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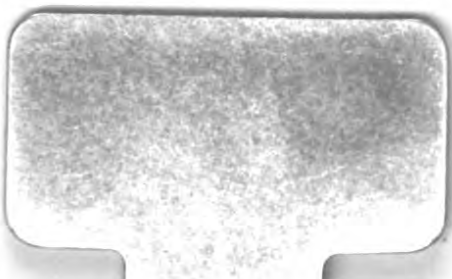


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THE
POPULAR
IDOL



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THE POPULAR IDOL.

A Novel.

BY

WILLIAM MACKAY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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THE POPULAR IDOL.



CHAPTER I.

THE SUSPECTED MAN.

AT six o'clock the next morning a farm-labourer going to work discovered the body lying in the lane. He at once recognised the features of the deceased, turned very pale, crossed himself repeatedly, muttered a charm or two, and ran off to give the alarm at The Lodge. The servants were up, for McTavish was a master who

insisted on early hours: but none of them had missed his hat and stick from the hall. All supposed that he had retired to bed as usual, and would come down stairs as the clock struck seven. They could not believe this farm-labourer. Even when McFarlan discovered that the bed-room was empty and that the bed had not been slept in, he refused to credit the awful story. It was too horrible.

But it was too true. Followed by the groom and the gardener, McFarlan followed the man who had brought the intelligence. And there lay the body. Stiff and motionless, with the appealing face turned towards heaven. Poor McFarlan's distress was genuine. The first tears that he had shed since childhood fell upon the face of his dead master now. He stood silent for some moments, his eyes fixed upon the remains.

Then he turned round to the men and gave his opinion as to what was best to be done. *He* was for removing the body at once. But the groom wouldn't hear of such a course.

This groom was a very sharp fellow, and had lived in cities before he had entered McTavish's service. He could give the straight tip about coming events, and used to haunt the public part of criminal courts when out of a job. *He* was for leaving the body just as it was, until a magistrate saw it, or a coroner. But McFarlan stooping down and touching the clothes of the dead man, which were damp with the night's vapours, swore that he wouldn't leave the body there another instant, no! not for all the magistrates and coroners in Christendom.

McFarlan's will was paramount. Still the

groom must have his way to a certain extent. Let them observe the position of the body themselves, he suggested, in order that they might be able to assist the coroner and the magistracy. They would no doubt be called upon to give evidence. They were bound by every consideration to regard all the surrounding circumstances very carefully. Then with great precision and with an evident interest in the work, he pointed out the position of the body, whether the head was nearer to the wall or to the hedge, how many paces from the centre of the lane it was. Then he pointed out the wound and the blood, deciding that the shot had been fired from "on in front," and that the bullet had "struck sideways."

The latter conclusion was arrived at not so much from an examination of the wound

itself, as from the fact that a hedge ran along the side of the lane. Given a murdered body in an Irish lane with a hedge, then 'tis a hundred chances to one the murderer fired from behind the thicket. Thus the groom argued to himself, talking learnedly about the direction of the wound.

"Houd yer jaw, maun," cried McFarlan, "I canna thole yer prate. Will nane o' ye stap his mouth?"

The groom, indeed, was not suffering from so great a grief as McFarlan, nor did the presence of death awe him much. At that moment he was thinking of the important figure he would cut at the inquest, in the box before the magistrates, in the more important box at the assizes.

And yet at heart this groom wasn't a

bad fellow. His "straight tips" were sometimes not all that could be desired by those paying for them. And the eternal dark horse that he predicted, rarely if ever came to light. But he was by no means a heartless man, and was proverbially kind to women and children, and dumb animals. McFarlan couldn't bear to see the alacrity which he displayed under the circumstances, and shuddered at the brisk manner in which, having called the attention of all to what he termed important particulars, he said, "An' now nothin' remains but to catch the man that fired," as if that were quite a secondary and simple enterprise as compared with the observations just made by himself. The four men lifted the body from the ground and carried it in silence to The Lodge. They laid it in the whitewashed room on the basement, where the three forms

were and the engraving of Calvin's death. Then they closed the door on it.

It is useless now to trace the way in which the news spread. Before twelve in the day there was not a soul in Ballymareen, or its vicinity, that had not heard of it, and the "Eagle" promised a second edition at two o'clock, giving the fullest and latest particulars. The news caused intense excitement.

It may be true that when a landlord is murdered in Ireland popular sympathy is with the murderer. All I can say is that I was in that country when the news of this outrage was noised abroad, and everywhere I heard it denounced as horrible and cold-blooded. Crowds clustered round the portals of the Town Hall, where the magistrates were in earnest consultation; and the little

editor at the "Eagle" office, almost recovered from his recent attack, was besieged for scraps of information. Down by the cliff the excitement was even greater than in the town, and great sympathy was expressed for "the nephew," and the simple people wondered who would break the news to him.

At the appointed hour the second edition of the "Eagle" appeared, and was eagerly bought up. The fullest and latest particulars which it had promised, however, were found to be very meagre; indeed, the "Eagle" merely gave an account of the finding of the body, suggesting in a leading paragraph that such a crime could not have been committed by any one connected with the town, and that it was no doubt the work of an alien vagrant whose object was booty.

They had the electric telegraph in Ballymareen, and early in the morning the magistrates had communicated with the authorities in Dublin Castle. The telegram was opened by a minor authority. The minor authority shrugged his shoulders. When after some hours the chief appeared, *he* glanced at the telegram. He shrugged his shoulders too.

“Shall I wire a reply?” said the minor authority to his chief.

“Oh, no!” answered the chief authority, yawning, “write to them by this evening’s post; usual thing, recommend activity, and tell them that the Government will consider the advisability of offering a reward for the capture of the criminal, or for such information, etcetera—you understand.”

In due course the magistrates received this

reply, and were very much incensed. The O'Banagher threatened to bring the matter under the attention of the House. He never did.

The news got as far as London that day. The placard of the "Evening Globe" appearing in the office window announced in large capitals,

ANOTHER AGRARIAN MURDER IN IRELAND.

And as pedestrians, going along the Strand, read the advertisement, they too shrugged their shoulders. If the bill had told of "Another murder in St. Giles's," or "Half a dozen fresh brutal assaults in White-chapel," the intelligent Londoner would *not* have shrugged his shoulders; but this "potting" of Irish landowners was really such a very common occurrence, that one musn't exhibit surprise or indignation.

One shrugs one's shoulders and passes on.

In Ballymareen, however, there was considerable agitation. And the question starting to every lip was:—Who fired the shot?

For a solution of the question one naturally looked to the police. So the constabulary turned out and began searching the country for fire-arms. No doubt a most admirable plan for detecting the criminal, considering that there was hardly a peasant for miles round that hadn't a gun or pistol in his possession. Evidently, however, the honest fellows must do *something*.

The Royal Irish Constabulary has often been eulogised in the House of Commons and elsewhere, as a force composed of very able and intelligent men. The public press has endorsed these statements, thinking

that as a force it might possibly be a little more efficiently officered. But it is perhaps well to bear in mind that the Irish Constabulary is not a police, but a semi-military force. The men composing it have never graduated as thief-catchers. Indeed they know nothing about that trade. And if their scent for a criminal is not keen, and if they usually fail in the exercise of their detective functions, do not blame them, and do not be over-ready in accusing the natives of secreting the missing offenders, but blame the Official Asses who set soldiers to do policemen's tasks; who despatch men with rifles to catch a thief.

The police of Ballymareen turned out to catch McTavish's murderer. And they shook their heads and looked very wise, and said and did a number of things which will not be recorded against them in these

pages. It is sufficient to say that had the detection of the murderer depended on their sagacity, that criminal would be at large at the present moment.

The consternation caused in Fitzgerald's family by the sad news, was naturally very considerable. On Kate, particularly, it had a marked effect. She was weak and nervous, and fainted off when the intelligence was brought to her. When the first horror passed away, her mind naturally reverted to the nephew of the murdered man. She felt for him under this sudden bereavement. Pity was taking the place of the anger which she had been feeling towards him. Oh! that he should ever have done anything to forfeit her love. It ought to be her's now to break the tidings to him, to console, to comfort him. But there were

others, no doubt, whose consolations were dearer to him.

Notwithstanding the fond assurances of her father, she could never forget what she saw near Sheehan's cottage. Did those glances, that nestling to his side, that easy familiarity mean nothing? She couldn't believe it. She pondered bitterly on that scene, hiding the secret in her heart. Still in presence of this awful calamity she felt softened towards him, and had he come to her at that moment in trouble and penitent, it is possible that she would have forgiven everything. But there is hardly a breath of wind on the sea, and the herring-smack that has just left Cork Harbour, ploughs slowly and wearily over the waters, and so the golden opportunity is missed.

Mr. Fitzgerald having called up his de-

cision and common sense, and other magisterial attributes, was confident of the speedy arrest of the fugitive wretch who had committed the awful crime. The O'Banagher, too, had expressed a firm conviction that the efforts of the police would be crowned with success. Indeed, it was the unanimous opinion of the magistrates assembled in the Town Hall that the constabulary would soon ferret out this skulking malefactor, and having given notice that a Reward of Fifty Pounds sterling would be given to the individual giving such information as would lead to the apprehension of the murderer, they left the matter, (Heaven help us!) to the police.

On Tuesday morning there was an inquest. Nothing particular was elicited from the witnesses. The first called was the farm-labourer who found the body. After him

came the groom, who quite won the hearts of the jurymen by the almost professional ability which he displayed in describing the position of the body and the nature of the wound. After him came the surgeon; the jury, however, didn't place much importance on his testimony, as he differed from the groom in his description of the wound.

The jury had every reliance in the *bonâ fides* of the groom, who was a man of the world and spoke to them in a way that a Christian could understand. This young surgeon, on the other hand, wasn't twenty-six years of age, and had a very off-hand and conceited manner of giving evidence. It was too bad that a young fellow like him should be allowed to contradict a person of years and experience like the groom, just because he happened to have a Latin word

or two at the tip of his tongue. Much to the delight of his brother jurors, the foreman proceeded to let this witness down a peg or two, as he called it, by cross-examining him. He went a little too far, however, for happening to ask him,

“On your oath now, Sir, did ye iver take out yer diplomy?” the coroner cut him short and administered a stinging reprimand into the bargain.

The gatekeeper then deposed to his last interview with the master. And McFarlan repeated the conversation that had taken place in the dining-room. That was all the evidence that could be put before the jury. The intelligent twelve then viewed the body. The coroner charged. After a great amount of bickering and dissension, and exchange of personalities that threatened to result in

hand-to-hand encounters, the jury brought in a verdict of Wilful Murder against some person or persons unknown, and being discharged, slunk off to their respective cabins, leaving the question of who fired the fatal shot exactly where they found it.

That afternoon, however, a clue was discovered. And the magistrates sitting in secret conclave in the Town Hall, were delighted to find that the clue had been obtained by a policeman. It justified their confidence in the constabulary as a detective force.

The constable in question had come by his information accidentally. It had been volunteered by a mendicant over a glass of whisky in a public house. This mendicant was one of the few strangers that had been induced by McFarlan with promises of

refreshment to attend the Sunday evening service at The Lodge. He had got a glass of ale and a hunk of bread in the kitchen, and had left the premises about nine o'clock, he wasn't sure about the hour, but it was "there or thereabouts;" he was prepared to swear to that by the five Crosses. He passed the end of the lane, walking down the road, and he saw a man in a long cloak slinking along by the hedge. It was an "ould" man, he could see that by the hair on the back of his head, which was grey; was quite prepared to swear that he was an "ould" man in a long cloak, and that he was "slinking." That was how he came to notice him. If he hadn't been "slinking," he wouldn't have seen him at all probably. He had always had a great objection to "slinking" himself, and regarded persons who adopted that mode of pro-

gression with distrust. Had never "slunk" himself; had never been in jail; was an honest beggar, and had never visited Ballymareen before. Didn't know any of the inhabitants. But would know the man he had seen in the lane if he saw him again. He couldn't be mistaken.

This was the substance of the evidence given by the honest mendicant to the constable over a glass of whisky, and afterwards to the sub-inspector sitting in the police barracks. The sub-inspector described the appearance of a man, and asked him if that tallied at all with the appearance of the individual in the cloak that he had noticed on Sunday night. Sure it was his born image. If the man that his honour described, and the man in the cloak weren't one and the same, the "divil was in it;" that was all the mendicant could say.

He was ordered not to leave the town, as his evidence might be wanted at the trial. A constable conducted him upstairs, where he was caused to feel very uncomfortable by being placed in a room that was scrupulously clean.

The police would not have paid much attention to this gentleman's testimony, had it not corresponded with a scrap of documentary evidence which they had discussed that morning, but had dismissed as absurd. McFarlan had discovered in his master's wastepaper basket the portions of a threatening letter. He had placed the pieces together and given them to the authorities. The letter was dated Saturday, and was duly signed by the writer.

The description which the sub-inspector had repeated to the mendicant was the description of the man who's name was to

the foot of that document. Evidently the individual who penned and dispatched the threatening letter to the murdered man, was the same who had been seen "slinking" along the lane a short time before murder took place. The O'Banagher thought that this was very slight evidence on which to issue a warrant. But Fitzgerald thought differently. And the majority agreed with Fitzgerald. The warrant was signed and handed back to the police.

But the news of the warrant had preceded the bearers of it, and when they came to search the house of the suspected man he was not to be found in it. Every dwelling in Ballymareen and about it was searched. But the suspected man was not in any of them. Whatever doubt might have existed in the magisterial mind as to the guilt

of the suspected man was quite dispelled by his sudden and mysterious disappearance.

CHAPTER II.

“IN THE BLOWN WET FACE OF THE SEA.

AS night fell, a fresh wind sprang up, the tide going out in its teeth. The sea moaned, and small but angry waves dashed up like the quick palpitating of an angry bosom. The clouds moved swiftly across the dark face of the heavens. Not a dangerous night to be out in, but an unpleasant one. As the herring-smack rose

and dropped quickly, and as the salt spray fell in showers over his glittering mackintosh, Edgehill thought it a very unpleasant night, and considered it a great hardship that he should experience such difficulty in keeping his cigar alight.

But he was full of hopeful anticipations. Change of scene had raised his spirits. He had begun to adopt the cheerful view of the case which Fitzgerald and his uncle had propounded. If he had to go through it all again, he thought, he wouldn't run away as he had done. After all, his conduct was quite susceptible of explanation. He should have gone directly to Kate and related his own version of the case candidly, keeping nothing back. He began to regard himself as having displayed a most reprehensible timidity. He felt con-

fident that by the time he reached shore the cloud would have passed away. To-morrow would witness his re-instatement.

He was in excellent spirits. While the fishermen had remained at Queenstown he had gone on to Cork—"the birth-place of Maclise, by Jove." It was a jolly old place, he considered. He had listened with great interest to,

"The bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters of the River Lee,"

and had purchased a copy of Father Prout's Reliques at a book-shop on the Grand Parade, as a souvenir of his visit. He had also gone into the establishment of a jeweller in Patrick Street, where he

selected one of the handsomest bracelets in the whole shop.

He had these trophies concealed about his person, as he stood by the side of the rough old seaman who was steering. The other men were at their posts. One looking out at the bow. The other standing by the mast ready to take in sail, should a sudden necessity arise.

The man who steered was a representative of the good old times, when smuggling was not looked on as a heinous offence by the gentry whose estates were bounded on the south by the sea. In his young days he had done a good bit of that sort of work, running out wool and running in brandy under the very bows of the revenue-cutters. He had many yarns to spin of that happy period, and regretted, poor old fellow, that there were no such

excitements to cheer the winter of his existence.

To these narratives Edgehill gave ear, spinning in return yarns about London and Paris to which the skipper listened earnestly, being like all of us, easily interested in the unknown.

The coast was in sight, at least, to the practised eyes of the mariner's it was visible, though to Edgehill's, hidden as yet. They were on the look-out for the Ballymareen light. When that beacon smote a path through the night they would welcome it, for the men were drenched with the angry spray of this chopping sea, and anticipated with eager fancy the turf-fires in the cottages, and the allowance of hot grog before turning in for the night.

They spoke in disrespectful terms of the unlooked-for breeze that had torn the

surface of the sea and retarded their progress. What if their wives were in bed, and there waited for them no burning turf — no hot grog! They had been whistling for a breeze all day, but not for a breeze coming straight on to their bows.

At last they made out the light. The ship was put about. With dipping gunwale she sped towards it, as if conscious of the not distant haven. This sudden alacrity was checked, however. It is dangerous to run headlong upon a coast, no matter how friendly. So the mainsail was lowered, just as the lights in the cottage-windows were seen to twinkle through the darkness.

Near the entrance of the creek they were passed by an outward-bound smack. They exchanged signals and attempted to

exchange words with it, but the wind was too strong, the roar of the waves too clamorous and the outward bound passed quickly away. Edgehill observed in the stern of the departing vessel a figure which was not that of a sailor, and fancied that its face was turned suddenly away as the boats came in sight of each other. But the night was dark, the smack distant, the glance momentary. No doubt he only fancied that he saw.

Now they had made the creek. The jetty was in sight, with lights reflected on the wet planks, and men waiting for their arrival. But Edgehill's attention was principally attracted by a figure that stood upon the extreme end of the structure, with face turned towards the face of the sea. It was a woman's figure, and an uncommonly fine one too, covered from head to foot with a

blue cloak, the hood of which was drawn about her face.

The jib was lowered and the smack slid quietly up to the side of the jetty. The men that waited put their lanterns down and shouted "heave off," on which ropes were flung to them from fore and aft, and made fast in the iron rings. With a cheery word to each Edgehill sprang ashore. He stretched his cramped limbs, shook the spray from off his oil-skin hat, and then having time to gratify his curiosity, turned to where the woman stood looking out on to the angry waters. He approached the woman to get a nearer view. He was within a pace or two of where she stood, when she, too, having a curiosity to gratify, also turned. She threw the hood of her cloak from about her head and Edgehill stood face to face with Norah Murphy.

He shrank back instinctively, and was about to leave without a word. But she gazed at him steadily, her fine eyes looked reproach, there was an expression of great melancholy in her face. She held out her hand to him, and said simply,

“You are displeased to meet me?”

“You are the last person in the world I expected to see here,” said Edgehill, conscious of a great want of gallantry, but unable to say anything else. He, however, took the cold hand which she offered to him, and dropped it, having accorded the most meagre pressure.

“Then you *are* displeased to see me?”

“Don’t force me to say that.”

“Then why avoid me?”

This was the merest folly. What right had this girl to talk in this way to him?

Their acquaintanceship was but a day old, not that even, and she was upbraiding him with unendurable familiarity. She had doubtless come down here under the protection of the men with the lanterns. To their protection he would leave her. She divined his intention and said,

“Stay, Mr. Edgehill, I have something very serious to say to you.”

“It can be said at another time, in another place.”

“Come with me to High Street, then, for you *must* hear it.”

This was too much. Go with her to High Street! As if one visit to that accursed place had not caused him grief enough. The request made him seriously angry. He shook his head. He was determined to leave her *now*. She caught him by the arm.

“For God’s sake,” she said, “stay! If you won’t come home, listen to me here.” She was evidently in deep distress. He waited to hear her communication. They stood at the very end of the little pier. The tide was low, and the waves were dashing among the piles upon which the jetty stood. Behind them the men were unloading the smack. A sudden light broke upon him. He remembered the figure that had passed them outside the creek, the figure with averted face. Something had happened to her parent. She wanted advice, perhaps. It would be cruel to refuse a hearing.

“Yoor father passed us just now?”

“He did.”

“And the ‘something serious’ is about him?” he asked.

The wind had blown her hair about her

face which was dreadfully pale. The ends of her cloak flapped in the breeze. But he was determined to hear her in this place, or not at all. Never again, he said to himself, shall we two be discovered walking together.

"The news affects him, and all of us, but *you* most of all," she replied.

Serious news affecting *him*. Then it must be about Kate. Some terrible tidings about her, of which this jealous woman (so the young fool flattered himself) was not sorry to be the bearer. But how connect serious news about Kate with serious news about Murphy?

"For Heaven's sake speak quickly," he gasped.

She loosened her cloak, and stood in front of him with her hands clasped. She

seemed puzzled as to the manner in which she should commence. At last she inquired, with what Edgehill considered strange irrelevancy,

“Did you consider your uncle a strong man?”

The question had not the desired effect. It occasioned him not the slightest sensation of alarm. Pshaw! What was all this infernal mystery about? The young woman was evidently mad, mad perhaps with love and jealousy. That was a simple and satisfactory way of accounting for her acts and words.

“I mean,” she said, “a man likely to *live* long?” She put a strong emphasis on the *live*, and leaned towards him as she uttered the word in a solemn frightened accent. He saw her meaning now.

“Yes! he’s—he’s not ill?”

She did not answer, but turned away her head. His face pale as ashes, he clutched her hand.

“For God’s sake, Miss Murphy! Norah! tell me all, he’s not *dead*?”

Norah covered her eyes with her hands and said,

“Yes.”

Edgehill reeled like a drunken man. The pier seemed to rock beneath him, and the tumult of the waves to subside into a remote buzzing. He would have fallen had not Norah placed her arm about him. He shuddered at that touch, and disengaged himself, and she shuddered too as he turned from her. He straightened himself and said in a husky voice,

“I can hear all now.”

But Norah was a proud girl. He had flung her off. He had shuddered at her

touch. No doubt, she felt for him in his great grief; but she would tell him no more there. Would Mr. Edgehill do her the honour to see her to the top of the cliff? There was a perceptible sneer in her tone. Edgehill felt ashamed of himself. He offered her his arm, and led her from the end of the jetty.

The men, still unloading the little vessel, were quite silent as he passed, for they too had learned the sad news. One of them went before with a lantern, lighting them up the path in the face of the cliff. The grass on the edge was bent to earth in the wind. The sapless stalks in the garden rattled strangely, and the little gates banged to and fro. The man showed them into the kitchen of his own cottage. It was empty. The hands of the little clock in the corner pointed to eleven. The turf burned cheer-

fully. The owner of the house withdrew, and left them sitting there. Edgehill broke the silence.

“This was very sudden. There must have been foul play.”

“Yes,” she said, “I scarcely knew how to break it to you, your uncle was murdered.”

He motioned her to proceed, and she related to him all she knew of the sad event. He sat with his face buried in his hands, exclaiming every few minutes, “My poor uncle! my poor uncle!” And when she had finished her narrative he groaned, “Why did I leave him?” Then there was silence for a time. Ideas began to take shape in his mind, and looking up suddenly he asked,

“But your father! how does this affect your father?”

"My father is suspected of the murder," she answered calmly.

Edgehill started and moved off. She looked steadily at him. As his gaze met hers, a sickly smile overspread his countenance, and he said,

"Impossible, impossible!"

"God bless you for saying *that*," she exclaimed, "for saying it too before you heard from my lips that my father was in his own house at the time of the murder, and for half an hour before it." Then she sketched for him the evidence on which the warrant had been issued.

"This is horrible," he said. The second news seemed to clear his mind somewhat from the numbing effects of the first, and he asked pertinently enough,

"But why then did he leave?"

Why not stay and face this accusation?"

Then she explained to him that Father O'Brien was accountable for her father's flight. The priest was afraid that a serious riot would be occasioned by the arrest of Murphy. The constabulary force in the town was very small, there was no detachment of military on the spot. A serious riot meant more loss of life. And his Reverence believing that the real murderer would be captured in a day or two, had brought the news of the warrant, and conveyed the suspected man to the creek. He had lain concealed in the smack all day, and was now—Norah uttered the words with a sigh of relief—was now safe on his way to Cork.

"And oh! Mr. Edgehill," she said, with tears in her eyes, "I'm so thankful to

you for not harbouring the cruel suspicion, for expressing a belief in him, and in me."

The door of the cottage opened, and when its owner entered they rose, and thanking him, left the place. At the doors of the other cottages the men stood in silence watching them depart. They muttered a sorrowful "God bless you, Sir," and Edgehill departing, was touched by their honest sympathy, and waved his hand to them as he turned the corner.

He saw Norah to her father's house in High Street. Two policemen were stationed on the steps, determined to pounce on the errant householder the very moment he attempted to effect an entrance into his mansion. When the door was opened, Norah gave her hand to her companion, saying,

"Tell me again that you discredit the evidence."

"Utterly," replied Edgehill.

"God bless you!" she said once more. She entered the house, and the servant slammed the door most wickedly to express her great contempt for the two representatives of the law who guarded the portals.

"A could night, Sir," remarked one of the constables to Edgehill; but he, not heeding the polite overture, ran off to Molloy's. The inmates of that hostelry had retired for the night. He woke them up, however, and after a delay of minutes that seemed a delay of hours, he got his horse, mounted and galloped madly to The Lodge.

He was expected. The gatekeeper would have detained him, but he tore along the

avenue and up to the house. He jumped from his horse, leaving it to be seen to by anybody who fancied the job. The door was opened. McFarlan with pale face looked at his young master, and saw that he need say nothing, so he led him in silence to the dining-room.

Fitzgerald who had taken upon himself all the mournful arrangements which it should have been Edgehill's duty to make, was sitting there. The magistrate read in the young man's face what McFarlan had read there. He grasped his hand. They looked at each other in silence for some minutes, each conscious of an awful sensation as if the dead man were in the room.

