

Jim looked behind, watched Devoy lumbering off, and wondered how any man could carry so much money in his breast pocket. If it was Father Pat's, did any of it belong to him? Imagine him not knowing before that Father Pat was such a great man—he seemed such a shabby old man. . . .

The country here was new to him and he looked about with interest. Mooncon mountain seemed to have two peaks instead of one; and he could recognize the Bit of Dawlish beyond Tubber, but they were the only familiar objects. He leant back, his elbow on the well board, and grew pink with excitement. Devoy hadn't fitted in the board properly,

and through the open space in front the noses of several rabbits peeped out.

He was thrilled by their cool touch on his fingers.

At the top of Culleen hill Dempsey whispered :

“Look behind you and you’ll see Dalychouse—the grey house in the trees far away on your left.”

“I see it, I see it,” Jim whispered excitedly. “I never saw it before.”

“Imagine that now,” Dempsey said, “and beyond there in front of you on your left—you see them trees? That’s Lissyfad, your grandfather, Colonel Levin’s place.”

Jim frowned. “I’ve no grandfather but grandfather Daly,” he said hotly.

“Do you hear that now—and him Colonel of the milesha too,” Dempsey said, with a pious look at the sky.

“He’s an Orange dog and an English traitor,” Jim said, his anger betraying him into a loud tone.

“There you are—talking again. And who are you giving this beautiful character to?” Father Lysaght said, looking up with a smile.

“My mother’s father,” Jim said doggedly, but a little abashed.

The priest frowned. “Your grandfather, you mean. For shame. What would your mother say?”

“Susan Roche says he is.”

“Susan Roche says more than her prayers. When I’ve finished Lauds I’ll give you a bit of my tongue for this, and perhaps a thrashing.”

Jim smiled composedly as the priest resumed his reading. Long experience had taught him that Father Lysaght was never so harmless as when he threatened, and as for thrashing—he looked at Dempsey to share the joke. But Dempsey had even a better one. He was holding up, a biscuit, pointing at the rabbits and making a pretence of eating with his lips. Jim smiled intelligently, took the biscuit, and,

before the rabbits had nibbled it all, was in front of the priest's house at Drisheen.

"Here we are at last," Father Lysaght said with a final sign of the cross, jumping briskly on to the road.

"What a shabby place. Is that my uncle Pat's house?" Jim said, disgusted.

"It's a battered shell with a gold kernel," Father Lysaght said drily. "Come along in."

"Oh," Jim said, looking for some new wonder. "You'll pick some dandelions, won't you, while we're inside," he whispered to Dempsey.

"It isn't far I'll have to go to look for 'em," Dempsey said, nodding towards the neglected garden which, choked with rank grass and weeds, fronted the long, low, single-storied, slated house. A low wall surmounted by an iron railing surrounded the narrow strip of garden. The plaster on the garden wall and on the front wall of the house had peeled off in irregular patches. The iron railings had corroded till many of the bars had fallen asunder. The small entrance gate, both hinges rotted away, stood permanently open. There was no trace of the gravelled path from the gate to the door, beyond a less dense growth of grass and a denser growth of weeds slightly trodden down. Hollyhocks, nettles, roses, dandelions, docks and immense tree lupins flowered in tangled masses. The door and windows were askew from rotting posts and lintels. The paint had either peeled off or had been washed away to the priming. One whole sash had been replaced by an outhouse door. Broken panes had either been left untouched or had been repaired with pieces of brown cardboard. The door knocker, its hinge gone, was fastened with a piece of bent wire. The limestone doorstep was spotlessly clean; and on it was a beautiful Persian cat, on his back, his head between his fore paws, gently licking his belly. He stood up as Father Lysaght approached, arched his back, and sidled his long

body luxuriously, from his ear to the tip of his tail, against the priest's trousers.

As the priest was about to knock the sound of sobbing and of heavy footsteps came from the hall. The door opened with a grating noise, and Julia Feeney, half hidden behind it, her apron to her eyes, said tearfully :

"Sure I saw ye coming from the window of the kitchen, and I making a cup o' tea for myself to drown my grief. Och, Father James, asthore, and is it young Mister Jim Daly you have with you that he'd give his heart's blood for? And where's his own brother, Mr. Pierce, and he not with ye this day? Ochone, ochone o, sure it's crying him within in the Cathedral at Lisgeela he must be, and he not with ye. At one o'clock and I lifting the praties off the fire Bessy Neil came to me with the news, bringing it hot foot from Lisgeela as fast as the ass could carry her. Turned into a stone I was, with the pot in my hand, and the blood froze in me, till the tears came, and then my hand went limp and the pot and the blessed spuds scattered themselves trawn-ahela everywhere about the floor. Sorra such tears Bessy says she ever seen since she waked her own mother. And wasn't he father and mother to me, the best and the most generous and the most flahool master that ever drew breath. Them that'd say he wasn't let 'em say it to my face," she added, angrily, lowering her apron, and throwing out her chest.

"No one says it," Father Lysaght said mildly. "Jim and I have come to look over his papers—he may have left some directions that may have to be attended to at once."

"Sure you're heartily welcome, Father James. 'Tis you always understood the good heart he had, and his own blood is doubly welcome. But if it was some of them others came, even if they wore a belly-band itself, I take my solemn davy it's to slam the door in their face I would as sure as my name is Julia Feeney."

"Now, now, Julia, none of that," Father Lysaght said quietly.

"Oh, I'll listen to you, Father James, none readier, both as a friend of the dead and a good priest of God, but as to what I'll do or will not do I'll follow my own counsel in that."

"You're in his house, and you won't be—what he never was—rude to anyone high or low."

"Indeed and I wouldn't demean myself so far," she cried, hesitating. "And you're right there, he wouldn't like it. But a remark or two by the way of no harm?"

"Not even a remark," he said firmly, his lips twitching a little.

"It's a hard and bitter penance you're putting on me," she said with a deep sigh. "But in memory of the dead I promise you to abide by it. But there's no bar, thanks be to God, to chanting the praises of the dead and letting the world know his virtues."

She opened the door wide to allow the priest and Jim to enter. "There's that thief of a cat," she said, with a catch in her voice, "waiting him on the doorstep and he never to cross it again unless he walks, which God forbid—though sorra afeard even of his ghost I'd be. It's many a tit-bit he threw you, Prince agra," she added resolutely, resting a hand on her hip, and facing Father Lysaght unblinkingly. "The one great failing of the dead was that he was so wasteful and extravagant of the food. Not that he'd eat much himself, for 'tis he was the dainty feeder. 'Put on that saddle of mutton for the dinner to-day,' he'd say to me. 'Wouldn't a couple of chops off the loin be enough for you, there being no company?' I'd say—for it's few were good enough for him and he couldn't abide riff-raff. 'No,' he'd say. 'Roast the saddle, Julia, and we'll have the loin to-morrow unless you think the piece of beef more tasty?' And not even by dint of roasting or boiling a joint a day could I get through all that he'd order in. Just a pick he'd take off

it, and a plateen full for Prince and then 'twould be 'Take it away, Julia, and don't let me see it again.' It's to bury it in the garden I used so as not to let on to the neighbours the power of food we misused. It was his one and only sin and I hope God won't be hard on him for it."

She faltered a little and her half-defiant look softened and became worried. Father Lysaght held out his hand. She looked at his sympathetic face unsteadily for a moment, wiped her hands on her apron, took his hand, knelt and kissed it twice. He helped her up.

"You mean that God is big enough to overlook a trifle?" she said brokenly, smiling through her tears.

"I do," he said firmly.

"Then heaven *is* his bed to-night," she said, with a sigh of relief. "But what's on me at all, at all, to be keeping your reverence and Mister Jim standing on the doorstep? It's glad I am that you came, for there's that in the room there," with a mysterious nod towards the door on the left, "that I'd rather ye'd take away with ye and I all alone in the house. There's nothing in any other room that ye need bother yeerselves with. The dining-room is shut up—it was the luck of God the window fell in after the Confirmation and not before it. And there's nothing of any value there but the porringer he used to ate out of and he a child. The rag and bone man wouldn't give five shillings for all that's in his bedroom—a few rags of clothes and an old truckle bed that's as hard as the sky of heaven in a winter wind. And not a stick in any other bedroom except me own, and only a few odds and ends of things in the kitchen. And not a scrap of his papers anywhere except in the room within. Whatever there is is all before ye in there, and nothing locked up. He carried keys about with him, for it was a trick he had of playing his fingers on them. And it's to go and get ye both a cup of tea now I will—by dint of contriving I can get it easy for ye."

Father Lysaght made no effort to keep her, but he watched her as she clattered down the flagged hall in her heavy shoes, her head bent forward.

"What a funny old woman," Jim said, half awed. "And the whole world knowing that my uncle near starved himself."

"You've a lot to learn, my boy," the priest said.

"Everything is bare and mean, but she keeps it as clean as a new pin," Jim said, with a look round the spotless flags, the highly burnished brass knobs to doors that somehow looked clean and polished though half the paint had peeled off, and the absurd white, lime-washed dado on a faded and worn red wall paper.

"More than that," the priest said, interested.

"She was very fond of him," Jim said thoughtfully.

"That's better."

"And she's a brick to stand up for him like that."

The priest smiled, said nothing, but ran his fingers through the boy's hair.

"Let us go in," Jim said eagerly.

"We must settle about Julia Feeney first," the priest said, watching him. "I'm going to tell her a lie."

"You wouldn't do that, Father James—it wouldn't be fair to her," Jim said indignantly, firing up.

"I prefer your way to George Washington's," the priest said with a chuckle. "We were always good friends, Jim, but we're going to be better. You may put a score of rabbits in the well of the car if you like. But I'm going to tell Julia Feeney that lie all the same."

Still frowning Jim's face took on a puzzled, inquiring look.

"It's this way," the priest said calmly. "Father Pat didn't remember her in his will—I don't believe she has a penny piece—and I'm going to tell her that he did."

"Oh," Jim said, his face clearing. "I understand," he added, with a smile.

"Not much—a few pounds down, and enough to keep her year by year. You agree? It all comes out of your money."

"You bet," Jim said enthusiastically. "There's enough I suppose?" he added, with a shade of regret for toppling dreams.

"Heaps," Father Lysaght said emphatically. "You could give it to her yourself, of course—but it would never be the same thing to her."

Jim thought this over for a few seconds and then said an eager, "I see."

"We must consult your mother, of course, but she's sure to agree."

"Sure to—my mother sees everything at once," Jim said confidently.

The priest patted his shoulder, took away his hand abruptly, said harshly: "Let's go in now," and led the way into the sitting room.

A roughly made roll top desk stood in a corner by the front window, almost filling the space between the window and the empty grate. At the other side of the grate was a rickety mahogany bookcase, reaching from the floor to the low ceiling, but in two of the shelves only were there any books. A glass door, one pane patched with cardboard, led to a broken-down greenhouse of which hardly any of the glass remained. Opposite the bookcase was a cupboard let into the wall. A cheap Brussels carpet, old and patched and darned, covered the floor. The chenille table cover on the small square table was neatly patched with stuff evidently cut off the ends of the cloth itself. The flimsy Nottingham lace curtains hanging from dejected looking bamboo poles over the window and the greenhouse door were darned till little of the original lace remained. The shiny, horse-hair armchair standing between the table and the empty grate and three forlorn chairs in a row along the

opposite wall were patched with black cloth. The patches on the armchair had themselves been darned. The burnished fire irons had lost all useful parts. An oleograph of Pope Leo XIII.—a calendar advertisement, five years old, of a firm of Catholic educational publishers—was tacked over the mantelpiece. On the opposite wall was a farmyard scene of Morland's, shiny and German, emblazoned with the Christmas compliments of Mallon and Son, grocers, Hill Street, Lisgeela. The wall paper, repaired in a variety of colours, was faded to an indistinguishable pattern which left a doubt as to what was damp and what was pattern. A pair of slippers lay against the broken bar of the fender. A copy of the *Lisgeela Weekly News* was on the table, unopened, beside a paraffin lamp trimmed for lighting.

"Julia Feeney has just managed to keep the place from falling to bits," Father Lysaght said, after a quick glance round the room. "If you look through the cupboard, Jim, I'll see what's in the desk."

He drew a chair in front of it, sat down, and rolled back the unlocked top.

"There's nothing in the cupboard but three big tins of Jacobs' biscuits and a half pound tobacco box," Jim called out, disappointed.

"Have you looked inside 'em?"

"No."

"Well, do."

"Oh," Jim shouted. "Do come here, Father James. Half-crowns and two-shilling pieces and shillings and six-pences—stacks and stacks of 'em. The biscuit tin is so heavy I'm afraid to try and lift it out."

"What's in the other tins?" Father Lysaght asked, without looking round.

"Silver in one—chock full—and the other's about half full of coppers. And the tobacco box—oh, if it isn't packed with sovereigns and half-sovereigns."

"Put the lids on, shut the cupboard and come here and help me," Father Lysaght said in a matter of fact tone that chilled Jim's growing spirit of adventure. It was more exciting than playing at Red Indians or Protestants, and here was Father James taking it coolly and half spoiling everything.

"There's nothing else *in* the cupboard," Jim said mysteriously, in a sort of whispered shout, "but if we lifted up the boards we *might* get something underneath."

"Shut the door, and come here," the priest said impatiently, as he went on sorting papers.

Jim, in sheer disgust, felt an inclination to slam the cupboard door—Father James wasn't playing the game. A glance at the greenhouse door restrained him. Out there a robber or a highwayman or a pirate might be crouching with ears pricked. He shut the door of the cupboard gently, made a cabalistic sign with his finger to the back of the priest's bent head, and, with carefully chosen steps, walked on tiptoe towards the desk. Still on tiptoe, he peered, his hand shading his eyes, over Father Lysaght's shoulder. Pshaw, no treasure there—only a confused mass of papers. Yet, were these cheques and notes?

"Lord, but he was a queer man," the priest said, breaking the spell. "Just thrown in anyhow and forgotten. I'll have to take out all these drawers," pulling out two pink slips from behind a drawer. "Hundreds and hundreds of pounds in uncashed cheques and dividend warrants—several years old, some of them—just as if he got tired of the game, or got bored—everywhere I stick in my hand I find a bundle of greasy notes; and securities thrown in anyhow. But I can't find a list of securities or a bank book or account book anywhere. Have a look through the bookcase, Jim, and see if you can find anything—any account book or copybook or paper with writing in it."

"I'm sure it's under the boards you'd find 'em," Jim said eagerly.

“What is the boy thinking of?” the priest said, leaning back in his chair and looking at Jim with a weary smile. “Hidden treasure, eh?” pinching his ear. He waved his hand over the desk and added seriously, “And all this lying about for anyone who cared to lift the lid. Run and look through the bookcase like a good boy, or we’ll be here all night and I’ve a lot to do—it’s twenty past six.” With a sigh, and unconvinced, Jim went at once, while the priest bent again to the sorting of cheques and dividend warrants, notes and securities.

“‘Diseases of Cattle’ is no good, I suppose?” Jim called out.

“No.”

“Nor ‘All about the Horse?’”

“Only books in handwriting or with written figures,” the priest said with a patient smile.

“Oh,” Jim said, turning over rapidly, “‘Clover as a Fattener’; ‘The Complete Farrier’; a devotional book by St. Francis Liguori; ‘The Georgics’; Gury’s ‘Casus Conscientiæ’; Crabbe’s Poems; ‘The Absentee’; three volumes of the Roman Breviary; ‘Castle Rackrent’; ‘Speeches from the Dock’; ‘The Treatment and Cure of Murrain’; ‘The Parents’ Assistant’; ‘Irish Land Laws’; ‘Hell opened to Christians’; ‘The Key of Heaven’; ‘Sermons by Vicesimus Knox’; ‘Bleak House’; ‘The History of the Daly Family from the Creation of Adam, with Frequent Reference to and Quotations from Original and Authentic Documents and Many Notes and Appendices.’”

“Say, Father James,” he shouted. “Here’s a find—a History of the Dalys.”

“Oh, that!”

Jim revenged the priest’s indifference by banging Sidney Smith’s complete works with the “Curiosities of Literature.”

“There’s only a ‘Ready Reckoner’ and ‘The Spiritual

Exercises of St. Ignatius' and a bundle tied with string left," he said petulantly.

"Untie it then."

He cut the string with his pen-knife, dropped the pen-knife and string on the floor, and shouted excitedly :

"Here they are !—The Reverend Patrick Aloysius Daly—I never knew he had that frump of a name—in account with the National Bank, Drisheen Chapel Accounts, and two other little pass-books with writing and figures in them."

"That's all right then," Father Lysaght said, with a calmness that annoyed Jim and damped his elation a little. Father James was a good sort but he was getting old—forty if he was a day. It wasn't his fault, perhaps, that he wasn't any good at a game like this. Now his mother—she always said and did the right thing—and in the very rightest kind of a way.

Father Lysaght took the books, turned them over rapidly one by one, said "Yes, yes," drew a notebook and pencil out of his pocket, and, bent over the desk, began a more detailed examination of the books, scribbled occasionally in his notebook, and seemed to forget that there was anyone else in the room. Jim fidgeted from foot to foot, pulled the tail of the cat, yawned, tried to open the greenhouse door but found it was nailed up, thought of the rabbits, and was eyeing the cupboard door irresolutely and gathering courage to have another look at the buried treasure—wasn't it all the same as buried in there in the dark?—when there was a knock, and Julia Feeney, bearing a tray, entered the room.

"With the help of Mrs. Costigan, a real laughy woman she is, above at the public-house in front of the chapel gate, I fixed up the tea grand," she said proudly, putting down the tray on the table. "But the eggs is our own, and the bit of butter, as luck'd have it, Mrs. Devoy sent up only yesterday."

"Is there a Gladstone bag or an empty trunk in the

house? Or a clean sack would do. And some string or rope and a piece of sealing-wax?" Father Lysaght asked, without looking up.

"I've some sealing-wax in my pocket," Jim said quickly, scenting fresh excitement.

"There was my own box," Julia Feeney said, fingering her apron thoughtfully, "but sure I broke it up long ago for kindling the fire with, and there's his trunk with the cow-hide cover on it as good as new that he had in Maynooth with him, but I use that for a chest of drawers to keep his few things in; and there's the carpet bag that he used to take to the retraits with him and into Lisgeela if ever he slept there for a couple of nights during Holy Week, but it was seldom he did it—that's empty. And there's string enough and to spare—put by off an odd parcel and the like, and it's little of it Whitey'll need any more. But what in the world would you be wanting them for, Father James?"

"To take away some papers and the money to the bank," he said directly.

"I'll run and get the bag," she said gladly. "Sure every time I used to look at them cake tins in the cupboard—it's mass offerings and baptisms and the like they are—it's to cry my eyes out I used, and him not getting an ounce or a drop of comfort out of 'em—a ton weight on his heart the money was, squeezing the good nature out of him."

"I can't see that he owes a penny," Father Lysaght said when she left the room. "And the church account owes him about twenty pounds. There's roughly about thirty-seven thousand pounds worth of securities, averaging five per cent. or a little over—about forty thousand altogether with what's piled up on the desk here and his bank balance and what Devoy has—and your find," he added with a smile. "About two thousand a year."

"Is that as much as the Scovells have?" Jim asked, interested.

The priest stood up, yawned, looked at the boy whimsically and said, "Perhaps your grandfather was right, and it might be better to pitch it all into the Oweybeg."

"What is the sealing-wax for? Is it to seal it all up in the bag?" Jim said, ignoring irrelevancies.

"We must make some pretence of taking tea, I suppose, seeing that she's gone to all this trouble about it," the priest said with a smile at the japanned tray which had a bottle and a recommendation to drink Power's whisky painted in bright colours in the centre. "But we can't manage these eggs after all the cake we've eaten at Scarty."

"Oh," Jim said, a little perturbed. "If you don't mind, Father James, I think I could manage to eat an egg or two."

6.

Mrs. Scovell was worried. Her frequent laughter had a trick of breaking off suddenly; and now there was a long pause in her brisk talk while she pricked her ears to listen. Durkan, the butler, had ridden into Lisgeela on his bicycle, and had promised to be back at seven, for dinner at a quarter past eight. It was twenty-seven minutes past eight and he hadn't come—at least he hadn't announced dinner. She wouldn't have worried but it was Mr. Brownlow's first visit, his first dinner, too, for he had only arrived before tea. He seemed quite nice and simple, but being English and official, he was sure to be particular. She had herself heard Mr. Dasent, the Chief Secretary, say that his private secretary ran the Lodge, and there everything was well done. Of course, Mr. Brownlow would say nothing, no matter how wrong things went; but her brother Hamilton was sure to make remarks—the Pakenhams took a pride in the directness of their remarks, especially their remarks about what they called the Southern Irish. Thank God, she no longer lived in Antrim, much as Hamilton thought

of Ulster. And Lord Drumbeg? She shivered a little. Right or wrong, the Scovells were not important enough to escape his censure. With the governess to dinner, too!

Miss Fraser, accustomed to the Bohemian ways of Dublin, wouldn't mind, and there was only Mr. Lentaigne outside the house-party. He was a neighbour and would understand. Happily it was a beautiful evening, and there had been no difficulty in inducing everyone out on the west terrace to admire the sunset. But if Durkan wasn't at his post by half past, she'd trust Conroy—he'd do very well with Betty's help. It wasn't as if it was a large party.

"Doesn't it recall angels looking out of the gold bar of heaven, Mr. Brownlow?" Miss Grayson, the English governess, said sentimentally.

"Not half bad—splendid," Brownlow said with difficulty, working himself up to enthusiasm.

"Mr. Brownlow has used up all the jewels and lots of his poetry with me," Miss Fraser said maliciously. "It's just a June sunset over Mooncon and there's nothing more to be said."

"We've far finer sunsets in Antrim. You should see 'em from my place at Ballywilliam," Hamilton Pakenham said.

"Too Orange for me," Miss Fraser said sweetly. "Look at those red golds and greens and amethysts—not a tinge of yellow anywhere."

"Not in it with an Antrim sunset," Pakenham said stolidly.

"I'm getting damn peckish, Theo," Derek Scovell, large and fat, his blue eyes sparkling in a ruddy, clean-shaven face, said pleasantly, in an undertone to his wife.

"It's Durkan," she said in a hoarse whisper.

"What! Not——" he paused, with a humorous tilt of his eyebrows.

"I hope to goodness, not," she said in sudden distress, a

smile struggling with a tear, her hands falling limply by her sides. "No, I'm sure it's only a puncture or something. He knew there was a dinner on," she added pleadingly, crimson mounting to the gold of her hair.

"Better order up dinner without him—and don't worry, old girl," he said with a shrug, resting his hand for a moment on her shoulder.

"Dinner is served, milady," Durkan said in a carefully measured tone, as if in stern reproof of the caress.

"How could you, Durkan?" she said reproachfully. The "milady" instead of "ma'am" didn't always make him quite impossible, but it was a danger signal.

"I assure you, milady, I amn't," he said carefully. "I'm as steady as a judge or as the master there himself."

She was very much distressed. Her tall, slender figure quivered and her lips trembled pitifully. He was all right, but he must be humoured. She hoped Drumbeg was out of hearing. What would Hamilton say, and Mr. Brownlow think? Anyhow, to prevent worse happening she must face it.

"What was it then?" she said cheerfully, bracing herself.

"It was all on the head of Father Pat Daly, milady. The time slipt past me, and I within in the snuggerly at Mallon's with a few of the neighbours and Mrs. Mallon herself leaning across the bar, with her elbows on the counter, full of the news. 'Tis the fine-looking woman she is yet, God bless her, and you too, milady. It wasn't anything extra in the way of drink we had beyond a glass or two—but one person after another kept coming in with a fresh item. Struck sudden he was in front of the Presbytery door. 'I'm dying,' he cried, and out rushed the bishop and the priests that were gathered for the conference. Head and feet they lifted him in on the conference table, and they had only just time to clap the holy oils on him when he gave up the ghost crying out, 'I call ye all

to witness that I leave everything I have or might be having in the way of worldly wealth to my own grand-nephew, Jim Daly of Scarty.'

"They say how the bishop and a scattering of the priests went tearing mad at getting none of it. But sorra ha'penny they'll touch, for the dying word of a priest is more binding than a book oath, Mrs. Mallon says. There's a divarsity of opinion about how much he left, but there's no doubt that there was ten thousand pounds found hidden away under the seat of the trap. Father James Lysaght found it with his own hands. What the whole amount is, nobody knows. Father Griffin swore to Mrs. Mallon that it was over thirty thousand. Up and up it's been going since, till, at half-past seven, Tim Davis put it at not a penny less than a hundred thousand—and I wouldn't be a bit surprised with all that happened after. Just at that minute Mrs. Mallon asked me by the way of no harm if we were going to have any dinner at all at Dalyhouse to-night. I lepped, milady, and it's God's truth that I laid down the glass that I was lifting to my lips and left it there on the counter, and it not half empty, and whipped off on my bicycle."

"The dinner is being spoilt," Mrs. Scovell said feebly.

"Sorra bit of it, milady. They're busy in the kitchen over the news that I gave 'em a glimpse of on my way through; and Mrs. Lacy timed anything that might be spoilt for a quarter to nine, through her own good nature, and knowing my ways, and I not in at seven."

"Thank God, the dinner's safe," said Scovell with a sigh of relief.

"Remember I've had no tea, Theodora," Hamilton Pakenham said icily, with a disapproving glance at husband and wife and butler.

"There's one thing more, milady," Durkan said imperturbably. "As I whipped past the National Bank,

there was Fagan's car just drawn up, and Dempsey the driver on the dickey, and Father James Lysaght and young Jim Daly together on one side, and the other side piled as high as my head with bags and boxes with a rug thrown over 'em. And Father Lysaght knocked and Mr. Murphy the manager himself came down, and they colloqued together awhile on the doorstep, and then themselves and Dempsey lifted the things in, a biscuit tin alone being that heavy that Dempsey near sank into the pavement under it. Sure 'twas easily known 'twas gold was in it. Three of them there were and a carpet bag, only that was lighter, full o' paper money it was no doubt."

"And you were whipping by all the time?" Scovell said drily.

"No, it was standing I was, your honour, leaning on my bicycle, waiting to see if I couldn't get in a word afterwards with Dempsey. The dinner is served, ma'am," he wound up, suddenly and sternly.

"He's quite all right now, Derek," Mrs. Scovell whispered joyfully.

"You mustn't think, Brownlow, that a scene like that could occur in my part of Ireland," Pakenham said with emphasis, as they made their way along the terrace to a French window opening into the dining-room. "In the North, I assure you, we don't gossip with our servants in front of our guests."

"It was extremely interesting," Brownlow said hurriedly.

"And so characteristic," Miss Grayson said gushingly. "Not that I ever saw it happen before, but it strikes exactly the right note of colour, with the accent, and the sunset and things—just what one would have expected."

"It's the slackness of the Southern Irish—even the Protestants have it. Theodora used to be as hard as nails, but now——" Pakenham shrugged his shoulders, adding, "it's the climate I suppose."

"He's explaining how the Northern Catholics are such fine fellows," Miss Fraser laughed.

"That's different," Pakenham said hastily.

"The Ulster climate is a purely Protestant virtue," Lentaigne, a Vandyke bearded man of thirty, said mockingly, taking his seat at the round table. "It stiffens Orange backs, but leaves the Catholics weak-kneed."

"It's race in Ulster," Pakenham said stubbornly.

"Blood—always blood," Drumbeg said.

"More than half of the Ulster Orangemen are Celts," Lentaigne said drily.

"We can't forget that we're a conquering race," Pakenham said loftily.

"Who did you conquer?" asked Miss Fraser.

"The Irish," Pakenham said.

"They seem to have a kick in them still—nine lives like a cat, I suppose," Miss Fraser said, with girlish simplicity. "I'm shockingly ignorant of history, but I read somewhere of James Stuart running away, some broken treaty or another, and the desertion of an unarmed peasantry by their leaders—the Tirconnells, the——"

Drumbeg, at Mrs. Scovell's right, was perceptibly stiffening.

"The Drumbegs always found themselves on the winning side, if it was sufficiently respectable," Lentaigne interrupted with a laugh. "But Drumbeg dislikes to be reminded that his fathers were once Loyalists—I beg his pardon—rebels, I mean. The king is dead, long live the king."

Drumbeg was blushing to the roots of his sensitive red hair. He drew himself up to his full height, the top of Mrs. Scovell's delicate pink ear, offended dignity in his thin pursed lips and sharp nose, and in his glazed, grey-brown eyes.

"I never let ancient history interfere with my dinner,"

Derek Scovell said pleasantly. "What matter if a Drum-beg was once or twice attainted and thought better of it. With all Pakenham's loyalty his grandfather worked against the Union, and said some nasty things of England and Farmer George, and Pitt; and his father threatened to fling the poor old Queen's crown into the Boyne if the Irish Church Bill was passed. She's still on the throne, God bless her, and Hamilton thinks she's a good Orangeman because the Home Rule Bill was defeated. This is excellent salmon—we'll whip that pool in the glen again to-morrow, Drum-beg. Care to come Brownlow? I can give you a rod. Lentaigne is nibbling at Home Rule," he continued amicably, "though his family has one of the rottenest tar-and-feather records in the whole country. They scare children to bed about here, Brownlow, with tales of what his great-grandfather—'The Bloody Butcher' he's called—did in the rebellion of '98."

"All of 'em true too, very likely," Lentaigne said equably.

"Mine was a patriot then," Scovell went on. "Yes, Durkan, a little more salmon—the fat part. The mob used to take the horses from his coach and drag it, cheering, through the streets of Dublin. He was nearly broke, and he sold his vote and his country to Castlereagh, for twenty-five thousand. He preferred all cash to part payment in a peerage. 'Twas a lot of ready money to have all at once in those days, and it cured his extravagance. He gave up politics after that—the mob pelted him home for five miles along the Kildare Road. But where am I, Theo? I seem to have lost the point somewhere."

"What matter," his wife said cheerfully, Durkan's masterly control of himself and of the dinner having completely restored her spirits.

"You are explaining Ireland to Mr. Brownlow," Miss Fraser said ironically.

"Anyhow the money was still at Tullyfin in my grandfather's time. He took a mortgage with it on the Daly-house property and——"

"Did the Dalys in the eye," Lentaigne suggested smoothly.

Scovell laughed heartily. "All that's as dead as the Butcher Lentaigne," he said with a grin, "and I have Dalyhouse."

"Old Pierce the peasant reminds you of it occasionally," Lentaigne said.

"The dear old peasant patriot, with the face and grace of a duke," Miss Grayson murmured.

"He does, damn him," Scovell said moodily.

"Derek!" said Mrs. Scovell with affectionate reproach.

"Who wouldn't curse an old meddlesome peasant that robbed one of two years' rent?" Scovell said, holding up his hands appealingly. "I had my tenants well in hand till that damned old Fenian put in his oar and lost me twenty thousand."

His face brightened again. "But, thank God, those days are gone. The Parnell split has broken the Nationalists to bits, and a landlord can breathe freely again—for my time at least. But speaking of political records, I have the cleanest of any of you. My family helped to make the Union, and the Union made them. So naturally, I'm a Unionist—for the rest I try to live and let live."

"Even Pierce Daly?" Lentaigne smiled.

"I'd hang all agitators on the nearest tree," Scovell said angrily. "What's the Castle up to, Brownlow, leaving people like him at large?"

Brownlow's thin lips smiled tolerantly, and his brown eyes showed a faint interest.

"I agree with you, Scovell, that the Irish question has petered out in the Divorce Court—'Kilt' but, perhaps, not 'Kilt dead,' in one of the expressive phrases I've added

to my store, since I've come amongst you. Now we wish to kill it dead, to stamp it out once for all. While the Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites are squabbling among themselves we come in with a constructive policy."

"Blessed word," Lentaigne murmured.

"Repression has been tried," Brownlow continued unmoved, "not quite successfully, I'm afraid—not permanently successfully, anyhow. In the present propitious lull we have given a sudden swing to the pendulum, and are trying kindness—putting the blind eye to the telescope for minor political crimes, building light railways, piers, harbours and things of that kind, encouraging small industries. A whole host of things."

"The Kicks and Doles policy," Lentaigne said.

"Not Doles," Brownlow said hastily. "Constructive help—helping the people to help themselves. The Irish are a sentimental people, and they're sure to respond to kindness."

"They have beautiful manners," Miss Grayson said.

"Kick an angry woman black and blue, till she thoroughly hates you, then give her a chuck under the chin and a ha'penny bun, and she'll lick your hand with gratitude," Miss Fraser said pensively.

"Once you take your heel off their necks, you'll have the devil to pay," Pakenham said vehemently.

"Quite so, quite so," said Drumbeg with the timid aggressiveness of a flurried rabbit.

"Railways won't do any harm," Scovell said meditatively. "A free grant, I suppose?"

Brownlow nodded.

"That's all to the good," Scovell said approvingly. "It'll bring money into the country and do good to all of us. And I don't want the Government to be too hard on the people—but the landlords must be protected. Put down the agitators, and the people will be as quiet as

lambs. It's a disgrace to any Government to leave that old ruffian Pierce Daly loose at my very gate."

"Stand up for your cousin, Drumbeg," Lentaigne said maliciously. "Old Pierce is a relative of yours."

"I don't know him," Drumbeg said stiffly.

"His mother and your grandmother were first cousins."

"I don't know him," Drumbeg repeated icily.

"There!" Scovell said, with triumph, addressing Brownlow. "You see the sort Daly must be, when Drumbeg, who's his cousin, won't acknowledge him—a rebel with only a hundred acres of freehold, and the Government are afraid to lay a hand on him."

"How can they—if he has done nothing illegal?" Brownlow said coldly.

"As if that ever stood in the way," Scovell said despairingly. "You'll probably be giving him one of your damn soup tickets next—a light railway to his hall door or a pier in his garden. The Oweybeg is nice and convenient. God be with the old times when only landlords had these little attentions. Though we never had much done for *us*, except to have the county road from Lisheen brought up to the Tubber gate. And my father was chairman of the Grand Jury then." He laughed heartily. "He always said it was to convenience my mother he did it, but even then, when the landlords had it all more or less their own way, he was afraid of old Pierce's eye—he disliked driving past Scarty."

"But you say the man is of small importance—a mere peasant," Brownlow objected, slightly bewildered.

Lentaigne laughed and said, "He has twice the power in the county of Scovell and myself."

"It shows how far agitation has gone outside Ulster," Pakenham said gloomily. "Dasent should tighten the rein instead of loosening it. A Coercion Act now, or martial law."

"Perhaps it's because he's Lord Drumbeg's cousin. Naturally the people would take that into account," Miss Fraser said innocently, with a smile at the self-conscious peer, whose freckles stood out like brown islands in a crimson sea.

"This strawberry shortbread is rather dry, Theo," Scovell said, spluttering.

"He's so picturesque—sometimes I think I love him. Lord Byron would have made a hero of him," Miss Grayson lisped. "The old rebel I mean—not Lord Drumbeg," she explained. But the explanation was lost in Derek Scovell's laughter.

"He's no more a peasant, of course, than you or me," Mrs. Scovell said gaily, addressing the table through Brownlow, who, with a quick memory of the little greengrocer's shop in a back street of Wakefield, the board school, a scholarship at Wakefield Grammar School and the glories of a Magdalen Demy, hastily nodded assent. "He married a peasant. Of course, that was the last straw. A dreadful woman, whose brother was in jail as a Fenian, and whose nephew got six months a few years ago for a speech against the Carngarth Evictions—Driscoll is the name. They are tenants of Derek's at Tullyfin. But I must say for the old man, that if we won't know him, he won't know us. Not even Hamilton has half his pride, nor Mr. Lentaigne, who tries to hide his under a thin cloak of Fenianism and rights of the people and all that. He was born in this very house. You can't see the Daly arms very well in this light, in the top panels of the windows, with a Drumbeg quartering too. So Lord Drumbeg is his cousin on both sides. Derek dislikes him partly because he's a Daly. There's not the least use in trying to deny it, Derek, or in making faces at me like that. Of course, Pierce the peasant has been a dreadful nuisance about the land and deserves to be shot for it. But the real reason of

Derek's dislike—see how he blushes—is Arabella Levin. She refused him and married Theobald Daly, old Pierce's son. That was before Derek met me, of course. I've always been dying to meet her, just to find out what he saw in her, but I've never had the chance. Her own people cut her and, of course, everyone else had to follow—the Scovells would have in any case. Though there isn't one in the county to-day who could tell whether they're cutting her or she them. Derek doesn't care for her any more—she only rankles. But he hated Theobald and doesn't love the old father. Nonsense, Derek, it is quite interesting, and it's not time to go. You'd like to have coffee here, Helen?"

"Rather," Miss Fraser smiled.

Brownlow was feeling very much at sea, and ate a *crème de menthe* sweet, which he disliked, in a mental struggle for his bearings. They were all children, these Irish, landlords and tenants, and needed a leading string.

"You'll go to the funeral, of course, Drumbeg?" Lentaigne said.

Drumbeg fidgeted, blushed and said coldly, "I'll send a carriage. I always send a carriage to parish priests' funerals—within a convenient distance. It's due to my position as the leading Catholic in the county."

"Cave," Scovell said cautiously. "That will do, Durkan. You can all go now. Leave the liqueurs and the port on the table. It's all right to discuss politics before the servants," he added when they had left the room, "and even one's family affairs," with a chiding look at his wife, "but religion's never safe. I'd be inclined to send a carriage myself but I'd be afraid of old Pierce—as likely as not he'd kick it out of the funeral. Father Pat was a decent old man. He had the grass of two bullocks from me off a farm I have in Drisheen, and there never was a word between us. He didn't meddle in politics."

"He must have been a damned old scoundrel—they all are," Pakenham said warmly. "You'll excuse me, Drumbeg—Irish priests I mean. I know you don't hold a brief for 'em. English priests are different—Unionists and gentlemen, the few of 'em I've met. And this story Durkan told—I don't admire the way you deal with your servants, Theo, but I had to listen. What was it—a hundred thousand pounds ground off the faces of the poor."

"It only grew to that in Mallon's snuggery," Scovell said tolerantly. "And Durkan was pretty sure to round it off—say, twenty thousand. He never spent a penny."

"What a sound Unionist he was," Lentaigne said mockingly. "Why he deserved an Orange crown, Pakenham, to take all that money from Catholic Nationalists, who might otherwise have spent it on agitation."

"There's something in that," Pakenham admitted.

"I think there must have been some exaggeration," Brownlow said, a little eagerly, glad to have an opportunity of disclosing his knowledge of the country. "Even the amount you suggest, Scovell, is impossible. Happily my information is official and beyond question. Some fussy persons made a row about Irish priests not paying income-tax. Dasent consulted—why Lord Drumbeg, I remember it was your bishop here, Dr. Deehan, a most convincing man. I was present, and he made it clear to us that no Irish priests came within the taxable limit. The whole story must have arisen in—what was the excellent epithet?—Mallon's Snuggery." He gave an assured laugh, but a little regretted his triumph in the evident discomfiture of all his listeners.

"Don't be stopping the sun in its course, Lentaigne," Scovell said, purple from the repressing of a choking in his throat. "The port is freezing at your elbow."

Lentaigne said "Oh," as if waking from a dream, and Drumbeg's fish-like eyes twinkled.

"The poor priests! and we all supposed them to have at least the income of carpenters," Miss Fraser said languidly.

"If he left any money it goes to the people at Scarty," Lentaigne said, with a glance at Brownlow, as if begging forgiveness for the assumption.

"Gad, I forgot that," 'Scovell said gloomily. "If old Pierce has the handling of it, he'll only kick up more trouble."

"I'm glad for the boy's sake—he seems nice," Mrs. Scovell said tolerantly. "He'll have a chance of some education."

"They tell me Pierce is bringing him up a Fenian like himself. Education will only make him worse," Scovell said angrily.

The Irish, even the best of them, were an extraordinary people, building all sorts of superstructures on purely imaginary hypotheses, Brownlow thought. "A legacy of nothing won't help him much," he said playfully.

"Nothing could be truer than that," Scovell said solemnly, with an appraising look, as if Brownlow were a museum specimen.

"I always said that Ulstermen are needed at the Castle," Pakenham said with suppressed anger. "Or even a loyal Catholic like you, Drumbeg—I'm not bigoted."

"God bless me—Pakenham isn't weakening on the English connection," Lentaigne said with a horrified expression.

"Dasent is as good as the rest," Scovell said with a laugh. "Orange, or green, or red, or Lentaigne, whatever colour he is—we all treat the priests the same. We mayn't like them—even Drumbeg hasn't a good word for them—but wherever I have a grass farm I give the parish priest his due of bullocks. It pays in the long run. And occasionally you get a bishop like Deehan who's a real trump. Perhaps Dasent didn't make much of a mistake in giving

way to him about the income-tax. No doubt he likes to get a good deal, but he spends it freely, and he's a good friend to the landlords and to England."

"He's not an archbishop yet," Lentaigne said drily. "You've a lot of influence in Rome, Drumbeg?"

"I have the honour of knowing His Holiness, who deigns to discuss spiritual matters with me on occasion," Drumbeg said primly.

"Then no doubt you discussed Deehan—he's a spiritual matter of some weight."

"He's an excellent prelate with a profound belief in the rights of property," Drumbeg said reprovingly.

"He keeps a foot in the other camp for safety," Lentaigne said laughing.

Drumbeg frowned. "Only as a restraining influence I assure you. He convinced me——"

"As he did Dasent about the income-tax," Lentaigne interrupted. "He's able enough. He was a moderate Home Ruler when Gladstone was in. He's a moderate Unionist now. I expect to see him a Republican some day. Do you see much of his priests, Drumbeg?"

"I'm as likely to see my peasants," Drumbeg said, half shrinking, half shuddering. "They are too impossible. When they don't drink they snuff, and few of 'em change their linen."

"Deehan does, I suppose," Lentaigne said coldly.

"Dr. Deehan is a bishop," Drumbeg said with a shrug.

"Then of course he doesn't need to. If you won't meet your priests or the peasantry, how can you call yourself the leading Catholic in the county?"

"I am a Catholic, therefore I am the leading Catholic," Drumbeg lisped with all the patience of an infant teacher.

"You spoke of a Republic, Lentaigne," Brownlow said mildly. "Rather far-fetched, isn't it?"

"Far-fetched but not impossible, if you drive 'em to it," Lentaigne said thoughtfully. "This is a country where we speak of our great-grandfathers as you do of men of your year at the 'Varsity. In England you live in the present. Your past is a record, and a fine one, of a more or less ordered procession of liberty. You beheaded a king and deposed another, but you can look on it all now without passion. What seemed crimes to Royalists and Jacobites are now only landmarks of political change. But the Irish have a sort of timeless memory of England as an ogre, a sort of shameless and unscrupulous tyrant who robbed them of liberty and oppressed them relentlessly. Henry the Eighth, Elizabeth, Cromwell, William of Orange, are merely steps in your political evolution. You forget their crimes, if they were crimes, in the good they did—for England. In Ireland they are murderers and pillagers who have never died. They live on as symbols of England. You progress from Tory to Whig, from Whig to Radical, from Radical to Socialist, in a pleasant kind of see-saw, but deep down in Irish minds you are all still the bloody Cromwellian murderers who bore bleeding children through the streets of Drogheda on pike tip, over two hundred years ago. Your heroes are their devils and their devils are you. Even the good-natured Dasent is a bloody tyrant bearing Greek gifts. I shouldn't be at all surprised to find people who really believed that his light railways were traps in which to maim or kill people," he wound up, with a huge laugh.

"But this is sheer madness," Brownlow gasped.

"It's the normal condition which an English historian who knew anything of psychology would expect to find—has frequently found, in fact—in any subject country not subject to England. In the Italian provinces and Bohemia under Austria, in the Poles under their many masters, in the Christian races under Turkey."

"But, good Lord, to speak of us in the same breath as the Turk," Brownlow said in indignant astonishment.

Lentaigne shrugged his shoulders. "You should hear Pierce Daly," he said with a smile. "He gives you credit for all the vices of the Turk, and adds to them a special brand of hypocrisy of which, he says, he'd be ashamed to accuse the Turk."

"This can't be true?" Brownlow asked, with a helpless look round the table.

"They hate you, right enough," Scovell said with a laugh. "But there isn't much vice in them at the bottom. Keep on dribbling little things to them and they'll keep quiet. Only you must protect the landlords—they're the bulwarks of England."

"If my estates weren't here I'd never come to Ireland—the people are so damnably vulgar and ungrateful." Drum-beg lisped in his piping, shrill voice. "Often I feel ashamed of sharing their religion. Even the priests are savages. I frequently bring over an English chaplain with me to avoid listening to a degradation of our beautiful holy Catholic service."

Pakenham sniffed a little at this, but he controlled his contempt and said vehemently, "Hear that, Brownlow. Drum-beg, one of the best and oldest Catholics, can't stand them. They hate you and they hate us. The only way with them is to keep a heavy heel on their necks. Only an Orangeman can understand an Irishman—Dasent is too sentimental. Gifts are no use. The Irish always snap at the hand that feeds them. Resolute government is what they need, and plenty of it. There's no real lull in their politics—there never is in hate. It will all break out again. I appeal to Lentaigne."

Lentaigne pulled his trim beard, a mocking light in his blue eyes. "It's all hours, and I've to drive six miles. You promised to play for us, Mrs. Scovell, and Miss Fraser to

sing, and we're boring you with fusty politics. What are we to do?"

"The stroke is with you," Miss Fraser said with an encouraging smile.

"Then I'll bore you with another speech," he said with a sigh.

"Hear, hear," she said gaily, "and give it hot to the Orangemen and the English."

"And you were born in Ulster," Pakenham said gloomily.

"But I'm not condemned to die blind," she said with a shrug. "Go on, Mr. Lentaigne," fixing him with her large brown eyes. He looked at her with half-closed lids, and she lowered her eyes quickly.

"I'm a moderate man on a fence, trying to use my eyes," he said, his eyes still on Miss Fraser.

"Indeed," Mrs. Scovell said derisively, with one implication.

"You're seeing from the other side of the fence already," her husband said, thinking of politics.

"I agree with Pakenham that the Parnell split hasn't killed the Home Rule demand—it's about the only thing in which we agree. Little disputes between Parnellites and anti-Parnellites hardly touch the issue. Redmond and Dillon, O'Brien and Tim Healy disagree about means—a mere surface disturbance on a deep sea. These storms in a teacup don't lessen the passionate sense of wrong of Ireland against England, nor the passionate feeling for liberty that has survived a hundred defeats. They may change the form of an organization, pull down one figure-head and exalt another. The bishops fuss about sin and Gladstone about the Nonconformist conscience, but in the long run all England gets out of it is an added reputation—if that were possible—for hypocrisy. It doesn't surprise me in the least that there are people in Ireland who believe that the Government faked the divorce case. All Ireland

in a few years will believe that England killed Parnell. You break a whip in one man's hand and sow a whole country with scorpions. There's not even the lull you speak of. The whole country at this moment is seething with a new life—this new-fangled co-operation, a movement for keeping alive the language, for studying history, for promoting Irish industries, and they are only a few of the many symptoms of a new spirit of self-reliance. My dear Brownlow, you may as well try to stop the Shannon with a sieve, as hope to kill the Irish demand for liberty with the gift of a railway. If you keep an innocent man locked up manacled in a dark cell, you can't expect gratitude for the gift of a chocolate cream. There's only one way of earning his gratitude—and if you get it then it is because he is magnanimous—and that is by letting him out. That's the only kindness that will kill Home Rule. If the English were an imaginative people, and not merely sentimental, they'd free Ireland to-morrow in reparation and remorse for wrongs and injuries. Happily the Irish are imaginative and can admire and respect the bold gesture—they may even forgive you. There is just one glimmer of hope in the whole sorry business. Pakenham says the Irish hate you. They don't. They think you hate them. They can't believe that the cumulation of wrongs you've done them can come of anything but an intense, persistent hatred—even their imagination fails to fathom English stupidity. Oh, I know you don't hate them—you needn't trouble to say it. I only tell you what the Irish think—with some reason too. If there is any hatred at all it is with us so-called Loyalists here—a bitter frightened hate that is capable of any sort of insanity."

"By God, he's gone over to the rebels," Pakenham said furiously.

Drumbeg's slender body seemed to shrink as he murmured, "To those vulgarians."

Scovell swallowed a glass of port hastily, a troubled look in his open face. "You don't mean all that, you know, Lentaigne," he said with a worried laugh, slightly banging his empty glass on the table. "You are just pulling Brownlow's leg and taking a rise out of Drumbeg and Hamilton. They rise to any old fly. But I'm too old a friend not to know you. You're as English as I am, and a good Protestant—we don't want any Orangemen down here. But there's reason in everything. Live, and let live, I say, but stick to your class. Lentaigne is a devil for views," he added, with a sweep of his hand to his other guests; "he was just airing them."

Brownlow flicked the ash off his cigarette meditatively.

"Very picturesque—reminds me of a Magdalen brekker when we were all younger," he said, half with a cool insolence, half admiringly. "Dasent would be interested in the point of view. It's a distortion of history of course, but interesting for its survival value. What civilization the Irish have, we gave 'em. They repaid us with outrage and rebellion, but as befits a great empire, with large responsibilities towards subject races, we've been patient, infinitely patient. And we are getting our reward. Despite what you all say, things are growing quieter. Dasent and I have been keeping our eyes open, and we know. Experience in administration gives one skill in reading the signs. The people are coming round slowly but surely. Only yesterday a bishop proposed a vote of thanks to Dasent for the Ballycoursey railway. A few—poets mostly—give expression to extreme views, but poets break no bones. We are even thinking of extending the bounds of freedom—what was it Tennyson said?—and make the bounds of freedom wider yet! We have been elaborating a new conception of the Union. What is Ireland after all but an English county? All the people speak English—

at least of a sort. Why not give them county councils on the English model?"

"And destroy the power of our Grand Juries," Pakenham said, horrified.

Lentaigne laughed. "Have you read Anatole France's 'L'Etui du Nacre,' Brownlow? The first story—a tale about Pontius Pilate—is the portrait, for all time, of an Irish Chief Secretary."

"I never read novels—but Dasent might be interested," Brownlow said condescendingly.

"How long have you been in Ireland, Mr. Brownlow?" Miss Fraser asked pertly.

"Three months."

"Wonderful! To have learnt more about us than we know ourselves—in such a short time," she said admiringly.

"It's the bringing of a fresh mind to bear on your problems, Miss Fraser, and—if I may say so—an open mind," he said, with a mixture of modesty and pride.

Mrs. Scovell stopped the retort that was twitching on Miss Fraser's lips by a sharp—

"Come, let's all go to the music room, Helen. Mr. Lentaigne must have your song before he goes."

There was a movement of chairs, a patting of skirts, a pulling down of waistcoats, and a vague muttering:

Drumbeg to himself, "Even one's own class in Ireland is becoming impossible—they are little better than peasants—all of 'em."

Pakenham, half aloud, "I'm damned. Lentaigne too. A halter is too good for him."

Mrs. Scovell to Miss Fraser, "Weren't you bored to death, my dear?"

"I'll give the fellow a talking to when I get him alone—knock all the nonsense out of him," Scovell muttered fiercely to his napkin as he pitched it on to his chair.

