

Fairy Legends of Ireland



Crofton Croker

LONDON
COUNTY COUNCIL

SCHOOL

AWARDED TO

Vera Beeston

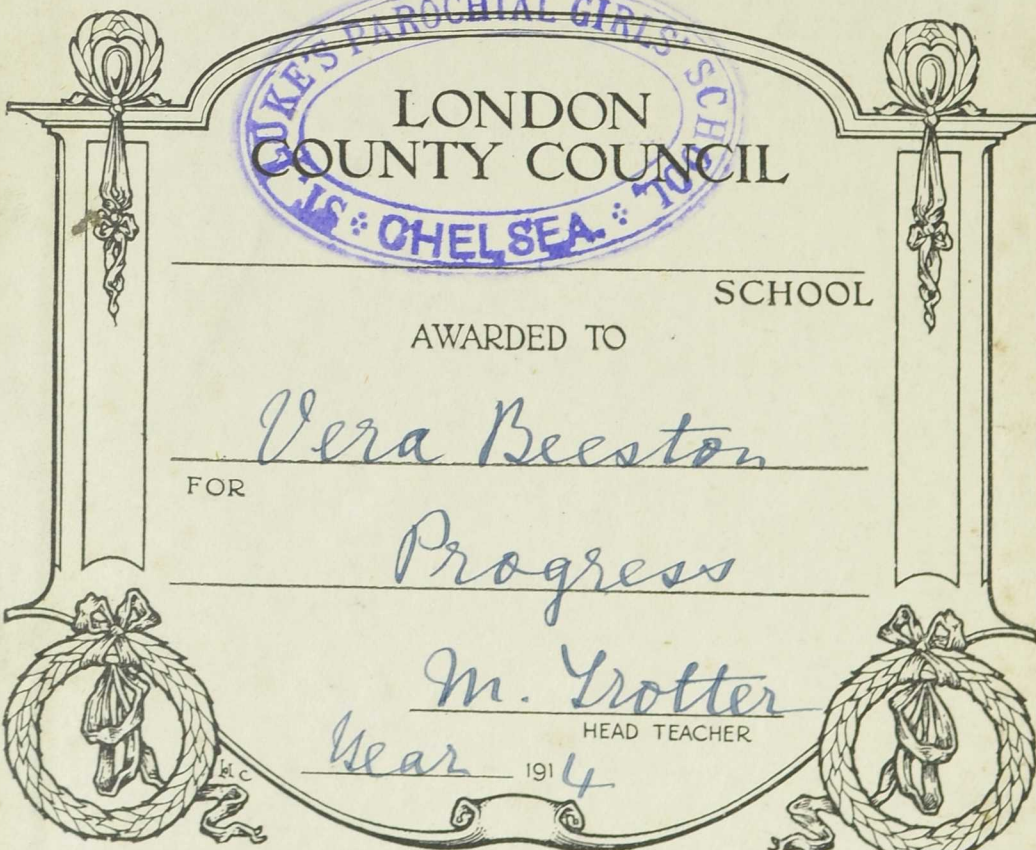
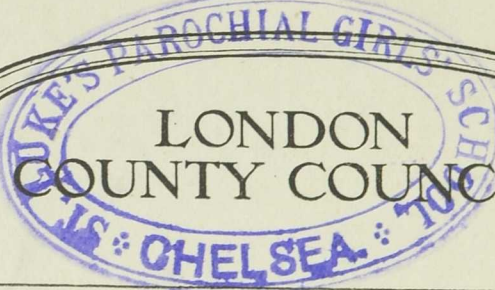
FOR

Progress

M. Trotter

HEAD TEACHER

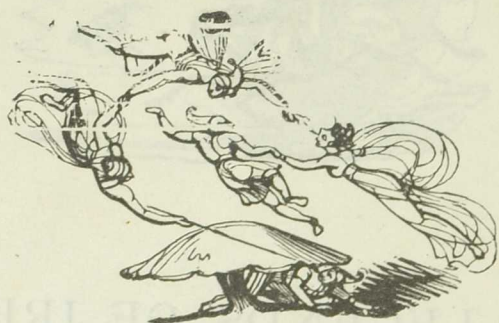
Year 1914

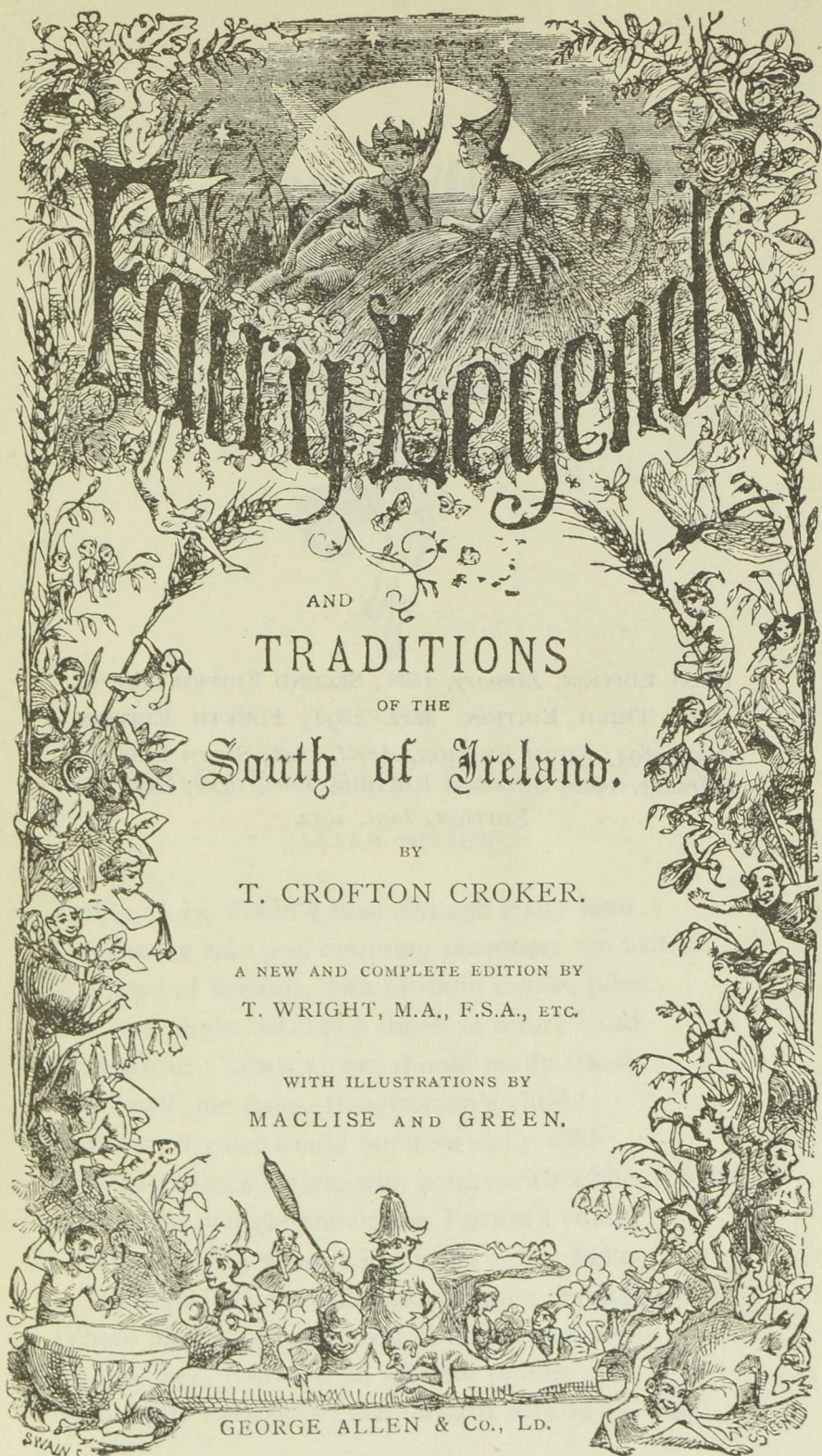


L8.50-



FAIRY LEGENDS OF IRELAND.





South of Ireland.

BY
T. CROFTON CROKER.

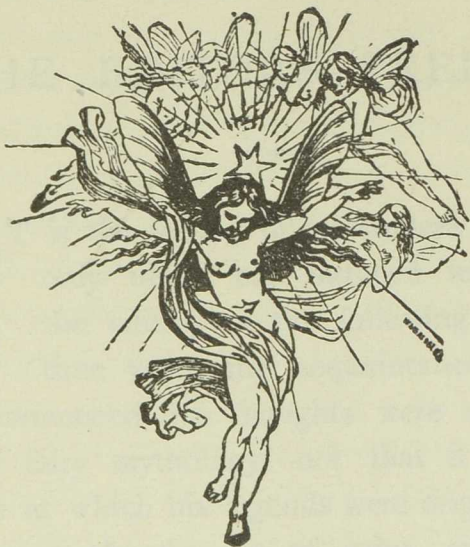
A NEW AND COMPLETE EDITION BY
T. WRIGHT, M.A., F.S.A., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
MACLISE AND GREEN.

GEORGE ALLEN & Co., LD.

All rights reserved.

FIRST EDITION, *January*, 1888; SECOND EDITION, *March*,
1889; THIRD EDITION, *May*, 1890; FOURTH EDITION,
May, 1894; FIFTH EDITION, *April*, 1898; SIXTH EDITION,
February, 1902; SEVENTH EDITION, *June*, 1906; EIGHTH
EDITION, *June*, 1912.



TO THE

DOWAGER LADY CHATTERTON,

CASTLE MAHON.

THEE, Lady, would I lead through Fairy-land
 (Whence cold and doubting reasoners are exiled),
 A land of dreams, with air-built castles piled ;
The moonlight SHEFROS there, in merry band
With artful CLURICAUNE, should ready stand
 To welcome thee—Imagination's child !
 Till on thy ear would burst so sadly wild
The BANSHEE'S shriek, who points with wither'd hand.
In the dim twilight should the PHOOKA come,
 Whose dusky form fades in the sunny light,
 That opens clear, calm LAKES upon thy sight,
Where blessed spirits dwell in endless bloom.
I know thee, Lady—thou wilt not deride
Such Fairy Scenes.—Then onward with thy Guide !



THE
DOWAGER LADY CHATTERBOX
CASTLE MAJOR

That Lady, would I had through Fairyland
Went cold and dripping meadows and
/ land of flowers with all castles piled
The midnight silence there in every land
With every CHATTERBOX should ready stand
To welcome thee—Imagination's child
Till on thy ear would burst so soft, so
The Lark's shrill, who comes with whistling
In the dim twilight when the Lark's song
/ those dusky forms in the sun's light
Then open thou, Lark, upon thy right
/ have those eyes dwell in cold's dream
I know that Lady—then with her beside
Such Fairy Stories—Then onward with thy Lark!

THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

IT is the feeling of attachment to an old friend only which has induced me to undertake the editing of the following pages. At the time when my acquaintance with Crofton Croker commenced, his thoughts were absorbed in the subject of fairy mythology—not that it was very near the period at which his legends were originally published, for they were already out of print, and he was contemplating a new edition, which, from various circumstances, soon afterwards took the abridged form in which it appeared in Murray's Family Library. Thus, as I also was then occupied with researches on the same subject, we became fellow-labourers in these interesting inquiries, and I became the confidential depository of his most secret wishes in regard to the future of his own—and I think I may say his favourite—book. For he certainly looked upon the form it had taken in the Family Library as only a temporary one, and he cherished the hope of producing an edition more complete, if not enlarged, even upon his original plan. Death prevented the accomplishment of his wishes by himself, but I have now at last gladly assisted in carrying out one part of his plan, that of republishing the complete collection of his Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland.

It was one of the first regular collections of fairy

legends published in our language, and I confess that I look upon it, taken altogether, as the best. When these stories first appeared they presented a freshness and novelty seldom possessed by similar productions, and it obtained a success which contributed greatly towards bringing this class of literature into public favour. Its author had the merit of giving the stories as they are told simply by the Irish peasantry, and not, as is too generally the case, clothed in the artificial embellishments of the compiler.

These popular stories are no modern creations, but, like the language in which they are told, they have descended from generation to generation, from remote antiquity, undergoing in their way modifications in accordance with the gradual changes in the society which has preserved them. Hence these legends are found to be characteristic of different peoples, and where we can obtain any of them as they existed at early periods, and compare them with the same stories told in modern times, they enable us to trace the history of popular superstitions and mythology. This, however, we are not often able to do, although we can find enough to convince us of the strong hold which they have always had upon men's minds. But we can collect and compare together the legends of different countries as they now exist, and we thus discover by infallible marks the affinities of the tribes who inhabit them. Through all the branches of the Teutonic race we find a constant recurrence of the same stories, and, beyond this also, we meet with stories among the Celtic populations of Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and Brittany, which bear that sort of resemblance to legends of un-

doubted Teutonic origin, proclaiming, on the one hand, the truth, which rests upon other evidence, that Celt and Teuton came originally from one stock, and, on the other hand, showing that these legends are of such remote antiquity that they must have been in existence before the first separation in that stock took place.

Till Mr. Crofton Croker collected the legends of the south of Ireland, the value and interest of such stories were very little appreciated in this country, and our popular traditions were generally despised, and were rapidly disappearing. The publication of the first volume, which contained the legends of the Shefro, the Cluricaune, the Banshee, the Phooka, and Thierna na Oge, produced so great a sensation, that its author began immediately to prepare for a second series, in order to make the subject more complete; and with the second volume, containing this new series, he also gave to the world a third volume, containing a translation of the *Essay on Fairy Mythology* by the Brothers Grimm, and some collections relating to the fairies of Wales. This volume was intended to gratify the interest in the subject of our popular superstitions which had been suddenly excited, and did not properly belong to the two previous volumes; it has therefore been omitted in the present edition. As I have said before, I knew it to have been Mr. Croker's wish to publish a complete edition of the Legends in one series, and it has been my aim in the present edition to edit them as nearly as possible according to the plan which I believe that he had designed.

THOMAS WRIGHT.

Brompton, London.

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.



HIS collected edition of the late Mr. Crofton Croker's "Fairy Legends of Ireland" has been out of print for some years. It is now included, as the representative volume of Irish Fairy Lore, in the "Illustrated Library of Fairy Tales of all Nations," since by universal assent it is recognized as the best and most characteristic work of the kind dealing with Irish superstition.

All the original very clever woodblocks have been acquired, together with the copyright, for our series, and the work is now re-issued in its entirety, with the exception of the notes—now somewhat incomplete or irrelevant, owing to the great advance that Folklore has made, as a science, of late years—and one or two of the stories, which, treating as they do of spiritualism or other matters of no interest to the Folklorist, as such, and of questionable interest to our Juvenile Readers, have been omitted.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE LEGEND OF KNOCKSHEOGOWNA	13
THE LEGEND OF KNOCKFIERNA	21
THE LEGEND OF KNOCKGRAFTON	27
THE PRIEST'S SUPPER	36
THE YOUNG PIPER	43
THE BREWERY OF EGG-SHELLS	55
THE CHANGELING	61
CAPTURE OF BRIDGET PURCELL	63
LEGEND OF BOTTLE-HILL	66
FAIRIES OR NO FAIRIES	81
THE HAUNTED CELLAR	90
SEEING IS BELIEVING	102
MASTER AND MAN	107
THE TURF CUTTERS	118
THE FIELD OF BOLIAUNS	121
THE LITTLE SHOE	127
THE SPIRIT HORSE	130
DANIEL O'ROURKE	136
THE CROOKENED BACK	149
FIOR USGA	158
THE ENCHANTED LAKE	164
THE LEGEND OF O'DONOGHUE	170

	PAGE
THE LADY OF GOLLERUS	176
FLORY CANTILLON'S FUNERAL	187
THE SOUL CAGES	194
THE LORD OF DUNKERRON	216
THE WONDERFUL TUNE	222
THE GOOD WOMAN	233
HANLON'S MILL	246
THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN	253
DIARMID BAWN, THE PIPER	266
NED SHEEHY'S EXCUSE	274
DREAMING TIM JARVIS	293
SCATH-A-LEGAUNE	305
THE HIDDEN TREASURE	315
THE ROCK OF THE CANDLE	324
BARRY OF CAIRN THIerna	331
THE GIANT'S STAIRS	343



IRISH FAIRY LEGENDS



THE LEGEND OF KNOCKSHEOGOWNA. (THE HILL OF THE FAIRY CALF.)

IN Tipperary is one of the most singularly shaped hills in the world. It has got a peak at the top like a conical nightcap thrown carelessly over your head as you awake in the morning. On the very point is built a sort of lodge, where in the summer the lady who built it and her friends used to go on parties of pleasure ;

but that was long after the days of the fairies, and it is, I believe, now deserted.

But before lodge was built, or acre sown, there was close to the head of this hill a large pasturage, where a herdsman spent his days and nights among the herd. The spot had been an old fairy ground, and the good people were angry that the scene of their light and airy gambols should be trampled by the rude hoofs of bulls and cows. The lowing of the cattle sounded sad in their ears, and the chief of the fairies of the hill determined in person to drive away the new-comers, and the way she thought of was this. When the harvest nights came on, and the moon shone bright and brilliant over the hill, and the cattle were lying down hushed and quiet, and the herdsman, wrapt in his mantle, was musing with his heart gladdened by the glorious company of the stars twinkling above him, she would come and dance before him,—now in one shape, now in another, but all ugly and frightful to behold. One time she would be a great horse, with the wings of an eagle, and a tail like a dragon, hissing loud, and spitting fire. Then in a moment she would change into a little man lame of a leg, with a bull's head, and a lambent flame playing around it. Then into a great ape, with duck's feet and a turkey-cock's tail. But I should be all day about it, were I to tell you

all the shapes she took. And then she would roar, or neigh, or hiss, or bellow, or howl, or hoot, as never yet was roaring, neighing, hissing, bellowing, howling, or hooting heard in this world before or since. The poor herdsman would cover his face, and call on all the saints for help, but it was no use. With one puff of her breath she would blow away the fold of his great-coat, let him hold it never so tightly over his eyes, and not a saint in heaven paid him the slightest attention. And to make matters worse, he never could stir; no, nor even shut his eyes; but there was obliged to stay, held by what power he knew not, gazing at these terrible sights until the hair of his head would lift his hat half a foot over his crown, and his teeth would be ready to fall out from chattering. But the cattle would scamper about mad, as if they were bitten by the fly; and this would last until the sun rose over the hill.

The poor cattle from want of rest were pining away, and food did them no good; besides, they met with accidents without end. Never a night passed that some of them did not fall into a pit, and get maimed, or maybe killed. Some would tumble into a river, and be drowned: in a word, there seemed never to be an end of the accidents. But what made the matter worse, there could not be a herdsman got to tend the cattle by night. One visit from

the fairy drove the stoutest-hearted almost mad. The owner of the ground did not know what to do. He offered double, treble, quadruple wages, but not a man could be found for the sake of money to go through the horror of facing the fairy. She rejoiced at the successful issue of her project, and continued her pranks. The herd gradually thinning, and no man daring to remain on the ground, the fairies came back in numbers, and gambolled as merrily as before, quaffing dewdrops from acorns, and spreading their feast on the head of capacious mushrooms.

What was to be done, the puzzled farmer thought in vain. He found that his substance was daily diminishing, his people terrified, and his rent-day coming round. It is no wonder that he looked gloomy, and walked mournfully down the road. Now in that part of the world dwelt a man of the name of Larry Hoolahan, who played on the pipes better than any other player within fifteen parishes. A roving, dashing blade was Larry, and feared nothing. Give him plenty of liquor, and he would defy the devil. He would face a mad bull, or fight single-handed against a fair. In one of his gloomy walks the farmer met him, and on Larry's asking the cause of his down looks, he told him all his misfortunes. "If that is all ails you," said Larry, "make your mind easy. Were there as many fairies

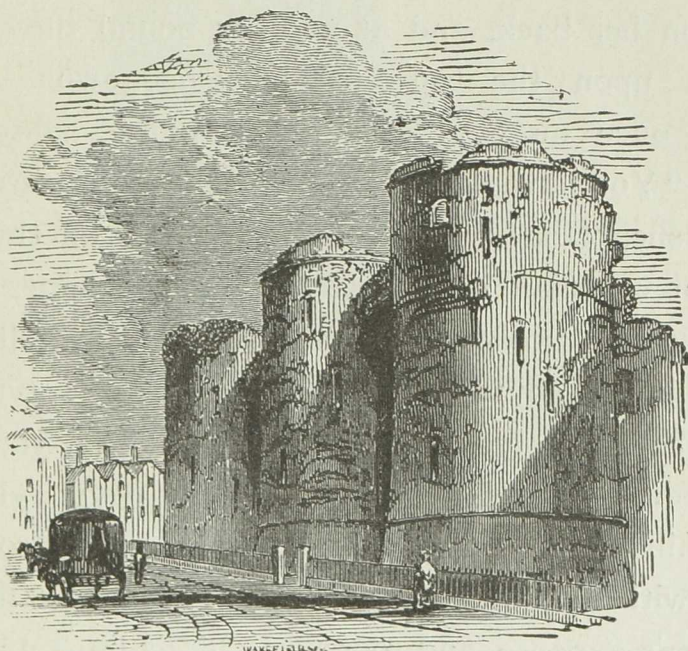
on Knocksheogowna as there are potato blossoms in Eliogurty (a fertile barony in the county Tipperary), I would face them. It would be a queer thing indeed, if I, who never was afraid of a proper man, should turn my back upon a brat of a fairy not the bigness of one's thumb." "Larry," said the farmer, "do not talk so bold, for you know not who is hearing you ; but if you make your words good, and watch my herds for a week on the top of the mountain, your hand shall be free of my dish till the sun has burnt itself down to the bigness of a farthing rushlight."

The bargain was struck, and Larry went to the hill-top when the moon began to peep over the brow. He had been regaled at the farmer's house, and was bold with the extract of barley-corn. So he took his seat on a big stone under a hollow of the hill, with his back to the wind, and pulled out his pipes. He had not played long when the voice of the fairies was heard upon the blast, like a low stream of music. Presently they burst into a loud laugh, and Larry could plainly hear one say, "What! another man upon the fairies' ring? Go to him, queen, and make him repent his rashness ;" and they flew away. Larry felt them pass by his face as they flew like a swarm of midges ; and looking up hastily, he saw between the moon

and him a great black cat, standing on the very tip of its claws, with its back up, and mewing with the voice of a water-mill. Presently it swelled up towards the sky, and turning round on its left hind-leg, whirled till it fell to the ground, from which it started in the shape of a salmon, with a cravat round its neck, and a pair of new top-boots. "Go on, jewel," said Larry: "if you dance, I'll pipe;" and he struck up. So she turned into this and that and the other, but still Larry played on, as he well knew how. At last she lost patience, as ladies will do when you do not mind their scolding, and changed herself into a calf, milk-white as the cream of Cork, and with eyes as mild as those of the girl I love. She came up gentle and fawning, in hopes to throw him off his guard by quietness, and then to work him some wrong. But Larry was not so deceived; for when she came up, he, dropping his pipes, leaped upon her back.

Now from the top of Knocksheogowna, as you look westward to the broad Atlantic, you will see the Shannon, queen of rivers, "spreading like a sea," and running on in gentle course to mingle with the ocean through the fair city of Limerick. On this night it shone under the moon, and looked beautiful from the distant hill. Fifty boats were gliding up and down on the sweet current, and

the song of the fisherman rose gaily from the shore. Larry, as I said before, leaped upon the back of the fairy, and she, rejoicing at the opportunity, sprang from the hill-top, and bounded clear, at one jump,



LIMERICK CASTLE.

over the Shannon, flowing as it was just ten miles from the mountain's base. It was done in a second, and when she alighted on the distant bank, kicking up her heels, she flung Larry on the soft turf. No sooner was he thus planted, than he looked her straight in the face, and, scratching his head, cried out, "By my word, well done! that was not a bad leap *for a calf!*"

She looked at him for a moment, and then assumed her own shape. "Laurence," said she, "you are a bold fellow ; will you come back the way you went ?" "And that's what I will," said he, "if you will let me." So, changing to a calf again, Larry got on her back, and at another bound they were again upon the top of Knocksheogowna. The fairy, once more resuming her figure, addressed him : "You have shown so much courage, Laurence," said she, "that while you keep herds on this hill you never shall be molested by me or mine. The day dawns : go down to the farmer and tell him this ; and if anything I can do may be of service to you, ask and you shall have it." She vanished accordingly ; and kept her word in never visiting the hill during Larry's life : but he never troubled her with requests. He piped and drank at the farmer's expense, and roosted in his chimney-corner, occasionally casting an eye to the flock. He died at last, and is buried in a green valley of pleasant Tipperary : but whether the fairies returned to the hill of Knocksheogowna after his death is more than I can say.