"Then you know all," said Fitzgerald.

"All," groaned Edgehill.

Fitzgerald taking a light from the table, beckoned Edgehill to follow him. They descended to the basement, and stopped at the door of the whitewashed room. They entered. Kind friends! good friends! The room was hung with sombre draperies and flowers were strewed about. As Frank's eye glanced on these, he again shook the hand of his friend, and through swimming eyes looked the thanks and gratitude which he could not utter.

With silent footsteps they approached the centre of the room, as if fearing to disturb the awful sleep of him who lay there. . . . Stooping down, Frank gazed long and earnestly. But from those lips no sound would ever come, nor any slightest motion of those stern features. . . . And Fitzgerald turned away as the bereaved nephew found relief in tears.

When they returned to the dining-room, Fitzgerald related in low tones all the circumstances connected with the murder. And Edgehill did not interrupt him, but listened dreamily, catching only a word here and there.

"It is some satisfaction if a small one," he said, having expressed his belief in the guilt of Murphy, "that we have succeeded in finding the murderer."

"But you have not found him," said Edgehill.

"No, we have not captured him, certainly; but what I meant was that we had brought the guilt home to the criminal."

"I understood your meaning, Mr. Fitzgerald," said Frank, with a sigh, "I understood your meaning, when I said that you had not found him."

Fitzgerald was amazed beyond measure. In his whole magisterial experience he had never heard a clearer case. He went over the evidence again for Frank's edification. The motive made so apparent by the threatening letter, the terms of which he repeated.

"These are very general terms and might mean anything," said Frank.

"Granted, if taken by themselves, but in connexion with other circumstances, most important," said the magistrate, in a tone that showed some displeasure at Edgehill's scepticism.

"I place but little importance on the other circumstances, or on the witness that deposes to them," replied Edgehill, still dreamily—still unconscious that the attitude which he was assuming was calculated to annoy the magistrate.

"But the man has fled," urged Fitzgerald, with an emphasis that showed that in his mind the flight was a circumstance which placed the question of guilt beyond dispute.

"I am sorry he should have fled; probably he had his own reasons. But for God's sake, Mr. Fitzgerald, don't let us discuss these things. Tell me of my uncle, of your last interview with him."

Fitzgerald, however, *would* discuss these things. It was a duty he owed to society, to his dead friend, a duty which he must impress on the surviving relative. There was silence in the dining-room, interrupted only by the musical ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece. Edgehill waited for the information he had asked, and waited in vain, for after a considerable pause,

Fitzgerald said in a mild tone of reproof.

"I am surprised, Edgehill, that you should not feel more anxious to avenge your uncle's death."

"I have no room in my heart now, except for one feeling," replied Edgehill, looking appealingly into the magistrate's face.

"At least," said the other, unappeased, "you are the last one in the world who should endeavour to throw cold water on the efforts of those who are attempting to fulfil the ends of justice. Perhaps you spoke hastily just now in describing the evidence. I don't like to recall the actions of my dead friend, which justifiable enough, would sound strangely if mentioned over his coffin. But you know that your uncle attacked Murphy, and wounded him too, and you know that Murphy was a revengeful man, and——"

Frank only looked appealingly at his friend, and his friend understanding the mute request stopped short, but added,

"You must own, Edgehill, that you spoke hastily in describing the evidence."

Thus did the good man leave this mourning but refractory young fellow a loop-hole for escape. But the other saw it not.

"No," he replied, sighing, and never for a moment reflecting on the possible effect of his words. "No, I am perfectly sincere in what I say of the evidence. I am as confident of Murphy's innocence as I am of my own, as I am of yours."

"Why, Sir, he was on the spot about the time of the murder," exclaimed the magistrate, with considerable warmth.

“*At* the time of the murder Murphy was in his own house, and for half an hour before it,” said Frank, “but this is an inquiry which will be more satisfactorily dealt with in another place. Do tell me something about my uncle.”

For the first time now Edgehill perceived that the magistrate was angry. His face was flushed and he bit his lips. There was another silence between them, and the musical ticking of the clock became a sound calculated to fill all space. During that pause, strange suspicions took shape in Fitzgerald’s mind. And not heeding the request that had been put to him, he said at last,

“Mr. Edgehill, have you any objection to inform me from whom you received the news of your uncle’s untimely death, and the news of this alleged *alibi* of Murphy’s.”

"I have no objection, I heard both from Murphy's daughter."

"I feared as much."

The magistrate's worst suspicions were confirmed. The nephew of the murdered man was taking the part of the murderer, because he loved the murderer's daughter ; and it was to this callous wretch that he had promised his only child, Kate. She, indeed, with a true woman's instinct, had detected the real nature that lay beneath the pleasing exterior of the young painter. She had been right in her decision, quite right. And to think that he, her father, should have endeavoured to shake her in her determination.

These thoughts passed swiftly through his mind as he rose and stood before Edgehill. He had no sympathy now for the heart-broken man who sat there with his hand pressed to his temple, and a puzzled,

helpless, appealing look in his face. Without offering his hand, the magistrate turned and moved towards the door of the dining-room, grasping the handle of it he said in hard and bitter tones,

“Mr. Edgehill, till after the last rites are paid to my departed friend, I will refrain from saying to his nephew what I have to say. I wish you good-night, Sir.”

So saying he left the room. Frank realised all now. He had not in his grief and confusion anticipated the effect of his defence of Murphy upon the magistrate's mind, or the still more fatal effect of the admission of an interview with Norah. To his terrible grief had been added another only less great. The father had gone round to the daughter's side. His dream was shattered. Falling back in his chair, he groaned,

“Oh, God, now I *am* alone !”

McFarlan found him here. The expression had left his face. His lips were livid and his cheeks blanched. He was staring with wild eyes at the clock on the mantelpiece. The old man led him to his room. He had but a vague idea of the utter desolation of that young heart. But he sat by his bedside till the dawn appeared, and the sufferer sank into uneasy slumber.

CHAPTER III.

AN EPISTLE OF MARSHALL'S.

THE various entertaining works of travel which Mr. Marshall has from time to time given the reading world, owe much of their success to the light and impertinent style in which they are written, the thin vein of satire which runs through them, and the utter want of truth and sincerity which is manifest on every page. Marshall has a very easy method of writing a book. When he goes on his travels, he invariably keeps up a correspondence with Lord Dovecote, a nobleman of literary tastes

but without any particular ability. On his return to town, Marshall borrows from his noble friend these interesting communications, and extracting the smartest passages, very soon "knocks up" a couple of volumes, which are sure to be in lively demand at the leading libraries for a couple of months at least.

About a week after the events recorded in the last chapter, Lord Dovecote received an epistle from his absent friend. We are in a position to reproduce the interesting document in this place, feeling sure that our readers will value one page of the gentlemanly banter of this popular writer above many pages of our own more homely prosing :—

"Castle Banagher,

"Wednesday.

"My dear Lord Dovecote.

"I have been particularly fortunate in

my visit to this land of irreclaimable barbarians. The gods seem to have ordered events with a view of displaying to the literary tourist all the charming characteristics of a very peculiar people. Were I gifted with your powers of satire, I would write a book now that would make me famous to the end of time. I am, unhappily, wanting in that endowment. I shall therefore postpone the publication of my Hibernian investigations until after I have visited the country of the Hottentots—a land to which I intend directing my wanderings next year. I can then publish my experiences of both savage races in one volume.

“With the pleasing eccentricities of my host you are already acquainted, though I must do that statesman the justice of observing, that when his foot is on his native bog he displays a variety of additional

peculiarities, which, if evinced in town, would either make him the lion of the season, or procure his expulsion from decent houses, according to the temper in which Society happened to be.

“I think I wrote you a description of the Hunt Ball. They danced polkas at it. I was, however, grievously disappointed at the absence of jigs from the programme. The jig is a sort of Irish *can-can*, only much more indecent.

“You are aware that notoriety is one of the chief objects of my existence, and you will be pleased to hear that I have been so fortunate as to attract a considerable amount of local attention. For this advantage, I am indebted to the editor of the ‘Ballymareen Eagle,’ a miserable little creature, who, I am proud to say, disapproves not only of my political life, but of my literary style. He has

held me up to the derision of the public here, both in leading articles, and in verses printed in the Poet's Corner. The last of these productions was a very weak effort indeed, each stanza ending with this abominable couplet

“For none of us is partial
To this stuck-up Cockney Marshall.

The happy result of these satires is, that I cannot show myself in the streets without being laughed at by some aged but ignorant rustic, to whom the compositions have been read by the hedge school-master. Such demonstrations, however, cause me but little annoyance, calling to mind, as I do, the epigram of the *other* Martial

“‘*Risu inepto res ineptior nulla est.*’

“You will hardly believe me when I inform you that whenever I encounter the

little scoundrel who writes all these things about me, he invariably blushes and touches his hat to me—or his ‘caubeen,’ as it is termed in his own elegant language. You will be still more incredulous when I assign the reason of his hostility. A few days after my arrival, he called upon me here. I found him seated in The O’Banagher’s library. He had his hat and umbrella in his hand. When I entered the room, he let fall the ‘caubeen,’ and in his efforts to recover that head-dress, he dropped his umbrella.

“Notwithstanding his ridiculous and utterly contemptible appearance, I refrained from laughing. He soon stated his business. He wanted my name as a subscriber to the ‘Eagle.’ Distinctly, but with marked politeness, I declined the honour. He blushed violently and withdrew. I requested the servant, in the event of the

gentleman's calling again, to insist on his leaving the 'caubeen' in the hall. I cringe at the mere thought of that hat.

"I then dismissed the subject from my mind, till it was unpleasantly recalled by his denunciations of myself in the 'Eagle.' The 'Eagle' belongs to what is called the National Press of this country. It is so called, I believe, because the editors are selected from among the peasantry, and live by pugnacity and mendacity.

"There has only been one Agrarian murder since my arrival, the present being, I am informed, a rather dull season. It is confidently expected, however, that a beginning having been made, things will now look up. If things *do*, I shall leave the country at once, as all the roads about here have hedges, and the marksmen who indulge in this sort of sport are by no means particular.

“The victim in the present instance is an uncle of young Edgehill’s, whose works you may remember having seen at this year’s Academy Exhibition, where they excited some curiosity. The deceased was a man of immense wealth, and young Paint-pots inherits everything. He will never, I should fancy, write ‘pinxit’ after his name again—though it would not at all surprise me if they made him President of the Royal Academy next year, or the year after. The young gentleman is possessed of a certain amount of common sense, and has put the estate into the market. He has, I presume, that attachment to life, which is only natural to persons at his tender age.

“The police here — with a want of ordinary perception, which I had fondly supposed to be confined to the detective department at Scotland yard—have fastened

the crime upon Murphy, the proprietor of the 'Eagle,' a full length portrait of whom I sent you in a recent epistle. The hereditary bondsman has fled, no one knows whither.

"Another instance of Hibernianism! Young Edgehill, it seems, was engaged to be married to the daughter of a local magnate, named Fitzgerald. This gentleman happens to have a strong personal prejudice against Murphy, and simply because Edgehill declines to accept the guilt of Murphy as a thing proved, the match has been broken off — the young lady approving of this summary proceeding. Now, mark how precisely Irish all this is!

"While the gentleman could sing that 'he was but a landscape painter,' with barely enough to keep himself in clean collars and cigars, the parent allows

his daughter to be sought and won by him. When he suddenly falls into a fortune that would make him an object of interest in half the drawing-rooms of Mayfair, the engagement is broken off, and the young gentleman forbidden the house.

“I attended the funeral of the victim last week, expecting to witness some peculiar rites—in which expectation I was disappointed—and observed that Fitzgerald and Edgehill, who were chief mourners, did not interchange a word. The disconsolate swain has left the house of his late uncle, and is staying at Molloy’s Hotel, where I called on him to-day. I offered to put his name up at the Junior Coningsby Club—a courtesy which will console him for his recent afflictions if anything can.

“I have been bitterly disappointed in

the divine Norah—about whom, I fear, I may have become garrulous in recent effusions—but whose name shall never again appear in this correspondence. She turns out to be a very dragon of virtue, and I am still suffering from the utter want of consideration she displayed, in declining those offers of protection which I thought were justified by the absence of her paternal relative. In many respects, these Irish women resemble the females of savage nations.

“Should anything of an exciting nature occur, I shall be sure to inform you of it. I expect (shall I say *hope*?) to leave this heathen settlement for Dublin to-morrow or next day. Should I reach London in the enjoyment of life, I shall hope to meet your lordship shortly after my arrival. Should I come to hand in a coffin—as is most likely—I trust your

lordship will do me the honour to follow my remains to Kensal Green. Whether dead or alive, I am determined to be in town within a fortnight.

“ I remain, my dear Lord,

“ Your friend and disciple,

“ AUGUSTUS MARSHALL.”

“ *The Inevitable* P.S. I forward by book-post, a copy of Father O’Brien’s ballads, and will feel obliged by your having it *favourably* noticed in the forthcoming number of your Review. I asked his Reverence to write a notice of the book himself, promising to have it inserted; but with a modesty rare in an Irishman his Reverence declined.

“ A. M.”

CHAPTER IV.

FOLLOWS THE FORTUNES OF MURPHY

THERE are some Irishmen who appear to be quite in their element when flying from before offended Justice. Under such circumstances, a man of this class feels his spirits rise, and is conscious of an increase of his natural vigour. He will display an astonishing knowledge of tactics in evading a dun, and there is no gentleman in the world so difficult to serve with a writ. The raciest anecdotes in his reper-

toire have to do with sheriff's officers, and his imitations of the nasal twang of Lazarus and Isaacs are perfect marvels of accuracy.

When dwelling on such themes, he will astonish the unimaginative foreigner with accounts of his infinite resources and super-human daring in overreaching the myrmidons of a tyrannical system. He talks of sponging-houses and debtor's prisons as a warrior would talk of the battles in which he had taken part. The Marshalsea is his Sebastopol, Cursitor Street his Corunna. But what are debts when compared with the crime with which Murphy was now charged?

He felt that at least he was the chief actor in a most exciting piece, and he seemed to grow younger as he entered into the spirit of the performance. He chuckled as he called to mind his escape, and

imagined the utter discomfiture of his persecutors. He regarded his flight as a positive triumph over the alien.

When a man has passed the meridian of life, when his hair has turned to grey, and his feet are visited by occasional twinges of the gout, one would think that he would be apt to repine at the fortune which sent him sailing over a rough sea in a common herring-smack. And it is difficult to understand the nature of that individual who, after spending his days respected by an entire community, becomes absolutely jubilant when compelled to fly from that community with a charge of murder hanging over his head. Such, however, was Murphy's happy state of mind as Ballymareen faded from his sight.

He was not bound for any distant shore. There was nothing to be gained

by such a course. What he wanted was a city with plenty of inhabitants in it. The secret of his whereabouts would be safer in a crowd. They landed him at Cork. That town, however, was not big enough for him, though he deemed it advisable to remain there until he had effected certain minor changes in his appearance.

His first visit was to the establishment of a respectable hair-dresser, where he had his whiskers removed and his face cleanly shaved. Here he also purchased a heavy black moustache, and was carefully instructed as to the means of affixing it to his upper lip. He thought it well to inform the assistant who gave him the directions, that he was about to play a leading part in some private theatricals.

He remained in the ancient city till

the following morning, when he left for Dublin by the first train. Selecting an empty compartment, he waited anxiously till the train started. Then taking out a pocket-glass, he proceeded to ornament his upper lip with the heavy moustache ; as he surveyed himself, he burst into immoderate laughter. And, indeed, the effect was very startling. The white hair on his head contrasted strangely with the dark silky appendage purchased at the shop of the barber. His own mother wouldn't have known him.

When the train stopped at the Limerick Junction, he purchased a morning paper, and laughed again and again as he read the minute descriptions of himself contained in it. About mid-day he arrived in Dublin in excellent spirits.

He had no luggage, and waving his stick, he politely declined the invitations of

the jarvies, whose disreputable vehicles were drawn up in a line on the roadway beyond the platform. He proceeded along the quays, his hat jauntily cocked on one side, and the celebrated emerald conspicuous on his bosom. As he walked along, he must have felt the absence of the grateful homage to which he had become accustomed in the South.

His progress through the city did not even attract the attention of the hurrying pedestrians. He consoled himself that a lengthened absence from the famous city had dimmed his memory, and besides that his complete disguise forbade the possibility of recognition.

If, however, the general public was not alive to the presence of this distinguished arrival, he knew of a select circle into the midst of which he would be received with loud and genuine expressions of welcome.

A circle which he regarded as the most renowned, the most brilliant, the most daring in the universe. A circle embracing men whose names would one day be as famous in the annals of the country, as they were now eminent in the estimation of their friends and relatives. In a word, that magic circle which comprised the proprietors, editors, and writers of the National Press. By them he was known. His name had been a tower of strength to them. His early life had been spent in assisting to compile their wonderful broadsheets ; and his most notable adventures were frequently alluded to by his successors in their leading columns.

Almost a generation had passed away since Saxon law had snatched him from their midst, had immured him in a dungeon—had compelled him, a lonely exile, to wander listlessly in foreign lands. Now, in

his old age, Saxon law was driving him back into their arms. The identical men, indeed, with whom he had in the days of his young ambition taken counsel would, for the most part, have been removed by the accidents of time; accidents to which we are all subject, but which cling very thickly about the career of a Dublin journalist.

But to the new generation his name was familiar, his exploits known, his position as a sincere patriot acknowledged. Frequently he had the satisfaction of reading in the Dublin papers allusions to himself—it being no unusual circumstance for a leading article to conclude with such a sentence as this :—

“ But it is useless to urge the importance of these facts upon the venal and renegade statesmen who now rule the destinies of this enslaved island—the more so when we reflect that our claims have already been insisted

upon with all the philosophy and scholarship of a Molloy, with all the flashing wit and biting sarcasm of an O'Toole, with all the undaunted candour and crushing eloquence of a Michael Eugene Murphy."

The new generation was not unmindful of his merits, and so he swaggered down the Dublin quays swinging his stick about, and wagging his head from side to side, as he whistled softly to himself the stirring strains of "Garryowen." He required no guide through the streets of the Irish metropolis. Every public building that he passed was familiar to him as the face of an old friend, and he recognised the paint on the house-fronts now as the same paint that had adorned them five-and-twenty years ago.

Full of delightful anticipations he crossed Carlisle Bridge, and wended his way to Old Monastery Street. He stopped at the office

of "The Phœnix," and banging the swinging glass doors, strode in, twirling his moustache and glaring at the office boys who stared at him in return. They were in the habit of seeing strange visitors—cadaverous men in sombreros and long cloaks from the American Continent, French gentlemen of noble extraction but tattered apparel—nevertheless, they giggled and nudged each other, as they looked on this singular intruder with the white head, the black moustache and the extraordinary gem. He, affecting not to notice their merriment, handed his card to one of them and said pompously,

"Have the koindness to take this kyard to Mистер Sylvester."

The boy hurried off, awed by the impressive manner of the visitor.

"The Phœnix" was a paper of extremely national politics. What was the exact line

of policy adopted by its directors would be extremely difficult to define. But this much is certain, its writers always acted on the offensive; and the young man who could indite the hardest sentences about England, and make the most reckless and scurrilous statements about those in authority, was pretty certain to rise in the estimation of his employers, and to obtain frequent additions of a few shillings to his weekly wages.

The object of this journal—not avowed of course—was to keep the people in a state of chronic discontent. That, at least, is the plain Saxon for it. If you were to permit any one of those connected with the paper to explain its objects, no doubt you would be astonished by the wonderful flow of his unintelligible grandiloquence. If fine words have any weight, this organ of public opinion was engaged in an enterprise of the most noble and patriotic kind.

But a reference to a file of "The Phoenix" may possibly induce the reader to adopt a belief quite different to the one expressed by the gentlemen who lived by writing for it. There you will find that when a measure, for which they have begged and prayed and bullied the English Government, has been granted, their gratitude is expressed by fresh attacks and ungenerous cries of "Ah! we *made* you concede it," or "Pshaw! we didn't want it." There you will find that no concession will satisfy the people, short of complete severance from Great Britain; and behind every moderate claim put forward you will discover another demand looming portentous. There you will find the suggestion of a republic ever present, and the doctrines of the Commune unpleasantly familiar. There you will find all the clap-trap about equality and fraternity, which is so easily imitated from the gutter-prints of Paris and Madrid.

There you will find force openly advised, treason constantly preached—and all this by individuals, who, in the event of a popular outbreak, would disappear in the hold of a Cunard steamer, or become the informers upon whose oaths their unfortunate dupes would be transported or hanged. The owners of this precious organ may be described in one word as sedition-mongers in a very large way of business.

The literary chief of “The Phoenix” was a Mr. McManus Sylvester, a gentleman of some natural ability, and confident in his attainments as is the manner of self-educated men. He cherished the fondest belief in his own influence as a public man. Dublin was the fulcrum, his paper the lever, and himself the motive power by which the world was ever and anon tilted to this side or to that. He culti-

vated the delusion that "The Phœnix" was perused beyond the confines of Ireland, and that his diatribes created now and then the utmost consternation in the bosoms of Her Majesty's Ministers.

Indeed, you would find it a rather difficult matter to convince him that no two members of the Government had ever seen a copy of his paper; and it would be a matter of impossibility to persuade him that Dublin was not the intellectual centre of the universe. He was assisted in his duties as editor of "The Phœnix," and certain other organs, by two gentlemen who sat in the office with him, acting only as they were moved by the older and superior spirit. These persons had indeed a *voice* in the management of the papers. It was however "vox et præterea nihil."

We have kept our friend Murphy waiting however.

The office-boy, very much subdued in his demeanour, returned, and requested him to step up to Mr. Sylvester's room.

"Lade the way, ye young divil."

Thus invoked, the young divil proceeded up two broad and dusty flights of stairs, and ushered Murphy into a large room on the first floor.

Portraits of national worthies adorned the walls. Newspapers, newspaper-cuttings, Post Office Directories lay about the floor in the utmost confusion. A strong smell of paste and printers' ink pervaded the atmosphere. Murphy took off his hat and waved it airily. Personally, he was unknown to all three gentlemen, and they to him. But his name was a passport to their friendship. They received him with great kindness, and motioned him to a seat.

At present they were engaged in the transaction of some business with Mr. Potts,

the distinguished National artist. Murphy sat down requesting them not to let his presence interfere with their arrangements, for his time was all his own bedad. So he took up a paper and whistling Garryowen very very softly, pretended to be engaged in a diligent perusal of the latest news. He was listening all the time, however, to the conversation going on between the editors and Mr. Potts.

This distinguished artist depicted English Tyranny for one of their weekly papers at the very moderate cost of fifteen shillings per cartoon—that being the average rate at which art is encouraged by the Irish leaders of public opinion, who, nevertheless, think it right to vilify any draughtsman attempting to augment his income by an emigration to London. There was at present some difference of opinion between the editors as to the cartoon for the coming week. They had decided about the

subject, but were divided as to a matter of detail.

The artist was to represent Ireland as a dead lion, and the English press as a vicious donkey administering kicks to the defunct beast—a subject, it must be admitted, very telling, very original, and very full of the most cutting satire. The question in dispute was this—whether the artist should introduce only *one* donkey as representing the entire press, or *three* donkeys representing three particular London journals. Sylvester was for one donkey—his two coadjutors recommended three—the artist for obvious reasons agreed with the chief.

“Now I really think one donkey is sufficient, Mr. Potts,” urged Sylvester.

“One donkey—yes, I think one is *quite* enough,” acquiesced the artist.

“Oh, no,” exclaimed the other two, “three donkeys would be much more effective.”

“Suppose,” suggested the artist, turning to Sylvester, “suppose we put only one donkey in this week, and,” turning to the discontents, “keep the other two for another time.”

In this way, after some warm discussion, the matter was arranged. But the artist had other business with them. At that time, a spirited publisher was bringing out a re-issue of the standard works of distinguished Irish novelists. It was to be a truly National edition, printed on Irish paper, and illustrated by an Irish artist. The artist selected was Mr. Potts. He was in a dilemma, and wanted the advice of Mr. Sylvester, who was editing the edition. He was at present illustrating one of ——’s celebrated works, and had in his possession the only copy of that book which the editor happened to possess.

Now, most unfortunately from the middle

of this solitary copy twenty pages were missing, and the artist was unable to proceed with his work, for the book was coming out in weekly parts, and these pages were wanted immediately.

“What am I to do?” he asked.

“Oh! write twenty pages yourself—but be sure and keep up the interest.”

“Very well, Sir,” replied the drawer on wood, leaving the room.

And this is the way in which books are edited in Ireland, which, of course, accounts for the large publishing trade done there, and the natural preference which the public displays for Dublin editions.

There was to be further delay in the greeting which Murphy expected. As the artist withdrew, an old man rushed into the room. It was Dr. Costello, the great Irish historian, whose face though considerably changed by time and trouble and whisky,

was well remembered by Murphy, who looked at him over the top of his paper.

“I must have that thirty shillings,” he cried in querulous tones.

“But, my dear doctor, you haven’t done the work,” replied the editor.