"What would become of the country if the landlords turned rebels?"

"All very characteristic—very Irish. Dasent will be amused," Brownlow formed on his tongue behind expressionless lips.

"These political discussions are most useful," Miss Grayson said aloud to no one in particular. "They bring the two peoples closer together. I always suspected that the Irish were really English, and Mr. Brownlow has convinced me—a little more picturesque, perhaps."

Lentaigne drew abreast of Miss Fraser as she reached the door of the long dining-room.

"You meant it all?" she said eagerly.

"To start with, I don't know. But it grew on me. I suppose I've been feeling like that for some time."

"I knew it all along."

"I never see you," he said, interested in a pink profile.

In the big stone hall, the walls hung round with rifles arranged in fans, she said irrelevantly:

"Pray for a south wind for me to-morrow. I'm fishing over Grange Con reach in the afternoon—only Diana."

"Oh," he said reflectively.

"I wonder what that woman at Scarty will do now that she's got some money," Mrs. Scovell said to Drumbeg at the music-room door. "The boy is quite presentable."

7.

Jim Daly opened his eyes to a column of sunlight falling slantwise across his bed from the circular pane at the top of the window on his right, to a silver disc on the wall-paper. His eyes, heavy with sleep, closed again. He stretched his legs and wriggled his toes luxuriously, dimly conscious that it was late. He opened one eye cautiously

and counted the little sprigs of rose on the wallpaper from the corner of the room to the bright patch. He was late, of course, for the sun should have been coming through the window by the washstand. Eight, nine, ten—plenty of time for breakfast. A wagtail pecked at a pane beside him. He looked at it for a moment, heaved back the bed-clothes suddenly and, with a kick and a bound, was on the floor. His birthday—and to forget it like this. He ran to the small dressing-table and gave a long sigh of satisfaction. He took up a new half-crown, spun it into the air, and, as it rested in his palm, sighed again, but this time with faint regret. Well, there would be sixpence over. He'd pay Dick Kavanagh his two shillings the first thing. The rabbits—oh, bother! He had promised them a feed at seven and it was now a quarter past eight if it was a minute. He stared dismally at a tin of hot water. He looked round the room carefully. There was nothing except—he handled new knickers contemptuously—and he big enough for trousers, too. He smiled confidently and continued his examination of the room—his mother wasn't likely to make a whole birthday out of new clothes. They just happened. Was it something too big to bring upstairs? Or maybe it was in her own room? He walked on tiptoe to the open door leading to his mother's room and peeped in. She had beaten him out to-day—it was that old drive to Drisheen did it all. Though it was fun driving home with Dempsey all alone and it almost dark—after nine, the latest he had ever been out. It was no use—there was nothing there either. Would it be in a case, or would his grandfather have fixed it up—a fly on and all? If only his Uncle Pat hadn't died at such an inconvenient time he'd have been downstairs long ago and seen it. It was fine though, sitting up till long after ten, and eating a supper as if he were a mother or a grandfather, and his mother giving one every chance to describe every-

thing down to the putting the money into the safe at the bank, and his grandfather listening to every word though he pretended to be reading a speech of John Redmond's. He hadn't yet said his prayers. He wandered back disconsolately to his own room, derived a momentary pleasure from catching, with a sweep of his hand, a blue-bottle which had buzzed in through the open window. He listened to it buzz for a moment in his shut palm and, with a sigh, let it fly up the wide chimney. Should he say his prayers first or wash first? With another sigh he knelt on the strip of carpet beside the bed, shut his eyes firmly, and got through the "Our Father" with no other distraction than that the rabbits wanted cleaning out. At the "Hail Mary" his eyes had somehow opened, had fixed themselves on the half-crown thrown carelessly on the bed, and he was wondering just how new it was. Inextricably mixed with a hissing expression of belief in the mysteries of the Creed was a firm conviction that the wheel would be silver—not real silver, of course—and not brass. He confessed his sins with wandering eyes—it folded up so small that it might have fallen down somewhere and got hidden. He began the act of contrition with a feeling of despair, muttering aloud, "Oh, my God, I am heartily sorry," stopped suddenly, his eyes glued to the open window by the wash-stand, swooped up from his knees with a long-drawn, incredulous "Oh," and in a second was fingering tenderly, eyes and mouth wide open, the top of a fishing-rod. He leant out so as to get a full view of the glistening idol resting on the doorstep—fixed up and all, with a silver wheel and a fly tied on—it was his grandfather did that. And the bait-tackle in its little wooden frame sitting as quiet as quiet on the rush-bottom chair. And the new basket slung on the arm. It was the very rod that he had shown his mother in the window of Lanigan's shop at Lisgeela. Wasn't she a brick to know that he was dying

for it, and he not letting her know that he wanted it even one tiny bit—and it fifteen shillings, too. Talk about wonders—why, he had hardly dared to hope. He hadn't hoped, he had just only thought, and there it was. He craned his neck out farther—yes, and there was the brown canvas case almost hidden by the roses. Standing stiff, too; it must have in it the extra strong top-length of rod for bait fishing.

"What's up with the boy at all and he so late?" his grandfather grumbled from within the depths of the door opening on the lawn.

"I suppose I must get him up for school," his mother said regretfully. "He was up too late last night."

"Yerra, and what does it matter about school? Let the boy have his sleep out," his grandfather said pettishly.

"Caught out. Coo-ey—coo-ey, mother, grandfather," Jim cried delightedly. "Oh, tha-anks, tha-anks, mother and grandfather," he shouted, as the tops of their heads appeared beneath him. "I've never seen anything grander than the rod—nor than the half-crown, either," he added valiantly. "I'm a grown man now."

"I wish the day was darker and that he could try the rod with some chance of a fish," his grandfather said, anxiously peering at a cloudless blue sky, "and what wind there's in it is from the east," he added regretfully.

"For shame, father. Do you want rain for the hay-makers?" Arabella said chidingly.

"Well, maybe you're right," Pierce said half-heartedly.

"As if I wouldn't try the rod in any case. There's sure to be fish in any weather with a rod like this," Jim said hopefully.

"Not dressed, lazybones. And breakfast almost on the table," his mother said reprovngly.

"Oh, I forgot—but," as an extenuating plea, "I've said my prayers; I'll be down in a jiff. I suppose you couldn't

pass the rod up to me, mother? I'm afraid of lifting it by the top for fear of breaking it."

"Certainly not!" she said sharply. "Do hurry down, Jim."

With a last, fond look at the rod he turned away, sighing. He took the can of water in his hand, but put it down at once and ran again to the window.

"Say, mother, you haven't wished me a happy birthday," he said reproachfully.

"The boy is incorrigible," she said, wafting him a kiss with a smile.

He washed and dressed hastily and was struggling with his tie when he thought of Cornelius Nepos—ten lines and not one done. He hadn't even opened his satchel—that was Father Pat again. But perhaps Father Macdonald wouldn't call him to-day. The day was so warm the Miss Curleys would probably go to the sea and there would be no lessons at all. He took the stairs at a headlong pace, two steps at a time, and ran into Susan at the bottom. He saw a kiss and a hug in her eyes and outstretched arms and wished she wouldn't. But there was sure to be a surprise to-day in his luncheon packet which she had in her hand. He wondered where she had hidden the birthday cake—and submitted. Susan was an old dear, and her cakes the best in the world, but her kisses were hot and sticky, not nice and cool like his mother's. He made straight for the garden door and the rod, tested it over a flower bed and caught a petal. He looked at the river doubtfully, but his mother's warning voice made him put down the rod with a reluctant sigh. He kissed his mother and grandfather perfunctorily, lost in a calculation of when at the earliest, and where, he could fish in the afternoon. The long willow pool in the glen above Grange Con, where his grand-uncle's land meared the river, was a famous place, shaded even in the heat of the day. He could easily

get to the Driscoll's by five, leave Crabbit there, have an hour and a half where, as grand-uncle Teige Driscoll said, "Trout as long as a gossoon's arm, and twice as thick, are plenty as starlings, and one or two of 'em'd be sure to rise if you'd only coax 'em enough." He ate hot scones—an unusual treat—as if they were a daily happening. Suddenly he shot out of his chair with a cry:

"The rabbits—I must feed 'em."

"They're fed long since," his grandfather said drily. "Better have another hot cake."

"Oh, these are hot scones. How jolly," he said, sitting down and attacking them afresh.

There wasn't really much fear of Father Macdonald keeping him in after hours even if he missed all the lessons. Once in an age, perhaps. How could they go on talking about the funeral with even the possibility of being kept in in front of him—to-day, of all days.

"I'm off, mother; I couldn't eat another scone," he said, jumping up.

"He has left you none, father," she said ruefully.

"It's the making of a boy to have a good appetite," Pierce said gleefully. "Sure the loaf bread is the safest for an old man. And be sure to be back at four, Jim avick."

"Oh, that old cake," Jim said from the door. "I don't bother about that now. But not one iota of a minute later than four for tea, mother. I've to be at Tullyfin by five at the latest, and 'twill take Crabbit half an hour from here."

"What new madness is this?" his mother said, bewildered.

"The soundest of sound sense," his grandfather said admiringly. "It's the fish is running in the boy's head, and it's there he'll get 'em, if they're to be got at all, on a day like this."

But Jim had not waited for either verdict. After another look at the rod, he picked up his cap and satchel in

the hall, made sure that his luncheon was packed, but resisted a temptation to see what was the surprise. He had a moment's remorse in the stable on finding Crabbit not only fed—his grandfather always did that—but rubbed down and ready for the road, impatiently champing a newly-polished bit. This gave him a spare half-hour. He opened his satchel, hesitated between the *Nepos* and "Quentin Durward." He chose the novel, and was so thrilled by the reception of the herald that, though he galloped, he was a quarter of an hour late by Burdett the watchmaker's clock as he entered Lisgeela. By Crabbit's doing his very best through the Lisgeela streets, and the luck of finding Looney himself lounging under the sign-board, "Patrick Looney. Entertainment for man and beast," he was only seven minutes late as he opened the door of the one small room of Father Macdonald's house, known as St. Stanislaus College. Father Macdonald raised his eyes for a moment from the damp page of the *Lisgeela Weekly Fulminator*—which, on Friday, contradicted flatly all the opinions and most of the news of the rival *Thursday Weekly News*—suspended the operations of his gold tortoiseshell toothpick, said: "Late again, Mr. Daly," yawned and gave his attention to the street which his desk overlooked. A dozen or so of curious pairs of eyes watched Jim as he took his seat at the first of the two battered desks that ran along the back of the room. He took out his books with a contented sigh—it was always a favourable sign when Father Mac. began the day with a newspaper instead of Latin Grammar—opened his *Nepos* and Smith's *Smaller Latin-English Dictionary*.

"Have you a sixpence?" he whispered sibilantly to Dick Kavanagh.

"I have."

A half-crown and a sixpence were exchanged.

Jim looked up a word in the dictionary. "Come to

Andrews' at playtime and have a threepenny ice," he said.

"I will then," Dick Kavanagh said, licking his lips, adding half admiringly, half enviously: "I suppose you're very flush of the coin?"

"That sixpence is all I have."

"Tell that to the marines," Dick said, with an incredulous face, "and the whole world knowing ye found a gold mine in the back garden and put it in the bank."

"Rot," Jim said, with all the importance of exact knowledge, looking up the same word again. What was the use of giving three or four meanings to a word when one never knew which to choose? With his fingers still marking the page in the dictionary, he relented and gave Dick Kavanagh a full account of the treasure hunt.

"And you didn't bag a fistful?" Dick said contemptuously.

"I never thought of it," Jim said half regretfully, "and _____"

"Oh, you're only an old molly-coddle after all, Jim Daly. Sure I thought you had some spunk in you. Afraid of Father Lysaght, no doubt?"

Jim fired up and said with cold fury, "I'll blacken your two eyes for that, Dick Kavanagh, the minute we get out."

"Silence, gentlemen," Father Macdonald, disturbed in his reading of an unusually strong libel even for *The Fulminator*, muttered pettishly, without looking up.

Jim scowled at the dictionary, took out his penknife, and having found with difficulty on his portion of the desk a clear space not already marked with his name, began to cut vigorously.

"I was only joking," Dick Kavanagh cringed. "Sure everyone knows you have courage in you for anything, let alone a trifle like that. And it's not going back on the ice you'd be?"

Jim considered gravely this new aspect of the case and said magnanimously: "Well, of course, if you're sorry. But I haven't told you about my new rod."

The discussion swayed pleasantly over the whole field of wet and dry fly fishing, ground bait, the possibility of greenheart in a fifteen-shilling rod, till Father Macdonald, with a yawn that threatened for a few delirious moments to leave his jaws permanently wide apart, said:

"In five minutes I'll take the first Latin class," expanded his chest, blew a long breath from bulged cheeks, got up impatiently and, his hands in his soutane pockets, lounged in front of the window by his desk, with an abstracted gaze at the street.

"Do you think he will?" Jim said with a doubtful look at the Nepos.

"He might," Dick Kavanagh said moodily.

Father Macdonald said: "Ah," and hurried out of the room, making a vain attempt to cover his pleasure with a heavy frown.

Dick Kavanagh vaulted over the front desk, rushed to the window and peered out.

"Down books, boys, for the day. It's the Miss Curleys going to the sea," he rhymed excitedly. "They're talking to him. But sure they have him persuaded beforehand?—see it in his eye. He's saying he will. They're coming in to wait for him in the sitting-room." And after a few minutes: "There, what did I tell you? I hear him in his bedroom, changing out of his soutane."

Dick had barely got back to his seat when Father Macdonald came in, fastening a stud in a clean, white cuff, too wide for the sleeve of his coat. Having succeeded in adjusting the cuff to the sleeve he stood gravely at his desk, rubbed his closed lips with the middle finger of his right hand, sighed, rested both his hands on the desk, gazed at them for a moment and said:

"Gentlemen, we are accustomed in St. Stanislaus College to pay some token of respect to the memory of the deceased clergy of the diocese. As to-morrow is a free day in any case, I feel that I cannot do better than give you the remainder of to-day in honour of such a revered and venerated priest as Father Pat Daly."

"Hurrah," Dick Kavanagh shouted, waving Jim's dictionary.

"It's not an occasion for levity," Father Macdonald said with a frown.

Jim felt that his Uncle Pat was not such a bad fellow after all, and hurried to Looney's with Dick Kavanagh talking incessantly in his wake. No ices were to be had at Andrews' till one o'clock, but sixpence worth of chocolate at Mallon's went a long way between two, and a slab of it in a man's pocket was a generous thing against starvation and he out fishing. And he'd go in for it, if Jim was uneasy about leaving the pony. Not that he was ever backward in spending his own money, but he couldn't break in on the half-crown which was as good as mortgaged in his mind for an ass that he was saving up for.

"An ass," Jim said pityingly, stroking Crabbit's quarter.

"Oh, but he's a prize ass," Kavanagh said eagerly. "And likely to win in the Lisgeela sports in August, and maybe far and wide," embracing the universe in an eloquent gesture.

Jim admitted the difference readily and discussed age, height, speed, and weight-carrying capacity. An invitation from Dick to view the ass, "my own ass I might say, and me only seven shillings off him," was hard to resist, but the rod, not having yet been used, was still more attractive. A proposal to go shares in the ass to the extent of seven shillings found favour at first, but the difficulty of putting together seven shillings seemed an insurmountable bar. Dick pooh-poohed this, claiming, as the son of a solicitor,

to know everything. Any man with the name of money could draw money out of a bank. Jim knew all about cheques, of course, but no cheque that was ever written could draw Father Pat's money from behind the big iron door Mr. Murphy clanged on it. Dick said the word had only to be said and his father'd have the law of Mr. Murphy for it. Jim thought Mr. Murphy much too nice and quiet to have the law of, but Father Lysaght would know. Dick begged, for the love of heaven, to keep the ass dark from Father Lysaght—it wasn't as if the ass was what you could swear to as a prize ass, he never having actually won a prize, only he had the cut of an ass that might easily win one if he only got the chance. And as Jim hadn't the money in his pockets and, so to speak, at liberty, it might be as well to let the whole thing, ass and all, drop, for fear worse'd come from Father Lysaght hearing about it, and, maybe, his father.

The chocolate having been bought and divided fairly, Jim set out for home. If only he had brought the rod with him he could save a mile by going direct to Tullyfin by the Lisheen road. Providence had given him the whole day for fishing in the glen. Yet his mother seemed sometimes to have a strange disregard for Providence. And to-day's gift was unduly complicated. The obvious intention of Providence was that he should get his rod, ride straight to the glen, run the chance—which was no chance at all but a dead certainty—of getting a meal or meals at the Driscolls', spend the whole enchanted day in filling his basket with fish, and be home just in time for supper. He had a momentary thought of helping Providence in its intention by slipping in quietly to the cottage, securing the rod and slipping out again without a word said and no one the wiser. But Crabbit's steady trot hammered a sustained objection to this. It wasn't so much that it couldn't be done that moved him, for difficulty was only another at-

traction, but the memory of a look in his mother's eyes when she looked down her nose at him. There was nothing for it but to face all the risks—only his mother must give way about dinner. It was simply impossible to waste one's time at Scarty waiting for dinner till half-past one—he was determined on that.

A spirited argument ended in a compromise. His mother made no difficulty about dinner, but she insisted on tea—she'd put it off till five or half-past, but he must be back. When he realized that the birthday cake was really a treat for his grandfather he gave in at once. A grandfather who never forgot anything, who had actually unscrewed and packed the rod "so that there'd be no delay on the boy," who had fitted a shoulder strap on the case and provided a new landing net, was one to be considered and coddled.

At half-past twelve Jim, dismounted, the reins in his hand, was undoing the hasp of the gate opening on the bawn of his grand-uncle Teige's house.

"It's Jim Daly that's in it as sure as I'm alive," a flushed, stoutish, brown-eyed woman shrieked from the door of the long, low, thatched farm-house.

"It is, Mrs. Con," Jim said, with a timid obviousness.

"Well, now, if that isn't the luck of the world," she said, wiping her hands in her rough brown apron and pulling down her turned-up sleeves, a little girl hanging on to her skirt. "Sure it's you that can tell us all about it. Con brought the news home from the market, but it was that sketchy that there was no satisfaction in it. It's the great man entirely you're going to be, I'm told—it's making a priest of you they'll be, or something grand like that, or turning you into quality like your mother."

"I hope Uncle Teige will let me have a day's fishing," Jim said, bewildered.

"Sure he will and a hundred of 'em. I'm blessed if it

isn't the quality breaking out in him already," she laughed good-humouredly, as she wrung his hand. "Is it afeard of your own cousin you are, Betsy? It isn't kind mother for her to be shy, but you never know how childre'll turn out. Run away then, agra, and call in your father to his dinner. If it was them other thieves of the world, Mike and Sarah Anne was in it, it's lepping about you they'd be, but it's in school they are, thank God, if they aren't mitching. Tie the pony to the latch o' the door, and Con'll take him round. Your grand-uncle is within. In with you, now. And wasn't it lucky, Mike laid a cross line last night, though his father is agin it, so it's a salmon we have for the dinner. Sure it's God always provides for the Friday. Father-in-law, here's your sister's grandson coming to see you," she shouted, slapping Crabbit away from the door, and pushing Jim into the kitchen in front of her.

"It's not as deaf as all that I am, woman," Teige Driscoll quavered through toothless gums. "Didn't I hear you telling it to the whole barony out on the bawn there. I'm two years older than the man that's dead, but it's the full use of all my senses I have yet, thanks be to God. But sure it's heartily welcome anyone of your name is to this house, Jim Daly," he added, with grave courtesy, taking the boy's hand.

"Shout up to him, Jim, boy, sure it's as deaf as a post he is," Mrs. Con said placidly, preparing another place at the table already laid for a meal in the right-hand corner of the kitchen, between the settle and the open hearth.

"My mother and grandfather sent you their love," Jim shouted.

"Think o' that now," the old man said, his hand to his ear. "And she a Levin and all that, and she once a black Protestant. It's many a raking I gave her father and his father before him on a platform and the like. And it's

Pierce Daly is the decent man. Sorra better Irishman there is in the whole country, though he married my own sister. I wish I could say the same for the man that's dead. It's a good priest he was, I'm told, and that might get him past Saint Peter, but it's little help he'll have in getting to heaven from all he ever done for his country."

"It's too much speechifying is running in this family," Mrs. Con shouted, as she lifted half a salmon from a big pot on the hearth.

"Maybe it's a salt herring or only an egg itself you'd be having for your dinner this day if it wasn't for the speeches, and not a fine salmon like that," he said triumphantly.

"Hear him now, and it Mike the ruffian with a cross-line," she said with a shrug. "What did a speech ever get for a man but jail or to be thrown out of house and home?"

"At it again, Sally. Sure it's a fine hand you are at the speeches yourself, God bless you. It's jealous she is, father, at not seeing the inside of a jail herself," Con Driscoll said pleasantly from the doorway.

The old man drew himself up and looked at his son admiringly. Both men were clad alike in frieze, white flannel bawneens, and white linen shirts open at the neck. The red hair, firm jaw and mouth, the stocky but wiry figure of the son could all be traced in the father. Lack of teeth made the old man's jaws sharper and compressed his lips, and years had slightly bent his shoulders, but his blue eyes were as bright and clear as his son's.

"A woman is too weak a vessel for such a high level of honour as the jail, with the treadmill and the oakum picking and the skilly we had in my time," Teige said proudly.

"Don't be frightening young Jim off it before his time comes," the son said with a laugh. It's fine metal he'll be for any league that's in it in a few years' time. And the cause'll be none the worse for the cartful of sovereigns I'm told Father Pat left. Though it's little honour there is in

the jail now compared with my father's time, with your own clothes and the best of eating and drinking from outside. It's some dirty trick of the English to try and cure us of the jail by making it pleasant for us."

"Yerra, give the boy some peace from the English," Mrs. Con said, half emptying a pot of new potatoes into a large wooden bowl. "As if he hadn't enough of that with Pierce Daly. It's a trout the boy wants to kill and not the English."

"When I grow up I'll fight the English," Jim said calmly.

"You wouldn't lay hooks for a salmon, Jim; it's to fight the English clean you will," Con said, with a wry look at the fish.

Jim blushed. "I only fish for trout," he said evasively.

"Let ye all sit down," Mrs. Con said good-humouredly. "What if the fish was poached itself—sorra one'd know it from the taste. I never met such a man. He'd melia-murder the English—in his talk anyway—and he goes into the tantrums if an innocent boy lays a crossline for a Friday dinner."

"Women is women," Con shouted despairingly to his father.

"They are, the poor things," his father said with a commiserating nod.

"You can't be with your father for one minute, Betsy, without dirtying your pinny," Mrs. Con said by way of retort. "Run away into the room at once and put on a clean bib. But sure the men are all alike. Take some butter, Jim, with the new potatoes—they're like to hang heavy on the stomach without it. It's to save Con a journey you did by coming in on us to-day. It'd ill befit a Driscoll not to be at the funeral of any one of the Dalys—though it's a distant man Father Pat was in his ways—and Con was going to ride into Lisgeela to find out about the funeral, though he has a cow going to calf on him and a

field of hay in windrows and only God above knowing when the weather mightn't break. But sure you'll be able to tell us *that* and more besides—the whole ins and outs of the will and everything. Betsy'd be a better warrant to bring home the rights of a story than Con there, and it happening, as you might say, under 'his eyes within in the market. A hundred questions I put to him if I asked him one, and only got back for my pains 'The man died sudden, I tell you, and Jim's got the money,' just as if he hadn't a tongue on him nor an eye nor an ear in his head."

"It's paralysis of the tongue she'll be getting next," Con said with a resigned shrug.

"Eh, what?" the old man said with his hand to his ear. "You're right, Con. The dead man was no Nationalist. Never paid a penny to a league nor stood on a platform in his life, and when Parnell himself was at a meeting near Drisheen, sorra outside his door Father Pat'd step to bid him the time of day. Looking down on him to-day in heaven Parnell is for it I've no doubt."

Mrs. Con looked doubtful. "It's a great man entirely Parnell was, surely," she shouted. "But as for him being up in heaven now, and he a Protestant and no better than he should be, so they say, I wouldn't put him past purgatory myself."

"It's high among the saints of God he is," the old man said sternly. "Didn't he die a martyr, or as good as one, the way Gladstone and the English harried him from pillar to post; and don't the catechism itself say that the blood of a martyr blots out every sin? Every man that died for his country, be he a Turk or an atheist, let alone a Protestant, gets a high place in heaven. Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmett and Lord Edward Fitzgerald; though they were Protestants itself, are wearing crowns as bright as St. Patrick himself. The Pope may deny it to them—may God forgive him for being in the pay of the English—but

sure God knows better, and the people know better, being one and the same, for doesn't the whole world know that the voice of the people is the voice of God?"

"It's your father is the great theologian, Con, may God bless him," Mrs. Con said admiringly. "He has a better grip of it than any priest I ever heard. And sure it's not for the likes of me to meddle in high matters of the kind. Have another taste of the salmon, Jim, and tell us all about Father Pat."

Jim, at the start, was almost as unresponsive as her husband, but he yielded more to a detailed questioning. Happily Con remembered the cow at about a quarter to two, and broke short Mrs. Con's fiftieth eager question about the biscuit tins which had moved her to deep emotion. Jim got up from the table with a sigh of relief. He had enjoyed the attentive audience, but there had been moments when tears were near his eyes at the thought of all the fish he was missing. Con examined the tackle with minute care, fixed the rod, tied on a new fly and presented Jim with half a dozen, "never known to fail." "If it wasn't for the cow and the hay I'd go with you myself," he said regretfully. "The sky is clouding up a little and you may have a rise or two. And as you've to be back home at half-past five, you say, I'll send Mike down to the bridge at Grange Con to meet you with the pony."

Jim whipped the willow pool up and down without getting a rise. He saw several fish, deep down, almost motionless, or moving lazily, but could not tempt them to the surface, though he tried fly after fly. Excitement lapsed into boredom. His right arm was tired and he felt the heat intensely. He picked out the notes of the different birds and was tempted to put down his rod and look for nests. The buzzing of insects and a faint, distant gurgle of water lulled his senses till he almost slept standing. The top of his rod touched the water several times. But each

time he braced himself, determined to stick it out. He remembered the luncheon which he had transferred from his satchel to the fish basket, decided to try another fly, and opened the luncheon packet in the process—one bread-and-butter sandwich, two jam sandwiches, a hard-boiled egg, and a slab of butterscotch. Susan was a brick. He kept the sweet for last and rolled the rectangular slab, whole, round and round in his mouth appreciatively as he tried another cast. He crunched the sweet as he heard voices approach down the glen on the opposite bank. Round a willow came two men, one in waders, followed by a man carrying two salmon rods and a landing net. He recognized the man with the long, bushy beard as Blake, Scovell's water bailiff, a famous fisherman. He mustn't be caught lagging. He swallowed the sweet quickly and gave all his attention to his cast.

"The rottenest day I've ever had—to come home without a fish," came down the river. That was Scovell himself. He gave them a rapid glance. And the other was Red Drumbeg, one of his cousins who wasn't a cousin—a freak who was no good for man or woman or God or King or country, his grandfather said. He blushed a little and stiffened.

"That's the youngest of the brood of vipers," Scovell said, with a shrug.

"What? That boy?" Drumbeg lisped.

"Pierce Daly's grandson," Scovell said.

"But he's fishing your water," Drumbeg said indignantly.

Jim turned his head and stared at them with level, steady blue eyes. He lengthened his line and the fly fell within a foot of the opposite bank.

"The impudent young beggar," Drumbeg said angrily.

Scovell laughed. "He's game enough, anyway," he said ruefully. "It is my water, I suppose," he added without lowering his voice as they moved off. "At least, it used to

be, but one never knows where one stands these days. His grandfather's people-in-law, the Driscolls, are my tenants along that bank, and they claim the fishing—they even warned me off it a couple of years ago. It was too much trouble to test the matter so I let 'em have it."

Their voices floated back for a while against the silence of the glen in mutual recrimination on landlords' rights, and on letting the country go to the dogs in not keeping tenants well under. With the voices, Jim's ardour for fishing died. If Blake, who knew the wiles of fish and the Oweybeg in all her moods, had failed, it was simply all up. He fished down towards Grange Con bridge, but with a lack of interest that allowed frequent searches for wild strawberries on the grassy ridge running almost parallel to the river but fifty yards back. It could not be much after four, he guessed by the sun, when he got to the bridge. Sitting on the parapet, on the Liskeel side, he dawdled over his fly-book, unfastened several flies from his cap and put them in the book. He chased a butterfly, wished he had brought "Quentin Durward," packed his rod, debated whether he'd go back to Driscoll's for Crabbit or wait for Mike. He sat on the parapet again, let himself down to a ledge from which the low arch sprang, tried to touch the water with his boot, holding on the ledge with his elbows, failed, but succeeded in regaining the parapet after slipping twice back on to the ledge. He traced the river far below Liskeel by the glint of silver on the water. Scarty was hidden away somewhere at the foot of the upland, but that was the Dalrymple demesne stretching away in front and to the right, though he couldn't see the house. And there was a woman fishing down on the Dalrymple side. How foolish of her on such a bright afternoon. The little girl by her side, chasing butterflies with the landing net, had more sense. A man with a peaked beard rode up on a bicycle. It was Mr. Lentaigne of Derrylim—a landlord,

but one of the best of a bad lot, grandfather Daly had said one day after an argument with him in the Lisgeela Post Office. And always afterwards Mr. Lentaigne had nodded and smiled at Jim when they passed one another in Lisgeela. But to-day he seemed to look through him without a trace of his funny smile; with a sort of glazed, searching look that seemed to wander down the river. He made an exclamation as he passed, and Jim turned towards him thinking that he had spoken to him. But Lentaigne, taking no notice of him, jumped off his bicycle, half threw it against the side of the bridge, jumped the low wall at the side and walked rapidly down the river bank towards the woman and child. Jim was interested in Lentaigne's shadow. He thought of giants and seven-leagued boots. If Lentaigne were Quentin Durward he'd be engaged in some adventure. Perhaps he was. There was the lady, but there were no ruffian soldiery about. In ambush, perhaps. He jumped off the parapet and his eye caught the bicycle. A bicycle was one of his dreams. He examined it closely—a sprightly, American machine with yellow wooden rims and a perky little saddle, and geared to seventy-two. He stood back a little and looked at it scornfully. It was too flimsy—his own, with a deep sigh, if he ever got one, would be a Humber. What was keeping that lazy Mike? But it wasn't nearly five yet. He sat again on the parapet. Did anybody ever pass over the Grange Con bridge? He was like Alexander Selkirk in Juan Fernandez—and there were the savages coming nearer. It was the little Scovell girl—Diana they called her. They must be acting a play. It was very like the play he had seen in the town hall at Lisgeela. Little Diana had the rod now—it was too funny how she held it, just as if she were bait fishing. But little girls were like that—they knew nothing about anything. And she looked as important as if she could catch a fish. She was just a

doll—a rather nice doll. But it was Mr. Lentaigne and the lady who looked most like the people in the play. There they were, away back from the river, under the shade of the old elm, just like the tree on the stage, with patches of light quivering on the grass. And the lady was standing quite still, her hands by her side, her head bent a little to hide her blushes, and her eyes were fixed on the sunlight at Mr. Lentaigne's feet. He was looking at her with the very eyes of the man in the play, and talking quickly too, his beard making little funny movements, his hands restless. It would soon be time for her to look up; but he had to take her hand first. There—he had taken it. Now—yes, there she was, looking up at him with that sort of look in her eyes that one didn't know whether she was going to cry or laugh. And now he'd put his arm out and she'd fall on to it, but with her head turned so that he could kiss her. There—but they did it far better in the play. And now his godmother would die and leave him a fortune, and her father would relent, and they would be married and live happy ever after. And there they were off now, wandering down by the river just as if she had no rod to look after, and he no bicycle lying on the side of the road for anyone to run off with—but they were always like that.

Jim watched them disappear with a look of tolerant contempt which deepened to disgust as his eyes fell again on Diana. She was now sitting on the bank, the rod held under her arm, its top bobbing in the water, while, with both hands, she was making a daisy chain. Making daisy chains was all little girls were good for.

She shrieked and made a grab at the rod.

"Miss Fraser, Miss Fraser," she called excitedly, looking round bewildered.

"Let it run free—don't jerk him," Jim shouted, as he raced along the top of the parapet.

"The line is all running away. Oh, boy, boy," she said despairingly.

"Let it go free—run along the bank with him."

He was at her side in a few seconds and had firmly taken possession of the rod.

"I've caught a fish—I've caught a fish," she shouted, making wild leaps.

"Maybe—if you haven't lost him," he said grimly, trying to control, as befitted a man, excitement even deeper than hers.

"He's on it all right," he shouted joyfully, after a few seconds' despair over a slackened line. "A monster he is, too."

"Is it a salmon?" she asked in an awed tone.

"A pound-and-a-half trout if he's an ounce," he said, too excited to be contemptuous. "Run back for the net."

She hung about him, hopping from leg to leg and waving the net excitedly. "It's my fish—not your fish nor Miss Fraser's. I caught it," she said determinedly.

"It might get off yet," he said, with a smile.

"Oh, don't lose him," she begged. And then with a frown and a stamp of her foot: "If he goes it's you lost him, and you'll be a horrid boy."

He gave an effective answer to this by landing the trout without the net on a little patch of sand. She swooped down on the fish, held it up in her hands triumphantly. "Father didn't catch a fish, Miss Fraser didn't catch a fish, Lord Drumbeg didn't catch a fish. Did you catch a fish?" with a note of doubt in the pæan of joy.

"I didn't," he said gloomily.

"Hurrah! Only I caught a fish," she chanted, as she jumped about in a sort of Indian war dance.

"You're like the pink fairy in the play," he said, "only you dance better."

He gazed at her, his mouth a little open.

The mischievous look in her blue eyes and her mutinous lips sobered down. She stood quite still and stared at him solemnly. "I didn't quite altogether catch the trout—you helped me," she said.

"Oh, that was nothing," he said loftily. "I'm nine—this is my birthday."

The corners of her lips drooped a little. "I'd be seven if my birthday was now, but it isn't till December," she said doubtfully, adding with more confidence: "I've a pony and two canaries and a goldfinch."

"I've a pony for ages and ages, and five rabbits and a trout-rod of my own," he said half-heartedly, a little ashamed of throwing such glories in the face of a girl who was only six and a half really.

"Your pony is a common pony," she said disdainfully. "I've seen him often. You're the common little boy that we don't know that lives in the cottage near our gate and your mother suicided herself."

He flushed hotly but restrained his anger. If she were a boy—but he couldn't hit even a boy of that age. And she was only a girl and didn't know what she was saying. He shrugged his shoulders.

"And I'm a Protestant and you're only a Catholic, like the servants," she said, making a last dash for superiority. "They adore idols and go to hell—granny says so," she added in explanation.

He laughed with a calm certainty. The whole world knew that it was Protestants who went to hell. The retort was on the tip of his tongue but he checked himself. She was too like one of the angels to go to hell—one of the cross ones. She was wriggling a pink toe through a hole in her sandal. The sun caught a strand of hair falling down from under her broad hat and turned it into gold. The freckles on her proud little nose were like specks of gold dust. The slight tan on her face only made it a

cooler and firmer creamy pink. He had never seen anyone so nice and cool. If she weren't a Scovell and a Protestant and a landlord and English she'd be fun to play with.

He sighed. "There's Mike above on the bridge; I must be going," he said regretfully.

"That's your pony. Oh, do give me a ride, won't you?" she said eagerly. "Oh, bother," she added, stamping her foot angrily. "There's old Grayson and granny coming to fetch me and Miss Fraser to tea at Tullyfin. And now I can't have my ride." She turned her anger on Jim. "And granny will give it to you hot if she finds you poaching on our land."

The unfairness of this staggered him a little. "I'm not afraid of the old souper," he said angrily.

"What's a souper? She's not a souper—she's my granny, Lady Alice Scovell," Diana said, divided between curiosity and indignation.

"She steals Catholic babies and sends them away to Dublin in baskets to be brought up Protestants," Jim said, stalking away.

"Oh, how nice—and then they're not on the road to hell any more," Diana said in a glow of excitement over the attractive information. "You're not a very horrid little boy, and you can take the old fish if you like," she called pleadingly.

He was already climbing the slope to the bridge. This was the last straw and helped him to set his face in that "proud, impudent look," which, Susan Roche had taught him as a child, was "the fit face for a Daly to meet a Scovell with."

Lady Alice Scovell, however, saw no impudence in his fearless, boyish face as he passed the landau. She watched him through her lorgnette. "I know the lout with the pony," she said to Miss Grayson. "The son of Driscoll,

one of the worst ruffians on the Tullyfin estate. But who is the attractive child that was speaking to Diana?"

"He's the grandson of the darling old patriot, Pierce Daly," Miss Grayson said warmly.

"Fudge," the old woman said, clicking her glasses to. "What a common-looking boy! And his mother was once a lady. You must be more careful of your young charge, Miss Grayson. She mustn't be allowed to come in contact with such riff-raff. Sentimentality is to be expected in an Englishwoman, but to call a murderer—or what is just as bad—a patriot is a little too much. You'll be giving them Home Rule next. And where's that Miss Fraser? To go off and leave the child alone. She's a Fraser of Ballyowen, but since she's taken to flirting with rebellion she's not to be trusted in anything."

"She's coming up the bank with Mr. Lentaigne," Miss Grayson said, glad to free herself from attention.

"Oh," Lady Alice said, with a grim smile, again fixing her lorgnette. "Perhaps Mr. Lentaigne is why she's a rebel—he's not safe I'm told."

"What sort of a day had you, Jim?" Mike Driscoll said, as he handed him the reins.

"A rotten day," Jim said, gruffly, discharging some of his anger on the unoffending Mike by jerking away the reins.

8.

Arabella Daly sat sewing in her own sitting-room. It was the room in which the wife of Pierce the Rake had, for several dreary years, bewailed the fortunes of the Daly family. At her death it had been shut up, and had remained unused during Ann Daly's time. A few days after Arabella's marriage Pierce had given her the key, saying that the south room'd be some place for her to go into when she was tired of the voices of the men in the

parlour. The three windows in the bow looked on to the juniper hedge, trellised with roses, dividing the lawn from the garden, and gave a glimpse of the river beyond the cedar trees on the right. Another window at the side gave a view of the Liskeague road.

In her first months at Scarty Arabella sat oftenest by the window overlooking the road. She had accepted Theobald with a full realization of his narrow life and had never regretted her choice. But this did not prevent longings and regrets for many of the things she had given up. She watched the road day after day, hoping that her mother would come. Once, as she sewed a dress for the baby she was expecting, she saw the Liskeague horses turn the bend with Tanner on the box. She pressed the garment to her breast and waited, her heart beating violently, till she got a side view of the Victoria. Her heart almost stopped as she saw her mother, her face white and strained, gazing at the house. Her tears fell freely on the white muslin. Of course her mother had felt how much she wanted her and was coming. She rushed to the front door, but as she opened it the carriage passed by. She struggled to the gate and watched, with numbed body and eyes that barely registered an impression, the carriage cross the bridge and drive in at the Dalyhouse gate.

Nothing mattered very much after that. No stab ever went so deep again. Her father rode by often on his way to meets at Ballyfahey and Knockeen, sitting his horse stiffly, never even looking at the cottage. Her brother Jasper always walked his horse past and stared half shamefacedly, half contemptuously at the house. Peter with his regiment in India—how would he treat her? And of all her relatives and friends Uncle Silas was the only one that had called. It hurt, but she felt no bitterness, though she took to sitting in the bow overlooking the river.

With a sort of tender irony, her mind went back over the past as she sewed a tuck in the sleeve of one of Jim's shirts. She was still in the hastily improvised black dress which she had worn at the funeral, and caught a glimpse of herself in an old mirror set in the panelling between the windows. What had it all mattered to her? She smiled faintly with her lips, but there was no change in her sad eyes. She had had Theobald and now there was Jim. The room breathed of Jim. There was the little old oak table at which she had taught him his first lessons, and the hand sewing machine with which she had made almost every garment he had ever worn, and the little shelf with his books. She snapped a thread. Was he to be snapped off from her just like that? What were her own plans for him but just that? Was her father-in-law right after all? There was a loud knock at the door and Susan bobbed in her head.

"It's Father Lysaght come to see you, ma'am. Will I bring in the tea now or wait till the master and Mister Jim come back?"

"Bring it in now," Arabella said as she put aside the sewing. "It's very good of you to come so soon," she added, shaking hands with the priest. "I was afraid you couldn't get away from the dinner."

"My dear lady, I'd keep an appointment with His Satanic Majesty to escape carving beef for twenty-five hungry priests on a hot June day. What's worrying you?"

"It's Jim," she said meekly.

"There's a novelty now," he said mockingly.

"We must settle about him before I begin to waver," she said pleadingly.

"Wavering?" he said drily. "You must give me some tea to strengthen me to say 'Ditto' to all the foolishness you have already decided on. A funeral's a thirsty business."

"You know I always ask your advice," she said demurely.

"And always follow your own whims."

"Considered judgments," she suggested.

"Far be it from me to fight for the last word with a woman. And here's Susan with the tea."

"There's four cups for your reverence, without calling on the water," Susan said, with a bob towards the priest, "and fine and strong too, to your liking."

"Not even our tea is safe from you—I like mine weak," Arabella complained.

"You can water yours down, ma'am," Susan said primly, as she left the room, "but sure, the clergy must have everything to their taste."

"Undue influence again, I suppose," the priest said derisively.

"I don't criticize my priests," Arabella said ironically, adding more seriously, "Anyhow I forgive them a lot for the beautiful sermon the bishop preached to-day. It was wonderful.

"Very," Father Lysaght said drily.

"Who's critical now?" Arabella laughed. "And to get up out of bed too, with a bad cold! It was a remarkable funeral."

"It was," Father Lysaght said with a chuckle. "It was reported that the bishop had a convenient cold and intended to snub Pierce Daly by not attending his brother's funeral. That big gathering of people had little to do with poor Father Pat, though it was his funeral. It was partly a political meeting in honour of Pierce, and partly a snub to the bishop."

"But no one could have spoken more highly than Dr. Deehan did of my father-in-law—called him the grand old man of the land war, a model patriot and what not?"

Father Lysaght nodded and swallowed his second cup of tea. "Father Carberry got wind of the demonstration,

and the bishop made a marvellous recovery from his cold. Even Mallon the grocer, who organized the funeral, admits that the bishop carried off all the honours."

"I intend to send Jim to an English school," she said after a short pause.

He lifted his eyebrows whimsically. "Beaumont or Downside or Stonyhurst?" he asked, holding out his cup.

"No, not to a Catholic school. Winchester—if I can get him in. I want you to tell me what he knows—whether he must go to a private school first or have a tutor. What has he learned at the college?"

"Now, Mrs. Daly, that's hitting below the belt. Remember I'm a priest and a governor of the college—may God forgive me."

"Well?" she said with a smile.

"I must have another cup of tea to give me courage. There was a saying in Maynooth in my time, with which we used to make mincemeat of Darwin and the evolutionists—*nemo dat quod non habet*. You can't knock blood out of a stone, it means. It didn't hurt Darwinism, but it has its application to the college."

Father Lysaght shrugged his shoulders. Mrs. Daly looked meditatively at the river. After a while the priest said, "But you needn't worry about the boy; he knows more than most boys of nine. He was well grounded by Begley the schoolmaster and yourself."

"I wasn't worrying. I was trying to decide between a preparatory school and a tutor. I want to be fair to him, but I want to see as much of him as I can."

"Then you have decided," he said with a smile.

"A year or two at a good day school with a good tutor as well—he has lee-way to make up—might be best," she said thoughtfully.

"That will mean your going away?"

"My life is his. Now that that's settled, the rest is all clear. I shall take him abroad for all his holidays. He must know languages, and that's the best way. He has a smattering from me already of French and Italian and German. He must know them well and pick up some others."

"My God. You'll muddle the boy's head."

"Oh no, I won't. He laps up a language, and I shall like it myself, too. I've been shut up here for ten years," she added after a pause, her eyes again on the river.

"You're a wonderful woman," he said simply. "I'm a bit worried though," he added hastily, "about that English Protestant school. Pierce won't like it because it's English, nor the bishop because it's Protestant."

"My father-in-law is a difficulty," she admitted. "I've spent the greater part of the last two days worrying about him. I don't see any way out that won't hurt him, and he's done more for me and for Jim than anyone but you could ever understand. I'd sacrifice myself willingly for him, but not Jim. He lives in the boy, but so do I. I've seen too many children sacrificed to their parents to lay mine on any altar."

"He'll say you're bringing him up English and anti-Irish," he said moodily.

"Parnell was educated at English schools and Hugh O'Neill was brought up at the court of Elizabeth," she said with a smile.

"There's a point in that," he said seriously.

She laughed. "Even the best of priests are Jesuitical. I suppose I can be too—for Jim."

"It might appeal to Pierce," the priest laughed heartily, "to send the boy to an English school to learn their tricks and be able to turn their own weapons against 'em."

"I hope that Jim will see the foolishness of many English and Irish prejudices," she said gravely.

"And be a man of the world, like your Uncle Silas," he said slyly.

"God forbid," she said earnestly. "Jim will always have beliefs and convictions. He's too much of a Quixote and a Daly not to—but his prejudices must be his own. I'm determined that he shall see and hear all sides."

"In religion too?" he said gently.

"I'm his religion now," she said calmly. "Some day, if it's going to mean anything in his life, he'll have his own."

"Converts never slough all their heterodoxy," he said with a sigh.

"And priests must be professional," she laughed. "But you know well what I mean. And you needn't worry about the Protestantism of English public schools—they are just schools. They're so tolerant that they coddle Catholics as they would a rare medieval relic. Jim will find himself more in the hands of priests than he'll like. I wish he could be as well protected against other things, but he'll be no worse off at Winchester than in a Catholic school."

The priest nodded gloomily. "All the same it's a dangerous experiment. Perhaps it's sacrificing him on some little private altar of your own you are."

"It's no experiment—it's simply the best I can do," she said with a patient sigh. "Though I suppose all education is an experiment—and a very poor one at that, I'm afraid. If I'm trying an experiment it is the outcome of my own experience. If I have any certainty about Ireland it is that children are deliberately educated to misunderstand one another. You were brought up in a watertight compartment, a good little Catholic whose first duty in life was to despise Protestants. I was brought up in a tank on the other side, where all Catholics were anathema."

"Yet you saw the truth—you came over," he said triumphantly.

"I saw Theobald," she said softly. "Once in a way love gets a chance and resolves all hates. But I want something more than a rare miracle which has no bearing on the question. Till I was twenty-two I heard all the Protestant twaddle about Catholics. For the last ten years I've heard all the Catholic twaddle about Protestants. Honestly I can't say which is worse. Both sides are grossly unfair. Suspicions, innuendoes, lies—any vile stick is good enough to beat one another with. It's not religion, it's blasphemy," she added bitterly.

"That's a hard word for your own religion," he said gravely.

"I'm not speaking of religion," she said with a smile, "but of the irreligion that unfortunately goes with it. I love my religion but I refuse to accept hatred and misrepresentation of Protestants as part of it."

"Your own people threw you over when you married a Catholic," he said grimly.

"The pot calling the kettle black," she laughed. "But I don't quarrel with it—it fairly represents the two churches in Ireland. I'm not attacking either side. I'm merely defending both—from themselves. I have been in both camps and I've found the same sort of decent people in both. Their God is the same and their love of Him is the same. They have similar faults and similar virtues. Yet each side attributes to the other some sort of horrible demonology. Susan Roche thinks the Protestant God is a savage Orange-evicting Unionist landlord who tortures Catholics. Tanner's idea of the Catholic God is a blood-thirsty, rebel peasant in some vague trappings of the Pope of Rome. Either would willingly accept the other's God as her or his own devil. And you keep up this criminal farce, Father Lysaght."

"I?" he said indignantly.

"Yes, you and the other priests and parsons. You keep

the people apart, you bring the children up in separate schools. You are a Home Ruler. If you get control of the Government do you mean to ride roughshod over all the Protestants?"

"What nonsense," he said pettishly.

"Then why don't you allow Catholic children to go to school with Protestant children? They might each at least find out that the other doesn't wear a tail and horns and hoofs, and who knows but they might discover a common humanity."

"Now, now, Mrs. Daly, we must protect the young from——"

"From having common sense," she interrupted.

"What has come over you at all?" he said, distressed. "It can't be that you're not happy in your religion."

"Perfectly happy. But I wish religion in Ireland, on both sides, wasn't so mixed up with land and politics and racial and class hatred."

"That all comes from the Orangemen. There's no harm in the Catholics. They use hard words occasionally, but it's the Orangemen——"

She laughed. "I heard almost the same words, with the religions reversed, from our rector when I was a child."

"That's very odd," he said meditatively.

"I wonder how Jim will turn out," she said after a pause.

"Oh, he'll hold his own," the priest said proudly. "With his own size and weight or a bit above it he'll be able to give a good account of himself and his religion anywhere."

PART TWO

I.

SIR SILAS LEVIN, K.C.B., gazed pensively at the tired and wilted trees of the Green Park. The world of inner politics and diplomacy was disturbed, and he had had what he called a stiff morning, but there was no trace of worry in his impassive face.

A club acquaintance wandered into the large bow, looked hesitatingly at the erect trim figure that showed no sign of age beyond whitened hair and moustache, rattled keys in his trousers pocket, and said, with a look at the open window shaded by gay sun blinds :

“ This is the coolest room in London in August.”

“ So,” Levin said, with the well-known intonation, correct and polite, which few bores survived.

Buller moved off with a sigh. And Levin would have been interested in that elephant hunt in the eighties recalled by this blasted quivering heat, but no doubt he was worried over the state of Europe—things were said to be dicky.

Had he known Sir Silas intimately he would have recognized the slight movement in the left eyebrow as a sign of intense irritation. Buller had opened conversation with his innocent platitude dozens of times on most days—“ coolest” became “ cosiest ” in cold weather, and the month changed with the calendar—for thirty years. Sir Silas knew it as well as he knew the Green Park, and had hitherto received it with a responsive smile. Buller might be a bore about big game, but he knew more about the interior of Africa than any man in London, and Sir Silas had a thirst for

exclusive information. It was the collocation of "London" and "August" that almost moved him to the unbelievable solecism of "damn the fellow." Happily neither lips nor eyes betrayed his emotion. It was enough to rile a saint or slightly provoke a diplomatist of sixty-one. Not even during the Boer War had he been kept in London and missed the twelfth. Without moving an eyelid he roundly damned a then friendly power. His letter to the duchess had been temporizing; and she had been more than kind—for the twelfth, too—in leaving the invitation open, but nothing short of a sudden drop, of which there was no sign, of the political temperature would now make acceptance possible.

He glanced at the clock on the mantelpiece, and his methodical mind was occupied for a moment with a more immediate wrong. The sole he had ordered for luncheon would be spoiled if Jim Daly wasn't here in five minutes. He looked down his slim body with a smile. It was rather a joke that fellows at the office took the hefty young giant for his nephew. The "Uncle Silas" deceived them; or, more likely, his own youthful appearance. After all, he was still young, so much younger than his brother that he was more like the brother of his niece Arabella. The hock would be too cold if Jim wasn't punctual. . . .