THE LEGEND OF KNOCKFIERNA.

IT is a very good thing not to be any way in dread of the fairies, for without doubt they have then less power over a person ; but to make too free with them, or to disbelieve in them altogether, is as foolish a thing as man, woman, or child can do .

It has been truly said that "good manners are no burthen," and that "civility costs nothing ;" but

there are some people foolhardy enough to disregard doing a civil thing, which, whatever they may think, can never harm themselves or any one else, and who at the same time will go out of their way for a bit of mischief, which never can serve them ; but sooner or later they will come to know better, as you shall hear of Carroll O'Daly, a strapping young fellow up out of Connaught, whom they used to call, in his own country, "Devil Daly."

Carroll O'Daly used to go roving about from one place to another, and the fear of nothing stopped him ; he would as soon pass an old churchyard or a regular fairy ground, at any hour of the night, as go from one room into another, without ever making the sign of the cross, or saying, "Good luck attend you, gentlemen."

It so happened that he was once journeying in the county of Limerick, towards "the Balbec of Ireland," the venerable town of Kilmallock ; and just at the foot of Knockfierna he overtook a respectable-looking man jogging along upon a white pony. The night was coming on, and they rode side by side for some time, without much conversation passing between them, further than saluting each other very kindly ; at last, Carroll O'Daly asked his companion how far he was going.

"Not far your way," said the farmer, for such his

appearance bespoke him: "I'm only going to the top of this hill here."

"And what might take you there," said O'Daly, "at this time of the night?"

"Why, then," replied the farmer, "if you want to know, 'tis the *good people*."

"The fairies, you mean," said O'Daly.

"Whist! whist!" said his fellow-traveller, or "you may be sorry for it;" and he turned his pony off the road they were going towards a little path which led up the side of the mountain, wishing Carroll O'Daly good-night and a safe journey.

"That fellow," thought Carroll, "is about no good this blessed night, and I would have no fear of swearing wrong if I took my Bible oath that it is something else beside the fairies, or the good people, as he calls them, that is taking him up to the mountain at this hour. The fairies!" he repeated; "is it for a well-shaped man like him to be going after little chaps like the fairies? To be sure, some say there are such things, and some say not; but I know this, that never afraid would I be of a dozen of them, ay, of two dozen, for that matter, if they are no bigger than what I hear tell of."

Carroll O'Daly, whilst these thoughts were passing in his mind, had fixed his eyes steadfastly on the mountain, behind which the full moon was rising

majestically. Upon an elevated point that appeared darkly against the moon's disc, he beheld the figure of a man leading a pony, and he had no doubt it was that of the farmer with whom he had just parted company.

A sudden resolve to follow flashed across the mind of O'Daly with the speed of lightning: both his courage and curiosity had been worked up by his cogitations to a pitch of chivalry; and muttering, "Here's after you, old boy," he dismounted from his horse, bound him to an old thorn tree, and then commenced vigorously ascending the mountain.

Following as well as he could the direction taken by the figures of the man and pony, he pursued his way, occasionally guided by their partial appearance: and after toiling nearly three hours over a rugged and sometimes swampy path, came to a green spot on the top of the mountain, where he saw the white pony at full liberty, grazing as quietly as may be. O'Daly looked around for the rider, but he was nowhere to be seen; he however soon discovered close to where the pony stood an opening in the mountain like the mouth of a pit, and he remembered having heard, when a child, many a tale about the "Poul-duve," or Black Hole of Knockfierna; how it was the entrance to the fairy castle which was within the mountain; and how a man, whose name was Ahern, a land sur-

veyor in that part of the country, had once attempted to fathom it with a line, and had been drawn down into it, and was never again heard of ; with many other tales of the like nature.

“But,” thought O’Daly, “these are old women’s stories ; and since I’ve come up so far I’ll just knock at the castle door, and see if the fairies are at home.”

No sooner said than done ; for seizing a large stone as big, ay, bigger than his two hands, he flung it with all his strength down into the Poul-duve of Knockfierna. He heard it bounding and tumbling about from one rock to another with a terrible noise, and he leant his head over to try and hear if it would reach the bottom.—when what should the very stone he had thrown in do but come up again with as much force as it had gone down, and gave him such a blow full in the face that it sent him rolling down the side of Knockfierna head over heels, tumbling from one crag to another, much faster than he came up ; and in the morning Carroll O’Daly was found lying beside his horse, the bridge of his nose broken, which disfigured him for life, his head all cut and bruised, and both his eyes closed up, and as black as if Sir Daniel Donnelly had painted them for him.

Carroll O’Daly was never bold again in riding alone near the haunts of the fairies after dusk ; but small blame to him for that ; and if ever he happened

to be benighted in a lonesome place he would make the best of his way to his journey's end, without asking questions or turning to the right or to the left, to seek after the good people, or any who kept company with them.



EAGLE'S NEST, KILLARNEY.

THE LEGEND OF KNOCKGRAFTON.

THERE was once a poor man who lived in the fertile glen of Aherlow, at the foot of the gloomy Galtee mountains, and he had a great hump on his back ; he looked just as if his body had been rolled up and placed upon his shoulders ; and his head was pressed down with the weight so much that his chin, when he was sitting, used to rest upon his knees for support. The country people were rather shy of meeting him in any lonesome place, for though, poor creature, he was as harmless and as inoffensive as a new-born infant, yet his deformity was so great that he scarcely appeared to be a human creature, and some ill-minded persons had set strange stories about him afloat. He was said to have a great knowledge of herbs and charms ; but certain it was that he had a mighty skilful hand in plaiting straw and rushes into hats and baskets, which was the way he made his livelihood.

Lusmore, for that was the nickname put upon him

by reason of his always wearing a sprig of the fairy cap, or lusmore (the foxglove), in his little straw hat, would ever get a higher penny for his plaited work than any one else, and perhaps that was the reason why some one, out of envy, had circulated the strange stories about him. Be that as it may, it happened that he was returning one evening from the pretty town of Cahir towards Cappagh, and as little Lusmore walked very slowly, on account of the great hump upon his back, it was quite dark when he came to the old moat of Knockgraston, which stood on the right-hand side of his road. Tired and weary was he, and noways comfortable in his own mind at thinking how much farther he had to travel, and that he should be walking all the night; so he sat down under the moat to rest himself, and began looking mournfully enough upon the moon, which,

“Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent Queen, unveil’d her peerless light
And o’er the dark her silver mantle threw.”

Presently there rose a wild strain of unearthly melody upon the ear of little Lusmore; he listened, and he thought that he had never heard such ravishing music before. It was like the sound of many voices, each mingling and blending with the other so strangely that they seemed to be one, though all

singing different strains, and the words of the song were these—

Da Luan, Da Mort, Da Luan, Da Mort, Da Luan, Da Mort ;

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 6/8. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

System 1:
Da Luan, da Mort, da Luan, da Mort, da

System 2:
Luan, da Mort, augus da Cadine. Da

System 3:
Luan, da Mort, da Luan, da Mort, da

System 4:
Luan, da Mort, augus da Cadine.

when there would be a moment's pause, and then the round of melody went on again.

Lusmore listened attentively, scarcely drawing his breath lest he might lose the slightest note. He now plainly perceived that the singing was within the moat; and though at first it had charmed him so

much, he began to get tired of hearing the same round sung over and over so often without any change ; so availing himself of the pause, when the *Da Luan, Da Mort*, had been sung three times, he took up the tune, and raised it with the words *angus Da Cadine*, and then went on singing with the voices inside of the moat, *Da Luan, Da Mort*, finishing the melody, when the pause again came, with *angus Da Cadine*.

The fairies within Knockgrafton, for the song was a fairy melody, when they heard this addition to the tune, were so much delighted that, with instant resolve, it was determined to bring the mortal among them, whose musical skill so far exceeded theirs, and little Lusmore was conveyed into their company with the eddying speed of a whirlwind.

Glorious to behold was the sight that burst upon him as he came down through the moat, twirling round and round, with the lightness of a straw, to the sweetest music that kept time to his motion. The greatest honour was then paid him, for he was put above all the musicians, and he had servants tending upon him, and everything to his heart's content, and a hearty welcome to all ; and, in short, he was made as much of as if he had been the first man in the land.

Presently Lusmore saw a great consultation going forward among the fairies, and, notwithstanding all

their civility, he felt very much frightened, until one stepping out from the rest came up to him and said,—

“Lusmore ! Lusmore !
Doubt not, nor deplore,
For the hump which you bore
On your back is no more ;
Look down on the floor,
And view it, Lusmore !”

When these words were said, poor little Lusmore felt himself so light, and so happy, that he thought he could have bounded at one jump over the moon, like the cow in the history of the cat and the fiddle ; and he saw, with inexpressible pleasure, his hump tumble down upon the ground from his shoulders. He then tried to lift up his head, and he did so with becoming caution, fearing that he might knock it against the ceiling of the grand hall, where he was ; he looked round and round again with the greatest wonder and delight upon everything, which appeared more and more beautiful ; and, overpowered at beholding such a resplendent scene, his head grew dizzy, and his eyesight became dim. At last he fell into a sound sleep, and when he awoke he found that it was broad daylight, the sun shining brightly, and the birds singing sweetly ; and that he was lying just at the foot of the moat of Knockgraston, with the cows and sheep grazing peacefully round about him. The

first thing Lusmore did, after saying his prayers, was to put his hand behind to feel for his hump, but no sign of one was there on his back, and he looked at himself with great pride, for he had now become a well-shaped dapper little fellow, and more than that, found himself in a full suit of new clothes, which he concluded the fairies had made for him.

Towards Cappagh he went, stepping out as lightly, and springing up at every step as if he had been all his life a dancing-master. Not a creature who met Lusmore knew him without his hump, and he had a great work to persuade every one that he was the same man—in truth he was not, so far as outward appearance went.

Of course it was not long before the story of Lusmore's hump got about, and a great wonder was made of it. Through the country, for miles round, it was the talk of every one, high and low.

One morning, as Lusmore was sitting contented enough at his cabin door, up came an old woman to him, and asked him if he could direct her to Cappagh.

"I need give you no directions, my good woman," said Lusmore, "for this is Cappagh ; and whom may you want here ?"

"I have come," said the woman, "out of Decies' country, in the county of Waterford, looking after one Lusmore, who, I have heard tell, had his hump

taken off by the fairies ; for there is a son of a gossip of mine who has got a hump on him that will be his death ; and maybe, if he could use the same charm as Lusmore, the hump may be taken off him. And now I have told you the reason of my coming so far : 'tis to find out about this charm, if I can."

Lusmore, who was ever a good-natured little fellow, told the woman all the particulars, how he had raised the tune for the fairies at Knockgraston, how his hump had been removed from his shoulders, and how he had got a new suit of clothes into the bargain.

The woman thanked him very much, and then went away quite happy and easy in her own mind. When she came back to her gossip's house, in the county of Waterford, she told her everything that Lusmore had said, and they put the little hump-backed man, who was a peevish and cunning creature from his birth, upon a car, and took him all the way across the country. It was a long journey, but they did not care for that, so the hump was taken from off him ; and they brought him, just at nightfall, and left him under the old moat of Knockgraston.

Jack Madden, for that was the humpy man's name, had not been sitting there long when he heard the tune going on within the moat much sweeter than before ; for the fairies were singing it the way Lusmore had settled their music for them, and the song was going

on ; *Da Luan, Da Mort, Da Luan, Da Mort, Da Luan, Da Mort, agus Da Cadine*, without ever stopping. Jack Madden, who was in a great hurry to get quit of his hump, never thought of waiting until the fairies had done, or watching for a fit opportunity to raise the tune higher again than Lusmore had ; so having heard them sing it over seven times without stopping, out he bawls, never minding the time or the humour of the tune, or how he could bring his words in properly, *agus Da Cadine, agus Da Hena*, thinking that if one day was good, two were better ; and that if Lusmore had one new suit of clothes given him, he should have two.

No sooner had the words passed his lips than he was taken up and whisked into the moat with prodigious force ; and the fairies came crowding round about him with great anger, screeching and screaming, and roaring out, " Who spoiled our tune ? who spoiled our tune ? " and one stepped up to him above all the rest, and said,—


" Jack Madden, Jack Madden !
 Your words came so bad in
 The tune we felt glad in ;—
 This castle you're had in,
 That your life we may sadden ;
 Here's two humps for Jack Madden ! "

and twenty of the strongest fairies brought Lusmore's

hump, and put it down upon poor Jack's back, over his own, where it became fixed as firmly as if it was nailed on with twelve-penny nails, by the best carpenter that ever drove one. Out of their castle they then kicked him; and in the morning, when Jack Madden's mother and the gossip came to look after their little man, they found him half dead, lying at the foot of the moat, with the other hump upon his back. Well to be sure, how they did look at each other! but they were afraid to say anything, lest a hump might be put upon their own shoulders. Home they brought the unlucky Jack Madden with them, as downcast in their hearts and their looks as ever two gossips were; and what through the weight of his other hump, and the long journey, he died soon after, leaving, they say, his heavy curse to any one who would go to listen to fairy tunes again.



THE PRIEST'S SUPPER.

T is said by those who ought to understand such things, that the good people, or the fairies, are some of the angels who were turned out of heaven, and who landed on their feet in this world, while the rest of their companions, who had more sin to sink them, went down farther to a worse place. Be this as it may, there was a merry troop of the fairies, dancing and playing all manner of wild pranks, on a bright moonlight evening towards the end of September. The scene of their merriment was not far distant from Inchegeela, in the west of the county Cork—a poor village, although it had a barrack for soldiers ; but great mountains and barren rocks, like those round about it, are enough to strike poverty into any place : however, as the fairies can have everything they want for wishing, poverty does not trouble them much, and all their care is to seek out unfrequented nooks and places where it is not likely any one will come to spoil their sport.

On a nice green sod by the river's side were the little fellows dancing in a ring as gaily as may be, with their red caps wagging about at every bound in the moonshine, and so light were these bounds that the lobes of dew, although they trembled under their feet, were not disturbed by their capering. Thus did they carry on their gambols, spinning round and round, and twirling and bobbing, and diving, and going through all manner of figures, until one of them chirped out,—

“Cease, cease, with your drumming,

Here's an end to our mumming ;

By my smell

I can tell

A priest this way's coming !”

And away every one of the fairies scampered off as hard as they could, concealing themselves under the green leaves of the lusmore, where, if their little red caps should happen to peep out, they would only look like its crimson bells ; and more hid themselves at the shady sides of stones and brambles, and others under the bank of the river, and in holes and crannies of one kind or another.

The fairy speaker was not mistaken ; for along the road, which was within view of the river, came Father Horrigan on his pony, thinking to himself that as it was so late he would make an end of his journey at

the first cabin he came to. According to this determination, he stopped at the dwelling of Dermod Leary, lifted the latch, and entered with "My blessing on all here."

I need not say that Father Horrigan was a welcome guest wherever he went, for no man was more pious or better beloved in the country. Now it was a great trouble to Dermod that he had nothing to offer his reverence for supper as a relish to the potatoes, which "the old woman," for so Dermod called his wife, though she was not much past twenty, had down boiling in the pot over the fire ; he thought of the net which he had set in the river, but as it had been there only a short time, the chances were against his finding a fish in it. "No matter," thought Dermod, "there can be no harm in stepping down to try ; and maybe, as I want the fish for the priest's supper, that one will be there before me."

Down to the river-side went Dermod, and he found in the net as fine a salmon as ever jumped in the bright waters of "the spreading Lee ;" but just as he was going to take it out the net was pulled from him, he could not tell how or by whom, and away got the salmon, and went swimming along with the current as gaily as if nothing had happened.

Dermod looked sorrowfully at the wake which the fish had left upon the water, shining like a line of

silver in the moonlight, and then, with an angry motion of his right hand, and a stamp of his foot, gave vent to his feelings by muttering, "May bitter bad luck attend you night and day for a blackguard schemer of a salmon, wherever you go! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, if there's any shame in you, to give me the slip after this fashion! And I'm clear in my own mind you'll come to no good, for some kind of evil thing or other helped you—did I not feel it pull the net against me as strong as the devil himself?"

"That's not true for you," said one of the little fairies, who had scampered off at the approach of the priest, coming up to Dermot Leary, with a whole throng of companions at his heels; "there was only a dozen and a half of us pulling against you."

Dermot gazed on the tiny speaker with wonder, who continued, "Make yourself noways uneasy about the priest's supper; for if you will go back and ask him one question from us, there will be as fine a supper as ever was put on a table spread out before him in less than no time."

"I'll have nothing at all to do with you," replied Dermot in a tone of determination; and after a pause he added, "I am much obliged to you for your offer, sir, but I know better than to sell myself to you or the like of you for a supper; and more than that,

I know Father Horrigan has more regard for my soul than to wish me to pledge it for ever, out of regard to anything you could put before him—so there's an end of the matter."

The little speaker, with a pertinacity not to be repulsed by Dermod's manner, continued, "Will you ask the priest one civil question for us?"

Dermod considered for some time, and he was right in doing so, but he thought that no one could come to harm out of asking a civil question. "I see no objection to do that same, gentlemen," said Dermod; "but I will have nothing in life to do with your supper,—mind that."

"Then," said the little speaking fairy, whilst the rest came crowding after him from all parts, "go and ask Father Horrigan to tell us whether our souls will be saved at the last day, like the souls of good Christians; and if you wish us well, bring back word what he says without delay."

Away went Dermod to his cabin, where he found the potatoes thrown out on the table, and his good woman handing the biggest of them all, a beautiful laughing red apple, smoking like a hard-ridden horse on a frosty night, over to Father Horrigan.

"Please your reverence," said Dermod, after some hesitation, "may I make bold to ask your honour one question?"

"What may that be?" said Father Horrigan.

"Why, then, begging your reverence's pardon for my freedom, it is, If the souls of the good people are to be saved at the last day?"

"Who bid you ask me that question, Leary?" said the priest, fixing his eyes upon him very sternly, which Dermod could not stand before at all.

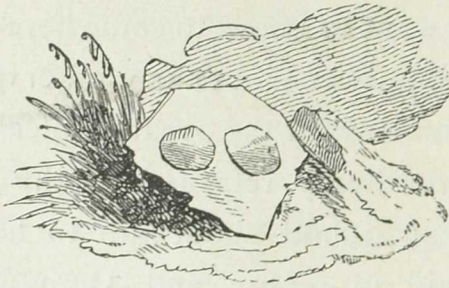
"I'll tell no lies about the matter, and nothing in life but the truth," said Dermod. "It was the good people themselves who sent me to ask the question, and there they are in thousands down on the bank of the river, waiting for me to go back with the answer."

"Go back by all means," said the priest, "and tell them, if they want to know, to come here to me themselves, and I'll answer that or any other question they are pleased to ask with the greatest pleasure in life."


Dermod accordingly returned to the fairies, who came swarming around about him to hear what the priest had said in reply; and Dermod spoke out among them like a bold man as he was: but when they heard that they must go to the priest, away they fled, some here and more there, and some this way and more that, whisking by poor Dermod so fast and in such numbers that he was quite bewildered.

When he came to himself, which was not for a long time, back he went to his cabin, and ate his dry potatoes along with Father Horrigan, who made quite

light of the thing ; but Dermot could not help thinking it a mighty hard case that his reverence, whose words had the power to banish the fairies at such a rate, should have no sort of relish to his supper, and that the fine salmon he had in the net should have been got away from him in such a manner.



THE YOUNG PIPER

 HERE lived not long since, on the borders of the county Tipperary, a decent honest couple, whose names were Mick Flanigan and Judy Muldoon. These poor people were blessed, as the saying is, with four children, all boys : three of them were as fine, stout, healthy, good-looking children as ever the sun shone upon ; and it was enough to make any Irishman proud of the breed of his countrymen to see them about one o'clock on a fine summer's day standing at their father's cabin door, with their beautiful flaxen hair hanging in curls about their head, and their cheeks like two rosy apples, and a big laughing potato smoking in their hand. A proud man was Mick of these fine children, and a proud woman, too, was Judy ; and reason enough they had to be so. But it was far otherwise with the remaining one, which was the third eldest : he was the most miserable, ugly, ill-conditioned brat that ever God put life into ; he was so ill-thriven that he never was able to stand alone, or to leave

his cradle ; he had long, shaggy, matted, curled hair, as black as the soot ; his face was of a greenish yellow colour ; his eyes were like two burning coals, and were for ever moving in his head, as if they had the perpetual motion. Before he was a tweivemonth old he had a mouth full of great teeth ; his hands were like kites' claws, and his legs were no thicker than the handle of a whip, and about as straight as a reaping-hook : to make the matter worse, he had the appetite of a cormorant, and the whinge, and the yelp, and the screech, and the yowl, was never out of his mouth.

The neighbours all suspected that he was something not right, particularly as it was observed, when people, as they do in the country, got about the fire, and began to talk of religion and good things, the brat, as he lay in the cradle, which his mother generally put near the fire place that he might be snug, used to sit up, as they were in the middle of their talk, and begin to bellow as if the devil was in him in right earnest ; this, as I said, led the neighbours to think that all was not right, and there was a general consultation held one day about what would be best to do with him. Some advised to put him out on the shovel, but Judy's pride was up at that. A pretty thing indeed, that a child of hers should be put on a shovel and flung out on the dunghill

just like a dead kitten or a poisoned rat ; no, no, she would not hear to that at all. One old woman, who was considered very skilful and knowing in fairy matters, strongly recommended her to put the tongs in the fire, and heat them red hot, and to take his nose in them, and that would beyond all manner of doubt make him tell what he was and where he came from (for the general suspicion was, that he had been changed by the good people) ; but Judy was too soft-hearted, and too fond of the imp, so she would not give in to this plan, though everybody said she was wrong ; and maybe she was, but it's hard to blame a mother. Well, some advised one thing, and some another ; at last one spoke of sending for the priest, who was a very holy and a very learned man, to see it. To this Judy of course had no objection ; but one thing or other always prevented her doing so, and the upshot of the business was that the priest never saw him.

Things went on in the old way for some time longer. The brat continued yelping and yowling, and eating more than his three brothers put together, and playing all sorts of unlucky tricks, for he was mighty mischievously inclined, till it happened one day that Tim Carrol, the blind piper, going his rounds, called in and sat down by the fire to have a bit of chat with the woman of the house. So

after some time Tim, who was no churl of his music, yoked on the pipes, and began to bellows away in high style; when the instant he began, the young fellow, who had been lying as still as a mouse in his cradle, sat up, began to grin and twist his ugly face, to swing about his long tawny arms, and to kick out his crooked legs, and to show signs of great glee at the music. At last nothing would serve him but he should get the pipes into his own hands, and to humour him his mother asked Tim to lend them to the child for a minute. Tim, who was kind to children, readily consented; and as Tim had not his sight, Judy herself brought them to the cradle, and went to put them on him; but she had no occasion, for the youth seemed quite up to the business. He buckled on the pipes, set the bellows under one arm, and the bag under the other, worked them both as knowingly as if he had been twenty years at the business, and lilted up *Sheela na guira* in the finest style imaginable.

All were in astonishment: the poor woman crossed herself. Tim, who, as I said before, was *dark* (blind), and did not well know who was playing, was in great delight; and when he heard that it was a little *precchan* not five years old, that had never seen a set of pipes in his life, he wished the mother joy of her son; offered to take him off her hands if she

would part with him, swore he was a *born* piper, a natural *genus*, and declared that in a little time more, with the help of a little good instruction from himself, there would not be his match in the whole country. The poor woman was greatly delighted to hear all this, particularly as what Tim said about natural *genus* quieted some misgivings that were rising in her mind, lest what the neighbours said about his not being right might be too true ; and it gratified her moreover to think that her dear child (for she really loved the whelp) would not be forced to turn out and beg, but might earn decent bread for himself. So when Mick came home in the evening from his work, she up and told him all that had happened, and all that Tim Carrol had said ; and Mick, as was natural, was very glad to hear it, for the helpless condition of the poor creature was a great trouble to him. So next day he took the pig to the fair, and with what it brought set off to Clonmel, and bespoke a bran-new set of pipes, of the proper size for him.

In about a fortnight the pipes came home, and the moment the chap in his cradle laid eyes on them he squealed with delight, and threw up his pretty legs, and bumped himself in his cradle, and went on with a great many comical tricks ; till at last, to quiet him, they gave him the pipes, and he im-

mediately set to and pulled away at *Fig Polthog*, to the admiration of all that heard him.

The fame of his skill on the pipes soon spread far and near, for there was not a piper in the six next counties could come at all near him, in *Old Moderagh rue*, or *The Hare in the Corn*, or *The Fox-hunter's Fig*, or *The Rakes of Cashel*, or *The Piper's Maggot*, or any of the fine Irish jigs, which make people dance whether they will or no : and it was surprising to hear him rattle away *The Fox-hunt* ; you'd really think you heard the hounds giving tongue, and the terriers yelping always behind, and the huntsman and the whippers-in cheering or correcting the dogs ; it was, in short, the very next thing to seeing the hunt itself.