“And I can’t do it till I get the money. I tell you there’s a bailiff sitting on every chair in my hall waiting for that thirty shillings.”

Mr. Sylvester had evidently heard of the bailiffs before, and shook his head at the old historian, who whined out,

“Well, you’ll give me a trifle on account won’t you?”

He received the sum of ten shillings, and went off, evidently much delighted at the success of his artifice.

Now the National editors had an interval in which to pay some attention to their unexpected visitor. They seated themselves,

and Sylvester addressing him in words similar to those adopted by the head of a deputation when interviewing a Cabinet Minister, said

“This is indeed an unexpected honour, and I am sure that I only utter the sentiments of my colleagues, when I express a hope that you will favour us with one or two contributions from your pen.”

Murphy bowed.

“Bedad, gentlemen, ye overpower me entirely wid yer koindness. But I’ll be obloiged to keep very quite during my risidence in the methrawpolis. I’m disguised. This ornament,” he said, twirling his moustache, “is not natural, but acquoired. In fact, I’m wanted on a thriflin’ charge of murder.”

The editors smiled.

“Oh, pray don’t allude to that matter. The rumour indeed has reached us. But pray don’t mention it.”

"I may as well inforrum ye though, that I'm innocent of the haynous offince," Murphy said pompously.

Sylvester shook him by the hand.

"I congratulate you, Sir, on your innocence. I'm glad to hear it. So are my colleagues. Though, I hope you will believe me, when I say that *no* circumstance could induce us to forget the respect which we owe to a man whose name is so dear to his countrymen as is your own."

Again Murphy bowed.

"Ye have touched the ould man's tinderest chord," he said, pressing his bosom, "my chief business in callin' on ye, was to enquire whether ye knew of any quite hiding-place where I might repose me grey hairs till this affair blows over."

They could direct him to the place of all others. The old house in Tandy Street—a mansion sacred in the annals of Irish con-

spiracy—had been turned into a boarding-house. It was a very retired place and the charges were moderate. Nearly all the young men engaged on the National Press—several of whom were wanted—made that their place of abode. Among them, Murphy's secret would be safe, and their genial companionship would relieve the monotony of his enforced retirement. Murphy knew the house well, he said, and thanking the literary gentlemen for their kindness, he left the office.

The old house in Tandy Street is one of the most famous domiciles in the Irish metropolis. Within its walls the Gallagher Conspiracy was concocted. In its rooms all genius and valour at that time connected with the National cause had met. And from its lobbies—sad and terrible memory—the patriots had been eventually dragged by a hireling force. After the collapse of

that patriotic organisation, the old house had remained untenanted for years. Then it had been taken by Mrs. Grady, and converted into a lodging-house. The memories connected with the old place were very sacred, and the young blood of the National Press rallied round Mrs. Grady, and took her lodgings in preference to any others.

As Murphy stood before the door of the house, his bosom swelled with various emotions, and the stirring scenes of his early life were brought vividly before him. When the door was opened, he introduced himself to Mrs. Grady, and agreed to pay the rent of a small sleeping apartment at the top of the house—the rent to include the use of the large sitting-room on the ground floor where her lodgers were wont to congregate. Here the fugitive patriot lived for more than a week without stirring outside the door. The window of his bedroom afforded an

exit on to the leads—where he sometimes enjoyed half-an-hour's airing. His days indeed were dull. But the nights were spent with great joviality.

It was a strange company that assembled every evening in Mrs. Grady's large sitting-room. A very ragged, a very unshaven, a very money-less company. Poor fellows! they didn't make nearly so good a thing out of their Liberty, Equality, and Absurdity, as did the proprietors and chiefs of the journals for which they wrote. In the daytime they looked morose, haggard, and hungry; but when assembled together at night, they flickered into a state of feverish gaiety, amid the fumes of punch and under the clouds of tobacco smoke.

A queer noisy Bohemia was this of Tandy Street. And they were strange men who lived within its borders. Good-hearted and thoughtless, they looked vaguely forward to a

National commotion which would result in their elevation to the surface of affairs, a general recognition of their merits, a desirable replenishing of their pockets, with a more frequent change of linen, and a greater command generally of the luxuries of life. Till that happy period should arrive, they sustained themselves on hope and whisky, and the noisy interchange of opinion.

Here and there among them might be discovered one or two admirable scholars and accomplished writers, but the majority of them were deplorably ignorant, and unskilled in any art, save that of calling names with the ready eloquence which would appear to be the birthright of an Irishman.

Among these prolific and ill-fated littérateurs, Murphy swaggered and joked and sang and talked. And the young men hung upon his words, and revered him greatly.

He told them of his Autobiography then in progress, and regretted that, owing to the hurry of his flight, he had not brought the manuscript with him ; but he repeated whole pages for their edification, and they applauded him for the exploits which he narrated, and for the literary skill with which they were recounted.

They were romantic and gallant youths, and listened with rapt attention to the passages that introduced Norah ; for some of them had seen the heroine during her visits to Dublin, and spread the fame of her wonderful beauty among the others. Thus had the old man an additional claim upon their sympathy, and was fêted and lionised in the big sitting-room to his heart's content. A thousand instances of their delicate attention might be recalled, but one will suffice.

He had been repeating his Autobiography

one night, accompanying the narrative with draughts of whisky, more copious than usual. His utterance becoming thick, and a certain failure of memory seducing him into repetition, it was proposed to vary the proceedings with a song. Several National melodies were chaunted, an exercise which occasioned the consumption of more whisky. Then an eloquent young bondsman suggested the propriety of a speech. An orator volunteered, and discoursed for half-an-hour with wonderful fervour and extraordinary gesticulation of the wrongs of the down-trodden country. He concluded his address by requesting all present to drink to "The Ballymareen Eagle."

Only too ready to drink to anything, the admiring assembly rose, and drank the toast with solemn cheers. Then Murphy rose to respond. But it was discovered that he was somewhat unsteady on his legs, and required

the readily proffered support of the patriot on his right. With half-closed eyes and with chin depending to his breast, he looked round upon his audience, stretched out his arm and dropped it again quickly. Raised it once more, and with a preliminary hic-cough commenced—

“G’m’n — the ‘Eagle’ — what’ll-I-say-about-it? — it soars — and it soars — and — damn it, it soars.” At the last word, he fell heavily forward on to the table, and when the gentleman who had been endeavouring to support him jumped forward to render him assistance, he was discovered to be asleep.

With what tender interest did they crowd round the fallen orator. What gratifying solicitude was displayed by each. He was gently raised and carried by those devoted creatures to his own room. Silently did loving hands extract the emerald from his

scarf, laying it reverently upon the toilet-table. With quick dexterity they removed his clothes and put him to bed, gazing upon him with an anxiety more than filial. Quietly, and on tip-toe they withdrew, fearing to disturb his heavy slumber. A touching picture!

But notwithstanding the beautiful homage and unbounded respect paid to our hero by the patriots of Tandy Street, he began to pine for a little liberty. This enforced privacy was becoming irksome to him. After a week of confinement, he determined to take a stroll or two in the neighbourhood. His first adventure was a midnight ramble as far as the adjacent quay. On the following night, he extended his excursions to Dame Street, where he appeared in an oyster-room as early as ten o'clock.

With each journey the feeling of security

increased. He appeared in leading thoroughfares in broad daylight. He visited Alma Mater, and keeping his identity a profound secret, made the acquaintance of an undergraduate or so, from whom he learned what changes had taken place since he too wore the gown. Eventually, he came to the conclusion that his disguise was so perfect as to preclude the necessity of any further skulking in Tandy Street, and going to bed one night he said to himself,

“Faith! I’ll dine at The Three Cups to-morrow, as sure as me name’s Murphy.”

CHAPTER V.

THE THREE CUPS.

IN a little by-street not far from Trinity College, stands an old-fashioned tavern called The Three Cups. In a spacious dining-room, at the rear of the building, an "ordinary" is served on every day of the year at fifteen minutes past five o'clock precisely. This institution is supported almost entirely by students from the adjacent University, who like Young Wilding in the play, abandon "short commons with long

graces, for long tavern bills with no graces at all." The Three Cups is indeed a relic of an old dispensation, and the ordinary a revival of that which used to flourish before the open coffee-house was swept away by the palatial club.

Here, every day, a considerable number of graduates with a privileged sprinkling of undergraduates assemble to dine. When the college bell is summoning the students to the more decorous feast provided in the Hall, these brighter spirits are wont to meet together, and the wits among them grow sharper, and the orators more overpowering, and the satirists more biting by reason of frequent contact with each other over steaming masses of Irish stew, followed by steaming tumblers of Irish whisky. The Three Cups is not exclusive. Its friendly portals are open to all. But the ordinary citizen does not care for the noisy companionship of

the collegians, so that strangers seldom enter.

The institution had come into being since Murphy's time, but no sooner did he hear of its existence than he determined to pay it a visit. He arranged his toilet with extra care, and confident in the impenetrability of his disguise, entered the dining-room a few minutes before the appointed hour. A row of tables, each laid for four persons, extended along the sides of the room. About half of them were already full. Murphy quietly took his place at the table nearest the door, which happened to be empty, and taking up a newspaper began to read. There was an awful clatter. Gentlemen at one extremity of the room interchanged civilities with gentlemen at the other. College anecdotes, in which the names of learned professors were irreverently mentioned, flew about in all directions. Puns were made in loud tones—the punsters were groaned and hissed.

Laughter was frequent and general; and whenever a new arrival entered the room, he was saluted with demonstrations of delight if he happened to be a favourite—with demonstrations of disgust if he chanced to be unpopular among his contemporaries.

It was a place after Murphy's own heart. And with the paper held before his face, he wondered when the three seats at his own table would be filled, and whether the gentlemen occupying them would be as good-humoured and communicative as those already assembled. He was not kept long in suspense. Three gentlemen seated themselves on the three vacant chairs, as the hand of the clock pointed to the quarter past. Murphy kept the paper before his face, waiting to hear the voices of his companions before he inspected their personal appearance. Indeed there can be no doubt but that the patriot, notwithstanding his courage, was

unpleasantly conscious of his moustache, and hesitated before exposing his countenance. The gentleman who had taken the chair next to him, addressed an observation to the one who sat opposite. Murphy started. The gentleman opposite replied. Murphy turned pale. The first voice was that of The O'Banagher. The second voice was that of Marshall. The hand grasping the paper trembled violently. Murphy rose to go, but The O'Banagher, who was a very polite man, stopped him, saying,

“Pray don't let us disturb you, Sir—” and then in an astonished whisper, “Why—yes—it's Murphy !”

Fortunately Marshall was engaged in talking to a gentleman who sat beside him, so that Murphy's conference was unnoticed, nor did he hear the patriot reply to The O'Banagher.

“For the Lord's sake, keep me saycret.

Inthrojuice me as Brophy—an actor—anything. Oh, why the divil did ye recognise me ?”

There was no escape now. He put down the paper, and The O'Banagher introduced him as Mr. Brophy, an eminent tragedian, to Mr. Marshall and to Mr. Hackett, the Auditor of the College Historical. Marshall stared at the performer, and expressed the great pleasure he experienced in making his acquaintance; and Hackett overpowered him with expressions of his respect. Fortunately for Murphy, (so he thought to himself,) the conversational powers of the student were very considerable, and he was not averse to displaying them. He would no doubt keep Marshall in small-talk, and prevent the necessity of *his* adding any remarks to the general fund.

“This is an honour that doesn't happen to me every day,” said Hackett, who had

an easy audacity that led many people to think him far beyond his real age which, was twenty-three, "joining in social and unrestrained converse with two members of Imperial Parliament, and a renowned professor of the histrionic art. Oh! here's the soup. By Jupiter isn't it hot?"

Murphy bent his head over his plate, now and then wiping the ends of his moustache in quite a natural manner. He was beginning to feel more easy in his mind. Hackett and Marshall found entertainment in each other's conversation, and he was enabled in the interval, between the soup and the fish, to whisper behind his napkin an inquiry or two, to which The O'Banagher nervously whispered a reply. Indeed, the universal confusion, the laughter, the noisy talk, the clatter of plates going on at the other tables rendered these hurried communications safe.

But when the fish was removed and the joint put on, and The O'Banagher rose to carve it, Hackett addressed his observations to the table generally, thus obliging Murphy to take cognizance of the gentlemen to whom he had been formally presented.

"That is indeed an enchanting sight," said Hackett, pointing to The O'Banagher's operations. "What after all, gentlemen, are the joys of social intercourse, the beauties of sentiment, the charms of poetry, when compared with an array of solid refreshment such as we contemplate at this moment? I'd rather have a dinner any day than an epic. I respect Francatelli more than I do Tennyson. Soyer's a more interesting author than Victor Hugo. Eating and drinking are topics of universal importance; and as the immortal bard says—as an actor you will remember the passage, Mr. Brophy—the whole world is kin at dinner-time."

He stopped, out of breath, but dashing into illustrative anecdote, went on again.

“I knew a fellow once—very clever, but not literary, you know—best billiard-player about college—great partner at whist, too—in fact, knew more about Hoyle than about Homer. Well, at Commons one day, a man asked him what he thought of *The Prisoner of Chillon*. ‘Never heard of it,’ says he, ‘but if it’s anything to drink, I’d prefer it with the chill *off*.’ Now, I admire that fellow’s ignorance. He was quite right. A perfectly healthy and muscular specimen of the human animal—male sex—should *live* poems, and leave the reading of them to women. Don’t you think so, Sir?” inquired the garrulous youth, appealing to Murphy.

“Faith! I always was an admirer of poethry meself, an’ used to wroite a great dale of it whin I was a boy,” said Murphy.

“Ah! of course,” said the other, with his

mouth full, "as an actor, you're bound more or less to go in for it. But *you'll* agree with me, I'm sure, Mr. Marshall."

"No doubt there's something in what you say," said the Member for Hampton Wick, "at least, in the latter part of it. But I entirely disapprove of your first remarks ; a man will do much more to produce flabby muscles by over-eating and over-drinking than by over-reading. Granting, however, for the sake of argument, that the chief end of man's existence is the cultivation of biceps, then, of course, I agree with you that the less he reads the better."

"I suppose now," said The O'Banagher silyly, to the student, "that you find the temptation to over-read yourself very considerable."

"Come now, my honourable friend—that's a sarcastic remark ; but I assure you that, whether the temptation be weak or strong,

I overcome it a good deal. Hi! hallo! waiter—potatoes here!”

Hackett then commenced a more vigorous attack on the eatables and drinkables before him, giving evidence of an appetite sufficiently large to excuse to some extent his materialistic theories.

“I’d have made a splendid heathen,” he remarked, pointing to his operations.

“You’re a very decent Christian,” said the complimentary O’Banagher.

“I agree with you,” went on Hackett, “I make a very *decent* Christian—a sort of fair average, you know. But as a heathen, I’d have been very——”

“*Indecent*,” suggested Marshall.

Hackett smiled.

“No, no! as a heathen, I’d have been first-rate. I could enjoy life so. My tastes, you see, are extremely simple, (no, thanks, no Worcester for me—too much apothecary’s

shop in it. I'll trouble you for the Chutney). I hate the thousand and one absurd dodges of an advanced civilisation."

"And yet you admire Francatelli?" observed Marshall.

"Sir, he's a heathen of another kind. He's my beau-ideal of a heathen—a man who uses the same vehicle that Milton had for his *Paradise Lost*, to hand down recipes for a ragout and directions for the manufacture of a fricassee."

"I'm afraid, Mr. Hackett," said The O'Banagher, "that your ideas on the subject are a little mixed up."

At this evidence of critical acumen on the part of The O'Banagher, Hackett burst out laughing.

"Faith! I believe they are," he said, "but if I only got time to shake them down a bit, I'd evolve a theory that would rather startle you."

The end of the dinner was approaching. The noise at the other tables increased, and Murphy was mentally congratulating himself on the extent to which he had kept out of the conversation, when Marshall asked him,

“At what theatre are you performing just now, Mr. Brophy?”

“At prisent, I’m out of an engagement,” replied the other, blushing as he attempted to disguise his voice.

“I don’t ever remember to have seen you perform—or (I’m sorry to admit) to have heard your name as an actor—”

“Very likely, Sir, very likely—I niver perforrum out of the provinces,” said Murphy, pulling energetically at the corner of the table-cloth, and not daring to look his questioner in the face.

“You only do leading parts, I presume?” said Marshall, quietly.

“You preshoom a good dale, I think, Sir.

I am principally noted for my Shakesparian representations. Hamlet is me strong point, if I may say so."

The O'Banagher observing the discomposure of his friend, and fearing that he might become irritated to such a point that it would be impossible to conceal his identity, lifted his wine-glass to his lips, and bowing to the patriot, said,

"Your health, Mr. Brophy."

"Hurrah!" shouted Hackett. "The King drinks to Hamlet."

The last course was removed, and Marshall, who was unaccustomed to dine in such a row, suggested departure. But Hackett wouldn't hear of such a thing. There was one custom of the place which must be punctually observed by all visitors. No man was ever permitted to leave these tables without first ordering a Mat.

"Here, waiter—Mats for four."

As Marshall's object in visiting the country was to become acquainted with all its barbarous customs, he determined to gratify his curiosity as to the mysterious Mat so summarily ordered by the ingenuous youth in whose company he found himself.

The waiter, returning, placed before each of the guests a little circular mat. Eyeing this deposit suspiciously, Marshall asked,

"Something to eat?"

"No! Something to drink," replied the ready Hackett.

Presently the waiter re-appeared, and placed on each mat a tumbler, and by its side a measure of whisky. He then placed upon the table jugs of hot water, bowls of sugar, spoons, and plates of lemon peel. Similar preparations were in progress at the other tables, and in less time than it takes to write it, a steaming tumbler of punch stood before every occupant in the room. Pipes

and cigars were produced. Men left their seats and walked up and down, talking to their acquaintances. The jokes and anecdotes were delivered in a louder tone. *Double entendre* became more frequent, and the laughter more boisterous than ever. Having sat over his decoction for half an hour, stirring it with a spoon, but partaking very sparingly of it, Marshall announced his desire to leave. The O'Banagher and Hackett announced themselves ready to accompany him.

"Good-bye, Mr. Brophy," said Marshall.

"Adieu, sweet Hamlet," cried Hackett.

"Murphy!" whispered The O'Banagher into his ear, "meet me at the Prince's Theatre to-night—ten o'clock—behind the scenes."

Murphy nodded assent, and heaving a great sigh of relief, ejaculated fervently, "the Lord be praised." He had no intention of

leaving the Three Cups just yet. He would remain somewhat longer among the jovial young fellows. He ordered another Mat, and moved to a table near the middle of the room, laughing as loudly as the oldest frequenter at the first story he heard. Then he volunteered narratives of his own, and quite unconscious that he had become the butt of the young men's ridicule, he entered fully into the spirit of the merriment, and laughed immoderately at his own expense.

While Murphy was thus enjoying the fleeting moment, and shouting "*carpe diem*" to the mock encouragements of his noisy audience, Marshall was seated in his hotel writing a letter to his friend Lord Dovecote. It was a letter which seemed to amuse its author very much, for he read it over once or twice before committing it to its envelope.

He was, no doubt, very severe on Dublin society, and had lots of ridiculous little in-

cidents to relate to his lordship. He probably made great fun of the students among whom he had dined, and spoke in disrespectful terms of the whisky-punch which it is their heathenish custom to imbibe after meals. He thought the Dublin students a race of young savages, and informed his lordship that each quadrangle of the college was called after some penal settlement or other. They belonged indeed to quite a different race of beings from the young persons they had known at Oxford, when fellow-students together—the gentlemen at Christchurch having been (as far as Marshall could remember) most decorous persons, and the “quads” there unsullied by absurd names. But that which amused Marshall most of all in his letter (and I must say that it is refreshing to hear of a man who can study his own productions with interest)

was one of its concluding sentences. It ran thus—

“Opposite to me at the table sat Murphy, adorned with a large black moustache, and scowling like an East-end tragedian. I knew him at once by the twinkling of his ‘oi,’ and the extent of his emerald—one of the most prodigious gems in this country. He felt quite confident in his disguise, and evidently was under the impression that I had failed to detect him—although he was sufficiently discreet to join very little in the conversation. I kept up the delusion, and bade him good-bye under his assumed name, with every appearance of friendship and innocence. Requesting The O’Banagher and his friend to precede me to the hotel, I drove to the first police-station, leaving with the inspector a description of the patriot’s disguise, which for accuracy and graphic power, will compare very favourably with

more pretentious works of mine. I expect momentarily to hear of his arrest. I do not believe that he is guilty of the crime laid to his charge. It is probable, however, that if brought to trial, he will be hanged. Should that desirable result be accomplished, I shall feel that I have aided in hastening an event which will do more for the prosperity of one portion of this miserable island, than has been effected by all the Government measures passed during the last three Sessions of Parliament."

CHAPTER VI.

ABOUT THE WINGS.

THE reader will already have observed that The O'Banagher was a man of simple tastes. Indeed, considering that he had Royal Blood in his veins, his tastes might be regarded as slightly vulgar. If there be anything in the doctrine of Divine Right, I suppose the lineal descendants of Irish monarchs have as much claim to the mystic heritage as any kings in the world. It is certain, however, that neither in his

appearance nor in his habits was The O'Banagher ever known to display the inward and spiritual grace.

While the duty which he owed to his constituency kept him in London, he frequented all sorts of queer places. Political entertainments he hated. At the beginning of the Session he invariably received an invitation to one of the Premier's dinners, but he always left at an early hour, finishing the night at the chambers of some friend in the Temple, or at Evans's Supper Rooms in Covent Garden, or at The Coffee Plant Club, a resort which he much preferred to the Reform, because it was so free and easy, and because everybody knew everybody else there. He has often avowed that he'd rather attend a Quaker's Meeting than a dinner at Carlton House Terrace. He was out of his element there. They talked over the little gentleman's head, and The

O'Banagher, although exceedingly good-natured, liked to be looked up to by his companions.

In Dublin he had declined an invitation from his friend the Master of the Rolls, preferring, as we have seen, to dine at The Three Cups. If, by a strange chance, he should some day become a reigning sovereign, he would comport himself with regal dignity. For the present he preferred to ignore such pretensions. He had studied his Shakespeare, and knew that Prince Henry had frequented The Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap, meeting the strangest of strange company in that pleasant rendezvous. No doubt he had dined at ordinaries there. It would be soon enough to display the airs of a king when one was invested with the powers and privileges appertaining to the sacred office. So when absent from Ballymareen, the representative of that

borough indulged his simple whims, and was delighted when his young friend Mr. Hackett (whose father was also the father of the Irish Bar), proposed to take him behind the scenes of the Prince's Theatre.

Young Hackett was a great theatrical authority in Dublin, and so he contributed most of the criticisms that appeared in the *Irish News*; he was much petted by the managers, and had the run of their excellent establishments. He was wonderfully conversant with the literature of the comic dramatists of the day, considering their comedies much more amusing than the productions of Plautus and Terrence, whose works he was compelled to study.

The Prince's Theatre is situated in Great Coburg Street, and has never been a very flourishing concern. It used to pass from lessee to lessee, changing hands nearly every year, and even now, I am told, yields but a

small return to its enterprising manager. The audience, crowding the pit and two spacious galleries, pay but a trifling sum for admission. Its members are noisy and humorous, and are on terms of great familiarity with the performers, addressing them by their Christian names from the front of the house—occasionally receiving stern reprimands from some irritable star who happens to dislike that method of encouragement. Behind the scenes there is more dust and disorder than is usually to be found even in theatres. The scenery, which is compelled to do duty in tragedy and comedy and burlesque, passes on from manager to manager—from generation to generation—and is probably included in the rent of the house.

At the time of The O'Banagher's visit to this temple of Thespis, the passion for burlesque had been revived in the breasts of

the juvenile community, and bending to the popular taste, the manager had put on a grand Fairy Spectacle, by a native author, entitled "The Fate of Pretty Popsy Wopsy." When The O'Banagher, conducted by his young friend, entered the stage-door, the entertainment was in full swing. And when, having passed through several dark and dirty passages, he found himself upon the stage, he looked round him with an air of simple wonder which did his companion's heart good to witness.

It was a new experience for the senator, and he gazed with interest on the lovely creatures in gauze who flitted to and fro—going on and off at the command of the stage-manager, or the imperious summons of the call-boy. He was astonished at the agility displayed by the carpenters in moving the creaking scenes, and shuddered at the shouts of the prompter, who stamped his foot and

swore awfully when a line was missed. Then louder than all came the roar of the audience. And their jokes, and the smell of tobacco-smoke blown down from the gallery, called to the mind of the student of English drama, those early days in the annals of the stage, when such practices were the rule in our theatres.

While The O'Banagher stood staring about him, Hackett was rushing about with a nod or a "how d'ye do?" for everybody. Young ladies, whose names appeared on the bills as Hortense or Emilia, he addressed as Judy or Molly. And they didn't seem in the least displeased, but gaily quaffed the porter which the young critic had ordered in large pewter pots for their refreshment. And they laughed at his witticisms, and complimented him openly on his good looks, and wheedled him for notices in the influential journal for which he wrote. Many of them

were arrayed in strange costumes, for it was Pretty Popsy Wopsy's fate to wander among uncouth quadrupeds and nondescript insects, and all manner of creeping things, which were represented by some of the ladies of the company.