He had shown some lack of discernment in having had misgivings about the boy. But then the whole circumstances were so peculiar—the queer ménage at Scarty—even now with a comfortable income. And that dreadful old peasant with no sense of humour in politics. The boy was dogmatic, too, and viewy; a bit bumptious perhaps, but that was youth and would wear off. It wasn't every youngster whom Draycott noticed; and to say that Daly was a leg-up to the Foreign Office was enthusiastic for such an austere chief. It was double-edged, like most of Draycott's compliments, to add that diplomacy couldn't

boast of many double-firsts. It was so like Draycott's bookishness to harp on mere intellectual equipment in an office where knowledge of men and of the world and a facility in languages were the prime necessity. He drew himself up serenely. If Jim had only his knowledge of the world he would do well in the service. It would do him no harm, of course, to have the intellectual link with Draycott, and he could jabber languages thirteen to the dozen. He glanced at the scare heading running across the front page of an evening newspaper with a smile of superiority and murmured, "So the've got it at last—the wrong end of it too—three days late."

"Sorry if I'm late," Jim Daly, tall and broad-shouldered, said in eager apology, having caught the last word.

"Bless me, Jim, you're a tornado. But you've saved the sole."

"Mine or yours?"

"Both. For I'd have damned your soul in another minute to the detriment of my own," Sir Silas said with a chuckle appreciative of the thin witticism. He was slightly hurt that Jim didn't laugh. But the boy was looking round at the antlered heads, fish, and primitive weapons that lined the walls.

"A comfortable crib this—looks sporting."

"It not only looks it, but it is—the club, perhaps, of the kind in the world," Sir Silas said a little pompously.

"Not much in your line, eh, Uncle Silas?"

Sir Silas meditated a snub, but decided against it. The boy was so jolly in his loose tweeds. And the air of negligence came of a first-class tailor. Those young fellows had no reverence, and there was a twinkle, too, in the large blue eyes. There was very little appearance of the student in the straight back and tanned face. He laughed quietly.

"I find myself telling you all my secrets, my dear boy," he said, taking Jim's arm. "But let's be going down—the

hock will be just right. This is a refuge," he went on confidentially. "In a crisis my other two clubs are impossible. Bishops and third secretaries are equally inquisitive. But here"—he waved a hand towards the heads in the hall—"not a man who has an idea of the British Empire but as a game preserve."

"Jolly near right," Jim said.

"Eh, what?" Sir Silas said sharply.

"I did hear there was a rumpus on," Jim said imperturbably. "There was a vague rumour of it in the nursery, where I'm fed on pap and the alphabet. What's the row, Uncle Silas?"

Sir Silas pursed his lips slightly and shook his head with a condescending smile. "I mustn't breathe a word. But it's very important—very. Something more than a rumble. But it will pass—it shall pass. *We* will see to that."

"Some day the Rads will have your neck, Uncle. Hugger-mugger diplomacy, ending in some rotten job, and a let in for the country—so they spoke of you at the Union."

Sir Silas smiled. "Youth will have its fling. I was a bit of a Rad once myself—not since I arrived at responsible office, of course. Precedent and compromise, my boy, are the wheels of our almost perfect machine."

"Flummery and evasion," Jim laughed, helping himself liberally to sole.

"Well, well, perhaps, just a little," Sir Silas said tolerantly, "and there's always the big stick behind. How do you find that hock?"

"Not half bad."

"You young cub," Sir Silas said with the indignation he reserved for the most important things in life. "There isn't another hock like it in London. A nice discrimination in wine is as important in diplomacy as an apt quotation. I remember once, a very ticklish affair it was, bringing the French plenipotentiary over to our side by a delicate

appreciation of Moselle—rank stuff it was too. But he was one of those mad regional fellows—you know the type in Ireland. A smack of my lips—a bit vulgar, perhaps, but the interest of the Empire was at stake—a few judicious words, a tag of Horace, and the thing was done. You'll find life in the F.O. extraordinarily interesting. At first, of course, while you're cutting your teeth, it will be largely social. But in twelve or fifteen years, when you've learned your way round and have begun to be let into things—always provided you show tact, of course—you'll have the ball at your feet. Brains are well enough in their way, but tact is the thing. And don't neglect women. Wives count most in England—others abroad generally. Bear in mind that no German woman has any influence; and American women are so busy in making a social position that they take only a superficial interest in politics. But a nice punctilio is necessary with all women. Few only can help, but all are able to hurt. And don't get entangled. I'm not a prude, but it complicates things and plays the very devil—in England. Your career simply can't afford it. In a Protestant country your religion would seem to be against you, but nothing could be farther from the truth—it's a vulgar error of the herd and of Irish Protestants. Well, *we* don't regard the Pope exactly with the eyes of Belfast Orangemen. There's no official connection, of course, but—well, you know how things are done. There's a subtlety about ecclesiastical diplomacy that's very fascinating." He sipped his hock reminiscently. "On the whole, I should say, you'll find your faith a distinct asset."

"Thanks for the lecture, Uncle Si. Diplomacy sounds a bit piffle, don't you think? But the hock's bully. May I have another glass?"

Jim poured himself out a glass as he spoke.

Sir Silas regarded him with mixed feelings. Tact was distinctly lacking, but, on the other hand, to appreciate that

wine at twenty-four was something. "A little more care in the choice of words perhaps," he suggested vaguely.

"Oh," Jim said with a nod of intelligence. "We're such chums, you know, Uncle Silas. But I'll turn on another tap if you really wish me to."

The slight tone of patronage made Sir Silas say hastily, "With me, my boy? Quite absurd. But with others, perhaps," he hedged a little. "Well, you've entered a service which demands a certain gravity—always with a light touch, of course."

"It's my work, I suppose," Jim said with a shrug. "I feel like a kid at an infant school doing silly things that lead nowhere."

"In time, my boy, in time. *I* did those things—and well, I have arrived," Sir Silas said with a complacent smile.

If Jim meant anything beyond respectful attention by his level look it was admirably concealed, Sir Silas admitted to himself as he disposed of the remainder of the bottle. The boy had undoubtedly a certain poise. Would he protest against the full glass? Sir Silas poured slowly, but it wasn't till the straw-coloured liquid was almost level with the top of the glass that Jim drawled "thanks." Sir Silas rather ruefully poured what remained into his own glass, murmuring to himself that the boy had nerve.

"I'm tempted to chuck the whole thing and go in for politics," Jim said meditatively.

"Good Lord!" Sir Silas said with the finest shade of irritation. "Would you exchange the substance for the shadow, legitimate pride for a hollow vanity, real power for——"

"You mean you fellows are the real trick riders, while the political blighters are the clowns who smirk and scrape and pretend they've done it?" Jim said blandly.

"Precisely—though I eschew circus metaphors."

"I forgot—you prefer 'em church," Jim said gravely, as he finished his hock.

"We'll have some coffee," Sir Silas said austerely.

As he stood waiting his turn to pay his bill he gazed thoughtfully through the glass doors at Jim's back. The rogue knew, of course, of his weakness for the Hippodrome and that he never went to church except at Lissyfad. There was a careless assurance that promised well in the set of the boy's head and shoulders. There were faint indications of the rapier even now, though his natural weapon seemed to be the bludgeon. And those honours didn't show through.

"You'll stick it out, Jim," he said with more of appeal than was his wont, and a confidential squeeze of an arm, as they made their way to the smoking-room.

"Got to—for a few years, anyhow. Promised the mater."

Sir Silas forgot his shallow probing for the moment in a more generous human liking. The boy was made of good stuff. And his mother deserved it, too—she had made him what he was.

"When do you cross?" he asked.

"Night mail," Jim said, his eyes lighting up. "Better come, Uncle Silas. Leave all this jabber here, and I'll give you some fishing. Thank God for the F.O.—I've got two months of Ireland in front of me. Do come. We'll have a ripping time. I can't believe the old F.O. is ever worried about anything. You can come if you want to."

Sir Silas gave him the smile that betokened depths of incommunicable knowledge, but thought it well to explain a little.

"My dear boy, I haven't missed a twelfth in Scotland for thirty years. So you can imagine how I feel at being kept in London in this heat, and the extreme gravity of the affairs that keep me here. But apart from the political atmosphere—many thanks for the invitation—I'm as likely to be found in the Sahara in August as in Ireland. Not a decent grouse

moor in the country. I'm blessed if it breeds anything but difficulties."

He touched a bell, pointed to a deep armchair, and sank into another.

"Not that one escapes Ireland by staying out of it," he began with a sigh. "I ought to have nothing to do with the damned island—officially I mean—yet it's a big part of my worry now. It has a whole machinery of Government all to itself, but do you think it sticks there? It invades every Department. It bobs up all over the world—in America, in all the colonies, in Egypt. It has more than once prevented an advantageous treaty. All the Chancelleries of Europe twit us with it. An unspeakable young Turk had the audacity, at a conference of the Powers, to bring it up as a precedent for Armenian atrocities. If we mention the Congo someone murmurs Ireland. Germans make comparisons with—good God!—their humane treatment of the Herreros."

He stopped and watched meditatively the approach of a waiter. "I must have a liqueur as a sedative. You won't join me?"

He gave an order, lit a cigarette, and puffed thoughtfully.

"It's a malignant disease dangerous only to British interests, and it finds out the weak spot everywhere, at home and abroad. When we think we have stamped it out it crops up afresh, only more virulently. It's like influenza."

"Its pathology is simpler," Jim murmured.

"Eh, what?" Sir Silas said sharply, but as Jim made no reply he went on: "I'm so used to Ireland as a ghost at every feast that I'd almost think it a hallucination if at this moment it didn't threaten to break up the Empire."

"Out with it, uncle," Jim said coolly. "What's the whole fuss about?"

"Cabinet secret," Sir Silas almost snapped. "And even if it weren't I'm not sure that I'd discuss the subject with

you. I forgot the rebel strain in you—I thought you had shed all that.”

“I can’t shed my mind,” Jim laughed, “unless, indeed, the F.O. reduces it to pulp. Come now, uncle, confess. Doesn’t the whole trouble come of the muddled incompetence of the old Government?”

“A Liberal Government *is* apt to drive the ship on the rocks,” Sir Silas said moodily.

“And a Tory to keep it there,” Jim jeered.

“Pup,” Sir Silas said tolerantly. “Perhaps even the Tories do interfere too much with the permanent officials.”

“Oh, *they*’re as blind as bats,” Jim said fervently, adding a little hastily but with some aplomb, “But you’ve pulled ’em out of many a hole, Uncle Si—you’re sure to pull ’em out of this—whatever it is.”

“Thank you,” Sir Silas said urbanely, but with a slight flicker of an eyelid. “There’s only one thing left for Ireland, and that’s to sink it,” he added, sipping his *fine champagne*.

“You’ve tried so many brilliant solutions with such gorgeous results! Yes, why not try sinking it? From very cussedness it’d drift over and block up Liverpool and Bristol. It’s such an impracticable country,” Jim said gravely. “But we’re forgetting the snipe shooting over Looskey bog,” he added with a twinkle. “You wouldn’t sacrifice that, Uncle Si?”

“I won’t have my leg pulled, sir,” Sir Silas said severely. “You’re all a pack of foolish children—Orange and Green alike.”

“We’re getting on,” Jim said placidly. “A Protestant Irishman (a responsible official, too) admits—it would be ‘violently asserts’ but for the diplomatic manner—that Orangemen are foolish. Carson too, of course?”

“There is no Scotch question,” Sir Silas said gloomily.

“Oh, you can always bag a Scotchman with a job—it

only gives an Irishman funds to push his grievance. Besides, they won't all take jobs."

"They took the land."

"Their own, and they're paying for it."

"Railways, harbours, labourers' cottages—it would take me hours to go through the list of gifts."

"Restitution you mean, and only half-hearted at that. There's excess taxation in a century of over three hundred millions."

"The same old platitudes."

"It's not Ireland's fault that they're rather time-worn truths."

"What in God's name do those people want?" Sir Silas said with a shrug of exasperation.

"Their country," Jim said shortly. "They've said so once or twice in eight hundred years," he added with a humorous twinkle.

"Pooh-pooh!" Sir Silas said with a wry face.

"Fie, Uncle Silas—and you're teaching me diplomacy. Is that an expression to use in a discussion? Is it tactful?"

"You impudent young ruffian! You'd try anyone's patience. Ireland a nation! It's too silly. I'm broad-minded," he added with a quick recovery of his pompous manner. "I wasn't against Gladstone's Land Act, though I couldn't approve his Home Rule Bill. Gerald Balfour's Congested Districts Board was a step on the right path. Horace Plunkett is a good fellow. His co-operative work—admirable. His Department of Agriculture—sound. Much sounder than Horace himself, I'm afraid. He moves too fast. Has too much conscience for a party man—it might lead him anywhere. I had hoped that poor George Wyndham would have settled everything with his Land Act that made English farmers' mouths water. He'd have gone farther, and I'd have been with him, only the Orangemen did him in. His idea was some sort of council. McDonnell brought the

idea from India, and Birrell afterwards bagged it. But the Liberals have no art in these things—didn't use bait enough for the bishops. The Rads did better with their University Act—showed a good deal of tact, too, in swallowing their principles. Birrell advocating a sectarian university was a sight for the gods, but we have a certain dexterity in things of the kind, thanks to our Indian experience. It's disheartening, though, that we have got very little gratitude for all these magnificent efforts in sound constructive statesmanship. And now we're up to our eyes in the whole mess again. Don't breathe it, but the whole of Europe may be at one another's throats any moment, and Ireland again threatens to split the country when we need, as we never needed before, a united front."

"Good!" Jim said approvingly. "That explains the federal tosh then?"

"Hum, hum! It's an idea. It has to be explored—Royal Commission and all that. It may smooth over things."

"Won't wash," Jim said with decision.

"As I said, I wish the damned island were out of the way," Sir Silas said fretfully. "It's an old man of the sea dragging at our ankles. Those pig-headed Orangemen are as bad as the Nationalists. All sides are suspicious. There's some new extreme set with an unpronounceable name egging Redmond on; and Carson is like a melancholy devil's advocate spitting venom. They all distrust us."

"The consciousness of shining virtue will console you," Jim said with a grin. "It's a help, too, to see other people's sins so vividly."

"By Jove, it's three o'clock, and I've a conference," Sir Silas said with a meditative and not altogether approving glance at his grand-nephew.

In the cloakroom he said abruptly:

"I'm not sure that I like your attitude of mind about all this, Jim. A little Socialism or anything of that sort is

pardonable, but the Empire is sensitive about its boundaries. However, the young know everything. What would you do?"

"Find out what they want and give it to them."

"I must say I expected more of you. You err against the first principle of sound statesmanship—give subject peoples only what's good for them."

"No wonder they love you dearly," Jim said with a laugh. "Good-bye, Uncle Silas. And be sure and settle the Irish question while I'm away."

"The young scamp—a rebel to his finger-tips," Sir Silas said to himself with a shrug, lazily swinging a gold-headed malacca as he crossed to the Green Park. "Well, well, we're a tolerant people."

2.

Jim took the Greenore boat-train partly because the lack of work at the office was more irksome than usual, with Ireland looming so near; partly because it gave a thin illusion of getting him home sooner than the Kingstown boat-train, which left Euston more than an hour later: also one dined with more comfort, and there was the extra sleep on the boat.

It was still light outside when the train got into the open at Willesden. He stood in the corridor, out of the glare of the electric light, and watched the line of red fire on the horizon in the west. Over there somewhere was Ireland and Scarty, the Owneybeg and Looskey bog. By some such light he remembered it, only much more wonderful. The bronze ball in the south, hung between the tree-tops, was only a Japanese lantern compared with the August moon rising above the shoulder of Mooncon. Was it really so, or had he only imagined it? Something seemed to tear at his heart, and the vivid colours were blurred. It was fifteen years since he had seen it, and how could one remember?

But he remembered. He was sure he remembered. He could see it all now with his eyes shut. The valley opening out from Grange Con bridge, the Ownybeg winding like an immense silvered snake through the green, lush plain, with Lisgeela shrouded in a golden smoke haze huddled up within one of the coils, the windows of the Cathedral throwing back at the sun a brilliant flame, the purple heather on the near hills, the deep blue of the mountains, and the brown stretch of Looskey bog. And the mater had kept him from all this, and now he was a Foreign Office clerk.

He laughed, and the opal sky had a more tender look. She was the best mother in the world, and he had had a ripping time. His grandfather had been great fun. How he had fumed and groaned on the first journey; and afterwards his eagerness, like a child's, for new places. And his row over the English with the old Garibaldian revolutionary, with whom he had made friends at Verona—"the great lovers of freedom!" the Garibaldian shouted excitedly, "and their great leader Sir Palmerston, the friend of man and of Italy!" It was in vain that his grandfather shouted "Tyrants!" and "Bloody Whigs!" for old Felice shouted him down, and in the end was convinced that he was an Austrian spy. And his almost similar experience with a Czech at Prague. But it had only made his grandfather believe all the more firmly in the depravity of the English, who "scattered the gold they squeezed out of Ireland like dust to blind the eyes of the world to their own wickedness." And there was the irony of it all, which only grew on him gradually, that at the very tables at which his grandfather was thundering against England, he himself was picking up languages for the service of England. And how he did work—worked harder, he saw it now, in the holidays than at school or at Oxford; but his mother had made it such a game. Whether it was a ski or a Slav dialect there was no slacking. It was hard work, but it was work that was

always play with those wonderful backgrounds—Naples and Sorrento from Capri, Rome from any of the hills, the Black Forest, the Rhone Valley, Arles in the moonlight, the choleric face of the old colonel on the deck of the steamer going up to Constantinople, with his hand to his ear: "Troy did you say, sir? I can tell you even at this distance that it's a damned bad fort." Winchester was work and his fight with Bateson and those first miserable days when they called him Mike—but he had fought an end to that. And Balliol was work and the boats and his first briar. And there was Uncle Silas bobbing in and out everywhere—Uncle Silas who was almost English but just wasn't. And there were friends, many of them. Bateson still, though he would bear the mark of that split ear through life. Such friends, too! They wore well, though Phipps said, "Oh, Ireland," as if it were a cannibal island. Their reserve sat somewhat consciously on them and sometimes broke out in shy, unexpected enthusiasms that never seemed real. They were like a March sun with moments of brilliant heat—good to travel with. They were as certain of discarded German philosophies as they were of England. And they were still more certain about Ireland, of which they never tried to know anything.

A white-coated attendant warned him that dinner would be off in a quarter of an hour. He hurried through a meal. It was absurd how anxious he was to get across. The long wait for the mails at Holyhead would be dreadful. He was sure he couldn't sleep. He should have taken the later train. He nodded over a book in his corner seat. It was some sort of game of which he had lost the key, this taking the Greenore train for the Kingstown boat. The light from the ceiling made a curious pattern on the moving lips and beard of the man opposite. Voices seemed to come from long distances.

"Carson will teach 'em."

"Nothing will ever teach the Irish."

One of the voices was the man opposite talking into his beard, and there was a grotesque shadow of the other. It was like a game of battledore and shuttlecock played with sharp, staccato words.

"Not a foot of Ulster soil, I say."

"If we can keep the six counties, perhaps——"

"No, not a foot, I say. We must have the nine."

"There's talk of only four counties."

"I'm loyal to my King and the Orange flag, but if the English did that I'd turn machine-guns on 'em."

Jim tried to rouse himself. They were Orangemen, and the point of view might be interesting. But he nodded again.

"The country is going to the dogs in any case. Devils of Radicals—gave a judgeship to a Nationalist and a papist. One couldn't expect justice from such people." There was a series of rumbles, a blank, and then:

"Let the southern Protestants stew in their own juice, I say. They're not Protestants at all—no backbone in 'em, a weak-kneed, milk-and-water lot of givers in."

"Plunkett? I always suspected Plunkett. No man could appear to be so reasonable and not have a cloven hoof."

"Ssh!"

"Who cares? But he's asleep, anyway."

And as if it were a hypnotic suggestion he fell asleep. At Crewe the sudden stillness of a stoppage made him hear the man in the beard profess a readiness to "die in the last ditch." At Chester the shadow had become vehement on the six-county solution. Ulster had become the Key of Empire in the Menai tubular bridge. A harsh shout of "Greenore boat, Greenore boat," broke in on a dream in which Carson and Redmond, their arms about one another's necks, waving unsteady champagne glasses, were singing at the top of their voices, "Orange and Green will carry the

day!" Jim rubbed his eyes and stared wonderingly at his two companions, who stood, bags in hands, and apparently very angry, waiting for the train to stop.

"God spews the lukewarm out of His mouth," the man with the beard muttered. The shadow, who was a mild man turned passionate, said heatedly, but with an effort at sarcasm:

"God is an Orange gentleman and not a bravo."

"You'll rise a better Orangeman after a night's rest, George," the bearded man said more mildly.

"I don't want more than the six, and I'll have no less if I slept for a hundred years," the mild-looking man said in a determined tone.

When the train stopped both turned to Jim and said pleasantly, "Good-night," the bearded man adding: "You had a fine sleep, sir. We were rather wakeful, but we wiled away the time with a friendly little chat over politics. It'd be a dreary world without it."

From the platform, as the train moved off towards the Kingstown boat, Jim heard in the mild man's voice:

"I'm as good an Orangeman as you are, Sam, but if every drum in Ulster was banged in my ears I'll not yield on the six."

Jim lounged about the empty compartment, examining the photographs of Irish scenery. Did Englishmen ever get excited over politics? In a way, yes. But calmly, as if certain of their assured position in the sun. He regretted that he had not listened more attentively. Prosperous business men, he decided, and they discussed not shop but politics from London to Holyhead. His grandfather was the same. He carried Ireland with him everywhere, sat unmoved amid historic monuments and the most beautiful scenery in Europe till he came across some peasant who in an American or Cockney accent revealed another Ireland, generally under Austrian rule. Then only did the place

live. Was it something in his own blood that made him somewhat similar? Made him such an autochthonous devil, as Phipps said, made him take the history school after Greats because history might throw some light on Ireland? What was history but a record of prejudice? One got from it what one brought to it. Froude and Lecky were to him handbooks of revolution—Froude only made the facts more glaring by his bias. Yet Phipps found in every English effort salve for the marvellous English conscience—the effulgent sun shining on half the world could ignore its spots. . . .

He asked the steward to call him when land was sighted; and it seemed that he had only turned over on his pillow when he heard:

“Land, sir,” and the steward was standing at the side of the berth, with tea on an outstretched tray.

He saw Ireland first as a grey trail on the horizon, scarcely distinguishable from the soft haze. A hill or two soon stood out more solidly. He tried to identify them. No, he had never really seen them before. Fifteen years ago he had looked at them from the deck of, perhaps, this very boat, looking back then instead of forward, but he hadn't seen them. He had looked as an excuse for keeping his face hidden from his mother, but everything had been a mere blur. All the more as his whole attention had been bent on the effort, not quite successful, of keeping the tears in his eyes from betraying themselves in his voice.

As the sun rose higher out of the sea in the wake of the boat the thin curtain of mist seemed to waver and break. Suddenly he remembered his mother's voice, her very words. The islands were Lambay and Ireland's Eye, and the bold headland was Howth. The smoke smudge in the flat was Dublin. Bray Head was the sentinel on the left. The blaze of glittering light between was the series of little terraced towns, Dalkey, Killiney, Kingstown, Blackrock, their

windows reflecting the sun. They danced—seemed even to sing from sheer joy and happiness. For a moment he had a choking sensation in his throat, a mist seemed to have again shut out the light and colour. He shrugged his shoulders, murmured “pish,” went below, and busied himself with his luggage.

A fat woman blocked his way to the gangway. “My heart is all a-flutter, ma’am,” she confided to a dried-up little woman who seemed to resent the confidence. “‘It’s not Margate this year, Joan, my lass,’ my ’usband says to me. ‘It’s Ireland,’ he said. ‘If you’re bent on a foreign land, John,’ I said, ‘why not make it Dieppe where the natives aren’t more savage than you might expect, and the sands’d remind you of Margate.’ Not but what John himself is a mild man—nothing wild or savage in his ways, though he comes from Ireland. ‘Tugging at his heart-strings,’ he said it was after thirty-four years, and Ireland it had to be, my dear.”

On the quay Jim bought an *Irish Times* and a *Freeman’s Journal* with a feeling that “tugging at one’s heart-strings” was not a far-fetched image.

“You’ve both sides there, your honour,” the old news-vendor said, “but if you want ’em more bitter here’s the *Daily Express* and *Sinn Fein*.”

Jim was satisfied with the milder brew and read “The Blessings of British Civilization” in one paper, and “The Blight of English Rule” in the other, as the train jolted to Westland Road. Instead of going round to Kingsbridge by the loop-line, on the advice of a porter he took an outside car across the city “to enjoy the fresh air.” Having crossed the lower end of Stephen’s Green the driver plunged through a network of rough cobbled streets, noisome, with dilapidated, frowsy houses on either side. Jim protested against the route, but the driver explained with a grin: “It’s the way I always take the English. Sure it does ’em good.”

"I'm not English."

"Hear that now," the driver said, unconvinced. "It's making fun of me your honour is."

"No."

"It's, maybe, one of them Liberals you are that's promising us some sort of Home Rule, devil's skewer to it."

"I'm Irish."

"Sure it's tired your honour must be then of seeing Trinity and the Bank," the driver said lightly. "And the air of the Liffey is a bit heavy on tender nostrils at this time of the morning and the tide out. Sure there's no loss on this way at all, and I'll take you through Francis Street where the gentry used to live in the old times."

It was Naples from Ischia, of which, Jim decided, the view from the boat had dimly reminded him. And these foul streets were like the back streets of Naples over which the dead hand of the Bourbons still lingered, only less dignified.

"It's the fine houses them used to be before the Union," the driver said tentatively.

"Indeed," Jim said.

"I once drove Sir Edward Carson himself in this very car," the driver said, making another effort.

"You've got a good horse," Jim said.

The driver's face brightened hopefully. "But sure it's John Redmond is the flahool man. It's never less than a two-shilling piece he ever proffered me for a drive within the boundary. And more than once it was half-a-crown itself, and he maybe only going from Westland Row to his own house in Leeson Park."

But Jim was again thinking of Scarty and made no response. The driver whipped up his horse with a despairing murmur, "There'd be more foolish talk in him if he was English. But sorra one of me's sure what side he's on and it's seldom it failed me. He's that dark he's not unlike

one of them Orangemen I'd sometimes be driving to Amiens Street."

He softened, however, under the tip, and said fervently, "God put your honour on the right road anyway, though it's there you are already, maybe, with the help of God."

The train flew swiftly along the wooded river valley and was well out on the rolling plain of Kildare by the time Jim had finished breakfast. The names of stations as they seemed to fly past awakened half-forgotten memories: Leixlip, where the bitter-tongued Jennings sister congratulated James Stuart on having won the race when he complained that the Irish had run away; "the Curragh of Kildare, the boys will all be there, with their pikes in good repair;" Silken Thomas. There was a thrill even in seeing names of places he had heard so much of. He opened a map and traced out the familiar names. They seemed to be part of him—to live in his memory.

"It's your first visit, sir," his one companion in the compartment, a florid-faced man of about fifty, who had for some time been fidgeting with his newspaper, said pleasantly.

"In a way, yes."

"Not a fellow official by any chance? I belong to the Land Commission."

"I suppose I am an official—a novice though, and I've shed it all for two months. Not an Irish official; I come from London," Jim said, with an effort to anticipate some of the questions he saw coming.

"I knew it. You worried me a bit at first. He has the cut of one of us, I said to myself. But the moment you spoke I saw you were English. My name is Jackson. I know most of the men from the other Departments and couldn't place you. Of course new men bob up every day now, thick as blackberries, but you're not exactly the type—queer lot some of 'em. We can breathe here to-day, but

as a rule we fill the first-class carriages. Last night there were twelve passengers in the saloon carriage coming up—eleven of 'em Government officials, and the twelfth doubtful. The railway companies ought to pay us a heavy commission for swelling their dividends. 'Pon my soul, though, some of these new fellows should be made to travel third. God be with the good old days when all Irish officials belonged to our class. But nowadays I expect one of 'em at any moment to spit on the floor. It's a serious state of affairs, but what can you expect with a Liberal Government? I've two sons growing up myself, and they'll probably have to go to the colonies. You have to pass examinations for the Civil Service in England I suppose?"

"As a rule, I believe," Jim said.

"That's the devil of it," Jackson said gloomily. "Just like a second-class clerk here. And my boys weren't brought up to it. Any decent Government would recognize the people who have a claim. My family have filled responsible positions in Ireland for two generations—got a job for the asking, I might say. No damned examinations—it ran in their blood. Set them down anywhere in a job with any decent sort of screw—it didn't matter what position—Clerk of the Peace, Secretary to a Grand Jury, Resident Magistrate, Local Government Inspector, a commissionership or the like—they drew their pay with credit to themselves and to England. But to-day—with so many new jobs going, too—my dear sir, it's enough to make a loyalist sick. And to think what we've done for this damned country. But, please God, we'll have a Tory Government back again some day. Though even they're not what they were," he added with a deep sigh. "Going far, sir?"

"Lisgeela."

"You're a lucky man. I'd rather my work'd bring me there than to any other part of the country, though I manage to

pick up a day's fishing in most places. You have a rod, I see. An Owneybeg salmon, sir, is something to remember. Nothing like 'em on the Breedeen, where I'm dividing land to-day, but a Breedeen salmon isn't bad, either, and I may get a few even in weather like this. I'm getting out here. It's been very pleasant meeting you. Who knows but I may come across you some day in Lisgeela. We've some trouble down there. Oh, no, not with the salmon, thank God," he added with a laugh, in reply to Jim's inquiring glance. "Only over land. The Scovell estate. The sale is held up by an old agitator with one leg in the grave. I'm sorry for Scovell, of course, but if those things must happen, let it be near a good salmon river I pray. And there are worse hotels than the Daly Arms. You change at Ballybawn. A pleasant journey to you."

He waved a friendly hand from the platform. Jim remembered Phipps and his jibes, and laughed as the train moved off. All Irishmen were autochthonous. There were no such differences between Irishmen of any class or creed as between Irishmen and Englishmen. Uncle Silas and this Jackson were so like Susan Roche. Even the Orangemen in the boat train had more in common with the Catholic peasant than with Phipps or the average Englishman. And he himself felt at home with the jarvey. What made the Irish-English Irish and not English? Climate, propinquity, the inevitable mixture of race behind the other influences? The two-nation theory was a bogey. Catholic and Protestant in Ulster were, racially, as like as two peas. Many of the most violent Orangemen were Irish Celts, once Catholic, now Protestant. The others, Scotch-Irish and English, had become North-Irish Celts in temperament. Wealth was no key to the problem. Protestants everywhere in Ireland were no more industrious than Catholics. In Rathvalley glen Catholic peasants tilled a barren hillside with an industry unsurpassed by the hardest workers

in Europe. Neither history nor biology was responsible for the myth of the Protestant industrious apprentice. It grew entirely from the vanity of a privileged class. Privilege gave the Protestant in Ireland power and position, but it flattered him to attribute his superiority to virtues of character and race. Protestants had got all the best land: Catholics were driven on to the waste lands and bogs to starve or live as best they could. Protestants had been protected in their prosperity; Catholics harassed in their pitiful struggle for life by every ingenious device of oppression. . . . Even the industries of the North were only a happy accident.

The rolling grass lands had become stained here and there with patches of brown. The vivid green now gave way altogether to dingy tracts of low-lying arable which were soon lost in the golden brown of an immense stretch of bog-land. The train drew up at Ballybawn on the outskirts of the bog.

"Ballybawn, Ballybawn. Change here for Droosky and all stations on the Droosky line. Be careful that you don't lose yourselves. The first train doesn't stop anywhere at all. The next train pulls up everywhere," a porter bawled at the top of his voice.

"The express surely stops at Droosky?" an excited tourist asked.

"Amn't I after telling you it does," the porter said, scratching his head. "Is it into the Atlantic it'd go? Though it does that same an odd time when Tim Clancy, the driver, has a drop of drink in him. But sure the salt water never gives anyone a cold. It cheers 'em up, the poor creatures," he added confidentially to Jim as he collected his luggage. "They expect something after their long journey, maybe from Manchester or Birmingham, and it's little in the way of entertainment there is to offer them. Sure the people can't be always shooting landlords to

please 'em, and I'm worn out inventing outrages. Not but what Tim Clancy'd have my life if he heard that I put the name of the drink on him, and he one of them teetotal cranks. Well now, just think of that," he went on, gazing abstractedly at an incoming train. "If that isn't the slow train after beating out the express. It's sorry I am to discommode your honour, but you must run for it."

Jim and his luggage, amid the excitement of station-master, guard, and several porters, were bundled into a compartment, empty but for one passenger. His porter hung on to the footboard as the train moved off.

"Left behind you'd be," he explained, "only I told the guard that you were the son of the chairman of the line. It's making a record he is to-day, and he only ten minutes late, and he's trying to keep it up. The top of the morning to you, miss. Sure I didn't see you, and you hid there behind the paper. Old Ireland for ever, and more power to your silver tongue. 'Tis you that's able to put the fear o' God into the Sassenachs."

Jim's eyes met the woman's eyes for a moment—blue, of an infinite depth, calm, slightly mocking, half questioning, half condemnatory. He was being judged and condemned. But for what?

"I fear he has thrown my things on some of yours," he said, lifting a bag on to the rack.

"The English possess the land," she said with what she may have meant for contempt. The slight curl of the short upper lip disclosed pearly teeth. It was as if a rose expanded for a moment and showed the white at the centre. She lowered her eyes and fixed them on her newspaper. He took his seat in the corner diagonally opposite. The porter was wrong about her tongue. Silver was too sharp and tinkling for such charm of sound. There was gold in the hair under the boat-shaped hat that accentuated the slight tilt in her nose, the curve of the upper lip and the

firm rounded chin; gold in the few freckles which she seemed to wear for effect, as eighteenth century beauties wore patches, on the cool ivory tan of her face. It was not tan at all. It was some miracle of the sun that preserved all the warmth beneath. The blue in her hat, and of the linen coat and skirt, fitted to her figure, was a vivid splash of colour against the brown of the bog. Autochthonous, too? What had such radiant beauty to do with politics? What a wonderful effect the long curled eyelashes had on her face.

"The winds blow politics in Ireland," he said maliciously.

"They sing liberty to slaves," she said, letting the paper fall on her knees.

"I haven't seen any," he said with an effort to conceal his admiration.

"The English see nothing anywhere but the perfection of their own rule," she said demurely.

An obvious retort tempted him, but he left it unsaid. It would, at least, be premature. So, he was English again. He would be a Turk or a Hottentot if it only made her talk.

"Slaves?" he said meditatively. "Since I've left London I've met an Orangeman who hypothetically cursed England, a news vendor who sold me the newspapers he thought good for me, a jarvey who drove me where I didn't want to go, a masterly railway porter——"

"And a Sinn Feiner whom you English put in jail," she said proudly.

"You?" he said incredulously.

"Me," she nodded. "I bashed a policeman of course. But then he shouldn't have tried to arrest me. All I said was that no nation on earth touched the English for hypocrisy and perjury."

There was fire now in the blue depths of her eyes. How

any policeman could have arrested her! But that Irish policeman was clever. He had the pleasure of being bashed by her and of bearing her off to the lock-up. Indignation made her the more irresistible. If he could only keep that look on her face.

"Rather hard on a Government that's doing its best to pass Home Rule," he said with a judicial air.

"A Liberal?" she murmured with a look, and in a tone that seemed to lay him bare as some vile thing on a dissecting table. "Thank God the Sinn Feiners aren't hypnotized like Redmond and his people. *We* know what the word of Englishmen is worth. They promise freely enough when they are in difficulties and then edge out of performance."

"The Land Act?"

"They fatten their slaves in order to tax them higher."

"Can nothing good come out of England?"

"Nothing," she said vehemently. "I trust the Liberals even less than I trust the Tories. The Tories hate us, but the Liberals patronize us. I prefer hate to patronage. One would think we were naughty children or slaves."

"But you said you are slaves."

"No doubt you think we are," she said with a regal indifference, again taking up her newspaper.

He took out a book and tried to read, but found himself looking at her again. Two parsons, one a dean, got in at Ballyvore. She nodded to both coldly, but the dean insisted on shaking hands, saying with a laugh:

"My dear lady, though you have been in jail you mustn't be too proud. I christened you, you know. When the evil day comes you'll give me warning, or sprinkle my doorposts, or whatever the republican way of exempting one from destruction is?"

His companion said "Humph."

The dean laughed. "Lefroy comes from the North and takes these things seriously. We know better," he said with a smile at the now indignant young woman.

"Mr. Facing-both-ways," she said impudently.

"A good definition of Mr. Dean," the dean said lightly. "Lefroy would agree with you there. A dean is a ridiculous person, stoned at once by the bishop and the chapter. But then, I control the structure. Don't force me to fly the republican flag," he said in mock horror.

"I shall send you one. Who knows how soon you may need it," she said with a malicious glance at the horror-stricken Lefroy.

"The Union Jack is the emblem of our King and country," Lefroy said indignantly.

"I always thought it was the Orange party rag," she said innocently.

"Lefroy dots all his i's," the dean said suavely. "But how are your good father and most excellent mother? Not exactly approving, eh?"

"A state of truce with me, but otherwise as obstinate as ever."

"The tenants haven't given in? Your influence in that direction would be most meritorious."

"I stopped 'em painting the cattle green—it was cruel to the animals, as they licked the paint and it made 'em ill. But dad must fight his own land battles. He ought to be grateful that I don't take to the platform against him. But it would make things a little more strained at home, and my friends are tolerant and don't expect it. I did advise them," with a smile at Lefroy, "to practise some of the Orange virtues. 'No Surrender' had immense success."

Lefroy seemed to threaten apoplexy. His lips worked painfully. Before he could find expression for his deep feeling the dean interfered gently.

"But you'll excuse us, my dear lady; I promised Lefroy

to discuss with him matters in connection with the Sustentation Fund."

The girl again took up her paper. Once when he looked at her Jim caught her eyes fixed on him. She turned over the paper impatiently and frowned. There was something vaguely familiar about the frown, something about the set of her eyebrows and the rather petulant lips that recalled some memory. Had he ever seen her before? He shut his eyes and tried to remember. Scraps of the parsons' conversation reached him. The dean severely, "My dear fellow, one must live. What if the man is broke? You won't get your full contribution from the fund otherwise. Fifty pounds you say? Keep his name down by all means. It's done every day."

A hoarse whisper from Lefroy. "Do you think she'll become a pervert in religion as well as in loyalty?"

The train slowed down. "It's been delightful to have this pleasure, Miss Diana," the dean said effusively.

"Good-bye, Miss Scovell," Lefroy said heavily. "May God direct you."

"I'm blessed," Jim murmured under his breath. "She—and a rebel."

3.

Jim forgot his luggage in watching her progress down the platform. The only two porters were in smiling attendance. A smiling stationmaster, cap in hand, hung by her side. Passengers, taking the train for Droosky, waited by the doors to salute and smile as she passed. A one-legged beggar, supporting himself against a lamp-post, called out, with a magnificent sweep of his battered hat, "More power to you, Miss Diana." A grim, bearded man, who had smiled and saluted with the others, asked, "Miss Diana who?"

"Miss Diana, of course. Sure the whole world knows her—Miss Diana Scovell," a frieze-coated young farmer said in a tone of wondering contempt, his eyes glowing.

"Her?" the bearded man said, with a condemnatory frown.

"Have you anything to say agin her?" the farmer asked aggressively.

"No, no," the bearded man said hastily. "She's a most attractive young lady."

"It's well for you," the young man said in a disappointed tone. "There's many a man in the town of Lisgeela'd have hit you at once for putting that face on you," he added, as if regretting his own moderation.

"Your luggage, I think, sir?" the dean said with a tolerant smile. "There's not much use waiting for a porter, with Miss Diana about. Since she's been to jail she's become a sort of royal personage—the local Joan of Arc."

"She's very beautiful," Jim said.

"That, too, of course," the dean said with ironic suavity, helping with the luggage.

The train moved off. Jim, standing beside his luggage, again sought the lissom blue figure. She was standing by the booking office door talking, with a flushed eager face, to a tall, thin, white-haired priest, her attendants, now increased by all the station loungers, hanging back in a smiling half circle. A dull cloud obscured the sun, but her vivid face seemed to radiate its brightness not only on the group of people around her, but on the dingy station buildings—transfigured them, Jim thought. She looked towards him for a moment. The priest turned round and stared at him. The stationmaster took a bag from one of the porters, who started towards Jim with a run.

"Sure if we only knew it was you, it's not left standing like this you'd be," he said, seizing a luggage truck and pulling it towards Jim by one handle. "Sure it's hard to

have an eye for anyone but Miss Diana, may God bless her, Protestant and all. Though it's loth she'd be herself to leave Pierce Daly's grandson stranded high and dry on the platform without anyone to carry his bags. 'It's to meet Mr. Jim Daly I came,' says Father Lysaght after talking about this and that. 'Then it's him I must have come down with,' Miss Diana says, flustered like. 'Gimme them things, Davie Mulcahy, and run for your life,' says Mr. Duffy the stationmaster, and off I hopped like a hare. Sure you must remember me, Mr. Jim? 'Tis often you let drive at me with a switch and I hooshing after your pony down the Tubber road, and you coming in and out to school at the college—Davie Mulcahy."

"Perfectly," Jim said with decision, his eyes fixed on the blue figure now disappearing through the station door.

He sighed and looked at the porter who was grinning broadly, his white teeth gleaming against a freckled face almost as red as the shock of hair protruding from under his cap in front.

"Oh, yes, of course," Jim said struggling with a memory. "Davie Mulcahy." It was not the name he remembered, but the mischievous eyes and the freckles and the carrot hair. It all came back in a flash.

"It was you who frightened Crabbit into Spillane's shop," he laughed.

"The very one—and him trampling the baskets of potatoes and apples and the like all round the floor; and Mr. Spillane, God rest his soul, raging like a lion, and you following me down the road at full gallop as mad as a hatter, till I legged it over the wall into Mick Tracey's garden. It was great entirely—and my mother leathering me when I got home for leaving the seat of my breeches atop of the wall," Mulcahy said delightedly.

"Hullo, Jim. Do you know me, boy?"

"I'd know your voice anywhere, Father James," Jim said, turning round and taking the priest's outstretched hand. "You haven't changed in the least."

"You won't see my grey hairs, and you can't see my rheumatism. Well, well, to think that this giant of a man is Jim. I never felt old till this minute. I used to pat your head almost without lifting my arm, and now I have to look up at you," the priest said huskily. "Hurry with the things on to my car, Mulcahy. I'm coming with you, Jim."

As they drove through the town Jim tried to adjust his memory to what he saw. Liskeague seemed to have shrunk and grown shabbier. Tawdry new buildings emphasized the meanness of the old. In the main street a glaring red-brick bank made an ugly blotch of colour against the softer pinks and greys and drabs of the older houses. The new plate glass and mahogany shop-front of Mallon's made the house behind it the more dingy. Andrews' confectionery gave him a shock—was his memory of the cakes as unreal as his memory of the shop? The new convent vied in ugliness with the lunatic asylum and the new Presbytery with Delaney's terra-cotta pub, which might have been designed by the owner in a fit of delirium tremens.

"And that?" Jim asked, pointing to a pile of gimcrack villa Gothic.

"The new college," Father Lysaght said. "The bishop is letting himself go in stone and mortar."

"I suppose it's progress," Jim said wryly.

"When they made Macdonald a Monsignor he wasn't satisfied till he got a new college," the priest said with a shrug. "He has a couple of priests helping him now to do nothing—professors they call 'em."

The Tubber Road, a draggled streamer of grass-grown, rotting thatch and green, slimy walls, trailed off into the plain.

"The Church seems to have the best of it," Jim said with a laugh. "My grandfather used to be pretty hard on you for screwing the people so much."

"Since Deehan missed the Archbishopric he's grown more Nationalist," the priest said meditatively. "It annoys the Government and the Vatican, no doubt, but he has given up expecting anything more from them. He's all for pleasing the people now—within limits—and they let him have his fling. He helps them a little with Home Rule and they give him a plaything or two."

"The Church hasn't much in common with democracy," Jim said.

"Sorra much."

"Does Deehan really want Home Rule?"

"I'm no good at conundrums," Father Lysaght said drily. "He mayn't have much fear of Home Rule coming, or he may be a better Irishman than he's a churchman in his old age. Even a bishop, Jim, is a man first and last, and it's hard to plumb any man's heart."

Jim lost all interest in the bishop at the sight of thin spirals of smoke ascending through the trees ahead—beech and oak and elm and the two black cedars on the lawn, and the giant fir near the garden gate. For a moment there was a white gleam through the thick leaves; then chimney flues and a strip of brown thatch. At last, with an ache at his heart he saw the house, with masses of late crimson roses and purple clematis glowing against the white of the walls. The juniper hedge glistening in the sun, a solitary bird note, the drowsy hum of bees, brilliant red admirals and peacocks flitting over the cool green of the sward or adding to the blaze of colour in the beds, the deep shadows under the trees, the gleam of the river beyond, reproduced a memory he had carried with him in all his wanderings for fifteen years. Everything was the same, except the drive to the stable, which was no longer

grass-grown. The scene absorbed him, yet when he spoke it was of nothing in his conscious thoughts:

"It's odd about the Scovell girl being a Nationalist."

"She's a fine girl, Miss Diana," Father Lysaght said, urging the horse up the slight incline to the gate. "What's odd about it? Isn't she an Irishwoman? There's Tom Durkan holding the gate open; he wasn't here in your time."

"I've heard all about him from my grandfather," Jim said with a smile.

"You would," the priest said grimly. "He keeps Tom as much in order as he does the League. Not a leaf must be changed from how you left it. You must be very nice to your grandfather, Jim," he added gravely. "He's a bit hurt about you going into the Foreign Office."

"It's rather a good joke," Jim said lightly.

"I'm afraid he doesn't take it as a joke. He——"

"A hundred thousand welcomes, Mr. Jim," from Durkan, cut short the priest's explanation.

A trim parlourmaid standing in the porch was violently pushed aside, and Susan Roche, fat, florid and unwieldy, rushed out excitedly. Jim jumped off the car and held out his hand. She gazed at him bewildered, her mouth wide open, then seized his hand and kissed it several times.

"Sure it's the breath you took out of me for a minute," she said joyfully, "and me expecting the gossoon I sent away. Did you ever see a finer figure of a man, Father James, agra? But sure it's signs on him and he always giving the promise of it. Here I am myself, just the same as you left me," she laughed, generously ignoring an additional four stone of superabundant flesh, "and with all the changes about the place, sure you're the biggest of 'em all yourself. I'll be bound you won't find the place any cleaner, and we having a parlourmaid and a housemaid no less this many a year to help other to dirty it. God be with the good old times when I hadn't to clean up after them. It's

a favour you'd think the mistress was proffering me when she brought them into the house with their caps and aprons and all; a heart scald they are to me day and night. And Tom Durkan doing the boots and knives the way I'd be ashamed of doing 'em in my sleep."

Father Lysaght, with an impatient shrug, entered the porch. Jim made a movement to follow, but Susan put her hand on his arm. "Let him go, alannāh," she whispered with an elaborate screwing of her lips and eyes. "Sure I was only marking time, till I made his reverence tired of my old talk. 'Tis a private word I wanted all along to have with yourself alone. Run away now, Peggy, like a good girl, and be helping Tom Durkan to bring in them bits of things."

She waited till the parlourmaid had disappeared with a bag.— "It's hoarse in the throat I'm making myself, talking to your mother about it," she said in an earnest whisper. "But sorra'd one of her'd budge an inch. It's not common sense, she'd say, after me wearing out my tongue to no purpose. The poor mistress! as if common sense would move man or mortal to anything good or bad."

"What is it?" Jim asked patiently.

"Amn't I leading up to it? It's the master. Sure it's the heart that's broke in your grandfather, Mister Jim, and you a Government man. Didn't I turn my back on my own sister's son ten years ago and he disgracing me by being made a peeler. 'Tis well I know what Mr. Pierce must be feeling and his own blood doing something of the kind. Sure I'd have it against you myself only my heart is as soft as dough at the very thought or sight of you."

"If *you* don't mind then nothing else matters," Jim said airily.

"The same obstinate set of the jaw that all the Dalys have," Susan muttered half reproachfully, as she watched him rush down the narrow hall to meet his mother who

had come in from the river front. "Sure they never heed one another to say that he'd heed the likes of me."

"At last," his mother said pushing him back a little, her hands on his shoulders. "What does it feel like, Jim?"

He screwed his lips and glanced whimsically at the low ceiling which his head almost touched.

"Like a plant wrenched from its pot when it's been put back again—feeling round trying to make out what it all means. But it's more restful than the other thing. Hallo, a grey hair; let's have it up."

"Poor old Jim. You felt like that all the time?" she said sadly as he fiddled with her hair.

"Not I. I enjoyed every minute of it. There, that's better. It's younger you get you know."

"I'm forty-seven."

"Fibber. We were born the same day."

She blushed like a young girl, looked at him keenly, and removed her hands from his shoulders.

"I did it all for the best," she said with a sigh.

"Of course you did—and it has been for the best, and it is," he said with a firm set of his jaw. "And now what's all this nonsense about my grandfather? Where is he?"

"Under the cedar tree. Father James is with him. But we must have a talk about him first. Let me show you your room and the house."

They wandered about from room to room. It was all changed, but it was still the same—not a jarring note anywhere. The picture rails had not been there before, but they were just right and gave height to the low rooms. The old furniture was all there. Jolly good it was too—must have been bought by his great-great-grandmother Edwardes.

"Ever hear of an Edwardes in the family?" he asked.

His mother knitted her smooth brow.

"Your grandfather's grandmother on his mother's side," she said with a smile.

"Right. Dick Edwardes told me all about it. He's a descendant, too. Was up all the time with me and claimed the attenuated relationship as we were coming down. I'm going to see him—somewhere near Belfast—Castle Edwardes. Orange, with a streak of Balliol, though his people are the real thing. Says they'll hang me for a Croppy. If my grandfather doesn't hang me first for a traitor," he laughed.

"You've heard then?" she said, blenching a little.

He laughed again. "Don't you worry. You told me twenty times that month in Munich—by not telling me. And your letters—my young mumsy is as clear as crystal when she tries subterfuge. And his not coming since I got the nomination—not even to Laibach which he longed to see. Besides, Father James gave me a hint, and Susan has already fired a broadside."

She sat down in the armchair in his bedroom, clasped and unclasped her hands. Through the window he saw the cedar tree and a table laid for luncheon. Father Lysaght was standing by the table, rubbing his chin with his right hand and speaking earnestly to his grandfather, who was half hidden by a swaying branch.

"I hurt my father, and now I have hurt your grandfather, who's more than a father to me," she said in a flat monotone.

"Your father hurt you, you mean?" Jim said quietly.