The best of him was, he was noways stingy of his music, and many a merry dance the boys and girls of the neighbourhood used to have in his father's cabin ; and he would play up music for them, that they said used as it were to put quicksilver in their feet ; and they all declared they never moved so light and so airy to any piper's playing that ever they danced to.

But besides all his fine Irish music, he had one queer tune of his own, the oddest that ever was heard ; for the moment he began to play everything in the house seemed disposed to dance ; the plates and porringers used to jingle on the dresser, the pots

and pot-hooks used to rattle in the chimney, and people used even to fancy they felt the stools moving from under them ; but, however it might be with the stools, it is certain that no one could keep long sitting on them, for both old and young always fell to capering as hard as ever they could. The girls complained that when he began this tune it always threw them out in their dancing, and that they never could handle their feet rightly, for they felt the floor like ice under them, and themselves every moment ready to come sprawling on their backs or their faces. The young bachelors that wished to show off their dancing and their new pumps, and their bright red or green and yellow garters, swore that it confused them so that they never could go rightly through the *heel and toe* or *cover the buckle*, or any of their best steps, but felt themselves always all bedizzied and bewildered, and then old and young would go jostling and knocking together in a frightful manner ; and when the unlucky brat had them all in this way, whirligigging about the floor, he'd grin and chuckle and chatter, for all the world like Jacko the monkey when he has played off some of his roguery.

The older he grew the worse he grew, and by the time he was six years old there was no standing the house for him ; he was always making his brothers burn or scald themselves, or break their

shins over the pots and stools. One time, in harvest, he was left at home by himself, and when his mother came in she found the cat a horseback on the dog, with her face to the tail, and her legs tied round him, and the urchin playing his queer tune to them ; so that the dog went barking and jumping about, and puss was mewing for the dear life, and slapping her tail backwards and forwards, which, as it would hit against the dog's chaps, he'd snap at and bite, and then there was the philliloo. Another time, the farmer with whom Mick worked, a very decent, respectable man, happened to call in, and Judy wiped a stool with her apron, and invited him to sit down and rest himself after his walk. He was sitting with his back to the cradle, and behind him was a pan of blood, for Judy was making pig's puddings. The lad lay quite still in his nest, and watched his opportunity till he got ready a hook at the end of a piece of twine, which he contrived to fling so handily that it caught in the bob of the man's nice new wig, and soused it in the pan of blood. Another time his mother was coming in from milking the cow, with the pail on her head : the minute he saw her he lilted up his infernal tune, and the poor woman, letting go the pail, clapped her hands aside, and began to dance a jig, and tumbled the milk all atop of her husband, who was bringing in some turf to

boil the supper. In short, there would be no end to telling all his pranks, and all the mischievous tricks he played.

Soon after, some mischances began to happen to the farmer's cattle. A horse took the staggers, a fine veal calf died of the black-leg, and some of his sheep of the red-water; the cows began to grow vicious and to kick down the milk-pails, and the roof of one end of the barn fell in; and the farmer took it into his head that Mick Flanigan's unlucky child was the cause of all the mischief. So one day he called Mick aside, and said to him, "Mick, you see things are not going on with me as they ought, and to be plain with you, Mick, I think that child of yours is the cause of it. I am really falling away to nothing with fretting, and I can hardly sleep on my bed at night for thinking of what may happen before the morning. So I'd be glad if you'd look out for work somewhere else; you're as good a man as any in the country, and there's no fear but you'll have your choice of work." To this Mick replied, "that he was sorry for his losses, and still sorrier that he or his should be thought to be the cause of them; that for his own part he was not quite easy in his mind about that child, but he had him and so he must keep him;" and he promised to look out for another place immediately.

Accordingly, next Sunday at chapel Mick gave out that he was about leaving the work at John Riordan's, and immediately a farmer, who lived a couple of miles off, and who wanted a ploughman (the last one having just left him), came up to Mick, and offered him a house and garden, and work all the year round. Mick, who knew him to be a good employer, immediately closed with him; so it was agreed that the farmer should send a car to take his little bit of furniture, and that he should remove on the following Thursday.

When Thursday came, the car came according to promise, and Mick loaded it, and put the cradle with the child and his pipes on the top, and Judy sat beside it to take care of him, lest he should tumble out and be killed. They drove the cow before them, the dog followed, but the cat was of course left behind (it is a piece of superstition with the Irish never to take a cat with them when they are removing); and the other three children went along the road picking skeehories (haws) and blackberries, for it was a fine day towards the latter end of harvest.

They had to cross the river, but as it ran through a bottom between two high banks, you did not see it till you were close on it. The young fellow was lying pretty quiet in the bottom of the cradle, till

they came to the head of the bridge, when hearing the roaring of the water (for there was a great flood in the river, as it had rained heavily for the last two or three days), he sat up in his cradle and looked about him ; and the instant he got a sight of the water, and found they were going to take him across it, oh, how he did bellow and how he did squeal ! no rat caught in a snap-trap ever sang out equal to him. "Whisht ! A lanna," said Judy, "there's no fear of you ; sure it's only over the stone bridge we're going."

Bad luck to you, you old rip !" cried he, "what a pretty trick you've played me, to bring me here !" and still went on yelling, and the further they got on the bridge the louder he yelled ; till at last Mick could hold out no longer, so giving him a great skelp of the whip he had in his hand, "Devil choke you, you brat !" said he, "will you never stop bawling ? a body can't hear their ears for you." The moment he felt the thong of the whip he leaped up in the cradle, clapped the pipes under his arm, gave a most wicked grin at Mick, and jumped clean over the battlements of the bridge down into the water. "O my child, my child !" shouted Judy, "he's gone for ever from me." Mick and the rest of the children ran to the other side of the bridge, and looking over, they saw him coming out from under the arch of the bridge, sitting cross-legged on

the top of a white-headed wave, and playing away on the pipes as merrily as if nothing had happened. The river was running very rapidly, so he was whirled away at a great rate ; but he played as fast, ay, and faster, than the river ran ; and though they set off as hard as they could along the bank, yet, as the river made a sudden turn round the hill, about a hundred yards below the bridge, by the time they got there he was out of sight, and no one ever laid eyes on him more ; but the general opinion was that he went home with the pipes to his own relations, the good people, to make music for them.



THE BREWERY OF EGG-SHELLS.

It might be considered impertinent were I to explain what is meant by a changeling; both Shakespeare and Spenser have already done so, and who is there unacquainted with the *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Fairy Queen*?

Now Mrs. Sullivan fancied that her youngest child had been exchanged by "fairies' theft," and certainly appearances warranted such a conclusion; for in one night her healthy, blue-eyed boy had become

shrivelled up into almost nothing, and never ceased squalling and crying. This naturally made poor



Mrs. Sullivan very unhappy ; and all the neighbours, by way of comforting her, said that her own child was, beyond any kind of doubt, with the good people, and that one of themselves was put in his place.

Mrs. Sullivan of course could not disbelieve what every one told her, but she did not wish to hurt the thing ; for although its face was so withered, and its body wasted away to a mere skeleton, it had still a strong resemblance to her own boy. She therefore could not find it in her heart to roast it alive on the griddle, or to burn its nose off with the red-hot tongs, or to throw it out in the snow on the roadside, notwithstanding these, and several like proceedings, were strongly recommended to her for the recovery of her child.

One day who should Mrs. Sullivan meet but a cunning woman, well known about the country by the name of Ellen Leah (or grey Ellen). She had the gift, however she got it, of telling where the dead were, and what was good for the rest of their souls ; and could charm away warts and wens, and do a great many wonderful things of the same nature.

"You're in grief this morning, Mrs. Sullivan," were the first words of Ellen Leah to her.

"You may say that, Ellen," said Mrs. Sullivan,

"and good cause I have to be in grief, for there was my own fine child whipped off from me out of his cradle, without as much as 'by your leave' or 'ask your pardon,' and an ugly dony (tiny) bit of a shrivelled-up fairy put in his place; no wonder then that you see me in grief, Ellen."

"Small blame to you, Mrs. Sullivan," said Ellen Leah, "but are you sure 'tis a fairy?"

"Sure!" echoed Mrs. Sullivan, "sure enough I am to my sorrow, and can I doubt my own two eyes? Every mother's soul must feel for me!"

"Will you take an old woman's advice?" said Ellen Leah, fixing her wild and mysterious gaze upon the unhappy mother; and, after a pause, she added, "but maybe you'll call it foolish?"

"Can you get me back my child, my own child, Ellen?" said Mrs. Sullivan with great energy.

"If you do as I bid you," returned Ellen Leah, "you'll know." Mrs. Sullivan was silent in expectation, and Ellen continued, "Put down the big pot, full of water, on the fire, and make it boil like mad; then get a dozen new-laid eggs, break them, and keep the shells, but throw away the rest; when that is done, put the shells in the pot of boiling water, and you will soon know whether it is your own boy or a fairy. If you find that it is a fairy in the cradle, take the red-hot poker and cram it down his ugly

throat, and you will not have much trouble with him after that, I promise you."

Home went Mrs. Sullivan, and did as Ellen Leah desired. She put the pot on the fire, and plenty of turf under it, and set the water boiling at such a rate, that if ever water was red-hot, it surely was.

The child was lying, for a wonder, quite easy and quiet in the cradle, every now and then cocking his eye, that would twinkle as keen as a star in a frosty night, over at the great fire, and the big pot upon it; and he looked on with great attention at Mrs. Sullivan breaking the eggs and putting down the egg-shells to boil. At last he asked, with the voice of a very old man, "What are you doing, mammy?"

Mrs. Sullivan's heart, as she said herself, was up in her mouth ready to choke her, at hearing the child speak. But she contrived to put the poker in the fire, and to answer without making any wonder at the words, "I'm brewing, *a vick*" (my son).

"And what are you brewing, mammy?" said the little imp, whose supernatural gift of speech now proved beyond question that he was a fairy substitute.

"I wish the poker was red," thought Mrs. Sullivan; but it was a large one, and took a long time heating; so she determined to keep him in talk until the poker was in a proper state to thrust down his throat, and therefore repeated the question.

"Is it what I'm brewing, *a vick*," said she, "you want to know?"

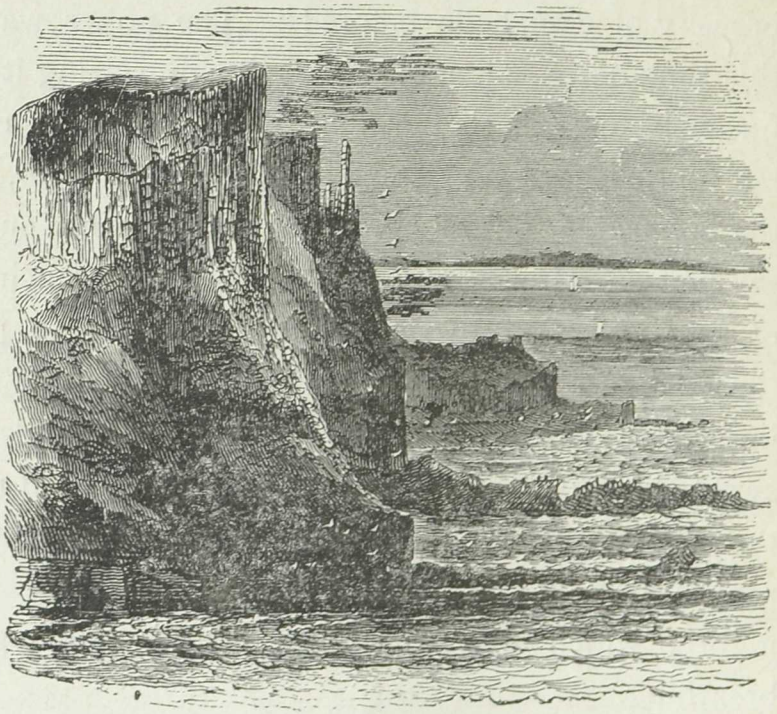
"Yes, mammy: what are you brewing?" returned the fairy.

"Egg-shells, *a vick*," said Mrs. Sullivan.


"Oh!" shrieked the imp, starting up in the cradle, and clapping his hands together, "I'm fifteen hundred years in the world, and I never saw a brewery of egg-shells before!" The poker was by this time quite red, and Mrs. Sullivan seizing it ran furiously towards the cradle; but somehow or other her foot slipped, and she fell flat on the floor, and the poker flew out of her hand to the other end of the house. However, she got up without much loss of time and went to the cradle, intending to pitch the wicked thing that was in it into the pot of boiling water, when there she saw her own child in a sweet sleep, one of his soft round arms rested upon the pillow,—his features were as placid as if their repose had never been disturbed, save the rosy mouth, which moved with a gentle and regular breathing.

Who can tell the feelings of a mother when she looks upon her sleeping child? Why should I therefore endeavour to describe those of Mrs. Sullivan at again beholding her long-lost boy? The fountains of her heart overflowed with the excess of joy,

and she wept! tears trickled silently down her cheek, nor did she strive to stop them—they were tears, not of sorrow, but of happiness.



THE CHANGELING.

 YOUNG woman, whose name was Mary Scannell, lived with her husband not many years ago at Castle Martyr. One day in harvest-time she went with several more to help in binding up the wheat, and left the child, which she was nursing, in a corner of the field, quite safe, as she thought, wrapped up in her cloak. When her work was finished she returned to where the child was, but in the place of her own she found a thing in the cloak that was not half the size, and that kept up such a crying you might have heard it a mile off. So Mary Scannell guessed how the case stood, and, without stop or stay, away she took it in her arms, pretending to be mighty fond of it all the while, to a wise woman. The wise woman told her in a whisper not to give it enough to eat, and to beat and pinch it without mercy, which Mary Scannell did ; and just in one week after to the day, when she awoke in the morning, she found her own child lying by her side in the bed ! The fairy that had been put in its place

did not like the usage it got from Mary Scannell, who understood how to treat it, like a sensible woman as she was, and away it went after a week's trial, and sent her own child back to her.



CAPTURE OF BRIDGET PURCELL,

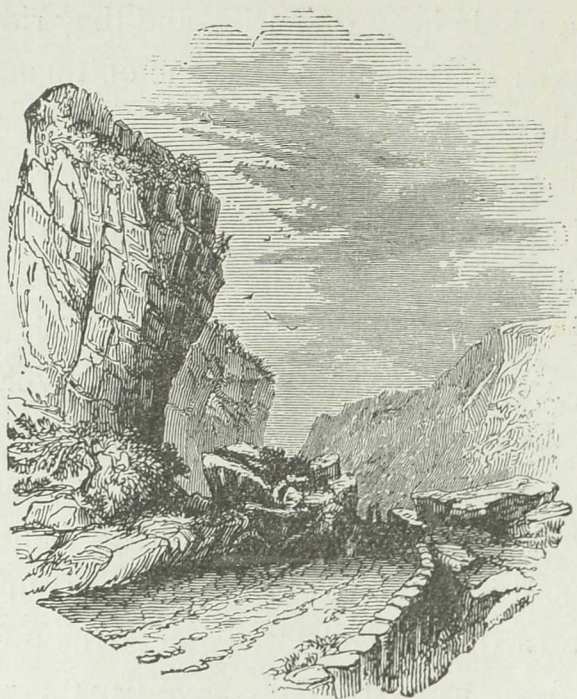
AS RELATED BY HER SISTER, KATE PURCELL.

BIDDY PURCELL was as clean and as clever a girl as you would see in any of the seven parishes. She was just eighteen when she was whipped away from us, as some say; and I'll tell you how it was. Biddy Purcell and myself, that's her sister, and more girls with us, went one day, 'twas Sunday too, after hearing mass, to pick rushes in the bog that's under the old castle. Well, just as we were coming through Carrig gate, a small child, just like one of them little craythurs you see out there, came behind her and gave her a little bit of a tip with a *kippen* (a switch) between the two shoulders. Just then she got a pain in the small of her back, and out through her heart, as if she was struck; we only made game of her, and began to laugh; for sure that much wouldn't hurt a fly, let alone a Christian. Well, when we got to the bog, some went here, and more there, everywhere, up and down, for 'twas a good big place and Biddy was in one corner, with

not one along with her, or near her—only just herself. She had picked a good bundle of rushes, and while she was tying them in her apron up came an old woman to her, and a very curious old woman she was. Not one of the neighbours could tell who she was from poor Biddy's account, nor ever saw or heard tell of the likes of her before or since. So she looks at the rushes, and, "Biddy Purcell," says she, "give me some of them rushes." Biddy was *afeard* of her life; but for all that she told her the bog was big enough, and there was plenty more rushes, and to go pick for herself, and not be bothering other people. The word wasn't out of her mouth when the old woman got as mad as fire, and gave her such a slash across the knees and feet with a little whip that was in her hand, that Biddy was 'most *kilt* with the pain.

That night Biddy took sick, and what with pains in her heart and out through her knees, she wasn't able to sit or lie, and had to be kept standing on the floor, and you'd hear the screeching and bawling of her as far, ay, and farther than Mungret. Well, our heart was broke with her, and we didn't know what in the wide world to do, for she was always telling us that if we had all the money belonging to the master, and to lose it by her, 'twould not do—she knew all along what ailed her; but she wasn't let tell till a couple of hours before she died, and then she told us

she saw a whole heap of fairies, and they riding upon horses under Carrig, and every one of them had girls behind them all to one, and he told her he was waiting for her, and would come for her at such a day, and such an hour, and sure enough 'twas at that day and hour she died. She was just five days sick, and, as I said before, our heart was fairly broke to see the poor *craythur*, she was so bad. Well, we hear tell of a man that was good to bring back people (so they said), and we went to him. He gave us a bottle full of green herbs, and desired us to boil them on the fire, and if they kept green she was our own, but if they turned yellow, she was gone—the good people had her from us. He bid us give her the water they were boiled in to drink. When we came home we boiled the herbs, and they turned as yellow as gold in the pot before our eyes. We gave her the water to drink, and five minutes after she took it she died, or whatsomever thing we had in her place died : anyhow 'twas just like herself, and talked to us just the same as if 'twas our own sister we had there before us. People say she's down 'long wi' them in the old fort ; some say she'll come back, and more say she won't, and indeed, *faix*, there's no knowing for *sartain* which to believe, or which way it is.



LEGEND OF BOTTLE-HILL.

IT was in the good days when the little people, most impudently called fairies, were more frequently seen than they are in these unbelieving times, that a farmer, named Mick Purcell, rented a few acres of barren ground in the neighbourhood of the once celebrated preceptory of Mourne, situated about three miles from Mallow, and thirteen from the “beautiful city called Cork.” Mick had a wife and family. They all did what they could, and that was

but little, for the poor man had no child grown up big enough to help him in his work; and all the poor woman could do was to mind the children, and to milk the one cow, and to boil the potatoes, and carry the eggs to market to Mallow; but with all they could do, 'twas hard enough on them to pay the rent. Well, they did manage it for a good while; but at last came a bad year, and the little grain of oats was all spoiled, and the chickens died of the pip, and the pig got the measles,—*she* was sold in Mallow and brought almost nothing; and poor Mick found that he hadn't enough to half pay his rent, and two gales were due

“Why, then, Molly,” says he, “what'll we do?”

“Wisha, then, mavournene, what would you do but take the cow to the fair of Cork and sell her?” says she; “and Monday is fair day, and so you must go to-morrow, that the poor beast may be rested *again* the fair.”

“And what'll we do when she's gone?” says Mick, sorrowtully.

“Never a know I know, Mick; but sure God won't leave us without Him, Mick; and you know how good He was to us when poor little Billy was sick, and we had nothing at all for him to take,—that good doctor gentleman at Ballydahin come riding and asking for a drink of milk; and how he gave us two

shillings ; and how he sent the things and bottles for the child, and gave me my breakfast when I went over to ask him a question, so he did ; and how he came to see Billy, and never left off his goodness till he was quite well ? ”

“ Oh ! you are always that way, Molly, and I believe you are right after all, so I won’t be sorry for selling the cow ; but I’ll go to-morrow, and you must put a needle and thread through my coat, for you know ’tis ripp’d under the arm.”

Molly told him he should have everything right ; and about twelve o’clock next day he left her, getting a charge not to sell his cow except for the highest penny. Mick promised to mind it, and went his way along the road. He drove his cow slowly through the little stream which crosses it, and runs under the old walls of Mourne. As he passed he glanced his eye upon the towers and one of the old elder trees, which were only then little bits of switches.

“ Oh, then, if I only had half of the money that’s buried in you, ’t isn’t driving this poor cow I’d be now ! Why, then, isn’t it too bad that it should be there covered over with earth, and many a one besides me wanting ? Well, if it’s God’s will, I’ll have some money myself coming back.”

So saying he moved on after his beast. ’Twas a fine day, and the sun shone brightly on the walls of

the old abbey as he passed under them. He then crossed an extensive mountain tract, and after six long miles he came to the top of that hill—Bottle-hill 'tis called now, but that was not the name of it then, and just there a man overtook him. "Good morrow," says he. "Good morrow, kindly," says Mick, looking at the stranger, who was a little man, you'd almost call him a dwarf, only he wasn't quite so little neither: he had a bit of an old wrinkled, yellow face, for all the world like a dried cauliflower, only he had a sharp little nose, and red eyes, and white hair, and his lips were not red, but all his face was one colour, and his eyes never were quiet, but looking at everything, and although they were red they made Mick feel quite cold when he looked at them. In truth, he did not much like the little man's company; and he couldn't see one bit of his legs nor his body, for though the day was warm, he was all wrapped up in a big greatcoat. Mick drove his cow something faster, but the little man kept up with him. Mick didn't know how he walked, for he was almost afraid to look at him, and to cross himself, for fear the old man would be angry. Yet he thought his fellow-traveller did not seem to walk like other men, nor to put one foot before the other, but to glide over the rough road—and rough enough it was—like a shadow, without noise and without effort.

Mick's heart trembled within him, and he said a prayer to himself, wishing he hadn't come out that day, or that he was on Fair-hill, or that he hadn't the cow to mind, that he might run away from the bad thing—when, in the midst of his fears, he was again addressed by his companion.

"Where are you going with the cow, honest man?"

"To the fair of Cork, then," says Mick, trembling at the shrill and piercing tones of the voice.

"Are you going to sell her?" said the stranger.

"Why, then, what else am I going for but to sell her?"

"Will you sell her to me?"

Mick started—he was afraid to have anything to do with the little man, and he was more afraid to say no.

"What'll you give for her?" at last says he.

"I'll tell you what, I'll give you this bottle," says the little one, pulling the bottle from under his coat.

Mick looked at him and the bottle, and, in spite of his terror, he could not help bursting into a loud fit of laughter.

"Laugh if you will," said the little man, "but I tell you this bottle is better for you than all the money you will get for the cow in Cork—ay, than ten thousand times as much."

Mick laughed again. "Why, then," says he, "do

you think I am such a fool as to give my good cow for a bottle—and an empty one, too? indeed, then, I won't."

"You had better give me the cow, and take the bottle—you'll not be sorry for it."

"Why, then, and what would Molly say? I'd never hear the end of it; and how would I pay the rent? and what should we do without a penny of money?"

"I tell you this bottle is better to you than money take it, and give me the cow. I ask you for the last time, Mick Purcell."

Mick started.

"How does he know my name?" thought he.

The stranger proceeded: "Mick Purcell, I know you, and I have regard for you; therefore do as I warn you, or you may be sorry for it. How do you know but your cow will die before you go to Cork?"

Mick was going to say "God forbid!" but the little man went on (and he was too attentive to say anything to stop him; for Mick was a civil man, and he knew better than to interrupt a gentleman, and that's what many people, that hold their heads higher, don't mind now).

"And how do you know but there will be much cattle at the fair, and you will get a bad price, or may be you might be robbed when you are coming

home ; but what need I talk more to you, when you are determined to throw away your luck, Mick Purcell."

"Oh, no, I would not throw away my luck, sir," said Mick ; "and if I was sure the bottle was as good as you say, though I never liked an empty bottle, although I had drank the contents of it, I'd give you the cow in the name——"

"Never mind names," said the stranger, "but give me the cow ; I would not tell you a lie. Here, take the bottle, and when you go home do what I direct exactly."

Mick hesitated.

"Well, then, good-bye, I can stay no longer : once more, take it, and be rich ; refuse it, and beg for your life, and see your children in poverty, and your wife dying for want—that will happen to you, Mick Purcell !" said the little man with a malicious grin, which made him look ten times more ugly than ever.