Standing at the wings, The O'Banagher examined these disguises with great curiosity, and thought to himself that a play was seen to much greater advantage from his present position, than from the back of a box, and that it was every bit as intelligible too. When the lady who represented the Pretty Popsy Wopsy came off, Hackett led her up to The O'Banagher. She was a London columbine, and The O'Banagher thought he had never seen such eyes and shoulders and legs in all his life. Her remarks, it is true, were far from interesting, but women are seldom both beautiful and witty.

The little man was enchanted, and would

possibly have entertained thoughts of marrying her, had he not discovered that she had at least one husband already. The columbine, however, could not tarry long in his company, being wanted on the stage again. The house roared with delight as she bounded on, and The O'Banagher wished in his heart that the audiences in the House of Commons were only half as appreciative.

He then made a little love to a stag-beetle, whose graceful movements and wonderful eyes, and thick black hair, made great havoc with his heart. But she was required very frequently on the stage, and was generally hurried away just as her admirer was in the middle of an elaborate compliment. Hackett, who, like many other dramatic critics, aspired to become a dramatic author, was busy dilating to the manager on the merits of a piece which he had recently written. Everybody was on, and The

O'Banagher hung about the wings still in a state of wonderment, when he was clapped on the shoulder, and turning round discovered Murphy.

It was some years since Murphy had been behind the scenes of a theatre, though at one time such places were familiar enough to him. It will be remembered, perhaps, that the Gallagher Conspiracy was intimately connected with the old Fishamble Street Theatre, one of the chief conspirators being the leading villain at that establishment; so that, in his young days, Murphy was constantly at the back of the curtain there, and was, indeed, at the celebrated banquet which was given in the Green Room, when the leading villain's daughter was married to Flynn, the patriot. As he looked round, similar scenes of old times came back to him, and there was a tear in the eye that met The O'Banagher's.

Taking into account the state of mind into which these unaccustomed surroundings had put the senator, it is not surprising that for a moment he should have become oblivious of his reason for inviting Murphy to meet him here, and that his first remark should have been,

“A most singular and delightful scene— isn’t it Murphy?”

“Horribly painted flats,” muttered Murphy, shaking his head, and pointing towards the stage.

The O’Banagher mistaking his meaning and the direction of the finger, looked at him reproachfully, and said

“Oh! you know they *have* to paint—the light’s so strong—and as for being flat, I can assure you they’re most interesting and amusing young ladies.”

“I don’t mane the gyurls, I mane the

scenery," explained Murphy, "but whisper ! Is Marshall here ?"

"No ! I asked you on purpose. I thought you'd like to speak to me privately."

"Faith ! ye were always considhrate, O'Banagher," replied Murphy, "but d'ye think now he recognoised me."

"Not a bit. He asked me going away whether I had ever seen you act. And I told him I had—and it was no lie either."

"Divil a thruer word ye ever spoke—but be the holy poker, I'm gettin' very toired of me prisent part—and I don't loike this dis guoise at all, at all."

There was a touch of pathos in the old man's voice, and as The O'Banagher gazed upon his woe-begone countenance, he found it difficult to repress a smile.

"But you know, Murphy," he said, "disguise is necessary ; and I think it exceed-

ingly foolish of you to venture too much in public."

"And don't ye think it a sin an' a shame that a man loike meself that has been working for the good of the counthry since I cut me oi teeth—a man that has got the good opinion of every pathriot in Oirland, and the good word of every national jornal in the kingdom—isn't it a sin an' a shame, I say, that he should be obloiged to skulk about loike a common criminal. It amused me at forst—but, bedad, it's gone beyond the limits of a joke entoirely."

"It's hard, I admit," acquiesced The O'Banagher.

"Hard! O'Banagher, hard! Why, it's one of the most monsthrous cases in the p'litical hith'ry of the toimes. Now, tell me, have ye got the laste suspicion as to who is the rale offender?"

The O'Banagher whispered something in

his ear, and when he had ended the communication, Murphy whispered into *his*. They winked at each other, and exchanged nods full of intelligence, and shook their heads. Then Murphy made many inquiries about Ballymareen — about Norah — about “The Eagle” — about Edgehill — about his persecutors. His mind was much relieved by all he heard. Norah had been doing wonders in directing the paper, and the editor had seconded her efforts.

Edgehill was a young gentlemen for whom The O’Banagher had no great liking, but he was forced to admit that he had acted in a very manly and straightforward manner. He disbelieved in Murphy’s guilt, had offered a reward of £500 for the detection of the murderer, and had been very kind to Norah, during her father’s absence. Besides, The O’Banagher observed, he was now a very wealthy person, and one could

afford to be civil to him, though his conduct on one or two occasions had been rough and ungentlemanly.

In the middle of this discourse, Hackett came up to them, leaning on the arm of the manager.

"Ah! Brophy, glad to see you again. Permit me to present you to Mr. Dickson, the manager of this beautiful establishment. My friend, Brophy, Sir, is, I am given to understand, a tragedlan of very great eminence—a man well-versed in the charnel-house department of literature—you might do worse than engage him."

The manager bowed, and Murphy, blushing, said

"I have quitted the stage for iver—left it, indeed, before me friend Mither Dickson was borrun."

"You were wrong, Sir, very wrong," went on Hackett, "the decline of the stage

has been brought about solely by the decline of tragedians. Playgoers long for the splendid gloom of former days. We go to theatres expecting to find declamation and pomp, and, behold, we get nothing but amusement and frivolity."

"Yer imploied complimint is very de-loightful to me—but me actin' days are over. Loike Hamlet, bedad, I've become conscious of a plintiful lack of wit and most wake hams."

"Bravo, bravissimo! Excellently delivered i'faith," cried Hackett. "Really, Dickson, you ought to induce our distinguished friend to do a scene out of Hamlet on the occasion of your benefit."

"Only too happy, I'm sure," said the manager.

"Impossible, me dear Sir," replied Murphy, trembling lest they should proceed further with their inquiries, "but it's late. I must be goin'."

The polite manager, who was ever wonderfully civil to Hackett's friends, begged him to remain. The great scene of Popsy Wopsy was just coming on. It was worth waiting for. Expressing a desire to meet him again, he went off towards the green-room with the "critic-in-waiting." Relieved by his departure, Murphy determined to remain for a few minutes, although the spectacle, viewed from the wings, was neither very edifying nor very intelligible.

He caught sight of gauzy figures passing and re-passing. The orchestra was discoursing quick music. Popsy Wopsy, as seen from the front of the house, was surrounded by the fairy court—and the approved revels were going on under the direction of the ballet-master, who stood on a stool near the prompter, and gave his orders with great energy and volubility. While this was transpiring on the stage,

Murphy suddenly became conscious of figures in his rear. He looked hastily round, and saw four members of the constabulary. Without wasting a moment in useless reflection, he bounded on to the stage, with the police officers at his heels.

Such a scene as then took place never before occurred on the stage of The Prince's Theatre—nor has there been such a scene since. Seeing the invasion so unlooked for, so unaccountable, Popsy Wopsy shrieked, and several of the juvenile members of the *corps de ballet* went into hysterics. The band ceased playing, and stood up, gazing at the unrehearsed entrance with genuine astonishment. At first, the audience failed to comprehend the meaning of the intrusion of an elderly fugitive hotly pursued by a number of policemen. A vague idea prevailed that it was a part of the play. A scene from the harlequinade of the forth-

coming pantomime introduced into the spectacle as a pleasing diversion.

A dead silence fell upon the audience. And if the prompter had not become paralysed with wonder, he would have embraced that moment and rung the curtain down. He omitted that evident precaution, and the true state of the case appearing to the hushed mob, the golden silence was broken ; the spectators jumped to their feet and roared and hissed, as Murphy dashed through the fairy circle and sent the fays flying in all directions. A rush was made by some of the people in the pit—they were however kept back by the members of the orchestra, and the manager appearing, brought down the curtain just as the police had succeeded in catching Murphy and placing the handcuffs upon his wrists.

Baulked of their amusement, the wilder spirits of the house proceeded to break up

the benches, and to hurl portions of them through the building. The shrieks of women rent the air, and pieces of broken gaseliers crashed on the floor. Then a cry of fire was raised and a terrible panic ensued. People were trodden under foot. Cries and curses rose from all parts—as the audience crushed through the narrow means of exit into Great Coburg Street.

Meanwhile, Murphy was led away ignominiously handcuffed, escorted by the police, and followed by Hackett and The O'Banagher. Behind them came the manager, his face black with rage, as he hurled anathemas on the head of the departing patriot. Murphy was dignified in his demeanour—though his face had turned pale, and the manly tear glistened under his eyelid, when he looked sorrowfully at the handcuffs.

“You’ll bitterly repent this outrage.” he said, calmly to his captors, but they

merely cautioned him in the usual way not to commit himself to any remarks which might be used against him at his trial.

When they got him into the back street in which the stage-door was situated, they placed him on a car and drove away with him.

Deep was the sorrow that reigned in Tandy Street when the sad intelligence was made known there, and bitter was the indignation expressed by those daring young patriots. They vowed all sorts of vengeance—though none of them cared to venture to the police office to make inquiries. They spoke, however, of their departed friend, and extolled his many virtues. And if they could but have raised the price of a railway ticket, one of their number would have been despatched that night to Ballymareen to break to the divine Norah, the appalling intelligence of the arrest and incarceration of her father.

CHAPTER VII.

BACK TO BALLYMAREEN.

IT was raining in Ballymareen. It was generally raining there, and the unusual continuance of fine weather, which the inhabitants had lately enjoyed, was regarded as an ominous circumstance. The return of the wet relieved many minds, although it necessitated a closer confinement to the house, together with other incidental circumstances which will suggest themselves to the reader. Still it was more natural, and

the spirits of the Ballymareenites rose as the rain fell. The little town looked drenched and dismal. Nobody was out of doors—nobody except a policeman or so, and such as domestic or official duties compelled to be abroad. The rain poured through the streets and fell through the sloping byways on towards the cliff—down the face of which it careered to the sea in small cataracts.

The proclamation on the pump, and on the doorposts of the Town Hall, offering £500 for the apprehension of the murderer, was torn by the wind and flapped about illegible. At the police office, another notice had been exhibited in the morning. That poster promised, in addition to the sum offered by Edgehill, Her Majesty's gracious pardon to any accomplice not being the actual murderer, who would give information to the authorities. A very magnificent

offer it must be acknowledged, and occasioning no increased burden on the tax-payers of the nation.

The excitement in the town was still considerable. But beyond pasting the Government proclamation on the board in front of the office, the police had done nothing for days. They had brought their suspicions to bear on one individual. It was a preposterous and insulting thing to request them to try a new scent. The inaction of the police infuriated Edgehill. In vain he urged them to renewed effort. They were polite enough, but they took no measures.

Edgehill publicly espoused the Murphy cause, and actually wrote a letter in "The Eagle," wherein, with considerable plainness of speech, he accused the constabulary of retarding the course of justice, and of assisting, by their stupidity, the escape of the murderer. If in the breast of any member

of the Fitzgerald family there lingered a kindly emotion, that letter dispelled it, and the unfortunate correspondent was regarded as a being lost to all sense of propriety.

On the same night that Murphy ventured to the Prince's Theatre in Dublin to witness the Fairy Spectacle, Edgehill sat in the Commercial Room of Molloy's Hotel in Ballymareen. A roaring fire of turf and logs burned in the grate, and was reflected in the two dingy salvers on the sideboard. Two candles stood upon the table lighting up the sporting pictures that adorned the room, and laying the shadow of the frame that enclosed Meekin's masterpiece upon the wall. The curtains were drawn, and the persistent rain beat against the windows and fell from the roof, pattering upon the pavement in front.

The experience of the last few weeks had

wrought a noticeable change in the appearance of the artist. He had walked through the fiery furnace not unscathed. The flames had left their mark upon him. He seemed to have grown older during that awful time. His countenance gave some evidence of what novelists call the ravages of time. He was very pale, and his face wore a permanent expression of sadness. There were wrinkles on his brow, and he had acquired a habit of sighing deeply, which ill-became one who had travelled over but a small portion of the journey of life. Possibly he had reason to sigh and to look melancholy. Everything had gone wrong with him. He had been the helpless toy of circumstances. But a very great authority had laid it down that "from the loss of a tooth to that of a mistress, there's no pang that is not bearable."

Edgehill had survived the terrible ordeal,

and, dressed in deep mourning, he sat down to dinner every day at Molloy's with great punctuality. There were some sustaining reflections to be indulged in. If he had lost much, he had also acquired something. If he was one of the most unhappy individuals in Munster, he was also one of the wealthiest. The bustle and excitement occasioned by interviews with lawyers and valuers, the paying off of servants, the examination of papers, had done something to distract his mind. He was getting better all the time—slowly but surely recovering from the shock.

Edgehill was not companionless. Near him sat Father O'Brien, with his feet stretched towards the fender. A cheerful flavour of whisky-punch pervaded the atmosphere. The Mat is an institution not confined to Dublin ordinaries, and Father O'Brien's stood on the table by his side.

His pocket-handkerchief was spread open upon his knees. One hand grasped the smooth exterior of his glass, and the other reposed upon the arm of his chair. His face beamed with sensations of comfort and sentiments of good fellowship, as he quietly smoked a cigar from the case of the younger man.

"Come, come, my friend," said the priest, cheerily, "don't be so downcast. I declare the gloom is infectious."

Edgehill shook his head, and sighed deeply.

"You ask an impossibility. I don't believe I'll ever laugh again."

"Nonsense, nonsense, my dear Sir," answered the priest, "you still have friends and the means of purchasing many a laugh."

"*Friends !*" exclaimed Edgehill, with bitter emphasis.

"I hope I know of one at least," said his Reverence, reproachfully.

"Father O'Brien," said the young man, offering his hand to the priest, "I beg your pardon. Distress makes me forget myself—but I shall always remember your great kindness. You have befriended me, when those upon whose support I had counted, deserted me—deserted me." Edgehill sighed again, and gazed dreamily into the fire.

"We mustn't harbour unkindly thoughts. You have youth and riches. Time will bring the truth to light, and restore you to the position that accident has lost to you. After the night comes the morning, you know."

The priest sipped his hot punch, and Edgehill replied

"I'll never know what happiness is till I get out of this; and out of it I will not stir till my uncle's death is avenged."

"Vengeance is a divine prerogative—it is

not for us to exercise it. I hope, however, that the criminal may speedily be made to answer for his deed. But don't speak of it as vengeance."

Thus did the theologian split hairs.

"I see that Government has taken the matter up," said Edgehill, gloomily.

"I'm sorry to see that Government *has*," replied the priest.

"Sorry?"

"Sorry; not at the fact of the tardy measure, but at the manner of it. I have always denounced the principle of buying the evidence of an accomplice."

"But," urged Edgehill, "you must bear in mind the great difficulty experienced in tracing crime by ordinary means."

"I bear that in mind."

"Well, then, if ordinary means fail, Government is forced to adopt this extraordinary method."

“I fear,” said the priest in a good-natured tone, “that I have failed to follow the steps by which you arrive at that conclusion.”

“Will you tell me how in the world the Government is to apprehend an Irish criminal except by such means. The police worse than useless — the magistrates worse than the police?”

“Faith !” said the priest, betraying some irritation of manner, “it’s not my business to find out means for Government. Dirty workmen like dirty tools, and perhaps it comes quite natural to the authorities at the Castle to take criminals into their confidence. But I can give you my opinion ; you’ll say it’s an Irish view, perhaps, and wanting in that element of common sense, which is so largely imported into English opinions. I believe, then, that it would be better for ten guilty wretches to escape, than for one to be

executed on the oath of an equally guilty informer."

"Better for the ten criminals, no doubt," said Edgehill, quietly.

"No, Sir ; but better for your country and for mine. Better for my country, because its belief in the peaceable intentions of yours would be strengthened. We look on informers here in a different light. We regard them as the basest of mortals, and unthinking people, if they see a Government taking the refuse of the cells into its counsels, are apt to conclude that there's not much difference between 'em. And it would be better for your country, because it would lead to a basis of mutual confidence between the two nations."

Father O'Brien lifted the poker and thrust it into the fire. A cloud of sparks and flake-like dust from the turf and logs flew up the chimney. A brighter light filled the

room. The poker had acted as a conductor. The priest's suppressed anger escaped along the metal, and expended itself in the bowels of the grate. When he looked up, his face was as jovial as ever.

"I really can't see," went on Edgehill, "why a whole people should be incensed at the discovery of a crime, no matter how vile the means employed in that discovery."

"I don't suppose, Mr. Edgehill, that you will see the matter exactly as I see it; but you will believe me when I give it to you as the result of my experience, that no criminal is so atrocious in the eyes of an Irish peasant as the man who commits the crime of informing."

There was silence for a moment or so, broken by the crackling of the logs—the tinkling of the priest's spoon against the sides of the glass—the whistling of the

cold wind and the pattering of the rain.

"I think I can give you some evidence on the point," said Father O'Brien, breaking the silence, and taking out his pocket-book. He turned towards the table, drew the candles close to him, put on his spectacles, and then took from one of the compartments of his pocket-book a long and ragged piece of paper, considerably crumpled and very dirty. The priest held it between his fingers, and looking from it to Edgehill, said,

"I don't know whether they'd admit this document as evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons; but, on my veracity, I'd learn more from it than from the contents of a dozen blue-books."

"What is it?" inquired the artist curiously.

"It's a ballad—that's all. It's not even

a good ballad. It hasn't that ring of true poetry sometimes discovered in similar productions. The lines are halting, and the rhymes—don't rhyme always. But there are thousands of copies of it sold, it's sung at every fair, and in nearly every cabin in the south of Ireland ; therefore, notwithstanding its literary defects, I venture to call it an important document. Shall I read it for you ?”

“ If you please, and if it's not boring you too much.”

The priest bowed affably.

“ You're something of a critic yourself,” said the priest, “ though in the case of my own productions a too indulgent one ; but I think you'll agree with me when I say that these rough effusions, written by men that haven't the least pretension to literary ability, and who only write in poetry because they don't know how to express themselves

warmly in prose, are as superior to the laboured efforts of a practised amateur, as cheese is to chalk."

Edgehill nodded his acquiescence in this critical dogma, and assumed a listening attitude.

"Therefore, I needn't apologise for the accidental enormities of my author. We'll be able to get at his meaning. The work is narrative, and is entitled 'Finlay the Informer!'"

The priest cleared his throat, and read in mellow musical tones, that lent quite a charm to the production, and even gave a rythmn to its unrythmical lines—the following production:—

FINLAY, THE INFORMER.

December was the month, my boys, when Finlay he was nabbed.

By a d—d tithe-proctering vagabond, he was unfairly grabbed.

And we walked behind him to the jail, while his tears they
fell like dew.

When the peeler up and says to him, "Ma bouchal, this
won't do."

Now this Finlay had a secret that was life and death to us all,
For if it was discovered, sure full twenty drops must fall.
So we walked behind him to the jail, "Keep up your
heart," says we.

"Och, don't be feared, they won't get much from Finlay's
mouth," says he.

They locked Mick Finlay in a cell, they chained him with
a chain.

Cold stone it was his pillow, and his bed was wet with rain ;
But divil a drop of whisky did they give the boy to drink,
And so his lightsome spirits they at last began to sink.

Now, Mick Finlay he was took up for gunpowder hid away,
And the reason of that powder hid, it's not for me to say,
But coming on towards Christmas, THE DEVIL came from
Hell.

"How are ye, Mick," says he, quite bold ; says Mick, "I'm
far from well."

The Devil he was dressed in red, his eyes were made of
flames,

And Finlay smelt the brimstone, that burnt blue upon his tail.

"Och, sure my boy," says he to him, "By the soul of
Fin M'Cool,

To be sittin' here in irons, sure it's you're the mighty fool."

And what there passed betwixt the two, sure nobody can tell ;
But in Mick's heart was sown the seed THE DEVIL grows
in Hell.

Mick sent unto the jailer—"Where's the Governor?" says
Mick.

"I've a secret to confess to him, so be off and tell him quick."

Then came the Governor of the jail, all in his robes of state,
And stood quite grand, and stared at Mick, all through the
iron grate.

Says Finlay then—"My Lord," says he, "a secret I've to tell,
And with it buy my liberty, if you're willing for to sell."

At this the Governor drew near, and listened to his tale.
That blessed night Mick Finlay left the Ballincollig jail.
That blessed night the sogers and constables so bold,
Gave Mick a bag containing a thousand pounds of gold.

That blessed night the sogers marched to twenty peasant farms.
That blessed night the neighbours heard the firing of fire-arms.
That blessed night full twenty boys were clapped in irons fast.
While Finlay the Informer down through Isnagarvan passed.

Och, by the tears and sobs and groans of widows sore dis-
tressed,

Och, by the sighs and sobs and moans of orphans sore op-
pressed,

Och, by the hate that honest men will perjured beasts pursue,
I call on every one that hears to swear this thing to do.

To swear black death to him that swears a brother's life away,
To swear his information is the last word that he'll say,
To swear distress and sickness to his near and dear relation,
To swear his soul unto——

“Telegram for your Riverence,” shouted the waiter, throwing open the door.

The priest started, and dropped the ballad. He very seldom had communications sent to him in this way, and wondered what the important intelligence could be. Perhaps they had made a bishop of him. Or, perhaps, as was more likely, he had been suspended on account of his dangerously liberal views, and the unclerical character of his last book of poetry.

“Hand it over you rascal,” he shouted to the waiter, who was carefully examining the envelope, as though by that means to become acquainted with the nature of its contents.

When he did hand it over, he stood by

the side of the priest, expecting to have his curiosity, which was very great, satisfied. But his Reverence told him to “begone,” so he fled from the room, and closing the door, applied his ear to the key-hole.

The priest tore open the cover, and proceeded to read the telegram.

“From The O’Banagher. ‘Murphy arrested to-night in Dublin. Break news to Norah. I return to-morrow.’ This *is* news.”

Both gentlemen rose and looked at each other.

“This is a most iniquitous farce,” exclaimed Edgehill, “now the chances are that the real culprit will never be apprehended.”

“And the informer who procured this arrest will probably come down upon you for the five hundred pounds,” said the priest with a smile.

“I’d advise him not to apply personally, as the consequences might be serious. I’ll show the magistrates my opinion of their sagacity by posting another notice tomorrow, offering a thousand pounds for the capture of the real offender. This is outrageous.”

“Meantime, we must think of others,” said the priest, quietly, “the news must be broken to the daughter—and, if you have no objection, I think you might accompany me. Morally, you are the prosecutor in this case, and the repeated assurance of your belief in Murphy’s innocence may be very grateful to her at this trying moment.”

“I’ll accompany you with pleasure,” said Edgehill. He had no qualms now about visiting High Street. He had been there frequently since Murphy’s flight. He felt a savage desire that those who had treated

him cruelly should know of these visits. They had suspected Murphy, as they had suspected him, upon insufficient evidence. He would protect the woman who was suffering from the persecution. He had forgiven the editor even, and asked his pardon.

He rang the bell, and the summons was answered with such wonderful alacrity that it was quite evident that the waiter had been listening to their interview outside the door. Edgehill ordered his great coat and a couple of umbrellas; and they passed out together into the street. A melancholy dripping street. The wind swept round the corners, and the moaning of the sea mingled with the pattering of the rain. Not a soul was abroad, and there were lights in but a few of the windows.

Fortunately, High Street was at no great distance, so they forced their way cheer-

fully through the storm, and were pleased to find that there was light in the window of the house next door to the office of the "Ballymareen Eagle." Two policemen still kept weary watch on the steps before the door. Poor men, they were terribly drenched, and nothing could have sustained them, save the hope of gloriously capturing the fugitive, when he should attempt to effect an entrance into the house.

The priest rang the bell. The servant opened the door, but kept the chain up—reconnoitering. She was determined that the officers should not take the castle by surprise. Seeing the priest, however, she quickly undid the chain.

"Is Miss Norah in?"

"Troth, she is yer Riverence, an' it's glad she'll be to see you, Sor,"

The priest knocked at the parlour-door and went in with Edgehill following. That

sitting-room was much more tastefully arranged than during its owner's occupancy. The confused mass of miscellaneous articles had been removed from the sideboard, and in the place of the cigar-boxes and candlesticks that were wont to repose there, flowers were arranged in vases and some plate glittered in the firelight. In a low rocking-chair by the side of the fire, but facing the door, sat Norah. In one hand she held a little Chinese screen, keeping the heat of the flames from her face, and in the other Father O'Brien's Ballads, one of which she was humming to herself.

Norah had her own ideas about costume, and was by no means conventional as to the times and seasons when certain things should be worn. She wore whatever suited her, whenever it suited her. And everything suited her always. At present she was habited in a loose robe-de-chambre made of

rich purple material descending from her throat to her heels, without being drawn in at the waist. It was open at the neck, affording a glimpse of her exquisitely beautiful bosom. The wonderful plaits were undone, and her rich black hair fell about her face and over her shoulders as she rocked herself to and fro, leaning back in the low chair; one of her little feet was exposed, moving quietly backwards and forwards. Evidently she was not dressed for the reception of visitors; and, indeed, who could have expected arrivals at such an unearthly time of night? However, she displayed not the slightest embarrassment, but rose from her chair, and laying down the screen, held out her hand to the priest in the old frank manner, and then to Edgehill, at whom she looked somewhat demurely.