"I'm morbid to think of him now. For that was something I couldn't avoid. I would do it all over again tomorrow with full knowledge of the consequences. I couldn't regret it no matter how hard I tried. But this is different. I foresaw the danger from the first. But I built on his affection for you, for me. It wasn't as if your going into the Foreign Office was something inevitable like

my marriage with your father. That was fate, destiny, what you will, and I was ordering only my own life. But *you're* another matter," She paused, her eyes fixed on the cedar tree.

Jim was distressed. He wriggled from foot to foot, and, when he noticed it, stood rigid, watching his mother intently. This was the first sign of weakness he had ever seen in her. He would give anything to save her one twitch of her long nervous fingers. If he could only shift the worry somehow from her shoulders to his own.

"I shouldn't have sent you into the Foreign Office," she said miserably. "But it wasn't a mere whim. I had something more in view than giving you a job or a position. Behind it was a vague dream that perhaps some day you'd help to break down barriers—built only on ignorance and misunderstanding—between England and Ireland I mean."

"Are *you* sorry I'm in the Foreign Office?" he asked gently.

She hesitated. "No; I'm not. I'm sorry for your grandfather, and I'm a little afraid of you. It would be different if you had chosen it yourself."

"But I did choose it," he said firmly. "We must straighten out this tangle, mother. I owe you more than I can ever tell you. You've sacrificed the best part of your life to me. But if you wanted me to leave the Foreign Office there'd be a row. I went there because I wanted to, and I mean to stay there—for the present, at least."

She stared at him, a little bewildered, but he returned her look unflinchingly.

"I intended it from the very first—I did my best to influence you," she said falteringly.

"Then you were as wise in that as in everything else," he said, stroking her hair. "My grandfather doesn't blame *you*, I suppose?"

"No, he doesn't blame me," she said listlessly.

She had got what she wanted—yet it seemed a defeat. This was some new Jim whom she didn't know. Her boy had slipped away from her, and in his place was this man with set lips. In a moment their relations had changed. What was it she had lost? It wasn't his love. She could see it in his eyes, and feel it in the touch of his fingers on her hair. She couldn't live if it was otherwise. Nothing mattered, not her father-in-law, not anything as long as she held his love. Yes, she saw it all now. Thank God it had come without any conflict of will. The pained feeling gradually ebbed away and only joy remained. He stood apart from her now, a man. The colour again came back to the day and she gave a glad sigh. She had escaped some horrible danger. Had their relations not only been changed but reversed, she should be glad.

"It's that silly bed," she said, standing up. "None of us seems to have realized how you'd grown. I must have it changed."

"It is rather short," he said ruefully. "Shall I face my grandfather now?"

"Let's," she said with a sigh.

But she lingered on the way, hanging on his approval. When he said the little Paul Brill was jolly good, she showed all the pleasure of having painted it herself.

Jim felt some change in her. She had grown younger. She was really more beautiful than Miss Scovell—in a different way of course. If she hadn't pitched him into the damned Foreign Office she'd be perfect.

"You'll be nice to him?" she said, pressing his arm as they walked across to the cedar tree.

"Why, of course," he said grimly.

He could not take his eyes off his grandfather's, of which he was conscious from the moment he left the door—two pin-points of light under white shaggy eyebrows.

"Hallo, grandfather," he called out, more cheerfully than he felt, when he was halfway across the lawn.

The eyes blinked once, but there was no change in the fierce accusing stare. Jim stood in front of the rush arm-chair, his lips set as tightly as the old man's, his hand stretched out.

Father Lysaght stood by the side of the chair, his lips pursed in a noiseless whistle.

Pierce lowered his eyes, and looked hungrily at the out-stretched hand. With a spasmodic sigh that shook his whole huddled-up body he raised his right hand from where it rested on his knee and touched Jim's hand limply, muttering, "You've disgraced your name."

Suddenly as if the touch had galvanized him, his body became taut, his hand gripped Jim's fingers tightly. He looked up, his lips twitching.

"How are you, boy?" he said fiercely.

"Pretty fit. How are you, grandfather?"

"Poorly—only poorly, and how could I be any other way?" he said, glaring at Jim reproachfully but giving another squeeze to the hand, which he let go reluctantly. His head again sank between his shoulders, but his angry eyes followed Jim's movements.

"Here's luncheon," Arabella said with a sigh of relief.

"I've no appetite for my dinner. How could I and——" Pierce began.

"Well, I have," Father Lysaght interrupted hastily. "I'm as hungry as a wolf."

Pierce watched gloomily the preparation of the table.

"Now, father," Arabella said.

"Well, now that I see it, I'd maybe be able to pick a bone," he said rising with some difficulty. "I'm as firm as ever on my feet; the trouble is to rise to them," he said accepting Jim's help. He kept hold of his hand as they walked to the table and then dropped it suddenly.

"I keep forgetting things," he said with a frown.

"It's by forgetting things that we keep young," Father Lysaght said with a laugh. "I forget my rheumatism whenever I can. When I'm out here I forget that I'm a sort of perpetual curate with the bishop's foot always on my neck."

"You don't forget your country," Pierce said, pausing in carving a chicken, and glaring at Jim.

"I would and welcome if you'd only give me a drumstick or something to forget it with. And there's Jim as hungry as a hawk after his long journey. But with all our forgetting, we mustn't forget that he's a sort of a stranger and a guest among us all."

Pierce said "Humph," but he carved more quickly.

"Did you bring your rod with you, Jim?" he asked quietly, after a while.

"Yes."

"A salmon wouldn't rise to a fly in an August like this unless he did it in a dream," Pierce said, his stern face relaxing into a smile. "Anyhow I warned Con Driscoll that you'd be coming about now, and he's keeping his bank warm for you."

"It's rumoured that the Tullyfin tenants are settling with Scovell," Father Lysaght said tentatively.

"There's many a thing rumoured," Pierce said placidly. "But not a Tullyfin tenant 'll buy till Con Driscoll releases him, and Con'll make no sign till I give the word."

"It's a great strain on Miss Diana to be living in the house and this fight going on, seeing the side she's on," Father Lysaght said thoughtfully, fingering a wineglass. "I saw her at the station to-day and she wasn't looking—well, as well as one might expect."

Jim wondered vaguely if it were possible to paint the lily.

"She's an Irishwoman for you," Pierce said admiringly.

"It's the inside of a jail she's under a compliment for to the English Government. That's the only job she'd take at their hands."

"It's into her coffin ye might send her if ye go on worrying her," Father Lysaght said gravely.

"She told Con Driscoll she didn't give a thraneen one way or another," Pierce said stiffly.

"That's the sort of girl she is—to go on grieving her heart out in secret till the harm is done," Father Lysaght said with a shrug. "And what's between ye after all? Scovell asked twenty-two years' purchase, and he's come down to twenty. The tenants offered sixteen and have gone up to seventeen. As Miss Diana said to me to-day, the sporting thing to do would be to split the difference."

"She said that?"

"Or words to that effect," Father Lysaght said with a shrug of indifference.

"Would Derek Scovell take eighteen and a half?"

"He would."

"Then I won't break her word," Pierce said with a sigh of relief. "You can tell Mallon from me that he can settle at that, and I'll send word to Con Driscoll. To tell you the truth, since Miss Diana went to jail I'd be glad to be quit of it. I saw her pass by a few minutes before you came and she never looked better, with all your 'words to that effect.' I suppose Derek came to you or the bishop?"

"He might," Father Lysaght said imperturbably.

"He was always a hasty man," Pierce said with a quavering chuckle. "If he'd only waited another two days we'd have gone up a year to eighteen and then the split 'd have been at nineteen, which was what I always intended to give. Have a glass of wine with me, Jim, boy."

4.

Derrylinn, Simon Lentaigne said, was an indiscretion of his youth. . His father had spent the dowry of his wife in building on to a beautiful Queen Anne house elaborate French Gothic stabling and out offices. At twenty-one Simon spent the accumulations of a long minority in pulling down the Queen Anne house and building an elaborate French Gothic, castellated villa to suit the stabling. Helen Fraser preferred to see in the raw limestone monstrosity an obscure working of Providence, and as Helen Lentaigne she always defended it with spirit. Irish landlords, she explained to Diana Scovell, inherited their ideas with their houses, vegetated for a few years, and died. Simon had killed Queen Anne and all the mouldering traditions of his class at a blow. By a happy impulse he had built a house which gave him artistic dissatisfaction from the first, and sowed that discontent which opened his mind to new ideas. His mind walked, she said. One could trace the steps: in the Constable, which he inherited but clung to; in the Ingres, which was his first reaction from the house; in the Corots and Manets and Monets, in the Dégas and Cezanne; in the Sargent landscape and in his latest purchases—a Tahitian study by Gauguin, and a Matisse. And, of course, to a mind that moved in Ireland, English institutions went the way of the Victorian painters—to the cellar.

“It may have been the salvation of Simon, but it’s beastly ugly,” Diana Scovell said, looking up at the house.

“How far is the kitchen from the dining-room in Daly-house?” Helen Lentaigne asked with a tolerant smile.

“Miles.”

“Then a new house has compensations beyond the salvation of one’s husband’s soul,” Mrs. Lentaigne said cheer-

fully. "There are bathrooms and not makeshifts; and Simon built when servants had begun to be considered as human beings. You're out to kill to-night, Diana. That green and gold with your hair. I thought blue and saffron or something were the new national colours?"

"As if I hadn't outgrown dress," Diana said with a pout at her shoe which matched the dull gold trimming of her dress.

Mrs. Lentaigne glanced ruefully at her own rather full figure. "In our coffins, my dear—perhaps," she said with a sigh. "Even then our souls will be hovering round, worried that we haven't been laid out properly. However," more cheerfully, "black and the powder puff are still a help. And Simon doesn't see me—he sees Helen Fraser."

"Fudge—fishing? But I only pay compliments to plain women," Diana said with an admiring look.

"You dear thing," Mrs. Lentaigne said with a complacent sigh and a pat on Diana's fingers. "You should have come to stay."

"A dinner with Uncle Hamilton is as much as I could stand. What brings him here of all places? The Orange moth singeing his wings on the rebel candle."

"I'm a cousin—he still clings to that rock. And he has a fixed belief that anyone born Orange cannot become permanently insane. He has even a faint hope of you, though as you weren't born in Ulster you're a worse case. Then as Simon hasn't joined a party he's not entirely unregenerate. Poor old Hamilton! He's as uneasy as a clucking hen. He really comes to try and find out what the Liberals are up to. He's in luck this time—we have Patterson, one of the Whips. Takes an interest in Irish policy and hopes to succeed Birrell. If he didn't know so much about Ireland and wasn't for ever airing his knowledge—you know the sort of thing—he'd be quite nice."

"Has he shown you round Derrylinn yet?"

"Worse than that. He knows all our thoughts and motives."

"That kind of prize ass," Diana said with a shrug. "Who else is there?"

"No women but ourselves. De Lacey the Sinn Feiner—you know him. One of Plunkett's young men, Fergus Kane—I think you've met him. The Dean. George Dale, the Redmondite M.P.—warranted not to quarrel with Orangeman or Sinn Feiner. Dick Gazeley—the Meath Gazeleys and a sort of cousin of yours—a moderate Unionist, but firm I think, and the dark horse, Jim Daly."

"Scarty has broken its shell then?"

"Not Arabella—yet anyhow. But she asked me to take the young man off her hands for a few days. Old Pierce is giving him a thin time—flings the Foreign Office in his face a dozen times a day."

"Serves the fop right," Diana said emphatically.

"Fop?" Mrs. Lentaigne said indignantly. "The last thing I'd call him. Good looks—certainly. But his strength saves him. A bit of a Hercules and as hard as nails."

"The superior English type, I mean—patronizing and all that. He tried it on with me—I travelled down with him from Ballybawn."

"You're as prejudiced as old Pierce. The boy has absolutely no side."

"Before I knew who he was I disliked him for being an Englishman."

"And now you dislike him because he isn't. Is that the logic of Sinn Fein?"

"You've a weakness still, Helen, for the logic of the Orange Lodge. I dislike him because he's an Irishman who has taken an English job."

"A Foreign Office clerkship a job? Anyone less like a careerist I've never met. Even Patterson who, like many

Englishmen, confounds life with a career, says Jim has thrown himself away. You don't know what he did at Oxford?"

"Became a prig probably. He wears an English Government label—that's enough for me. Brought up a Nationalist, too, and with such a grandfather!"

"Are you a little Unionist?"

"Anyhow I don't like him," Diana laughed.

"Well, that's a solid reason at last. You're a silly goose, Di. I'm starved. No wonder you're crotchety, dear, at finding dinner put back half an hour. But Mr. Patterson was so anxious to explain Ireland to the Beekawn fishermen that I hadn't the heart to refuse. You must blame him for the delay and not Jim Daly. Let's hope the Beekawn people won't hate me too much for the infliction. Oh, thank God, there's the bell."

"More round-table jabber, I suppose?" Diana said with a shrug, as they made their way to the house.

"I've told you who's here—you know the result," Mrs. Lentaigne said cheerfully. "Simon still hopes for a miracle. Some night during a discordant wrangle a hand will write on the wall a heaven-sent settlement of the Irish question. The wolves will lie down with the lambs and we shall all be happy ever after. What a mercy Simon didn't remake the park when he rebuilt the house," she added, gazing wistfully at the wonderful pattern of black and gold a clump of elms made against the sunset.

"Violence is the only method," Diana said truculently. "Strauss is the only musician I can listen to. Harmony with Uncle Hamilton and the English can only be got through discords. The English will at least pretend to be just if they're only made uncomfortable enough."

"My dear, the complacency of the English is like a stone wall. The sun never sets on their self-satisfaction. They carry the blessings of dulness to the ends of the earth. You

bash your heads, and if they notice you at all you are merely flies out of season."

"You're weakening, Helen. And it was here I learnt that I was Irish."

"It's not the first time that a pupil got out of hand. I'm not weakening, though I suppose I've outgrown the first zeal of the convert. You can't knock down the British Empire with a pop-gun, my dear. But if we only have patience there must be some way of piercing its thick hide or stirring its slow-moving brain. Walls of Jericho don't fall now to the sound of trumpets. And you've only been piping your penny whistle for a year. You won't intimidate England by bashing an Irish policeman."

"I might strangle it with mixed metaphors," Diana said viciously.

Mrs. Lentaigne laughed heartily. "Simon says I'm pretty dreadful. It's the mixture of people I've been entertaining for the last fifteen years, I suppose."

"I explained exactly how they should view it from the economic standpoint," came in a well modulated voice through the open drawing-room windows.

Mrs. Lentaigne tripped up the steps to the churchlike door and paused to take breath, making a grimace at Diana.

"Mr. Patterson again. We must rescue them, Di. Give me a good old Tory rather than a philosophic Rad. Even the Whigs knew better than to treat passion as a sum in arithmetic. It's like curing a lovesick girl by telling her to count ten and draw a long breath."

"I could see the self-evident truth sinking into their minds, slowly but surely taking hold——"

Dean Brereton escaped with a bound and met the women almost at the threshold of the door opening from the hall:

"My dear lady, you basely deserted us. Happily Mr. Patterson filled the gap, in so far as it was humanly possible, by one of his lucid—— But this is too charming,

Diana. You didn't prepare me for this, Mrs. Lentaigne. It will be a pleasure for you, Patterson."

Mrs. Lentaigne murmured an introduction.

"The latest convert to your policy of conciliation," the dean supplemented suavely.

"Were you at the Beekawn meeting?" Patterson asked, a glow of interest in his grey eyes.

"Centrifugal attraction, I am afraid," Simon Lentaigne said with a laugh, taking possession of Diana.

Patterson, a slightly perplexed frown on his self-possessed, clean-shaven, hatchet-like face, looked at the dean, who was gently stroking his silky brown beard.

"She's just come out of jail," the dean said blandly.

"Do explain, Dale," Patterson said to a slenderly built man, who, though in correct evening dress, seemed to have strayed down from the Renaissance through Louis Quinze salons and Georgian withdrawing rooms trilling Sappho and Ronsard and Herrick, the high bridge of his exaggerated Roman nose threatening him with the stake, from which a hint of the dagger and the bowl in his sardonic brown eyes and thin lips had perhaps saved him.

Dale shrugged thin shoulders gracefully, and said, tilting a black eyebrow, "The dean means that you've made her an irreconcilable."

"We? What nonsense. Do be serious, Dale."

"Good Lord. And I've just listened to his speech at Beekawn," Dale said, his white teeth gleaming against the blue-black of his long, narrow face. His lips and nostrils curled in a sneer, but the laughing eyes softened the sting. "Unhappily she doesn't belong to my party. I didn't know you had anything like her, De Lacey. I'm strongly tempted to join you. Who wouldn't follow her? I don't blame the Liberals so much for swallowing their principles and suppressing free speech as for their blindness to beauty. It's enough to strain the party friendship, Patterson."

"Do get to the point," Patterson said sharply.

"She got fourteen days for making a speech," De Lacey, a short, bearded man in spectacles, said quietly.

"Be quite fair, De Lacey—for bashing a policeman," Dale said with a grimace.

Patterson awoke from an abstracted stare at his pumps.

"An important distinction," he said brightly.

There was a movement towards the dining-room. Mrs. Lentaigne led off with Diana, the men following in groups.

"You must introduce me, De Lacey," Dale said with a friendly pressure of the arm. "There's that young Daly sidling up to her. Damn cheek."

"She doesn't like the Parliamentary party," De Lacey said with an impassive face. "Likes 'em about as much as she does your friends the Liberals."

"Friends?" Dale said, rubbing his chin ruefully. "Surely, not quite that. Working partners, shall we say?"

"They get the swag and you the dishonoured promissory note," De Lacey said with a chuckle.

Patterson and Dean Brereton sat on either side of Mrs. Lentaigne at the round table. Lentaigne had Diana on his right. Dale made a move to get beside her but was forestalled by Jim Daly. Dale then made a successful but unobtrusive flank movement and took the chair on Lentaigne's left. Hamilton Pakenham, with a moody glance at his niece, and a grunt in response to her "Glad you're near me, Uncle Hammy," sat beside Dale. Gazeley weighed the dean against Pakenham and chose the vacant place between the dean and Jim Daly. De Lacey, in response to a nod from Mrs. Lentaigne, took his seat beside Patterson.

"When I first married," Mrs. Lentaigne said, "I used to try and arrange people at table. It worried my life out and was never a success. Now—" she paused as a tall, gaunt, clean-shaven man came hastily into the room. He stopped abruptly and gazed at the table hesitatingly.

"There's no choice left, Mr. Kane. It must be between the Orange Lodge and Sinn Fein," Mrs. Lentaigne said with a smile.

"Couldn't be better. Am I not a sort of halfway house?" Kane said drily.

"Now?" the dean reminded Mrs. Lentaigne.

"Oh, well now, they fit themselves in anyhow. I'm not worried, and it's at least no worse than when I was."

"I've quite lost my heart to the Beekawn fishermen. Not even my own constituents could have been more responsive," Patterson said emotionally.

"He promised them a new pier," Dale said, making a bid with his eyes for Diana's sympathy.

"Good Lord! A pier on shifting sand," Lentaigne said, pulling his pointed grey beard.

"Bribery and corruption," Pakenham grunted.

"A Liberal Government is a government that bribes with both hands," Diana said sweetly. "One day a sop to the so-called Loyalists, the next a sop to the Redmondites. Anything to stave off Home Rule."

"Pity an unhappy Redmondite," Dale said dolefully.

"How interesting," Diana said derisively. "I thought you never came to Ireland."

"Always for fishing," Dale said with an admiring smile.

"I must say, Mr. De Lacey," Patterson said for the ears of the table, "I don't quite understand your position. Do you pronounce the word 'Sin'? Oh, 'Shin.' I must confess I find Sinn Fein a little unreasonable. Ireland has already an excellent body of representatives who have been most useful to us in the House. They press the claims of Ireland in season and out of season. But I'm glad to be able to say that they have learnt the reasonableness which the very atmosphere of the House always induces. They know the worries of a big empire, more especially with the state of Europe what it is, and are willing to wait."

"How long?" De Lacey said with a smile.

Patterson pursed his lips. "We have our difficulties, I admit. We must first get the House of Lords out of the path—but the limited veto will secure that. And some of our Nonconformist supporters are still more Protestant than Liberal; they have fears for their co-religionists in Ulster. Liberal Imperialists don't yet quite see their way. And there is the fiscal question; there is a fear among some of our staunchest supporters that you are not quite sound on Free Trade. But these are all matters of adjustment and balance. You must trust us."

"Why?"

Patterson shrugged his shoulders and glanced round the table as if seeking protection for his modesty and reticence.

"A very interesting question," the dean said benignly.

"Help me, Dale," Patterson said appealingly.

"To damn us both?" Dale said, with a grin. "Better keep the half loaf hidden up your sleeve."

"And when Mr. Pakenham and his friends beat the big drum I suppose another slice will go?" De Lacey said quietly.

"Whole loaf or half loaf, we'll have none of it," Pakenham said threateningly.

"And we'll take only the whole loaf," De Lacey said with a shrug.

"What is Sinn Fein but a mere group?" Patterson said with a wave of his hand, as if brushing it aside.

"It's an eternal fact—the desire of a nation for freedom."

"I speak of practical politics," Patterson interrupted icily.

"And a determined will to get it," De Lacey finished his sentence coldly.

"We have the representatives of the people with us," Patterson said, with a smile at Dale.

"Indeed," De Lacey said ironically. "Do you believe in their blessed bill, Dale?"

"It's a rotten bill, but it's the best they can do, and the best we can get," Dale said gloomily. "Half a loaf is better than no bread."

De Lacey laughed and then looked grave. "There you have the tragedy of the Redmondites," he said sadly. "They are one of our grievances against you, Mr. Patterson. You have corrupted them to the sanity and reasonableness of your opportunist politics. In becoming good Liberals they have got out of touch with Ireland."

"If I remember aright Sinn Fein has tried its strength against them," Patterson said coldly.

"And was beaten," De Lacey laughed pleasantly. "But then you hadn't shown your hand. Your wonderful gift was still in the poke. When the next test comes things will be different—very different."

"Dreams cut no ice in politics," Patterson said, with a curl of his lip.

"But faith does," De Lacey said good-humouredly. "You don't believe in your own bill. It's a mere move in your party game. But it's a matter of life or death to us. You may pass your bill, but Ireland can't be made to accept it against her will."

"You haven't even a policy," Patterson said, with a shrug.

"*Solvitur ambulando*—England has never yet failed to supply us with one," De Lacey said amiably.

"Your friend De Lacey may be a help to us in dishing the Liberals," Pakenham said thoughtfully to Diana.

"Oh, he'll dish you with them," Diana said confidently.

"And us, I suppose?" Dale said ironically.

"Oh, you? You exist only in Westminster, and you'll disappear at the next election."

"What the devil is Sinn Fein?" Pakenham asked with a frown.

"Just 'ourselves,'" Diana said airily. "Irishmen—we don't exclude even Orangemen. No hanging on the tail

of the Liberal cart, no going hat in hand and cringing to England, no sending of useless representatives to Westminster," her eyes seeking Dale, who bowed and said: "Thank you." "No taking of jobs—just standing independently on our own feet, working out our own salvation."

"And bashing policemen for recreation," Pakenham said stolidly.

"I got a wiggling for that," Diana laughed. "No, no violence—passive resistance. We simply ignore England."

"Is it a joke or is it high treason?" Pakenham asked doubtfully. "What do you make of it, Kane?"

Diana laughed. "He won't acknowledge us, but Sinn Fein as a political idea grew out of the co-operative movement. Horace Plunkett and Mr. Kane and their friends are really responsible for us."

"I won't be drawn into politics," Kane said with an amused smile.

"Is the d—blessed thing spreading?" Dale asked irritably.

"Like wildfire. It's normal enough development of the intellectual movement that has been going on for the last fifteen years. I've always told you, Dale, your party was foolish in not backing the co-operative movement and the Gaelic League."

"It has no political experience," Dale said oracularly.

"It has life," Kane said drily.

"What I deprecate is the extreme in political views," the dean said, wagging his head impressively. "Take things quietly, and everything turns out for the best. I'm old enough to remember disestablishment. The Church was to be ruined: we are stronger than ever we were. The Fenians were to have cut our throats: they didn't. Then landlords were to be murdered or expropriated or both: they either died in their beds or live happily in the receipt of

higher and far more comfortable incomes from the funds. My good friend, Dr. Phelan, the Roman Catholic bishop of Droosky and I may be seeking heaven by slightly different paths, but we have a pleasant word and a handshake now and again on the way—at an asylum committee or elsewhere. The Pope may have a bad name in Belfast, but he's quite a pleasant person in Droosky."

"You couldn't get the Protestant candidate elected doctor to the asylum," Pakenham objected.

"My dear Pakenham, that was human nature and not religion. The Catholic candidate had thirteen relations on the committee, the Protestant only two."

"Of course, you'd have elected the Catholic in Belfast, Uncle Hammy," Diana said impudently.

"I'd venture to say," the dean continued suavely, "that I have less reason to quarrel with the Pope and his clergy than Mr. De Lacey, who is, I understand, a Catholic."

"I get fewer smiles than you, anyhow," De Lacey said with a shrug.

"Ah! How is that now?" Patterson said, pricking his ears attentively.

De Lacey again shrugged his shoulders and said: "It's one of the anomalies of our political system that the Catholic Church owes much of its power in Ireland to the English Government. England does its best to make us priest-ridden by giving the Church control of education, and then points to the power of the Church as a difficulty in the way of self-government. It may be only stupidity, but it looks very like malice. In no Catholic country has the Church any such power. Catholics have always resisted these secular claims of their Church. Orangemen shriek Home Rule, Rome Rule. I and many Catholics have more Rome Rule than we want, and it is English rule that imposes it on us. Mr. Pakenham will not, perhaps, believe me, but I would not lift a finger for Home Rule if it meant the poli-

tical rule of my own Church. I'd a thousand times prefer the Union."

"You think the religious difficulty a boggy then?" Patterson asked.

"I know it is. If I may retort the argument, the last accusation an Irish Protestant should make against Catholics is religious bigotry. The only persecuting Church we have ever had in Ireland was the Protestant Church. Let us hope their religion helped Protestants in the next world, for it certainly helped them in this. We've had a religious tyranny hardly known elsewhere. A Protestant minority was endowed with every political and economic advantage. It was a narrow, bigoted theocracy, merciless and tyrannical. And England, the home of progressive liberty, backed this moral and political crime with all the force of its arms!"

"Why shouldn't it back the true religion against superstition?" Pakenham said hotly.

Patterson smiled. The dean stroked his beard gently.

"It's the Orangemen and not Irish Catholics who share the political ideas of the Vatican," De Lacey said with a shrug. "But, happily, the world doesn't stand still either for a Pope or an Orangeman. With the growth of political liberty Italian Catholics threw off the secular rule of the Pope, and Irish Catholics have tried to free themselves from the Protestant incubus. The medieval autocracy which England cynically maintains in Ireland has been tottering for years and is now in danger of falling. The greatest spoils system in Europe could hardly appeal to the English workman to maintain its economic and political ascendancy, so it squealed about the Pope and the danger to Protestantism," he smiled at Pakenham. "The Orangemen's fear of the Pope is made up of a memory of their own sins, a fear of reprisals and a desperate clutching at the remnant of the spoils."

"That's a monstrous—nothing but a gross travesty," Pakenham spluttered, his brick-red face going purple. "I appeal to you, Kane."

"Every Church is tyrannical if it gets the chance," Kane said cheerfully.

"We all know what the Pope is," Pakenham said heatedly.

"He's a fine old Orange gentleman," Diana said maliciously.

"He doesn't bother us in Meath," Gazeley said, sipping his wine.

"He does me infernally," De Lacey said moodily. "But the English Government and Mr. Pakenham and his friends won't let us deal with him."

"We'll muzzle him effectively in our bill," Patterson said with decision.

"Exasperate us into defending him, you mean," De Lacey said sharply.

"How's feeling with your people in Meath about the bill, Gazeley?" Lentaigne asked hastily.

"Since we sold our land we're taking it quietly. Anyhow, it's not likely to be much worse than the sort of government we're bound to have in England before long. You're letting the Socialist tail wag the dog too much, Patterson. We don't like the bill, but if we must have it I suppose we must. And the priests will be a safeguard against Socialism."

"Rank treachery," Pakenham growled.

Gazeley shrugged his shoulders. "Do you expect us to fight England? And if there's treachery anywhere it's in the North. What's all this talk of partition? If there is danger you evidently want to save your own skins and leave us in the lurch."

"Uncle Hammy loves the Radicals so much that he can't be separated from them," Diana laughed.

"We'll be driven to civil war," Pakenham said, with a despairing gesture.

The dean stroked his beard. "My dear Pakenham," he said suavely, "nothing is worse for a man than worry. Never court difficulty prematurely. Irish disturbances only happen in the newspapers and in the House of Commons. Home Rule has been a pleasant subject for discussion as long as I can remember, and there's every sign that it will last out my time. We should decidedly miss it as a topic. What are the prospects for the twelfth, Simon?"

Mrs. Lentaigne stood up. Jim Daly moved back a chair to allow Diana to pass out.

"You never uttered. Was it remorse for your desertion of Ireland?" she said half defiantly.

"I wondered how the poor country survives so much discussion."

"You think of deeper things, of course," she sneered.

"Much," he smiled. "Do you remember the fish we caught together below Grange Con bridge?"

She gave him a quick sidelong glance. "So you've remembered that too," she said with more friendliness of tone.

5.

Jim spent three days at Derrylinn, and as he was a good listener he had Ireland dinned into his ears from half a dozen angles.

Lentaigne was indignant with the Liberals. Their best thinkers seemed to have no influence in the Government. Administration in Ireland was a byword for inefficiency. Birrell spoke beautifully of freedom in the abstract, made cynical epigrams, and governed through a machine hardly known in England under the Stuarts. The two departments of Irish Government with life in them—out of forty-seven—the Estates Commissioners and the Department of

Agriculture, were the creation of a Conservative Government. The Liberals hampered the one with pedantic financial restrictions, and dismissed from the other its founder and soul, Horace Plunkett, the only man in the administration who combined a knowledge of the country with broad sympathies and a constructive intelligence. The proposed settlement was a parody on Liberal principles, professions and promises. It exasperated Orangemen and Nationalists alike and was the crowning proof of England's incapacity either to understand or govern Ireland. Liberal love had created a deeper sense of distrust than centuries of Whig and Tory coercion. The Unionist said to Ireland: "You're a bold bad girl. I must keep the manacles on your arms and legs, but I'll give you a lollipop when you behave well!" The Liberal wept on her neck and *talked* of striking off her handcuffs while carefully tightening her leg chains. It seemed as if no English Cabinet, Unionist or Liberal, would ever see Ireland but as an English interest.

Patterson took Jim for a long walk, asked his opinion of the bill, and, without waiting for a reply, gave for two hours his own views on Ireland and the bill. He quoted Morley on Compromise, and deplored that Irishmen hadn't a thorough grasp of the principles of the Manchester school. The financial clauses of the bill were a triumph of orthodoxy. Ireland couldn't stray from the true path under such a strong rein. Her future depended on strict adherence to Liberal principles. When Irishmen fully understood the bill they would all jump at it, for it gave Nationalists all they desired while it kept a firm English control which would appeal to Unionists. Sinn Fein was only a flash in the pan. Irishmen were, perhaps, a little unreasonable, but, as he discovered at Beekawn, they were open to conviction. He discovered everywhere the seeds of a sound Liberalism. . . .

Dale deplored a wasted life in the House of Commons. For an Irish Nationalist it was a sort of living grave—a momentary hope, then indifference and apathy. Cynicism was what saved him from despair. One couldn't hate England, one could only pity her. She muddled Ireland only a little more than she muddled herself. She had bitten off more of the world than she could chew and governed only in spasms. Ships and coal and iron and selfishness had made her rich and powerful and stupid, with an occasional gleam of intelligence of which she was ashamed and distrustful. Ireland was alternately a nuisance, a joke, and a party stick. With big majorities, independent of the Irish vote, Liberal and Tory cheerfully forgot her. With dwindling majorities Tories took a friendly interest in her ailments, and Liberals remembered their principles, but always with discretion. No English party gave anything to Ireland except under pressure of threats or fear, and then only the minimum necessary for party safety. The Irish question had never yet been dealt with on its merits by any English party, and never would be. It was a mere pawn in the party game to avert a danger or secure an advantage. Both parties hated Ireland as the worst of their many failures. The last person to be consulted on a Home Rule bill was a Nationalist; and if he offered advice it was always disregarded. England had failed to govern Ireland for eight hundred years, but every Under-Secretary was confident that he could, in twenty-four hours, draft a bill to settle the whole mess. England would never let go her grip on Ireland: she hugged it as men cling to a secret sin.

Jim complained of being a bit bewildered.

Dale pushed his thin fingers through his heavy black hair and said that fifteen years of the bad ventilation of the House had muddled his own brain till he saw all English parties red,

"But you've been defending the bill to De Lacey?" Jim said laughing.

"Defending our taking it, you mean? What else was there to do? Some of our fellows have been in the House over thirty years—thirty years of bitterness and disappointed hopes—listened to with impatience unless we played the fool and amused 'em in an after-dinner speech, voted down on every Irish question. It's easy for De Lacey and the Sinn Feiners to sneer at Redmond and Dillon and the rest of us. But he hasn't been a pariah dog all his life, kicked away from a bone or having it snatched from him. We are all tired and sick and want to get away from it. Some think this rotten bill the best we are ever likely to get from English apathy, distrust, or active dislike. Others are ashamed to come back home empty-handed. Others see in the bill the certainty of failure and the possibility of starting a new agitation on its breakdown."

"And you?"

Dale lifted his eyebrows whimsically and shrugged his shoulders.

"I was brought up a Liberal and discovered my country through what I believed were the principles of Liberalism. I now know that Liberal principles rarely survive the taking of office. Bad as this bill is I don't believe we'll get it. Carson will bang the Orange drum, and the bleating of that ass Pakenham will reach the hearts of the great British people with their slumbering hatred of the country they have wronged. Or Sinn Fein may raise a rebellion in a potato patch, or Miss Scovell bash another policeman at the critical moment. Any excuse will serve for dropping us if the Liberals get afraid of the next election. We shall be called unreasonable for crying for bread, and ungrateful for not giving thanks for a stone. Patterson will drop Ireland like a hot coal and cheerfully take up the Armenian question. *Que voulez vous, Georges Dandin?*"

"The Liberal group when I was up weren't like that," Jim protested.

Dale laughed cynically. "Nor my group at Cambridge—they were idealists to a man. Some are now Ministers with their ideals carefully locked up till they lose office. The rest—any who kept their faith—are thin voices crying in the wilderness, vaguely wondering where Liberalism has disappeared to with a Liberal Government in office. De Lacey thinks me a knave or a fool. Perhaps I am. Perhaps I'm only a disappointed man trying to smile with as little bitterness as the feeling of being in a sinking boat permits."

De Lacey, Jim discovered, rather liked Dale, and thought him merely a tragedy.

"The Parliamentary game had to be placed. Parnell did it magnificently. He tore aside the veil of sentimental Pharisaism that hides English ruthlessness, was as ruthless as the English and didn't trust them. When Gladstone got him in the heel his followers had no grit. The tragedy was that they believed in English promises. The damned House of Commons lulled 'em to sleep. They saw two English parties playing see-saw over sewers and Board Schools and thought that the party which shouted sympathy with the oppressed of other nations was burning with zeal to free Ireland. They forgot that there never had been but one party in England when her own sins had to be hushed up. For Ireland a Tory Government and a Liberal Government have always meant exactly the same thing—English oppression."

Jim smiled.

"There are differences in the pressure of the jack-boot, perhaps," De Lacey growled. "Take my word for it, England is all cant and hypocrisy. You were educated there and you ought to know."

"That's perhaps why I'm not quite so sure as you are," Jim laughed.

"You'll soon be if you stick to the Foreign Office," De Lacey said confidently. "You'll join us yet. Before we've done we'll paralyze English government in Ireland."

Jim found Kane, who professed to have no politics, as political as any of the others. He spent the day flying through the county on a motor bicycle, organizing or inspecting agricultural banks, stores and creameries, and stayed up half the night writing or talking and smoking. One night Jim sat up with him till five in the morning in a whirl of talk and smoke.

"They talk and talk," Jim said. "I make many of their generalizations myself when I'm in England. Here they seem too fluent, too easy. The effect on me is to make me suspect myself."

"If they are about English stupidity, don't worry," Kane said gravely. "They are the accumulated judgments of eight hundred years' experience—a sort of racial memory that breaks out instinctively in every Irishman."

"But it isn't true."

"It's true in Ireland for an Irishman. What the devil is it to an Irishman if the Englishman is as wise as Solomon at home? In Ireland he has shown only his stupid tyrannical side, and by that he is judged. As nations stand in the world I suppose England occupies a high place. It has wealth and power and a high degree of culture, a long roll of statesman and poets. But the Irishman sees none of these things. He sees a big bully whom he has beaten to his knees. Pakenham boasts of being one of a conquering race while he whimpers for the backing of the bigger bully. The English and their Orange garrison never conquered Ireland. They killed and exiled and starved millions, but the unconquerable soul of the country they have never been able to touch. It mocks them from beyond the grave. It despises them here. It is England and not Ireland that has been conquered—conquered by an idea; though

England, which is groping after its own soul, lost in and clogged by material success, doesn't yet see it. When England has advanced some steps further on the spiritual road and can see her own injustice as clearly as she now sees the injustice of others she will right her wrong to Ireland. Individuals see it already. The various half-hearted attempts at Home Rule show the working of the spirit in wider groups. You can see it here among the garrison, even in this house. Mrs. Lentaigne and myself were brought up in the belief that God was an Orange gentleman who austerey whipped the mere Irish into blacking His boots and starching His shirt and graciously kicked them to hell for their pains. We have given up the worship of that fetish. So have Lentaigne and Dale. It shows what a political cleavage religion made in Ireland when we are known as Protestant Home Rulers. The pretty girl who dined here, Miss Scovell, is a symptom of a more robust awakening among women. Gazeley is a common type of the Protestant landlord outside Ulster. He's a Unionist more by tradition than by conviction. The extremists on his own side irritate him, and he's a little suspicious of extremists on our side, but he wants peace. Ulster is England's worst crime in Ireland, and will cause her most trouble in the end. When the last Englishman is converted to Home Rule a remnant of Orangemen will be found banging a drum and proclaiming themselves the only loyal Englishmen. They owe everything to England, but nothing will shake an Orangeman's conviction that he keeps the British Empire from crumbling to bits."

He smoked for a while in silence. "The whole thing is very sad to me," he broke out again with a sigh. "Though I have left the Orange camp and have no sympathy whatever with their political attitude, I was brought up among them and I understand them. And where there is understanding there is always a certain amount of sympathy.

To understand them at all one has to put back one's mind politically and religiously for over two hundred years. They are the Scotch Covenanter and the English Puritan living on into the twentieth century. In England and Scotland the dourness of the extremer forms of Protestantism was softened by adversity. In Ireland they were top dog. Both Presbyterians and low-church Protestants were equally the chosen of God before the common enemy, the heathen Papist and his god the Scarlet Woman, whom they did their best to destroy with fire and sword. In intervals of rest from smoking out Papists, Episcopalians and Presbyterians fought out their own little rows. The Presbyterians had a slim time, and many of them were forced to emigrate to America to escape persecution. While the Papists were crushed, Episcopalians and Presbyterians could afford to fight among themselves. They even developed a sort of top-dog nationalism and resented English interference. The Union was carried by English bribery against the will of the majority of Irish Protestants. Catholic emancipation again united Episcopalians and Presbyterians against the common Papist foe. But the real political consolidation of Irish Protestantism came with the agitation for the repeal of the Union. The Pre-Union Irish Parliament was entirely Protestant. An Irish Parliament after 1829 would be predominantly Catholic. Irish Protestants who had fought steadily against English aggression during the whole of the eighteenth century forgot at once their grievances against England and the differences among themselves, remembered that they were an outpost of English civilization and became more English than the English themselves. The Orangemen, who had no love of England while their heels were firmly fixed on the necks of the Catholics, suddenly discovered their love when the Catholics began to show their heads. The history of Ireland during the nineteenth century is the story of the struggle for

political, economic, and religious equality of the Irish Catholic against Irish Protestantism backed by England. It was an unholy alliance. England with her boasted love of freedom, with her progressive laws of liberty, deliberately lent herself to maintain in Ireland the political and religious ascendancy of a comparatively small minority. Not only that, but England, with her own religious and political ideas broadened by three centuries of progress, upheld in Ireland narrow religious and political ideas which she herself had been gradually discarding since the seventeenth century. The Irish Catholic was coerced, put under martial law, deprived of his rights under Habeas Corpus, because he strove to have the freedom of any ordinary Englishman. He struggled for liberty according to English ideals of the nineteenth century, and was dealt with by English methods of the seventeenth, including even the Star Chamber. England's share in the blame I leave to God, to her elastic conscience, and to her historians who find it hard to believe that she can do a wrong. I can find no excuse for her. The Irish Protestant is less to blame. English statesmen knew that they were acting against their principles, but their Irish administrators had no qualms. They got their power in the seventeenth century because they were Protestants, and there has been no change since then either in their Protestantism or in their political ideas. Senator Tillman once said that no law of the United States ever gave a vote to a negro or took one away from a white man. Irish Catholics managed to grab the vote, but Irish Protestants have managed to keep the power. Eighty years after Catholic emancipation they still run the country. They call on England to maintain a system which gives them the privilege of defending the sound Protestantism of John Morley against the wiles of the Scarlet Woman and a Stuart Toryism against the subversive political ideas which the Nationalists have borrowed

from the textbooks of Oxford and Cambridge! Then, of course, the Union pays. Up to five or six years ago ninety-nine per cent. of the jobs of any importance went to Protestants. As Nationalist M.P.'s never take office the small Ulster representation—nearly always lawyers—are sure of jobs. The acceptance of the Union by Nationalists would be as great a blow to good Protestants as Home Rule. They even howl because the Liberals have given a few jobs to the tamer Nationalists."

"The difficulty is deeper than mere spoils, I suppose?" Jim said.

"I agree," Kane said with a shrug. "But the spoil hunters have the loudest voices and do most to prevent a settlement. The narrow fanaticism of the Ulster Protestant also stands in the way. And men hate to lose power. But there are glimmerings of reason. Ten years ago no Unionist would admit the possibility of Home Rule for any part of Ireland. Now it is admitted that Home Rule is inevitable outside Ulster. There is even talk of dividing Ulster. This splitting up of Ireland is so damned silly that it might seem reasonable to the English mind. The worst fanatics after the Ulster Orangemen are the Ulster Catholics. You won't make them less bigoted by isolating them. It's the politics of the parish pump and would only create fresh difficulties. Economically the thing is absurd. The National sentiment of Ireland one nation is sound through and through. Belfast needs the southern hinterland just as much as the agricultural South needs the manufacturing North. Their trade and banking are inextricably mixed up at this moment to their common advantage. I hate the Union, but I'd rather have the Union than have a new artificial barrier set up within the country. England created the Irish difficulty and she has got to settle it, but perpetuating it is not settling it."

He emptied his pipe, blew it clear, and put it in his pocket.

"It's five o'clock and I have to be at Duncashin for a meeting at nine," he said with a yawn. "Belfast people tell me that the South would ruin the industries of the North, that the Southern Irish have no business capacity. Duncashin is an agricultural parish with only three Protestant families out of three hundred. It has a creamery, a bank, an agricultural society, a co-operative store. There isn't in Belfast a greater miracle of successful business. Good God, I'm sick of Irish politics as it is served up at the English breakfast table."

He lit a candle, blew it out again with a laugh as he noticed the sun streaming through chinks in the shuttered windows.

"I'm like an English statesman, peering at the Irish question with a candle while the sun shines full on it. One would be in despair if the miracle of the British Empire didn't cheer one up. England teaches men liberty and then tries to go on governing them like an old grandmotherly schoolmaster. Wherever she goes she sets up an Ulster and is a little shocked when it is kicked out or slapped in the face. But she's not so stupid as when she bungled America and lost it. She spanked her Ulsters in Canada, South Africa, and Australia—when there was no other way out of the muddles she and they had made. Some day—but let's go to bed."

Late one afternoon Jim met Pakenham in a little ruined church on the outskirts of the demesne. Pakenham was examining the carved doorway.

"That's Norman, I suppose?" he said, with a friendly look.

"No, it's pre-Norman—Irish, in fact; Celtic Romanesque in the jargon."

"Hum, hum. They had some idea of architecture then?"

"Ornament was highly developed; but the Norman invasion seems to have arrested development in native archi-

ecture. There was promise in it, but Irish Gothic is second-rate."

"Humph. You should see some of our buildings in Belfast. I must say I like our host's house, but Simon built it before he went over to the enemy—when he had some common sense. But, good God, what a collection of freaks he always has about him."

"I suppose we are," Jim laughed.

"I didn't mean you, of course. You're in the service of your country. Damn plucky it was of you, too, to stand out against the old man. Helen Lentaigne told me about it to-day and I was proud of you. And you a Pa—a Roman Catholic, too. It's a real pleasure to meet a man of sense—a——"

"Brand plucked from the burning," Jim suggested, with a grin at the *cliché*.

Pakenham nodded gravely. "A loyalist I was going to say. Beyond yourself and myself I don't believe there's another in the house."

"Patterson is a minister of the Crown," Jim said drily.

"Queen Victoria would have strung him on the nearest tree," Pakenham said angrily. "But this young King—badly advised, too? Not even Royalty is what it used to be. And I can remember the time when Liberal didn't spell 'traitors.' Some quite decent Ulstermen used to be Liberals, but, thank God, they saw the cloven hoof when the Liberals went over to Home Rule. I wish I could say the same of Conservatives in the South. There's Gazeley now. I can remember when Gazeley was a decent man—as sound as a bell on the Union. And now his loyalty isn't worth six months' purchase. The South has gone to the dogs—not even the Church is sound. There's the dean, veering round like a weathercock. If Home Rule came in the night he'd enjoy his breakfast in the morning just as if nothing had happened. And—but I can't speak of her. Thank God

the property is in tail male and goes to a sound Unionist—what the damn Nationalists will leave of it. She has only a child's portion, and a damn sight too much it is for a rebel."

"Your niece?" Jim asked, with quickened interest.

"Niece? A changeling, sir. She can't have a drop of Pakenham blood in her. Mad, sir. Mad as a March hare. The whole world seems to be going mad, but, thank God, Ulster is keeping its sanity. Even if Englishmen became traitors to their flag, Ulster'd still be loyal. But the heart of Protestant England is sound. It's only those damn Liberals trying to deceive the world. Wait till we beat the drum in every parish in England and explain our wrongs. We have right on our side, and God is with us. England can't have forgotten the walls of Derry and the memory of her great King William. We'll wake her up from the sleep with which the Liberals have drugged her. Orangemen saved England at the Boyne and they'll save her to-day from the cut-throat murderers who threaten her liberties."

"De Lacey and Dale are mild-mannered murderers," Jim said with a smile.

"They're clever enough, I admit," Pakenham said sadly. "But my dear sir, that's all put on to bamboozle that ass Patterson. Anyone can fool an Englishman. It takes an Ulsterman to see through the hypocrisy of the Nationalists. They've even learned to talk their nonsense as if there was some sense in it. But all the time they have a knife or blunderbuss up their sleeves. What can one expect with the priests and the Jesuits egging them on."

"But Dale is a Protestant," Jim objected with amusement.

"No Protestant in his senses could be a Nationalist," Pakenham said with a frown. "Protestant Home Rulers are either completely mad like that dreadful niece of mine; or a little touched," he tapped his forehead lightly with the middle finger of his right hand, "like the Lentaignes—

decent people, but they've gone quite soft in the brain; or write poetry like Kane; or are concealed Jesuits like Dale. I can see it in the fellow's eye. He's the most dangerous sort."

They turned the corner of a shrubbery and came in view of the front of the house.

"A telegram for you, Daly," Dean Brereton called out from the steps.

Pakenham went in by a side door, while Jim walked on hurriedly to meet the dean.

"Dear Pakenham is rather trying," he said, as he handed Jim the telegram.

"He was explaining to me all about Nationalists and Catholics," Jim said, as he tore open the envelope.

"He would," the dean said, with a faint sigh. "The dear fellow even suspects me of being a Jesuit because I don't wear Orange spectacles."

Jim read: "Everything is now all right. Come home as soon as possible. Mother."

"Something pleasant?" the dean said, watching Jim smile.

"Some quiet fishing at least. It's a wonderful country, dean."

"The pleasantest in the world," the dean said blandly.

6.

"How are things at home?" Father Lysaght asked eagerly, as he shook hands with Jim in the main street of Lisgeela, opposite a retiring Georgian house on which the Virginian creeper was beginning to turn red.

"Couldn't be better."

"Good," the priest said, with a nod of satisfaction. "I'm glad I got round the old man at last. It was a chance remark your mother made to me fifteen years ago that did it in the end—about Hugh O'Neill being brought up at the

Court of Elizabeth and using against the English themselves the tricks of government he learnt there. That, and the fact that you spend more than you make out of your job. Not but he was glad enough to find a bridge by which to cross over to you. Are you coming in here?" he added, pointing to the brass name plate: "RICHARD A. KAVANAGH, Solicitor," on the gate of the low iron railing in front of the house.

"Yes. But I wish Dick had another dinner hour."

"So would Dick," Father Lysaght laughed. "Five o'clock is a sign that Macdonald is dining with us. Since he became a Monsignor he won't dine with anyone in the town at any other hour. It's his idea of fashion, poor man. The bishop, who can't wait a minute after three, and himself nearly had a row over it. But the laity have to give in."

They were kept waiting on the doorstep for some minutes. Father Lysaght rang a second time and then said apologetically:

"I oughtn't to flurry poor Kate. She's probably dishing the dinner, and Dick gives her the rough edge of his tongue if she answers the door without being spick and span in her cap and apron. He's aiming at great style."

The door was opened by Dick Kavanagh himself in a tweed coat, riding breeches, heavy boots, the tops of his woollen stockings an elaborately designed tartan plaid of vivid colours. He wore a huge gold fox-mask pin in his white hunting stock. His swarthy face glistened from a recent shave. His thick lips, stubby black moustache, snub nose, small grey eyes under bushy black eyebrows, large white teeth and thick wiry black hair shining with brilliantine united in a broad grin of welcome.

"I'm glad you were able to come, Mr. Daly. How is the world using you, Jim?" he said, awkwardly. "You're welcome, your reverence. If I were you," to Jim again, "it's not next or nigh this rotten three-ha'penny town I'd come,

out of the hunting season too. Only that I take a run up to Dublin myself an odd time I'd be a regular old frowst. Not but there are some likely little girls in Liskeilly, but Father James keeps a strict eye on 'em."

"It's time you settled down, Dick," Father Lysaght said coldly.