"Maybe, 'tis true," said Mick, still hesitating : he did not know what to do—he could hardly help believing the old man, and at length, in a fit of desperation, he seized the bottle. "Take the cow," said he, "and if you are telling a lie, the curse of the poor will be on you."

"I care neither for your curses nor your blessings,

but I have spoken truth, Mick Purcell, and that you will find to-night, if you do what I tell you."

"And what's that?" says Mick.

"When you go home, never mind if your wife is angry, but be quiet yourself, and make her sweep the room clean, set the table out right, and spread a clean cloth over it; then put the bottle on the ground, saying these words: 'Bottle, do your duty,' and you will see the end of it."

"And is this all?" says Mick.

"No more," said the stranger. "Good-bye, Mick Purcell—you are a rich man."

"God grant it!" said Mick, as the old man moved after the cow, and Mick retraced the road towards his cabin: but he could not help turning back his head, to look after the purchaser of his cow, who was nowhere to be seen.

"Lord between us and harm!" said Mick. "*He* can't belong to this earth; but where is the cow?" She too was gone, and Mick went homeward muttering prayers, and holding fast the bottle.

"And what would I do if it broke?" thought he. "Oh! but I'll take care of that;" so he put it into his bosom, and went on anxious to prove his bottle, and doubting of the reception he should meet from his wife. Balancing his anxieties with his expectations, his fears with his hopes, he reached home in

the evening, and surprised his wife, sitting over the turf fire in the big chimney.

"Oh! Mick, are you come back? Sure you weren't at Cork all the way! What has happened to you? Where is the cow? Did you sell her? How much money did you get for her? What news have you? Tell us everything about it."

"Why then, Molly, if you'll give me time, I'll tell you all about it. If you want to know where the cow is, 't isn't Mick can tell you, for the never a know does he know where she is now."

"Oh! then, you sold her; and where's the money?"

"Arrah! stop awhile, Molly, and I'll tell you all about it."

"But what is that bottle under your waistcoat?" said Molly, spying its neck sticking out.

"Why, then, be easy now, can't you?" says Mick, "till I tell it to you:" and putting the bottle on the table, "That's all I got for the cow."

His poor wife was thunderstruck. "All you got! and what good is that, Mick? Oh! I never thought you were such a fool; and what'll we do for the rent? and what——"

"Now, Molly," says Mick, "can't you hearken to reason? Didn't I tell you how the old man, or whatsomever he was, met me—no, he did not meet me

neither, but he was there with me—on the big hill, and how he made me sell him the cow, and told me the bottle was the only thing for me?”

“Yes, indeed, the only thing for you, you fool!” said Molly, seizing the bottle to hurl it at her poor husband’s head; but Mick caught it, and quietly (for he minded the old man’s advice) loosened his wife’s grasp, and placed the bottle again in his bosom. Poor Molly sat down crying, while Mick told her his story, with many a crossing and blessing between him and harm. His wife could not help believing him, particularly as she had as much faith in fairies as she had in the priest, who indeed never discouraged her belief in the fairies; maybe he didn’t know she believed in them, and maybe he believed in them himself. She got up, however, without saying one word, and began to sweep the earthen floor with a bunch of heath; then she tidied up everything, and put out the long table, and spread the clean cloth, for she had only one, upon it, and Mick, placing the bottle on the ground, looked at it and said, “Bottle, do your duty.”

“Look there! look there, mammy!” said his chubby eldest son, a boy about five years old; “look there! look there!” and he sprung to his mother’s side, as two tiny little fellows rose like light from the bottle, and in an instant covered the table with

dishes and plates of gold and silver, full of the finest victuals that ever were seen, and when all was done went into the bottle again. Mick and his wife looked at everything with astonishment; they had never seen such plates and dishes before, and didn't think they could ever admire them enough; the very sight almost took away their appetites; but at length Molly said, "Come and sit down, Mick, and try and eat a bit; sure you ought to be hungry after such a good day's work."

"Why, then, the man told no lie about the bottle."

Mick sat down, after putting the children to the table, and they made a hearty meal, though they couldn't taste half the dishes.

"Now," says Molly, "I wonder will those two good little gentlemen carry away these fine things again?" They waited, but no one came; so Molly put up the dishes and plates very carefully, saying, "Why, then, Mick, that was no lies sure enough: but you'll be a rich man yet, Mick Purcell."

Mick and his wife and children went to their bed, not to sleep, but to settle about selling the fine things they did not want, and to take more land. Mick went to Cork and sold his plate, and bought a horse and cart, and began to show that he was making money; and they did all they could to keep the bottle a secret; but for all that their landlord

found it out, for he came to Mick one day and asked him where he got all his money—sure it was not by the farm ; and he bothered him so much that at last Mick told him of the bottle. His landlord offered him a deal of money for it, but Mick would not give it, till at last he offered to give him all his farm for ever : so Mick, who was very rich, thought he'd never want any more money, and gave him the bottle : but Mick was mistaken—he and his family spent money as if there was no end of it ; and to make the story short, they became poorer and poorer, till at last they had nothing left but one cow ; and Mick once more drove his cow before him to sell her at Cork fair, hoping to meet the old man and get another bottle. It was hardly daybreak when he left home, and he walked on at a good pace till he reached the big hill : the mists were sleeping in the valleys and curling like smoke wreaths upon the brown heath around him. The sun rose on his left, and just at his feet a lark sprang from its grassy couch and poured forth its joyous matin song, ascending into the clear blue sky,

“Till its form like a speck in the airiness blending,
And thrilling with music, was melting in light.”

Mick crossed himself, listening as he advanced to the sweet song of the lark, but thinking, notwith-

standing, all the time of the little old man ; when, just as he reached the summit of the hill, and cast his eyes over the extensive prospect before and around him, he was startled and rejoiced by the same well-known voice : "Well, Mick Purcell, I told you you would be a rich man."

"Indeed, then, sure enough I was, that's no lie for you, sir. Good morning to you, but it is not rich I am now—but have you another bottle, for I want it now as much as I did long ago? so if you have it, sir, here is the cow for it."

"And here is the bottle," said the old man, smiling ; "you know what to do with it."

"Oh ! then, sure I do, as good right I have."

"Well, farewell for ever, Mick Purcell : I told you you would be a rich man."

"And good-bye to you, sir," said Mick, as he turned back ; "and good luck to you, and good luck to the big hill—it wants a name, Bottle-hill—good-bye, sir, good-bye : " so Mick walked back as fast as he could, never looking after the white-faced little gentleman and the cow, so anxious was he to bring home the bottle. Well, he arrived with it safely enough, and called out as soon as he saw Molly, "Oh ! sure, I've another bottle !"

"Arrah, then, have you ? why, then, you're a lucky man, Mick Purcell, that's what you are."

In an instant she put everything right ; and Mick, looking at his bottle, exultingly cried out, " Bottle, do your duty." In a twinkling, two great stout men with big cudgels issued from the bottle (I do not know how they got room in it), and belaboured poor Mick and his wife and all his family, till they lay on the floor, when in they went again. Mick, as soon as he recovered, got up and looked about him ; he thought and thought, and at last he took up his wife and his children ; and leaving them to recover as well as they could, he took the bottle under his coat and went to his landlord, who had a great company : he got a servant to tell him he wanted to speak to him, and at last he came out to Mick.

" Well, what do you want now ? "

" Nothing, sir, only I have another bottle. "

" Oh, ho ! is it as good as the first ? "

" Yes, sir, and better ; if you like, I will show it to you before all the ladies and gentlemen. "

" Come along, then. " So saying, Mick was brought into the great hall, where he saw his old bottle standing high up on a shelf : " Ah ! ha ! " says he to himself, " maybe I won't have you by-and-by. "

" Now, " says his landlord, " show us your bottle. " Mick set it on the floor, and uttered the words : in a moment the landlord was tumbled on the floor ; ladies and gentlemen, servants and all, were running,

and roaring, and sprawling, and kicking, and shrieking. Wine cups and salvers were knocked about in every direction, until the landlord called out, "Stop those two devils, Mick Purcell, or I'll have you hanged!"

"They never shall stop," said Mick, "till I get my own bottle that I see up there at top of that shelf."

"Give it down to him, give it down to him, before we are all killed!" says the landlord.

Mick put his bottle into his bosom: in jumped the two men into the new bottle, and he carried them home. I need not lengthen my story by telling how he got richer than ever, how his son married his landlord's only daughter, how he and his wife died when they were very old, and how some of the servants, fighting at their wake, broke the bottles; but still the hill has the name upon it; ay, and so 'twill be always Bottle-hill to the end of the world, and so it ought, for it is a strange story.





FAIRIES OR NO FAIRIES.

JOHN MULLIGAN was as fine an old fellow as ever threw a Carlow spur into the sides of a horse. He was, besides, as jolly a boon companion over a jug of punch as you would meet from Carnsore Point to Bloody Farland. And a good horse he used to ride ; and a stiffer jug of punch than

his was not in nineteen baronies. Maybe he stuck more to it than he ought to have done; but that is nothing whatever to the story I am going to tell.

John believed devoutly in fairies; and an angry man was he if you doubted them. He had more fairy stories than would make, if properly printed in a rivulet of print running down a meadow of margin, two thick quartos for Mr. John Murray, of Albemarle Street; all of which he used to tell on all occasions that he could find listeners. Many believed his stories, many more did not believe them; but nobody, in process of time, used to contradict the old gentleman, for it was a pity to vex him. But he had a couple of young neighbours who were just come down from their first vacation in Trinity College to spend the summer months with an uncle of theirs, Mr. Whaley, an old Cromwellian, who lived at Ballybegmullinahone, and they were too full of logic to let the old man have his own way undisputed.

Every story he told they laughed at, and said that it was impossible, that it was merely old woman's gabble, and other such things. When he would insist that all his stories were derived from the most credible sources, nay, that some of them had been told by his own grandmother, a very respectable old

lady, but slightly affected in her faculties, as things that came under her own knowledge—they cut the matter short by declaring that she was in her dotage, and at the best of times had a strong propensity to pulling a long bow.

“But,” said they, “Jack Mulligan, did you ever see a fairy yourself?”

“Never,” was the reply.

“Well, then,” they answered, “until you do, do not be bothering us with any more tales of my grandmother.”

Jack was particularly nettled at this, and took up the cudgels for his grandmother; but the youngers were too sharp for him, and finally he got into a passion, as people generally do who have the worst of an argument. This evening—it was at their uncle’s, an old crony of his with whom he had dined—he had taken a large portion of his usual beverage, and was quite riotous. He at last got up in a passion, ordered his horse, and, in spite of his host’s entreaties, galloped off, although he had intended to have slept there, declaring that he would not have anything more to do with a pair of jackanape puppies, who, because they had learned how to read good-for-nothing books in cramp writing, and were taught by a parcel of wiggy, red-snouted, prating prigs (“not,” added he, “however, that I say a man

may not be a good man and have a red nose"), they imagined they knew more than a man who had held buckle and tongue together facing the wind of the world for five dozen years.

He rode off in a fret, and galloped as hard as his horse Shaunbuie could powder away over the limestone. "Drat it!" hiccuped he, "Lord pardon me for swearing! the brats had me in one thing—I never did see a fairy! and I would give up five as good acres as ever grew apple-potatoes to get a glimpse of one—and, by the powers! what is that?"

He looked and saw a gallant spectacle. His road lay by a noble demesne, gracefully sprinkled with trees, not thickly planted as in a dark forest, but disposed, now in clumps of five or six, now standing singly, towering over the plain of verdure around them, as a beautiful promontory arising out of the sea. He had come right opposite the glory of the wood. It was an oak, which in the oldest title-deeds of the country, and they were at least five hundred years old, was called the old oak of Ballinghassig. Age had hollowed its centre, but its massy boughs still waved with their dark serrated foliage. The moon was shining on it bright. If I were a poet, like Mr. Wordsworth, I should tell you how the beautiful light was broken into a thousand different

fragments, and how it filled the entire tree with a glorious flood, bathing every particular leaf, and showing forth every particular bough ; but as I am not a poet I shall go on with my story. By this light Jack saw a brilliant company of lovely little forms dancing under the oak with an unsteady and rolling motion. The company was large. Some spread out far beyond the farthest boundary of the shadow of the oak's branches, some were seen glancing through the flashes of light shining through its leaves, some were barely visible, nestling under the trunk, some no doubt were entirely concealed from his eyes. Never did man see anything more beautiful. They were not three inches in height, but they were white as the driven snow, and beyond number numberless. Jack threw the bridle over his horse's neck, and drew up to the low wall which bounded the demesne, and leaning over it, surveyed with infinite delight their diversified gambols. By looking long at them he soon saw objects which had not struck him at first ; in particular that in the middle was a chief of superior stature, round whom the group appeared to move. He gazed so long that he was quite overcome with joy, and could not help shouting out, "Bravo ! little fellow," said he, "well kicked and strong." But the instant he uttered the words the night was dark.

ened, and the fairies vanished with the speed of lightning.

"I wish," said Jack, "I had held my tongue ; but no matter now. I shall just turn bridle about and go back to Ballybegmullinahone Castle, and beat the young Master Whaleys, fine reasoners as they think themselves, out of the field clean."

No sooner said than done ; and Jack was back again as if upon the wings of the wind. He rapped fiercely at the door, and called aloud for the two collegians.

"Halloo !" said he, "young Flatcaps, come down now, if you dare. Come down, if you dare, and I shall give you *oc-oc*-ocular demonstration of the truth of what I was saying."

Old Whaley put his head out of the window, and said, "Jack Mulligan, what brings you back so soon ?"

"The fairies," shouted Jack ; "the fairies !"

"I am afraid," muttered the Lord of Ballybegmullinahone, "the last glass you took was too little watered : but no matter—come in and cool yourself over a tumbler of punch."

He came in and sat down again at table. In great spirits he told his story ; how he had seen thousands and tens of thousands of fairies dancing about the old oak of Ballinghassig ; he described their beauti-

ful dresses of shining silver ; their flat-crowned hats, glittering in the moonbeams ; and the princely stature and demeanour of the central figure. He added, that he heard them singing and playing the most enchanting music ; but this was merely imagination. The young men laughed, but Jack held his ground. "Suppose," said one of the lads, "we join company with you on the road, and ride along to the place where you saw that fine company of fairies?"

"Done!" cried Jack ; "but I will not promise that you will find them there, for I saw them scudding up in the sky like a flight of bees, and heard their wings whizzing through the air." This, you know, was a bounce, for Jack had heard no such thing.

Off rode the three, and came to the demesne of Oakwood. They arrived at the wall flanking the field where stood the great oak ; and the moon, by this time, having again emerged from the clouds, shone bright as when Jack had passed. "Look there," he cried, exultingly ; for the same spectacle again caught his eyes, and he pointed to it with his horsewhip ; "look, and deny if you can."

"Why," said one of the lads, pausing, "true it is that we do see a company of white creatures ; but were they fairies ten times over I shall go among them ;" and he dismounted to climb over the wall.

"Ah, Tom! Tom!" cried Jack, "stop, man, stop! what are you doing? The fairies—the good people, I mean—hate to be meddled with. You will be pinched or blinded; or your horse will cast its shoe; or—look! a wilful man will have his way. Oh! oh! he is almost at the oak—God help him! for he is past the help of man."

By this time Tom was under the tree, and burst out laughing. "Jack," said he, "keep your prayers to yourself. Your fairies are not bad at all. I believe they will make tolerably good catsup."

"Catsup," said Jack, who when he found that the two lads (for the second had followed his brother) were both laughing in the middle of the fairies, had dismounted and advanced slowly, "What do you mean by catsup?"

"Nothing," replied Tom, "but that they are mushrooms" (as indeed they were); "and your Oberon is merely this overgrown puff-ball."

Poor Mulligan gave a long whistle of amazement, staggered back to his horse without saying a word, and rode home in a hard gallop, never looking behind him. Many a long day was it before he ventured to face the laughers at Ballybegmullinahone; and to the day of his death the people of the parish, ay, and five parishes round, called him nothing but Musharoon Jack, such being their pronunciation of mushroom.

I should be sorry if all my fairy stories ended with so little dignity ; but—

“ ———— These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air—into thin air.”





THE HAUNTED CELLAR.

THERE are few people who have not heard of the Mac Carthies, one of the real old Irish families, with the true Milesian blood running in their veins as thick as buttermilk. Many were the clans of this family in the south ; as the Mac Carthy-more, and the Mac Carthy-reagh, and the Mac Carthy of Muskerry ; and all of them were noted for their hospitality to strangers, gentle and simple.

But not one of that name, or of any other, exceeded Justin Mac Carthy, of Ballinacarthy, at

putting plenty to eat and drink upon his table ; and there was a right hearty welcome for every one who should share it with him. Many a wine-cellar would be ashamed of the name if that at Ballinacarthu was the proper pattern for one. Large as that cellar was, it was crowded with bins of wine, and long rows of pipes, and hogsheads and casks, that it would take more time to count than any sober man could spare in such a place, with plenty to drink about him, and a hearty welcome to do so.

There are many, no doubt, who will think that the butler would have little to complain of in such a house ; and the whole country round would have agreed with them, if a man could be found to remain as Mr. Mac Carthy's butler for any length of time worth speaking of ; yet not one who had been in his service gave him a bad word.

"We have no fault," they would say, "to find with the master, and if he could but get any one to fetch his wine from the cellar, we might every one of us have grown grey in the house, and lived quiet and contented enough in his service until the end of our days."

"'Tis a queer thing that, surely," thought young Jack Leary, a lad who had been brought up from a mere child in the stables of Ballinacarthu to assist

in taking care of the horses, and had occasionally lent a hand in the butler's pantry: "'Tis a mighty queer thing, surely, that one man after another cannot content himself with the best place in the house of a good master, but that every one of them must quit, all through the means, as they say, of the wine-cellar. If the master, long life to him, would but make me his butler, I warrant never the word more would be heard of grumbling at his bidding to go to the wine-cellar."

Young Leary accordingly watched for what he conceived to be a favourable opportunity of presenting himself to the notice of his master.

A few mornings after, Mr. Mac Carthy went into his stable-yard rather earlier than usual, and called loudly for the groom to saddle his horse, as he intended going out with the hounds. But there was no groom to answer, and young Jack Leary led Rainbow out of the stable.

"Where is William?" inquired Mr. Mac Carthy.

"Sir?" said Jack; and Mr. Mac Carthy repeated the question.

"Is it William, please your honour?" returned Jack; "why, then, to tell the truth, he had just *one* drop too much last night."

"Where did he get it?" said Mr. Mac Carthy; for since Thomas went away the key of the wine-cellar

has been in my pocket, and I have been obliged to fetch what was drunk myself."

"Sorrow a know I know," said Leary, "unless the cook might have given him the *laste taste* in life of whiskey. But," continued he, performing a low bow by seizing with his right hand a lock of hair and pulling down his head by it, whilst his left leg, which had been put forward, was scraped back against the ground, "may I make so bold as just to ask your honour one question?"

"Speak out, Jack," said Mr. Mac Carthy.

"Why, then, does your honour want a butler?"

"Can you recommend me one," returned his master, with the smile of good-humour upon his countenance, "and one who will not be afraid of going to my wine-cellar?"

"Is the wine-cellar all the matter?" said young Leary; "devil a doubt I have of myself then for that."

"So you mean to offer me your services in the capacity of butler?" said Mr. Mac Carthy, with some surprise.

"Exactly so," answered Leary, now for the first time looking up from the ground.

"Well, I believe you to be a good lad, and have no objection to give you a trial."

"Long may your honour reign over us, and the

Lord spare you to us!" ejaculated Leary, with another national bow, as his master rode off; and he continued for some time to gaze after him with a vacant stare, which slowly and gradually assumed a look of importance.

"Jack Leary," said he, at length, "Jack—is it Jack?" in a tone of wonder; "faith, 'tis not Jack now, but Mr. John, the butler;" and with an air of becoming consequence he strode out of the stable-yard towards the kitchen.

It is of little purport to my story, although it may afford an instructive lesson to the reader, to depict the sudden transition of nobody into somebody. Jack's former stable companion, a poor superannuated hound named Bran, who had been accustomed to receive many an affectionate pat on the head, was spurned from him with a kick and an "Out of the way, sirrah." Indeed, poor Jack's memory seemed sadly affected by this sudden change of situation. What established the point beyond all doubt was his almost forgetting the pretty face of Peggy, the kitchen wench, whose heart he had assailed but the preceding week by the offer of purchasing a gold ring for the fourth finger of her right hand, and a lusty imprint of good-will upon her lips.

When Mr. Mac Carthy returned from hunting, he sent for Jack Leary—so he still continued to call his

new butler. "Jack," said he, "I believe you are a trustworthy lad, and here are the keys of my cellar. I have asked the gentlemen with whom I hunted to-day to dine with me, and I hope they may be satisfied at the way in which you will wait on them at table; but, above all, let there be no want of wine after dinner."

Mr. John, having a tolerably quick eye for such things, and being naturally a handy lad, spread his cloth accordingly, laid his plates and knives and forks in the same manner he had seen his predecessors in office perform these mysteries, and really, for the first time, got through attendance on dinner very well.

It must not be forgotten, however, that it was at the house of an Irish country squire, who was entertaining a company of booted and spurred fox-hunters, not very particular about what are considered matters of infinite importance under other circumstances and in other societies.

For instance, few of Mr. Mac Carthy's guests (though all excellent and worthy men in their way) cared much whether the punch produced after soup was made of Jamaica or Antigua rum; some even would not have been inclined to question the correctness of good old Irish whiskey; and, with the exception of their liberal host himself, every one in company preferred the port which Mr. Mac Carthy

put on his table to the less ardent flavour of claret, a choice rather at variance with modern sentiment.

It was waxing near midnight when Mr. Mac Carthy rung the bell three times. This was a signal for more wine; and Jack proceeded to the cellar to procure a fresh supply, but it must be confessed not without some little hesitation.

The luxury of ice was then unknown in the south of Ireland; but the superiority of cool wine had been acknowledged by all men of sound judgment and true taste.

The grandfather of Mr. Mac Carthy, who had built the mansion of Ballinacarthly upon the site of an old castle which had belonged to his ancestors, was fully aware of this important fact; and in the construction of his magnificent wine-cellar had availed himself of a deep vault, excavated out of the solid rock in former times as a place of retreat and security. The descent to this vault was by a flight of steep stone stairs, and here and there in the wall were narrow passages—I ought rather to call them crevices; and also certain projections, which cast deep shadows, and looked very frightful when any one went down the cellar-stairs with a single light; indeed, two lights did not much improve the matter, for though the breadth of the shadow became less, the narrow crevices remained as dark and darker than ever.

Summoning up all his resolution, down went the new butler, bearing in his right hand a lantern and the key of the cellar, and in his left a basket, which he considered sufficiently capacious to contain an adequate stock for the remainder of the evening: he arrived at the door without any interruption whatever; but when he put the key, which was of an ancient and clumsy kind—for it was before the days of Bramah's patent,—and turned it in the lock, he thought he heard a strange kind of laughing within the cellar, to which some empty bottles that stood upon the floor outside vibrated so violently that they struck against each other: in this he could not be mistaken, although he may have been deceived in the laugh, for the bottles were just at his feet, and he saw them in motion.

Leary paused for a moment, and looked about him with becoming caution. He then boldly seized the handle of the key, and turned it with all his strength in the lock, as if he doubted his own power of doing so; and the door flew open with a most tremendous crash, that if the house had not been built upon the solid rock would have shook it from the foundation.

To recount what the poor fellow saw would be impossible, for he seems not to have known very clearly himself: but what he told the cook next

morning was, that he heard a roaring and bellowing like a mad bull, and that all the pipes and hogsheads and casks in the cellar went rocking backwards and forwards with so much force that he thought every one would have been staved in, and that he should have been drowned or smothered in wine.

When Leary recovered he made his way back as well as he could to the dining-room, where he found his master and the company very impatient for his return.

"What kept you?" said Mr. Mac Carthy in an angry voice; "and where is the wine? I rung for it half an hour since."

"The wine is in the cellar, I hope, sir," said Jack, trembling violently; "I hope 'tis not all lost."

"What do you mean, fool?" exclaimed Mr. Mac Carthy in a still more angry tone: "why did you not fetch some with you?"

Jack looked wildly about him, and only uttered a deep groan.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Mac Carthy to his guests, "this is too much. When I next see you to dinner I hope it will be in another house, for it is impossible I can remain longer in this, where a man has no command over his own wine-cellar, and cannot get a butler to do his duty. I have long thought of moving from Ballinacarthy; and I am now deter-

mined, with the blessing of God, to leave it to-morrow. But wine you shall have were I to go myself to the cellar for it." So saying, he rose from table, took the key and lantern from his half-stupefied servant, who regarded him with a look of vacancy, and descended the narrow stairs, already described, which led to his cellar.