“I don’t mind Father O’Brien, but I must apologise to *you* for my costume.”

"I have to apologise for this intrusion. In whatever costume you appear, you always look charming," said Edgehill.

"Well, do take a chair. You're a sad flatterer," she said, holding up her finger reproachfully, thereby causing the wide sleeve of the robe to fall back, displaying the wonderful symmetry of her white arm.

"No," said Edgehill, seating himself and denying the charge of flattery. "I'm only an artist and speak with professional enthusiasm."

Norah bowed and sat down again, exhibiting just a trifle less of her pretty little foot.

"You see," she said, holding the book of ballads towards its author, "I'm engaged religiously in studying the Fathers."

"I'm afraid, my child, the modern Fathers are hardly worthy of your study, particularly the poetical ones," said the

priest, not displeased at the compliment.

“Indeed,” replied Norah pouting, “I won’t allow even your Reverence to say that, because it reflects not only on your own genius, but upon my taste.”

Which of us is proof against this sort of flattery. The priest postponed the delivery of the message with which he was burdened. He beamed with satisfaction:

“I’m glad you like them,” he said.

“Like them!” cried Norah, “why, I have all the love-songs off by heart. It’s so delightful to have a spiritual adviser who can write one’s love-songs. You have read them, of course, Mr. Edgehill?”

“I have read and re-read them, and each time with increased pleasure,” answered the painter.

“Come, come! young people,” said the priest, smiling and shaking his head, “this will never do, you shouldn’t encourage

the vanity of an old man like myself."

Norah laughed one of her silvery laughs and glanced towards the harp in the corner. The priest turned to Edgehill, and said,

"This young lady has done me the honour to set some of my verses to music. I daresay, if you ask her, she'll sing one of them. You'll then see how tame the poetry is when compared with the melody. At all events, Norah and I will be able to divide the honours between us."

"I hope Miss Murphy will favour us," said Edgehill.

"I'm all obedience." She rose and seated herself at the harp and sang a little ballad called "Fickle Dennis." Commencing,

"Oh, Dennis, me darlin', don't lave me."

She sang with an amount of fervour that must have astonished the shivering policemen on the steps. She had a rich and

highly-cultivated voice, well-known to all the worshippers at St. Malachi's Chapel, where she led the praises of the people. As the concluding heart-broken appeal of the simple lyric rang through the room, her audience involuntarily applauded. She rose from the harp, and folding her arms across her breast, curtsied low, like a prima donna, and returned to her chair laughing at her performance.

"Who wouldn't write ballads if he were sure of being interpreted like that? Eh, young gentleman?" asked the priest, smiling with delight.

Edgehill avowed that he knew not which to admire more, the composition or the rendering of it.

"But to think of Father O'Brien writing love-songs," laughed Norah, tickled seemingly at the idea.

"And why should I not?" asked the priest.

“Oh! I didn’t say you should not—only,” she said, dropping her eyes, “I think it’s a great pity your Reverence should have gone into the Church.”

“Why?”

“You’re such a loss to the world, you know.”

“But, my child, I hope that a man’s being in the Church does not necessarily imply that he *has* become a loss to the world.”

“Not to the world exactly—but to the women in it,” replied Norah, enjoying the confusion which her words occasioned to her spiritual adviser.

The priest shook his head gravely. He was accustomed to Norah’s extravagance of expression, but the young Englishman might misinterpret it. He looked reproachfully at his wayward charge, and said in a tone of rebuke,

"My child, my child!" But she only laughed that gay ringing laugh of hers. Laughed at the embarrassment of the priest, at the amused expression of Edgehill, at her own easy daring.

"But," she said, pausing, "I'm sure you gentlemen have come to tell me something. Any news from poor father?"

"Yes, Norah," answered the priest seriously. "You have caused me to neglect my duty. Our only excuse for disturbing you at this hour was to bring you news of him."

She leaned forward in her chair and listened patiently.

"Your father was arrested about an hour ago in Dublin."

The effect produced upon Norah by this announcement was not exactly what Edgehill had anticipated. He looked for confusion, tears, possibly a fainting-fit. He was

disappointed. Norah's character was one that was not to be measured by casual study. Her varying humours concealed the real nature beneath. But still he had observed instances of extreme tenderness on her part—of sympathy for the distress of others, of a true woman's heart prompting to deeds only less precious than her kindly words. But Norah gave evidence of no amiable weaknesses now. She started to her feet. Her fine eyes flashed, her bosom heaved. She threw back her hair, and clenched her little hands.

“Oh ! so they've arrested him have they ? And I suppose the Fitzgeralds imagine that they have succeeded in disgracing him—in degrading me. Perhaps they think I'll fly the country or hide myself in the purlieus of a city—or——”

“Norah, my child,” interrupted the priest in a gently-soothing tone, “this is unworthy

of you. The magistrates have acted from ignorance, I don't think we need impute motives."

"Don't tell me that, Father O'Brien. They're mean and cruel. It's all Fitzgerald's doing. The O'Banagher told me so. No magistrate could have acted so from mere ignorance. It's malice, malice, malice from beginning to end. But let them take care! I'm only a girl; they regard me, I daresay, as their social inferior, but at one word I can raise the country-side." She stamped her foot impatiently on the ground and looked half-defiantly at the priest, who said in the same soothing voice,

"And Norah Murphy will not *say* that word. Her father's innocence will be supported by law and not by force. The magistrates have, no doubt, already received intelligence of the arrest, and by to-morrow the town will be filled with military and

police. A riot would be a terrible thing, and I am quite sure that you will use your influence on the side of order. Besides, your father has friends," and the priest pointed towards Edgehill. The indication had more effect upon her than the appeal.

"You recall me to myself. Mr. Edgehill, you have been a real friend to me. You will not find me ungrateful. But it is dreadful to be prevented from meeting these people face to face—to tell them how I laugh at their attempts to degrade us—to tell them that I have as much family-pride as the best of them—to make them understand that their efforts will only result in the increased popularity of my father." She reseated herself. "Oh, Father O'Brien—Mr. Edgehill, if you but knew how little I understand of politics, how little I care for them, how I despise those who trade in them! Still the arrogance and power, and the ability to use the

engine of the law to crush their enemies possessed by these people, makes me almost believe in the sort of nonsense which is advocated in the leading columns of the 'Eagle.' "

She was suddenly silent, but broke out again,

"For days there have been two horrible policemen stationed at our door, as if thieves and swindlers resided here. I have pretended not to notice that insult—borne it silently in the hope that the murderer would be arrested without subjecting us to this public exposure."

Glancing up, she caught the look of parental reproof on the priest's face. Her passion had spent itself. She rose and threw herself at his feet. Her cheeks were pale now. She looked wistfully into the old man's face, and said with an air of deep humility.

"I've been naughty, Father. But it's over. Forgive me and bless me."

Edgehill didn't know whether it was the custom generally among Irish priests to accord forgiveness as his Reverence accorded it. He kissed the beautiful suppliant on the forehead, and raising her from the ground conducted her to her seat. She looked her thanks through swimming eyes, and made an effort to assume her old air of gaiety.

"Now we must think of what's to be done. This hardened old prisoner must have proper counsel. I suppose Mr. Butler will accept a brief for the defence from the convict's daughter. Do you think he will, Mr. Edgehill?" she inquired. It was a poor pretence of gaiety.

"I have heard, pardon my bluntness, that Mr. Butler is a very great admirer of yours, and I'm sure he'll only be too glad."

She raised her eyebrows and sighed.

"Dear me! then we actually have our friends and admirers. We haven't been socially demolished *yet* then!"

The priest shook his head reproachfully and the gesture was not lost upon Norah.

"Don't be alarmed, Father O'Brien, I'm not going to be naughty again." She laughed as she spoke, but the merriment was a painful effort. "How the world has changed since those dear old times that the romancers write about. Then a lady used to throw a glove to her champion in the arena. I'm going to throw a brief to mine—a horrid roll of blue paper tied with red tape. And it's consoling to think that there is one templar who admires me sufficiently to accept that challenge."

"You have troops of friends, Norah," said the priest.

"Yes, but this is such a commonplace way of calling upon one's champions—a round-

hand manuscript from an attorney's office, endorsed—let's see, how is it they endorse them? 'Regina *versus* Murphy. For the defence Mr. Butler, Q.C., with you—' Oh! whom shall we give our learned friend for a junior? I wish you were a barrister, Mr. Edgehill. It would be a rare chance for you."

"An opportunity which I would eagerly embrace, I assure you," replied Edgehill.

The priest rose.

"The news has excited you, my child. You're exhausted, and had better retire. To-morrow The O'Banagher will be here. He has, no doubt, received full instructions from your father, and will consult with his attorney as to what counsel shall be engaged. Good-night, God bless you."

She shook hands with her visitors. It was past midnight and the rain still fell heavily. The news, however, had evidently arrived,

and the streets of the little town, in spite of the lateness of the hour and the severity of the weather, were not as empty as they had been a short time before. Constables were hurrying to and fro. Messengers were entering and leaving the telegraph-office. As the priest and his companion passed the police-station they recognised Fitzgerald's carriage standing before the entrance, and looked significantly at each other but said nothing.

When Norah heard the door close upon her friends, she threw herself back into the chair. She held her hand to her face and sobbed violently. The hot tears forced their way between her fingers, and she moaned, "Dear old father--dear old father!"

CHAPTER VIII.

A TUMULT OF THE PEOPLE.

THERE are, it is to be presumed, but few people who would have given to Murphy the advice tendered by Father O'Brien, when the news of the warrant got wind. "Why not stay and face the charge?" was the question immediately asked by Edgehill when he heard of the patriot's departure; and "Why not stay and face the charge?" is the question that ninety-nine sane persons out of a hundred would propose on hearing the innocence of the fugitive asserted. A

flight, a disguise, a hiding away in suspicious houses—these would be strong arguments from the mouth of a prosecution. One thing, however, is quite certain, that the apprehensions of his Reverence were proved to be founded on an intimate knowledge of the human nature existing in Ballymareen.

With the approach of dawn the rain had cleared away, and before the sun rose rumours of Murphy's arrest became current in the town and its vicinity. People on their way to daily toil, learning of it, returned to their homes, and depositing their spades there, made for such centres as would be likely to furnish them with accurate information. For one day, work might go to the devil. Their champion and protector was in peril; until his affairs were satisfactorily settled, their own might wait.

By eleven o'clock in the day, the streets were quite full of anxious and sullen men. Precisely at that hour, the little editor of "The Eagle" did, with his own hands, place

in the office-window a large placard announcing that on the next day would be published in "The Eagle," a full account of the arrest of Michael Eugene Murphy, Esq., in Dublin ; his appearance before the magistrates there, and leading articles expressing the intense disgust of the populace on hearing of these tyrannical proceedings. Half an hour later, the editor placed a second placard in the window. It was signed Francis Edgehill—expressed the surprise of its author at the arrest of an innocent person, ventured a hope that the people would not be led astray by the mistakes of others, and offered a reward of One Thousand Pounds sterling to anyone who could give evidence that would result in the apprehension and conviction of the murderer.

These manifestoes caused the wildest commotion. No such scene had been witnessed for many a year. Some indeed called to mind the fearful disturbances that had taken place some fifteen years before, when the

police, instructed by the magistrates, had attempted to disperse a meeting assembled to celebrate the Release of the Martyrs. But it is questionable if, even on that occasion, there was the same wide-spread sentiment of indignation.

The police, afraid to interfere, made no attempt to send the people about their business. The gallant fellows affected not to hear the remarks which were flying about in all directions; remarks, the reverse of complimentary—and some of them in the Irish language conveying the bitterest sentiments of hostility. Rustic orators now and then addressed themselves to portions of the crowd, calling for cheers for Murphy, and groans for the authorities. Requests that were responded to with great heartiness.

At one o'clock a detachment of the 41st arrived from Fermoy; those warriors were greeted with derisive howls and angry hisses, and insulted with various observations, which elicited much laughter from the mob. "Och

be jabbers, ye're not all come to hould wan man, are yez?" or "Throth, it's a brave lot ye are entoirely," or "Git out, ye damned mudherin'-machines." The soldiers marched silently on to the quarters prepared for them—the most of them amused at the peculiar humours of the Ballymareenites, though some of those who had lately joined displayed unmistakable signs of anger and impatience.

The reception given to the soldiers, however, was complimentary when compared with that accorded to the re-inforcement of constabulary which arrived shortly afterwards. They would not condescend to groan and hiss this hybrid force. But pointing with their fingers, joined in that derisive laugh cultivated by the Irish peasantry, which coming from their mouths conveys an amount of contempt and bitter hatred, that I have never heard equalled by any other form of insult. It was not the good-humoured laugh which a London crowd will

sometimes raise round a "bobby" who has done something ridiculous. It was the concentrated essence of hatred—a prolonged, malicious scoff. The unfortunate objects of their derision were too well accustomed to these marks of public disapprobation to pay much attention to them. After a short consultation among the magistrates, it was determined to place bodies of police and military at the top of the main streets, ready to act in case of emergency. Forbearance was urged upon the men; and supported by a strong sense of duty, they took up their positions, and bore the insults of the crowd with a fortitude that, under the circumstances, might be counted as good humour.

The arrest of Murphy was a source of great satisfaction to the Fitzgeralds—at least to the heads of the family. The Justice of the Peace who regarded it as the crowning triumph of his own sagacity and promptness, assumed an air of great importance, and dashed backwards and forwards between the

town and his mansion at least half a dozen times that day. He had completely worn out one of his horses, so great was his energy and enthusiasm. If the Government failed to acknowledge his magisterial qualities after this instance of them, he would be very much disgusted with the Government. In his public capacity he expressed a dignified satisfaction. In his private capacity he chuckled over the chance which seemed likely to bring about one of the main objects of his life—the removal of Murphy from Ballymareen, and the consequent peace and quietness of that agitated town. Mrs. Fitzgerald, who fondly believed that her husband possessed a genius for legislature equal to that of Solon himself, and who had frequently urged him to contest the borough against The O'Banagher, of whose legislative qualities she held the meanest opinion, rejoiced with her helpmate and congratulated him on the success of his efforts.

Kate felt none of the enthusiasm that

kindled in the breasts of her parents. To her the arrest of Murphy seemed a very minor affair indeed. What her mind dwelt upon was the fact that her lover had espoused the cause of the wretched man, and espoused it because he loved his daughter.

That discarded lover of hers was walking uneasily up and down the dismal Commercial room of Molloy's Hotel, endeavouring to drive Kate's image from his mind. Like the disappointed young hero of Locksley Hall, he cried out to that image twenty times a day,

"No, you never loved me truly—love is love for evermore."

But he was mistaken. She did love him. To herself she denied the fact every hour. Her love, she believed, was entirely eaten up with hate. He was utterly unworthy of her. She would make a supreme effort some of these days to forget all about him. The events now transpiring necessarily recalled him; he was mixed up with them all. But

when things settled down, then she would pluck the memory up and cast it from her for ever. Sometimes she mused on the conversation over the chess-board. How terribly ominous it had been. Had he not said in the twilight then that nothing could alter his love. And she, believing him, had suggested that though the love might remain the same, some unforeseen circumstance might part their lives. Perhaps that was true. Possibly he still—No! no! such a reflection only increased her distress. Had she not witnessed his baseness, and did not every day afford some fresh instance of it?

“He never loved me,” she sighed, “and I have ceased to care for him.”

A statement which was explicitly denied by her pale cheeks and sad longing eyes. I protest there is no picture more melancholy than that of two young lovers separated by an accident at which their lives must diverge—both loving—each believing the other false. Would they get over it? They had sur-

vived the blow—that, at least, was something. They were convalescent—that was still better. By and by they would be quite well. Would that be best of all?

A wonderful change from the riotous commotion of Ballymareen to the calm of Fitzgerald's library. Kate sat in the very embrasure where Frank had first hinted distinctly at his love. The trees and grass on the lawn were still dripping from last night's rain. The sun was struggling through the clouds, and the birds, anticipating a favourable change in the weather, sang merrily in the laurel-bushes. From the stable-yard came sounds of the groom's wooden shoes clattering over the stones, and now and then the clanking of the iron handle of his pail, and again the dash of the water over the panels of the brougham. Kate sat and looked bitterly out of the window, and hearing these sounds, heard them not. Her mother sat near her, smiling with a satisfaction which she could not suppress, and

employing her busy fingers on a piece of needlework. As Kate heaved a sigh, her mother dropped her work and said tenderly,

“Kate, my dear, you must try and be a brave girl. You’re ruining your complexion by thinking of one who is quite unworthy of you.”

“Oh, mother, don’t,” cried Kate, “I’m trying to forget—trying hard.”

“That’s spoken like my own daughter. I can understand your feelings, but I really think you should have no difficulty in forgetting one who takes the part of a wretched murderer—the murderer of his own uncle too! Why it’s worse than anything I ever read about even.” The good lady’s reading was not very extensive, but she evidently considered that, her researches not having yielded her such an instance, no such instance existed. More experienced readers than Mrs. Fitzgerald often make a similar mistake.

“It’s not that, mother. Mr. Edgehill may

believe in the man's innocence. Indeed, I'm sure he does. No it's not that."

"But, my darling child, what else can it be? Surely you can't conceive of any one's believing in Murphy's innocence. I always said that wretch would do something desperate ; and now he's done it, you see," said Mrs. Fitzgerald in a tone that implied that Murphy had got himself into trouble for the express purpose of verifying her predictions.

"I could have excused that, mother—had he been true to me ; but to think that he was deceiving me all the time, that I should have fancied he loved nobody in the world but me—when—when—Oh, I can't bear to think of it!" She pressed her hand to her side and sobbed.

"There now, my poor child, don't think about it. No tears, for I declare here's father."

At that moment they caught sight of the energetic magistrate dashing along the

avenue, his horse in a lather. Kate brushed away her tears, and in a few minutes her father was in the room.

"There's awful work going on in the town," he exclaimed, "and I must go back immediately. Let me have a bit of something to eat at once. They can't do anything without me down there."

"What's the latest news, dear?" asked the anxious wife ringing the bell at the same time.

"The latest news is that young Edgehill is a rascal. I'm blessed if I don't think he's joined the Fenians. He has issued a proclamation of the most inflammatory kind, containing a gross contempt of our authority."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Fitzgerald. "But can't you get an injunction from the Court of Chancery restraining him?" It has been observed before that this good-lady's knowledge of legal procedure was of the most limited description.

"The Court of Chancery has nothing to do with it," replied the magistrate in a supe-

rior tone, "but I know what I'd do if I had my way. I'd put him into the dock with his friend Murphy."

Kate gave a little scream and turned a degree paler.

"Don't be alarmed, my child. I have consulted my clerk and find that the law won't allow me to go so far. I declare a magistrate has no authority in these days; no matter to what side we turn we are fettered by absurd enactments. Had I the amendment of some of these same laws, I'd soon show young gentlemen that they could not insult a magistrate with impunity."

"That you would, my dear," rejoined his wife, with a pride not merely pardonable but commendable.

"Father, dear, don't discuss the matter any more—it pains me," said Kate, going up to him. He kissed her tenderly, and went off to the dining-room, where we will leave him refreshing himself with a cold luncheon and reflecting bitterly on the limited

powers vested in Justices of the Peace. Fitzgerald was in reality one of the best fellows in the world—warm-hearted and generous, but impulsive and hot-headed. A devoted friend but an implacable enemy. In one word, an Irishman.

As the day wore on the tumult in the town increased. Up to the present there had been no absolute encounter between the mob and the armed forces. But there seemed to be every prospect of one. The magistrates had determined not to interfere unless some violence were committed. As long as "the boys" confined themselves to howling and twirling their shillalags about, and marching up and down the streets, they were to be let alone. Even the small colony by the cliff, usually so dead to political events, was now stirred to its little centre. Tarpaulin hats were seen here and there among the caubeens, and the mariners united their voices with those of the agriculturalists

and townspeople in singing the praises of Murphy and in deriding his enemies. All the streets were tolerably full of people, ardently hoping that sooner or later a constable or soldier would tread on the tail of one of their coats. The principal crowds were three in number. One assembled round the entrance of the Town-Hall, execrating the magistrates supposed to be conspiring there. Another in front of Murphy's house doing honour to its absent lord by fervid exclamations of devotion. A third about the door of Molloy's Hotel, where Edgehill was staying, singing the praises of that young Saxon for his generous championship of their natural leader.

Edgehill, who had been accustomed to an easy-going artist's life, by no means appreciated these tokens of a suddenly achieved popularity, and prudently resisted the efforts put forth to induce him to address his admirers. He walked nervously up and down the torn and faded carpet of Mrs. Molloy's

Commercial-room, afraid to go out and irritated at being obliged to remain a prisoner. It was a great relief to him when Father O'Brien called in the afternoon. The priest had little to tell. He had received a second telegram from The O'Banagher, announcing the fact that he would not return as promised in his first dispatch, but would endeavour to come in the same train as the prisoner. The celebrated Mr. Butler had arrived, and was at present in High Street with Norah, consulting with that lady about her father's defence. Norah more accustomed to the ebullitions of the Ballymareenites, had none of the dread experienced by Edgehill. This popular clamour pleased her. Far from being under a cloud, her father's reputation shone more resplendent. For once in her life, she felt heartily grateful to the howling supporters of her parent, and evinced her gratitude by appearing occasionally at the window of her father's house, when she was saluted with ringing cheers, twirling of shillelaghs, doffing of

caubeens, and patriotic shouts of "Oireland for iver!" "Hurroo for the masther!" "Never fear alana, not wan dar hurt him while we're to the fore!"

The outbreak, hopefully expected by the military, did not take place. As the twilight came the rioters began to feel the pangs of hunger, and the effect of their bellowing upon throat and lungs. First the tarpaulin hats disappeared, entering the little white cottages over the hill. Then gradually the whole concourse melted away, and when the moon rose over the sea, the crowds had dwindled down to three or four insignificant little groups gathered about the doors of the public-houses.

Next day the streets were filled from a very early hour, and a fresh source of excitement was discovered in the presence of a body of hussars that had come from Cork in the night, and that pranced about the town in order to keep the thoroughfares clear. The cavalry was in less favour even than the infantry —

being actively engaged in opposing the wishes of the people. The foot-soldiers standing at ease at the heads of the streets, and grinning over the muzzles of their guns, were simply contemptible; these mounted soldiers careering through the town on neighing chargers were altogether detestable, and the mob expressed its dissatisfaction in the fiercest epithets in the whole mob-lexicon. Their attention was diverted at eight o'clock, when the "Eagle," was published. The first edition of the paper was exhausted in a surprisingly short time, even those who could not read, purchasing it in the hope of hearing the news spelt out to them by somebody who could. The "Eagle" contained a full and glowing account of Murphy's arrest in the Prince's Theatre. Of his undaunted behaviour before the Dublin magistrate. Of his many and glorious achievements in the popular cause. The account ended with an intimation that the patriot was now on his way to Ballymareen, where he was expected to arrive in the fore-

noon. The news was retailed from one to another, and lost nothing in the transmission, exceedingly curious comments being occasionally delivered with great seriousness by some of the sympathisers.

“The *Prince's* Theayter ! d’ye moind that now ?” says Phelim awfully to Shaumus, “an’ I’ll be bound the Prince himself was wid him, too.”

“Divil a doubt av it,” says Shaumus, “but what *is* a theayter, Phelim ?”

“Be jabbers, it’s meself dosn’t know ; barrin’ it’s a coort or a palace. Sure, whin Misther Morphy’s in Doblin he mixes wid none but th’ ouldest nobilitee, bedad.”

Whatever mystery enshrouded these minor details of the story, one thing was quite evident, namely, that Mr. Murphy was now on his way to Ballymareen, and it behoved them as good Irishmen to meet him on the road, and give him a welcome worthy of his acceptance. About two-thirds of them, actuated by this noble impulse, left the

town and moved off towards Dunmannock. Having trudged a couple of miles in the direction of that village, they halted, and after a consultation turned into an open field by the roadside, there to disport themselves till "his honour" should appear in sight. Here they engaged in a variety of pastimes. Some danced to the whistling of others. Some engaged in single-stick encounters. Some played cards on the stumps of fallen trees. Some, more studiously inclined, lay on the grass and read ballads. Almost all smoked rank tobacco out of short dhudeens, while all displayed an amount of light-heartedness and hilarity that contrasted strangely with the ferocious aspect they had worn in the presence of the soldiery and police.

Some hours passed in this manner, but about midday, they were startled by sounds from a distance up the road. Instantly they stopped in the midst of their amusements, and rushed in a body to the middle of the

highway. Looking straight ahead they saw a cloud of dust, and through the cloud they caught a glimpse of flashing swords and glittering helmets. The clattering of horses' hoofs on the hard road, and the rumbling of wheels was all they heard. A dead silence fell upon them—and as the figures of horsemen took shape in the cloud, they parted right and left, forming an avenue through which the cavalcade must pass. When it came near, the silence was broken by a wild cheer, renewed again and again. The startled horses reared and shook their manes at this sudden cry, and the gallant riders looked surprised.