"And a man having only one life and a short one at that," Dick sighed, with an appealing look at Jim. "There's room on the rack for your hats. Everyone is here now—up with the dinner, Kate," he shouted down a stairway at the back of the little hall. "You'll find everything rough and ready, but what can you expect of a lone bachelor, and I was sure you wouldn't mind for the sake of old times," he said, holding Jim back as Father Lysaght entered a sitting-room on their right. "I've got old Mac to meet you. He's fat and fifty but a spry old boy still. He takes the Miss Curleys to the sea as if he were only a three-year-old, and they're no chickens now I can tell you, though they're fluffier than ever, with golden hair falling down their backs. He's as proud as Punch of you, and is always talking of some examination or other you passed. But we'd better go in."

Monsignor Macdonald, in a dark purple caped soutane and bright purple sash, trimming and buttons, separated himself from the group standing in front of the empty grate, and advanced to meet Jim with mincing steps, a smile on his handsome florid face.

"My dear boy," he cooed in a rounded voice. "This is a pleasure."

His lips curved in a smirk. The jaunty white curl on his forehead, almost concealing his baldness, seemed to smirk. He wrung Jim's hand heartily and patted his shoulder. "You have done well, my boy, but you may thank the good seed that was planted in you at St. Stanislaus College. It's a proud day for me to dine at the table of one distinguished pupil to greet another—Dick doesn't

suffer from small jealousies on the academical plane—still more distinguished.”

“I passed my final by the skin of my teeth,” Dick muttered.

“But let me introduce you,” the Monsignor continued with a wave of his hand to the group round the fireplace. “Mr. James Daly, gentlemen, who has shown Oxford University what St. Stanislaus College, Lissegeela, can do in *belles lettres* and the arts and sciences. Mr. Murphy, the esteemed manager of our branch of the National Bank, who lets us all overdraw our accounts in reason.”

“I wish to God he did,” Dick Kavanagh murmured as he joined gloomily in the general laugh.

A tall, nervous man with sloping shoulders wagged his ragged beard with a silent chuckle as he shook hands, peering at Jim with weak but pleasant brown eyes over spectacles low on his nose.

“Dr. Greany, who brought you into the world.”

“A fine baby—scaled nine pounds and a quarter,” the little pompous doctor said, snatching at Jim’s hand, with an aggressive look around as if someone had denied the interesting fact.

“Mr. Foley, our respected District Inspector of Police.”

A small, clean-shaven man, who tried hard to look like a groom but failed by a hair’s breadth, bowed with a deprecatory smile.

“Dick and Father Lysaght, who keeps us all in order, you know. *One* of my assistants—Father Devitt,” the Monsignor added curtly, with a slight grimace at an athletic-looking, black-haired young priest who smiled cynically. With a return to his genial florid manner, the Monsignor added blandly: “And last, but not least, Mr. McEnvoy, who woos the law no less diligently than our host.”

“I may woo her, but it’s to McEnvoy she gives the glad

eye," Dick said, with a grin at the bright-eyed young man, fair, rather fat, strong jawed but with pleasant lips, who was shaking hands with Jim. "But if I don't get cases I can always give a good account of myself at a dinner. I had a squint at Kate taking it in. Will you lead the way, Monsignor?"

"With pleasure, my dear boy," Monsignor Macdonald said cordially, taking Jim's arm. "You can see the lack in this room—a woman's taste," he added with a wave of his hand at the green baize covered centre table. "A nice bunch of flowers now'd set that off, and a few antimacassers on the backs of them lonely-looking chairs, and some vases and china ornaments on the mantelpiece. Dick has good taste in dressing himself, but it doesn't run to titivating his house."

"You've noticed, I'm sure, Mr. Daly," Dr. Greany said pompously, as Dick struggled with a large joint of roast beef, "the immense improvements in our town?"

"It has changed a good deal," Jim admitted.

"My father used to have it all his own way, and now there are four solicitors taking the bread out of one another's mouths," Dick growled, helping the Monsignor to beef.

"Sure the more lawyers the more law they say," the Monsignor said feelingly, helping himself to mustard. "Just a hint of that horse-radish sauce, Dick. It's wonderful, glory be to God, the prosperity we're enjoying. Only yesterday his lordship said to me: 'I doubt, Monsignor,' he said, 'whether in the greatest age of the faith so much stone and mortar was ever piled up to the service of God in any small town as Lisgeela has seen during the last twenty years.' 'And so worthily, my lord,' I said. Dick, the beef is done to a turn."

"The town and the country, as far as my rounds extend, have progressed to an unexampled material prosperity," Dr. Greany said enthusiastically.

"Material *and* spiritual," the Monsignor cooed. "For the first time in its history Liskeilly has a Monsignor as president of its noble college. Honours of the kind are only a trial of the flesh to a humble man like myself, but I can't help taking a pride in it for the sake of the town."

"Jim can't help seeing that the town has got on," Father Lysaght said drily.

"A new flourishing bank that hasn't diminished the prosperity of the old—two blades of grass, as it were, where one grew before," Dr. Greaney said lyrically. "I appeal to my friend, Mr. Murphy."

"We're doing well—very well, indeed. I'd rather have the two blades in the National, of course. But as it is we can't complain. No, we certainly can't complain. Indeed I'd be almost inclined to admit three blades and that two of them find their way to the National," Murphy said, chuckling noiselessly.

"You hear that, Father Devitt, the country turning into a gold mine and you can't leave well enough alone," Monsignor Macdonald said with a note of sternness. "Now that the Scovell property is settled the whole country round is in the hands of the tenants, and we want ease and peace to enjoy our prosperity. You can fill the tumbler, Dick. That claret of Mallon's is as soft as milk on the palate. Was the country ever quieter, Mr. Foley?"

"As quiet as a lamb, Monsignor," the Police Inspector said cheerfully. "If the judges go on getting white gloves at the Assizes the R.I.C. will be out of a job."

"Don't despair, Foley, the Government can always be trusted to provoke a row," McEvoy said. "Believe me, you won't be out of a job for long."

"I cannot agree with your diagnosis, McEvoy," Dr. Greaney said with a frown. "In the troubled times my duty to my profession compelled me to steer clear of the treacherous waters of politics—I had patients in every

camp. But the distinct leaning of our present Government to the Nationalist side has altered the situation. It is a Liberal Government in the best sense of the word, some of the best plums of the legal profession and of my own honoured calling having been given to moderate Nationalists. I have become a member of the United Irish League."

"Do you think, Greany, I'd have any chance of the Crown Solicitorship if I became a member?" Dick Kavanagh asked anxiously.

"I can see Home Rule looming in the distance," Greany said oracularly.

"You can see through a pretty thick fog, then," Father Devitt said sourly.

"Greany means that he sees a job," McEvoy said, with a curl of his lip.

"I know no better earnest of the good faith of the Government than that they should give office to sound Nationalists of good standing in their professions," Greany said, with offended dignity.

"The Orangemen see in it a proof of bad faith—you see they don't get all the jobs—and they have a big pull in England," McEvoy laughed. "You'd better hurry up, Greany. It mayn't be fashionable to be a Nationalist in a year or two."

"I have perfect faith in the word of a government—they are gentlemen," Greany said crushingly.

"Political gentlemen," McEvoy said lightly.

"I appeal to Mr. Daly," Greany said heatedly.

"A government has been known to keep its word," Jim said cautiously.

"I hope to God they'll break it this time. But they're so used to breaking it that there's little fear of their keeping it," Father Devitt said vehemently.

"Moderation, Father Devitt, moderation," Monsignor

Macdonald said placidly, sipping his claret. "I have often warned you that the only road to safety is in moderation. A few glasses of claret at dinner and a glass of punch after makes one see the world as it is, rosy and comfortable. What can you expect of cold water but bile? It makes a sort of drunkenness in the mind that's worse than the after effects of bad potheen whisky. If you'd only take a glass of wine like a man you'd see less harm in England."

"'Twould take a good many glasses to make me see any good in what they're offering us now," Father Devitt said, with a gloomy smile. "I'd as soon trust old Nick himself. But sure England and Machiavelli are one and the same thing. I was reading 'The Prince' the other day, and it's a complete record of English policy in Ireland. If an Englishman is honest then he's the greatest self-deceiver under the sun. The Home Rule they're promising us—it wouldn't at all surprise me but they'd try to keep their promise this time—is nothing but another halter round our necks. It's the biggest attempt they've made yet to bribe the country by the offer of jobs. We'll go on taxing you, they say, and you can spend the money without any responsibility. The thing'd break down in five years and we'd be disgraced for ever. I think well of my country but we're not angels out of heaven. It's not for nothing the English are offering us Greek gifts: they want to prove we're unfit for Home Rule by making it impossible for us to administer it."

"You give them credit for unusual astuteness," Jim laughed.

"They're either fools or knaves," Father Devitt said, with a shrug. "They can take their choice of the dilemma. The Orangemen are shrieking against the bill as if it was only their skins were in danger. I have no great love for them, but it'll be a good job for the whole of Ireland if they

succeed in wrecking the bill which'd do us a sight more harm than it'd do them."

"Then, please God, we can go on as we are and no harm done," Monsignor Macdonald said, with a sigh of relief. "No, thank you, Dick. I won't disturb the beef with any apple tart, excellent as it is. But I find a shaving of cheese not so deleterious—a help in fact. I picked up the habit at Buxton, where I sometimes go for my health. An Orangeman from Belfast introduced me to it. He was a queer fellow, that Orangeman, and used to wrangle over politics like Father Devitt there till I found out that he used to go to Aintree as regular as myself, and from that day on we quarrelled peaceably over horses without another mention of King William or the Pope. The dinner does you credit, Dick, but it's a wife and not Father Lysaght you ought to have sitting down there opposite you."

"Are you going to the Horse Show, Monsignor?" Dick asked uneasily.

"Am I going to my bed this night, young man? What about one of the Mallon girls for him, Father Lysaght?"

"He'd have to go to daily mass," Father Lysaght said, with a reproving look at Dick.

"That's a malady they'd grow out of if they married steady men," the Monsignor said tolerantly. "One of 'em'd be better than politics for you, Dick. They're warm girls with at least ten thousand apiece, and you might do worse than not let the convent bag it. I see we're all finished. What about having the hot water in the other room, and a game of Nap in the name of God?"

7.

Con Driscoll's snug farmhouse drowsed in the August heat. The elms at the end of the bawn were as still as the duckpond beside the gate. The lowing of a cow in the

near-by paddock seemed to come from afar. Sheep hung together in little groups as if seeking protection from the heat in the shadows of one another.

Mike Driscoll, standing in an empty cart, held up to his father at the top of the ladder the last sheaf of wheat which was to complete the stack. Con fixed it in position, patted it fondly, and turning half round on the ladder looked admiringly at the half dozen stacks on the outskirts of the haggard.

"That's one more than we had last year and in half an acre less ground," he said slowly, in a voice that seemed to hang motionless and detached in the still air.

"It's the superphosphate did it," Mike said, wiping the sweat from his tanned face with the already wet sleeve of his cotton shirt.

"It had a hand in it, no doubt. But there was the fine year that God gave us; and the feeling that the land was as good as our own so that we put our hearts into it. And it is our own now, thanks be to God. You can see a great change in the face of the country already."

"There hasn't been much time for a change to work in Tullyfin yet," Mike said, gathering up the reins from the back of the restless, pawing horse.

"What a man feels in his heart I suppose it's easy for his eyes to see," Con said meditatively. "But sure even a blind man'd see what a differ it makes to own your own land when you look at Mr. Lentaigne's property that was, and Brazier's and all the rest scattered about the country that the tenants bought in these five or six years back. And now we're going to put a crown on it all with Home Rule, please God."

"It'll take some striving for that yet," Mike said with a frown, jumping lightly out of the cart. "As far as I can see everything is ready here now for the threshing to-morrow. My mother might give us a cup of tea."

"She's a good warrant for that, and I got a whiff of cake from the oven a few minutes back," Con said, descending the ladder. "Though it's only about four o'clock we've put in a good twelve hours. As the last sheaf is up we'll take a rest till Betsy brings in the cows."

Mike led the horse towards the stable, his father walking behind the cart with a hand resting on the back shaft.

"Is there anything between Betsy and that young man of the Sullivans?" Con said, as Mike took off the harness.

"There might and there mightn't," Mike said stolidly.

"I wish you went as slow in your notions of politics," his father said drily.

"Politics is far easier to get at the rights of than a girl," Mike said pensively, giving a slap to the mare. "Hurry on into your box with you, Kitty."

"I wouldn't let Molly Jordan get the better of my temper if I were you," Con said with a chuckle.

"I don't give a thraneen for Molly Jordan," Mike said hotly, pushing the heavy cart into its shed as if it were a toy.

"The sooner you make it up with her the better if Betsy means anything, for your mother'll want some help in the house," Con said coolly, lighting his pipe. "I like a little fire in a woman myself. Your mother has a good spark of it to this day. But it's all the more reason for a man to be even-tempered or there might be a conflagration. Come along in and have a cup of hot tea to cool you. If you were only more biddable about politics now."

"You were very biddable to my grandfather, God rest his soul," Mike said with a touch of his father's irony.

"We hadn't Home Rule in our hands in them days," Con said, scratching his chin.

"It's on a far away bush it is still, and it's many a thorn we'll get in scrambling for it," Mike said with a firm set of his lips.

"It's in John Redmond's pocket."

"It's no more in his pocket than I am—nor within his reach either. The English have fooled him like they fooled many a good man before him."

"The grace of God has touched their hearts at last, I tell you," Con said, stopping within a few feet of the kitchen door and waving his pipe argumentatively.

"The grace of God'd shrivel up if by any accident it came within a field's length of one of 'em," Mike said contemptuously.

"It has 'em in its grip now, I tell you," Con said confidently. "See how they're putting a muzzle on the House of Lords. At long last they're bent on doing us justice. It's only the Orangemen that's giving trouble now. And they'll quieten down, the poor omadauns, when they know that we don't mean them any harm."

"You're only dreaming, father," Mike said, with a sweep of his hand and a crinkling of his brow very like his father's. "For what would the Orangemen be kicking up all this trouble if the English didn't put 'em up to it so as to give themselves an excuse for slipping out by the back door when they've no more use for the Irish vote? What harm'd we do an Orangeman no more than any other Irishman? Didn't they profit by all the land agitation yourself and my grandfather suffered for, and did we grudge it to them? And it's they were able to drive a hard bargain too, and get more out of it than ever ye did. Isn't Miss Diana a Protestant, and if her religion was as black as the hob of hell, is there a Catholic within miles of us that wouldn't kiss the ground she walks on? It's the crookedness of the English, I tell you, that's at the back of it all, and if they were in earnest itself, which they aren't, I wouldn't wipe the clauber off my shoes with the mean kind of Home Rule they're talking of giving us."

"It's all them Gaelic League classes, and the Co-opera-

tive, and them Technical Instruction lectures that's turned your head," Con said good-humouredly.

"It isn't then—it's only kind father for him," Mrs. Con, who had been for some time standing in the doorway, her arms akimbo, her brown hair, showing a few strands of grey, brushed smoothly away from a centre parting and gathered in a bun rather low at the back of her head, cried out with a laugh. "If ye aren't the dead spit of what yourself and your father used to be, Con, over five-and-twenty year ago. Only that God gives ye most times more work than ye're able to compass I wouldn't have ease or peace from yeer clatter about Home Rule. It's the wonder of the world that ye haven't England swept off her feet long ago with all yeer talk. And Mike'd kiss the ground Miss Diana walks on, would he? I wish to God Molly Jordan saw him trying to do it. If he had the courage of a mouse it's kissing Molly herself he'd be and bringing her in here on the floor to me while I have any strength left in my tongue to advise her about this and that."

"Hear her, now," Con said, with a forced sigh.

"It's one of them Suffragettes she's in training for," Mike said, seeking sympathy from his father with a dry laugh.

Mrs. Con fanned her flushed face with her spotless white apron.

"Will ye be going and washing yeer hands? Don't ye see it's dressed I am?" she said with a grin, making way for them. "If Mike is such a daring fellow as he lets on it's Miss Diana's fingers he'll have a chance of kissing in a few minutes instead of her footstep. She's going up North and she asked Betsy to look after a hound pup for her while she's away. She sent word that she'd walk him over here herself about four o'clock or thereabouts."

"Jim Daly isn't fishing our bank to-day by any luck?" Con asked, with the flicker of an eyelid.

"I wish to God there was anything like that in it," Mrs.

Con said with a sigh. "But sorra eye she has in her head for a man since she took to them figaries of politics. Except for a dog or the like, or a crowd, she has no heart left in her."

"Is it a Unionist you'd have her?" Mike said indignantly.

"It's a woman I'd have her and not a hurdy-gurdy with only one tune to it," his mother said with spirit.

"She goes to extremes with the flag-waving, no doubt," Con said amicably. "But I wouldn't put it past Miss Diana to give a good account of herself in more ways than one. Anyhow she's taken lately to coming to Tullyfin by the river bank instead of round by the road."

"Betsy seen young Daly down on the bank with a rod a while back, and I put his name in the pot on the chance of him dropping in for a cup o' tea," Mrs. Con said with a studied assumption of indifference.

"Let us go and wash ourselves, Mike, in the name of God," Con said with a chuckle. "Your mother is like a tricky fish. When you've made up your mind she's gone off with herself, there she's tugging at the line fresher than ever."

8.

Mrs. Scovell sat in a corner of the Chesterfield in the bay of the long music room at Dalyhouse. She held the *Spectator* open in her lap but her eyes wandered to Diana, who was swinging a mushroom straw hat to and fro as she knelt on the end of the seat and gazed moodily through an open French window.

"I was once as willowy as you are, Di," the mother said with a faint sigh.

"What's wrong now?" Diana asked unfeelingly.

"I like a rest after luncheon," Mrs. Scovell sighed more deeply. "I've had worry enough, but it doesn't seem to be

any help. I've had to have my dresses let out again—not much, but it's distressing. And that Arabella Daly keeps her figure. She's two years older than I am."

"Arabella is a dear. Heigh-ho," Diana said, jumping to her feet.

"Dearer than your mother?" Mrs. Scovell said with a confident smile.

"Don't be a goose, mummy darling. There," she stooped down and brushed her lips on her mother's forehead. "You're a brick, and your figure's all right—nice and soft and comfy. Arabella is rather on the scraggy side."

Mrs. Scovell patted her slightly rounded bust complacently. "Have you seen her lately?" she asked with eager curiosity.

"This morning."

"You didn't go in?" her mother asked timidly.

"No," Diana said half defiantly. "This nonsense about my not going there is a bit too thick though."

"Your father has been very tolerant about—the other things," her mother said severely.

"Oh, you needn't worry. I'll keep my word."

She laughed gaily. "Poor old boy. He jibs at a gnat and swallows a camel. I suppose I have been a bit rough on him though. But now that the land's settled he might withdraw the embargo and make friends with old Pierce."

"You know the whole county thinks he has been too tolerant with you," her mother said with a slight frown. "You should have heard him swear the night you were coming back from jail. I've never seen him so angry. He almost cried with vexation, said he could never hold up his head in the county again and swore he wouldn't let you into the house. Yet he took the car down himself to meet you and mixed with that dreadful crowd and the tar barrels and everything."

"That's father all out," Diana said with a laugh.

"That's how he'll take Home Rule when it comes. You should have seen him at the station. It was the first time in his life he got cheered by an Irish crowd, and anyone could see that he liked it. They had been denouncing him that very day I heard, about the land, but they cheered him more than they did me. It was a game thing to come and meet me—and they saw it. He's more like them than he thinks."

"Don't worry your poor father more than you can help," Mrs. Scovell said weakly. "You know old Daly has treated him badly."

"Nonsense. It was all a fair fight, and no one knows it better than father. His row with Pierce Daly is just a tradition: it came down to him like his Unionism, and he doesn't know how to get out of either of 'em."

Mrs. Scovell sighed again: "It would be nice to know Arabella—our nearest neighbour too. Even her sister-in-law, Jasper Levin's wife, speaks well of her. But your father will never give in—he was in love with her once. Was it the boat?"

"In love with her? But I don't see how that matters?" Diana said with a puzzled look. "Pooh, what nonsense. Yes, it was the boat," she added, her eyes sparkling mischievously. "The only thing I learned by going to jail was to interpret regulations strictly. 'Have you kept your promise not to go within the gates of Scarty?' 'Yes, your worship.' If father will be so stupid what can you expect? I drifted down in the canoe opposite the cedar trees—there's a sort of backwater at that very spot. I kept well out from the bank. Arabella sat on the bank and old Pierce hadn't to move from his chair. We had a very comfortable talk."

"I don't know where you got your character from—you're not like your father nor like me," her mother said despairingly.

"Outside I'm mostly you, thank God. Inside I think

I'm mostly granny—Tullyfin, not Ballywilliam," Diana said composedly.

"I had your hair certainly, and your complexion——"

"Have," Diana smiled.

"I may not be quite a wreck, but I'm not such a fool as that," Mrs. Scovell said with a pleased smile. "But your granny Scovell to be responsible for the devil in you! She'd have a fit if she heard you."

"We took different turnings, that's all," Diana said confidently.

"I once heard she had a liking for old Daly—she never spoke to him. But it would have been grotesquely impossible," her mother said with a puzzled laugh.

"What would? They are very much alike," Diana said, putting on her hat.

"Was the boy there to-day?" Mrs. Scovell asked, after watching the operation for a few seconds.

"The English prig? Thank goodness, no."

"Louisa Drumbeg has an eye on him for Sophie," Mrs. Scovell said meditatively. "I've seen him, and I must say he's quite distinguished looking. Louisa met him at the Levins, who are making a fuss over him. Sir Silas writes so enthusiastically of the boy's future that Jasper wants to make up for his treatment of Arabella by making much of Jim. Louisa even spoke of calling, but I warned her that Arabella wouldn't be at home. Dear Louisa thinks she has only to hold out a hand. Five daughters are rather difficult these days and Roman Catholic eligibles are few. I mentioned the Driscoll connection—just to test her. But she's prepared to swallow even that. She was quite sharp with me, seemed to think I was putting difficulties in her way, that I had an eye on him for you or something."

"Had you?" Diana asked coldly.

"Of course you're very young. And there's Frank Scovell?" Mrs. Scovell said hesitatingly, flushing slightly.

"Not the property, thank you. I hoped you had dropped him."

"I suppose I have, though I'd have liked you to have Dalyhouse," Mrs. Scovell said with a regretful sigh. "So would your father in spite of all your tantrums. It breaks his heart to think of the place going to Frank."

"If I could marry Dalyhouse without Frank nothing would please me better. But——" Diana made a grimace.

"I know. I feel like that about him myself. But it's hard to give up the idea because of the place. If only I had a son, or if Frank weren't such a dull stick," Mrs. Scovell said plaintively.

"I'll never marry," Diana said decisively, arranging rebellious hair under her hat in front of a mirror on the wall. "There are so many more exciting things to do."

Mrs. Scovell, undisturbed, watched her admiringly.

"Your father is sure to meet him. Who knows but Jim might be the means of healing the feud," she said meditatively.

"I'm tired of hearing him discussed," Diana said petulantly, with a toss of her head.

"The Brazier girls are after him. You'll see they'll take to cub hunting again this year. Durkan has it from his nephew at Scarty that Simon Lentaigne is lending Jim Daly some mounts," Mrs. Scovell said thoughtfully. "Even the shopkeepers' daughters are setting their caps at him. The little Mallon girls haunt the Tubber road on the mere chance of seeing him."

"You'll quote Nanny next," Diana said ironically, but with a slight blush.

Mrs. Scovell laughed cheerfully. "Dear old Rafter has everything settled. It's the will of God, she says, that sent him home to knock all the nonsense out of you. She may love you because she nursed you, but a Daly is her Lord of

Creation. King Cophetua and . . . She has some tale of meeting you in the glen——”

“It was a pure accident,” Diana said heatedly, flushing from her neck to her hat.

“Of course,” Mrs. Scovell said with a complacent look. “But the servants *will* gossip, and Helen Lentaigne wrote that he was decidedly attracted.”

“I’m off to see granny,” Diana said hastily. “If you were a Sinn Feiner, mother, you’d know that we occupy ourselves with other things.”

“You cease to be men and women, I suppose?” Mrs. Scovell said, getting up with a leisurely smile. “Well, well. Tell granny that I’ll come to see her every day while you’re away. This is the only room in the house that doesn’t shriek of the Dalys. Your grandfather made it by roofing in the two wings.”

She walked in silence down the long lofty room.

“I’m leaving the pup with Con Driscoll till I get back from Ballywilliam. Rafter might make up some story about myself and Mike,” Diana said a little shrilly.

“I think not, dear,” Mrs. Scovell said with a contented smile. “But you have the queerest circle of friends, Diana. Your father has the patience of a saint. Those Driscolls were his bitterest opponents over the land. I don’t know how many years’ purchase they have deprived us of.”

“Prevented us from robbing them of,” Diana said mockingly.

“I never argue politics. Thank God there are more sensible things to talk about. I hope someone will call. Run away now child and enjoy your walk.”

9.

Diana called the puppy to heel on Grange Con bridge. Should she go by the road or by the bank? She felt irri-

tated and worried. Always, before, she had known her own mind and acted on it. But for the last three weeks—it was too silly and disgusting. It had been such a relief to get away from the gossip of man-hunting and do real things. Was she doomed to fall into the rut of the Braziers and the Beaumonts and talk and think of nothing but men? It was the thinking that mattered. She had talked at school and at home—one couldn't escape from it, but this was different. It had begun in the train, something that vaguely disturbed her and put her on the defensive. She leant on the parapet, staring down the Dalrymple bank. There, somewhere by the big elm, he had landed the trout. Did she really remember it, or was it only because Helen Lentaigne so often spoke of it? She crossed over to the other side of the bridge and looked up towards the glen. It was shorter by the road, but the grass was more pleasant. That wasn't even honest. The genteel little Mallon girls were straighter. Once it was an accident. How many times had it been? Five or six. And he? He had been there on a day when he was as likely to catch a whale as a salmon. To-morrow she was going to Ballywilliam. Somewhere in her breast she felt a little empty ache, but she whipped her thoughts to combat it. She should be at her real work again. She must prepare her speech for the branch meeting in Belfast. It would be such fun going there from Ballywilliam of all places. Things and not people were her real interest. Ireland, her wrongs and her rights, were the beginning and end of all her interests. This other feeling happened in somehow, uninvited, unwelcome. It was some weakness which she had the strength to overcome when she became conscious of its presence. It was dangerous only when she was off her guard. It was least harmful when she was with him, for then her antagonism was keenest. . . .

She hesitated for a moment opposite the stile, walked on

a few steps, stopped, called back the pup, turned round, retraced her steps and crossed the stile. It was the last time for some weeks, perhaps for ever. She wasn't afraid of him. She thought again of her meeting in Belfast, of her speech. She formed a few sentences. They seemed to ring hollow, to trail off into nothingness among the reeds. The bulrushes seemed to look at her with his level eyes, neither accepting her nor rejecting her, just weighing her in a balance. He thought her a fool, laughed at her. Not actually, but she knew he was laughing behind his eyes. His reserve of judgment was all condemnation of her. Sometimes there was another look in his eyes. She felt hot and uncomfortable, pulled off her light, unlined linen coat, fanned herself with it, and slung it across her shoulder. Love, if it meant anything at all, meant some respect for one's ideas. That other look, which had appealed to her weakness, was mere pity for her ignorance and folly—insult added to injury. He was just an embodiment of the pitying contempt the best type of Englishmen had for Ireland. He would marry her for her hair and her eyes and her silly face—at least he thought it silly. Men did that and women submitted to it. Marriage was a companionship, some community of thought and aim. The Lentaignes had it and were happy. Her father and mother? They were happy, though it wasn't easy to see what they had in common. Anyhow they didn't despise one another. She stood and watched a water-hen dive quietly, the water rippling gently in ever widening circles round the spot where it had disappeared. The pool among the reeds was quite still again. He would go out of her life like that. She stared bleakly at the smiling water, put her hand to her breast to try and still the aching feeling. If she could only think. He shouldn't look at her like that—it wasn't fair. It was a mean attempt to sap her resolution. There was nothing in common between them. She was Ireland. He had taken

his stand with England. She would make him see that a woman could live her own life. If he wasn't a traitor—no, she wouldn't call him that—he was blind, blind. He was a hanger-on of a country that she must fight with all the strength of her mind and body—fight him even, if it were necessary. Ireland was right, England wrong. She was on the side of right; he, with all his cleverness, was wrong. He was merely a temptation to her faith in Ireland. He was a symbol of what had to be fought and broken.

Round a bend, in the shade of a clump of willows, she came on him suddenly, lying on his side on the grass. She caught his eyes fixed on her with the look she hated, half smiling, half quizzical. She blushed.

"First blood," he said, pitching aside the book which he held open, on the grass, and jumping up.

"Fishing?" she said disdainfully.

"Waiting for you," he said with an admiring look.

She stubbed the book with her shoe and turned over the front cover.

"Isaak Walton," she said with a little disconcerted laugh. "You ought to be ashamed to read him with all this pretence of fishing."

She glanced disapprovingly at the rod, the basket, and landing net yards apart on the grass, as if he had pitched them away impatiently.

"I've been doing something much sillier for the last three weeks—pretending I'm not in love with you," he said firmly.

A Painted Lady hovered over a clover blossom. Her eyes followed it hungrily. In some way the exquisite feeling of happiness which filled her seemed to hang on its movements. If only the whole world could be made to stand still and remain for ever just as it was now. The gurgle of water in the river, the faint chirping of innumerable grasshoppers, the sharp buzz of a bee, the whispering of willow leaves seemed to blend with the glad beating of

her heart in a sort of divine harmony. The butterfly flew slowly towards the river, and disappeared under the bank. One of the sentences she had thought of for her Belfast speech recurred to her, and she repeated it mechanically. It was only the old weakness after all in a new form. It could never, never be. Her heart beat painfully. The joy had all gone and had left her weak and giddy.

"Let's sit down," she said numbly. She sank down quietly where she stood, and sat upright, her palms resting on the cool grass.

"Have I been too sudden?" he said anxiously.

"This is some new game," she said, burying her hands in the deep grass for support.

"Oh, be serious, Diana," he said, sitting down opposite and crossing his legs.

"Diana?" she said mockingly to gain time.

"What else?" he said grimly.

"Oh, I don't mind. I'm serious though. Don't spoil everything by this nonsense."

"But I love you—have loved you ever since I saw you. All my life, I think."

"Is this a new way of jibing at my politics?" she said, suppressing a desire to kiss the eager face.

"Politics. What have politics got to do with it? I love you. I'm asking you to be my wife."

"My feelings don't matter, I suppose? But it's all in character. England all over. She has only to hold up her finger and the world must grovel at her feet," she said angrily.

"Do you love me?" he said imperturbably.

She flushed and laughed a little bitterly. "You're as convincing in love as you are in argument," she jibed. "No wonder England can't govern if that's how her diplomatists make love. You should hear the perfect lover—a Sinn Féiner of course. I'm Joan of Arc and Kathleen na

Houlihan. He's lyrical on my eyelashes and my finger-tips. I'm a blend of the Madonna and Venus. I'm a poem from my ear to my instep."

"You haven't answered my question," he said.

"I won't marry you," she said firmly, though her lips trembled and her eyes avoided his.

"There's someone else? You seem to have had experience," he said bitterly.

"Lots. But there's no one," she said, hesitating between resentment and a desire to explain.

"You haven't answered my question. Do you love me?" he said gently.

"Don't," she said appealingly.

Something in his look roused her to anger, and she said vehemently, "It's not fair of you to hector me like this. You've done nothing but bully me and sneer at me. Why should I love you? Why shouldn't I hate you?"

"Good God," he said helplessly. "Bully you and sneer at you? Why, I've worshipped you—do now, though you're angry with me. Your frown only made me less happy than your smile. Nothing mattered but you—to see you, to be with you. And when that was impossible, to think of you. I can't make you love me if you don't feel like it, but to hate me. Oh, do be fair."

"There," she said triumphantly. "But you've so often told me I'm prejudiced that it doesn't surprise me now."

"You are a bit, you know," he said with a puzzled frown. "You're not thinking of our rows about politics?" he added after a pause, with a boyish laugh.

"An impassable wall divides us," she said with the gesture of life and melodrama.

His slightest flicker of a smile added fuel to her flame, and his words did not help to quell it:

"No wall is impassable. And it must be a tiny wall if it exists at all. I've crossed it without noticing it."

"I haven't your agility and detachment of mind," she said with a shrug of her shoulders, adding quickly as if doubtful of the efficacy of irony, "I love my country."

"What makes you think I don't?"

"If you do you dissemble your love pretty cleverly," she said drily.

"There's too much at stake between us, Diana, to quibble. What have I done? You're not making a barrier of persiflage? I've never had a serious political discussion with you."

"Is it nothing to treat me as if I wasn't worth taking seriously?" she said angrily.

"But, good Lord, it wasn't that. I took *you* seriously. I was thinking of you then and not of politics. If I must dot the i's, I love Ireland rather too much for my peace of mind. I was fed on her as a child, and I can't drop the habit. I don't speak of her much, just as I can't speak to others of you. But she's there all the time in my mind and in my feelings."

"Yet you became a Foreign Office clerk," she said indignantly. "Why did you do it?"

"Why indeed?" he said with a shrug. "It's a rotten job. But it pleased the mater and doesn't matter to me for the moment."

"How could you feel in that way if you loved Ireland?" She clasped and unclasped her hands nervously. "At the best it's sheer indifference. You simply don't care."

"But I do care—care tremendously."

"When I knew I cared I had to give up everything."

"And I admire you for it. But there must have been a time when you were groping, saw no definite way out, were trying to make up your mind. That's where I am at the moment. I'm trying to understand."

"But you've definitely gone over on the English side by taking an English job."

"Isn't that condemning me because I'm not a Sinn Feiner? I won't press the point that all Sinn Feiners haven't made up their own minds on the question—I've met some who are civil servants. The Redmondites see nothing wrong in my position. All that matters to me, however, is that I see nothing wrong in it. The old Foreign Office is the servant of the crown and people of Great Britain and Ireland—even Sinn Fein hasn't yet separated them. You're one of my masters, or you will be when you get the vote. As for being English! If you marry me you'll hear me abuse England till you wish you had never heard the name."

"You laugh at me for attacking her," Diana said petulantly.

"You see her face all black. I see a white or a drab patch here and there," he laughed. "You may be right, I may be right. What does a difference of opinion in politics about England matter if we love one another."

"It's impossible," she said fingering the grass thoughtfully.

"Is that the Italian impossible that means 'Yes'?" he said hopefully.

"Certainly not. Couldn't you join our party, Jim?" she asked eagerly.

"Do you love me?"

She jumped up hurriedly and shouted "Lascar, Lascar! Where's that puppy?"

Jim muttered "Damn the puppy," stood up and frowned. "You haven't answered that question yet," he said doggedly.

"If you were only half as persistent in groping your way into being an Irishman it might be different," she said regretfully.

"It's yes, then," he said joyfully, stretching out his hand for hers.

"No, don't touch me. I couldn't stand it," she said excitedly, moving away from him. "I mustn't. I've my work to do here. It's more than religion to me—more than love. I can't leave it, I can't. It would be worse than apostasy. Don't make me miserable."

"Don't be afraid. I can wait—now," he said grimly. "Next week you may be more of a woman and less of a martyr. I'm going to stay with the Edwardes."

"You're an English brute. But I'm glad you're coming up North," she said with a smile. "You see how impossible it all is," she added, holding out her hand.

"Indeed?" he said drily, a hungry look in his eyes, as he clasped her hand.

"You may kiss me—but it means nothing," she said, drawing him towards her.

"I'm damned if I do—on these terms," he said, shaking off her hand roughly.

She smiled through half lowered lids. "There's more of the Irishman in you than I thought," she said as he moved away with a muttered "Goodbye."

"Don't forget your hat and your rod," she called after him gaily. "Now, Lascar," patting the hound's head as he tried to lick her hand, "we can have our tea in comfort."

10.

Jim and Father Lysaght sat in armchairs in front of a cheerful fire in Father Lysaght's sitting-room in the Presbytery at Lisgeela. A bronze reading lamp, with a low green shade, lit up the green cover of the centre table but left the rest of the room half dark. Occasionally a flame shot out from a hissing coal and revealed the furniture, mostly books in open shelves, a few chairs, dark-green curtains on the windows and the back of the door. The curtains, the priest explained, were neither for ornament nor to keep out

draughts, but to hide raw pitch pine the look of which he detested. Wind howled in the poplar trees at the end of the Presbytery garden, and the rain pattered sharply on the window panes. Jim sat well back in his comfortable chair, his feet on the fender, drew long, slow, regular puffs from his pipe and watched meditatively the figures made by the glowing coals. The priest leant over the side of his chair, held an open breviary so as to catch the light from the lamp and read his office. His rapid muttering made a curious undertone to the wind and rain. He shut the book with a snap, knelt for a few seconds on his chair, made the sign of the cross, threw the book on the table, stood up, took his pipe and tobacco box off the mantelpiece, and sat down with a sigh of relief.

"So much done," he said cheerfully. "You could easily be in a worse place, Jim, on a night like this. I'm not sorry we got out of the bishop so early. A short dinner with him goes a long way, if you knew all his stories by heart twenty years ago. We'll have a quiet smoke, and a cup of tea later, and I'll drive you home about ten o'clock. I promised an old man that's dying out your way to look in on him then."

"I can get Fagan's car. It's a dreadful night for you to be out," Jim objected.

"And have old Fahey complaining to St. Peter about me if he died during the night," the priest said with a whimsical smile, crushing the tobacco into the bowl of his pipe. "I'm not even sure of being left in peace till then, but let us hope for the best, and the weather may cheer up."

"You could get one of the young men to go?"

"I suppose I could. But dying people are more cranky than the rest of us, and that's saying a good deal. The old ones like to have the old man they've used to to show them the road in the end. One has to take the rough with the smooth. Regularly about once a month, for the last ten

years, I've been called out of my warm bed in the middle of the night to attend an old collogue who'll see me under the sod yet. Young priests are apt to get sharp over trifles like that, but when you're on the way to sixty you get used to it."

He lit his pipe and puffed for a while in silence. "I suppose this is the last I'll see of you this side of Christmas, but I hope you'll come back to us regularly now?"

"Rather."

"The old man was hoping that there might be something between yourself and Miss Diana?" the priest said, watching a smoke ring intently.

"There was—a good deal of nagging," Jim said, emptying his pipe in the fender.

"Nothing softer than that?"

"She's as sexless as a nun or a suffragette," Jim said wrathfully.

"There's a tender spot in many a nun, and I wouldn't trust one of them suffragettes out of my sight," the priest said drily. "A healthy amount of sparring between a man and a woman is never a bad sign, and often wears out any crust of difference there might be between 'em. She was so bitter agin you to me that I was almost sure she was in love with you."

"She has no heart," Jim said moodily.

"She's a daughter of Eve, and it's seldom one of 'em hasn't a taste for the apple and for sharing it with a likely man," the priest said genially. "These days she often carries it in her pocket for a bit and plays with politics or the like for a while. And with all the clatter and excitement she might sometimes be under the illusion that her heart was aching for a cause and not for a man. Sooner or later foolishness like that wears away of itself, but it's liable to burst any minute under proper pressure in season. You saw a good deal of her when she was up North, she told me?"

"Very little," Jim said bitterly.

"You could hardly expect to see her all the time. My poor boy, you must be very hard hit. But it's only a matter of time till her 'good deal' is your 'very little.' The next thing I expect to hear is that she has a call to spread the cause in London."

"I'm afraid you don't know her," Jim said gloomily.

"I saw her once meeting you suddenly opposite the post-office, and I haven't been dealing with women for thirty years without learning about their ways. They come and tell me this and that, but I have my own ways of judging. 'Twas only for a second, but I said to myself, 'There's a job for you one day, James Lysaght.' At that stage it's more the brake than the spur they generally need. Have you asked her yet?"

"She's refused me."

"Was it after last Saturday week?"

"No. Before that."

"Then go on asking her," the priest said with a laugh. "She'll be sick enough if you don't ask her again at Christmas. It'll take her till near that to wear out the novelty of being a sort of national hero. It's like a new toy to her now, but she'll tire of it soon enough when you're out of her sight for a while. Maybe I oughtn't to encourage you to marry a Protestant, but she has a face that makes me forget the heretic in her. And who knows, with the help of God, but she may yet see the light. Anyhow the children'll be safe."

"Don't separate us in the next world if we have the luck to come together in this," Jim said ironically.

"You must take your risk if you marry a Protestant. But if I were you I'd trust God to let her down light since He made her a temptation. Anyhow, even the strictest theologians have left a few back doors open by which a Protestant may escape hell," Father Lysaght said, pursing his lips and rubbing his chin.

"How considerate of 'em," Jim said drily.

"They're great men, the doctors of the church. I wouldn't put it past them to square the circle yet," the priest said with a laugh, settling himself back comfortably in his chair.

"No wonder the Orangemen are suspicious of you."

"Did you find them very bitter agin us up North?" the priest asked eagerly. "They talk a power I suppose about Home Rule, Rome rule?"

Jim nodded.

"Do you think they really believe it, or is it only put on to delude the British?"

"Oh, they're quite serious—at least the ordinary run. Of course it's a good catch-cry in Great Britain and is exploited for that by many who know better."

"The Irish never took their politics from Rome, and more power to them for it—and they never will," the priest said fervently.

He relit his pipe, puffed it for a while in silence and said quietly, "It's the misfortune of the Church that she's loaded down with a lot of rubbish of laws and rules and regulations about her rights and powers that have come down from the dark ages and that she hasn't the courage to rid herself of. She's like an old woman, God forgive me for saying it, who keeps by her every rag of clothes she ever wore since she was a baby in arms and goes on pretending at eighty that she can wear any day she likes the bib or the petticoat she wore at her mother's breast. She was no worse than her neighbours, better if anything, when she made out that she had rights over the bodies of kings and peoples, could set up kings or pull them down, and force people from their allegiance. She burnt heretics, or got them burned when every Government in Europe killed everyone who disagreed with them. It's many a long day since she could burn a cat, let alone a heretic, even if she

wanted to do it, in the most Catholic country in the world without being had up before a civil court for it. All those things are as dead as Queen Anne, but Protestants can fling them in our face because we go on pretending they're alive. But what's the use of talking about that when an Irish Catholic Nationalist wouldn't touch the politics of Rome with a barge pole."

"The Church is a bit autocratic even in Ireland," Jim said with a smile.

"It's a queer mix-up," Father Lysaght said with a laugh. "You have the English Government hand and glove with the Pope. They don't like him nor the reactionary politics of the Vatican—in England. But, they say to themselves, the Pope is the very man for us in Ireland. We may be a progressive Government in England, but we're an autocracy in Ireland. The Vatican doesn't believe in popular government, so we'll use it as a tool to keep the rebellious Irish in their place. The Pope claims the right of controlling this and that. No Catholic country in the world now admits his claim, but we'll admit it. We'll give him the schools or the like and he'll keep the people quiet over the land and Home Rule."

Jim laughed.

"No wonder you'd laugh," the priest said with a shrug. "You go up North—you can hear it here from your uncle, Jasper Levin—and the Orangemen say to you: 'See them dreadful priests with the education of the country already in their grip—they'll have our schools under the Pope the day Home Rule comes. It'd be as good as a play if the country hadn't to suffer for it. Whatever political power the Church has in Ireland comes to it through the Union. There's every fear that down it'll go flop when Irish Catholics get control. Strange as it may seem, the harder the Orangemen beat the drum and the longer they're able to keep off Home Rule the better the Vatican will like it,"

“What about the bishops?”

“Bishops are bishops all the world over, but all the same I’d like to give the poor devils their due,” Father Lysaght said, resting his pipe on his knee. “It’s a trying position for a saint, let alone an ordinary human being. I know nearly all the bishops, and on the whole they’re not a bad sort. Politically they have to balance on the edge of a razor. They have to keep in with the people and they have to keep in with the Vatican. Getting to be a bishop at all is a sign of a safe man that knows his way round. Within the memory of man none of ’em was ever known to run the risk of losing his job. A bishop who has ambitions to be an Archbishop or a Cardinal inclines towards the politics of the Vatican. Those that are satisfied with being merely bishops, as soon as they’ve got their job, incline towards the politics of the people. But, except in a fit of temper like Deehan, they’re all careful to avoid extremes. If you ask me whether they want Home Rule or not I’d say that nearly every one of ’em is tugged in opposite directions. They have a certain amount of power now, and they know that they run the risk of losing it by Home Rule. But in their hearts they’re all Irishmen and have at least a sentimental hankering after Home Rule. It’s pull devil, pull baker with them. They have no love for England nor for medieval Vatican politics, but they love their own power in spite of their professional humility and’d hate to give it up. But in a pinch I wouldn’t put it past even a bishop to take a risk for his country. In any case the Protestants have nothing to fear from them. Under Home Rule they’d be so busy defending their own power against their Catholic subjects who are supposed to be under their thumbs, that it is not thinking of worrying Protestants they’d be.”

“Are the priests as sound Orangemen as the bishops and the Pope?” Jim asked derisively.

“The priests have the politics of the people. If they

haven't they're soon made to feel it. There are overbearing priests, and tyrannical priests, and avaricious priests, and some may be no better than they might be, but for the most part they're hard-working, decent men who have taken up a job and do it as best they can. They're men and not shining angels. The people take religion from them, but turn their backs on their politics unless it's an echo of their own. If a football can be said to lead a mob, then they're often leaders. The people put up with a good deal from them, but the one thing they won't stand from them is politics made in England or made in Rome."

"Then you think Home Rule, Rome rule, all nonsense?"

Father Lysaght threw out his hands despairingly. "I don't think about it, man. I know it as certain as that I'm sitting here. One of the things, and the chief of 'em, that keeps the church what it is in Ireland to-day, and not like what it is in France or Italy, is that the country is still under the foot of England. In the memory of the people England still stands for religious as well as political oppression. They love the priests that said masses for them and attended the dying in the Penal times. But they hate any clerical encroachment on their liberty. When the country has a Parliament of its own, and political differences have to be fought out within the country and not against England on the Home Rule issue alone, then the priest will have to clear out of politics here as elsewhere. The Irish are a religious people, but half their religion is pride that it is the one thing England was never able to take from them. The priests keep their heads above water in Ireland to-day by forgetting every musty political principle they learned at college. Like the people, thank God, they take their politics from Ireland and not from Rome. And Irish politics are liberty and equality and not clerical domination. If the priests ever try to run Papal politics in Ireland the Catholics'll give 'em shorter shrift than the

Orangemen. The bishops have tried it scores of times, but it has always ended in failure."

"Then unless the people themselves are bigots it would seem as if the Orangemen could still breathe under Home Rule?" Jim said, preparing to light a fresh pipe.

The priest looked at the clock. "Don't light that yet—the tea'll be in in a minute," he said with a laugh. "You're a queer fellow, Jim, to be catechizing me like this and you knowing more about the Pope and nearly as much about the people as I do myself. The people are political bigots if you like—if in this age of the world you can blame men for thirsting for liberty and not being happy till they get it. As for religious bigotry, you've only to walk down the town of Liskeilly to get your answer. Some of the best shops in the place are Protestant shops, and there aren't enough Protestants in the whole district to support one decent shop. There's a lot of foolish talk among children, but it's only a sort of lingering memory of the bad times. Two gossoons may bandy words about the Pope and Proddy-woddies, but religion doesn't keep a ha'p'orth of custom out of any Protestant shop. And there's no more respected man in the town than Mr. Ellison, the Protestant rector. I've read in the Unionist papers of cases of religious intolerance about here—the boycott of a Protestant or the like, but everyone in the place knew he was boycotted for politics and not for religion. Lord Drumbeg, who's more Catholic than the Pope, was boycotted more than any man in the whole country. But sure you know this well. Is your grandfather a religious bigot? Or your cousin Con Driscoll, or that ruffian Dick Kavanagh, or any Catholic you know for that matter? Except maybe Drumbeg, and he's a Unionist. I don't say that there isn't some religious bigotry up North. The religions there are more evenly divided. They're like fighting cocks of more or less equal strength, and the nuts from the shipyards are convenient

weapons. But it's largely a case of using religion to stoke up their political fervour. The Catholics make a politician of the Blessed Virgin and break Orange heads in her honour on Lady-Day. The Orangemen break Catholic heads on the twelfth of July in remembrance of a battle that wasn't fought on that day at all, and to honour a Dutchman who had an alliance with the Pope. Catholics are to blame as well as Protestants. I once went to an archæological meeting in Derry, and one of the priests of the town pulled a face on him as long as Carson's when I told him the name of the hotel I was going to stay at—I picked it out of the Railway Guide. 'The Orange Hotel,' he said horrified. 'If they're top dog up here, as you say,' I said, 'then I'll probably get a good bed and a decent glass of whisky,' and sure enough I did. Horace Plunkett and his co-operatives were doing a good deal to do away with the bitterness on both sides, and was getting Orangeman and Catholic, priest and parson, to see that they had more in common than hatred and a taste for breaking one another's heads, but now the fat is all in the fire again. The English Imperialists have discovered Ulster as a weapon to smash the Liberals. Carson has become an Orangeman to save the Empire. Bigotry is to be let loose in Ireland again. 'Pity the poor Ulster Protestant and save him from the ravening maw of the wicked Pope,' will be shouted through the length and breadth of Great Britain to rouse English Protestantism to its duty of throwing over Asquith. We're in for bad times, but sure it's only another page in the long record of England's misdeeds. But I'm dry with all this talk. Thank God there's the clatter of a tray outside the door and we'll have our tea. Keep out of politics, Jim boy; it's a crooked game."

PART THREE

I.

"THIS stuff ought to be put on ice," Bateson said with a bored look at the hock cup which he had mixed with care.

"That will do, I think," Jim Daly said with a critical but approving look at the table laid for luncheon.

He moved some flowers unnecessarily.

"The Liberals are making worse than their usual mess of Ireland," Phipps said from behind the *Observer*. "We handed it over to them happy and contented and they've turned it into a bear garden."

"Damn backwoodsman cheek—with your gun-running Carsons and Tory mutiny in the army," Bateson said with mild indignation, stifling a yawn.

"Let's clear out now. No, Bateson, you don't. No more smoking. She ought to be here any moment," Jim said, with a frown at Bateson and an anxious look at the table.

Bateson pocketed his cigarette case with a sigh.

"You should have taken her to the Savoy, or left all this to Simpson," Phipps said with a withering look at the mess Bateson had made on the sideboard. "However, something may yet be done," he added, touching a button near the fireplace. "Amateurs interfering with meals are like Liberals trying to govern."

"She wished to come here," Jim said moodily, still brooding over the table.

"Who's doing the chaperon?" Phipps asked.

"Mrs. Leggett."

"Another of those damn Liberal wives! However, she's pretty," Phipps conceded doubtfully.

"Yessir?" a manservant said.

"Clear up all this," Phipps said with a vague wave of the newspaper. "And see that everything's right."

"Yessir."

"Don't touch the table, Simpson," Jim said, again moving some flowers.

"Cut out," Phipps said, shepherding Jim and Bateson out of the dining-room. He looked at Simpson, who said with his eyes, "You can leave it to me, sir."