When he arrived at the door, which he found open, he thought he heard a noise, as if of rats or mice scrambling over the casks, and on advancing perceived a little figure, about six inches in height, seated astride upon a pipe of the oldest port in the place, and bearing a spigot upon his shoulder. Raising the lantern, Mr. Mac Carthy contemplated the little fellow with wonder: he wore a red nightcap on his head; before him was a short leather apron, which now, from his attitude, fell rather on one side; and he had stockings of a light blue colour, so long as nearly to cover the entire of his leg; with shoes, having huge silver buckles in them, and with high heels (perhaps out of vanity to make him appear taller). His face was like a withered winter apple; and his nose, which was of a bright crimson colour, about the tip wore a delicate purple bloom, like that of a plum; yet his eyes twinkled

——— "like those mites
Of candied dew in moony nights—"

and his mouth twitched up at one side with an arch grin.

"Ha, scoundrel!" exclaimed Mr. Mac Carthy, "have I found you at last? disturber of my cellar—what are you doing there?"

"Sure, and master," returned the little fellow, looking up at him with one eye, and with the other throwing a sly glance towards the spigot on his shoulder, "a'n't we going to move to-morrow? and sure you would not leave your own little Cluricaune Naggeneen behind you?"

"Oh!" thought Mr. Mac Carthy, "if you are to follow me, Mister Naggeneen, I don't see much use in quitting Ballinacarthu." So filling with wine the basket which young Leary in his fright had left behind him, and locking the cellar door, he rejoined his guests.

For some years after Mr. Mac Carthy had always to fetch the wine for his table himself, as the little Cluricaune Naggeneen seemed to feel a personal respect towards him. Notwithstanding the labour of these journeys the worthy lord of Ballinacarthu lived in his paternal mansion to a good round age, and was famous to the last for the excellence of his wine and the conviviality of his company; but at the time of his death that same conviviality had nearly emptied his wine-cellar; and as it was never so well filled

again, nor so often visited, the revels of Master Naggeneen became less celebrated, and are now only spoken of amongst the legendary lore of the country. It is even said that the poor little fellow took the declension of the cellar so to heart that he became negligent and careless of himself, and that he had been sometimes seen going about with hardly a *skreed* (rag) to cover him.





SEEING IS BELIEVING.

THERE'S a sort of people whom every one must have met with some time or other ; people that pretend to disbelieve what, in their hearts, they believe and are afraid of. Now Felix O'Driscoll was one of these. Felix was a rattling, rollicking, harum-scarum, devil-may-care sort of a fellow, like—but that's neither here nor there. He was always talking one nonsense or another, and among the rest of his foolery he pretended not to believe in the fairies, the Cluricaunes and the Phoocas ; and he even sometimes had the impudence to affect to doubt of ghosts,

that everybody believes in, at any rate. Yet some people used to wink and look knowing when Felix was *gostering* (boasting), for it was observed that he was very shy of passing the ford of Ahnamoe after nightfall ; and that when he was once riding past the old church of Grenaugh in the dark, even though he had got enough of *potheen* into him to make any man stout, he made the horse trot so that there was no keeping up with him ; and every now and then he would throw a sharp look-out over his left shoulder.

One night there was a parcel of people sitting drinking and talking together at Larry Reilly's *public*, and Felix was one of the party. He was, as usual, getting on with his *bletherumskite* about the fairies, and swearing that he did not believe there was any *live* things, barring men and beasts, and birds and fish, and such things as a body could see, and he went on at last talking in so profane a way of the "*good people*" that some of the people grew timid, and began to cross themselves, not knowing what might happen, when an old woman called Moirna Hogaune, with a long blue cloak about her, who had been sitting in the chimney-corner smoking her pipe without taking any share in the conversation, took the pipe out of her mouth, threw the ashes out of it, spat in the fire, and, turning round, looked Felix straight in the face.

“And so you don’t believe there is such things as Cluricaunes, don’t you?” said she.

Felix looked rather daunted, but he said nothing.

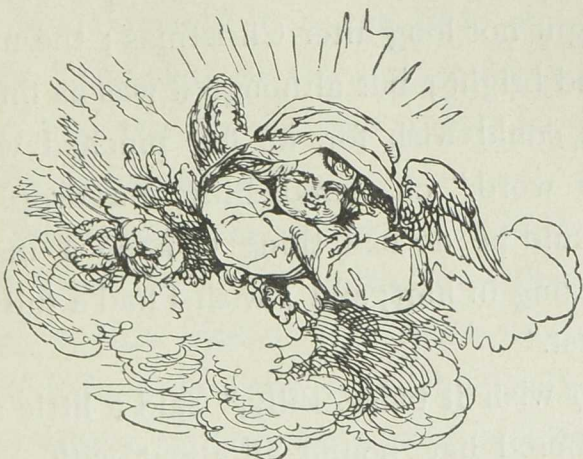
“Why, then, upon my troth, and it well becomes the like o’ you, that’s nothing but a bit of a gossoon, to take upon you to pretend not to believe what your father and your father’s father, and his father before him never made the least doubt of! But to make the matter short, seeing’s believing, they say; and I that might be your grandmother tell you there are such things as Cluricaunes, and I myself saw one—there’s for you now!”

All the people in the room looked quite surprised at this, and crowded up to the fireplace to listen to her. Felix tried to laugh, but it wouldn’t do; nobody minded him.

“I remember,” said she, “some time after I married my honest man, who’s now dead and gone, it was by the same token just a little afore I lay in of my first child (and that’s many a long day ago), I was sitting out in our bit of garden with my knitting in my hand, watching some bees that we had that was going to swarm. It was a fine sunshiny day about the middle of June, and the bees were humming and flying backwards and forwards from the hives, and the birds were chirping and hopping on the bushes, and the butterflies were flying and sitting on the flowers, and

everything smelt so fresh and so sweet, and I felt so happy, that I hardly knew where I was. When all of a sudden I heard, among some rows of beans that we had in a corner of the garden, a noise that went tick-tack, tick-tack, just for all the world as if a brogue-maker was putting on the heel of a pump. 'Lord preserve us!' said I to myself; 'what in the world can that be?' So I laid down my knitting, and got up and stole softly over to the beans, and never believe me if I did not see sitting there before me, in the middle of them, a bit of an old man, not a quarter so big as a new-born child, with a little cocked hat on his head, and a dudeen (pipe-stump) in his mouth smoking away, and a plain old-fashioned drab-coloured coat with big buttons upon it on his back, and a pair of massy silver buckles in his shoes, that almost covered his feet, they were so big; and he working away as hard as ever he could, heeling a pair of little brogues. The minute I clapped my two eyes upon him I knew him to be a Cluricaune; and as I was stout and foolhardy, says I to him, 'God save you, honest man! that's hard work you're at this hot day.' He looked up in my face quite vexed like; so with that I made a run at him, caught a hold of him in my hand, and asked him where was his purse of money. 'Money?' said he, 'money indeed! and where would a poor little old creature like me get

money ?' 'Come, come,' said I, 'none of your tricks doesn't everybody know that Cluricaunes, like you, are as rich as the devil himself?' So I pulled out a knife I had in my pocket, and put on as wicked a face as ever I could (and, in troth, that was no easy matter for me then, for I was as comely and good-humoured looking a girl as you'd see from this to Carrignavar), and swore if he didn't instantly give me his purse, or show me a pot of gold, I'd cut the nose off his face. Well, to be sure, the little man did look so frightened at hearing these words that I almost found it in my heart to pity the poor little creature. 'Then,' said he, 'come with me just a couple of fields off, and I'll show you where I keep my money.' So I went, still holding him in my hand and keeping my eyes fixed upon him, when all of a sudden I heard a *whiz-z* behind me. 'There! there!' cried he, 'there's your bees all swarming and going off with themselves.' I, like a fool as I was, turned my head round, and when I saw nothing at all, and looked back at the Cluricaune, I found nothing at all at all in my hand; for when I had the ill luck to take my eyes off him, you see, he slipped out of my hand just as if he was made of fog or smoke, and the sorrow the foot he ever came nigh my garden again."



MASTER AND MAN.

BILLY MAC DANIEL was once as likely a young man as ever shook his brogue at a patron, emptied a quart, or handled a shillelagh; fearing for nothing but the want of drink; caring for nothing but who should pay for it; and thinking of nothing but how to make fun over it; drunk or sober, a word and a blow was ever the way with Billy Mac Daniel; and a mighty easy way it is of either getting into or of ending a dispute. More is the pity that, through the means of his thinking, and fearing, and caring for nothing, this same Billy Mac Daniel fell into bad

company ; for surely the "good people" are the worst of all company any one could come across.

It so happened that Billy was going home one clear frosty night not long after Christmas ; the moon was round and bright ; but although it was as fine a night as heart could wish for, he felt pinched with cold. "By my word," chattered Billy, "a drop of good liquor would be no bad thing to keep a man's soul from freezing in him ; and I wish I had a full measure of the best."

"Never wish it twice, Billy," said a little man in a three-cornered hat, bound all about with gold lace, and with great silver buckles in his shoes, so big that it was a wonder how he could carry them, and he held out a glass as big as himself, filled with as good liquor as ever eye looked on or lip tasted.

"Success, my little fellow," said Billy Mac Daniel, nothing daunted, though well he knew the little man to belong to the *good people* ; "here's your health, any way, and thank you kindly ; no matter who pays for the drink ;" and he took the glass and drained it to the very bottom without ever taking a second breath to it.

"Success," said the little man ; "and you're heartily welcome, Billy ; but don't think to cheat me as you have done others,—out with your purse and pay me like a gentleman."

“Is it I pay you?” said Billy; “could I not just take you up and put you in my pocket as easily as a blackberry?”

“Billy Mac Daniel,” said the little man, getting very angry, “you shall be my servant for seven years and a day, and that is the way I will be paid; so make ready to follow me.”

When Billy heard this he began to be very sorry for having used such bold words towards the little man; and he felt himself, yet could not tell how, obliged to follow the little man the livelong night about the country, up and down, and over hedge and ditch, and through bog and brake, without any rest.

When morning began to dawn the little man turned round to him and said, “You may now go home, Billy, but on your peril don’t fail to meet me in the Fort-field to-night; or if you do it may be the worse for you in the long run. If I find you a good servant you will find me an indulgent master.”

Home went Billy Mac Daniel; and though he was tired and weary enough, never a wink of sleep could he get for thinking of the little man; but he was afraid not to do his bidding, so up he got in the evening, and away he went to the Fort-field. He was not long there before the little man came towards him and said, “Billy, I want to go a long journey to-night; so saddle one of my horses, and you may

saddle another for yourself, as you are to go along with me, and may be tired after your walk last night."

Billy thought this very considerate of his master, and thanked him accordingly: "But," said he, "If I may be so bold, sir, I would ask which is the way to your stable, for never a thing do I see but the fort here, and the old thorn tree in the corner of the field, and the stream running at the bottom of the hill, with the bit of bog over against us."

"Ask no questions, Billy," said the little man, "but go over to that bit of bog, and bring me two of the strongest rushes you can find."

Billy did accordingly, wondering what the little man would be at; and he picked out two of the stoutest rushes he could find, with a little bunch of brown blossom stuck at the side of each, and brought them back to his master.

"Get up, Billy," said the little man, taking one of the rushes from him and striding across it.

"Where shall I get up, please your honour?" said Billy.

"Why, upon horseback, like me, to be sure," said the little man.

"Is it after making a fool of me you'd be," said Billy, "bidding me get a-horseback upon that bit of a rush? Maybe you want to persuade me that the

rush I pulled but a while ago out of the bog over there is a horse?"

"Up! up! and no words," said the little man, looking very angry; "the best horse you ever rode was but a fool to it." So Billy, thinking all this was in joke, and fearing to vex his master, straddled across the rush. "Borram! Borram! Borram!" cried the little man three times (which, in English, means to become great), and Billy did the same after him; presently the rushes swelled up into fine horses, and away they went full speed; but Billy, who had put the rush between his legs, without much minding how he did it, found himself sitting on horseback the wrong way, which was rather awkward, with his face to the horse's tail; and so quickly had his steed started off with him that he had no power to turn round, and there was therefore nothing for it but to hold on by the tail.

At last they came to their journey's end, and stopped at the gate of a fine house. "Now, Billy," said the little man, "do as you see me do, and follow me close; but as you did not know your horse's head from his tail, mind that your own head does not spin round until you can't tell whether you are standing on it or on your heels: for remember that old liquor, though able to make a cat speak, can make a man dumb."

The little man then said some queer kind of words, out of which Billy could make no meaning ; but he contrived to say them after him for all that ; and in they both went through the keyhole of the door, and through one keyhole after another, until they got into the wine-cellar, which was well stored with all kinds of wine.

The little man fell to drinking as hard as he could, and Billy, noway disliking the example, did the same.

“The best of masters are you, surely,” said Billy to him, “no matter who is the next ; and well pleased will I be with your service if you continue to give me plenty to drink.”

“I have made no bargain with you,” said the little man, “and will make none ; but up and follow me.” Away they went, through keyhole after keyhole ; and each mounting upon the rush which he left at the hall door, scampered off, kicking the clouds before them like snowballs, as soon as the words, “Borram, Borram, Borram,” had passed their lips.

When they came back to the Fort-field the little man dismissed Billy, bidding him to be there the next night at the same hour. Thus did they go on, night after night, shaping their course one night here, and another night there ; sometimes north, and sometimes east, and sometimes south, until there was not a gentleman’s wine-cellar in all Ireland they had not

visited, and could tell the flavour of every wine in it as well, ay, better than the butler himself.

One night when Billy Mac Daniel met the little man as usual in the Fort-field, and was going to the bog to fetch the horses for their journey, his master said to him, "Billy, I shall want another horse to-night, for maybe we may bring back more company with us than we take." So Billy, who now knew better than to question any order given to him by his master, brought a third rush, much wondering who it might be that would travel back in their company and whether he was about to have a fellow-servant.

"If I have," thought Billy, "he shall go and fetch the horses from the bog every night ; for I don't see why I am not, every inch of me, as good a gentleman as my master."

Well, away they went, Billy leading the third horse, and never stopped until they came to a snug farmer's house, in the county Limerick, close under the old castle of Carrigogunniel, that was built, they say, by the great Brian Boru. Within the house there was great carousing going forward, and the little man stopped outside for some time to listen ; then turning round all of a sudden, said, " Billy, I will be a thousand years old to-morrow ! "

" God bless us, sir," said Billy, " will you ? "

" Don't say these words again, Billy." said the little

old man, "or you will be my ruin for ever. Now, Billy, as I will be a thousand years in the world to-morrow, I think it is full time for me to get married."

"I think so too, without any kind of doubt at all," said Billy, "if ever you mean to marry."

"And to that purpose," said the little man, "have I come all the way to Carrigogunniel; for in this house, this very night, is young Darby Riley going to be married to Bridget Rooney; and as she is a tall and comely girl, and has come of decent people, I think of marrying her myself, and taking her off with me."

"And what will Darby Riley say to that?" said Billy.

"Silence!" said the little man, putting on a mighty severe look; "I did not bring you here with me to ask questions;" and without holding further argument, he began saying the queer words which had the power of passing him through the keyhole as free as air, and which Billy thought himself mighty clever to be able to say after him.

In they both went; and for the better viewing the company, the little man perched himself up as nimbiy as a cocksparrow upon one of the big beams which went across the house over all their heads, and Billy did the same upon another facing him; but not being much accustomed to roosting in such a place, his legs hung down as untidy as may be, and it was quite clear

he had not taken pattern after the way in which the little man had bundled himself up together. If the little man had been a tailor all his life he could not have sat more contentedly upon his haunches.

There they were, both master and man, looking down upon the fun that was going forward ; and under them were the priest and piper, and the father of Darby Riley, with Darby's two brothers and his uncle's son ; and there were both the father and the mother of Bridget Rooney, and proud enough the old couple were that night of their daughter, as good right they had ; and her four sisters, with bran new ribbons in their caps, and her three brothers all looking as clean and as clever as any three boys in Munster ; and there were uncles and aunts, and gossips and cousins enough besides to make a full house of it ; and plenty was there to eat and drink on the table for every one of them, if they had been double the number.

Now it happened, just as Mrs. Rooney had helped his reverence to the first cut of the pig's head which was placed before her, beautifully bolstered up with white savoy, that the bride gave a sneeze, which made every one at the table start, but not a soul said "God bless us." All thinking that the priest would have done so, as he ought if he had done his duty, no one wished to take the word out of his mouth,

which unfortunately was preoccupied with pig's head and greens. And after a moment's pause the fun and merriment of the bridal feast went on without the pious benediction.

Of this circumstance both Billy and his master were no inattentive spectators from their exalted stations. "Ha!" exclaimed the little man, throwing one leg from under him with a joyous flourish, and his eye twinkled with a strange light, whilst his eyebrows became elevated into the curvature of Gothic arches: "Ha!" said he, leering down at the bride, and then up at Billy, "I have half of her now, surely. Let her sneeze but twice more, and she is mine, in spite of priest, mass-book, and Darby Riley."

Again the fair Bridget sneezed; but it was so gently, and she blushed so much, that few except the little man took, or seemed to take, any notice; and no one thought of saying "God bless us."

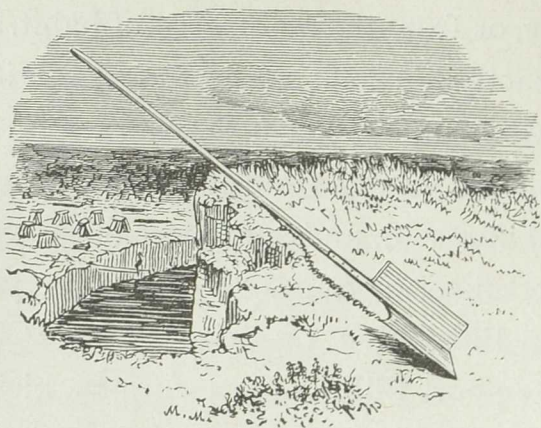
Billy all this time regarded the poor girl with a most rueful expression of countenance; for he could not help thinking what a terrible thing it was for a nice young girl of nineteen, with large blue eyes, transparent skin, and dimpled cheeks, suffused with health and joy, to be obliged to marry an ugly little bit of a man, who was a thousand years old, barring a day.

At this critical moment the bride gave a third

sneeze, and Billy roared out with all his might, "God save us!" Whether this exclamation resulted from his soliloquy, or from the mere force of habit, he never could tell exactly himself: but no sooner was it uttered than the little man, his face glowing with rage and disappointment, sprang from the beam on which he had perched himself, and shrieking out in the shrill voice of a cracked bagpipe, "I discharge you from my service, Billy Mac Daniel—take *that* for your wages," gave poor Billy a most furious kick in the back, which sent his unfortunate servant sprawling upon his face and hands right in the middle of the supper-table.

If Billy was astonished, how much more so was every one of the company into which he was thrown with so little ceremony. But when they heard his story, Father Cooney laid down his knife and fork, and married the young couple out of hand with all speed; and Billy Mac Daniel danced the Rinka at their wedding, and plenty he did drink at it too, which was what he thought more of than dancing.





THE TURF CUTTERS

“SURELY,” said Bill Welsh, “there is none of them things called Cluricaunes now; ’tis my belief they are gone, clear and clean, out of the country this many a long year.”

“Don’t be so sure of that,” replied Pat Murphy, with a knowing nod of his head; “for people have seen them, without any kind of doubt.”

“Ah,” said Welsh, “the old people—them that’s dead and gone, and can no more come back than the Cluricaunes themselves to tell us what sort of things they were.”

“What sort of a thing the Cluricaune is!” said Murphy, in a tone of surprise; “there’s myself, that is no dead man, but, God be praised for the same! stout and hearty this blessed summer’s morning, I see one once, and another man along with me see it as well as myself. It is as good as fifteen years ago, I was walking in Coolnahullig bog, in the parish of Magourney, with John Lynch, going for turf. Well, what should we see there before us, but a boy like of ten or twelve years old, only more broad and bulky, dressed in a grey little coat, and stockings of the same colour, with an old little black woollen hat. ‘By the laws,’ says Jack, ‘that’s a Cluricaune!’ ‘It might be,’ said I, ‘for I never saw one.’ ‘I am sure of it,’ says he, ‘for no boy could be so bulky. We’ll hunt him,’ says he, ‘and try if we can catch him, and get the purse, and then we’ll always find a shilling when we put our hand in it.’

“So we threw down the basket we had on our shoulders, and away with us after him; he was not more than twelve or fifteen yards from us at first, and he kept walking—walking on before us, until he came to a drain, when over pop went the little fellow with the spring of a grasshopper. On he kept walking then, and we run, and run our best too, but never the bit closer could we get to him. We


followed him better than a quarter of a mile, and he taking it fair and easy before our faces, when all of a sudden he turns short round a rick of turf from us.

“‘Jack,’ says I to Lynch, ‘we’ll have him fast now, at the other side of the rick.’ ‘He’s ours for certain,’ says Jack. So one of us, you see, turned one side, and the other the other side of the rick, thinking to pin the Cluricaune. We met sure enough on the other side, but never the bit of him could we find—he was gone, as if the ground had opened and swallowed him up!

“Lynch said he must be the Cluricaune beyond all doubt, for there was no hole in the rick half big enough for him to go hiding in from us!”



THE FIELD OF BOLIAUNS.

OM FITZPATRICK was the eldest son of a comfortable farmer who lived at Ballincollig. Tom was just turned of nine-and-twenty when he met the following adventure, and was as clever, clean, tight, good-looking a boy as any in the whole county Cork. One fine day in harvest—it was indeed Lady-day in harvest, that everybody knows to be one of the greatest holidays in the year—Tom was taking a ramble through the ground, and went sauntering along the sunny side of a hedge, thinking in himself, where would be the great harm if people, instead of idling and going about doing nothing at all, were to shake out the hay, and bind and stook the oats that were lying on the ledge, especially as the weather had been rather broken of late, when all of a sudden he heard a clacking sort of noise a little before him, in the hedge. “Dear me,” said Tom, “but isn’t it now really surprising to hear the stonechatters singing so late in the season?” So Tom stole on, going on the tops of

his toes to try if he could get a sight of what was making the noise, to see if he was right in his guess. The noise stopped; but as Tom looked sharply through the bushes what should he see in a nook of the hedge but a brown pitcher, that might hold about a gallon and a half of liquor; and by-and-by a little wee diny dony bit of an old man, with a little *motty* of a cocked hat stuck upon the top of his head, a deeshy daushy leather apron hanging before him, pulled out a little wooden stool, and stood up upon it, and dipped a little piggin into the pitcher, and took out the full of it, and put it beside the stool, and then sat down under the pitcher, and began to work at putting a heel-piece on a bit of a brogue just fitting for himself. "Well, by the powers," said Tom to himself, "I often heard tell of the Cluricaune; and, to tell God's truth, I never rightly believed in them—but here's one of them in real earnest. If I go knowingly to work, I'm a made man. They say a body must never take their eyes off them, or they'll escape."

Tom now stole on a little further, with his eye fixed on the little man just as a cat does with a mouse, or, as we read in books, the rattlesnake does with the birds he wants to enchant. So when he got up quite close to him, "God bless your work, neighbour," said Tom.

The little man raised up his head, and "Thank you kindly," said he.

"I wonder you'd be working on the holiday?" said Tom.

"That's my own business, not yours," was the reply.

"Well, may be you'd be civil enough to tell *us* what you've got in the pitcher there?" said Tom.

"That I will, with pleasure," said he; "it's good beer."

"Beer!" said Tom; "Thunder and fire! where did you get it?"

"Where did I get it, is it? Why, I made it. And what do you think I made it of?"

"Devil a one of me knows," said Tom, "but of malt, I suppose; what else?"

"'Tis there you're out. I made it of *heath*."

"Of heath!" said Tom, bursting out laughing; "sure you don't think me to be such a fool as to believe that?"

"Do as you please," said he, "but what I tell you is the truth. Did you ever hear tell of the Danes?"

"And that I did," said Tom; "weren't *them* the fellows we gave such a *licking* when they thought to take Limerick from us?"

"Hem!" said the little man, drily, "is that all you know about the matter?"

"Well, but about *them* Danes?" said Tom.

"Why all the about them there is, is that when they were here they taught us to make beer out of the heath, and the secret's in my family ever since."

"Will you give a body a taste of your beer?" said Tom.

"I'll tell you what it is, young man, it would be fitter for you to be looking after your father's property than to be bothering decent, quiet people with your foolish questions. There now, while you're idling away your time here, there's the cows have broke into the oats, and are knocking the corn all about.'