In the midst of the cavalry escort was an old jaunting-car, and on one side of it sat Murphy between two policemen. On the other sat The O'Banagher, accompanied by a gentleman, whom the boys did not recognise, but who was no other than our friend Hackett, who had come all this way for his own diversion, and with a vague idea of

making "special correspondence" out of his experiences for the Dublin papers. Murphy's moustache had been removed. But though the absence of his side whiskers somewhat altered his appearance, he was instantly recognised and cheered with a boisterous enthusiasm that warmed, what he was accustomed to call, the cockles of his heart. The shaving of his face was immediately set down as an indignity offered to him by his persecutors. It was a fresh item to be settled between them and the alien tyrant in the long account of grievances. Murphy was unable to lift his hat to his admirers in his accustomed manner, but he made a significant gesture that called their attention to the handcuffs upon his aged wrists. For any want of ceremony on the part of Murphy, occasioned by his manacles, Hackett amply atoned, bowing to the cheering mob with great affability, and alternately lifting his hat and throwing coppers to them.

When word went round that Mr. Murphy

was handcuffed, a terrific groaning and hissing was set up. But the soldiers had their swords drawn, and glared sullenly at the noisy following. So they gave up their derisive shouts, and cheered Murphy instead. He smiled and bowed pleasantly in return, the manly tear glistening in his eye. The procession moved at a slow pace, and the boys kept up with it without distressing themselves. As they entered Ballymareen, they were met by a second crowd that added its cheers to the first. A Roman Emperor returning from a victorious campaign could not have received a more flattering welcome. Cheer rose upon cheer, and the old man bowed, and the English soldiers were puzzled beyond measure. As the prisoner was driven past his own house, he espied Norah standing on the balcony unattended. She waved her handkerchief, and her sire nodded gaily.

All the available force in the town was stationed round the Bridewell — especially

about its forbidding portals. It was feared that a rescue might be attempted. The magistrates had at least made that impossible. As the prisoner left the car and was being conducted into the interior of the building, the cheers were deafening. And as the doors closed upon him, howls arose more deafening even than the cheers. It was with difficulty that Hackett and The O'Banagher passed through the midst of the rioters.

That night, Ballymareen was in a very disturbed state. The oldest inhabitant had never witnessed anything like it. Nearly every house in the town was illuminated; and exceptional non-sympathisers had their front windows smashed and their lives threatened. Tar-barrels were burned in the middle of High Street, and flags were displayed at first floor fronts. Whisky circulated freely ; and salutes were fired in numberless back yards. Disloyal songs were shouted, and national war-cries rent the air,

Had a stranger visited the town, he would thought that the inhabitants were rejoicing over some signal victory. But no! this was a Hibernian method of evincing defiance. The illuminations and the tar-barrels and the songs were occasioned by the incarceration of a natural leader on a charge of wilful murder. The magistrates, seeing and hearing these things, had sad misgivings about the morrow, when Michael Eugene Murphy, Esq. would be placed before them, to answer the charge brought against him by the police.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COURT OF COMMON SENSE.

WHEN one has spent a pleasant holiday at some out-of-the-way little spot, remote from the high roads, unknown to the ordinary tourist, and unmentioned in any guide-book, he is very likely to exaggerate the beauties and comforts of the resort, the adventurous discoverer of which he is apt to consider himself. Never before has he sojourned in such a charming village, or been surrounded by such wonderful scenery, or dwelt in such cleanly habitations, or been presented on his departure

with a bill exhibiting such a moderate sum-total. The skies are bluer there, the sun brighter, the sea moans more musically there than anywhere else in the known world—while as for the inhabitants, they are the most lively, the most beautiful, the most interesting mortals ever encountered. But suppose that some acquaintance, influenced by these glowing accounts, and on holiday intent, should accompany the explorer when next he visited the new-found Eden, 'tis ten to one that the second tourist finds nothing to his mind. The wonderful village is distant and dirty, the scenery common-place, the rain incessant, the charges monstrous, and worst of all, the much be-lauded inhabitants are pronounced to be dull when not disagreeable, and disagreeable when not dull.

I find myself very much in the position of a friend (if the reader will allow me to stretch the figure to that extent) who has basely lured his victim to disappointing retreats. I have

conducted the confiding traveller all the way to Ballymareen, which I described before reaching it, as a quiet, sea-faring little place, with white cottages on a cliff, and a youth eternally whistling and splicing oars, and a romantic little jetty, over which the white crests of the waves dashed, and a little Protestant church on a hill—a great desideratum to the British tourist. But after spending several weeks in the place, my too confiding friend begins to grumble. The jetty is a delusion, the fishermen quite ordinary mortals, and the boy who whistles on the cliff becomes a decided bore. The whole population has been set by the ear. There has been an unending succession of murders, riots, assaults. The only respectable family in the place has fallen out with the only respectable visitor to it. Everywhere there is ill-feeling, hatred, malice, uncharitableness. Even Father O'Brien is disagreeable because of those everlasting ballads of his, and——And to all this I bow, the

head pleading guilty. Two circumstances I must insist upon, however. The weather has been very fine indeed—for Ballymareen; and the proceedings have been diversified by a short trip to Dublin. It is too late now to select another watering-place. The autumn grows late. Besides, with this chapter will end the turmoil and the strife. In the very next chapter we will bundle up our knapsacks and start for town.

On the morning following the incarceration of Murphy in the Ballymareen Bridewell, the streets were as crowded as upon the two previous days. But the people observed a great decorum. Anxiety and curiosity kept them within bounds. From an early hour the approaches to the Court House were thronged. At eleven, the doors of the building were opened, and as many as the gallery would seat were admitted one by one. Occasionally a groan was uttered as a cavalry officer backed into the surging mass, and the

officials of the Court were vigorously hissed as they strode through the portals. On the whole, however, a decent silence was observed, the greatest anxiety being evinced for the fate of the prisoner who was about to be tried within.

The interior of the Court House was inconveniently crowded. In the gallery there was not an inch of spare space. A loud buzz of conversation filled the air. On the solicitor's form in front of the bench sat Norah Murphy, looking radiant, with a rose in her hair, the very latest importation in the way of hats on her head, and a heavy seal-skin jacket enveloping her adorable person. Beside her sat The O'Banagher, who had been advised not to take his seat on the bench, and who was very glad indeed to act in accordance with that advice. Under the bench, and facing the audience, was the magistrate's clerk biting the top of a quill and listening to the conversation of the editor of the "Eagle," who sat beside him ;

and beyond the editor sat Hackett, very much delighted by all that he saw and heard. On the raised bench behind Norah were seated Mr. Purdon, the attorney for the prosecution, and Mr. Butler Q.C., who was reading a newspaper and taking not the slightest notice of the gentleman opposed to him. Father O'Brien came in, accompanied by Edgehill. Room was made for these arrivals next The O'Banagher, who offered his hand very frankly to Edgehill, and hoped that bygones would be bygones, and Edgehill returned the pressure hoping so too, though at that moment he had forgotten all about his encounter with the little statesman.

At twelve o'clock Fitzgerald took his seat upon the bench alone. His brethren, dreading the ordeal at the last moment, had sent in pleas of sudden indisposition. A loud cry of "silence." Then the buzzing ceased; and after a few preliminaries Michael Eugene Murphy was called for, and was led

into court, and conducted to the dock by two policemen. The dock stood at the side of the bench, so that the prisoner was exposed to the gaze of all. He had made his toilet with more than ordinary care. The emerald glittered in his bosom, and a white flower—emblem of innocence—adorned his button-hole. The handcuffs had been removed. There was a jaunty air about him, a light and easy swagger in his progress to the dock, and an extra ruddiness in his rosy cheeks. He touched his fingers to his lips as he caught sight of his daughter. And then turning toward the gallery, bowed to his supporters, there smiling serenely the while. This was too much for those devoted and enthusiastic creatures. A man in the front row shouted out at the top of his voice, “More power t’ye Misther Morphy !” on which those behind set up cheers of mingled defiance and encouragement. To these demonstrations, Murphy bowed again and again, while Fitzgerald red with rage

struck the desk in front of him and shouted, "Constables, clear the Court."

Mr. Butler who had been quietly perusing his paper, quite dead apparently to all that passed, now started to his feet, laid down the broadsheet and removing his gold eye-glasses, letting them fall to the bottom of the string, said in his blindest manner,

"Your worship has the undoubted *right* to clear the Court, but may I request you to reflect on the consequences of hearing a charge of this kind with closed doors."

Now Mr. Butler was the last man in the world that the magistrate expected to see in his Court, and the last man in the world he wished to see there. As a Member of Parliament the Queen's Counsel had a disagreeable habit of calling the attention of that legislative assembly to the eccentricities of Irish Justices, and was regarded by every J.P. in the country as an exceedingly dangerous and meddlesome fellow. The Justice became suddenly calm.

"Are you in this case, Mr. Butler?" he asked in a tone of surprise.

"I have the honour to appear for the prisoner." A bow on the part of each.

"Well, I may overlook it for this time, but if such a demonstration is repeated I shall certainly clear the building."

"Our friends in the gallery will no doubt pay a proper attention to your worship's intimation." Saying this, Mr. Butler resumed his seat, and taking up the paper was once more lost seemingly to all that transpired. He had no brief before him, not even a note scribbled on a scrap of paper. The attorney for the prosecution, who was surrounded by voluminous foolscap, looked with admiration at this gentleman from the higher walks of the profession. *He* indeed, was quite nervous under the great responsibility, and the coolness of his distinguished opponent irritated him beyond measure.

When asked whether any attorney ap-

peared for him, Murphy merely waved his hand to the bench and said gaily,

“Proceed wid the case, Sor!”

“Do I understand you refuse to answer?”

“I decloine to hould any communication wid ye. Proceed wid the farce.”

After a few observations from the gentleman conducting the case for the police, the witnesses for the prosecution were called in order. There was quite a cloud of them. Some to prove the sound of fire-arms, and to endeavour to state the time. Some to prove the finding of the body. The surgeon to describe the wound. McFarlan to depose to the hour at which his master left the house, and to swear also to the discovery of the threatening letter written by Murphy. While these witnesses were being examined, Mr. Butler continued to peruse the paper diligently, only pausing in his researches when asked sharply by the magistrate whether he wished to cross-examine a witness, on which he looked over the top of the docu-

ment and shook his head. When, however, the clerk of the Court called out the name of Desmond O'Leary, Mr. Butler folded up his newspaper, put it into his pocket, and looked at the new witness. Desmond O'Leary was the mendicant who had sworn to the cloaked figure in the lane. He had been provided with a new suit of clothes, his face had been washed and his hair combed, and he looked exceedingly ill at ease as he stepped into the witness box and confronted the prisoner. A murmur of disapprobation ran through the gallery. But Fitzgerald glanced hastily up, and the boys, calling to mind his admonition, became hushed again. The attorney for the prosecution then put to the witness questions similar to those which he had answered on his first appearance before the sub-inspector. The attorney for the prosecution, however, ended with a question which the sub-inspector had not been in a position to propose.

“Look at the prisoner.”

O’Leary looked steadily at Murphy, who turned up his nose in the most disdainful manner.

“Now is that the man you saw in the lane?”

“Yessor.”

“That you swear?”

“That I swear.”

The attorney for the prosecution sat down, and O’Leary, imagining that he would be treated in the same way as the other witnesses, was about to leave the box. Mr. Butler however rose, and saying in his persuasive way, “Just one moment, my good man,” the witness came back looking rather sheepish. Butler was a man who occasionally lost his temper in cross-examination. He had at times however a habit of eliciting fatal facts, with the demure air of a physician consulting a patient. There was a good-humoured smile in his face as he scanned O’Leary from head to foot. O’Leary, on the other hand, dropped

his eyes and began to trifle nervously with the edge of his caubeen.

"You've sworn to tell the whole truth, haven't you?" was the first question.

"Ay, an' I *have* tould the truth. That's the man I seen in the lane," replied the witness, blustering and pointing to the dock.

"Pardon me, I didn't ask you anything about Mr. Murphy, I'm anxious to hear a little about yourself."

"No offence I hope, Sor."

"None whatever. I think we've had the pleasure of meeting before, Mr. O'Leary?"

"I dar say, Sor."

"Oh! come now," urged the counsel in the tone of gentle remonstrance used by a parent to a pet child, "come now, you musn't disown your old friends."

"Most like I have seen yer honour somewhere. But I disremember."

"But you know you've an excellent memory, Desmond, you've just been swearing

very positively. On your oath, where did you see me last?"

"Let me see," said the witness tapping his forehead, "the *last* time, yer honour said, I think."

"I think I did."

"Och! sure I remimber now. It was at the Punchestown Races, last year, yer honour had the bad luck to back Penny Whistle."

This raised a slight laugh against Mr. Butler, but did not seem to ruffle his temper in the least.

"I hope you were more fortunate, Mr. O'Leary. You're quite right, I *was* there, though I don't remember to have seen you. Now that you have given evidence of such an excellent memory, may I ask you to throw it back eight years?"

The witness nodded.

"To the assizes at Carlow?"

The witness nodded again.

"You remember that event?"

"Throth I do."

"I think it was at that time that we had the pleasure of making each other's acquaintance."

"Bedad the pleasure must have been all on wan side then. It was none to me."

"If I remember rightly, it became my disagreeable duty to ask you a few questions then."

"A few hundhred, yer honour manes. Ye puzzled me entoirely, an' made me swear what I niver mint to swear."

"In consequence of those inquiries of mine you were tried for perjury, found guilty, and sent to jail. Is that so, Mr. O'Leary?"

"Divil a lie in it. But I didn't perjure meself all the same, bekase a clever man like yer honour can make a poor boy swear anything he likes to put into his mouth."

"Oh! I see, Desmond. So you never tell a lie of your own accord, poor boy; but only when it's suggested to you by a designing and clever person like myself. Is that what I'm to understand?"

“Ye’ve hit it off exactly, Sor; sure I’ve seen me own mother steepin’ herself up to the lips in perjury, just bekase she was obliging, and said ‘yes’ to everything the quiet-spoken lawyer axed her.”

“Now let me ask you, was there any ‘quiet-spoken’ lawyer suggesting falsehood to you when you made your statement to the police?”

“No, Sor.”

“No? and yet, Desmond, I find that you informed those gentlemen that you had never been in jail?”

“The divil timpted me, Sor, and he’s the next worst thing to a cross-examinin’ lawyer,” said the witness sullenly.

“But you admit that it was untrue?”

“Yes.”

“Now, Mr. O’Leary, if you’re anxious to avoid further inconvenience, try and give a direct answer to my questions.”

The unfortunate man shuffled about the witness-box uneasily, the perspiration pouring down his face.

"First of all tell me, did you at any time while in the vicinity of the lane hear the report of a gun?"

"No, Sor."

"It was a quiet night, and the report of a gun would be heard at a considerable distance?"

"I dar' say it might."

"That's right, Desmond, be very cautious. Now you have just sworn that it was nine o'clock when you left McTavish's house."

"Och, no! yer honour. Now don't be puttin' words into a poor boy's mouth. I said 'there or thereabouts.'"

"There or thereabouts; very good. Now do you see that man over there," pointing to McFarlan. The witness looked at him and then at his tormentor.

"Don't you remember asking McFarlan what the time was as you were leaving the house, and don't you recollect that he told you that it wanted a few minutes to eight?"

"Bedad, now that yer honour remoids me av it, I do. Faix, it must have been about eight when I saw the man."

"But you have no doubt about the man "

"Not the laste taste in the world, Sor."

"You recognize him, I understand, by his figure and height, and by his slinking gait."

"Yessor."

"You saw him go into the dock to-day?"

"I did."

"And that was 'slinking,' was it?"

"Well! a kind of a sort of a slink, Sor."

"Very good. Now the man that you saw in the lane—had he whiskers?"

"He might; an' he might have shaved them off too, afterwards."

"Dear me! that is really quite possible. Tell me, have you had any conversation with the police since the arrival of the prisoner?"

"We talked about it, av coorse."

"'Av coorse' you would. Nothing more

natural. And this business about shaving would be mentioned, 'av coorse.' "

"It might."

"I know it might, but *was* it?"

"It was."

"Now Mr. O'Leary you may slink away."

If Mr. Desmond O'Leary never slunk in his life before, he certainly slunk now. He wiped his forehead with the sleeve of his coat, and took up his position behind a couple of his friends of the police force, a low growl proceeding at the same time from the gallery. The attorney for the prosecution announced that he had no further witnesses to call, and Mr. Butler was requested to proceed with the defence. He said,

"Your worship, I understand, was one of the magistrates signing the warrant on which Mr. Murphy was arrested, I shall therefore refrain from saying anything about that initial blunder. To me it appears strange that any proceedings should have been taken upon

the flimsy basis offered by the evidence of the gentleman who has just left the box. Whatever infinitesimal value may have attached to his assertions has, I hope, been destroyed by my cross-examination. I have only to ask your worship, exercising the discretion which the law allows you, to set the prisoner at liberty."

Mr. Fitzgerald was amazed.

"Do you mean to say that you call no witnesses?"

"I assure you, Sir, that it is quite unnecessary. I would not insult my client, whom I am also proud to call my friend, by offering any testimony to rebut the irrelevant perjuries of Mr. O'Leary."

Fitzgerald replied,

"You seem to have forgotten some circumstances which must influence my decision—the threatening letter, and the prisoner's flight and disguise."

"If your worship will believe me, I have forgotten nothing material to the issue. I

am not here to answer for the prisoner's indiscretions, but to defend him from a charge of Wilful Murder before a magistrate who is bound to base his decisions upon facts, and to dismiss from his mind mere rumours or suspicions."

"I would strongly advise you, Sir, to produce your witnesses, if you have any," said Fitzgerald testily.

There was one certain method of disturbing the learned counsel's equanimity, and the magistrate had hit upon it. He replied with asperity,

"Your worship is aware that it is not my custom to appear in police-courts. I am therefore unacquainted with the sort of etiquette observed between the bench and the bar in such places. But I can assure you that I shall not permit you or any magistrate on the bench to advise me as to the proper method of conducting a case. I have informed you that I will produce no witnesses. You are at liberty to make any comment

you please on the fact, but you must not presume to teach me my duty. This is a magistrate's court, but notwithstanding that fact it is, I presume, a court of justice."

"It's a court of common sense, Sir," replied Fitzgerald in a loud tone, "and I request that you will reserve your comments for——"

"For another place. In that particular I will condescend to act up to your advice. I shall certainly take the earliest opportunity of bringing the matter before a tribunal to which we must all bow."

"I understand your threat, Mr. Butler, and I defy it."

"Your worship must exercise your discretion on that as on other matters," said Mr. Butler resuming his seat.

Passages of this kind are very frequent in Irish courts of justice, and are listened to with intense admiration by the gallery audience. Slight applause followed the learned counsel's parting shot. It was suppressed

almost immediately, but in any case, Fitzgerald was too much occupied with other matters to notice it or to order the disturbers out of court. Murphy's face during the entire scene was a wonderful study. When Butler made a hit he winked at The O'Banagher as if to say, "D'ye moind that now?" shaking his head disparagingly when the magistrate ventured to reply. Fitzgerald having glanced at his notes then proceeded to announce his decision.

"I very much regret," he said, "that none of my brother magistrates are present to assist in this very important inquiry. At the same time, I wish it to be understood that I have not the slightest hesitation as to my duty on the present occasion. I am fully justified in committing——"

The worthy magistrate was interrupted by two loud shouts from the passage leading to the Court. "Stand back!" "Let me go!" The shouts were accompanied by a scuffling, and a moment afterwards the door

of the Court was burst violently open. A young man, pale and haggard, with his shirt open at the neck and a gun in his hand rushed towards the magistrate. In vain the police tried to detain him. He knocked them aside like nine-pins. When he had arrived at the space in front of the bench he stood panting, and then throwing the gun down on to the floor, said in a choked and husky voice.

“I did it. There’s the gun.”

A wonderful silence fell upon the assembly, and the gun falling on the floor seemed like the falling of a beam from the roof. Of all the eyes, anxious and horrified that glared upon the self-accused none expressed sympathy. None but Norah’s, and they were filled with tears as she murmured in scarcely audible tones, “James Sheehan !” But the whisper reached the man, and he turned his wild eyes on her, and pointing to her before the whole Court, went on in the same husky tones: “I give meself up to save him, bekase he’s her father.” Two police-

men had now taken their places beside Sheehan. Fitzgerald warning him of the awful nature of the crime which he was about to confess, desired him to speak on. He made it but too evident. The motive was understood by every one in Court, from his worship on the bench down to the most illiterate person in the assembly. The bread-winners of the household put in jail by McTavish, the rent falling due, the means to meet it wanting, the notice of ejectment, the sudden hunger for revenge, the hiding in the lane. He was the author of "Another Agrarian Murder in Ireland." Edgehill looked horror-stricken as he gazed on the murderer of his uncle. And Norah sobbed as he proceeded with his narrative.

It was too plain a case even for Fitzgerald. Having consulted with his clerk, he ordered the wretched man away in custody, and turning to Murphy, informed him coldly that he was discharged. He then left the bench and proceeded to his private

room, harbouring most unkindly thoughts against Murphy and Butler, and the police and the mendicant, and in fact everybody connected with the case. Murphy jumped from the box and was soon embracing his daughter, amid the plaudits of his admirers, whom the police were endeavouring, not very successfully, to drive from the premises. Their shouts were taken up by the crowd outside, and the most unbounded excitement prevailed. But when Murphy left the Court House with his daughter on his arm, the demonstrations of delight were of a description utterly beyond the powers of the present historian.

The Popular Idol was conducted in triumph to his abode, and of course acceded to the demand for a speech. Here he entertained the majority of his admirers for an hour with the flow of his fervid eloquence, while a small minority were entertaining themselves by ducking Desmond O'Leary in a neighbouring horse-pond.

CHAPTER X.

FAREWELL.

FOR downright and unabashed selfishness commend me to the *jeune premier* of a modern novel. It may happen, however, that this extra selfishness is more seeming than real. That the author in his anxiety to keep his hero constantly before the reader presents us with a greater number of his secret thoughts than of the private ruminations of his other characters. Now the secret thoughts of all of us are selfish. It follows therefore that the more a man's musings are analysed the more selfish he will appear, and

this theory is modestly offered in explanation of the apparent weakness in that direction evinced by Frank Edgehill, the leading young gentleman in this comedietta.

While Norah was sobbing over the fate of the Sheehans, while a wail of desolation was issuing from the door of their poor cabin, while the populace were cheering their liberated chief, and sousing his perjured opponent in the muddy waters of the pond ; while in a word everyone was intent upon the interests of others, Edgehill's sole thought was, "Now I can get away from this dreadful place." And straightway he set about preparing for an abrupt departure. His first visit was to the solicitor of his late uncle, now his own.

It was arranged that McFarlan who had been left an annuity of one hundred pounds, should remain as care-taker at the Lodge till the estate was disposed of. Edgehill was raw in business matters, and received instructions from, rather than gave instructions to

the leading solicitor of Ballymareen. The responsibilities of proprietorship began already to weigh heavily upon the artist. He groaned as he listened to the lawyer's directions about opening a bank account in London, and engaging a legal man there, about seeing his uncle's agent, about valuing the furniture, about—— Edgehill interrupting him, requested that he would write all his instructions down and forward them to his London address.

“And now I think that's all,” he said to the lawyer with a sigh of relief, but in the tone of one who had satisfactorily disposed of his business.

“There's the thousand pounds, Sir, that you left with me for the informer; shall I lodge it to your credit again?”

“No, let it be given to the town for public purposes, charities, or what you please.”

“We have no charities, and the rates are more than sufficient for our public purposes. If I might presume to advise, I should say

devote it to private purposes," the lawyer replied.

"No, no! I couldn't bear to use that money. Sink a pump with it, or build the fishermen a new jetty—anything!"

The lawyer shook his head, and said to himself,

"This young gentleman won't be so free with his money a year hence."

Advised and adviser parted on excellent terms, however, the latter promising to look faithfully after his client's affairs.

Back through the crowds of rejoicing natives to Molloy's Hotel, where McFarlan was waiting for him. The faithful old servitor, dressed in sombre black, had not yet got over the loss of his master. He looked older by a couple of years, but cheered up a little when Edgehill shook him by the hand. He gave him his final instructions and referred him to his lawyer in case he should need more. He asked him to provide a vehicle for him, and to have it at the door

by five o'clock in the evening, as he proposed leaving as soon as possible. Then he summoned the ever-watchful Mick and ordered him to pack up his things, which that garrulous menial promised to do amid many expressions of regret that his honour should "lave 'um so sudden."

From Molloy's down to the cottages by the cliff. It was a clear, cold day, and the sea sparkled under the sun. But Edgehill thought that a spirit of melancholy pervaded everything. The music of the waves was a dirge, the shriek of the sea-bird a cry from a lost spirit, the sound of the water under the jetty an awful sobbing, the strange stalks in the garden-patches, funereal emblems, and the cold wind whistling through the dry grass on the cliff's edge, the voice of an unseen Fate. Still in the cottages there were bright honest faces, and as the disappointed man saw the sun-burnt children, and took them on his knee and kissed their innocent little faces, he felt that there was something

in Ballymareen that he was sorry to leave; ay! and reflected gratefully that a poor honest heart or two would bear him in kindly remembrance when he was far away. It was a sincere "God bless you" that followed him when he turned to go.