A friendship begun at Winchester and surviving Oxford had led to the taking in common by the three friends of a house in St. James's Place. Profound diversities of opinion were bridged by habit, a good-humoured tolerance, and a common interest in social work. They were non-resident members of an Oxford Settlement in Rotherhithe and ran a boys' club near the Surrey Docks. Phipps was a Conservative member for Loamshire, vaguely supposed to be promising. Bateson belonged to the left wing of the Liberal Party, had the promise (which the party managers always forgot when opportunities arose) of a seat. He used the whip or the scorpion as the subject of his articles in the advanced Radical Press was the Unionist Party or the chiefs of his own party.

"Keep Mrs. Leggett near you, Phipps," Jim said, as they crossed the hall to their common sitting-room. "She has her knife in Bateson. I'll have Miss Scovell."

"I was wondering why the unusual thoughtfulness for me," Bateson said drily.

"I've got Aunt Sarah for you—at least she may come," Jim said cheerfully.

"Good of you," Bateson said with no excess of enthusiasm.

There was a ring at the front door. Phipps took up the *Nineteenth Century*. Bateson's fingers again strayed to his cigarette case. Jim flicked imaginary dust off the sleeve of his morning coat, his eyes on the door.

"Mr. Dale."

Jim sighed but said pleasantly, "How d'you do, Dale?" Bateson lit a cigarette.

Dale fixed Phipps with his monocle.

"Thought you were in Ulster drilling?" he said jeeringly.

"Smith and Bonar Law have gone over. Phipps is an Orangeman who has never been in Ireland," Bateson said, exhaling a luxurious puff.

"Law-abiding Tories," Dale began.

"Major and Mrs. Levin."

"Glad you were able to come, Aunt Sarah," Jim smiled at the short, stout, placid woman who towed a tall gaunt man in her wake. "Settled in at the War Office, Uncle Peter?"

"Mrs. Leggett. Miss Scovell."

Jim shot past his uncle, greeted Mrs. Leggett, a vivacious little brunette, perfunctorily, and seized Diana's hand. He had seen her yesterday driving a four-in-hand along Piccadilly in a Suffragette procession, but years seemed to have divided Saturday from Sunday. Twenty hours at most, and yet it had felt like half a lifetime.

"You've come at last," he whispered.

"No nearer," she said firmly, releasing her hand.

It was that first look of hers that always gave him a new hope—something in the depths of her big blue eyes that answered the hunger in his heart. But it was again only the old illusion that had mocked him so often for three years.

"She made *the* speech of the meeting" Mrs. Leggett said enthusiastically. "It's a pity she's not as sound on the Irish question as she is on Women's Rights."

"I can't understand why women bother about politics—such a pretty girl, too," Mrs. Levin said stolidly. "We didn't in India, did we, Peter?"

"No such rot," Major Levin growled.

"I'm in politics," Mrs. Leggett said with a look and in-

tonation that challenged the major and his wife to deny that she was a pretty woman.

Simpson announced luncheon. On the way in Bateson informed the Major, "Lifted old Leggett into the House and is now pushing him towards the Cabinet."

"Sensible woman," the major said gruffly. "No damned nonsense about the vote there."

"We are very angry with you naughty soldiers over the Curragh incident," Mrs. Leggett said when they had taken their places at table, wagging a playful finger at the major.

"Soldiers shoot only Nationalists in Ireland," Diana said sweetly.

"Don't see what else Gough could have done. An Irish Protestant to shoot down other Irish Protestants! It's unthinkable," Major Levin said with an uncomfortable wriggle.

"The politicians were behind it, eh, Phipps?" Dale said.

Phipps shrugged his shoulders. "We scored off the Liberals anyhow," he said with a grin.

"A glorious victory," Dale said ironically. "Tories used to boast of loyalty to the King and Constitution. As a party they never had much vision, but they were careful of their skins. Now they're slitting their own throats."

"Dale is playing the stage Irishman," Phipps jeered.

"I'm talking English politics," Dale said with a shrug. "Try and imagine me a Tory with a little intelligence—if it's not too fantastic to credit a Tory with intelligence. What do I see? My property threatened by the 1909 Budget, my privileges threatened by the veto on the House of Lords. Hitherto the King and the Constitution have been at once my privilege and my protection. My existence depends on their maintenance. Revolutions and rebellions are for wicked Radicals and the proletariat. I and Arthur Balfour and the few Tories with a glimmering of reason see all this. The 'have nots' are getting the upper

hand of the 'haves.' They are the more numerous, but are acting constitutionally. We are distressed, but we do not get into a panic. The brakes are getting worn out, but they can still keep back the wheels. But we reckon without our backwoodsmen. *They* get into a panic. They get an idea—the first in their lives—and like new wine in old bottles it will burst them. Carson gave it to them. The Smiths and the Bonar Laws are jubilant. With a whoop they are flourishing the knife with which they are about to cut the throat of Toryism in England. Carson's blessed word 'hypothetical' won't save the Tory Party in the day of doom. And what is the magic? You can see the Old Bailey mind working behind the madness. How would the lawyer put it? We can't fight the 'have nots' on the straight issue of property and privilege. They are too many for us. Let us confuse the issue, rouse their prejudices, divide them. Many of the 'have nots' are still sound, intolerant Protestants: let us appeal to their bigotry. They have some sort of distorted idea of patriotism slumbering beneath their greed for a living wage: let us hypnotize them into the illusion that the security of England is threatened. Ulster is the trump card that will win us back what we have lost. We'll trip up the Rads on their Home Rule Bill. Simpson, don't take away that beef."

"He thought you were lunching on your toshy speech," Phipps said gruffly.

"My dear fellow, if your party had the sense to lunch on my speech and digest it they wouldn't be committing hari-kari," Dale said blithely. "If I'm longwinded it's because I'm playing the part of a disillusioned Tory singing the swan song of his party."

"Well?" Bateson said with a grin.

"Why labour the point?" Dale said with a shrug. "Responsible leaders of the Tory Party are preparing an armed rebellion against the Crown and Constitution."

"Against the damned Liberals only," Major Levin said excitedly.

"Against the Crown and Constitution of Great Britain and Ireland," Dale said firmly. "They have gone farther, they have corrupted the officers of the King's army to disobeying the orders of the King."

"Come now," Levin said irritably.

"I'm speaking as a constitutional Tory. I recognize that the King governs through his ministers," Dale said with a smile.

"The Cabinet caved in," Levin grunted.

"Bateson may wish to defend *them*?" Dale said ironically.

"Not I—the weak-kneed crew," Bateson growled.

"They couldn't run the risk of breaking up the party," Mrs. Leggett said defensively.

"At the moment I'm only tracing the nemesis of the Tory Party," Dale said with a lift of his eyebrows. "I leave the Liberals to Mrs. Leggett and Bateson. Anyhow, they have given a moment's respite to my beloved Tories. Where have I left Carson and Bonar Law and Galloper Smith and the rest of my backwoodsmen?"

"Aren't you making too much of what's largely bluff?" Levin said uneasily.

"The backwoodsmen may be bluffing, but they have raised an army in Ulster that's not all bluff, my friend," Dale said seriously. "Ulster Protestants armed with machine guns and rifles are not safe men to play hokey-pokey with. They are capable of mistaking hypotheses for facts and may precipitate the destruction of the Tory Party at any moment. But whether Ulster fights or not, what have the Smiths and the Carsons and the Laws succeeded in doing for their party and for England? They have taught the 'have nots' the methods and uses of direct action. They have brought Parliament into derision.

They have justified armed rebellion. The upholders of the Crown and Constitution have gone amok. In their madness they are straining every effort to destroy their only protection. If Tory idiocy drives England into becoming a proletariat republic where a Tory cannot show his head, we may expect to find there statues to Carson and Law and Smith with inscriptions, 'To the mad prophets who showed us the way.'

"We don't think so badly as that of Sir Edward Carson, do we, Peter?" Mrs. Levin said archly.

"I won't have a word said against Sir Edward Carson," Diana said with a laugh. "If he weren't leading the Orangemen we'd be glad to have him in Sinn Fein. He takes no nonsense from England."

"Behold your first fruits, Phipps," Dale said drily.

"Oh, we owe Carson a great deal—we admit it freely," Diana said. "While you Redmondites and the old stuffy Liberals were talkee-talkee he was taking action. We got the idea of the volunteers from him. And the gun-running shows what a man he is. Very soon," she added mysteriously, "we too may have rifles and machine guns."

"Good God," Levin said, "even Liberals wouldn't allow rebels to arm?"

"Only Orangemen are allowed to rebel with impunity," Dale said, helping himself to wine. "In——"

"You're not going to let Dale make another speech, Jim? What about coffee in the common room?" Phipps said sharply. "He missed the Speaker's eye several times lately—Lowther's bored, I've no doubt—and he wants to fire it off here."

"Barring rhetorical trimming he seems all right," Jim said moodily.

"My thanks to the Foreign Office," Dale said, with a mock bow. "But they know something of Carson there, I understand. His defence of the Empire is creating a cheer-

ful expectation of its downfall in more than one foreign chancellery."

"Trust the Liberals, Mr. Dale," Mrs. Leggett said cheerfully, "when the opportune moment comes they will deal firmly with the situation."

"Any fear of that Serbian business drawing us into a European war, Jim?" Bateson said irritably. "What with Liberals who won't govern and Tories who have created one rebel army and are provoking another into existence, I see no other way out of the mess."

"What about coffee, Aunt Sarah?" Jim said, with his best imitation of his Uncle Silas's manner of ignoring awkward questions.

2.

Jim saw Diana frequently during the hot July days. They rode together in the Park before breakfast, but throughout the day she was occupied with some mysterious business in the City. Once he lunched with her at Mrs. Leggett's, and several times he met her out at dinners and dances. She was mildly lionized, partly as a suffragette, partly as an Irish patriot who gave trouble to the Redmondites, but mostly for her hair, her eyes, her wonderful complexion and a mouth and chin that seduced even Devereux, one of Carson's chief aids, from his drillings at Portadown for a whole fortnight.

Jim counted the hours that kept them apart, but was always restless and dissatisfied when they met. He was not jealous, and had no reason to be, but she was as firm as ever in refusing to marry him. He had made a hundred resolutions never to raise the question again, but he could not resist it when they were alone together.

For some years she had been quite frank about her love for him.

“Don’t spoil everything for me, Jim,” she said one morning, as they walked their horses, her eyes fixed vaguely on the absurd Albert Memorial looming out of a golden haze in the distance. “I love you. I’ve told you so a thousand times. I love you so much that I’m afraid to touch your hand. If I kissed you I should never let you go. It’s as much as that. It’s no use talking to me of the inevitable psychology of it. Inevitable psychology is all rot. I’ve felt like that for three years. It has been hell, but I’ve fought against it and won. It may be cruel to you, but I have suffered torture. I may be weak, but I can do it, and I will. It may be unfair to you. It is unfair to you. But I can’t help that. It may not be the way women act in books or in life either—other women. But I’m trying to explain myself. I may be vain, I may be anything you choose to say—you have the right to say almost anything. If you give me up and marry another woman I can’t blame you. I’d probably hate her, but I’d go on loving you. I don’t mind grovelling to you. Though it isn’t all grovelling, for it shows me my own strength. Call it madness, if you like. No, don’t speak. You think I’m merely muddled and vain. But I’m not. I may be in many things, but not in this. I see something that I’ve got to do—that I must do to keep my soul and my self-respect. It’s not that I pit a cause against you. I want you both. It’s no use your saying that I can have both together. If you knew what I’ve been doing in London for the last fortnight you’d know I cannot—not yet anyhow. We’ve failed to do things in Ireland up to this through not sticking enough—enough people didn’t stick long enough, I mean. Some always did, thank God, but never so much as now—nor so many. Don’t push me into despising myself. For that’s what would happen if I married you. I’d be a traitor not only to myself but to all those I work with—to Ireland.”

An impatient exclamation was on his lips but he checked

it. There was no use battling against the look that had now come into her eyes—almost exaltation.

“Well, you haven’t attacked me. That’s a change for the better,” he said ruefully.

She laughed merrily. “Poor old England is so silly when you come to see it at close quarters that I don’t think it can do you much harm,” she said maliciously.

“What are you doing over here?” he asked abruptly.

“What’s the Foreign Office doing about Serbia?” she asked demurely.

He laughed. “Don’t burn your fingers,” he said seriously.

“I don’t think they care enough to bother about us, no matter what we do,” she said contemptuously.

“The tail of an overfed lion can be pulled once too often,” he said sententiously.

“They give Carson rein enough,” she said indignantly.

“Carsonism isn’t Sinn Fein,” he said with a smile. “It doesn’t mean separation. It doesn’t seem to threaten English security. It’s a move in a party game. It’s a threat of a brick in a family row over Imperialism and a hundred home party issues. It cuts deeper, of course; but England won’t see that till the danger yawns open before her, and then she’ll muddle through. If we’re drawn into a war the Tory Imperialists will see their chance in another direction and Carsonism will be put on the shelf.”

“The English have no principles,” she said with a sneer.

“They’re always muddled about them, but they’re there all right. And she has prejudices that lie very deep. Patriotism isn’t an Irish monopoly.”

“An Englishman will do anything for a price,” she said with a knowing look.

“So you’ve been buying arms—oh, you’ll get Englishmen to do that,” he said with a frown. “But there are things Englishmen won’t do for a price—I’ve been seeing it for

the last few weeks—on principle, too. And there are things they won't do from habit and prejudice—let you take Ireland off their hands, for instance. Less than any time in their history they won't let you do it now."

"England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity," she said confidently.

"Perhaps," he said moodily. "But you have a better weapon than a few discarded rifles."

She jerked her rein, urged her horse to a gallop and threw over her shoulder: "What do they know of justice?"

In a few minutes he drew abreast of her. The Row was clear along the stretch by Knightsbridge Barracks.

"It's the only place in London where I can breathe," she said, giving her willing horse his head.

A policeman held up a warning hand.

"In Dublin he'd have fired at us," she said with a grimace when their pace had again slackened to a walk.

"No. He'd have shouted: 'More power to you, Miss Diana. It's a fine race, glory be to God,'" Jim said with a laugh. "Still I'm glad you can admire any English institution."

"Admire? I merely acknowledge in the English a certain orderly stupidity in dealing with themselves. In dealing with others they're stupid tyrants."

"Is Bateson a stupid tyrant?"

"You'd condemn that method of argument in me. What is one man in forty millions?"

"But there are thousands of Batesons—hundreds of thousands a little less articulate—with all his passion for liberty and honour and justice. Millions have it in a muddled sort of way. I'd go further and say that the great majority of Englishmen have deep down in them a sense of fair play."

"Ireland?" she said mockingly.

"I admit Ireland is an argument against me. It is

England's ghastly failure. But I'm not going to let it blind me to what is good in England."

"How can you defend her, Jim?" Diana said sadly. "You know how she has treated Ireland. It makes my blood boil. It shows what a chasm divides you and me."

"But I'm not defending her treatment of Ireland. I go further than you in condemning the stupidity of it, the folly of it—its wickedness if you like. Almost every mistake that one country could make in governing another England has made in Ireland. I'm merely trying to look over the high wall of prejudice and misunderstanding—largely built by England I admit—that divides the two countries. I'm trying to see the English side of the question as Bateson and many Englishmen see the Irish side."

"Through English Society over your mess of pottage," she jeered. "Well, what do you see?"

"Among other things that England has never been able to govern Ireland, that it never can govern it, that it has no right to try."

She pulled up her horse and stared at him. "Oh, Jim, Jim," she said brokenly, her eyes swimming. Her horse pawed the ground restlessly and backed out in the fairway. When the two horses were walking side by side again she said in a worried tone:

"But you're still in the Foreign Office?"

"If we tide over this mess—Draycott hopes we shall, and he's doing everything that a man could do to keep Europe from cutting its throat—I'm going to resign."

"Then you'll join us—it will be glorious," she said, her eyes glowing.

"I don't believe in Krag rifles," he said drily.

"But they're Mausers—the latest pattern, and made by one of the best German firms," she said eagerly. "They were ordered by the Orangemen, but Fingelstein let us have them cheap. He's in sympathy——" she bit her lip

and flushed. "I oughtn't to tell you this—still it's different now," she said nervously.

"I've heard nothing," he said with a frown. "Except that Germany is pretty thorough. For God's sake, Diana, keep out of all this. You're playing with fire."

"You're not going to join us, then?" she said with a cold ring in her low pitched voice.

"Good Lord, no. I'm not going to play with pop-gun revolutions. This shilly-shally Government are to blame, of course. They should have stopped the Carson bluff. But they'll stop your lot all right. It will be the same old game over again—England provokes a revolution in Ireland and will shoot down the revolutionaries regretfully in the name of law and order."

She looked at him, half furiously, half bewildered.

"You can see all that and you won't act?" she said indignantly.

"There's a vulgar saying that a live dog is better than a dead lion, and another that one doesn't save one's life by committing suicide. Like all lying proverbs they have a little truth in them. I'm not against rebellions. With a just cause and even a faint chance of success I'm all for 'em. We have a just cause but we have no chance of success. Not even one in a thousand. Failure is a dead certainty. There have been men, and there still are men, thank God, to whom the knowledge of failure is no bar—they are the salt of the earth, and have kept the idea of liberty alive in the world. But I'm not one of them. I see other ways, and I can only follow what I see. Why, England could put an army into Ireland in a week that would drive both Sinn Fein and the Orangemen into the Atlantic."

"She's tried it before and failed," Diana said contemptuously.

"What you're really counting on is that she won't do it," he said with a shrug of his shoulders. "For years England

has had a struggle within herself between an idealism founded on right and justice and morality, and *Realpolitik*—it comes from the mixture of Celt and Teuton in almost every so-called Englishman. At her worst she was never absolutely ruthless even in Ireland. Her best hasn't come on top yet, but it's coming. At the moment governing England is a blend of the good element and the bad, but the trend is pretty obvious. The Irish Home Rule Bills, rotten as they are, are a sign. But every step towards right rouses a furious reaction, and progress often has the appearance of a setback."

"Words, words," she said sadly. "Just to excuse yourself for doing nothing. Your grandfather is right. You've been corrupted here."

"Perhaps," he said resignedly. "But prejudice can't blind me to all facts. A new way of looking at things is arising in England. Don't be a party to spilling blood uselessly for what England will give you freely in a few years."

She laughed ironically.

"England yields to force and to nothing but force," she said confidently. "She has only two weapons—hypocrisy and the mailed fist. We've had both. We see through one and aren't afraid of the other."

"Shall we have another gallop, or have you had enough?" he said with a wry smile.

"Thank God, my work here is done," she said bitterly. "You talk of a new outlook, a new morality. I see nothing but Tango teas and night clubs and Liberal hypocrisy over a promised gift of a penny rattle to Ireland, and Unionist gloating over Carsonism and some scoffing at Votes for Women."

"Let's be getting back," she added wearily. "If you won't be a man, Jim, what are you going to do?"

"I shall try and help England to discern her conscience."

"A wonder worker," she jeered. "And how does the magician set out to achieve the impossible? Preach abstract ideas to the readers of the *Referee* and the *Winning Post*—the English governing classes?"

"That too," he laughed. "But I begin with a sugar-coated pill. I've been making it in my idle time—lots of it—at the F.O. It's a history of the Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, and Slovenes."

"Who on earth are they?"

"Irelands under Austria. The reactionary press will swallow it whole as the tyrant is German."

"You mean England will pick up from it some new tricks to play off on us. Jim, you're nothing but a child. I suppose that's why I love you so much when I ought to hate you. I must be off—but as you're a convert on the way I'll make another effort to talk sense to you. Are you free at four to take me for a spin?"

"If only you had one spark of common sense," he said severely.

She gave him a provocative glance and said demurely as she moved off, "You wouldn't love me then, of course. A man who hopes to influence England by abstract ideas could only love a fool. At four, then, I'll expect you," she called back over her shoulder.

3.

Jim had arranged to take his holidays early in July, but Diana's visit made him exchange with Bunty Peveril, who shared his room at the Foreign Office and wrote *vers libre* while Jim struggled with his history of the Austrian Slavs. Diana left suddenly at the beginning of the last week of July with no explanation beyond a telephone message, which Jim didn't get till hours after she had left town. Fortunately Bunty's holidays were to have begun on the

morrow, so Jim decided to take his at once if he could be spared from the office. He tore up a telegram cancelling a long-standing engagement to attend Violet Edwardes's wedding, called up her brother Stephen on the telephone, and arranged with him to go to Belfast the following night by the Midland and Heysham. He then called up his Uncle Silas, who damned him for interrupting his dressing for dinner, but saw no difficulty about an immediate holiday.

"The state of Europe is damn dicky—worse than ever I've known it. But the Austrians are gentlemen. *They* always meet us half way. It's the Germans butting in. But we see our way out of the wood. Thinking of resigning? What damn nonsense is that? You expect too much, Jim. Why, I was ten years older than you are now before I got any work to do. Have patience and it'll come. Yes, I know you have some special knowledge of Austria. Thanks, my boy—very interesting indeed, very interesting. But I find it's safer in diplomacy to keep to certain main lines and not bother about complicated detail. Enjoy yourself. I'm going to the Duke for the twelfth as usual—we'll have everything straight by then. No, I won't hear another word about your resignation. Come and see me when you get back and everything is quiet, and we'll talk it over."

Jim hung up the receiver with a smile. The British Empire was a wonderful institution. The old waggon lumbered along creaking loudly at every joint, with axles bent and wheels loose. In a bad rut the sleeping driver woke up for a somnolent moment, cracked his whip more from habit than for any purpose, and sank again into a comfortable snooze on top of the heavy, ungainly, jolting load, while the oxen plodded along heedlessly.

"It's all a jolly lark," Stephen Edwardes said, attacking his second helping of roast mutton in the dining car of the train for Heysham.

"The drilling, I mean. It's pretty stiff on me though. Swotting with a crammer all the week in London, and the double journey and my company drill every week-end."

His fresh young face didn't show fatigue, but he sighed heavily as he helped himself to red-currant jelly.

"What's it all for?" Jim asked.

"Hanged if I know—to spite the Government or the rebs or something. But it sets up the fellows no end. They used to be such a lurching lot of beggars, and see 'em now."

"The newspapers say wonderful things of you."

Stephen winked. "There's a lot of bunkum, but it's a spiffing rag for all that. It's jolly bad luck on me to have to leave it all and go to Sandhurst at the end of the hols. The men are as keen as mustard."

"Have you arms?"

"Good Lord, no. We form fours and all that, and route marches and things. You can't do much in a day a week, you know. Some of the Militia Johnnies and half-pays who have companies do more, but I can't fit it in. There are guns, I believe—but you've heard all about the gun-running. Wish I was in it. But my fellows have never seen a rifle. One hears talk—but I don't know. The fellows love it. I bought 'em a miniature rifle range, and there are tea parties no end, and flag waving and speeches. We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do, and all that. Some of 'em are spoiling for a fight. They'll go to pieces unless they can have a go at someone. The reb volunteers promise some sport, but they're worse off for arms than we are. It's all great fun. There are big political issues mixed up with it I'm told, but I don't pay much heed to political tosh. Dick knows all about it, though he takes it cool enough. And Duncan, Vi's intended, is up to his neck with Carson and Craig and Galloper Smith and all that talking crowd."

Belfast didn't show any excitement beyond its early

morning business as Jim drove through the half-awakened streets, with Stephen at the wheel, on his way to Castle Edwardes. It was a relief to get out of the half tawdry, half squalid provincial city at a pace that defied all speed regulations. In forty-five minutes—two minutes less than he had ever done it before, Stephen said cheerfully—they drew up at a long two-storied cut-stone house with a classic portico. The castle, a low ivied tower, peered round the corner of the house.

“No one down yet,” Stephen said, with a glance at the upper windows. “And a good job, too. Duncan is here, and I’m sick of spoons. You’ll have more than enough of it. Tell you what. I’ve a route march for eight. Come with me and you’ll escape the cooing till evening. We’ll have a bath and brekker and be cleared out before anyone’s down. Most of the men are at work, of course, and there’ll be only a sprinkling, but you’ll see what they’re like. I’ve two hundred and sixty altogether in my double company, but it’s the devil to get them all together. We’ll be lucky if we have thirty.”

Jim was glad of the opportunity both to escape the lovers and to see the volunteers. After a hurried bath, change, and breakfast, equipped with webbed belt, haversack and water-bottle, he went with Stephen, similarly accoutred, to the Edwardes’s farmyard, where he found the local drill-hall in the big hay barn. A group of men lounging about the door stood to attention and saluted. Some wore khaki shirts, others football jerseys, but the majority were in ordinary cotton shirts of many colours. Each man, however, had a webbed belt, a haversack, and a water-bottle, which seemed to be the official uniform. As they were put through some elementary drill on the cobbled pavement Jim counted forty-two men of all ages from about sixteen to sixty or more. Stephen was nervous, blushed a little when addressed as Captain, and left the

command to a sergeant who was evidently an old soldier. The men were bronzed and hefty and very much in earnest, but in bearing and movement would have cut a poor figure beside the rifle team at Winchester.

"Pretty good, eh?" Stephen said proudly in a low tone.

Jim nodded. It was *pretty* good. But what did it all mean? He wanted to talk to them, to ask them what it was all about. Perhaps during a rest he'd have a chance. The sergeant gave the order to fall in for the march. The little patchwork column set out, the sergeant at the side, Jim and Stephen in the rear. As they passed a roadside farmhouse a dour-looking bearded man eyed them sourly from the doorway.

"Them's a dandy lot you've with you the day, Mr. Stephen," he said in a sarcastic drawl.

"Aren't they? You should join us, Mackenzie," Stephen said pleasantly.

"I've my oats to attend to, praise the Lord. It's not much time I have for play," Mackenzie said with a grin.

"He's one of my persuasion I suppose?" Jim said when out of hearing.

"Oh, no. He's a Presbyterian. He hates an Orangeman only a shade less than he hates a papist. We're in the majority, of course, but there are a good few of *them* about. That's a workman of his just in front of you, and Mackenzie's pretty sore with us for taking him away from the harvest—humberging, he calls it. Anyhow, for one reason or another he'd hang Carson on the nearest telegraph pole."

"You haven't all the Protestants then?"

"Not by a jolly long shot—a lot of our own people even are lukewarm, and many won't touch us at all. Things are better since the Curragh incident, as they know they haven't to face the Army. But what we have are A.I."

In the fields men were busy harvesting. A slight heat

haze softened the blue of the hills. Here and there a farmstead slept in the sun. Away on the right was the sea, the white sails of a four-masted ship reflecting the light. The thud, thud of the marching men rang out a challenge to the deep peace that hung quiet but expectant over land and sea.

A rest was called and the men stretched themselves flat on their backs on a heather knoll. An elderly man pulled a tuft of heather, buried his face in it and drew a deep breath.

"I'm growing old like for the march," he said grimly. "But they won't let us alone."

"Who?" Jim asked.

"The English—giving way to the papists with their Pope and that Joe Devlin. I knew 'em well within in Belfast in the Falls road. The sly look of them priests. We won't have 'em ruling over us. There's David Simes there, he's put all his savings in a machine-gun. I know what I know. It's our money and our land they want. The North is the only part that has the money. They'd tax us out of house and home. I know what Home Rule means—the bloody robbers."

"Leinster is richer than Ulster," Jim objected.

"They're all beggars—beggars that live on Indian meal stirabout," the old man said vehemently. "And there isn't a year I don't kill a pig of my own. I know what they're after. And I'm used to my good oatmeal porridge, too."

By twelve o'clock some of the older men had begun perceptibly to lag and the younger to limp. A halt was called for a meal on a hillside overlooking a village. The men scattered themselves over the grass, sat or lolled. Pipes were lit and haversacks and bottles unslung. A few of the younger men started a competition of hop, step, and jump.

"Eleven miles," the sergeant said. "It's as much as they can do in reason, and some of 'em are done up."

After their meal the men stretched themselves out and slept. Stephen pulled a textbook on drill out of his haversack.

"I must read up a bit to put 'em through some exercises when they're freshened up," he said apologetically.

Jim lay flat on his back. Soon his pipe dropped from his mouth. He made a movement to recover it, but his hand stopped half way and he fell back asleep. When he awoke again Stephen was still reading with puckered brow.

"These things are the very devil," he said in a worried tone. "No sooner do I get them into my head than they run out again. Say, Davis, get a few of the men to cut a few score of osiers from the hedge over there."

The sergeant saluted. "It's not trespass, sir?" he said doubtfully.

"It's all right. It's Freke's land," Stephen said with a smile. "They're mostly Nationalists down there," he explained to Jim, pointing to the village, "and we must be careful."

"An Ulster within Ulster," Jim laughed.

"They've volunteers of their own, too. Dan Sugrue got 'em up. He was at Oxford with Dick."

"I remember him. But I thought he was a Unionist—he was certainly a Protestant."

"He's a Protestant all right. But he's a Sinn Feiner now, the damned turncoat," Stephen said pleasantly. "It's a bit of a mix-up, but it's topping fun. He has only about fifty men to my two hundred and sixty, but he was in the Militia and turns 'em out well. They're mostly Roman Catholics, but he has collared five or six Presbyterians, damn his cheek."

The osiers were cut and trimmed, and distributed among the men, who were now sitting up, yawning, stretching their legs, and lighting their pipes. Stephen read on for another ten minutes, put the book back in his haversack with a sigh, and gave the word to fall in.

The men were divided into two companies, and a mimic attack and defence of a small knoll followed, the osiers becoming rifles with fixed bayonets at the word of command.

A drum sounded from the direction of the village. There was a pause in the battle, and every eye was turned towards the approaching drum. A thin column of men in green sashes, marching two abreast, advanced up the road leading from the village.

"It's Saturday evening and they've their full muster," the sergeant said dolefully. "They're fresher than we are, sir. They mustn't see us marching. Old Palmer is as good as a cripple, and a few of the youngsters aren't much better."

"Break off for tea," Stephen said with a groan.

The men squatted again on the grass and drank cold tea, but their attention was given more to the rival volunteers.

"There's no fear of a scrap?" Jim said.

"It's not one of the days," Stephen said cryptically.

"That's the old drum they bought off us when we got our new one," an old man said contemptuously.

"What are they but a lot of monkeys imitating us in everything? They never dreamt of the drill till we put it into their heads," another said boastfully.

"They march straight enough for papists," a young man said admiringly.

"They haven't twelve miles and a pitched battle to their credit," one of the first speakers said with pride, and added with deep contempt, "The whole lot of 'em in all Ireland hasn't the courage to run in a cargo of guns."

"That's the truth anyway. Sure we could drive 'em into the Lough or into the Boyne Water at our leisure," the young man said with a grin. "Still I wouldn't be denying them the little virtue they have—they can walk when they're fresh."

"Shut up," the sergeant said authoritatively. "Let ye not pretend to see them."

The men busied themselves with their tea, casting furtive looks at the little column now almost abreast of them, but about fifty yards off. The drum continued to beat, and the green-sashed volunteers marched past, with eyes front, taking no notice of the group on the hill.

"They know you're here, I suppose?" Jim said with a laugh.

"What else did they come processing up the hill for?" Stephen said ruefully. "If my men were fresh I'd take the hill at the double and show 'em what's what. Let 'em get ahead a bit, Davis, and then we'll cut across the road and get home by Ballyowen. Nothing undignified, but we'll give the beggars a sell—they're sure to wait at the Furka cross-roads to have a jeer at us if we're limping."

It was ten to eight when the footsore route-marchers reached Castle Edwardes. While Stephen provided the men with beer and a scratch meal in the barn, Jim had a bath and got to the drawing-room at the last stage of Mrs. Edwardes's despair over a delayed dinner.

"It was too bad of Stephen to take you off like that," she said as she shook hands warmly.

"Jim likes seeing things," Dick Edwardes said drily. "He has seen something of the great army, eh, Bob?" he added to a smiling blond giant with a shrewd mouth.

"Bob Duncan—but you know," Violet Edwardes said timidly, a faint blush mantling her finely cut face.

Jim vaguely congratulated Duncan, who glanced possessively at Violet and said awkwardly, "Thanks, thanks. Dick is always sneering at our little efforts in Ulster, Mr. Daly. Of course, Stephen's lot out here are only a scratch pack. But you can see the real thing in Belfast."

They went into dinner without Stephen, Mrs. Edwardes murmuring in Jim's ear:

"That poor boy is killing himself. But he's so devoted. And it is a great cause."

In her high black silk dress, entirely disdaining fashion, she made an imposing figure at the head of the table. Her straight back, the poise of her head, the little black lace cap relieved with white on her half grey, brown hair were reminiscent of an older generation. Her face had a dignity that Violet's, for all its regular beauty, lacked. She was slightly nervous about the dinner, of the manners of Violet and Bob Duncan, which she rather tolerated than approved, of the absence of Stephen. Once when Bob snatched a salted almond from Violet she gave a timid, appealing look at Dick, calm and lazily cynical at the foot of the table, which said plainly, "Of course one has to expect it of Mr. Duncan, who is only a Belfast tradesman, but Violet!"

Stephen burst into the room as the fish was being removed, and insisted on taking up the meal where it stood.

"Can't look at soup or fish—I've begun on ham and beer in the barn. Dan Sugrue took the shine out of me to-day," he added with a laugh, taking the vacant chair between Jim and Dick.

"The disloyal ass—he's a disgrace to his family," Bob Duncan said with a frown.

"Oh, rats. Dan is a decent chap," Stephen said gaily. "I'd do the same to him. Paraded, as if his lot were the Ulster army and we only interlopers."

"It's getting a little beyond me to make out who's loyal and who's disloyal," Dick said grimly. "I used to think I was a loyalist, but I'm hanged if I know where I stand now. For the life of me, Bob, I can't see where you all differ from Dan Sugrue. You, a member of the Ulster Council—a major-general, I suppose—Ste drilling a company, and my mother and Violet with their Red Cross section. It's either play-acting or it's rebellion."

"Dick thinks that clever," Violet said scornfully. "Of course we must stand by our men," with a smile at Bob.

"One in the eye for you, Dick, -old man. She means she's Bob's man now," Stephen said cheerfully.

Mrs. Edwardes stiffened a little; but as she never could bring herself to disapprove wholly of anything Stephen did or said, she smiled faintly and made an effort to support Violet:

"You're forgetting the great cause, Dick dear. And we couldn't let the poor wounded go unattended."

"You expect Stephen to be brought in to you on a gory stretcher," Dick said with a shrug.

"Oh, never that. You shouldn't speak of such dreadful things," his mother said with a horrified look.

"Oh, well, you might be saved that—he'll probably be buried in jail—shot against a wall as a rebel," Dick said cynically.

"I'll have another helping of the vol-a-vent," Stephen said to the butler.

"I think it's very wrong of you to say such wicked things, Dick—and to speak of your brother as a rebel—we, who have always been loyalists," Mrs. Edwardes said half sadly, half indignantly.

"Don't you worry, Mrs. Edwardes. I promise you it will never come to that," Bob Duncan said placidly. "It's all a matter of politics. We'll drive the Liberals out of office and die peacefully in our beds."

"It's all a game of bluff, then?" Dick said coldly. "It's a dangerous weapon to handle, Bob."

"I wouldn't call it all bluff," Bob said thoughtfully. "It's a risky game enough I know, but the stakes are big and we must take our risks. I'm loyal to the King, but I've no loyalty to a Government that's playing ducks and drakes with property and capital."

"That's all right with a vote, but what about machine guns? When you shoot, you shoot the King."

"We won't have to shoot: The Government will get

cowed and throw up the sponge long before that," Bob said confidently.

"I wish the Tory Party luck when they've got into power with the lesson they've taught labour," Dick said anxiously.

"That's their lookout in England," Bob said cynically. "They're helping us to stave off Home Rule, and we're helping them to get back to power. Labour is quiet enough in Belfast, thank God. That's where the religious question is such an asset. The men forget their grievances against us because we're fighting the Pope and the priests side by side with them."

"You're even bluffing your followers," Dick said indignantly.

"No, it's just our luck. We're as much afraid of Home Rule as they are, only we're more afraid of injury to our business than of the priests. In a way the threat of Home Rule, so long as we're able to stave it off, is a sort of blessing in disguise—it keeps labour quiet."

"And when you're not able to stave it off?" Jim asked, laughing.

"Oh, I believe we can. England will never coerce us."

"But if she does?"

"I suppose we'd have to put up with it," Bob said moodily. "But I don't believe for a minute that she'll desert the most loyal people in the Empire."

"Loyalist, Jim, is an Ulster synonym for armed rebel," Dick said drily. "I'm a Unionist, and I don't want Home Rule, but my family are making it inevitable. The Nationalists can be trusted to imitate our Ulster loyalty. Indeed, they're at it already."

Violet yawned. "The Larne Flower Show would be better than this," she said with a frown. "What about driving me over to-morrow, Bob?"

4

"It's thankful I ought to be to God for giving me the use of my legs at all, seeing the age I am," Pierce Daly said as he walked slowly and painfully, with the aid of a stick and Jim's arm, towards the cedar tree.

Arabella got up from the bench, smiled a welcome, and arranged the cushions in the old man's armchair.

"Durkan was telling me," he said, when he had taken his seat, "that there was a shipload of arms landed in the night. The police are the only people in the county that haven't heard a word of it yet," he added with a chuckle.

"Diana's work I suppose," Jim said ruefully.

"The police are sure to know. It's really too bad of her," Arabella said fretfully. "It will mean jail again."

"Who'd tell them, in God's name?" Pierce said indignantly. "We may breed many queer people about here, but the barony never bred an informer yet. It ought to open the eyes of the English to the respect the people have for their laws. But sure, who'd expect sight from the blind?"

"I thought you were against rebellion?" Jim said with a frown, worrying about Diana.

"I was settled down in constitutional agitation," Pierce said, staring at the river. "And I'm too old now to change. I tried both the gun and the vote in my time, and England beat us in the one and tricked us in the other. Since Parnell died I haven't much faith in either of 'em, but I stuck to Redmond for the sake of old times. I'm more of the mind now of that Rooshian, Tolstoi, to sit still and fold our arms in the face of whatever the English want us to do, and not to take act or part in it. But it's only old people'd have the patience to wear England out in that way. The Sinn Feiners had a good notion enough of how

to set about it, but they've been led astray by Carson and his Orangemen with the English Tories at the back of them. I can't blame our young men for being suspicious that England is preparing to sell them again, and making ready for it. It's not the first time that she stirred up a rising in order to set her heel more firmly on the neck of the country."

"It's stupidity more than malice now," Jim urged. "Millions of Englishmen intend well by Ireland."

"There's a limit to the lack of reason even in the English," Pierce said drily. "They've put the comether on you over there, Jim. I had hopes you'd see through them better. If a man goes on bashing my head there's not much good in telling me that he intends me well. Anyway, if England lets in arms to the Orangemen I can't blame any Nationalist for having a gun in the thatch. England can't say that we began it this time, though I wouldn't put even a bigger lie than that beyond her when she's put to it. Anyway I'm not in it this time. It's the first time in my life there was a move round here for freedom without me knowing of it. It's a sign that I have a foot in the grave. Or it's maybe a punishment on me for trying to make believe that we're ever going to get the pot of skilly England is dangling now in John Redmond's eye. They'll break his heart like they broke many a good man's heart before him. But, thank God, they can never break mine, for I never had any trust in them."

A maid came hurriedly across the lawn and said with an air of mystery :

"There's a man outside the front door would like a word with you, Mister Jim !"

"Who is he ?"

"He's in a mighty hurry, sir," she said hesitatingly.

Jim shrugged his shoulders and followed her.

"It's Mr. Mike Driscoll, and I wouldn't doubt if it had

to do with the gun-running," she whispered over her shoulder.

Jim frowned, but quickened his pace. At the front door, faced towards the open gate, was his own little two-seater Singer, its engine throbbing. Durkan stood sheepishly by the front of the car, while Mike Driscoll, with set face, held the door of the car open.

"I got Durkan to bring it round to save time. I thought I could presume on you that much," he said, eyeing Jim keenly.

"Your cap, sir," the maid said, rushing out from the hall. Jim took it and laughed.

"Am I to get in?" he said ironically.

"There isn't a minute to lose. Take the Beekawn road as fast as ever you can pelt, and I'll tell you everything as we go along."

Jim looked at the serious face, kept back a retort, and jumped into the car.

"Why this drill-sergeant manner, Mike?" he asked as he let the car go.

"I'm sorry if I was too stiff," Mike said shamefacedly. "But I thought that if you wouldn't do it for us you'd do it for Miss Diana."

"I won't be mixed up in any of your nonsense," Jim said angrily, urging the car to its last inch of speed.

"And I wouldn't be beholden to a Government man for the weight of a pin of help except for the sake of Miss Diana alone," Mike said with dignity.

"I'm sorry, Mike. What is it?" Jim said in a gentler tone.

"Do you know the Carngarth cove between Beekawn and Ardglass?"

"Yes. Well?"

"And there's only one way down to it."

"I know that. Do hurry up."

"I want to give you the whole rights of it," Mike said deliberately. "And you can't go quicker than you're going. Well, anchored in the mouth of the cove about a quarter of a mile from the landing is Mr. Travers' yacht, and tied on to it is a Greencastle yawl with cases of rifles and ammunition in it. We got off all the rest last night, but we were short of one cart. Part of the last boatload had to be left; and for safety they kept it in the yawl instead of landing it. It was to be landed at half past nine this morning."

"It's five past nine now," Jim said tritely, glancing at the clock in the car. "But if you think I'm going to help you to play the fool you're mightily mistaken."

Mike grinned. "Within on the yacht is Miss Diana. She'll be in the yawl when it brings in the stuff," he said gravely. "Well, the long and the short of it is that the peelers aren't as big idiots as you'd have every right to expect. Though if Thady Duggan hadn't failed with his cart through his horse going lame, it's late for the fair they'd be this time as usual."

"For God's sake get on with it," Jim said impatiently.

"There's five minutes or more yet before you get to the Beekawn cross-roads where you must drop me, because the peelers'd never let you drive to Carngarth with the likes of me on the car," Mike said imperturbably.

"I'll stop the car if you don't tell me at once," Jim said threateningly.

"My God, amn't I telling you. Isn't it impatient you are. Well, the police got wind of it even at the tail of the hunt. This very minute they're in ambush down in the cove, and they're guarding the way down, and the cliffs round about. They'd be on the yacht long ago, but there isn't a boat in Carngarth but the yawl with the stuff in it, and that's out of their reach. But the coastguards were warned and they're rowing round from Beekawn and'll be at the

yacht shortly if they aren't there now. They started near an hour ago. When the people in the yacht see them coming as likely as not they'll make a drive with the stuff for the shore, and in they'll walk into the mouth of Inspector Foley and his men."

"Well?" Jim said grimly.

"We could have rushed the police, but we don't want a row—yet," Mike said meditatively. "They haven't the brains of a tom-tit between them, the poor ownshucks, God help them, and anyone they'd let down to the cove'd easily circumvent them. Let me down at the cross-roads there."

Jim stopped the car and Mike jumped out. "I'm sorry for disturbing you over your breakfast, but you can make it yet by taking the Lisheen road this side of the turn down to Carngarth," he said, looking up at the sky. "If Miss Diana has to go to jail itself, it's fine weather she'll be having there, thanks be to God."

"In jail you ought to be," Jim said angrily.

"That's as might be," Mike said philosophically. "But you'd need to hurry if you don't want to be late—for your breakfast," he added with a grin.

Jim frowned and started the car suddenly. The whole world was swinging on the brink of a precipice, and here was drawing-room comedy. He was angry with himself, with Diana, with Carson, with the Government. With all their boasted civilization governments had hardly emerged from barbarism. Deep down in their hearts they clung to domination and conquest. England had emerged farther from the pit than any of the great nations. At this moment she was courageously upholding right and freedom in the councils of Europe. Yet here in Ireland she was herself practising what she denounced, what she was prepared to shed her blood to destroy. . . .

He passed the Lisheen turn and lowered his speed as he approached the old by-road to Carngarth cove. As he

turned the corner two policemen, about ten yards ahead, moved to the centre of the road and held up their hands. He pulled up within a few feet of them and said to one whom he had known for years at Lisgeela :

"Is the road closed, Cahill?"

"It's not what you'd call closed, Mister Jim," Cahill said, scratching his head, and looking doubtfully at his companion, "but we aren't letting anyone down it. It's a cruel bad road on the tyres. It's split up on you entirely they'd be."

"Sure Mr. Daly is high up himself in the Government. What loss'd it be on the likes of him going down?" the other policeman said sheepishly.

"Sure there wouldn't," Cahill said in a relieved tone. "Only let you be careful, Mr. Jim, when you get beyond the hazel bush. It's more like a track down to hell, it is, than anything that'd be pretending to be a decent road."

"Right oh, and thanks, Cahill," Jim shouted as he negotiated a bad rut, with a smile at the immunity of high Government officials from burst tyres.

He took the steep decline at a pace that endangered the car and his neck. The road was little more than the dry bed of a mountain stream. Beyond the hazel bush it was a mere track between boulders matted with blackberry bushes and elder. A jutting cliff on his left shut out the sea. Once he asked himself what he was going down for, what he could do, what he would do even if he could do anything, but a sudden jolt made him give all his attention to the car. He seemed to hang in the air for breathless minutes, and then, round a corner, about five hundred yards ahead, the precipitous wall of limestone cliff that marked the far side of the cove glittered in the sun. The near cliff, glowering in the shade, still shut out the sea. He slowed down, and could just make out that the man watching him from a projecting rock near the cove steps was a

policeman. He was soon joined by another, who levelled binoculars on the car. In a few seconds he lowered the glasses and handed them to the first policeman, who at once disappeared behind a rock. The other took out a case and had lighted a cigarette as Jim approached.

"Hullo, Daly. Going to have a swim?"

"Morning, Foley. Glorious day for it. Are you?" Jim said, stopping the car and jumping out.

"No such luck. Have a lot of damned men with me. Thought I'd knock the softness out of 'em by some patrol work, but they've no guts in 'em, and I'm giving 'em a rest."

Small blue eyes glinted humorously in the little tight florid face, as he pointed towards a group of about twenty men stretched in the shade of a mass of rock.

"Give them a swim. It would freshen 'em," Jim said drily.

"Can't. There's a damned yacht out there, and I saw a flutter of petticoats on it. They seem to be making up their minds to come ashore. Looks like Travers' yacht. Wonder who they can be?"

Jim walked along the uneven ledge towards the rough steps hewn out of the face of the rock to low-water level. From the top of the steps he got the first view of the little bay widening out between lofty, sheer cliffs from the mere point, giving barely space for a long boat, where he stood. The sun cut diagonally across the water. A glittering sheet of rose and silver shimmered and smiled with playful malice at the deep, sullen greens and blues in the shadow of the cliff. Jim caught his breath at the sight of the yacht. He fumbled for his cigarette case. When he looked again as he threw away the match there was some commotion on the deck.

"There's a rowing boat coming round Beekawn point," a voice called out. Foley gave a muttered "ha," lit another cigarette, but didn't move from cover of the rock.

For a few seconds Jim watched alternately a six-oared boat moving rapidly towards the yacht from the direction of Beekawn point, and the action on the yacht itself. A yawl was pulled round from the stern to the side. Six men took their places at the four oars of the yawl and two women sat in the stern. As the yawl was pushed off he sat down at the head of the steps and said quietly:

"Those people are coming in off the yacht. I don't see how I can bathe."

"They're coming in off the yacht, are they?" Foley repeated aloud, but without moving from cover. "I don't see how you can very well. A few hundred yards back there's another cove—not at all a bad place," he added with some enthusiasm.

"I think I'll wait and see who they are," Jim said, rising and walking farther on on the ledge.

Foley shrugged his shoulders and threw away his cigarette. "Wonderful weather for the harvest," he said toying with a revolver case at his belt.

"Wonderful," Jim said, with a careless glance around. The policemen had risen to their feet, but still kept under cover of the rock. Foley lit another cigarette and kept the match suspended for a moment to listen to the dull thud of the oars striking the wooden thole pins of the incoming yawl. He yawned, strolled back to his men and spoke in a low voice to a sergeant. The coastguard boat was still a long way off the yacht, while the yawl was within a hundred and fifty yards of the steps.

Jim put his hand to his mouth and shouted, "Hallo, hallo."

Foley said "Damn," with a frown. The sergeant moved forward. Foley's face brightened. With a dry laugh he put his arm in front of the sergeant and stopped him.

"Recognized friends?" he said pleasantly to Jim.

"Yes."

"They'll be jolly glad to find a friend," Foley said with a grin.

The boat pulled up dead. A woman stood up in the stern and peered at Jim, shading her eyes from the sun with her hand.

"Jim Daly," he shouted.

"Hallo. You?" she shouted gleefully. "What brought you here?"

"To welcome you as you deserve, of course. Inspector Foley has twenty of his men behind the rock here to give you a guard of honour."

"Damnation," Foley said angrily, springing forward, followed by his men.

"What's wrong?" Jim asked quietly.

"You shouldn't have said that, you know," Foley said half doubtfully.

"I seem to have put my foot in it somehow," Jim said, struggling with a smile. "It's a good jest to say you've come to meet her—it's Miss Scovell—a sort of peace offering for putting her in jail once."

"She might find more than a jest in it," Foley said grimly. "It's my own fault not to have warned you. They're caught in a trap, anyhow, so there's not much harm done. Show yourselves well on the ledge, men, and Laverty, tell the look-out to shout to the coastguards. Gun-running," he added laconically to Jim.

"They're not Orangemen?" Jim said, interested in the manœuvres of the yawl which was being backed steadily out and sideways.

"No, Green. They're green enough to back out of Scylla into Charybdis," Foley said with a grin.

"They're backing on to the Devil's Harrow," a policeman said eagerly.

Four of the men in the yawl lifted a wooden case and

were preparing to sling it over the side, the remaining two men and the women balancing the boat.

"Stop that or I'll fire," Foley shouted, drawing his revolver.

"Pretty long range," Jim said drily. "And may you fire? What's the offence?"

The case was let drop gently into the water, sinking at once.

"The coastguards can drag for it—monkey tricks like that won't save 'em," Foley said with a shrug.

"Sorra good a drag or a diver either'll do. A diver lost his life once in it. It's as deep as hell except for the needle-points of rocks. Within the memory of man not a thing that was dropped there ever came to light again," a constable said with evident enjoyment.

"Shout all of you to the coastguards to hurry. It's neck or nothing between 'em now," Foley said with a resigned grin.

There was a wild shouting and waving of arms. The coastguards stopped rowing, and while they were coming to a decision gave a few minutes' respite to the men in the yawl, who worked feverishly. Case after case was dropped into the sea. The coastguards, having made up their minds what to do, rowed rapidly towards the yawl. The policemen stood silent, their heads stretched eagerly forward. Once when a case slipped back into the boat a policeman murmured "Bad luck." When the coastguard boat was about a hundred yards off a case was thrown over the side of the yawl with a shout. The crew in the yawl watched the eddies for a few seconds, then sat down to their oars and pulled quickly towards the steps.

"Drawn blank," Foley said ruefully with a half-questioning look at Jim. "Call out to the coastguards to pull back and search the yacht, Laverty. Not that they'll find anything," he muttered.

"How kind of you to come and meet us, Mr. Foley," Diana said mockingly as the yawl drew alongside.