Tom was taken so by surprise with this that he was just on the very point of turning round when he recollected himself; so, afraid that the like might happen again, he made a *grab* at the Cluricaune, and caught him up in his hand; but in his hurry he overset the pitcher, and spilt all the beer, so that he could not get a taste of it to tell what sort it was. He then swore what he would not do to him if he did not show him where his money was. Tom looked so wicked and so bloody-minded that the little man was quite frightened; so, says he, "Come along with me a couple of fields off, and I'll show you a crock of gold."

So they went, and Tom held the Cluricaune fast

in his hand, and never took his eyes from off him, though they had to cross hedges, and ditches, and a crooked bit of bog (for the Cluricaune seemed, out of pure mischief, to pick out the hardest and most contrary way), till at last they came to a great field all full of boliaun buies (rag-weed), and the Cluricaune pointed to a big boliaun, and says he, "Dig under that boliaun, and you'll get the great crock all full of guineas."

Tom in his hurry had never minded the bringing a spade with him, so he thought to run home and fetch one ; and that he might know the place again he took off one of his red garters, and tied it round the boliaun.

"I suppose," said the Cluricaune very civilly, "you have no further occasion for me?"

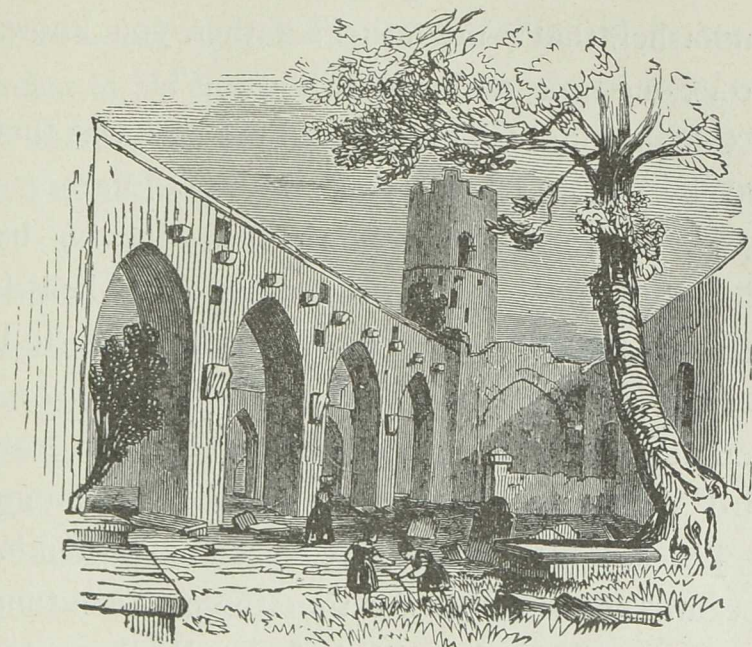
"No," says Tom ; "you may go away now, if you please, and God speed you, and may good luck attend you wherever you go."

"Well, good-bye to you, Tom Fitzpatrick," said the Cluricaune, "and much good may it do you, with what you'll get."

So Tom ran, for the dear life, till he came home and got a spade, and then away with him, as hard as he could go, back to the field of boliauns ; but when he got there, lo, and behold ! not a boliaun in the field but had a red garter, the very identical model

of his own, tied about it ; and as to digging up the whole field, that was all nonsense, for there was more than forty good Irish acres in it. So Tom came home again with his spade on his shoulder, a little cooler than he went ; and many's the hearty curse he gave the Cluricaune every time he thought of the neat turn he had served him.





THE LITTLE SHOE.

“**N**OW tell me, Molly,” said Mr. Coote to Molly Cogon, as he met her on the road one day, close to one of the old gateways of Kilmallock, “did you ever hear of the Cluricaune?”

“Is it the Cluricaune? why, then, sure I did, often and often; many’s the time I heard my father, rest his soul! tell about ’em over and over again.”

“But did you ever see one, Molly—did you ever see one yourself?”

"Och! no, I never *see* one in my life; but my grandfäther, that's my father's father, you know, he *see* one, one time, and caught him too."

"Caught him! Oh! Molly, tell me how was that?"

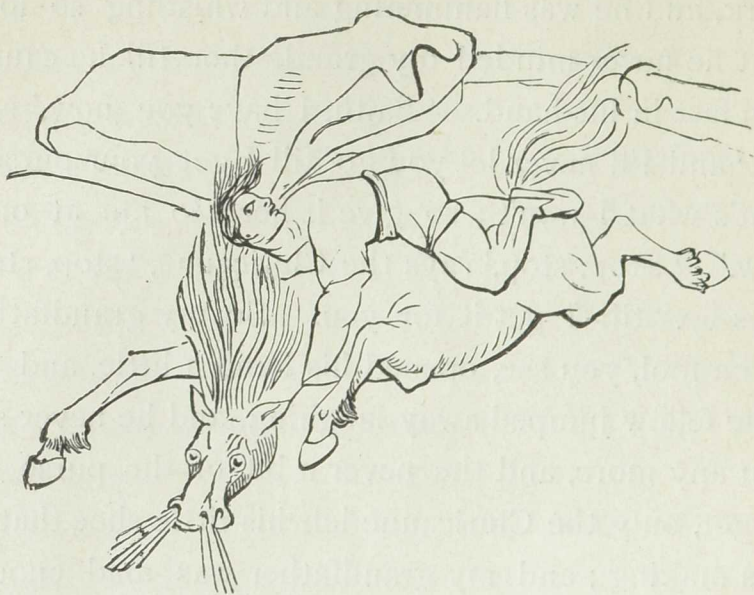
"Why, then, I'll tell you. My grandfather, you see, was out there above in the bog, drawing home turf, and the poor old mare was tired after her day's work, and the old man went out to the stable to look after her, and to see if she was eating her hay; and when he came to the stable door there, my dear, he heard something hammering, hammering, hammering, just for all the world like a shoemaker making a shoe, and whistling all the time the prettiest tune he ever heard in his whole life before. Well, my grandfather, he thought it was the Cluricaune, and he said to himself, says he, "I'll catch you if I can, and then I'll have money enough always." So he opened the door very quietly, and didn't make a bit of noise in the world that ever was heard; and looked all about, but the never a bit of the little man he could see anywhere, but he heard him hammering and whistling, and so he looked and looked, till at last he *see* the little fellow; and where was he, do you think, but in the girth under the mare; and there he was with his little bit of an apron on him, and hammer in his hand, and a little red nightcap on his head, and he making a shoe; and he was so busy with his

work, and he was hammering and whistling so loud, that he never minded my grandfather till he caught him fast in his hand. 'Faith, I have you now,' says he, 'and I'll never let you go till I get your purse—that's what I won't; so give it here to me at once. now.' 'Stop, stop,' says the Cluricaune, 'stop, stop,' says he, 'till I get it for you.' So my grandfather like a fool, you see, opened his hand a little, and the little fellow jumped away laughing, and he never saw him any more, and the never a bit of the purse did he get, only the Cluricaune left his little shoe that he was making; and my grandfather was mad enough angry with himself for letting him go; but he had the shoe all his life, and my own mother told me she often *see* it, and had it in her hand, and 'twas the prettiest little shoe she ever saw."

"And did you see it yourself, Molly?"

"Oh, no, my dear, it was lost long afore I was born; but my mother told me about it often and often enough."





THE SPIRIT HORSE.



THE history of Morty Sullivan ought to be a warning to all young men to stay at home, and to live decently and soberly if they can, and not go roving about the world. Morty, when he had just turned of fourteen, ran away from his father and mother, who were a mighty respectable old couple, and many and many a tear they shed on his account. It is said they both died heart-broken for his loss ; all they ever learned about him was that he went on board of a ship bound to America.

Thirty years after the old couple had been laid peacefully in their graves there came a stranger to Beerhaven inquiring after them—it was their son Morty ; and, to speak the truth of him, his heart did seem full of sorrow when he heard that his parents were dead and gone ; but what else could he expect to hear ? Repentance generally comes when it is too late.

Morty Sullivan, however, as an atonement for his sins, was recommended to perform a pilgrimage to the blessed chapel of Saint Gobnate, which is in a wild place called Ballyvourney.

This he readily undertook ; and, willing to lose no time, commenced his journey the same afternoon. Morty had not proceeded many miles before the evening came on : there was no moon, and the starlight was obscured by a thick fog, which ascended from the valleys. His way was through a mountainous country, with many cross-paths and by-ways, so that it was difficult for a stranger like Morty to travel without a guide. He was anxious to reach his destination, and exerted himself to do so ; but the fog grew thicker and thicker, and at last he became doubtful if the track he was in led to Saint Gobnate's chapel. Seeing therefore a light, which he imagined not to be far off, he went towards it, and when he thought himself close to it the light

suddenly seemed at a great distance, twinkling dimly through the fog. Though Morty felt some surprise at this, he was not disheartened, for he thought that it was a light which the blessed Saint Gobnate had sent to guide his feet through the mountains to her chapel.

Thus did he travel for many a mile, continually, as he believed, approaching the light, which would suddenly start off to a great distance. At length he came so close as to perceive that the light came from a fire ; seated beside which he plainly saw an old woman ; then, indeed, his faith was a little shaken, and much did he wonder that both the fire and the old woman should travel before him so many weary miles, and over such uneven roads.

“ In the pious names of Saint Gobnate and of her preceptor Saint Abban,” said Morty, “ how can that burning fire move on so fast before me, and how can that old woman be sitting beside the moving fire ? ”

These words had no sooner passed Morty's lips than he found himself, without taking another step, close to this wonderful fire, beside which the old woman was sitting munching her supper. With every wag of the old woman's jaw her eyes would roll fiercely upon Morty, as if she was angry at being disturbed ; and he saw with more astonishment than

ever that her eyes were neither black, nor blue, nor grey, nor hazel, like human eyes, but of a wild red colour, like the eyes of a ferret. If before he wondered at the fire, much greater was his wonder at the old woman's appearance, and stout-hearted as he was, he could not but look upon her with fear—judging, and judging rightly, that it was for no good purpose her supping in so unfrequented a place, and at so late an hour, for it was near midnight. She said not one word, but munched and munched away, while Morty looked at her in silence. "What's your name?" at last demanded the old hag, a sulphureous puff coming out of her mouth, her nostrils distending, and her eyes growing redder than ever, when she had finished her question.

Plucking up all his courage, "Morty Sullivan," replied he, "at your service;" meaning the latter words only in civility.

"*Ubbubbo!*" said the old woman, "we'll soon see that," and the red fire of her eyes turned into a pale green colour. Bold and fearless as Morty was, yet much did he tremble at hearing this dreadful exclamation—he would have fallen down on his knees and prayed to Saint Gobnate, or any other saint, for he was not particular, but he was so petrified with horror that he could not move in the slightest way, much less go down on his knees.

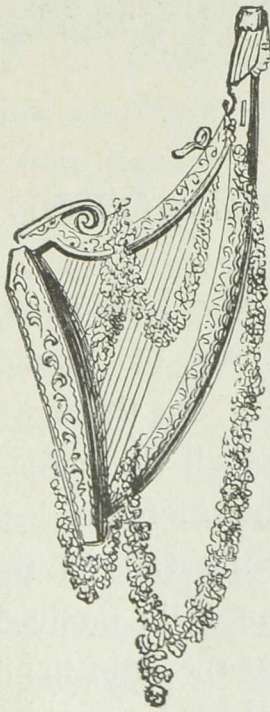
"Take hold of my hand, Morty," said the old woman ; "I'll give you a horse to ride that will soon carry you to your journey's end." So saying, she led the way, the fire going before them : it is beyond mortal knowledge to say how, but on it went, shooting out bright tongues of flame, and flickering fiercely.

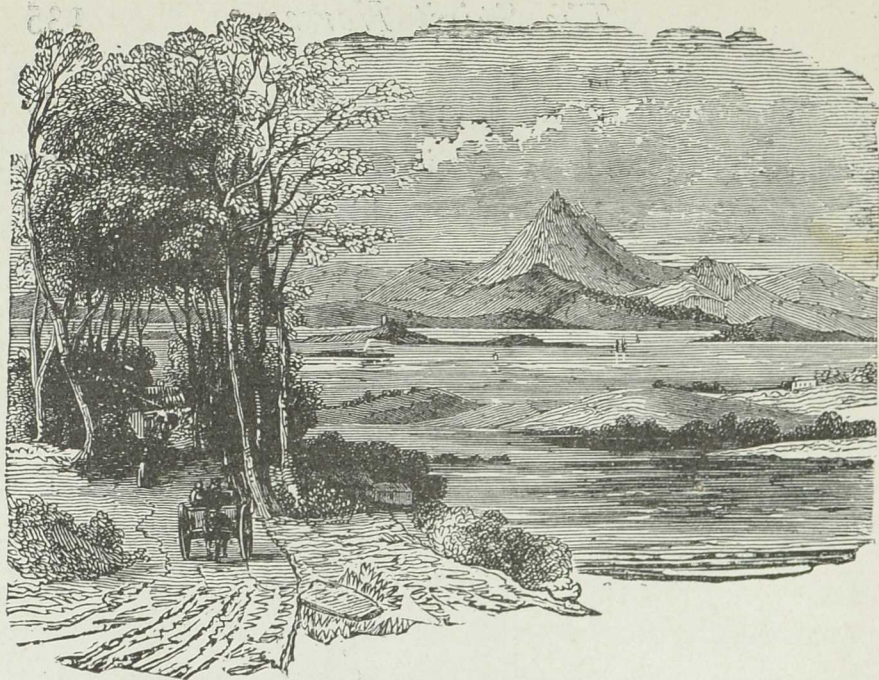
Presently they came to a natural cavern in the side of the mountain, and the old hag called aloud in a most discordant voice for her horse ! In a moment a jet-black steed started from its gloomy stable, the rocky floor of which rung with a sepulchral echo to the clanging hoofs.

"Mount, Morty, mount !" cried she, seizing him with supernatural strength, and forcing him upon the back of the horse. Morty finding human power of no avail, muttered, "Oh that I had spurs !" and tried to grasp the horse's mane ; but he caught at a shadow, which nevertheless bore him up and bounded forward with him, now springing down a fearful precipice, now clearing the rugged bed of a torrent, and rushing like the dark midnight storm through the mountains.

The following morning Morty Sullivan was discovered by some pilgrims (who came that way after taking their rounds at Gougane Barra) lying on the flat of his back, under a steep cliff, down which he

had been flung by the Phooka. Morty was severely bruised by the fall, and he is said to have sworn on the spot, by the hand of O'Sullivan (and that is no small oath), never again to take a full quart bottle of whisky with him on a pilgrimage.





DANIEL O'ROURKE.

PEOPLE may have heard of the renowned adventures of Daniel O'Rourke, but how few are there who know that the cause of all his perils, above and below, was neither more nor less than his having slept under the walls of the Phooka's tower.

I knew the man well : he lived at the bottom of Hungry Hill, just at the right-hand side of the road as you go towards Bantry. An old man was he at the time that he told me the story, with grey hair and a red nose ; and it was on the 25th of June, 1813, that I heard it from his own lips, as he sat

smoking his pipe under the old poplar tree, on as fine an evening as ever shone from the sky. I was going to visit the caves in Dursey Island, having spent the morning at Glengariff.

"I am often *axed* to tell it, sir," said he, "so that this is not the first time. The master's son, you see, had come from beyond foreign parts in France and Spain, as young gentlemen used to go, before Buonaparte or any such was heard of; and sure enough there was a dinner given to all the people on the ground, gentle and simple, high and low, rich and poor. The *ould* gentlemen were the gentlemen after all, saving your honour's presence. They'd swear at a body a little, to be sure, and, maybe, give one a cut of a whip now and then, but we were no losers by it in the end; and they were so easy and civil and kept such rattling houses, and thousands of welcomes; and there was no grinding for rent, and there was hardly a tenant on the estate that did not taste of his landlord's bounty often and often in a year: but now it's another thing: no matter for that, sir, for I'd better be telling you my story.

"Well, we had everything of the best, and plenty of it; and we ate, and we drank, and we danced, and the young master by the same token danced with Peggy Barry, from the Bohereen—a lovely young couple they were, though they are both low

enough now. To make a long story short, I got, as a body may say, the same thing as tipsy almost, for I can't remember ever at all, no ways, how it was I left the place; only I did leave it, that's certain. Well, I thought, for all that, in myself, I'd just step to Molly Cronohan's, the fairy woman, to speak a word about the bracket heifer that was bewitched; and so as I was crossing the stepping-stones of the ford of Ballyashenogh, and was looking up at the stars and blessing myself—for why? it was Lady-day—I missed my foot, and souse I fell into the water. 'Death alive!' thought I, 'I'll be drowned now!' However, I began swimming, swimming, swimming away for the dear life, till at last I got ashore, somehow or other, but never the one of me can tell how, upon a *dissolute* island.

"I wandered and wandered about there, without knowing where I wandered, until at last I got into a big bog. The moon was shining as bright as day, or your fair lady's eyes, sir (with your pardon for mentioning her), and I looked east and west, and north and south, and every way, and nothing did I see but bog, bog, bog—I could never find out how I got into it; and my heart grew cold with fear, for sure and certain I was that it would be my *berrin* piace. So I sat down upon a stone which, as good luck would have it, was close by me, and I began to

scratch my head, and sing the *Ullagone*—when all of a sudden the moon grew black, and I looked up, and saw something for all the world as if it was moving down between me and it, and I could not tell what it was. Down it came with a pounce, and looked at me full in the face; and what was it but an eagle? as fine a one as ever flew from the kingdom of Kerry. So he looked at me in the face, and says he to me, 'Daniel O'Rourke,' says he, 'how do you do?' 'Very well, I thank you, sir,' says I; 'I hope you're well;' wondering out of my senses all the time how an eagle came to speak like a Christian. 'What brings you here, Dan?' says he. 'Nothing at all, sir,' says I: 'only I wish I was safe home again.' 'Is it out of the island you want to go, Dan?' says he. 'Tis, sir,' says I: so I up and told him how I had taken a drop too much, and fell into the water; how I swam to the island; and how I got into the bog and did not know my way out of it. 'Dan,' says he, after a minute's thought, 'though it is very improper for you to get drunk on Lady-day, yet you are a decent sober man, who 'tends mass well, and never fling stones at me or mine, nor cries out after us in the fields—my life for yours,' says he; 'so get up on my back, and grip me well for fear you'd fall off, and I'll fly you out of the bog.' 'I am afraid,' says I, 'your honour's making game of

me ; for who ever heard of riding a-horseback on an eagle before ?' 'Pon the honour of a gentleman,' says he, putting his right foot on his breast, 'I am quite in earnest : and so now either take my offer or starve in the bog—besides, I see that your weight is sinking the stone.'

"It was true enough as he said, for I found the stone every minute going from under me. I had no choice ; thinks I to myself, faint heart never won fair lady, and this is fair persuadance. 'I thank your honour,' says I, 'for the loan of your civility ; and I'll take your kind offer.' I therefore mounted upon the back of the eagle, and held him tight enough by the throat, and up he flew in the air like a lark. Little I knew the trick he was going to serve me Up—up—up, God knows how far up he flew. 'Why then,' said I to him—thinking he did not know the right road home—very civilly, because why ? I was in his power entirely ; 'sir,' says I, 'please your honour's glory, and with humble submission to your better judgment, if you'd fly down a bit, you're now just over my cabin, and I could be put down there, and many thanks to your worship.'

"'Arrah, Dan,' said he, 'do you think me a fool ? Look down in the next field, and don't you see two men and a gun ? By my word it would be no joke to be shot this way, to oblige a drunken blackguard

that I picked up off of a *could* stone in a bog.' 'Bother you,' said I to myself, but I did not speak out, for where was the use? Well, sir, up he kept, flying, flying, and I asking him every minute to fly down, and all to no use. 'Where in the world are you going, sir?' says I to him. 'Hold your tongue, Dan,' says he: 'mind your own business, and don't be interfering with the business of other people.' 'Faith, this is my business, I think,' says I. 'Be quiet, Dan,' says he: so I said no more.

"At last where should we come to, but to the moon itself. Now you can't see it from this, but there is, or there was in my time, a reaping-hook sticking out of the side of the moon, this way (drawing the figure on the ground with the end of his stick).

"'Dan,' said the eagle, 'I'm tired with this long fly; I had no notion 'twas so far.' 'And my lord, sir,' said I, 'who in the world *axed* you to fly so far—was it I? did not I beg and pray and beseech you to stop half an hour ago?' 'There's no use talking, Dan,' said he; 'I'm tired bad enough, so you must get off, and sit down on the moon until I rest myself.' 'Is it sit down on the moon?' said I; 'is it upon that little round thing, then? why, then, sure I'd fall off in a minute, and be *kilt* and split, and smashed all to bits; you are a vile deceiver,—so

you are.' 'Not at all, Dan,' said he; 'you can catch fast hold of the reaping-hook that's sticking out of the side of the moon, and 'twill keep you up.' 'I won't then,' said I. 'May be not,' said he, quite quiet. 'If you don't, my man, I shall just give you a shake, and one slap of my wing, and send you down to the ground, where every bone in your body will be smashed as small as a drop of dew on a cabbage leaf in the morning.' 'Why, then, I'm in a fine way,' said I to myself, 'ever to have come along with the likes of you;' and so giving him a hearty curse in Irish, for fear he'd know what I said, I got off his back with a heavy heart, took hold of the reaping-hook, and sat down upon the moon, and a mighty cold seat it was, I can tell you that.

"When he had me there fairly landed, he turned about on me, and said, 'Good morning to you, Daniel O'Rourke,' said he; 'I think I've nicked you fairly now. You robbed my nest last year' ('twas true enough for him, but how he found it out is hard to say), 'and in return you are freely welcome to cool your heels dangling upon the moon like a cockthrow.'

"'Is that all, and is this the way you leave me, you brute, you?' says I. 'You ugly unnatural *baste*, and is this the way you serve me at last? Bad luck to yourself, with your hook'd nose, and to all your

breed, you blackguard.' 'Twas all to no manner of use; he spread out his great big wings, burst out a laughing, and flew away like lightning. I bawled after him to stop; but I might have called and bawled for ever, without his minding me. Away he went, and I never saw him from that day to this—sorrow fly away with him! You may be sure I was in a disconsolate condition, and kept roaring out for the bare grief, when all at once a door opened right in the middle of the moon, creaking on its hinges as if it had not been opened for a month before—I suppose they never thought of greasing 'em, and out there walks—who do you think, but the man in the moon himself? I knew him by his bush.

“‘Good morrow to you, Daniel O'Rourke,’ said he; ‘how do you do?’ ‘Very well, thank your honour,’ said I. ‘I hope your honour’s well.’ ‘What brought you here, Dan?’ said he. So I told him how I was a little overtaken in liquor at the master’s, and how I was cast on a *dissolute* island, and how I lost my way in the bog, and how the thief of an eagle promised to fly me out of it, and how instead of that he had flew me up to the moon.

“‘Dan,’ said the man in the moon, taking a pinch of snuff when I was done, ‘you must not stay here.’ ‘Indeed, sir,’ says I, ‘’tis much against my will I’m here at all; but how am I to go back?’ ‘That’s

your business,' said he; 'Dan, mine is to tell you that here you must not stay, so be off in less than no time.' 'I'm doing no harm,' says I, 'only holding on hard by the reaping-hook, lest I fall off.' 'That's what you must not do, Dan,' says he. 'Pray, sir,' says I, 'may I ask how many you are in family, that you would not give a poor traveller lodging: I'm sure 'tis not so often you're troubled with strangers coming to see you, for 'tis a long way.' 'I'm by myself, Dan,' says he; 'but you'd better let go the reaping-hook.' 'Faith, and with your leave,' says I, 'I'll not let go the grip, and the more you bids me the more I won't let go—so I will.' 'You had better, Dan,' says he again. 'Why, then, my little fellow,' says I, taking the whole weight of him with my eye from head to foot, 'there are two words to that bargain; and I'll not budge, but you may if you like.' 'We'll see how that is to be,' says he; and back he went giving the door such a great bang after him, (for it was plain he was huffed) that I thought the moon and all would fall down with it.