From the cliff to High Street. Before Murphy's house "the boys" still rejoiced loudly, and cheered the artist as he knocked at the door. There was great talking and laughing in Murphy's parlour. Murphy, restored to the bosom of his family, was in high feather, and was relating graphically the narrative of his adventures to a select audience. The O'Banagher was there with his young friend Hackett, and Mr. Butler and the parish priest. A really distinguished audience, with two M.P's., (or "im pays," as Murphy termed them,) doing him honour under his own roof. Norah, with whom Hackett was in conversation, looked pale and distressed. Edgehill would have taken a seat near her, but the father button-holed

him, addressing him in terms of extravagant compliment.

“Be the Lord, Sir, I’m eternally obliged t’ye, and you’ll foind the ould man will niver forgit a ginerous act.”

“I merely did my duty, Sir,” said Edgehill.

“Yes, Sor! but there’s a way of perfarm-ing jooty that raises it into one of the sub-loimest of the vorchews.”

Edgehill tried to laugh him out of hyperbole.

“The magistrate was very near committing you,” he said.

“Bedad, he was very near committin’ himself too,” replied the patriot.

While this was going on, Hackett was endeavouring to make himself particularly agreeable to Miss Murphy. He was full of the small talk of Dublin society, which is perhaps the smallest small talk in the world, and was flattering himself too, that his anecdotes of the aristocracy were making a great

impression on a very charming girl whose life had been wasted in a remote village.

"Really, Miss Murphy, I am surprised that so much beauty should be content to dwell remote from the centres of civilisation. It's a real shame. I hope one of these days that you'll condescend to brighten the metropolis with your presence."

"Do you mean London?"

"Hem—no, Dublin."

"Oh!"

The simple monosyllable was a somewhat disappointing reply, and dashed the talkative metropolitan even more than the information with which it was followed, namely, that Miss Murphy had been frequently in Dublin, and didn't think much of Society there. Hackett was not devoid of tact. He changed the subject immediately.

"By the way, who's that young fellow talking to your father? He seems rather a prig."

"Do you think so?" she asked quietly,

and then calling the artist to her side said, "Mr. Edgehill, permit me to introduce you to Mr. Hackett, he says that you're rather—a—like a friend of his."

Hackett bit his lip and blushed. The gentlemen bowed to each other, with the awkward civility sometimes evinced by two men when brought together by a beautiful woman.

"I've just called to say 'good-bye,'" said Edgehill to Norah.

"You don't mean to say so! Then you musn't say it here. Excuse us, Mr. Hackett, this is a very old friend of mine. I'm very rude, it's the custom in these parts, you know. Come along!" and she went before Edgehill out of the room.

"Upon my life that's the most daring move I ever witnessed," murmured Hackett to himself.

Edgehill followed his guide mechanically upstairs. She opened the door of the room on the first-floor. It was a large apartment

with three windows looking out on to the street, and a balcony in front. It was a half-furnished drawing-room. There was a piano at one end of it, and a small card-table, half a dozen chairs, and a large ottoman. Norah closed the door, and seated herself on the ottoman, motioning Edgehill to do the same.

"I couldn't let you leave," she said, "without telling you how very very grateful I am for your kindness while papa was away."

These thanks were painful to Edgehill. He was not conscious of having performed any signal act of kindness. He laughed away the allegation of generosity and added,

"You're looking pale and tired to-day."

"I have sad cause," she replied. "I have been visiting the Sheehans. Oh dear!" she shuddered at the memory, but recovering herself went on almost gaily. "It's such a relief to get away from that garrulous boy downstairs. And so you're *really* going."

There was unmistakable regret in her tone.

"In an hour I leave this for Cork. To-morrow night I hope to start for London."

"Hope! Are you glad to leave us then?" she whispered, drawing a little more closely to his side.

"Three weeks ago," he answered sadly, "I fancied that I should never be able to tear myself away. To-day, every hour spent here is torture."

"Come! that's hardly gallant you know."

"I can't help it," he said, letting his hand touch her's, "it's true."

"I don't fish for compliment, but—but—you musn't tell me that you're absolutely glad to get rid of me."

He looked straight at her and said slowly,

"Norah, I will be candid with you. You are the cause of the greatest bitterness of my life."

"I!" she exclaimed in surprise.

"Surely you must know, you must have heard."

"I don't know what you can mean," there was a genuine surprise in her reply that forbade his disbelieving it. He must go further with his confidence.

"You came between me and the woman that I loved," he sighed deeply; her face grew paler and she drew away her hand from his.

"The woman that you loved!" she exclaimed.

"I must tell you all. I was engaged to Kate Fitzgerald. It was all broken off the day after the meeting, the day after we went to Sheehans together."

She pressed her hand to her side, and her eyes sought the floor.

"Surely you must remember. That day I told you that you had probably wrecked my happiness."

She looked up at him, and said in a low voice,

"I thought you feared a difference with your uncle. I never thought of anything

else. . . . And you loved Kate Fitzgerald, and I have——” She sighed and tapped with her foot on the carpet.

Edgehill scarcely knew what to say. He had fancied that Norah must have heard of his engagement from her father, from The O'Banagher, from the priest. All three knew of it. He dare not question her veracity. She spoke the truth if ever mortal did. She looked at him through tearful eyes.

“And although you expected *that*, you — you forgave me.”

“Not only forgave you, but forgive you. You were no willing agent. The fates employed you, that's all.”

“You have confided in me,” she said, “tell me more. Do you love her still?”

“I do.”

Norah covered her face with her hands, and trembled. Edgehill had caused her pain. To sooth her was an evident duty. He moved towards her and said softly, and

with that utter want of tact in tracing the causes of emotion which characterises many of his craft,

“Don’t be distressed on my account. It’s all over now. I must only learn to forget.”

She started back, and removing her hands from her eyes, exclaimed,

“Forget! and you call *that* love?”

Edgehill coloured slightly. It was a selfish sort of admission. He did not improve it by adding,

“What can’t be cured must be endured.”

“A shopkeeper’s philosophy,” she said bitterly, “if I loved, it would not be with that love.”

“Then have you never loved?”

“Once—a little—but——” after a pause, “perhaps you’re right after all, and I shall forget—forget.” She looked reproachfully at Edgehill as she spoke. Then a silence fell upon them, each guessing at the other’s thoughts, each failing to read the riddle. Suddenly, and with a change of manner

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which surprised Edgehill, and proved Norah to be an actress of no ordinary powers, she said in her old frank and merry way,

"This is very foolish, isn't it?" Let us talk of something else. And so—and so you're going back to London."

"Yes."

"That's a wonderful place for forgetting," she went on, "so much to divert, the opera, the clubs, the Row."

"I've seen sadder faces in the Row than any where else in the world," replied Edgehill, with the air of a philosopher.

"How strange! Those are the faces, I suppose, of people who don't forget."

"I don't know," said Edgehill smiling. "But I can assure you that I'm not likely to forget you in a hurry, and one reason of my coming here to-day was to offer you something by which you might sometimes remember me."

She looked at him for an explanation.

"You have admired my roan mare?"

She nodded assent.

“Make me happy by accepting her as a gift. I have given McFarlan the necessary directions.”

“You’re a darling !”

Norah’s impulsiveness was as great as her beauty. She had been educated in a strange school. Her philosophy she had learned from her father. She had been guided through life without the counsels of a discreet mamma. Her manners she had learned from Mother Nature. She had only one way of denoting extreme gratitude. She leaned towards Edgehill and kissed him. Edgehill should have been satisfied with that salute, but as their lips met he flung his arm round her waist, her head dropped upon his bosom, and she gazed into his face with fond dreamy eyes, as he kissed her again and again. Attentions of this description are usually supposed to indicate a desire for holy matrimony. They did not upon this occasion. What Edgehill’s feelings

were it would be difficult to say. Perhaps he had lived long enough in Ireland to have imbibed the doctrines of the national bard—

“Then oh ! what pleasure whene’er we rove,
To be sure to find something still that is dear,
And to know when far from the lips we love,
We’ve but to make love to the lips we are near.”

Or perhaps a sense of savage satisfaction filled him, as he reflected that one lovely creature clung to him and was made happy by the caresses that another had spurned, or perhaps without motive he merely yielded to a beautiful temptation. For a few moments he was almost happy, as in silence he searched the eyes that dreamily met his, and noted the smile that played about her full red lips, and gazed on her alabaster throat, and watched the quick heaving of her bosom. There they sat in the silence, her head leaning on his breast, their hot lips meeting, conscious of a passion that was almost love.

“I’m so happy,” she sighed at last. •

“And I’m——a brute,” replied Edgehill, recalled to a sense of his enormous selfishness, and disengaging himself. They rose from the ottoman, and descended to the parlour.

Here the conversation and the laughter were as loud as ever. Norah going up to her father whispered to him that Mr. Edgehill wished to take leave of him. The patriot rose. Filling a couple of wine-glasses and requesting his friends to do the same, he said to Edgehill,

“I’m sorry, Sir, that ye can’t make it convaynient to stop wid us, but I would be the voilest of me name and race, if I allowed want of preparation to prevint me spaking the sintiments of me ould but grateful heart. I thrust, Sir, that your career through life may be a brilliant wan, an’ that the princely affloonce that has discinded t’ye may not injuice ye to lave the noble profission which ye’ve inthered, but that yer farchewn may become the goolden candlestick in which will shoin the undyin’ light of yer gaynius ;

gintlemen, I propose the hilt of our distinguished young frind."

Edgehill replied in a few hearty words, and then shook hands all round. The O'Banagher was profuse in his good wishes. O'Brien gave him a copy of his Ballads. Butler hoped to have the pleasure of seeing him in town during the next session. Even Hackett's "good-bye," was a warm one. The hospitable Murphy accompanied him to the door, followed by his daughter.

"Farewell," whispered Norah, pressing his hand.

"Good-bye, an' God bless ye, me boy," cried Murphy.

"Hurrah," shouted the rejoicing mob, and off went the caubeens, and round twirled the shillelaghs as Edgehill strode away. Thus was he leaving Ballymareen followed by the kindly wishes of everybody, of everybody except that one whose presence had drawn him to the place. Leaving without a word from her, a token, a message. Leaving

with the kisses of another hot upon his lips.

* * * *

Night-time, and the Holyhead mail-boat steaming out of Dublin Bay. The sea is calm, and the moon throws the shadow of the hills down into the waters. Here and there red and blue lights twinkle. Warm mellow rays come from the many lamps in the saloon, and there is the clatter of knives and forks, and the laughter of cabin passengers, and the hurrying to and fro of the steward's assistants bearing dishes of cold meat, and cups of tea, and piles of toast, and liqueurs of brandy. It is a cold night, and the few steerage passengers crawl from the portion of the ship allotted to them, and lie down at the side of the funnels, seeking warmth. Routed from thence they depart murmuring, but stealthily return when the enemy's attention is diverted. Besides these shivering mortals, and the captain who paces on the gangway, and the sailors who hang

about the deck, not many remain on board. The warm air and genial company, and ample repast in the saloon being considered preferable to the night winds of the bay. One figure, clad in a long rough overcoat, the collar turned up, walks moodily up and down the after-deck. It is our friend Edgehill, wrapt in "austerest thought," and smoking a cigar that glimmers red through the night. Presently another figure similarly habited emerges from the cabin, also showing a red signal. The figures pass each other, pacing up and down the deck. At last the second stops, and lowering his light says,

"Mr. Edgehill, if I'm not mistaken."

"Ah ! Mr. Marshall, glad to see you."

Here two hands are withdrawn from the deep pockets of the two overcoats, and are shaken and returned to their comfortable depths.

"Leaving the land of bondage?" said the representative of Hampton Wick.

"Yes," replied the other moodily, "never to return to it, I hope."

Side by side they continued pacing, their voices raised so as to be heard above the roar of the funnels, and the heavy crashing of the paddle-wheels.

"You've just left Ballymareen, I suppose?"

"I left it yesterday."

"Have they hanged our friend Murphy, yet?"

"No. The crime has been confessed by another."

"Hem, that's a pity. I have been flattering myself that I had procured the extinction of that fire-brand," said Marshall, knocking the ashes from his cigar.

"*You?*" said Edgehill in astonishment.

Marshall nodded, and told him the story of the dinner at "The Three Cups."

"I was pining for excitement of some kind. An investigation of Tommy Moore's statue, and the other examples of Irish genius that adorn the metropolis had thoroughly

soured me. When an opportunity arose which would enable me to gratify myself and benefit the country at the same time, of course I embraced it. I'm sorry the Munster magistrates didn't second my humble efforts in the cause of tranquillity."

Edgehill had read one or two of the traveller's books, and knew that everything he said wasn't to be taken seriously. He said nothing in reply. The two red signals moved steadily up the deck.

"By the way, I got Lord Dovecote to put your name up at the Junior Coningsby. It will be a year or two before you're balloted though."

"I'm in no hurry," said the other moodily.

"I'll be delighted to have you put up at the Garrets in the meanwhile," said the Senator, who was ever affable to men of whom he could make use, "they're more expeditious there."

"Thanks. I am a member of the Garrets."

"Oh, indeed! Sorry we haven't met before."

Edgehill sighed.

"I expect to find a great many new friends when I next drop in there." Poor fellow, his lately acquired wealth was already making him cynical. Although the insinuation was impolite, it was sufficiently unintelligible to be overlooked by a man of the world.

"I want you to do me a great favour, Edgehill," he went on after a pause.

The artist announced himself at the service of his friend.

"You know I'm writing a little book on Ireland, and I intend increasing its value by the introduction of illustrations. If you would make me half a dozen sketches of Ballymareen, I should be eternally your debtor."

The artist assured the author that nothing would give him greater pleasure. Business concluded, they fell to the discussion of general topics.

“What do you think of Norah Murphy?” asked Marshall.

“I think she’s an uncommonly fine girl,” replied his friend.

“So do I. But you’ll be surprised when I inform you that she’s an uncommonly virtuous one as well.”

“You don’t surprise me,” said Edgehill angrily.

“Ah, then you *too* have found out for yourself.”

“Sir !”

“I really beg your pardon, Edgehill. I only meant to insinuate that the freedom of her manners might suggest to an ordinary observer that—— But I fear I’ve annoyed you.”

Thereupon Edgehill surprised his friend by the warmth of his defence, and by his denunciation generally of opinions founded on appearances. When he had quite concluded his observations, Marshall said quietly,

“It’s getting rather cold and I think I’ll turn in. Sorry I’m not going as far as London with you, I’ve to pay a couple of visits in Wales. Good-night, and you won’t forget the sketches?”

“Good-night,” replied Edgehill, and when Marshall in the saloon heard his “tramp, tramp” overhead, he said to himself,

“Egad, everybody’s going mad. There’s a hundred thousand pounds spooney on a she-demagogue. He took my abuse of the parent quietly enough though. Poor devil!”

CHAPTER XI.

DAMON CONSULTS PYTHIAS.

THE world had grown older by a week, and our friend Edgehill was sitting in his studio in Fitzroy Street. He was becoming more and more cynical every day. The rumour of his wealth had gone before him and people began to crawl. The respect paid to the wealthy Edgehill, exceeded by far the respect erewhile paid to the talented Edgehill. No doubt he had grown suspicious, and exaggerated the evidences of an unmerited reverence. For my own part, I have no patience with a man who resents studied

civilities, whatever may be the motive of them. His landlady, he thought, addressed him in more subdued tones. The clerks in the bank where he used to keep his little account, were evidently affected by the wonderful increase of his balance, and the manager, who never before had condescended to notice him, came out of his private office and crawled most consumedly. People whom he did not remember to have met on any previous occasion bowed to him in the street; and a clergyman who had known him when his parents were alive, suddenly became aware of his existence, and for the first time visited the studio. Nothing can be alleged as a sufficient excuse for the inhospitable reception accorded by the artist to the Reverend Mr. Jones, or for the impertinent observations which he levelled at the worthy pastor. He was a hot-tempered youth. He felt keenly the position which his riches had given him, and burned to insult those who oppressed him with unsolicited homage.

One class alone treated him with the easy familiarity to which he had been accustomed. Those were the hilarious and noisy Bohemians who sometimes visited him. Genial and unsuspicious souls to whom the richest alderman in the city was an object for ridicule, and who regarded Rothschild as a being who did not necessarily command their respect. Their political economy was not learned from books, and questions of currency and laws of supply and demand were to them as abstruse problems as any in the world. When they had money they spent it freely, when they were without it they walked boldly into the nearest pawnshop and obtained a supply on the security of a watch, or a ring, or a suit of chain armour. There was no pretence, no shabby-gentility about them. When they were poor they acknowledged the fact, deeming it as an evidence of a very feeble philosophy to be ashamed of the inevitable. They affected velvet coats

and turn down collars, and often grew their hair to a surprising length.

To one artist belonging to this class Edgehill was greatly attached. In times of adversity they had befriended each other, in times of grief consoled each other, in times of love confided in each other. His name was Jack Romer. At least that is what we used to call him in those days. A year or two sometimes works a wonderful change, and I have recently seen his name in the Academy Catalogue as John Rowlandson Romer, Esquire. I trust he will not be displeased with the account now given of him. When he was plain Jack Romer, he was fonder of visiting the studios of other men than of working steadily in his own. He was as simple, sincere, good-tempered a soul as ever lived, and they were very few and very disagreeable artists who were displeased to see his smiling face and tawny beard appearing at their doors. Jack knew all Edgehill's secrets, knew what had taken

him to Ballymareen, had heard what brought him back. He was full of hearty sympathy, and endeavoured to rouse his friend out of the very unhealthy collapse into which he had fallen.

On the very same day that Edgehill had spoken his mind to the Reverend Mr. Jones, Jack Romer was sitting at the stove in the studio of the former, affecting to reprove his friend who sat near him for his assault on the cloth. They were smoking pipes, and two large tankards of beer stood on the floor within reach of them. From the high windows of the room you could catch a glimpse of the melancholy looking trees in the neighbouring square, and hear the rumbling of the Islington omnibuses as they passed along the Euston Road. The irrepressible Italian organ-grinder ground his melodies under the balcony, and the cheering cry of "Milk below-ow!" rent the air. The studio was in a state of some confusion. The old tapestries on the wall (purchased as a

great bargain in Wardour Street) hung awry. The lay figure had fallen down in a remote corner. Unwashed palettes and brushes lay about the floor. Two large easels stood near the light, and a quantity of canvas stood beside them. Edgehill, with his head supported on his hand, gazed into the stove and smoked contemplatively. In reply to some observation from his friend, he said,

“It’s no use, I can’t work, I’ve lost heart.”

“That’s the *money*, old boy. I’ve often experienced the evil effects of wealth myself, and I never feel in such good form as when my watch is at Attenborough’s, my ring at Dobree’s, and the rest of the family plate round the corner. You will observe that I carry those gauds about my person at present. What’s the result? Why I haven’t done a stroke of work for a fortnight.” He took a long pull at the beer, and then puffed at his pipe with redoubled energy.

“No, no, Jack, it’s not the money, it’s the disappointment.”

"Pshaw. Not a bit of it. You remember my affair with Polly Hopkins. When that perjured maid forsook me, I worked with an energy that surprised even myself. I produced my masterpiece while suffering under the tortures of that rupture, and I revenged myself by growing my beard, because I knew my pampered rival couldn't cultivate one. It must have made Polly awfully wild. I saw her yesterday in Regent's Park driving her own perambulator."

"My dear fellow I've tried to work, and I tell you I can't. I promised Marshall half a dozen sketches for his new book, and I wrote to him this morning asking him to commission somebody else. I don't know what to do!" said the painter in faltering accents.

"Take a pull at the beer," suggested Romer. Jack had an immense belief in beer. He regarded it as the most permanent support under all afflictions.

"I'll tell you what, Edgehill, if I were you

I'd write a sort of 'Sorrows of Werter.'"

"Hang it, Jack, don't chaff."

"I'm serious. You should get everything off your mind by an explosion. You're decidedly better since your attack on the clergyman. Pour forth your griefs to the world."

Edgehill smiled.

"Writing's not my trade."

"No, nor mine, but you'll find it the easiest thing possible when once you begin. I wrote an article myself once in reply to the attack Gower made on my picture in the *Fly Sheet*. It was splendid. Carson said the style reminded him of Milton's. The brutes refused to publish it though."

"Seriously, Jack, what ought I. to do?"

"Seriously, Edgehill, you ought to commence a picture for next year's Academy."

Edgehill shook his head.

"Very well, Sir," said the other, "spurn the advice of your friend, neglect the admonitions of your Romer, and tremble for

the results. Do nothing but reflect on fancied grievances, and attack parsons who mean to be civil."

Romer indulged in another draught of beer. When he withdrew his mouth from the pewter, he said,

"Edgehill, a brilliant idea has struck me. What you want is distraction. Go and travel on the continent for a couple of months, You'll be distracted by the very first Custom House officers you encounter. England expects that every man will pay his duty."

The painter looked up suddenly.

"There's something in what you say."

"Something! there's a great deal, there always is in what I say. Paris, Vienna, Rome, St. Petersburg, Jerusalem. By Jove, I don't see why you shouldn't go as far as Calcutta or Peking."

"I think you're right," said Edgehill, putting down his pipe as if he were determined to set off that very moment, "but I go on one condition."

"What's that?"

"You'll come with me."

"Quite impossible," replied the tawny-bearded one.

"You say you're not busy."

"I'm not busy, *ergo* I have no money, *ergo* I can't go gallivanting about continental capitals. I could a tale of impecuniosity unfold, only my landlady does it so much better, that I'd rather you'd hear it from her lips."

"I've enough for both," said Edgehill, "draw on me."

It was settled then and there. In a few days Edgehill procured circular notes and a passport, and left England with the light-hearted Romer as travelling companion. Both entered fully into the gaieties of the various places at which they pitched their tent. They wandered hither and thither; and as he strolled through picture galleries, or trod the marble spaces of great cathedrals, or saw the sunset over the Mediterranean,

Edgehill began to return to his right mind. In a fit of repentance he one day wrote a letter to Mr. Jones, acknowledging his transgression and asking for forgiveness. This was at Rome. And it is doing Mr. Jones the merest justice to say, that a letter from him followed Edgehill to Munich, in which the reverend gentleman displayed a faculty for forgetting which did him infinite credit.

At Munich the artists settled down. A number of their English brethren pursued their calling there, and while visiting those gentlemen Edgehill was seized with an odd desire to work. Romer and he took a studio between them and each commenced on a picture; the former on a bit of Rhine scenery, the latter on the single figure of a girl. All Edgehill's old ardour seemed to have returned as he stood by the hour before his easel. The face that he painted was not that of his model, but came from memory. It was Kate's face that grew upon the canvas, and as Jack Romer watched its progress, he swore

that he had never seen anything so beautiful. When the work was finished, a difficulty arose as to title. The friends consulted earnestly, but could think of nothing till Jack Romer recalled a line of old poetry, which the other declared to be capital, and with this quotation the work was forwarded to the awful Hanging Committee in London.

It may appear strange that in a narrative professing to give the history—or a chapter from the history—of a successful painter, nothing should be said in the way of criticism on his works. The truth is I never was an admirer of Edgehill's productions. They had a fault noticeable in the works of many others who were as well hung and as vociferously praised. There was a lack of subject in them, a lack of poetry, a lack of thought. This is, I am aware, the rankest heresy on my part. Critics never tire of lauding his wonderful powers as a colourist, his magical management of light and shade, the marvellous tone of his works. The

uncritical public take up the cry. The very school-girls talk over their bread-and-butter of the magical management and the marvellous tone. Looking at a picture by Chase, full of figures, beautifully grouped, and telling an exquisite story in a manner that every body can understand, Miss shakes her head and says gravely to her companion, "You see it wants a little more of *this* and a little less of *that*," and then proceeding to Edgehill's picture which hangs next to Chase's, you will hear a chorus of "Oh, how divinely exquisite!" "What magical, &c." Now I, as an humble member of the public, go to an exhibition not to examine wonderful tricks of colour, or to express astonishment at the feats of one who conjures with a palette knife, or to talk learnedly in the queer jargon of the studios. I go there like many other honest people to see *pictures*. The frequent infant muling and puking on the walls of Burlington House, and the abundant woman, kissing a flower, or hold

ing a letter in the light, or nursing a pigeon in her bosom, disappoint me. Nor am I reconciled to the presence of these when I find them described in the catalogue by a line out of Tennyson, or Browning, or Longfellow; nor even when I discover more daring spirits christening them out of Heine or Swinburne.

Edgehill had, however, become a fashion, and I imagine the critics found a great deal more in his works than he ever put into them. The picture painted in Munich was well hung in the Academy and extravagantly praised in the newspapers. It caused a *furor*. Never was anything so beautiful seen in Piccadilly. The artists were in Paris when these complimentary notices began to appear. The second week of May had set in. Edgehill's buoyant spirits had returned to him. He was more staid in his manner, and had become so used to the "crawling" of people, that he was not in a passion with it, or didn't notice it; or possibly the crawling was altogether the fancy of

a disordered brain. The friends were sitting at breakfast in their hotel one morning. Romer was glancing at some English papers just received. He pitched them one by one to his brother artist.