Foley saluted smartly. "Hard work getting rid of the ballast?" he said with a grin.

"Russian egg cases," Diana corrected, smilingly.

"Eggs gone bad, I suppose?" Foley laughed.

"Oh no, a little unwholesome to land," she said, taking Jim's hand as she jumped lightly ashore. "Not badly done for the Foreign Office," she whispered as her lips brushed his shoulder.

5.

Before mid-day, by popular rumour, Jim had become one of the principals in the gun-running escapade. In the evening he was cheered loudly as he drove past the market-house of Lisgeela, an old fishwife shouting :

"Thanks be to God the Daly blood has come to the top in him at last. Wasn't he the prime leader of 'em all."

As he drove home he decided that he must resign his job at the Foreign Office at once. It was not that he had done anything wrong. The ridiculous rifles were lost, and he knew that his intervention had prevented serious trouble, for Mike Driscoll had made other plans that would have taken effect had Diana been arrested. But certain formal obligations had to be observed, and he had broken one of them—in the letter anyhow.

At dinner his grandfather was in high spirits. Jim gave an ironic account of the gun-running, but old Pierce would have none of it.

"The finger of God is in the whole thing as plain as a pikestaff," he said over and over again with glowing eyes. "Sure I always knew he'd come right, Arabella. Didn't I often tell you? Now that everything is as God willed it, it's a daughter-in-law he'll be bringing in on the floor to you."

Though he hadn't drunk wine for a year he insisted on opening a bottle of old Burgundy. His memory of the intervening years seemed to have been blotted out, and he dwelt altogether on Jim's childhood, recalling incident after incident: the climbing of the elm-tree, Crabbit, the death of his brother.

"'Tis he was the queer old man," he said meditatively, "with his dreams of you getting back that big barn of a Dalhouse. But sure did I ever think myself that one of the Scovells'd be like a daughter to me. Her eyes melted any feeling of revenge I had against them out of me long ago. The one dream of my life now is that ye'd come together. And who knows what blow ye mightn't be able to strike for your country and ye of one mind."

"Love is all that matters. They have that, and it will bring everything right," Arabella said gently.

"Love was a good bridge for you, surely, Arabella," the old man said affectionately. "But it's women's talk for all that."

His hand trembled as he raised his glass to his lips and sipped the wine. He put down the glass, his fingers clinging to the stem as if for support, his eyes glowing.

"God knows I had the love of women in my day," he said harshly, "and I'm blessed out of the common now in my old age with the love of you and Diana. Far be it from me to belittle it or ye, and I'm beholden to you, Arabella, for nearly all the happiness I ever had. But above ye all—though it has been nothing but a heartscald to me all my life, I put my country—above Jim there, and he was always like my heart's blood to me, above my religion if it goes to that, may God forgive me. It's a queer twist God puts in a man," he added apologetically. "Me to be talking like this with no more strength in my limbs than a baby. Let me lean on your arm up to bed, Jim boy. 'Tis you're the comfort to me this night."

"Will there be a war, Jim, do you think?" he asked as Jim bade him good-night.

"Uncle Silas thinks not. I'm not so sure."

"I hope to the great God there will be and that England 'll come out of it broken," the old man said fervently. "A good beating is the only thing that'll ever show her her sins. God bless you, boy."

In the corridor Jim met his mother on the way to her bedroom. She raised her candlestick and let the light shine on his face. "I've a headache and must go to bed. No, nothing to worry about," she added quickly, seeing his look of concern. "It's been a trying day with all those ridiculous rumours. What shall you do?"

"Resign."

"Must it be that?" she said with a quiver of her lips. "Have you read the papers?"

"No."

"There will be war," she said tonelessly.

"Oh," he said staring through her.

"It makes a difference?" she said tremulously.

He started and woke to her drawn face watching him expectantly.

"The Foreign Office must overlook the gun-running," he said with a hard laugh.

"You'll go back there?" she said.

"Oh, that or something of the kind," he said evasively. She leant her head on his shoulder.

"It doesn't seem to make you any happier," he said railingly, patting her hair.

She kissed him with a desperate attempt at a smile and walked towards her room with dragging steps. He watched her till she disappeared behind the closing door, and from a jumble of vague thoughts said "If" aloud, and turned on his heel. The same thoughts took more form on his way to the study. The war, if it came, would be *the* war

between right and wrong. It was the final effort of Might and Aggression and Conquest to dominate the world. England was on the side of Right and Justice. She was to fight for freedom, not only for herself but for the world.

He took the stairs three steps at a time and hurried along the narrow hall. It meant the clearing away of the mist at Scarty and the rolling back of clouds from pole to pole. He laughed as he turned up the lights in the green shaded lamps. It was seeing Diana to-day that made him think of the effects of a world war in the terms of a family. But why not? Where better could one see what it meant? Diana, his grandfather, his mother, himself should be at one, all their differences gone. Ireland's claim to determine her own destiny was what England was about to fight for on behalf of the world. England, the Conqueror, was sloughing her somewhat spotted skin to lead in a brighter world as a federator of free peoples. . . .

He glanced through half a dozen newspapers. War seemed to be certain. There was no hedging on the main issue. English diplomacy was standing unflinchingly for Right. He sighed. All the implications of the war were not yet fully realized by the press and people. In twenty-four hours a new book of the world's history would open. Yet the last page of the old was filled with recriminations—Suffragette violence, disputes between Nationalists and Sinn Feiners; attacks by both sections of Nationalists on the Government for striking at the Howth gun-running while allowing Orange gun-running to go on unmolested; Orange defiance, labour threats. It was the last wail of the old order. In a day or two all these bickerings and misunderstandings would fade away as the morning mist before the hot August sun. . . .

He looked through a number of unopened letters. Bateson? What had he to say? "If we go in, we go in fairly clean for once in our lives. Let's hope we come out clean."

Bateson hadn't much faith in millenniums—nor had he himself for that matter. But this war was different. Even Bateson admitted as much. Phipps's letter wasn't promising: "Let's hope that Ireland will keep quiet. We can't afford trouble there while we're smashing Germany." But a larger and nobler spirit must come. It meant understanding and peace between Ireland and England. It meant Diana—it meant everything. . . .

He sat up late thinking out his position. His mind went back to Winchester, to the excitement there during the South African war. Volunteers went out then, and this was going to be a bigger thing. He was sick of the Foreign Office where the absurd system gave him no work. To stick there, doing nothing, during a war was unthinkable. His experience in the rifle team would be a help. There was only one thing to do. . . .

Half awake during the night he saw himself as a symbol of the new bond of friendship that was to unite England and Ireland. . . .

He chafed under the conflicting telegrams next day, and wired to Sir Silas to ask whether he was wanted at the office. A curt, "No. We shall send for you if we want you," made him angry with the stupidity of the Foreign Office, which was evidently determined to muddle along with the same owlish serenity in war as in peace. It relieved him, however, of any qualms of leaving a diplomacy, which he was not allowed to practise, for the army where he could at least use a rifle.

With the news of the declaration of war his restlessness increased. His grandfather was slightly ill, and Dr. Greany, as usual, gave pompous instructions:

"My patient mustn't be disturbed under any circumstances. No one is to have access to his room but Nurse Doran, whom I shall send out forthwith. No mention of the war—of anything likely to interfere with equanimity of temper."

Jim wandered from room to room, took a long walk up the glen, avoided his mother, who seemed also to avoid him, slept badly, and in the morning packed in readiness for an immediate journey.

The arrival of the newspapers giving the speeches of the party leaders in Parliament made him decide to leave as soon as possible—that day, if Greany would allow him to see his grandfather. Redmond had risen to the occasion, and England could not be deaf to his appeal. After eight hundred years of strife had come this miraculous healing. His own duty was clear. As a man, since all other means had failed, he had to fight for the freedom of the world. As an Irishman he could do no less. . . .

He went out on the lawn where his mother was knitting beneath the cedar tree. She put down her work and smiled at him as he came near. He pulled a wicker chair close to her and sat down. After a few minutes' silence she said :

“You're going?”

He nodded.

She looked at him as if expecting him to say something.

“I'm going into the Army,” he said.

Her hand moved towards his fingers clasped on the arm of the chair, and touched them one after another as she used to do when she played “Piggy-Wiggy went to the market” with him as a child.

“I was afraid of that,” she said listlessly. “I expected it—hoped for it in a way. But one is always afraid. If I hadn't sent you to England it mightn't have happened.”

“You should read Redmond's speech,” he said with an assumption of gaiety, flourishing the newspaper with his free hand. “Irishmen and Englishmen are one at last in a common cause. Had I remained at home I'd be doing the same thing.”

“I don't know,” she said with a faint smile. “But I tried to act for the best. I'm glad about Redmond. I

always hoped for a bridge, for some common understanding. What I was able to do, others, Irish and the English, could do. Thank God, it has come. If only it weren't a war. Oh, Jim, Jim."

She leant against him and wept silently.

"Don't, mother," he said awkwardly.

"When it comes to this nothing seems to matter but you—not oppression, nor liberty, England, Ireland, anything," she said brokenly.

"There's nothing to worry about," he said desperately. And then, surprised, but glad of the interruption:

"Good Lord—my grandfather."

Pierce, supported by the nurse, came through the doorway giving on the lawn. Arabella dried her eyes and rushed forward.

"Oh, father—Dr. Greany," she said reproachfully.

"That fellow," Pierce said contemptuously. "Who minds what he says. I'm as strong as a horse," he added as he moved feebly towards his chair, his weight divided between the nurse's arm and his heavy ash stick.

"She's a decent poor girl enough," he said with a distasteful look at the departing nurse as he settled himself more comfortably in his chair, "if she wouldn't go on pretending I was a sick man—with her 'Dr. Greany said this,' and 'Dr. Greany said that.' Who'd put any trust in what the likes of him or a political trimmer'd say? Twenty times he's put me on my death bed, and I always got off it by doing the opposite of what he said."

He put on his spectacles and took up a newspaper from the table beside him.

"She's going into it then," he said with a frown. "Listen to this will you? 'Protector of small nationalities.' The damned hypocrites. Did you ever hear the like?"

"Read Redmond's speech," Jim said.

"Redmond or anyone else couldn't change a devil into

an angel by the dint of saying it," Pierce said, resting the paper on his knees. "Let her practise at home first what she's so fond of preaching abroad for her own profit. Did she give Home Rule to Ireland last night? Answer me that."

"Principles were laid down that inevitably lead to it," Jim said confidently.

"Pooh. What is a principle to England? She's been mouthing liberty all her life and practising tyranny. She swallows her principles every morning with her eggs and bacon."

He took up the paper again and began to read. An angry frown gave place to a look of bewilderment. He took off his glasses and wiped them with his handkerchief, fingered the newspaper as if he doubted its reality. As he read on, his pallid face became slowly congested.

"Am I here in Scarty or am I in the moon?" he said feebly, letting the paper drop. "They've bamboozled that poor man Redmond."

"It's the speech of a statesman," Jim said eagerly. "He sees that this is a fight for world liberty. The British Empire has taken its stand on the side of world justice. He knows that England is now pledged to do justice to Ireland."

"Talk, talk," Pierce said bitterly. "England never made a pledge that she didn't find a way out of it. If she's fighting for liberty, let her prove it here. With all her talk, Jim, she's fighting to save her own skin and for her own power."

"She's fighting for an ideal," Jim said stubbornly.

"Do you hear him, Arabella? As if England had an ideal beyond her own pocket," Pierce said angrily.

"You know, father, that I've never believed that," Arabella said with a smile. "She was wrong and blind in Ireland, but she always had a finer side, and she has found

her true self now. It's a time for trust and not for remembering the past. I'm glad Jim sees it—even though it means taking him away from me again," she added tremulously.

"Stuff and nonsense," the old man began angrily. He stopped short and stared at her suspiciously. "What's that? Taking him away from you? What do you mean, woman?"

"I'm foolish enough to want to fight for an abstract idea," Jim said with an attempt at lightness.

"What are ye all talking about? What's the boy saying, Arabella?" Pierce said feebly, moistening his lips.

"He's going into the Army," she said with an uneasy look at the old man's face which seemed to have shrunk in a deathlike pallor.

"The English Army?" he muttered almost inaudibly.

She nodded, but he was no longer looking at her. He lay huddled up in his chair, his eyes closed, his fingers moving aimlessly over his knees.

Arabella rushed to him and put an arm round his shoulders. "Father you're not well. You shouldn't have got up. We'll help you back to bed," she said with a distressed look at Jim.

"Greany is right. I'm not fit for anything but the bed. Things are getting beyond me," he murmured with a feeble smile. "What's that they're saying about Jim being a redcoat?"

They helped him across the lawn. "What am I doing in my Sunday coat and there being a lot of work to do?" he said, looking vaguely at the herbaceous border. "The English never kept their word, I tell you, Arabella. Run and call the boy or it's late he'll be for school. But maybe you'd better leave him to have his sleep out. Did I tell you how he climbed the elm tree? There's a boy for you, and he only nine."

6.

"You're heartily welcome, Mr. Jim," Mrs. Mike Driscoll said with relief, jumping up from the table in the kitchen where the Driscoll family had had a hot argument over tea. "How's Mr. Pierce?"

"Better," Jim said, shaking hands with a gloomy Con and a gloomier Mike and Mrs. Con with the fire of battle still in her eyes. "He's able to walk about with help, but I'm afraid his memory is gone. I came to say goodbye. I'm off to-morrow."

"No wonder the poor man would be moidered in his mind with this war that's setting the whole world mad," Mrs. Con said with a truculent look at Con. "But if you're off itself it's more sense you'd have than to enlist for a soldier."

"That or a commission—it's all one to me," Jim laughed.

"What did I tell you?" Con said triumphantly to Mike.

"What's that one way or another," Mike said vehemently.

"Isn't he a Government man already?"

"Be easy with your father now, Mike," Mrs. Mike said anxiously, as she poured out a cup of tea for Jim.

"Your father-in-law is well able to defend himself. And if he's only a poor, weak, let-everyone-crow-over-him sort of a man itself, I'm well able to stand up for him," Mrs. Con said defiantly.

"Sure the whole world knows that," Mrs. Mike said with a slight edge to her conciliatory tone. "Won't you be giving Mr. Jim one of your hot cakes, mother? Sure he knows well the lightness of them."

"Anyone'd think it's a row we were having," Con said with a shrug and an appealing look at his wife.

"Is it me to raise my voice? Glory be to God it's the wronged woman I am," Mrs. Con said with a look at the

flitches of bacon hanging from the smoky ceiling as if calling on them to bear testimony. "Did I say one word above my breath but to try and put some sense into the head of a man that's on the brink of sixty."

"I'm not, nor near it," Con said with resignation.

"He'd contradict his own wife for the sake of a couple of years," Mrs. Con said with a despairing wave of her hands. "Did you ever hear of the like of that man, Jim? Talking of joining the Army and he no more fit to carry a gun than Mike's baby in the cradle there. He never had any sense, and it's losing his reason he's altogether now. But sure the poor man wouldn't be put to it if his son there had the spunk of a mouse in him," she added with a sudden change of attack.

"You well know it's his principles and not any fear that's keeping Mike back," Mrs. Mike said sharply.

"The obstinacy of a jackass—that's his principles," Mrs. Con said derisively. "I never knew any good to come of 'em. Con himself falls back on 'em as a sort of lean-to when the argument fails him. They're less stiffnecked maybe than Mike's, for they make him do one thing to-day and the opposite to-morrow. One day they put him all agin the English and drive him to jail, and the next they make him all for England. To hear him talk about the war you'd think he was a Sassenach born and bred. God help me, ever since I married into it, and long before, this house hasn't known rest or peace from principles with three generations of politicians in it, and maybe another growing up there in the cradle. It's a poor time of it we have, Molly Jordan, between us. What call at all, I ask you, is there on either of 'em to go?"

Her daughter-in-law shrugged her shoulders at this change of front and said wearily, "Isn't that what I've been holding all along?"

"Whist, women," Con said impatiently, "Redmond has

committed the country to the side of England, and I'm going to stand by him no matter what Mike may say or do. Honour has woke up in England at last, and she's going to fight for the weak and the oppressed. She's honour-bound to do justice to us at the same time, and I'm going to trust her. It's the one principle I stuck to all my life, and my father before me—to do my best for the freedom of Ireland, and the way to do it now is to back England in winning the freedom of the world. I'm over old, maybe, to carry a gun, but there's twenty men pledged to go already from this parish, and one man must go from this house."

"It won't be me till I see some sign that England is in earnest," Mike said stubbornly.

"Then it'll be me," Con said, setting his lips firmly.

"'Tisn't that I don't believe that England mayn't be right in the main about this war," Mike said uneasily, his face pale and strained. "God knows I'd like to fight with her to-morrow in the cause she says she's fighting for. Only let her give one sign that she's not going to trick us again and I'll take the shilling the next minute. I don't care what it is—even the rotten Home Rule Bill she has been promising us these years past. A week ago I wouldn't look at it, but I don't want to be hard on her and she in trouble. If she means anything at all she'll give us that at least. Can't you wait, father, till she shows her hand?"

"I'm not going to bargain with her," Con said doggedly. "She's done a noble thing in coming into this war, and I'm going to trust her word."

"She hasn't given her word to us," Mike said bitterly.

"She has given her word to the world and she can't go back on it," Con said firmly.

"She went back on it often. And, besides, it's her deeds we want," Mike said, pushing away his cup and standing up.

He walked up and down the kitchen, his hands in his trousers pockets, his head bent between his broad shoulders. His mother and wife wept. Con munched bread quietly. Jim counted the tea leaves floating in the bottom of his cup and thought of Diana. Would she be as intransigent as Mike? He glanced at the grandfather clock beside the dresser. Twenty minutes to six, and his appointment with her at Lentaigne's was for six. The car would do it in a quarter of an hour, but he must try to get away. Mike stood and faced his father across the table.

"I can't do it. I'd give my life to be able to trust her, but I can't," he said, wrenching out the words as if in pain.

"Don't let England divide ye at long last," Mrs. Con sobbed.

"It's a struggle that's going on in many a house in Ireland this night," Con said sadly. "If you can't, Mike, you can't. God knows England is herself to blame, for it's little reason she ever gave us in the past to trust her. But I can't believe she's such a double-faced liar now. Anyhow, if she goes back on me you'll be to the good to call her to account for it," he added grimly. "Here we are airing ourselves and our little differences in front of Jim," he went on with a laugh, "and none of ye asking him would he have another cup of tea."

"Is it going from me you are, Con?" his wife said chokingly. "Don't let your father put shame on you, Mike. Is it to let him risk his life you would, and you to stay at home? What did I rear you for?"

Mike turned on his heel and strode out through the open kitchen door.

"What can any man do but act on the light God gives him," Con said angrily. "For God's sake, Sally, let the boy be. It's a sight harder on him to stay than it is for me to go."

The baby began to cry. Con and the two women made

a simultaneous rush for the cradle. Mrs. Con held up the child with a triumphant, "Isn't he the dead spit of Mike?"

It was five minutes to six before Jim was allowed to break off his admiration of the baby, and a quarter past when he pulled up at Lentaigne's door.

The white, dusty road had seemed to stretch out interminably, yet, while he was still shirking the thought of her, here he was. Perhaps his long quest, too, was at an end.

He found Diana in the library.

"They're all at Beekawn—but you're to stay to dinner," she said, shaking hands, her face half turned away from him.

"You've been crying," he said, still holding her hand.

She shook him off.

"Your mother wrote to me. Jim, how could you? Your grandfather—who was so devoted to you?" she said angrily.

"Any stick is good enough to beat me with," he said bitterly. "Good Lord, do you hold me responsible for that?"

"I do," she said defiantly.

"Then you're either grossly unfair or a little fool," he said calmly, his lips hardening.

She flushed slightly, gave him a quick look and moved towards the bow window.

"This is a new rôle," she said quietly, her upper lip trembling. "Better sit down," she added, sinking into a corner of the deep settee, "and smoke. It may help you to keep your temper."

He opened a box of cigarettes, took one, and lighted it, stood with his back to the wide tiled fireplace, blew smoke rings, and looked at the book-lined walls with some interest. She watched him from under half-closed lids.

"The man who painted that," he said, nodding towards a small pastel hanging from the knob of one of the bookcases, "died painting signboards in the East End."

"Drink?" she said coldly.

"And some fool of a woman. I wonder I don't take to it," he said with a shrug.

"I prefer drink to fighting against one's country," she said scornfully, and added quickly with a sudden change to a tone of appeal. "For God's sake don't pose, Jim."

He threw the cigarette into the grate and sat on the end of the settee.

"I'm off to-morrow for God knows how long or where. Is it to end like this?" he said moodily, tapping the leg of the seat with his heel.

"I tried, Jim, but I can't," she said miserably. "The other day at Carngarth you could have taken me into your arms and ended it all. But you wouldn't. I was reading one of Simon's books before you came in—the 'Antigone.' It made me cry. It's like that with us—some fate that we cannot escape."

"This is being morbid. We carry our fate in our hands these days—or in our hearts," he said laughing, fingering a strand of her hair and letting the light play upon it.

"An ideal drives you one road and me the opposite. Love is no help—it only adds to the bitterness," she said brokenly.

He drew her head towards him and kissed her lips.

"Our roads are the same now," he said joyfully. "Our ideals were always the same. Our differences were about the means of achieving them." He tried to kiss her again, but she pushed him away gently.

"Don't, Jim. Don't make me feel again what has been a torment to me for the last few days. I've wanted you so much that I've grown numb from exhaustion. My feelings are almost dead now. Leave them dead. What's the use of making me miserable again when we're farther apart than ever."

"But we're not," he said with a confident smile. "There's only one thing to do now—to strike against the wrong with

which Germany threatens the world. The eyes of England are open at last to the evils of conquest. You've read the speeches in the House? Ireland is as good as free this moment."

She shook her head sadly. "I've tried to believe all that, Jim. I wanted to believe it. I put all my love for you in the scale to try and tip it down. But it was no use. The politicians say that this is a holy war against German aggression. In a way I believe it is. But what does England ask us to do? To take part with her in a war for the freedom of the world while we remain slaves. And slaves to whom? To England herself. Good God, was there ever such a travesty?"

"As your talk?" he said laughing.

"As English policy," she said warmly. "Is the German tyranny she asks us to fight against any worse than her tyranny to us? The slave-drivers may differ in the degree of their brutality, but they are the same in kind. Why should Irishmen believe in England as the deliverer of the human race? If she wants us to have faith in her, let her free us first."

"Give her time. She has to find the way," he said doubtfully.

"The way out of doing anything," she said quickly. "But this isn't a debating argument," she went on sadly after a short pause. "It's too great a tragedy for that. England is on the right side in this war, but with all her talk she's not going into it with clean hands. Let her do in Ireland to-morrow what she says she wants to do for the whole world, and every Irishman will be at her back. She can do it by the stroke of a pen. She hasn't done it and she won't do it, for the curse of conquest is on her. I've read the speeches you talk of. If I were English they might fire me with enthusiasm. But as an Irishwoman they only make me hard and bitter. English blood boils at a recital

of the wrongs with which Germany threatens the world. But it is a reminder to me of the wrong England is not merely threatening, but is actually inflicting on Ireland at this moment. She asks us to help her to prevent Germany doing to her and others what she herself is doing to us. My God."

She burst suddenly into a fit of sobbing.

"Don't, Diana," he said pleadingly. "You've worked yourself up to this. What you say is only half true. There has been a struggle going on in England for years between two ideals of life and government. The ideal that has led her into this war is the very opposite of the policy which coerces Ireland—it hasn't killed conquest, but for the first time it has prevailed over it. Freedom for Ireland is as certain as that you're sitting there."

"At once?" she said with an ironic smile through her tears.

"Of course," he said firmly.

"I wish I had your faith, Jim," she said sadly, drying her eyes. "Though I fear the age of moving mountains by faith has passed for ever. Like Doubting Thomas, I must have visible proof. I have too much English blood in me not to be suspicious of English good faith. I admit that England is groping after justice. It was even a factor in driving her into the war. But I see no sign that it is the prevailing motive. That has yet to be proved, and her treatment of Ireland is my test. I'll be with you, Jim, if she only gives me half a chance."

"You promise?" he said, taking her hand.

She made a movement towards him, but drew back shivering and shook her hand free.

"You must go?" she said miserably.

"I must," he said sternly. "God knows I love Ireland as much as you do, but there is something bigger than Ireland in all this. The freedom of the world is in the

balance. I can't wait to bargain. I know England will act decently."

"You think you are going to fight for Ireland?" she said harshly.

"Why, of course. Ireland is inseparable from what England is fighting for now. Can't you see it?" he said impatiently. "Redmond sees it. Twenty men are going from Tullyfin at once. In a few months thousands of Irishmen will be in the Army. Diana, can't you have a little faith?"

She flung her arms about his neck and kissed him passionately. She clung to him for several minutes, sobbing convulsively. He kissed her hair and the back of her neck.

"Crush me, Jim. Break me," she said in an exhausted voice.

She lay quite still in his arms and then suddenly pushed him away from her. She walked up and down the room trembling.

"That's the last of my weakness," she said, standing in front of him, with a pitiful twitching of her lips. "Good-bye now. No, don't touch me. Don't wait for dinner—I couldn't stand it."

"I must dine with my mother in any case," he said perplexed. "But what do you mean? I can't leave you like this. I shan't see you again, and we must settle things."

"Why can't you go while I see only you? I love you, Jim. I will always love you. Do go, for God's sake."

"Diana, have sense. We must fix up about our marriage," he said appealingly.

She flung herself down on the settee.

"Must we go back to that again?" she said despairingly. "Can't you see the yawning gulf between us? You say it isn't there. I pray night and day to make me see as you do. But I can see no hope. I see you broken on the wheel of your faith. You trust England, and I see her prepared

to betray you. I see the old evasions beginning already. The England of conquest is not dead. She's only using her idealists while they go her way. The reactionaries who were stirring up civil war a month ago in order to prevent Ireland from getting a trumpety measure of local government haven't become apostles of liberty in a night. They want to down Germany, and they have hopes of being able to tighten the halter on us in the process. *They* are your England and not a handful of idealists."

"This is blind prejudice," he said hopelessly.

"Your faith is a much blinder credulity," she said sharply.

"But if England proves I'm right?"

"I'll marry you that day. There's Simon's car. Kiss me. Oh, Jim."

"Hullo, Jim, where are you?" Simon Lentaigne's voice boomed from the front hall.

PART FOUR

I.

A YEAR and a half of war had left its mark on Jim Daly. A wooden leg was the most obvious sign. The greyness of his face under the eyes was the result of long months in hospital and would probably wear off, but a harder set of his lips and an introspective look in his eyes seemed to have come for good. His look of boyishness had altogether gone. His skin was stretched more tightly on his face, and sharply defined his jaw and the bony structure of his forehead.

He sat in a low armchair, staring at the fire in his own den in the St. James's Place house, his right leg, with its perfect brown boot, resting stiffly on the end of the fender. A review was open on his knees, but he had not looked at it for half an hour.

Bateson, his feet on the mantelpiece, hunched up in another armchair on the opposite side of the fire, was reading a book. His uniform hung loosely from his shoulders, and his face was thin to the point of emaciation.

"What's old Silas coming for?" he asked, searching round for a pipe on the carpet.

"Don't know. They may want me back."

Having found his pipe Bateson groped for tobacco, also on the carpet, and gave a sigh of satisfaction on finding it without having to move his legs.

"As good as anything else I should think," he said, filling his pipe.

"Six of one and half a dozen of another," Jim said moodily.

"Hope Phipps'll be in to talk to him—they both know all about it," Bateson grunted.

"Dale's coming," Jim said, with some of the old gleam of amusement in the quiet eyes.

"He'll prick some of the humbug. Damned if they don't think the war is run on clichés for the pleasure of old women at the clubs. Thank God I'm going back next week," Bateson growled, taking up his book.

"Fit?" Jim asked, with a doubtful look at the other's face.

"Fit enough for a bullet. It's about all they'll let me get out of the war," Bateson snapped, burying himself in his chair and book.

Jim stared at the fire. He huddled back more comfortably in his chair and watched the changing figures a huge lump of black coal made with the glowing embers underneath. A face which began as Diana suddenly became a leering, toothless hag. The wind howled in the chimney, and hailstones beat in gusts on the curtained windows. He shut his eyes again and saw Diana smiling at him. In a moment she was gone. He tried to recall the image, but nothing came except an inky blackness. Where was she? In Dublin, his mother thought. She was to make an effort to see her and would let him know. And his mother would be in Dublin to-night on her way home. He listened to the steady swish of a sleety rain on the window panes and shuddered. Her letters brought her so near to him and kept her so far off. She poured out love in one page and in the next harped on the ever-widening gulf that divided them. And it was always "I told you so," about the treatment of Ireland, with no word of what she was doing except that she was busy. She was half right in a way about the treatment of Ireland. His lips hardened, and he gazed sternly and steadily at the fire. It was one of the many sickening things of the war. It had hurt him as he had never been hurt before in his life. The hardships of the trenches were nothing, nor his wounds nor the loss of his leg. It was the irresolution, the weakness, the cynicism,

the bad faith about Ireland that had killed his enthusiasm and left him old and tired. No wonder Diana raged against English hypocrisy when he found it so hard to keep his faith. And he had memories of unselfishness, of sublime courage to sustain him, while she, as she saw things, had a perfect fulfilment of all her suspicion and distrust. . . .

"Let's wash," Bateson said, with a look at the clock. "We musn't keep Sir Silas waiting for his dinner."

In the common room they found Sir Silas planted in front of the fire, holding one hand behind his back to the blaze while he emphasized an argument with a wave of the other. The light gleamed on his shoes, his shirt front, his newly-shaven face. Phipps, in the red tabs and crown of a staff major, was appreciatively attentive. Dale, in a somewhat worn uniform of an infantry captain, was gloomily stubbing the stone guard of the fireplace with a restless foot.

Sir Silas withdrew his left hand from the shelter of his back and waved it towards Jim and Bateson, but he went on speaking to Dale.

"The result is certain if the facts are only put before them—diplomatically, of course. When they once understand the English position they're sure to come round. But we can go into that afterwards. Indeed, it's my object in coming here to-night. Not that I'm not always delighted to drop in, but in these crowded and momentous days one must combine work with pleasure. I see Simpson is announcing dinner. Jim, my dear boy, you want a sea voyage to set you on your—ahem—in order completely to recuperate."

He put a hand affectionately on Bateson's shoulder as they crossed the hall to the dining-room. "Have you decided to come to us? Hard work, of course, but you'd find it less trying than in the Army," he said suavely.

"The Army only tries my body," Bateson said grimly.

"Eh? You were on the Balkan Committee? We've just the very job for you."

"More secret treaties?" Bateson said with a sarcastic grin.

"My dear fellow, you must get rid of these pre-war Radical suspicions. Look at the Front Bench—a model of harmony. Come and join our happy family. You'll find everything—ahem—quite above board."

"Too much of a shock after the Flanders' doss-houses," Bateson said drily, edging off to his seat.

Sir Silas sighed and ate his soup in silence. He sipped a glass of sherry appreciatively.

"The country that can serve a wine like this in the second year of the great war is sure to win," he said confidently. "It has reserves of strength. Even our hock at the Penguins will outlast Kitchener's limit. Think of that for foresight, Phipps."

"We'll wipe 'em out this year," Phipps said resolutely.

Phipps and Sir Silas kept up a brisk discussion of strategy and tactics.

"I haven't been out, of course," Phipps admitted modestly. "But when I can spare time from the House I look in at the War Office—they know there."

Sir Silas lifted a doubtful eyebrow, but murmured: "Of course, of course."

The three soldiers listened with varying expressions of gloom.

"Anyone been to the revue at the Palace?" Dale asked in a pause.

Jim and Bateson showed a momentary interest. Phipps looked at Sir Silas with the smile of aloofness from the herd.

"We have no time for frivolity, Sir Silas?" he said austere.

Jim laughed. "Why, I saw Uncle Si——"

"Once with—ahem—ahem—a French Minister," Sir Silas said hastily. "That reminds me of our conversation

before dinner, Dale," he added with a quick return to his usual aplomb. "Now that we have dispensed with Simpson we can go on with it. We want you to go to America, Jim."

"Good Lord. What for?" Jim said, with a wry look of surprise.

"You should never have left us," Sir Silas said in a tone of mild reproof. "The centre of things needs all our men of brains."

"You might risk one or two on top at the front," Bateson said moodily.

"Over the top is their fate out there if you do," Dale said with a grin.

"Those soldiers—those soldiers," Sir Silas said, in the tone and with a nod of hopelessness. "Well, well, no one can say they lack confidence in themselves. And at the worst we can give them ideas from here. Damn pig-headed though. But in your case, Jim, it was an unnecessary sacrifice. And we had some work for you at home once or twice. However, it's all right now—I've arranged everything with the War Office. It's this perpetual Irish question. We get constant reports from America that it's playing the very devil with us all through the States. I can't believe that the Irish there understand things. They don't seem to know that we have passed a Home Rule Act."

Dale laughed. "And put it on the shelf and promised Ulster never to enforce it," he said bitterly.

"No, no. We promised not to coerce Ulster into accepting it," Sir Silas said soothingly.

"The Irish have eight hundred years' experience in interpreting English promises," Dale said with a shrug.

"You believe in us—you are wearing the King's uniform," Sir Silas said with benign conclusiveness over the edge of a glass of port.

"I'm wearing it for my sins—I was fool enough to be caught in a trap."

"If I were an Irishman I'd be a Sinn Feiner," Bateson said with sullen emphasis.

"Come now, we couldn't desert Ulster," Phipps said with an assured smile.

"You make me tired, Phipps, old man," Bateson said, brushing him aside with a grimace. "Of course, *you* can't desert Ulster. You can't desert your fellow conspirators. You helped Carson and Smith and Law to foster rebellion in Ulster. Instead of being in jail for it, or shot, you're all on the Front Bench now or on your way there. You may or may not have been play-acting, but Berlin took you seriously and you precipitated the war. If we escape a rebellion in Ireland during the war it won't be due to you and your friends. You've taught the Irish a lesson they won't forget, and you're egging them on every day to put it in practice."

"A little Sanatogen, my dear fellow, is an excellent sedative," Sir Silas said with a sympathetic glance at Bateson's strained, cadaverous face. "A dose night and morning will soon work wonders. And you must give up worrying about the past. Liberal and Tory are one for the duration of the war, and harmony mustn't be disturbed. Carson went too far, but it's all best forgotten now."

"Ireland hasn't forgotten it," Bateson said harshly.

"A little ruffled, perhaps," Sir Silas said with a meditative puff of his cigar, "but we can always manage her—she's at our elbow, so to speak. Soothing is the best—a little relaxation in the war restrictions isn't a bad idea. But if necessary we can apply pressure. No, Ireland doesn't worry me. It's the Irish in America. The Australian Irish are giving trouble, too, but I think we can manage them. We simply must get the American Irish right. They're interfering with the output of munitions.

Unless they're checked they may prevent America's coming into the war. In any case they seem to be delaying it. Your party might have done something Dale."

Dale's eyes lit angrily, but with an effort he restrained himself and laughed ironically.

"One must bear even the last straw with a smile," he said, making the attempt wryly. "You bind our hands behind our backs and expect us to use them. At the outbreak of the war my party declared itself in favour of the war. We did it because you said you were fighting for freedom and the rights of small nationalities. We did it with a good deal of risk, for we knew that many of our people distrusted English professions and promises. The principles on which all English parties entered the war bound them to pass at once and put in force not only the Home Rule Bill then before the House, but a far better one. We didn't wait to make a bargain. We trusted you to act on your professions. What happened? I was brought up with all the English distaste of plain speech, but there is only one word for it—you sold us. At no time in her history was Ireland closer to England than at the beginning of the war. Practically all the Irish people believed you had undertaken a just war. Most of them believed you entered on it for the reasons you alleged. The rest only waited for some proof. Well—you know what happened. Phipps knows more of the backstairs intriguing that went on than I do."

"We were anxious to do something," Phipps said uneasily. "But the Ulster men held out."

"You can apportion the blame as you will," Dale said wearily. "But English honour was sacrificed. Instead of the freedom which we expected we got a slap in the face. I don't mind myself or my party. It has wrecked us. We raised thousands of men to fight for you, but I hope I won't be among the few who come back alive. When Ireland

realizes how she has been betrayed we shall have a thin time."

"A gloomy view, Dale. Much too gloomy," Sir Silas said cheerfully. "Pass him the port, Jim. Ireland must be placated, of course. She's a little angry now perhaps. But if you only give us time everything will be set right. After all there is that Home Rule Act in the Statute Book. You must impress that on them in America, Jim."

"What do you expect me to do there?" Jim asked coldly.

"Have a look round generally. Find out what's in the air and at the back of the minds of the Irish."

"I can tell you now."

"'Fraid I must be off. I have an appointment with some Southern Slav revolutionaries. We have hopes of a rebellion in Austria. See Gridley to-morrow, and he'll fix up your credentials. It's a great strain, Dale, to keep one's eyes always clear for a weak spot." And Sir Silas waved himself out.

2.

Rough weather, a zig-zag course with lights out and westerly winds prolonged Jim's voyage to New York to twelve days. The boat was full of men, singly or in groups, engaged on errands connected with the war.

An interview with Sir Silas had convinced Jim that his mission was primarily for the good of his health. His uncle had been vague as to what he was expected to do.

"They'll understand you and you'll understand them," Sir Silas said with a smile at his finger nails. "You're Irish. Englishmen, the dear fellows, never quite get there in America. They have an ineradicable idea that people who don't speak English exactly as they do are necessarily inferior. This develops a sort of mental crust that is, to say the least of it, a little narrowing. It's perhaps at the root of the Irish question. It makes difficulties everywhere

abroad. The war is rubbing it off a little, but it lasts like the British Empire itself. The Englishman thinks the American crude. The American thinks the Englishman a bit of an ass. Soothe them, my boy, soothe them. And the voyage will pick up your health."

Jim protested that he himself needed soothing. Nothing but the conviction that England was essentially right about the war enabled him to tolerate the weakness or stupidity or bad faith about Ireland.

"You do stick it, you see," Sir Silas said suavely. "That's the main thing. You don't let us down in essentials. The war's got to be won and America has got to come in—you're sound there. For the rest it's rather an advantage that you don't think the British winged angels. The Americans don't and won't. They'll feel more at home with you, and they'll talk to you. Write me a report—especially about the Irish."

"For the pigeon-hole?" Jim said.

"I'll do what I can. But everyone is so busy. No one has any time to read anything, much less to think. Good-bye, my boy. Come back strong and we'll put you on to Austria."

Jim made friends with an American who sat next him at the captain's table—a tall, thin, wiry man, with a grey, hogged moustache, who cloaked a cold mind with a temperament strung with nervous energy.

"Kenrick, a lawyer—one of the leaders of the American Bar," the captain told Jim on the second day out.

"America will come in I suppose?" Jim asked, as he and Kenrick walked together after breakfast.

"Sure to. Got that out there?" Kenrick said as he helped Jim on to the boat deck.

Jim nodded. "Rather a nuisance to everyone I'm afraid. I'm not used to it yet."

"Good for you," Kenrick said heartily. "We're in the

war already. But politicians are politicians everywhere—they'll begin to move after the November elections. We're a mixture of races, and it hasn't always been easy to see the wood for the trees. But we're all Americans at bottom. Wilson, perhaps, could have handled the situation better, but I don't know. He has a difficult job. It's hard to disengage a big idea from its national trimmings. While America is out of it, our Germans are in sympathy with Germany, the Italians follow the lead of Italy, the Irish are bitter against England, and even the New England Americans don't love you."

"I'm Irish," Jim laughed. "Daly's my name."

"Couldn't quite place you. Went in with Redmond?" Kenrick said doubtfully.

"No, I'm an English official. But a Home Ruler for all that."

Kenrick wiped his pince-nez with his pocket handkerchief and took some time to adjust the information.

"Well, you'll understand how it is," he said with some relief. "It's got to be an American war. It's for something bigger than America, of course, as it's bigger than England or France or Germany. But that's how the mass of our people have to see it. I think the majority see it now—though, perhaps, Wilson knows better. But the day America enters the war, it's an American war, and hyphenated Americans will put by their hyphens and be Americans pure and simple."

He walked for some time with a troubled face.

"You're not making it easy for us, you know—England, I mean," he said with some hesitation. "America is going into this war for an ideal—to secure the freedom of the world. I suspect a phrase of the kind generally, but it's literally true. It's a moot question whether our interests would be better served by going in or keeping out. But that's a consideration that the mass of the people never

think of. We're going in because liberty is threatened. Our Germans will fight Germany, our Irish will fight side by side with England, not because they love England, but because England says she is fighting for the same ideal."

"Well?"

"What about Ireland?" Kenrick asked coldly.

"What about it?" Jim said uneasily.

"I forgot you're an official," Kenrick said with a shrug. "I'm Irish myself, far back—my grandfather. It sticks, I suppose, but I'm speaking as an American. I've been in France for the last twelve months doing Red Cross work. I'm going home now to try and hasten America into the war. I've a good deal of admiration for what England has done and is doing in the war. She's on the right side, and I'm with her till the world is free of the German threat. But I tell you frankly that her treatment of Ireland is hard to swallow. England talks very loudly about liberty, but it's largely hot air. Or it's a liberty she tries to keep largely to herself. She did her best to keep it from us. Her Colonies had to browbeat her into giving them freedom. But the worst case of all is Ireland. There's hardly an American, even before the war, who didn't think England a tyrannical bully in her dealings with Ireland. Since the war there are few who don't think her guilty of playing rather a crooked game. All the American-Irish, and many others, think that England trapped Redmond into supporting the war and then deserted him. Her Government was pledged to Home Rule. They had their chance when the war came of healing an old sore for ever. But did they do it? No, sir, they did a bunk. It flavoured too much of the gold brick swindle for us. They handed Ireland, bound, into the hands of Carson and his reactionary English backers. England has got to act democracy as well as talk it before she'll get people outside England to trust her."

"You don't believe in special treatment for Ulster then?"

"I believe in making her toe the line. I was born in the South—Georgia. My father fought in the Civil War—I was a kid then. We were beaten and I'm glad of it now. Our country had to be united. Ireland has got to be united. I'm Scotch-Irish myself, but I'd damn well spank Ulster into common sense. She's got swelled head from being too long the boss. Nobody in Ireland wants to hurt her. If England only cleared out all Irishmen would be friends in twenty-four hours. We can't help suspecting that she doesn't want to clear out. She let Carson play the fool before the war—or was it England's game? And now he's going to rule the roost."

"We didn't go into the war for that," Jim said moodily. "And you're going to fight with us."

"Your young fellows that I met in France didn't," Kenrick said warmly. "They're bully. But I'm suspicious of the old gang who're getting back into power in England. I'm going to fight with them, but that doesn't mean that I trust them. We have a common cause in this war, but they've got to prove that their hands are clean. And their treatment of Ireland makes them seem damn dirty. I have been talking to some of that crowd over there," he added with a grin, pointing to a group of Englishmen. "They're coming over to explain the English position. They're decent fellows, but they know as much about America as I do about Arabia. If America wasn't going into this war on her own they'd help to keep her out. They're that type of Englishman that's the greatest God damn fool on the face of the earth—who expects everyone to take him at his own valuation. They've muddled on to the right path this time, but we've got to keep them there and make 'em think out where it leads to."

"Make them give Home Rule to Ireland," Jim said, laughing.

"That's talking," Kenrick said grimly. "We will.

Those fellows tell me they want a union of the English-speaking race. It's a climb down for the British lion, and if she wants it she's got to pay for it by some straight thinking. The Irish question means a great deal to us. It's been cutting for years across our own politics. Though I'm Irish, I don't want an Irish question in American politics. It's a damn nuisance. I have no bitter memories of England. I come of Episcopalian Ulster stock, and have no reason to hate England. My feelings towards her are only those of the average American. But it's different with the great majority of the Irish in America. The iron has bitten into their blood, and they feel ten times more bitter against England than the most extreme Sinn Feiner in Ireland. They're the great bar to America's not coming sooner into the war. They'll stand in the way till Doomsday of any real understanding between America and England unless England plays the game decently with Ireland. They'll go into the war because they're Americans. But up to the day America goes in they'll intrigue against England. They'll hate her while they're in, and they'll work against her with increased fervour when they get out. England blames us for not being in the war sooner, but to a large extent it is she has made our difficulty and we resent it. England says Ireland is a private matter of her own. If that means anything it means that she claims a free hand to play the bully. It's not a plea I'd put forward if I were seeking an alliance on the grounds of a common democracy. But Ireland can never be a private matter of England while there are many times more Irishmen in America than in Ireland. Many an American President wished to God it was, but the Irish won't have it, and they tell at the polls. If England stands on technicalities of that kind it shows that she has learned very little from the war, and means very little by all her big talk. I don't know what you're coming over for, but the best work you could do for England is to go straight back

and tell your people to settle the Irish question at once—to do it generously and not in the haggling way the unworkable Home Rule Act you have in the cupboard proposes to do it. Until she does that she can never be friends with America, though we'll fight with her in this war whether she does it or not."

Jim found other Americans on board less outspoken than Kenrick, but in substantial agreement with him. They were full of appreciation of England's effort in the war and spoke confidently of the intervention of America. But there was always an element of suspicion and distrust of the ultimate aims of England; and Ireland invariably cropped up as a test of her sincerity.

By the time the pilot came aboard Jim felt that he knew as much as he needed to know about the Irish in America; but Kenrick told him that he ought to see some of the real Irish, as he himself was almost unhyphenated, as were the other Americans on board—mostly war workers who tolerated England and worked for France.

Kenrick promised him letters of introduction to representative Irish-Americans whose dislike of England kept them at home practising a rabid pacifism when they were not actively intriguing against England.

"Redmond has lost ground with them," he said regretfully. "They think England has fooled him. Between ourselves it looks as though she had. I hope to God they won't stir up a rising in Ireland. I couldn't blame them if they did, but it would make it more difficult for us to come in. I don't envy you your job if you're thin-skinned about criticism of England. Come and stay with me when you're sick of it."

The extraordinary hospitality of the Americans he met on the boat made Jim almost admire the monstrous statue of Liberty. They asked him to stay, offered to put him up at clubs, and gave him letters of introduction. Kenrick

proclaimed him a friend and seemed to act as a magic passport. When Jim tried to refuse a civility that was sure to give a lot of trouble to the donor, he was met with a laugh. "You're Bob Kenrick's friend, and I guess that goes in New York and in most places out of it."

A brilliant sun was melting the last of the snow as the boat made its way up the river. The cold harsh wind had suddenly gone, and a breeze, soft as a June west wind at Scarty, fanned his cheeks. A sun haze hid the dreariness of the New Jersey flats, and glorified Staten Island, whose trees and knolls already held the promise of spring. The tall sky-scrapers beyond the Battery, as the sun caught their windows, blinked a welcome in half derisive contempt of the sullen, dwarfed houses at their feet.

At eight Jim dined with the Kenricks in their house in the first block of 72nd Street, east of the Park. Mrs. Kenrick, with a gleam of mischief in her brown eyes, asked him what he thought of America.

"Noisy," he said grimly.

"Bob hasn't done his duty. You've been in New York several hours and aren't lyrical about Grant's tomb and Riverside Drive and the Pallisades. But here's Mr. Cronin—you can't escape Ireland in this house."

A tall, dark, clean-shaven man, with broad shoulders and a strong mouth, shook hands warmly with Jim, said he was pleased to meet him, and asked him what he thought of America.

"So far I've seen only Ireland," Jim said with a laugh. "The Customs officer was Irish. My taxi driver was Irish. So was the policeman who held us up in Fifth Avenue. The hotel porter is Irish. I'm not sure about the clerks at the desk. But the liftman is, and the floor clerk and the chambermaid."

"So are most of the judges that I've to argue cases before," Kenrick said with a grin. "My chief grievance

against England is that she drove them out of Ireland. And the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen and the Congressmen and Murphy—damn 'em."

"Kenrick's a mugwump," Cronin said with a smile. "He even forgets he's Irish when he remembers Tammany. Has Yeats been writing anything?" he added eagerly.

"Cronin's your man," Kenrick said later in the drawing-room. "He's not in politics, but he keeps in touch with everything. How he finds time for it I don't know. He's a lawyer, and a good one, too, and up to his eyes in work, but Howells would tell you that his only interest is literature."

For a week Jim felt that Cronin's only interest was politics.

"You want to see English-Irish relations through American eyes? Well, I'll show you," he said, taking up a pencil and scribbling some notes on the back of an envelope, as Jim breakfasted with him at his flat in the Washington on the morning after the dinner at Kenrick's.

The demonstration was a procession of breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, and suppers, in Cronin's rooms, at Sherry's, at the Lawyers' Club, at the Century. Jim met hundreds of representative men of all classes and opinions: Dutch-Americans, descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers, Scotch-Irish, unqualified Americans, Irish-Americans; republicans of all shades, democrats, Tammany democrats, mugwumps, socialists of many hues. They disagreed about America and American ideals. Many were vehemently for the war, some neutralist, some pacifist. Many spoke generously of England's action in the war. But always, even with those who admired her most, was some reservation. In nine cases out of ten the distrust arose in connection with Ireland. Jim didn't meet a single man who defended England's attitude. An old Republican Senator said phlegmatically, "I haven't a drop of Irish blood in my veins, though I'm one of the few so-called

real Americans who haven't. I'm of pure English descent. I like England and English institutions. I try to stand up for her in everything, but I can't say a good word for the way she's dealt with Ireland. If it weren't for her blindness America would be in this war long since. She's not only keeping a sore open on her side, but she has spread it over here. The future peace of the world is largely a matter of American and English friendship, but, war or no war, I see no chance of it here until England mends her ways in Ireland."

On their last evening together Cronin said, as he drove Jim to the Bronx, "I want you to see old Darcy. He was arrested as a Fenian in '65 and escaped from jail. He's very extreme. At one time he used to have a large following, but the Parnell and Redmond movements drew most Irish-Americans to constitutional agitation. Carsonism and the shelving of the Home Rule Act have now so disgusted even the moderates that Darcy is a power again. He's always plotting abortive rebellions; but in the present temper of the Irish here and in Ireland he may give England an unpleasant shock one day."

"He used to write to my grandfather," Jim said.

"That may help as an introduction," Cronin said doubtfully.

They found the old man huddled up in an armchair in front of a gas stove. He stood up to receive them, a curiously pathetic figure in an old grey dressing gown and carpet slippers. Deep furrows lined a forehead brown as parchment. His hair and scrubby beard were of a dingy white. His cheeks had fallen in over toothless jaws. His brown eyes, shy and placid, had an expression of youth under their shrunken lids.

"I've brought a friend to see you, Mr. Darcy," Cronin said respectfully.

"A friend of yours is as welcome as yourself, and that's

saying little of the regard I have for you, though you aren't with us itself. Won't you take a seat?" Darcy said feebly, pointing to some wooden chairs covered with books and papers. He supported himself by holding on to the back of his armchair, and made a movement towards the chairs as if to clear them.

"Leave that to me," Cronin said cheerfully, forcing the old man to sit down, and tilting the books off two chairs on to the floor.