“Well, I was preparing myself to try strength with him, when back again he comes, with the kitchen cleaver in his hand, and without saying a word he gives two bangs to the handle of the reaping-hook that was keeping me up, and *whap!* it came in two. 'Good morning to you, Dan,' says the spiteful little

old blackguard, when he saw me cleanly falling down with a bit of the handle in my hand; 'I thank you for your visit, and fair weather after you, Daniel.' I had not time to make any answer to him, for I was tumbling over and over, and rolling and rolling, at the rate of a fox-hunt. 'God help me!' says I, 'but this is a pretty pickle for a decent man to be seen in at this time of night: I am now sold fairly.' The word was not out of my mouth when, whiz! what should fly by close to my ear but a flock of wild geese; all the way from my own bog of Ballyashenogh, else how should they know *me*? The *ould* gander, who was their general, turning about his head, cried out to me, 'Is that you, Dan?' 'The same,' said I, not a bit daunted now at what he said, for I was by this time used to all kinds of *bedevilment*, and, besides, I knew him of *ould*. 'Good morrow to you,' says he, 'Daniel O'Rourke; how are you in health this morning?' 'Very well, sir,' says I, 'I thank you kindly,' drawing my breath, for I was mightily in want of some. 'I hope your honour's the same.' 'I think 'tis falling you are, Daniel,' says he. 'You may say that, sir,' says I. 'And where are you going all the way so fast?' said the gander. So I told him how I had taken the drop, and how I came on the island, and how I lost my way in the bog, and how the thief of an eagle flew

up to the moon, and how the man in the moon turned me out. 'Dan,' said he, 'I'll save you : put out your hand and catch me by the leg, and I'll fly you home.' 'Sweet is your hand in a pitcher of honey, my jewel,' says I, though all the time I thought within myself that I don't much trust you ; but there was no help, so I caught the gander by the leg, and away I and the other geese flew after him as fast as hops.

"We flew, and we flew, and we flew, until we came right over the wide ocean. I knew it well, for I saw Cape Clear to my right hand, sticking up out of the water. 'Ah! my lord,' said I to the goose, for I thought it best to keep a civil tongue in my head any way, 'fly to land if you please.' 'It is impossible, you see, Dan,' said he, 'for a while, because you see we are going to Arabia.' 'To Arabia!' said I; 'that's surely some place in foreign parts, far away. Oh! Mr. Goose: why then, to be sure, I'm a man to be pitied among you.' 'Whist, whist, you fool,' said he, 'hold your tongue; I tell you Arabia is a very decent sort of place, as like West Carbery as one egg is like another, only there is a little more sand there.'

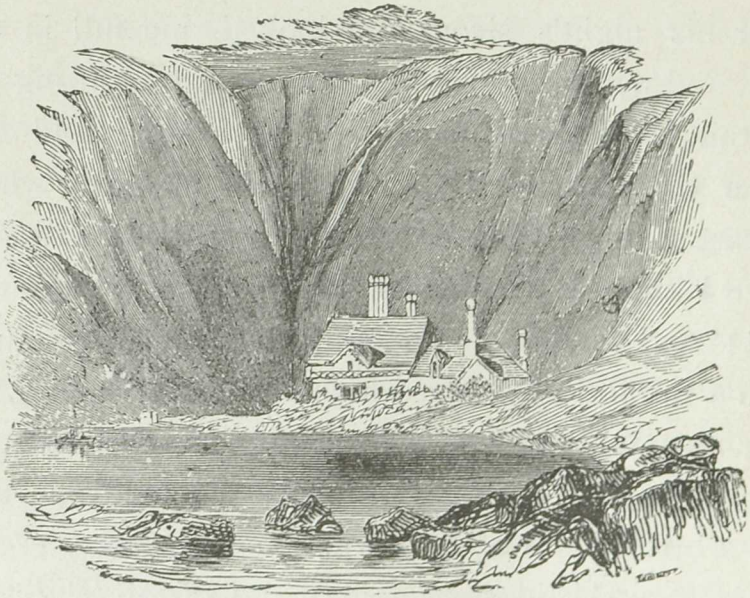
"Just as we were talking, a ship hove in sight, scudding so beautiful before the wind; 'Ah! then, sir,' said I, 'will you drop me on the ship, if you

please?' 'We are not fair over it,' said he. 'We are,' said I. 'We are not,' said he; 'if I dropped you now you would go splash into the sea.' 'I would not,' says I; 'I know better than that, for it is just clean under us, so let me drop now at once.'

"'If you must, you must,' said he; 'there, take your own way;' and he opened his claw, and faith he was right—sure enough I came down plump into the very bottom of the salt sea! Down to the very bottom I went, and I gave myself up then for ever, when a whale walked up to me, scratching himself after his night's sleep, and looked me full in the face, and never the word did he say, but lifting up his tail, he splashed me all over again with cold salt water till there wasn't a dry stitch upon my whole carcase! and I heard somebody saying—'twas a voice I knew too—'Get up, you drunken brute, off o' that;' and with that I woke up, and there was Judy with a tub full of water, which she was splashing all over me—for, rest her soul! though she was a good wife, she never could bear to see me in drink, and had a bitter hand of her own.

"'Get up,' said she again: 'and of all places in the parish would no place *sarve* your turn to lie down upon but under the *ould* walls of Carrigaphooka? an uneasy resting I am sure you had of it.' And sure enough I had: for I was fairly bothered out of my

senses with eagles, and men of the moons, and flying ganders, and whales, driving me through bogs, and up to the moon, and down to the bottom of the green ocean. If I was in drink ten times over, long would it be before I'd lie down in the same spot again, I know that."





THE CROOKENED BACK

PEGGY BARRETT was once tall, well-shaped, and comely. She was in her youth remarkable for two qualities, not often found together, of being the most thrifty housewife, and the best dancer in her native village of Ballyhooley. But she is now upwards of sixty years old ; and during the last ten years of her life she has never been able to stand upright. Her back is bent nearly to a level ; yet she has the freest use of all her limbs that can be enjoyed in such a posture ; her health is good

and her mind vigorous ; and, in the family of her eldest son, with whom she has lived since the death of her husband, she performs all the domestic services which her age, and the infirmity just mentioned, allow. She washes the potatoes, makes the fire, sweeps the house (labours in which she good-humouredly says she finds her crooked back mighty convenient), plays with the children, and tells stories to the family and their neighbouring friends, who often collect round her son's fireside to hear them during the long winter evenings. Her powers of conversation are highly extolled, both for humour and narration ; and anecdotes of droll or awkward incidents, connected with the posture in which she has been so long fixed, as well as the history of the occurrence to which she owes that misfortune, are favourite topics of her discourse. Among other matters she is fond of relating how, on a certain day, at the close of a bad harvest, when several tenants of the estate on which she lived concerted in a field a petition for an abatement of rent, they placed the paper on which they wrote upon her back, which was found no very inconvenient substitute for a table.

Peggy, like all experienced story-tellers, suited her tales, both in length and subject, to the audience and the occasion. She knew that, in broad daylight,

when the sun shines brightly, and the trees are budding, and the birds singing around us, when men and women, like ourselves, are moving and speaking, employed variously in business or amusement; she knew, in short (though certainly without knowing or much caring wherefore), that when we are engaged about the realities of life and nature, we want that spirit of credulity, without which tales of the deepest interest will lose their power. At such times Peggy was brief, very particular as to facts, and never dealt in the marvellous. But round the blazing hearth of a Christmas evening, when infidelity is banished from all companies, at least in low and simple life, as a quality, to say the least of it, out of season; when the winds of "dark December" whistled bleakly round the walls, and almost through the doors of the little mansion, reminding its inmates that as the world is vexed by elements superior to human power, so it may be visited by beings of a superior nature: at such times would Peggy Barrett give full scope to her memory, or her imagination, or both; and upon one of these occasions she gave the following circumstantial account of the "crookening of her back."

"It was, of all days in the year, the day before May-day, that I went out to the garden to weed the potatoes. I would not have gone out that day but I was dull in myself, and sorrowful, and wanted to be

alone ; all the boys and girls were laughing and joking in the house, making goaling-balls and dressing out ribbons for the mummers next day. I couldn't bear it. 'Twas only at the Easter that was then past (and that's ten years last Easter—I won't forget the time), that I buried my poor man ; and I thought how gay and joyful I was, many a long year before that, at the May-eve before our wedding, when with Robin by my side I sat cutting and sewing the ribbons for the goaling-ball I was to give the boys on the next day, proud to be preferred above all the other girls of the banks of the Blackwater by the handsomest boy and the best hurler in the village ; so I left the house and went to the garden. I stayed there all the day, and didn't come home to dinner. I don't know how it was, but somehow I continued on, weeding, and thinking sorrowfully enough, and singing over some of the old songs that I sung many and many a time in the days that are gone, and for them that never will come back to me to hear them. The truth is, I hated to go and sit silent and mournful among the people in the house, that were merry and young, and had the best of their days before them. T'was late before I thought of returning home, and I did not leave the garden till some time after sunset. The moon was up ; but though there wasn't a cloud to be seen,

and though a star was winking here and there in the sky, the day wasn't long enough gone to have it clear moonlight; still it shone enough to make everything on one side of the heavens look pale and silvery-like; and the thin white mist was just beginning to creep along the fields. On the other side, near where the sun was set, there was more of daylight, and the sky looked angry, red, and fiery through the trees, like as if it was lighted up by a great town burning below. Everything was as silent as a churchyard, only now and then one could hear far off a dog barking, or a cow lowing after being milked. There wasn't a creature to be seen on the road or in the fields. I wondered at this first, but then I remembered it was May-eve, and that many a thing, both good and bad, would be wandering about that night, and that I ought to shun danger as well as others. So I walked on as quick as I could, and soon came to the end of the demesne wall, where the trees rise high and thick at each side of the road, and almost meet at the top. My heart misgave me when I got under the shade. There was so much light let down from the opening above that I could see about a stone-throw before me. All of a sudden I heard a rustling among the branches, on the right side of the road, and saw something like a small black goat, only with long wide horns turned

out instead of being bent backwards, standing upon its hind legs upon the top of the wall, and looking down on me. My breath was stopped, and I couldn't move for near a minute. I couldn't help, somehow, keeping my eyes fixed on it; and it never stirred but kept looking in the same fixed way down at me. At last I made a rush, and went on; but I didn't go ten steps when I saw the very same sight on the wall, to the left of me, standing in exactly the same manner, but three or four times as high, and almost as tall as the tallest man. The horns looked frightful: it gazed upon me as before; my legs shook, my teeth chattered, and I thought I would drop down dead every moment. At last I felt as if I was obliged to go on—and on I went; but it was without feeling how I moved, or whether my legs carried me. Just as I passed the spot where this frightful thing was standing, I heard a noise as if something sprung from the wall, and felt like as if a heavy animal plumped down upon me, and held with the fore feet clinging to my shoulders, and the hind ones fixed in my gown, that was folded and pinned up behind me. 'Tis the wonder of my life ever since how I bore the shock; but so it was, I neither fell, nor even staggered with the weight, but walked on as if I had the strength of ten men, though I felt as if I couldn't help moving, and couldn't stand still if I wished it.

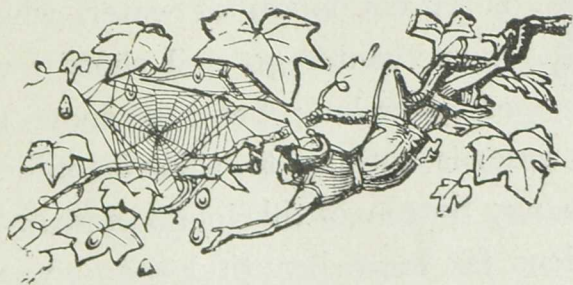
Though I gasped with fear, I knew as well as I do now what I was doing. I tried to cry out, but couldn't; I tried to run, but wasn't able; I tried to look back, but my head and neck were as if they were screwed in a vice. I could barely roll my eyes on each side, and then I could see, as clearly and plainly as if it was in the broad light of the blessed sun, a black and cloven foot planted upon each of my shoulders. I heard a low breathing in my ear; I felt, at every step I took, my leg strike back against the feet of the creature that was on my back. Still I could do nothing but walk straight on. At last I came within sight of the house, and a welcome sight it was to me, for I thought I would be released when I reached it. I soon came close to the door, but it was shut; I looked at the little window, but it was shut too, for they were more cautious about May-eve than I was; I saw the light inside, through the chinks of the door; I heard 'em talking and laughing within; I felt myself at three yards' distance from them that would die to save me; and may the Lord save me from ever again feeling what I did that night, when I found myself held by what couldn't be good nor friendly, but without the power to help myself, or to call my friends, or to put out my hand to knock, or even to lift my leg to strike the door, and let them know that I was outside it! 'Twas as if my hands

grew to my sides, and my feet were glued to the ground, or had the weight of a rock fixed to them. At last I thought of blessing myself; and my right hand, that would do nothing else, did that for me. Still the weight remained on my back, and all was as before. I blessed myself again: 'twas still all the same. I then gave myself up for lost: but I blessed myself a third time, and my hand no sooner finished the sign, than all at once I felt the burthen spring off of my back; the door flew open as if a clap of thunder burst it, and I was pitched forward on my forehead in upon the middle of the floor. When I got up my back was crookened, and I never stood straight from that night to this blessed hour."

There was a pause when Peggy Barrett finished. Those who had heard the story before had listened with a look of a half-satisfied interest, blended, however, with an expression of that serious and solemn feeling which always attends a tale of supernatural wonders, how often soever told. They moved upon their seats out of the posture in which they had remained fixed during the narrative, and sat in an attitude which denoted that their curiosity as to the cause of this strange occurrence had been long since allayed. Those to whom it was before unknown still retained their look and posture of strained attention, and anxious but solemn expectation. A grandson

of Peggy's, about nine years old (not the child of the son with whom she lived), had never before heard the story. As it grew in interest, he was observed to cling closer and closer to the old woman's side ; and at the close he was gazing stedfastly at her, with his body bent back across her knees, and his face turned up to hers, with a look through which a disposition to weep seemed contending with curiosity. After a moment's pause he could no longer restrain his impatience, and catching her gray locks in one hand, while the tear of dread and wonder was just dropping from his eyelash, he cried, "Granny, what was it?"

The old woman smiled first at the elder part of her audience, and then at her grandson, and patting him on the forehead, she said, "It was the Phooka."





FIOR USGA.

A LITTLE way beyond the Gallows Green of Cork, and just outside the town, there is a great lough of water, where people in the winter go and skate for the sake of diversion; but the sport above the water is nothing to what is under it, for at the very bottom of this lough there are buildings and gardens far more beautiful than any now to be seen, and how they came there was in this manner.

Long before Saxon foot pressed Irish ground there was a great king, called Corc. whose palace stood

where the lough now is, in a round green valley, that was just a mile about. In the middle of the courtyard was a spring of fair water, so pure and so clear that it was the wonder of all the world. Much did the king rejoice at having so great a curiosity within his palace ; but as people came in crowds from far and near to draw the precious water of this spring, he was sorely afraid that in time it might become dry ; so he caused a high wall to be built up round it, and would allow nobody to have the water, which was a very great loss to the poor people living about the palace. Whenever he wanted any for himself he would send his daughter to get it, not liking to trust his servants with the key of the well-door, fearing they might give some away.

One night the king gave a grand entertainment, and there were many great princes present, and lords and nobles without end ; and there were wonderful doings throughout the palace : there were bonfires, whose blaze reached up to the very sky ; and dancing was there, to such sweet music that it ought to have waked up the dead out of their graves ; and feasting was there in the greatest of plenty for all who came ; nor was any one turned away from the palace gates—but “you’re welcome—you’re welcome, heartily,” was the porter’s salute for all.

Now it happened at this grand entertainment there

was one young prince above all the rest mighty comely to behold, and as tall and as straight as ever eye would wish to look on. Right merrily did he dance that night with the old king's daughter, wheeling there, as light as a feather, and footing it away to the admiration of every one. The musicians played the better for seeing their dancing; and they danced as if their lives depended upon it. After all this dancing came the supper; and the young prince was seated at table by the side of his beautiful partner, who smiled upon him as often as he spoke to her; and that was by no means so often as he wished, for he had constantly to turn to the company and thank them for the many compliments passed upon his fair partner and himself.

In the midst of this banquet one of the great lords said to King Corc, "May it please your majesty, here is everything in abundance that heart can wish for, both to eat and drink, except water."

"Water!" said the king, mightily pleased at some one calling for that of which purposely there was a want: "water shall you have, my lord, speedily, and that of such a delicious kind that I challenge all the world to equal it. Daughter," said he, "go fetch some in the golden vessel which I caused to be made for the purpose."

The king's daughter, who was called Fior Usga

(which signifies in English, Spring Water), did not much like to be told to perform so menial a service before so many people, and though she did not venture to refuse the commands of her father, yet hesitated to obey him, and looked down upon the ground. The king, who loved his daughter very much, seeing this, was sorry for what he had desired her to do, but having said the word, he was never known to recall it; he therefore thought of the way to make his daughter go speedily and fetch the water, and it was by proposing that the young prince her partner should go along with her. Accordingly, with a loud voice, he said, "Daughter, I wonder not at your fearing to go alone so late at night; but I doubt not the young prince at your side will go with you." The prince was not displeased at hearing this; and taking the golden vessel in one hand, with the other led the king's daughter out of the hall so gracefully that all present gazed after them with delight.

When they came to the spring of water, in the court-yard of the palace, the fair Usga unlocked the door with the greatest care, and stooping down with the golden vessel to take some of the water out of the well, found the vessel so heavy that she lost her balance and fell in. The young prince tried in vain to save her, for the water rose and rose so fast that

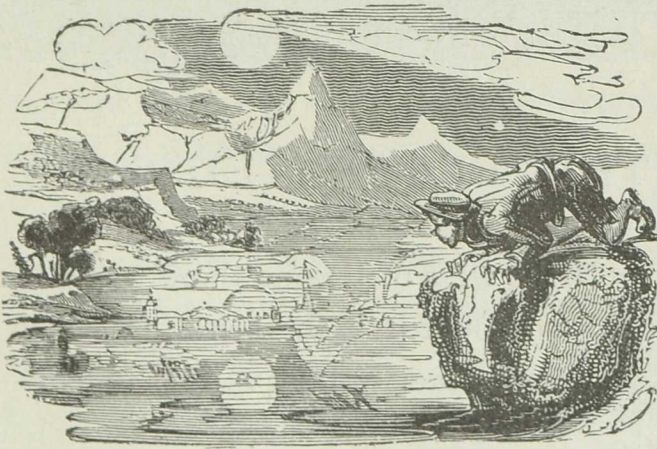
the entire court-yard was speedily covered with it, and he hastened back almost in a state of distraction to the king.

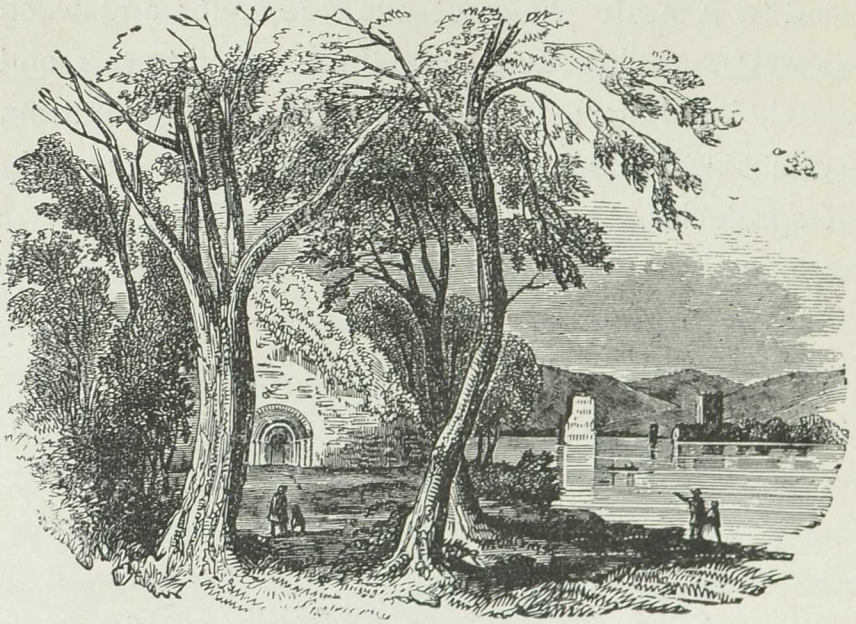
The door of the well being left open, the water, which had been so long confined, rejoiced at obtaining its liberty, rushed forth incessantly, every moment rising higher, and was in the hall of the entertainment sooner than the young prince himself, so that when he attempted to speak to the king he was up to his neck in water. At length the water rose to such a height that it filled the entire of the green valley in which the king's palace stood, and so the present lough of Cork was formed.

Yet the king and his guests were not drowned, as would now happen if such an awful inundation were to take place; neither was his daughter, the fair Usga, who returned to the banquet-hall the very next night after this dreadful event; and every night since the same entertainment and dancing goes on in the palace in the bottom of the lough, and will last until some one has the luck to bring up out of it the golden vessel which was the cause of all this mischief.

Nobody can doubt that it was a judgment upon the king for his shutting up the well in the court-yard from the poor people; and if there are any who do not credit my story, they may go and see the lough of Cork, for there it is to be seen to this day; the

road to Kinsale passes at one side of it ; and when its waters are low and clear the tops of towers and stately buildings may be plainly viewed in the bottom by those who have good eyesight, without the help of spectacles.





THE ENCHANTED LAKE

IN the west of Ireland there was a lake, and no doubt it is there still, in which many young men were at various times drowned. What made the circumstance remarkable was that the bodies of the drowned persons were never found. People naturally wondered at this; and at length the lake came to have a bad repute. Many dreadful stories were told about that lake; some would affirm that on a dark night its waters appeared like fire, others would speak of horrid forms which were seen to glide over

it ; and every one agreed that a strange sulphureous smell issued from out of it.

There lived, not far distant from this lake, a young farmer, named Roderick Keating, who was about to be married to one of the prettiest girls in that part of the country. On his return from Limerick, where he had been to purchase the wedding-ring, he came up with two or three of his acquaintance, who were standing on the bank, and they began to joke him about Peggy Honan. One said that young Delaney, his rival, had in his absence contrived to win the affections of his mistress ; but Roderick's confidence in his intended bride was too great to be disturbed at this tale, and putting his hand into his pocket, he produced and held up with a significant look the wedding-ring. As he was turning it between his forefinger and thumb, in token of triumph, somehow or other the ring fell from his hand, and rolled into the lake. Roderick looked after it with the greatest sorrow ; it was not so much for its value, though it had cost him half a guinea, as for the ill-luck of the thing ; and the water was so deep that there was little chance of recovering it. His companions laughed at him, and he in vain endeavoured to tempt any of them, by the offer of a handsome reward, to dive after the ring ; they were all as little inclined to venture as Roderick Keating himself ; for the tales which they

had heard when children were strongly impressed on their memories, and a superstitious dread filled the minds of each.

“Must I then go back to Limerick to buy another ring?” exclaimed the young farmer. “Will not ten times what the ring cost tempt any one of you to venture after it?”

There was within hearing a man who was considered to be a poor crazy half-witted fellow, but he was as harmless as a child, and used to go wandering up and down through the country from one place to another. When he heard of so great a reward, Paddeen, for that was his name, spoke out, and said that if Roderick Keating would give him encouragement equal to what he had offered to others, he was ready to venture after the ring into the lake; and Paddeen, all the while he spoke, looked as covetous after the sport as the money.

“I’ll take you at your word,” said Keating. So Paddeen pulled off his coat, and without a single syllable more, down he plunged, head foremost, into the lake: what depth he went to no one can tell exactly; but he was going, going, going down through the water, until the water parted from him, and he came upon the dry land: the sky, and the light, and everything, was there just as it is here; and he saw fine pleasure-grounds, with an elegant avenue through

them, and a grand house, with a power of steps going up to the door. When he had recovered from his wonder at finding the land so dry and comfortable under the water, he looked about him, and what should he see but all the young men that were drowned working away in the pleasure-grounds as if nothing had ever happened to them. Some of them were mowing down the grass, and more were settling out the gravel walks, and doing all manner of nice work, as neat and as clever as if they had never been drowned ; and they were singing away with high glee :

“ She is fair as Cappoquin :
Have you courage her to win ?
And her wealth it far outshines
Cullen’s bog and Silvermines :
She exceeds all heart can wish ;
Not brawling like the Foherish,
But as the brightly-flowing Lee,
Graceful, mild, and pure is she ! ”

Well, Paddeen could not but look at the young men, for he knew some of them before they were lost in the lake ; but he said nothing, though he thought a great deal more for all that, like an oyster—no, not the wind of a word passed his lips ; so on he went towards the big house, bold enough, as if he had seen nothing to speak of ; yet all the time mightily wishing to know who the young woman could be that the young men were singing the song about.

When he had nearly reached the door of the great house, out walks from the kitchen a powerful fat woman, moving along like a beer-barrel on two legs, with teeth as big as horse's teeth, and up she made towards him.

"Good morrow, Paddeen," said she.

"Good morrow, ma'am," said he.

"What brought you here?" said she.

"'Tis after Rory Keating's gold ring, I'm come," said he.

"Here it is for you," said Paddeen's fat friend, with a smile on her face that moved like boiling stir-about.

"Thank you, ma'am," replied Paddeen, taking it from her; "I need not say the Lord increase you, for you're fat enough already. Will you tell me, if you please, am I to go back the same way I came?"