"See there, and there," he cried, with as much glee as if the delightful compliments had been paid to himself, and the half-column criticisms delivered anent his own little landscape which had been mercilessly hung close to the ceiling of one of the rooms, where it escaped the notice of everybody. Edgehill read the articles with a smile of satisfaction. When he had completed the study, he rose from the table.

"We'll go home to-morrow, Jack," said Damon.

"So we will," said Pythias.

And home they went accordingly.

CHAPTER XII.

“ Well met, honest gentleman.”

“ AS YOU LIKE IT.”

INATTENTIVE to the signs of the times, unmindful of the leading articles in English newspapers, unversed in the manœuvring of parties, Edgehill did not even know that the political history of the seven months he had spent in wandering about the continent was a most important one. There had been a political crisis. The gentlemen in power had gone out, the gentlemen in opposition had come in. There had been a general election, a general re-

distribution of loaves and fishes, and the Irish question was going to be settled AT LAST. Marshall's book had come out, and friendly reviews affirmed that the volume would go a long way towards the solution of the difficulty. These events, however, seemed not to have affected very materially the appearance of London, and when Edgehill took his first walk down Regent Street, the May sun pouring on to the pavement, he thought that the crowds there seemed as undisturbed as himself by the hurry of events. He was glad to get back. He had become resigned to the inevitable. Still in his memory was enshrined the fair face of a lost love, but it was enshrined as the image of a dead Madonna, adorable but unapproachable. He was becoming reconciled to his new position, too, and began to assume a dignified air as became a gentleman of property. He rather liked the "crawling" now, and was secretly pleased when he saw the fact of his return to town mentioned in the 'Morning

Post.' I fear he was becoming somewhat snobbish.

From his lawyer he found that the estate had not yet been purchased, but that Mr. Fitzgerald was at present considering the propriety of becoming its owner. The intelligence did not startle him. He only blushed slightly at the mention of the name. That was all. He still retained the studio in Fitzroy Street, but took chambers in The Albany as well, and furnished them very luxuriously. This was a step disapproved of by Romer. He hated The Albany, and didn't care that his tawny-beard and well-worn coat should be seen there. It was wonderful what a number of friends Edgehill made in a wonderfully short space of time. He was beginning to enjoy society. He went nearly everywhere he was asked, and he was asked to a great many places. Daughters were agreeable and mothers confidential. He was a great favourite and began to think that he might have been hasty

in his early conclusions about the meanness of people who asked him out because he had a lot of money. Are bankers really as cautious in their communications as they are supposed to be? They are sworn to secrecy. But do they never talk over our little affairs to other customers, about my frequent overdrafts and paltry balance for instance, or about the comfortable sum total that appears to my reader's credit. From some such reliable source people must have learned of the artist's wealth, they were so certain of his stability, so accurate even as to the amount of his fortune. But Edgehill had ceased to trouble himself about people's motives now. He accepted the good fortune the gods had given him, and was always gay when not alone. In secret he found himself dwelling on the enshrined face. So he determined to be very little alone. He was constant in his attendance at the Opera. Only paid one visit to the Royal Academy Exhibition. Interested himself a good deal

in races. Kept a couple of horses at livery, and appeared frequently in the Row. He ventured to bet a little, and was well up in all the sporting events. Indeed he was becoming more attached to the company of Marshall than was good for him. The Member for Hampton Wick was very much about town, enjoyed cards a great deal, and was teaching Edgehill to enjoy them too. Jack Romer saw but little of his friend now. When he called at The Albany, Edgehill was exceedingly happy to see him, but honest Jack felt somehow that he was one too many, and disliked the supercilious senator with the eyeglass whom he met there. He secretly wondered whether Damon was sacrificing himself for this new Pythias, and almost wept when he became convinced that his friend was going to pitch up Art altogether. He never upbraided him, except once, when he heard that he had become a member of the Goodall Club. He shook his head gravely and said,

"Why, Edgehill, it's no better than a gaming-hell."

"Dear old Jack," said the other, catching him by the shoulders, "don't look so glum. I stake very little, and I draw upon an El Dorado."

Edgehill was living down the memory of a grief. And after only a very few weeks of going about town with Marshall had grown sadly changed. He had plunged into the business with a new-born and welcome enthusiasm, and without a grain of the caution, or a tittle of the knowledge of the world possessed by his guide, philosopher, and friend. But he felt no fear. This was merely a little temporary excitement. In a year he would return to his easel. He was merely living a feeling down. At the present rate he would live it down in, say twelve months and at a cost of, say four or five thousand pounds. A very moderate price for permanent peace of mind.

Fortunately for Edgehill an accident oc-

curred which altered the course of his life. He was young, wealthy, unskilled in the ways of the world, and the particular friend of Marshall. I can conceive of no one in a more "parlous state." He was going to the devil by one of the shortest possible cuts. Little more than one month of the twelve had slipped past. It was a fine day in July, and our friend, faultlessly arrayed, was sauntering lazily up Parliament Street. The clock in the tower of the House struck five. The street was crowded with broughams and cabs, and great lumbering vans. Lawyers' clerks hurried from Westminster Hall, carrying bags crammed with briefs. Government clerks, freed from their desks, were rushing towards the Park to smoke a cigar by the rails, or making for the trains that conveyed them to their families in suburban Brixton or remoter Peckham Rye. Barristers passed on to their clubs, or to their chambers in the Temple. Everybody seemed intent on something, except the artist, who as he

sauntered along gazed upon the glorious outline of the Abbey, with the effaced stone slabs all round it, and the one or two poor trees that grew in the hard soil under its shadows. He had some vague thought of walking on to the Abbey and wandering among its cloisters, when he was tapped on the shoulder with a parasol. He turned hastily round. A lady magnificently dressed and beaming with delight was holding out her hand to him.

"Miss Murphy!" he exclaimed in surprise, pressing her hand mechanically.

"Call me Norah," she replied gaily. "You may. I'm married, you know."

Edgehill scarcely knew whether to be displeased or gratified by this intelligence. He had never been in love with her certainly. He was conscious nevertheless of a little pang of jealousy. Norah was a prize worth winning, and some grinning rustic or paltry newspaper-reporter had borne her off. He expressed his congratulations and added,

"The happy man is——?"

"Mr. Butler, Sir. I am now the wife of Her Majesty's Solicitor-General for Ireland."

Edgehill's little pang of disappointment vanished at this news. He was sincerely rejoiced, and grasping the neatly gloved hand again, said with considerable animation of manner.

"I'm really delighted to hear this."

"I knew you would," she replied, "but here comes Jacob."

Mr. Butler emerged from the shop of a parliamentary stationer, where he had been purchasing a recent Act. The change of political belief which had preceded his acceptance of office under the new government had wrought no alteration in his appearance. He recognized the artist immediately, shook him warmly by the hand, and pressed him to come to his hotel and dine with Mrs. Butler and himself. Edgehill accepted with avidity. Norah took her husband's arm. Frank walked by her other side, and all three

proceeded in the direction of Charing Cross.

"And now," she said, "do you know who's in town, and anxious to see you?"

Edgehill suggested her father, or Mr. O'Brien, the priest. Norah shook her head.

"Guess again."

"I really can't," said Edgehill, fearing it might be the little editor, but not liking to mention it.

"The Fitzgeralds," said Mrs. Butler.

"The Fitzgeralds!" cried Frank, starting nervously, "and anxious to see *me*." He looked incredulously at Norah, what could she know of the wishes of her deadliest enemies.

"You know," she explained, "since Jacob sold his birthright for a mess of potage——"

"My love, my love!" interrupted the senator reproachfully.

"I mean," she said, "since we went over to the other side and accepted the Solicitor-Generalship we have become great friends with the Fitzgeralds. I'm Kate's confidante,

and I can assure you she'll be anything but displeased to see you."

The painter thought he must be dreaming. He stammered out, glancing at the senator.

"But—but—their misunderstanding about me—about you."

"I explained everything to them. They've all acknowledged themselves in the wrong, especially Kate. I believe they'd have acknowledged it to yourself, only you see you're a rich man, and they are afflicted with an unnecessary amount of family pride."

The monument in Trafalgar Square seemed to be dancing up and down before Edgehill's eyes, and the foot-passengers were discerned as "trees walking."

"Mrs. Butler, you're the best woman in the world," he faltered.

"And you're so deplorably English. Can't you call me Norah? Jacob won't mind, will you, dear?"

"Certainly not, darling," replied Mr. Butler, nodding to the Chancellor of the

Exchequer who happened to pass. Butler was at that moment framing answers to one or two exceedingly inconvenient questions of which he had received notice from foes on the opposition benches, and was paying but little attention to the conversation going on by his side.

"I'm afraid you're a sad coward, Frank," said the lady.

"I know I am," replied the repentant youth.

"Why, Kate has told me with her own lips that had you gone to her at once and explained everything she would have forgiven everything. Only, you know," she added, in a voice inaudible to her husband, "you should have been more discreet in your interviews with other ladies."

"Is this really all true?" gasped Edgehill, awaking from the dream.

"Of course it is. But you're so incorrigibly English. Why there's not an Irishman in the world that would have left Ballymareen

without demanding an explanation from Fitzgerald, or if he declined to give it, without pulling the house down about their ears. Is there Jacob?"

"Who? Which? Quite so!" rejoined Jacob, still busy with questions of greater importance to the country at large.

"Where do they stop? I'll leave a card on them to-day, this minute."

"Not so fast. They're not at home to-day. After dinner we'll talk about what's to be done."

The Solicitor-General for Ireland occupied apartments in a private hotel in Jermyn Street. Norah led the way upstairs to a sitting-room on the first floor. Motioning Edgehill to a seat, she went to her desk and scribbled a note. She rang the bell, and a boy in buttons answered the summons.

"Tell them to lay covers for three; and ask the porter to deliver this note for me, immediately," the page departed, "and now you'll excuse me," she said to Edgehill, and

ran off to dress for dinner, leaving Butler to entertain their guest.

It was a broiling July day. The windows were open, and the sound of passing vehicles, the cry of those who vended evening papers, the shrill conversation of message-boys who loitered in the sun were heard distinctly by Edgehill, and still in a half-dreamy state they seemed to him voices from a far off village. With an amount of consideration which I fear the reader will scarcely think characteristic of Edgehill, his first question was about the unfortunate man Sheehan. And when Butler informed him that he had died in jail, the artist who a few months ago had been burning to avenge his uncle's murder was secretly relieved to hear that the criminal had not come to the gallows. While the table was being laid, Norah re-entered the room dressed for dinner. Frank had never seen her look half so well. Even her husband gazed on her with admiration as she ran up to him and kissed him.

Butler was a man who always liked to dine well, if simply. He had been accustomed as a bachelor to order his own repasts for many years, and as a married man he continued the practice. His wine merchant invariably took his opinion on a new purchase in preference to his own, and not a salesman in Covent Garden Market could deceive him as to the merits of a pine-apple. He would tell the weight of a salmon to an ounce, and as a judge of game he had no living equal. They sat down to the table and a meek waiter reverentially handed round the soup, and filled the sherry glasses.

"I omitted to ask about Mr. Murphy," said Edgehill to Norah.

"Oh, papa's quite well, and the 'Eagle' flourishes. I fear he's very lonely though. He talks of coming to live in Dublin, where we'll be able to see a good deal of each other." An expression the reverse of plea-

sant passed over Butler's face at this announcement. A light summer cloud, it passed away as he touched his lips to the sherry.

"And the Autobiography?" asked the artist.

Norah laughed.

"Well, that work has been kept back greatly by the elections. Poor dear father was awfully excited and busy all that horrid time."

"I heard that you had some rough work in Ireland."

"Dreadful! Jacob barely managed to keep his seat." Jacob was engaged in removing the first undercut from a turbot. "Tell Mr. Edgehill how you won the election, dear."

"It's a very mild incident I fear," said Butler, acquiescing. "I was opposed, you know, by a man named Duffy, who makes poplins or something in Dublin. He has a tremendous income, and when the address

was issued everybody said to me, 'Now, Butler, you'll have to buy your seat.' 'Devil a bit of it,' said I. So I sent round orders to all the electors of Knockmellish—that's my borough—to meet me in the Town Hall. (James, remove the fish, and tell the cook to be a little more careful with his sauce the next time.)"

"And did the electors come?"

"Every one of them," went on the senator commencing to dissect a duck. "I had Norah on the platform, and I said, 'Boys, I'm going to stand for this borough of yours again, and what's more I expect to be returned too. Now I'm told that the gentleman that's come all the way from Dublin means to pay you for your votes. That's bribery,' I said. 'D'ye hear me, boys? a crime for which you could all be transported beyond the seas. Now I wouldn't give one of you a bribe if it was to make me Prime Minister, and to shew you that I'm determined to keep you pure, I'm going to pay

all the children in your families five shillings a day to watch and see that you're not bribed by the other side.' It cost me a lot of money but I kept my seat by it."

Edgehill thought that the story was pervaded with a questionable morality, however he only laughed and said it was infinitely clever.

"Not half as good as Judge Wylie's dodge," said Butler. "I'll tell you the story. When Judge Wylie was made Solicitor-General by the Tories, he stood for Ballygraney, a city convenient to Craigavad in the County Down. The price of votes in that borough was five pounds a piece."

"Why," said Edgehill laughing, "in Ireland votes have their regular market quotations?"

"In Ireland or England, I never heard of the place yet where they couldn't be purchased, and when a place gets the name of being immaculate, it only means that prices are higher there. (James, open the champagne.)"

“Constituents imitate their representatives you see,” said Norah, “and knock themselves down to the highest bidder.”

“My dear, how can you?” said Butler, half indignantly. “Well, Wylie was opposed by an English brewer who offered ten pounds a vote, which was exactly five pounds more than Wylie could afford to pay. However he had an agent, a Mr. Dan Moran, who was a wonderfully cute chap, and Dan promised to manage the thing if his chief left it entirely in his hands. He got a cheque from his employer that would allow him to give five pounds a piece to the boys. Dan cashed Wylie’s cheque all in ten pound notes. He cut the notes in two and entered the numbers in a big book. He then went round to the electors giving each of them half a ten pound note, and telling them they’d get the other halves from him when they put Wylie at the top of the poll. They did put him at the top of the poll, and the next day turned up at the agent’s office to

get the complete note. There was Dan seated behind a great big desk, and whenever a voter came in he'd say, 'Well, Pat, what's the number of your note, ma bouchal?' Then Pat would tell him the number, and Dan referring to his big book, would say, 'Ay! well So and So's got the other half, I think you better go and fight it out among yourselves.' And faith, when they saw how they'd been sold they *did* go and fight it out. But they fought it out with Dan Moran first and foremost, and there was the devil to pay for they half murdered him, poor man."

"Isn't it very dreadful?" asked Norah, solemnly appealing to Edgehill.

Butler laughed heartily, and declared that the man who bought votes made a tangible sacrifice for his party, but added that they were indulging in talk over mahogany now, and hoped that Edgehill wouldn't give currency to his sentiments. So the conversation proceeded, the artist inquiring after his

old friends in Munster. Norah maintaining an unaccountable reticence on the subject of the Fitzgeralds, and Butler coming to the rescue every five minutes with anecdotes from the Bar mess, or from the tea-room in the House of Commons.

When the last course was cleared away, and desert placed on the shining mahogany, they left the table at Norah's suggestion, and sat each in an easy chair at the open window. Across the geraniums in the balcony, Edgehill looked silently into the street. He was full of a fearful anticipation of happiness, and longed for to-morrow, when he determined he should learn his fate. All his old affection had been revived. He knew that he loved Kate more dearly than ever. The directer rays of the sun had ceased to fall on the burning pavement. The orb of day was "slowly sloping to the West," but the atmosphere was stifling, and seemed to dance in the hot after-glow. The jaded policeman, on the other side of the street, removed his

helmet and wiped his moist brow with a torn pocket-handkerchief. The milliner's assistant looked faint as she walked wearily homewards. The drivers, with hats cocked over the nose, slumbered on the boxes of their cabs. And the waterman refreshed himself with frequent draughts of porter at the public house round the corner.

The Solicitor-General for Ireland lay back in his chair denouncing loudly the designs of the Opposition. Norah seemed uneasy in her mind, and rising frequently looked over the balcony, smiled, and glanced inquiringly at her guest. Edgehill finding it impossible in his present state of mind to join in the conversation with any degree of liveliness, and seeing a piano in the room, requested Norah to sing something. She rose at once to comply, and seated herself before the instrument.

"I'll give you Father O'Brien's latest," she said, running her fingers over the keys. And she commenced in a low tone a little

Irish ballad. There was nothing particular in the words of the song, but the melody was plaintive in the extreme, and Norah expressed the sentiment of despairing sorrow with such intense feeling that Edgehill hid his face in his hands, and the Solicitor-General for Ireland went peacefully to sleep,

“She thought I deceived, and we parted.

My beautiful Eily, asthore,

She said I was base and false hearted,

Oh, beautiful Eily, asthore.

Come back to me, Eily, I'm dyin',

Come back to me, Eily, asthore,

Come back to your lover that's sighin',

An' promise to lave me no more.”

Such was the simple refrain of the priest's song, and as the voice of the singer thrilled through the room, a gentle tap at the door was unheard. It opened, and Edgehill started to his feet as Kate Fitzgerald entered the apartment. Her eyes were fixed on Norah. The music ceased as the lovely visitor bent over the performer and kissed her. Norah, with a flush of delight and triumph

on her face, rose and taking her by the hand led her to where Edgehill stood. Kate's face was very pale, and her lip trembled. At first she dare not look up, and Edgehill was irresolute, not yet assured of her forgiveness. Gradually the beautiful girl raised her eyes. She glanced softly up with a look of beautiful repentance.

“ Frank !”

“ Kate !”

And they were clasped in one another's arms.

Fitzgerald who had followed his daughter to the room discovered them thus, and when the embrace had come to an end, he begged the artist's forgiveness in a few manly words. The artist, with equal heartiness, declared that he had nothing to forgive, and Butler awaking suddenly, looked at his watch and announced that he'd have to go down to the House without a cup of coffee. Fitzgerald, who was interested in the questions which the Solicitor-General would that night have to answer, said that he would accom-

pany him to Westminster and take his chance of a seat in the strangers' gallery.

When the two gentlemen left the room the lovers talked and talked, sighing and laughing alternately, and with the horrible selfishness characteristic of the class, utterly neglecting Norah to whom they were indebted for this reconciliation. But Norah, understanding something of their feelings, sat by the far window reading the names in the last division list till it became too dark to read, and the lamps began to twinkle in the street and the curtains in the houses over the way to be drawn. And her great dark eyes followed the lights on the passing vehicles, and watched the shadows of night fall more and more thickly. Then she called a servant to light the gas, and when the blinds were lowered, for the first time interrupted the discourse of her guests. She made Kate sit down by the piano. And once again she sang the song about love unspoken and true hearts broken. And once again Frank was by her

side turning over the leaves of the music. And once again she was interrupted in the middle of it. Her fingers touched the keys with uncertainty. Her voice faltered. She burst into tears, and fell on her lover's neck. But they were tears of great joy and thankfulness. The bitter past was fading away. The present moment promised the sunniest future. They had met once more, never to part again. Oh, never to part again.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE last chapter of a novel has usually but little to do with the story itself. When the lovers are clasped in each other's arms, and the father murmurs, "bless you," to the soft accompaniment of a fiddle or two in the orchestra, the play is really over, and the sooner you bring down the curtain the better for author and everybody else concerned in the production of the piece. It occasionally happens, however, that when the performers have succeeded in pleasing the audience, a desire is evinced to have

them out before the curtain ; and sometimes even when that desire is not distinctly expressed the actor of the leading part is thrust forward by an energetic management, and bows over the foot-lights to his friends in front. So our play being played out, the tears having been driven away, and a period of happiness manifestly inaugurated, we have ended with a tableau and completed the business, let us hope, to the satisfaction of all parts of the house. Taking advantage, however, of the good old custom we hold back the curtain and let our leading actor stand face to face with the spectator.

Two years have passed since Frank Edgehill met Kate in Jermyn Street. It is the height of the London season and we are standing by the rails at Rotten Row. The reader has, I trust, no objection to loiter here for a moment in my company. We are familiar with the scene, of course. The mounted policemen keeping the vehicles in

line. The half-pay majors sitting on green chairs placed i' the sun. The dowagers in yellow chariots looking as if they had reached the lowest depth of human misery. The Jew money-lender in his mail phaeton, gloved up to the nines, driving a pair of high-stepping thoroughbreds and smoking a large cigar. The stray shopkeeper giving his missis a look at the nobs, and seemingly very proud of his little "shay." The trees trembling on each side, the glorious sun overhead, and the celebrated effigy of the Duke of Wellington keeping eternal watch above the arch.

Lounging thus by the rails, we are attracted by the appearance of an old gentleman who stands beside us. His gloves are somewhat soiled, he carries a heavy stick. His hat is jauntily cocked over his grey hairs. In his bosom nestles an enormous emerald, and a smile of great affability lights up his florid countenance. He has been endeavouring to strike up a conversation

with a War Office clerk who, noticing his gloves, declines to have anything to say to him. Baulked in this direction he turns to us.

“Foin dee, gintlemen,” he says, lifting his hat, “foinest dee I remimber since I left Ballymareen; an’ that’s about six months ago.”

It is indeed our old friend Murphy, looking a trifle more respectable than of yore, but as affable and garrulous as ever.

“Oh! so you left Ballymareen six months ago?” This is a simple observation, but quite sufficient to set him going.

“Faith I did. Quitted it for iver. I owned a newspaper there, the Ballymareen ‘Aigle,’ I dar’ say ye’ve heard of it. But since me son-in-law, Judge Butler, was raised to the Binch as a Justice of the Common Plays in Doblin, it wasn’t thought good taste on my pawrt to publish an organ opposed to his lordship’s docthrines. So I gev it up bedad.”

We express our sympathy.

"Some very nate equipeeges here," he goes on, pointing with that awful stick of his, "but I haven't seen anything yet to bate the carriage me dawther Norah dhroives in the Phaynix Parrik."

A handsome little phaeton passes. It is driven by a gentleman about twenty-six years of age. By his side, clad in a gauzy summer material, is seated a lady, her blue eyes flashing and her cheeks flushed with pleasure and excitement. On the back seat is a grey-headed servant in a neat livery. Murphy lifts his hat to the occupants of the phaeton, and they nod in return.

"That's Edgehill the painter," says the patriot, "foin young fellow, foin gyurl the wife. Faix they tell me he'll soon be an Academaycian, an' I'm goin' to a reception at their house in Kensington, to-morrow noight."

A tall gentleman crosses the drive on horseback. A tall gentleman with an eye-

glass. To him Murphy also bows. But the gentleman only stares haughtily at the agreeable Hibernian, and takes not the slightest notice of his salute.

"Consayted young man that," says Murphy. "That's Marshall, the Mimber for Hampton Wick. It's a hard thing, Sor, for a man of eencient ancisthry to be cut be a snob whose fawther was a brew'r."

We hardly notice the senator. Our eyes are following Edgehill's phaeton, and we have recognised the grey-headed servant as old McFarlan, who years ago was in the habit of ornamenting stable-doors with chalked maledictions of the Pope of Rome. But Murphy is irrepressible.

"D'ye see that ould man on the cob. Ye don't often see the loikes of him here. That's the great Kyardinal of Doblin. He's just had a foight wid wan of my best frinds, Fawther O'Brien. The priest was too liberal for 'um, d'ye see, so he sint him aff

to Amerikee. Oh, begorrah, there's The O'Banagher takin' off his hat to me."

He is silent for a season, but recommences,

"I suppose nayther of yez was iver in Ballymareen. It's a foin place, but public sperrit is dyin' out there since the 'Aigle' caysed to be published. Throth I'm tould they're not goin' to cilebrate the 'Relase of the Marthyrs' this year at all, at all."

"They want a natural leader," is suggested.

"Faix yer entoiely roight, Sor. They've begun to knuckle to the eelien, and Fitzjurd rules suprame there. But I must be goin'. I hope to have the pleasure of renewin' our acqueentance, for I loike ye bedad. The ould exoile hasn't as many frinds now as whin held hoigh position in his native city."

He kisses two fingers of his glove at us, he lifts his hat and departs. With his head on one side, his stick swinging in the air,

and his emerald resplendent under the rays of the afternoon sun, he swaggers down Piccadilly as if every mansion on one side of it, and every acre in the Park on the other, were his own private and particular property. But no cheers follow him. The insensate cockney populace greet him with no congratulatory shouts. He gives a copper to every crossing-sweeper with the air of a monarch conferring a favour. He glances roguishly at the fine women as they pass, and whistles "The Wearing of the Green" under the very noses of the policemen. He lives quietly near Oxford Street on a pension, allowed him by Norah. By day he writes a few pages of his Autobiography and haunts the resorts where fashion and aristocracy congregate. When night falls he seeks the congenial companionship of other expatriated Milesians. To them he boasts, when in his cups, of his bygone popularity, of his son-in-law the judge, and of his "discint from the eencient nobilitee of Oirland."

In Ballymareen there is peace. For the agitator is silent, and the "Eagle" has ceased to soar.

THE END.

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