"It's ashamed I am to welcome any stranger in a litter like this," Darcy said to Jim with a rueful smile at the dust and confusion of the room. There were books and papers everywhere, on the deal shelves, on the floor, on a small sideboard, on the rough table in the centre of the room.

"I think you know Mr. Daly's grandfather—Pierce Daly, of Scarty," Cronin said as they sat down.

"Pierce Daly is it?" Darcy said, looking at Jim doubtfully. "He was a good man once—no better. But he went wrong and took to moderation."

"There's nothing of the moderate about my grandfather," Jim said, laughing.

"Maybe you're more moderate than he is?" Darcy said suspiciously.

"Mr. Darcy is all for physical force," Cronin said hastily. "What can you expect of a man who sits here reading rebel poetry all day?" he added with a laugh and a humorous look at the tattered, dust-laden books.

"It's for many a long year they were all I had to keep the fire alight in me," the old man said with a glazed look at the smelly stove. "Only that I had to earn my bread to distract me and had them to fall back on when despair was gripping my heart, it's dead I'd be long ago. But it's thankful to God and them I am that I'm alive this day," he added, sitting upright in his chair, his eyes glowing.

"Well, well, we'll see—what we'll see," he said, after a pause, with a half furtive glance at Cronin.

"You wouldn't play the German game," Cronin said with a shrug.

"What call have we to interfere between two devils?" Darcy said vehemently. "They tell me the Prooshian devil is bad, but it was the other one that tried to throttle me, and that throttled my country. Of the two I have less hatred of the devil I don't know. But we'll pull the fangs of the one that hurt us. The Boers near did it—anyway they stood out three years," he added meditatively, his eyes again fixed on the fire.

"They were thousands of miles off and had room to run away," Cronin said drily, "and they had arms."

"Your father, Tom Cronin, wouldn't say that," Darcy said with a pitying look. "Yankee caution has coloured your blood. What greater crown could a man win than to die fighting for liberty with a pike or a gun in his hand? If he fails itself, won't he die to keep the blessed light burning? And in His own good time God'll side with the right. Who knows but it is now? Even England has the pluck to fight when her own liberty is only threatened. We'll see. We'll see. The hardest blow that God ever struck me is that I'm eighty-seven this day and can't use my legs, but thank Him for His mercy He hasn't taken my mind and my wits from me. And there are young men in plenty—aye, and women too—that have seen the light and are ready to follow it."

"I hope to goodness there will be no foolishness," Cronin said with a frown.

Darcy's eyes glowed, but he made no reply. He leant back in his chair and stared at the fire with a quiet smile. "They're making songs in Ireland again," he said after a while. "It's always a good sign. It's fifty years since I made a vow, and the last rocks of Kerry fading into the

mist, that I'd never go back only to help to set her free; and here I am now, when the day has come, talking of old songs and——"

He stopped suddenly, asked Jim would he like a drop of something, and recommended him not to leave New York without seeing Grant's tomb and taking a trip up the Hudson to Albany.

"Are there any statesmen in England?" Cronin asked moodily, as he drove Jim to his rooms at the Plaza.

Jim shrugged his shoulders.

"There's something in the air," Cronin said with a frown. "It can only be a flash in the pan, but it may do infinite harm here and to the cause England is fighting for now. She could so easily make friends with all these people—even with Darcy. The greatest joke in the world, if it wasn't so serious, is what Englishmen mean by self-determination. You're going to Boston and Chicago? You'll find it's the same story there. If you go right through the country from Seattle to Florida you'll find everywhere what you've found in New York: a growing desire to enter this war in spite of distrust of England. If England would only make the grand gesture towards Ireland—not in a year's time or in ten years' time, or when she's forced to it, but now and freely—nine-tenths of American distrust would be blown away. I'd almost be inclined to say all of it would go."

Jim went to Boston and Chicago and got back to New York at the beginning of Easter week.

"Wasted enough time in discovering the obvious?" Kenrick, with whom he was staying, asked drily.

"How far would you go?" Jim asked.

"As far as I could stretch with the will to go my farthest," Kenrick said thoughtfully. "There's only one end to this war and that's victory, and, I hope, peace and security. Even before the war England would have been more secure

with a friend beside her than with an angry stepdaughter. After the war, if we're not living entirely on hot air, the talk of strategic security is all bunkum. Anyhow, the cutting of a rotten political halter means the building of a sound economic bridge. No two countries in the world need each other more than England and Ireland. Let the Irish themselves decide. They've got to feel the taste of freedom first. Who knows—I think so myself—but in a few years a real Union may be possible. But it must be founded on friendship and not on conquest."

Cronin came quietly into the room with a set face.

"They've started a rebellion in Ireland," he said coldly.

"My God," Kenrick said despairingly.

Jim stared at them dumbly. He heard vaguely that the news had come through to the American Government in cipher. The newspapers knew nothing—probably a strict censorship. Dublin seemed to be in the hands of the rebels. There were few details. Jim watched Cronin's movements: the taking of a cigar out of a box on the library table, the lighting of it, his attitude in front of the open grate, as if something vital hung on them. But what he heard and saw made only a feeble impression. What really reached his brain and filled it was Diana. He saw her vividly in the smallest of Cronin's actions. If he missed one of them he should miss her. It was as if she was his power of thinking, and any attempt to give her an existence separate from it would drive her away.

"It's sheer lunacy," Kenrick said.

"The clash of imagination with the unimaginative," Cronin said.

"Provocative stupidity if you like—still, the Irish should have had more sense. Nothing but evil can come of it," Kenrick said harshly.

"If England could only see it for what it is—a gesture,

and rather a fine one—it might settle things,” Cronin said doubtfully.

“She won’t. She’ll shoot,” Kenrick snapped.

Kenrick’s sharp voice half awakened Jim. What were they talking about? Some sort of silly debate. Shoot? A cold sweat broke out on his forehead. It was too horrible.

“There were no names mentioned?” he said coldly, with dry lips.

“None,” Cronin said, looking at him curiously.

For days he haunted the news tape at the University Club, read every edition of every newspaper, called up the Consulate for some possible inside news. It was such a storm in a teacup compared with the war. Yet it seemed to hold the few men he could not succeed in avoiding almost as deeply as it held him. At least they talked of nothing else. There was a general suspense of judgment. In the club smoking room he listened apathetically to endless discussion.

“It’s a stab in the back,” Bramton, an English journalist, said.

“It’s like my kid of three going out solemnly and attacking with his fists the big policeman at the corner,” Kenrick said drily. “Let’s keep our sense of proportion.”

“But, my God, people have been killed. It’s cold-blooded murder,” Bramton said, horrified.

“Let us hope English newspapers aren’t taking that note. It has too much of the foretaste of the pogrom,” Kenrick said gravely. “The world is not inclined to acquit England of all blame for an Irish revolution. Least of all will she be held blameless for this one. Eight hundred years of misgovernment have occasionally been held to justify another name for what you call murder. I dare say there was a time when George Washington—with more reason, for he suffered less—was called a murderer. In fact we know he was: murderer, traitor, assassin even—all

the names you are now inclined to give to the Irish rebels. He succeeded, so you give him other titles now. You know America pretty well, Bramton, and you keep your ears open. Have you heard an American call the leaders of this revolt traitors or murderers? You shake your head. Well, ponder that. It would be well if England took the fact to heart and reflected on it. The revolt is petering out—is over perhaps this moment. We shake our heads over the foolishness of these men, for they are going to fail. But it is the shake of the head that has in it more admiration than blame. We regret that this has happened in the middle of the war. The war matters too much to America to make us draw back from the position we have taken up. But do you think for one moment that, because we are going to fight beside England in this war, we shall echo her words about this rebellion? There's not a man in the club except yourself—and I'm not sure about you; from your vehemence I see you have misgivings—who doesn't hold England responsible for this revolt of a mere handful of young men. How many are there in all? Not more than twelve or thirteen hundred it seems. The surprise to me is that there aren't more. It's not a revolt of the ignorant. It's a revolt of the educated. It's a revolt of the men who know all your past from the day Strongbow landed in Ireland. It's a revolt of men who knew they'd fail! But the immediate cause of the rebellion is that men are now sitting on your Treasury Bench and governing Ireland who were plotting against Irish liberty just before the war; who, at the outbreak of the war, diddled Ireland out of a miserable sop of self-government. And for God's sake, Bramton, give up talking of Casement and a German plot. We all know poor Casement. He's a picturesque ornament for your propaganda; but it's a damned foolish sort of propaganda here. It may go down in England, but we know, too well, how little Casement was in the councils

of the Irish either here or in Ireland. The next few days will be a critical time for England in the eyes of the world, and especially here. You won't be blamed for putting down the rebellion. But everything will depend on how you do it. Those idealists have captured men's imaginations. I'm sorry to inflict this tirade on you, but I feel the whole thing strongly. I go back to my illustration of my kid and the big policeman. What would the policeman do? England has an eleventh-hour chance. She could win Ireland back to-morrow by a generosity which is the only wisdom. Or——" he shrugged his shoulders and looked gloomily at the fire.

"Or?" Jim repeated the word as a question to himself over and over, but shirked giving a reply. He was oppressed by a feeling of almost physical fear. What was it Cronin called the revolt? A gesture. Surely England would see it. The men he fought with in Flanders and Picardy would see it—those generous men who always applauded courage even in the enemy. Bateson would see it, and Leonard and Hill. Even Phipps would be uneasy and in doubt. The new spirit was there, the new outlook on life. What then made him afraid? He shuddered. There was no use in trying to blind himself to the fact that the new had not yet driven out the old. And the old spirit, which only dimly understood the new, was in office and was still governing by the old methods.

A waiter handed him a newspaper. He looked feverishly for the latest telegrams. . . .

It was all over. Pearse, MacDonagh, Plunkett. . . . He gave a sigh of relief. Perhaps she wasn't in it—though there had been more than one mention of women. Poets almost to a man, with ideals that were essentially the same as those that drove the best Englishmen to heroic graves. And it was unawakened England that prevented them from fighting side by side. Surely the England that

was fighting for liberty would understand. He turned over another page and came on a later telegram: Arrest of Miss Diana Scovell and Michael Driscoll. The print swam in front of his eyes. It was some minutes before he could read the details. She had been in command of one of the surrendered buildings. Driscoll was leader of a country detachment. . . .

He struggled out of the club and found himself, when evening fell, in Central Park. He had walked round and round for hours till his leg was numb, and the same arguments went full circle time after time in his mind.

"You know some of them?" Mrs. Kenrick said at dinner.

"All of them I think."

"The woman, too?"

He nodded.

"Surely they can't shoot her?" she said sympathetically.

He stared at her. Something seemed to snap in him.

It was as if some impending horror had at last fallen.

"Surely not," he echoed coldly. He noticed that she was looking at him curiously. He pulled himself together and found himself speaking of the squirrels in the Park.

The days dragged on. The war had no interest for him. The shootings began.

"A big mistake," Kenrick said. "But it's hot blood yet and could be forgiven."

The shootings went on.

"England is mad," Kenrick said angrily. "There were only a few men in this, but these cold-blooded murders will drive every Irishman to fury, not only in Ireland, but here, in Australia, everywhere."

When the wounded Connolly was shot, Kenrick was in despair. "It's a crime against the peace of the world. Have they any sense, any feeling?" he said vehemently.

Jim had become apathetic. "England is no better nor worse than she was a month ago," he said dully. "I'm sure

there's an outcry in England against all this. The majority of Englishmen believe in liberty, and many of them are dying for it every day. But the machine of government is the old machine of the conqueror, and the men who run it can't shake off the old system—probably don't want to. The soldier who's responsible for all this probably thinks it a triumph of law and order."

"He ought to be shot," Kenrick said furiously.

"No, he'll be decorated," Jim said with an attempt at a smile.

He grew to fear the newspapers and read all day in Kenrick's library or walked in the Park.

"Driscoll is the only man shot to-day," Kenrick said one morning at breakfast. "And, good God, they've given a woman penal servitude for life. Diana Scovell. What do you say to that?"

"He was my cousin, and she—I hoped to marry her," Jim said dully.

"And you can take it like that?" Kenrick said wonderingly, after a long pause.

Mrs. Kenrick left the room, weeping.

"I have no feeling left," Jim said shortly.

"What do you mean to do?"

"Write a report of what America thinks of her coming ally," Jim said savagely. "Do let me alone, Kenrick," he added gently. "You've been very good to me. Let me find myself again. All this has nearly driven me mad."

"You won't give up England?"

"Will you?" Jim asked coldly.

"There's a big idea behind the war you see," Kenrick said doubtfully.

"I'm a slave to an idea, too," Jim said wearily. "England has done her best to kill it with one hand, but with the other—well, I can't forget the men I saw die beside me."

PART FIVE

I.

SIR SILAS LEVIN watched pensively a few leaves fall, flutter awhile, and turbillion gracefully along the Champs Elysées. He raised his eyes, and with a half repressed sigh gazed wistfully at the converging lines of vivid golden yellow that stretched up towards the Arc de Triomphe. From his second floor windows he had seen the bare black trees of January change gradually to masses of pink buds, to the tender green of the first leaves, to the heavier green of June, to the frowsy green of the hot summer months which made him long for Deauville, whither many of his fellow-workers had fled; and now, as a parting gift, was this austere blaze of yellow gold under a brilliant October sun. He sighed, turned his back on the window, locked a despatch case on a console, counted half a dozen small cases on the floor and looked thoughtfully at Jim Daly who lounged, reading the *Temps*, in an armchair in front of the fire.

"You need a holiday, Jim," he said with a glance at the reflection of his own fresh, pink face in a mirror.

"I'm going to have it—a long one," Jim said with the flicker of a smile on his worn face.

"Scarty?"

"Yes, Scarty."

"It's a wrench for me to get out of harness after forty-six years," Sir Silas said, sinking carefully into an armchair. "Very thoughtful of 'em, though, to put me on the Lauder Commission. A winter in the sun is not to be despised at my age. Sorry you're not coming with us, my boy, but

these little plums are naturally reserved for old war horses who need a sun bath. Someone is sure to know something about the work, and it gives us all a well-earned holiday. As I said to the P.M., it merges us honourably as well as pleasantly into the ranks of the unemployed—damned thoughtful of 'em. And to think that at the outbreak of the war I was within a month of the shelf—fading out, as it were! And here I am in the eleventh month of peace still at it. It's been a wonderful war. And you've made your mark, Jim. The ball is now at your feet. Within a few days you'll rank as a first secretary—I've seen to that."

"My resignation is there on the table," Jim said listlessly.

"Eh?" Sir Silas said with a frown, sitting up straight in his chair. "You must give up that nonsense. Thought you had given it up. Think of your career, man. Bless my soul, are you mad? Why, you put your back into the work—too much so, if anything—in a way that convinced me that you wanted to stay on."

"Hope dies hard—and, well, it helped me to forget," Jim said wearily.

"If you're not satisfied with the first secretaryship perhaps something better could be done," Sir Silas said hopefully.

"Good Lord, it's not that," Jim said bitterly.

Sir Silas lit a cigar and puffed it thoughtfully, his eyes fixed on the fire.

"Ireland again?" he said with a slight frown.

"That and other things," Jim said with a shrug.

Sir Silas looked at him sympathetically, hesitated, and said quietly, "I've never spoken of it before—though I felt deeply for you. Your mother told me all about it. About Diana, I mean. It must have been the very devil."

"It was," Jim said harshly.

"You saw her?"

"Once in Aylesbury jail when I got back from America. And again when they released her," Jim said tonelessly.

"I hope—well, that she saw the error of her ways," Sir Silas said tolerantly.

"No," Jim said with a smile. "She only saw the error of mine. I couldn't agree with her then," he said lighting a cigarette. "I don't agree now—but I'm not so sure."

Sir Silas gave a sigh. "You couldn't have married her. It would have been impossible—a revolutionary—a——" he hesitated.

Jim laughed bitterly. "I met her with a motor outside the jail and wanted her to marry me at once by special licence—I had it in my pocket."

"Good God!" Sir Silas said, genuinely shocked. "You—an official. We couldn't possibly have tolerated——"

"Remember the Czechs and the Jugo Slavs," Jim said drily.

"They're different," Sir Silas said with a frown and a wave of his cigar, but with a slight uneasiness of tone. "Professor Masaryk is now President of a republic in alliance with us. Dr. Benes is its Foreign Minister. Dr. Trumbić is Foreign Minister of the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes."

"They deserve it. It's to the credit of England to have helped to make them what they are by freeing their countries," Jim said thoughtfully. "But how are they different from the men who were shot in Dublin? They are men of the same type, with the same ideals."

He looked at his wooden leg moodily for a few seconds, smiled, lit another cigarette.

"My wooden leg will always be there to remind me that I mustn't give in," he said confidently. "This war has been fought and won for an ideal. Some day peace will follow."

Sir Silas looked at him uneasily. "A good bracing holiday is what you need to set you up. Why, we've signed the peace," he said tentatively, as if testing Jim's sanity.

"Good Lord, you don't call that last kick of the world of conquest a peace?" Jim said derisively. "I don't wonder poor Wilson is ill."

"We've done very well. Not everything that we wished, but, on the whole, very well indeed," Sir Silas said pompously. "And we have the League of Nations to carry on the good work."

"Bad as the League of Nations is, it's a miracle that anything so good escaped from that game of grab and vanity," Jim said moodily. "When the men who really won the war have repaired the League some good may come of it."

"Bless my soul, it's almost time for déjeuner," Sir Silas said with a glance at the clock. "You were always impracticable, Jim. The German menace has gone and the world is breathing freely at last."

"Ireland?" Jim said grimly.

"Ireland always makes you see red, my boy," Sir Silas said, levering himself out of his armchair. "She's damned troublesome for her size, but she's not the world. We succeeded, thank God, in keeping her out of the Conference."

"You heard enough of her though?"

"Yes, damn her. And America is rumbling again," Sir Silas said impatiently. "That was only an official 'damn,' Jim, my boy," he said with a glance at Jim's pained face. "I suppose it's because I'm an Irishman at bottom, or perhaps it's because I'm enjoying an unwonted freedom from office, but I've been thinking of Ireland very much to-day. When I'm rid of this Commission I want to settle there. Speaking unofficially as your old grand-uncle, she's been our biggest failure in the war. I did my best when you cabled me that time from America, but everyone seemed to be paralyzed, and nothing was done till it was too late. And then, as usual, what was done was wrong. It's a sort of armed camp now, I believe. But what can you expect

from the sort of people we've sent to govern it. They learn to lie crudely at the War Office. A diplomatist would have settled the country in a week."

"It's too late now even for subtle lying. For once in a way they might try honesty," Jim said with a shrug. "Anyhow, I'm sick of criminal blunders."

"The Cabinet Committee Phipps is on might do something—the pressure from America is rather severe," Sir Silas said doubtfully.

"Good Lord," Jim said hopelessly. "Come, Uncle Si, let's feed."

2.

Jim saw Sir Silas off on his winter holiday, crossed to London next day, and bade good-bye to the Foreign Office. He stayed two days in St. James's Place, making arrangements to give up his rooms, and waiting for Phipps and Bateson who were to travel with him to Dublin—Phipps in quest of a solution of the Irish difficulty, Bateson to write up Ireland for the *Thunderer*.

"It's been a rum war," Bateson said, from his corner of Phipps' reserved compartment of the Kingstown boat train. "This war to end war: the war of universal liberty and universal peace. And they say we've won 'em, too. Close on a million British and Irish gave their lives to that tune, not to speak of the many millions who have memories like this," holding out his empty left sleeve, "or less conspicuous but quite as enduring marks of the siren. We used to pipe that little ditty, Jim, even before the war, when Phipps said it was all tosh. And now that they say it's come true we're both broken men, and Phipps is in the Cabinet. Am I Alice in Wonderland, or the Special Correspondent of the *Thunderer* on my way to Ireland to describe the operations of an army in the field? That over-fed reactionary opposite can't be governing us in these

days of liberty. I've had only a third of a bottle of Burgundy, and we've just given peace to the world—the Prime Minister says so!"

"The burglars seized the house while the family were at the war," Jim said gloomily.

"The country is sound at the core," Phipps said amiably. "It knows its friends and naturally chose the men who won the war to do the reconstruction."

"Good Lord," Bateson said a little shrilly. "They won the war by staying at home and bagging five billions by profiteering! And the damned fools who risked their lives and lost their limbs, and the widows and orphans of the dead'll have to redeem the debt. What do you say, Jim?"

"I'm going to sleep," Jim said wearily.

He shut his eyes, but he couldn't shut himself off from the discussion. Two days had tired him of what seemed to be an interminable argument between Phipps and Bateson. It had made him sick at heart, but as he listened now it somehow gave him a gleam of hope. The England in power had made Ireland a hell, but the England in power was not the England that won the war. The England that fought for and won liberty for the rest of the world was herself not free. She had not yet broken the shackles of the old order. Selfishness and lust of money and power had entrenched themselves while generosity and love of liberty were at the wars. This explained the paralysis at Paris, the seething discontent in England, the misgovernment of Ireland, the distrust of the world. But the doom of the militarists, the profiteers, and reactionaries was already presaged by by-election after by-election. With a freer England, with the men in power in England who believed in an ideal and had fought for it, would come freedom for Ireland.

"Hear that, Jim," Bateson said derisively. "Old Phipps is going to settle Ireland."

"How much are your people in earnest, Phipps?" Jim asked, mildly interested.

"Oh, of course, we're in earnest," Phipps said doubtfully. "We must do something. That damned Liberal Home Rule Act comes into force on signing peace with Turkey, and we can't keep putting that off indefinitely. It's all damned awkward, though. Most of the Committee are up to their necks in promises to Ulster. One can't quite trust L.G. It may be a trick to round on us? What? Of course he may be on the straight—America is pressing him hard. But one never knows with him. Damned if I know what to do. If America had ratified the peace treaties things would be easier. But something may turn up. What do you think is the least they'd take, Jim?"

"The same old game," Bateson said with a shrug of disgust. "But perhaps you're prepared to do something? I see Freddy Smith's been over. Going to round on his Ulster friends? Set a slim 'un to catch the slim is a sound Georgian principle. I shouldn't be surprised, though, if L. G. has only given you a halter to hang yourselves. He sees you're played out and wants to creep back over your corpses to something with more promise of life. Your death bell's a-ringing, Phipps."

"I've been reading the report of the Convention—something might be done with that," Phipps said hazily. "Or the new Federal Commission?" he added with a sigh.

Bateson laughed. "The Convention helped you to trick America into the war. When you got her in you never even read the report. Try again, Rip Van Winkle. Good Lord, and you're going to settle the Irish question."

"What do you say, Jim?" Phipps said, ignoring Bateson with a frown of offended dignity.

"I've been telling you for over twenty years but you've never listened," Jim said quietly. "The beginning and end of the Irish question for you and your party was that

you had conquered Ireland and would do as you pleased with her. It wasn't for Irishmen to suggest anything—it was for you to decide what best suited your own purpose or convenience. That was the view of the English governing class down to the outbreak of the war. It wasn't the view of all Englishmen, thank God, but it was the view of those who pulled the strings and ruled. You held a big slice of the world and you were determined to stick to it. You never let go anywhere till you had to, and then only by as little as you could. In 1914 Germany challenged your position. She threatened to conquer you. But she also threatened to destroy liberty all over the world. Enough people wouldn't go into the war to put or keep you in power, but they would to defend liberty. So you had to go into the war, not to maintain your position as conquerors but to secure world liberty. That's how you got your armies together. That's what men died for. That's what the honour of England is pledged to."

"Pooh, pooh. Hyde Park oratory, Jim," Phipps said with a forced laugh.

"Don't waste your breath, Jim," Bateson said angrily. "They learn nothing and forget everything. Phipps and his breed came out of the war just as they went into it—mere party intriguers. They got us to fight for them, sneaked office while we were away, snatched an election before we got back, nobbled the Welsh evangelist to talk liberty while they practised tyranny, and now the fools think they're going to rule the roost till kingdom come."

"We are honourable men," Phipps said urbanely.

"The humour of it is that he believes it," Bateson said with a grimace.

"We must do something to clear up this mess in Ireland," Phipps said with a frown at Bateson.

"Clear out before you've disgraced your country," Bateson grunted.

"The only way to clear it up is to act on the principles on which you entered the war," Jim said quietly. "It's the honour of England against pre-war party politics now. Clear out your army of occupation and let Ireland decide for herself. It's that or holding the country by conquest."

"But surely there's a middle way—there are sane, reasonable, patriotic men in Ireland," Phipps said impressively.

Bateson laughed. "Sane, reasonable, patriotic," he echoed derisively. "Men who think like Phipps."

"There were many middle ways till you broke them down," Jim said patiently. "Almost any sort of Home Rule that didn't mean partition would have made Ireland friendly at the outbreak of the war. You chose to provoke a rebellion. Your cold-blooded shooting of the leaders threw the whole of Nationalist Ireland into the arms of Sinn Fein. If, instead of misleading your Ulster dupes you'd been in earnest about the Convention, you could possibly even then have imposed a settlement: Dominion Home Rule—making Ireland, say, as free as Canada—would have served. But instead you began the rake's progress. You promised Home Rule with your tongues in your cheeks and threatened conscription—a promise you never intended to fulfil, and a threat you were afraid to enforce. Well, you see the fruits of your work now. You've something like a hundred thousand troops in the country armed with tanks and field guns and aeroplanes. You're arming the police with hand grenades. You ask if there are any sane or moderate men in Ireland. There's hardly a Nationalist who doesn't think you insane or criminally wicked."

"Read the returns of crime," Phipps said indignantly.

"I've read 'em," Jim said grimly. "You're not even able to manufacture good propaganda. You exasperate a whole people to fury and then point triumphantly to the mur-

ders you provoked in justification of your policy. Sinn Fein and the Gaelic League and the Women's Organization you've suppressed are as incapable of murder as the Carlton Club—less so, since Ireland is the most crimeless country in Europe.”

“We must make 'em observe the law,” Phipps said firmly. “And the people were murdered.”

“It's notorious that some of these political crimes were acts of private vengeance,” Jim said with a shrug. “You were brought up with a sense of fair play, Phipps. The situation is as old as conquest. The effect of military tyranny is always lawlessness. Though you have won the war for freedom it's not necessary to take over all the methods of the Turk. These murders are deplorable, but the guilt is between the Government and the irresponsible people who committed them and not with the political groups whose reputation your propaganda is trying to blacken. You are blackening the good name of England and not Ireland. Sympathy didn't go to the Turk and the Austrian no matter how good their propaganda was. It's true you haven't descended to a general massacre yet,” he added bitterly.

His lip quivered, and he gazed past Phipps at a view of Chester. Phipps looked at him for a moment and said half apologetically :

“Damn it, Jim. It's all only politics.”

“Shut up, you ass,” Bateson said roughly. “And you needn't talk like a damned dull book, Jim. England's all right this time—it's Phipps's damned Government. It makes one almost ashamed of being an Englishman. But we'll turn 'em out. See if we don't. And then we'll have what we fought the war for. We'll have Ireland and England drinking out of the one glass before you know where you are.”

“Massacre was unfair—perhaps,” Jim said with a faint

smile. "You see it's not all what you call politics to me, Phipps. We're not politicians at all in Ireland in your sense of the word. I suppose because she's down she matters too much. It can't be a game even on the surface with us. We're particularists if you like to sneer at us. But then, you've got there. I was brought up as a child to hate you all indiscriminately. As a boy I said a hundred times that I'd fight the English when I grew up. Instead I went to Winchester and made friends with you both. Being Irish, I can throw off my thin veneer of reserve. I soon found that England wasn't all anti-Irish. It was made up of a great mass of people who hardly knew that Ireland existed, and of Phippses and Batesons—almost as many Batesons as Phippses. And the Phippses even I couldn't hate. I thought 'em wrong, but I could understand their point of view. The evil was that most Irishmen saw England as serried ranks of Phippses—not like our old stupid Phipps, Bateson, but as a malignant oppressive race that governed by hate. I was right in my view. But the Irish people at home were right, too; for the government they got was a government by malignant Phippses. It's a curse of conquest that even the Batesons—like Swift's bishops who, in crossing Hounslow Heath, were transformed into highwaymen—when in Dublin Castle have to wear the clothes and use the weapons of the worst of the Phippses. Not even a Bateson could be anything but a conqueror under the Union. My dream was that Ireland would one day see England as I saw it. That England would allow her to see it. And that England would see Ireland as I knew it to be. But this could never happen so long as they stood in the relation of conqueror and conquered—and conquered, too, only by persistent force, for Ireland has never admitted she was conquered and has always been in revolt, latent or open. It became a counting of heads with me. When the Batesons in England

outnumbered the Phippses, Ireland and England would at last be friends."

"What about the Ulster difficulty?" Phipps growled.

"The Ulster difficulty, or nine-tenths of it, was either an obsession or an invention of the Phippses, and would disappear with them," Jim said, with a wave of his hand.

He sighed, and went on in a dull monotone:

"Well, the war came, and the Phippses shouted liberty even more loudly than the Batesons. They condemned conquest and the idea of conquest. They nailed the flag of liberty to the mast and set off on the crusade for the salvation of the world."

"With the Jolly Roger hid up their sleeve," Bateson said drily. "Don't you worry, Jim, it's the last cruise of the pirates."

"I believed 'em," Jim continued tonelessly. "Redmond believed 'em. Dale, with all his cynicism, believed 'em. Thousands of Irishmen swallowed their distrust and went to their deaths through faith in Redmond. Well, Redmond is dead of a broken heart. Dale was riddled by shrapnel near Noyon. He was picked up by Reeve—one of your lot, Phipps—and lived long enough to have a last sneer at England. You remember that smiling sneer of his? Reeve told me he'd never felt so sick and ashamed in all his life. Poor old Dale."

He paused a moment, looked listlessly at his leg, and went on with a harsh laugh: "And now I'm going home to see Ireland rejoicing under liberty."

"You ignore the rebellion," Phipps said in an aggrieved tone.

"You didn't succeed in deceiving *them*," Jim said roughly.

"That's all right enough, but we have a case," Phipps said with a frown. "For our own protection we can't give up Ireland. She's necessary to our defence."

"The old excuse for conquest," Jim said drily. "And where's your League of Nations?"

"Oh, the League of Nations!" Phipps said with a shrug and a grin. "And our foreign policy is vital. We can't dream of letting 'em have that."

"You manage foreign policy so well," Jim said with a smile.

"And the police with the hand grenades?" Bateson sneered.

"Loyalists must have protection," Phipps said pompously.

"What are you going to do?" Jim asked carelessly.

"Give him time," Bateson said, fixing his rug. "He has never been in Ireland before, and he'll need at least a week-end to confirm the prejudices of a lifetime."

"We'll impose an equitable settlement," Phipps said in his best ministerial manner. "The Sinn Feiners won't meet us or discuss matters."

"That is, Ireland won't meet you. Well, after ignoring Ireland, what next?"

"There are the moderate men," Phipps said vaguely.

"As they exist only in your imagination, we'll let you have 'em," Bateson conceded graciously. "Well?"

"It goes without question that we can't coerce Ulster—some gentle persuasion, perhaps; but we must bear in mind the Two Nations. We'll be as fair as we can. We have to carry all England with us, and let the world, especially America, see that we mean to be just."

Bateson looked at his empty sleeve ruefully. "Are we back in 1914?" he said with a jeer. "I'm sometimes proud of being an Englishman. But I must admit that such damned drivel of self-complacency is only possible in an Englishman. Old Phipps was always a bit of a fool—that's why he's a minister—but of all the asinine——" he shook his head helplessly.

"You must know that you can't do it, Phipps," Jim said

with a return to some of his old eagerness. "Apart altogether from the betrayal of the ideal for which we went into the war, the thing is foolish. You can't impose a settlement—and such a settlement—on a country against its will. Especially on Ireland, on whom you've never been able to impose anything."

"They don't want a settlement. They want to repeal the existing Home Rule Act and make Southern Ireland a Crown Colony. Their peace is Partition, Coercion and Re-conquest," Bateson said derisively.

The ministerial veil descended on Phipps's eyes. "Nothing is decided," he said shortly.

"England isn't mad," Jim said to Bateson with a shrug.

"Only the Government. They're drunk with the delusion that they've won the war. It's not Ireland only. They're straddling ineptly all over the world. An old Admiral has said at least one wise thing—sack the lot."

"We've four years yet," Phipps said complacently.

"Give you four to one against it," Bateson said airily. "Making peace in Ireland on your lines would diddle you in a month. You couldn't do it with double your present army of occupation, gas masks, bombs, hand grenades, tanks, and all your other fertilizers of liberty. But, by Jove," he added after a pause, with a grimace, "I'd better hedge. You have a chance. If it became a question between Ireland and office, George'd make it a Dominion—a Republic even—rather than quit."

Phipps scowled and settled himself into his corner with pursed lips and tightly shut eyes.

"If you were an Irishman you'd be sick of all this juggling," Jim growled to Bateson.

"I'm sick of it as it is. So, I believe, are the majority of Englishmen. But we must make 'em sicker," Bateson said savagely.

3.

The Dublin coast line that had smiled so often on Jim was grey and apathetic as he stood by the gangway, impatient of the slow entry of the boat into Kingstown harbour. The soldiers who thronged the fore-deck had donned steel helmets and all the accoutrement of instant battle.

"A hostile landing?" Jim asked.

"Hush," Bateson said gravely. "Phipps is the dove of peace. They're his escort. You mustn't think there's an unusual number of soldiers in Ireland—it's merely a good training ground for an army in peace time. So the Chief Secretary told an American journalist. A Chief Secretary is always an honourable man noted for truth telling. He's Phipps's colleague, and he's to be his mentor on the whole truth about Ireland. The soldiers are only a pledge of good feeling. Hope they'll have a tank to meet you, Phipps."

On the landing stage, however, were only a smiling official, a group of obnoxious detectives, and a background of more soldiers in trench helmets, armed with rifles and fixed bayonets.

Bateson firmly declined a seat in Phipps's motor car.

"Good-bye, old man," he said genially. "Jim and I have still some shred of reputation left—we don't want to lose it."

When Phipps had driven off, with two attendant motor cars, there was a long wait while the train was being loaded with military baggage.

"What papers have you?" Jim asked a news vendor.

"There's one or two that isn't suppressed," he said with a grin. "So you're in luck to-day, your honour. If it was to-morrow now, there mightn't be one at all. It's an itch

they have on them for disturbing people, the poor creatures," he added with a contemptuous leer at the soldiers.

There were soldiers at Westland Row Station. Soldiers lounged in the streets leading to the hotel. At breakfast at the Shelbourne the tables were mostly occupied by officers.

A boyish-looking major of about twenty-four, with several wound stripes, jumped up hastily and came towards Jim's table, his hand extended, and shouted "Jim Daly."

"Stephen Edwardes," Jim said gladly after a moment's pause.

"Have only a minute," Stephen said, taking a seat. "Got to prevent the Sinn Fein Parliament meeting to-day. They've suppressed it, you know. Damned if I know what they haven't suppressed. But the rebs have the laugh on us every time. I'm about getting fed up with it. The war was a clean job, but this——" he made a wry face.

"We're doing our best to drive 'em into another rebellion," he added with a gravity that was new to Jim. "We rounded up thirty-five men the other day who hadn't done a damned thing, and they're in Mountjoy jail this minute—handcuffed in their cells, by God. Why, we never did that to the Germans! And Dan Sugrue is in jail on suspicion of shooting a policeman! Dan Sugrue murder a peeler in the dark! He's just as likely to murder his own young son!"

"Perhaps good may come of it if it has made all the Covenanters feel like you," Jim said.

"Oh, nothing'd stop 'em gibbering in Belfast," Stephen said with disgust. "But I'm out of all that tosh. I've had too much of the real thing. Believe me, very few of the men who've been out'll ever dress up for Carson again. But I must be off on this sickening job. See you again—don't be surprised if you see me a Sinn Feiner one day—there's a limit to what a man can stand of this," he muttered as he waved a good-bye.

"That's illuminating," Bateson said.

Jim laughed. "Stephen is hardly a type. Many of the more stalwart Covenanters are having a go at Sinn Fein now under cover of the King's uniform. The whole of Ulster, I believe, is ruled by Carson's chief of staff. That's the Government's way of promoting peace in Ireland. However, Stephen's attitude is hopeful—he's not the only decent man in Ulster. Let's go and see how they suppress the meeting."

They strolled round towards the Mansion House. Except for an unusual number of policemen and soldiers, the streets were much as Jim remembered them. There were amused smiles on the faces of some of the passers-by. A nursemaid wheeling a pram in Stephen's Green, shouted, "Sold again," to a passing detachment of steel-helmeted soldiers.

Along the pavement on either side of the Mansion House were massed large bodies of troops. A cordon was drawn round the open space in front of the broad steps. Jim and Bateson stood on the opposite pavement among a group of grinning spectators. Anyone who tried to enter the Mansion House was challenged.

"There's De Lacey," Jim said, pointing to a bearded man in spectacles approaching the cordon.

"You're a member of Parliament—you can't go in," a soldier said.

"I wish to see the Lord Mayor on Corporation business—I'm an Alderman," De Lacey said quietly.

"No go, you know," a second lieutenant said with a confident laugh. "The lid is tight on the meeting of the suppressed Parliament."

Jim and Bateson had come near. De Lacey turned and saw them.

"You'll be able to tell them in England, Mr. Bateson, of the efficiency of their Government," he said with a tired smile. "How are you, Daly? I was up all night," he said,

raising his voice for the benefit of the listening soldiers. "The meeting these poor devils are here to suppress broke up at three this morning, and most of the members are now on their way home. All Dublin knows it except the Government."

"Tell that to the Marines," the young officer said with an uneasy laugh.

De Lacey shrugged his shoulders and turned away with Jim and Bateson. "It's an impossible situation," he said, as they walked towards Nassau Street, "for them," he added with a smile. "They have only one choice. They can put Ireland to fire and sword—they'll have to kill by the thousand, and even then those that are left will breed again—or else give us what we want."

"What do you want?" Bateson asked.

"Good faith first. You can't overawe us with tanks and poison gas; nor with accusations of murder and burglary and larceny. The only crime we're guilty of is the determination to make Irishmen as free in Ireland as Englishmen are in England. If England thinks that a crime then she has been mouthing lies to the world for the last five years. However, it's not my business to make England logical. Until her actions in Ireland bear some relation to her professions of political principle, it is our duty to make her Government ridiculous and impossible. We are doing it and we will go on doing it."

"You would be friends?" Bateson asked.

"To-morrow," De Lacey said with emphasis. "Only remember this: you're not able to make us friends by force. Much less can you make us friends by chicanery. You tried that once too often. The men in Ireland who are bitterest against you to-day are not the men who fought against you in the rebellion, but the men who fought with you in the war. You've only to look around you to see why. But I must go in here."

He waved a hand with a smile and went into a bookshop.

"When will God open our eyes?" Bateson said moodily. "It's heartbreaking, Jim. Phipps and Co.—good Lord! A stupid Government is the greatest scourge of God. I believe this war has meant something overwhelming to us—that England has found her soul. Yet we have a Government that rules with more than the cynicism of Walpole, degraded by hypocrisy of which he couldn't be accused. Is the war and what we fought for all a delusion? Have we the Government we deserve, and are De Lacey and all these people right in thinking us liars and hypocrites and tyrants?"

A tank followed by a squad of soldiers in trench helmets slowly lumbered up the street.

"Damnation," Bateson said wrathfully, averting his eyes as it passed.

"Do you still believe in us, Jim?" he asked, after a long pause.

"It's hard to keep one's faith, but I do. In an England invisible here—that, perhaps, doesn't exist," Jim said, staring at the tank.

"Let's go back to the hotel," Bateson said with a note of resolution in his voice. "I'm going back to London tonight to raise a fiery cross. This is not a question of Ulster, or of England and Ireland. It's a question of the honour and good name of England. We can never hold up our heads in the world again if we allow this thing to go on. It's not a matter of pressure from America or unholy pledges to Orange politicians or a party deal or saving our face before the world. It's whether England has a conscience, whether she has any thought for her honour and her word, for right and justice, for fair play, for the principles for which Englishmen shed their blood in the war; or is to go down to history faithless and dishonoured."

Bateson's words rang in Jim's ears through the night, and above the noise of the train as he travelled to Lisgeela next morning. Bateson was right. If he could only prevail—and he must prevail. England had given too many martyrs to liberty not to think clearly at last. . . .

A brilliant sun lit up the brown of the bogs, the yellowing trees, the red earth of the fields turned up by the plough. It glanced on the ploughshares, and glittered on the bayonets of soldiers on the march beyond a hedge. . . .

Diana was right. She had not fought against the England that loved liberty passionately. If one looked into the heart of things she had fought for it. For she had fought against that last remnant of tyranny which still darkened the soul of England. . . .

At Ballybawn Junction there were soldiers, open-faced, bronzed, and laughing. The old porter scowled at them as he trundled Jim's luggage as close as he dared to their toes.

"One of them devils killed a man, and they put it down on us," he said in a dull tone.

Soldiers lounged about the platform at Lisgeela. Father Lysaght met Jim at the carriage door.

"It's all a bad business—a bad business," he said sadly, as he wrung Jim's hand. "Come here, Mulcahy. Be quick and attend to Mr. Daly's things," he called out to the red-headed porter.

Mulcahy gave a sour look at Jim's stiff leg and passed on to attend to another passenger.

"That's what comes of your fighting for the English," the priest said whimsically. "But come on. I want you to come up the town with me. We'll send in Durkan to look after the things."

"What's become of the market? Isn't this the October fair?" Jim asked, looking round the deserted approach to the station and at the empty cattle siding.

"Sure it is. But not a fair or market can we hold.

They'd be an illegal assembly. That's what I want you to hurry for. Con Driscoll was talking to three or four men on the street half an hour ago, and they've arrested him for it. The whole life of the place is held up. What does the Latin say about God sending people mad that He has a mind to destroy? I wouldn't doubt if the end of the English was at hand for they've gone clean off their heads. Run in, Durkan," he said to the driver, as they approached Jim's car, "and gather up Mr. Jim's things and pick us up at the police barracks. And take care that you're not caught talking with four people at once, for that makes a felon of you, and these idle peelers," with a glance at the blushing policemen at the station door, "'d be glad to get some work to do, and might land you in jail. And let us come away now to the barracks," he added, taking Jim's arm excitedly. "Between the both of us we might be able to make Inspector Foley see some sense and let Con Driscoll out."

He almost dragged Jim along. "If we don't hurry they might motor him off to jail. And there might be a riot or something and people shot. For the best part of my life I've striven to keep order in this town, and now the Government is putting it beyond me. A policeman was shot near here. I abhor the crime; but what can you expect under military rule? Soldiers and peelers break into thousands of houses every week and breed crime in the name of the law. The Government seems bent on blackening Sinn Fein and jailing innocent men. So the whole district is proclaimed and put under martial law. The whole place is at sixes and sevens. The people are exasperated to the last limit, and the soldiers and police are in the same state. What'll happen, God only knows. All my life, Jim, I've kept out of politics, but in my old age I'm sorely tempted to take a hand agin a Government that could be guilty of such a crime agin God and man."

A detachment of soldiers was drawn up in front of the white and black police barracks. The steel shutters were in place in front of the windows. Two policemen with rifles guarded the door. No difficulty was made about allowing the priest and Jim to enter, and they were shown at once into the inspector's office.

"Bad luck about your leg, Daly," Foley said briskly, shaking hands.

"Think of that now, and me never thinking of it. I'm very sorry, Jim," Father Lysaght said with an affectionate look. "But it shows how ye all have disturbed my mind, Mr. Foley. What about Con Driscoll and the other poor men you have arrested?"

"What about 'em?" Foley said with a defensive grin.

"You know they're as innocent of any crime as we are," the priest said indignantly.

"They broke the law," Foley said firmly.

"You know that that law ought never to have been put in force here," the priest said with a keen look. "You know as well as I do why Gage was shot?"

Foley shrugged his shoulders. "My dear Father James, the Lord Lieutenant has proclaimed the district. It's not for me to question his acts. There's the law and I've got to obey it."

"But you have some discretion in enforcing it? To arrest Con Driscoll of all men—who all his life stood out against crime of any kind!"

"His son was one of the leaders of the rebellion—shot for it," Foley said drily.

"Father and son might differ," the priest said sternly. "The day his son was shot, Con was fighting the Germans on the side of the English. He spent four years at it and was wounded twice."

"I know all that. It will no doubt tell in his favour when he comes before the R.M. It's my business to arrest

him if he breaks the law—extenuating circumstances are for the court to consider.”

“They were only discussing the price of a beast,” the priest said helplessly.

“They were breaking the law,” Foley said in a tone of finality.

Jim laughed. Foley looked at him suspiciously.

“What’s the joke?” he said sharply.

“It’s too long and intricate to explain,” Jim said with a smile. “And it’s as wide as the British Empire. You know perhaps that Driscoll is a cousin of mine. May I see him?”

“Oh,” Foley said wrinkling his brow and pursing his lips. “Well, I can see no harm in that. You are loyal anyhow.”

Jim shrugged his shoulders, a faint smile struggling on his lips. Foley touched a bell and instructed the policeman who answered it to show Mr. Daly to the prisoner Driscoll’s cell.

Jim followed the policeman across the hall, through the guardroom with its gleaming, sandpapered white deal furniture. Two men in handcuffs sat on a form in front of the fire. Half a dozen policemen were lounging about the room or reading newspapers at the table.

“Driscoll is in one of the cells,” the policeman said apologetically. “We had to separate ’em or maybe it’s an ‘illegal meeting’ they’d be holding under our nose.”

He took a key off the whitewashed wall, hung with rifles, and led the way through a paved corridor at the back. He unlocked a door and said:

“A visitor to see you.”

By the faint light of a small window near the ceiling Jim could make out the outlines of a figure lying on a narrow bench at the back of the cell.

“Why, it’s Jim Daly that’s in it,” he heard in Con Driscoll’s voice, as the rug-blanket was pitched on to the floor,

and Con struggled to his feet, impeded by his manacled hands.

"I'll wait for you in the corridor," the policeman said shamefacedly, retiring and shutting the door behind him.

"There isn't a seat to offer you beyond the board-bed I was lying on, but sure we can sit there," Con said apologetically as he completed a difficult handshake.

"This is too bad," Jim said angrily as they sat down.

"There's no loss in it," Con said thoughtfully. "The crops are all in but the swedes, and a touch of frost, if it comes itself, won't harm them. It isn't for long they can keep me locked up for this, and it'll reinstate me in the good opinion of the neighbours. Some of 'em used to look black enough at me since I came back from the war. But a while in jail'll give me back my character. And it's well I deserved to lose it for being such a fool as to believe in the English. But the jail'll make me clean again. I'd be thankful to you if you'd take a look in on Sally and Molly Jordan and give 'em what comfort you can. Mike's death tells hard on the both of them still, and they might be a little upset over this."

"Poor Mike," Jim muttered.

"I try to keep the thought of him from me, but it's no use, Jim. I wouldn't mind if they killed him in fair fight. But to take him out and shoot him in cold blood agin a wall! The first I heard of it was from a piece of newspaper that I wrapped my dinner in, and I in the front trench. It flustered me like and they had to take me to the hospital I was that light in my head. Captain Dale came to see me—it's a sad man he'd be to be alive this day—and he tried to make me see that it was the doing of some mad general or other, and that I wasn't to hold all the English to account for the doings of one fool. It was hard doctrine, but I tried to bow my head to it for the sake of Ireland. They offered to let me home on leave, but I couldn't face Sally

and Molly Jordan while the memory of how Mike was shot was fresh in them. For two years and a half after that I did my best to help to free the world. And when they said we'd set it free I came home to all this."

He held up his hands and rattled the chain of his handcuffs.

"Was it a will o' the wisp that we were following out there after all, Jim?" he said with a puzzled frown. "And they were so much in earnest. Sometimes I think it must be a nightmare is on me, for it's hard to believe that the same men who carried freedom to the Belgians, and the rest, can be giving the lie to themselves here. The Lord Lieutenant going across to England and calling us assassins! It's what the Germans used to do when they wanted an excuse for murdering innocent people."

The door opened and a policeman said that Father Lysaght was waiting. Jim was glad of the interruption, for he didn't know what to say to Con. There was nothing to say.

"You'll go and give a word of comfort to Sally and Molly?" Con said again in a dull voice, "and maybe the neighbours'd give them a hand while I'm gone from them. Glory be to God it's a bitter bringing up He's giving to them two young childre of Mike's."

The priest was waiting at the barrack door.

"Your mother asked me out to lunch, but I can't go," he said with a worried frown. "I can't leave the town. The Government is kindling a flame they'll never be able to put out. Flesh and blood can hardly stand it, but I must stay here and try and get the people to keep the law of God, anyway. Though how the good God Himself stands this sort of thing is a mystery."

Jim drove through the town with a set face. Small detachments of soldiers and policemen paraded the streets. At almost every door stood one or more of the occupants of

the houses with sullen, expectant faces. A boy trundled a hoop along the almost deserted main street, but stopped opposite the Post Office, to stare at a woman standing on the edge of the pavement. Jim slowed down as soldiers approaching on one side of the street and the boy on the other blocked his way. He brought the car to a standstill with a jerk, and lifted his eyes to meet a smile, half cynical, half questioning, on the blushing face of Diana.

"You can walk, Durkan," he said; "I'll take Miss Scovell home."

Durkan jumped off with a grin.

"Even with Durkan, we shouldn't be an illegal assembly," she said drily. "You could let down the seat behind."

"I could, but I won't. Get in, Diana," he said resolutely.

"They have arrested Con Driscoll. I must see Father Lysaght," she said irresolutely.

"I've seen both of them. Nothing can be done. It's all damnable," he said angrily.

"Jim?" she said breathlessly, her eyes glowing.

"I've come home for good. Whatever my work is, it is here. Get in, Diana," he said, holding open the door.

She took her seat beside him, nestling up close as he drove slowly towards the Tubber road.

"I believe this is only a last fit of madness before sanity," he said, nodding towards a camp on the fair green.

"You dear old Jim," she said happily.

"Bateson says——"

"I don't want to hear what Bateson says," she said, putting her hand on his as they cleared the last straggling house. "It's what you do. You've come back. I don't believe in miracles. Yet, who knows?" she added dreamily. "Faith in England that can survive the last five years may bring any miracle. I love you, Jim."

He put his arm round her and kissed her upturned lips. She clung to him passionately.

"You don't know what it is," she said, releasing him as the car swerved.

"Don't I?" he said with a happy laugh.

"When I thought they were going to shoot me, and again when I was sentenced for life," she said as if to herself, "it wasn't of death I thought, or imprisonment, or of Ireland even, but of you. And death was easier to face than the life sentence. It meant a shortening of the intolerable longing."

"Then why didn't you marry me when you came out?" he said bewildered.

She laughed happily. "With death near me there was only you in the whole world. But when I got outside the jail gate there was England again, and you seemed to be England to me—then. Now—well, now your eyes are open. Or is it only half open? Anyhow, enough to marry on. Hullo. There's your mother and your grandfather at the gate. Has she told you that he thinks you were away fighting the English?" she said mischievously.

"Perhaps I was," he said grimly. "And I believe I've won."

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