"Then you did not come to marry me?" cried the corpulent woman, in a desperate fury.

"Just wait till I come back again, my darling," said Paddeen! "I'm to be paid for my message, and I must return with the answer, or else they'll wonder what has become of me."


"Never mind the money," said the fat woman; "if you marry me you shall live for ever and a day in that house, and want for nothing."

Paddeen saw clearly that, having got possession of the ring, the fat woman had no power to detain him;

so without minding anything she said, he kept moving and moving down the avenue, quite quietly, and looking about him ; for, to tell the truth, he had no particular inclination to marry a fat fairy. When he came to the gate, without ever saying good-bye, out he bolted, and he found the water coming all about him again. Up he plunged through it, and wonder enough there was when Paddeen was seen swimming away at the opposite side of the lake ; but he soon made the shore, and told Roderick Keating and the other boys that were standing there looking out for him all that had happened. Roderick paid him the five guineas for the ring on the spot ; and Paddeen thought himself so rich with such a sum of money in his pocket, that he did not go back to marry the fat lady with the fine house at the bottom of the lake, knowing she had plenty of young men to choose a husband from if she pleased to be married.



THE LEGEND OF O'DONOGHUE.

N an age so distant that the precise period is unknown, a chieftain named O'Donoghue ruled over the country which surrounds the romantic Lough Lean, now called the lake of Killarney. Wisdom, beneficence, and justice distinguished his reign, and the prosperity and happiness of his subjects were their natural results. He is said to have been as renowned for his warlike exploits as for his pacific virtues; and as a proof that his domestic administration was not the less rigorous because it was mild, a rocky island is pointed out to strangers, called "O'Donoghue's Prison," in which this prince once confined his own son for some act of disorder and disobedience.

His end—for it cannot correctly be called his death—was singular and mysterious. At one of those splendid feasts for which his court was celebrated, surrounded by the most distinguished of his subjects, he was engaged in a prophetic relation of the events which were to happen in ages yet to



THE O'DONOGHUE.

come. His auditors listened, now wrapt in wonder, now fired with indignation, burning with shame, or melted into sorrow, as he faithfully detailed the heroism, the injuries, the crimes, and the miseries of their descendants. In the midst of his predictions he rose slowly from his seat, advanced with a solemn, measured, and majestic tread to the shore of the lake, and walked forward composedly upon its unyielding surface. When he had nearly reached the centre he paused for a moment, then, turning slowly round, looked towards his friends, and waving his arms to them with the cheerful air of one taking a short farewell, disappeared from their view.

The memory of the good O'Donoghue has been cherished by successive generations with affectionate reverence ; and it is believed that at sunrise, on every May-day morning, the anniversary of his departure, he revisits his ancient domains : a favoured few are in general permitted to see him, and this distinction is always an omen of good fortune to the beholders ; when it is granted to many it is a sure token of an abundant harvest—a blessing, the want of which during this prince's reign was never felt by his people.

Some years have elapsed since the last appearance of O'Donoghue. The April of that year had been remarkably wild and stormy ; but on May-morning

the fury of the elements had altogether subsided. The air was hushed and still ; and the sky, which was reflected in the serene lake, resembled a beautiful but deceitful countenance, whose smiles, after the most tempestuous emotions, tempt the stranger to believe that it belongs to a soul which no passion has ever ruffled.

The first beams of the rising sun were just gilding the lofty summit of Glenaa, when the waters near the eastern shore of the lake became suddenly and violently agitated, though all the rest of its surface lay smooth and still as a tomb of polished marble, the next moment a foaming wave darted forward, and, like a proud high-crested warhorse, exulting in his strength, rushed across the lake toward Toomies mountain. Behind this wave appeared a stately warrior fully armed, mounted upon a milk-white steed ; his snowy plume waved gracefully from a helmet of polished steel, and at his back fluttered a light blue scarf. The horse, apparently exulting in his noble burden, sprung after the wave along the water, which bore him up like firm earth, while showers of spray that glittered brightly in the morning sun were dashed up at every bound.

The warrior was O'Donoghue ; he was followed by numberless youths and maidens, who moved lightly and unconstrained over the watery plain, as

the moonlight fairies glide through the fields of air ; they were linked together by garlands of delicious spring flowers, and they timed their movements to strains of enchanting melody. When O'Donoghue had nearly reached the western side of the lake, he suddenly turned his steed, and directed his course along the wood-fringed shore of Glenaa, preceded by the huge wave that curled and foamed up as high as the horse's neck, whose fiery nostrils snorted above it. The long train of attendants followed with playful deviations the track of their leader, and moved on with unabated fleetness to their celestial music, till gradually, as they entered the narrow strait between Glenaa and Dinis, they became involved in the mists which still partially floated over the lakes, and faded from the view of the wondering beholders : but the sound of their music still fell upon the ear, and echo, catching up the harmonious strains, fondly repeated and prolonged them in soft and softer tones, till the last faint repetition died away, and the hearers awoke as from a dream of bliss.





THE LADY OF GOLLERUS.

ON the shore of Smerwick harbour, one fine summer's morning, just at daybreak, stood Dick Fitzgerald "shoghing the dudeen," which may be translated, smoking his pipe. The sun was gradually rising behind the lofty Brandon, the dark sea was getting green in the light, and the mists clearing away out of the valleys went rolling and curling like the smoke from the corner of Dick's mouth.

"'Tis just the pattern of a pretty morning," said Dick, taking the pipe from between his lips, and looking towards the distant ocean, which lay as still and tranquil as a tomb of polished marble. "Well, to be sure," continued he, after a pause, "'tis mighty lonesome to be talking to one's self by way of company, and not to have another soul to answer

one—nothing but the child of one's own voice, the echo! I know this, that if I had the luck, or maybe the misfortune," said Dick, with a melancholy smile, "to have the woman, it would not be this way with me! and what in the wide world is a man without a wife? He's no more surely than a bottle without a drop of drink in it, or dancing without music, or the left leg of a scissors, or a fishing-line without a hook, or any other matter that is no way complete. Is it not so?" said Dick Fitzgerald, casting his eyes towards a rock upon the strand, which, though it could not speak, stood up as firm and looked as bold as ever Kerry witness did.

But what was his astonishment at beholding, just at the foot of that rock, a beautiful young creature combing her hair, which was of a sea-green colour; and now the salt water shining on it appeared, in the morning light, like melted butter upon cabbage.

Dick guessed at once that she was a Merrow, although he had never seen one before, for he spied the *cohuleen driuth*, or little enchanted cap which the sea people use for diving down into the ocean, lying upon the strand near her; and he had heard that, if once he could possess himself of the cap she would lose the power of going away into the water: so he seized it with all speed, and she, hearing the noise, turned her head about as natural as any Christian

When the Merrow saw that her little diving-cap was gone, the salt tears—doubly salt, no doubt, from her—came trickling down her cheeks, and she began a low mournful cry with just the tender voice of a new-born infant. Dick, although he knew well enough what she was crying for, determined to keep the *cohuleen driuth*, let her cry never so much, to see what luck would come out of it. Yet he could not help pitying her; and when the dumb thing looked up in his face, and her cheeks all moist with tears, 'twas enough to make any one feel, let alone Dick, who had ever and always, like most of his countrymen, a mighty tender heart of his own.

“Don’t cry, my darling,” said Dick Fitzgerald; but the Merrow, like any bold child, only cried the more for that.

Dick sat himself down by her side, and took hold of her hand by way comforting her. 'Twas in no particular an ugly hand, only there was a small web between the fingers, as there is in a duck’s foot; but 'twas as thin and as white as the skin between egg and shell.

“What’s your name, my darling?” says Dick, thinking to make her conversant with him; but he got no answer; and he was certain sure now, either that she could not speak or did not understand him: he therefore squeezed her hand in his, as the only

way he had of talking to her. It's the universal language ; and there's not a woman in the world, be she fish or lady, that does not understand it.

The Merrow did not seem much displeased at this mode of conversation ; and making an end of her whining all at once, " Man," says she, looking up in Dick Fitzgerald's face, " Man, will you eat me ? "

" By all the red petticoats and check aprons between Dingle and Tralee," cried Dick, jumping up in amazement, " I'd as soon eat myself, my jewel ! Is it I eat you, my pet ? Now, 'twas some ugly ill-looking thief of a fish put that notion into your own pretty head, with the nice green hair down upon it, that is so cleanly combed out this morning ! "

" Man," said the Merrow, " what will you do with me if you won't eat me ? "

Dick's thoughts were running on a wife : he saw, at the first glimpse, that she was handsome ; but since she spoke, and spoke too like any real woman, he was fairly in love with her. 'Twas the neat way she called him man that settled the matter entirely.

" Fish," says Dick, trying to speak to her after her own short fashion ; " fish," says he, " here's my word, fresh and fasting, for you this blessed morning, that I'll make you Mistress Fitzgerald before all the world, and that's what I'll do. "

" Never say the word twice," says she ; " I'm ready

and willing to be yours, Mister Fitzgerald ; but stop, if you please, till I twist up my hair." It was some time before she had settled it entirely to her liking ; for she guessed, I suppose, that she was going among strangers, where she would be looked at. When that was done, the Merrow put the comb in her pocket, and then bent down her head and whispered some word to the water that was close to the foot of the rock.

Dick saw the murmur of the words upon the top of the sea, going out towards the wide ocean, just like a breath of wind rippling along, and, says he, in the greatest wonder, "Is it speaking you are, my darling, to the salt water?"

"It's nothing else," said she, quite carelessly ; "I'm just sending word home to my father not to be waiting breakfast for me ; just to keep him from being uneasy in his mind."

"And who's your father, my duck?" said Dick.

"What!" said the Merrow, "did you never hear of my father? he's the king of the waves to be sure!"

"And yourself, then, is a real king's daughter?" said Dick, opening his two eyes to take a full and true survey of his wife that was to be. "Oh, I'm nothing else but a made man with you, and a king your father ; to be sure he has all the money that's down at the bottom of the sea!"

"Money," repeated the Merrow, "what's money?"

"'Tis no bad thing to have when one wants it," replied Dick; "and may be now the fishes have the understanding to bring up whatever you bid them?"

"Oh! yes," said the Merrow, "they bring me what I want."

"To speak the truth then," said Dick, "'tis a straw bed I have at home before you, and that I'm thinking, is no ways fitting for a king's daughter; so if 'twould not be displeasing to you just to mention a nice feather bed, with a pair of new blankets—but what am I talking about? may be you have not such things as beds down under the water?"

"By all means," said she, "Mr. Fitzgerald—plenty of beds at your service. I've fourteen oyster-beds of my own, not to mention one just planting for the rearing of young ones."

"You have?" says Dick, scratching his head and looking a little puzzled. "'Tis a feather-bed I was speaking of; but, clearly, yours is the very cut of a decent plan to have bed and supper so handy to each other, that a person when they'd have the one need never ask for the other."

However, bed or no bed, money or no money, Dick Fitzgerald determined to marry the Merrow, and the Merrow had given her consent. Away they went, therefore, across the strand, from Gollerus to

Ballinrunnig, where Father Fitzgibbon happened to be that morning.

"There are two words to this bargain, Dick Fitzgerald," said his Reverence, looking mighty glum. "And is it a fishy woman you'd marry? The Lord preserve us! Send the scaly creature home to her own people; that's my advice to you, wherever she came from."

Dick had the *cohuleen driuth* in his hand, and was about to give it back to the Merrow, who looked covetously at it, but he thought for a moment, and then says he, "Please, your Reverence, she's a king's daughter."

"If she was the daughter of fifty kings," said Father Fitzgibbon, "I tell you, you can't marry her, she being a fish."

"Please your Reverence," said Dick again, in an under tone, "she is as mild and as beautiful as the moon."

"If she was as mild and as beautiful as the sun, moon, and stars, all put together, I tell you, Dick Fitzgerald," said the Priest, stamping his right foot, "you can't marry her, she being a fish!"

"But she has all the gold that's down in the sea only for the asking, and I'm a made man if I marry her; and," said Dick, looking up sily, "I can make it worth any one's while to do the job."

“Oh! that alters the case entirely,” replied the Priest; “why there’s some reason now in what you say: why didn’t you tell me this before? marry her by all means, if she was ten times a fish. Money, you know, is not to be refused in these bad times, and I may as well have the hansel of it as another, that may be would not take half the pains in counselling you that I have done.”

So Father Fitzgibbon married Dick Fitzgerald to the Merrow, and, like any loving couple, they returned to Gollerus well pleased with each other. Everything prospered with Dick—he was at the sunny-side of the world; the Merrow made the best of wives, and they lived together in the greatest contentment.

It was wonderful to see, considering where she had been brought up, how she would busy herself about the house, and how well she nursed the children; for, at the end of three years there were as many young Fitzgeralds—two boys and a girl.

In short, Dick was a happy man, and so he might have been to the end of his days if he had only had the sense to take care of what he had got; many another man, however, beside Dick, has not had wit enough to do that.

One day, when Dick was obliged to go to Tralee, he left his wife minding the children at home after

him, and thinking she had plenty to do without disturbing his fishing tackle.

Dick was no sooner gone than Mrs. Fitzgerald set about cleaning up the house, and chancing to pull down a fishing-net, what should she find behind it in a hole in the wall but her own *cokuleen driuth*. She took it out and looked at it, and then she thought of her father the king, and her mother the queen, and her brothers and sisters, and she felt a longing to go back to them.

She sat down on a little stool and thought over the happy days she had spent under the sea ; then she looked at her children, and thought on the love and affection of poor Dick, and how it would break his heart to lose her. "But," says she, "he won't lose me entirely, for I'll come back to him again, and who can blame me for going to see my father and my mother after being so long away from them?"

She got up and went towards the door, but came back again to look once more at the child that was sleeping in the cradle. She kissed it gently, and as she kissed it a tear trembled for an instant in her eye and then fell on its rosy cheek. She wiped away the tear, and turning to the eldest little girl, told her to take good care of her brothers, and to be a good child herself until she came back.

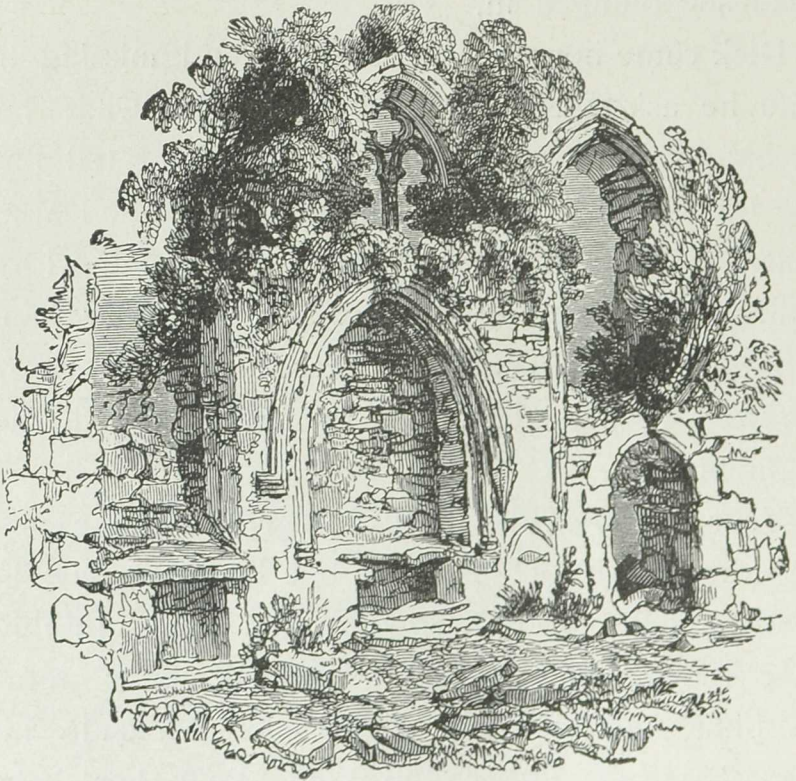
The Merrow then went down to the strand. The sea was lying calm and smooth, just heaving and glittering in the sun, and she thought she heard a faint, sweet singing, inviting her to come down. All her old ideas and feelings came flooding over her mind, Dick and her children were at the instant forgotten, and placing the *cohuleen driuth* on her head she plunged in.

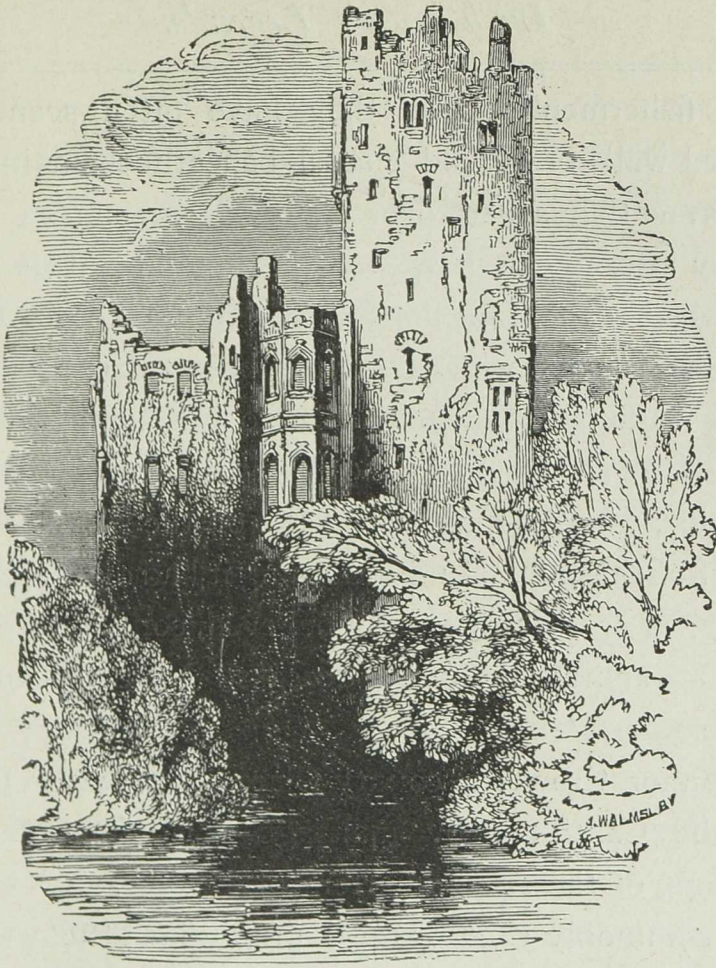
Dick came home in the evening, and missing his wife he asked Kathelin, his little girl, what had become of her mother, but she could not tell him. He then inquired of the neighbours, and he learned that she was seen going towards the strand with a strange looking thing like a cocked hat in her hand. He returned to his cabin to search for the *cohuleen driuth*. It was gone, and the truth now flashed upon him.

Year after year did Dick Fitzgerald wait expecting the return of his wife, but he never saw her more. Dick never married again, always thinking that the Merrow would sooner or later return to him, and nothing could ever persuade him but that her father the king kept her below by main force; "For," said Dick, "she surely would not herself give up her husband and her children."

While she was with him she was so good a

wife in every respect that to this day she is spoken of in the tradition of the country as the pattern for one, under the name of THE LADY OF GOLLERUS.





THE HAUNTED CASTLE.

FLORY CANTILLON'S FUNERAL.

THE ancient burial-place of the Cantillon family was on an island in Ballyheigh Bay. This island was situated at no great distance from the shore, and at a remote period was overflowed in one of the encroachments which the Atlantic has made on that part of the coast of Kerry.

The fishermen declare they have often seen the ruined walls of an old chapel beneath them in the water, as they sailed over the clear green sea of a sunny afternoon. However this may be, it is well known that the Cantillons were, like most other Irish families, strongly attached to their ancient burial-place; and this attachment led to the custom, when any of the family died, of carrying the corpse to the sea-side, where the coffin was left on the shore within reach of the tide. In the morning it had disappeared, being, as was traditionally believed, conveyed away by the ancestors of the deceased to their family tomb.

Connor Crowe, a county Clare man, was related to the Cantillons by marriage—"Connor Mac in Cruagh, of the seven quarters of Breintragh," as he was commonly called, and a proud man he was of the name. Connor, be it known, would drink a quart of salt water, for its medicinal virtues, before breakfast; and for the same reason, I suppose, double that quantity of raw whisky between breakfast and night, which last he did with as little inconvenience to himself as any man in the barony of Moyferta; and were I to add Clanderalaw and Ibrickan, I don't think I should say wrong.

On the death of Florence Cantillon, Connor Crowe was determined to satisfy himself about the truth of

this story of the old church under the sea: so when he heard the news of the old fellow's death, away with him to Ardfert, where Flory was laid out in high style, and a beautiful corpse he made.

Flory had been as jolly and as rollicking a boy in his day as ever was stretched, and his wake was in every respect worthy of him. There was all kind of entertainment and all sort of diversion at it, and no less than three girls got husbands there—more luck to them. Everything was as it should be; all that side of the country, from Dingle to Tarbert, was at the funeral. The Keen was sung long and bitterly; and according to the family custom, the coffin was carried to Ballyheigh strand, where it was laid upon the shore with a prayer for the repose of the dead.

The mourners departed, one group after another, and at last Connor Crowe was left alone: he then pulled out his whisky bottle, his drop of comfort, as he called it, which he required, being in grief; and down he sat upon a big stone that was sheltered by a projecting rock, and partly concealed from view, to wait with patience the appearance of the ghostly undertakers.

The evening came on mild and beautiful; he whistled an old air which he had heard in his childhood, hoping to keep idle fears out of his head: but

the wild strain of that melody brought a thousand recollections with it, which only made the twilight appear more pensive.

"If 'twas near the gloomy tower of Dunmore, in my own sweet country, I was," said Connor Crowe, with a sigh, "one might well believe that the prisoners, who were murdered long ago there in the vaults under the castle, would be the hands to carry off the coffin out of envy, for never a one of them was buried decently, nor had as much as a coffin amongst them all. 'Tis often, sure enough, I have heard lamentations and great mourning coming from the vaults of Dunmore Castle ; but," continued he, after fondly pressing his lips to the mouth of his companion and silent comforter, the whisky bottle, "didn't I know all the time well enough 'twas the dismal sounding waves working through the cliffs and hollows of the rocks, and fretting themselves to foam. Oh, then, Dunmore Castle, it is you that are the gloomy-looking tower on a gloomy day, with the gloomy hills behind you ; when one has gloomy thoughts on their heart, and sees you like a ghost rising out of the smoke made by the kelp burners on the strand, there is, the Lord save us ! as fearful a look about you as about the Blue Man's Lake at midnight. Well then, any how," said Connor, after a pause, "is it not a blessed night, though surely

the moon looks mighty pale in the face? St. Senan himself between us and all kinds of harm."

It was, in truth, a lovely moonlight night ; nothing was to be seen around but the dark rocks, and the white pebbly beach, upon which the sea broke with a hoarse and melancholy murmur. Connor, notwithstanding his frequent draughts, felt rather queerish, and almost began to repent his curiosity. It was certainly a solemn sight to behold the black coffin resting upon the white strand. His imagination gradually converted the deep moaning of old ocean into a mournful wail for the dead, and from the shadowy recesses of the rocks he imaged forth strange and visionary forms.

As the night advanced Connor became weary with watching; he caught himself more than once in the fact of nodding, when suddenly giving his head a shake, he would look towards the black coffin. But the narrow house of death remained unmoved before him.

It was long past midnight, and the moon was sinking into the sea, when he heard the sound of many voices, which gradually became stronger, above the heavy and monotonous roll of the sea: he listened, and presently could distinguish a Keen, of exquisite sweetness, the notes of which rose and fell with the heaving of the waves, whose deep murmur mingled with and supported the strain!

The Keen grew louder and louder, and seemed to approach the beach, and then fell into a low plaintive wail. As it ended Connor beheld a number of strange and, in the dim light, mysterious-looking figures, emerge from the sea, and surround the coffin, which they prepared to launch into the water.

"This comes of marrying with the creatures of earth," said one of the figures, in a clear, yet hollow tone.

"True," replied another, with a voice still more fearful, "our king would never have commanded his gnawing white-toothed waves to devour the rocky roots of the island cemetery, had not his daughter, Durfulla, been buried there by her mortal husband!"

"But the time will come," said a third, bending over the coffin,

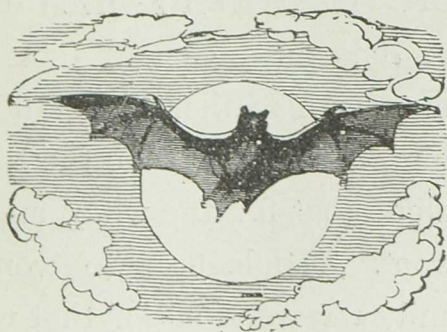
"When mortal eye—our work shall spy,
And mortal ear—our dirge shall hear."

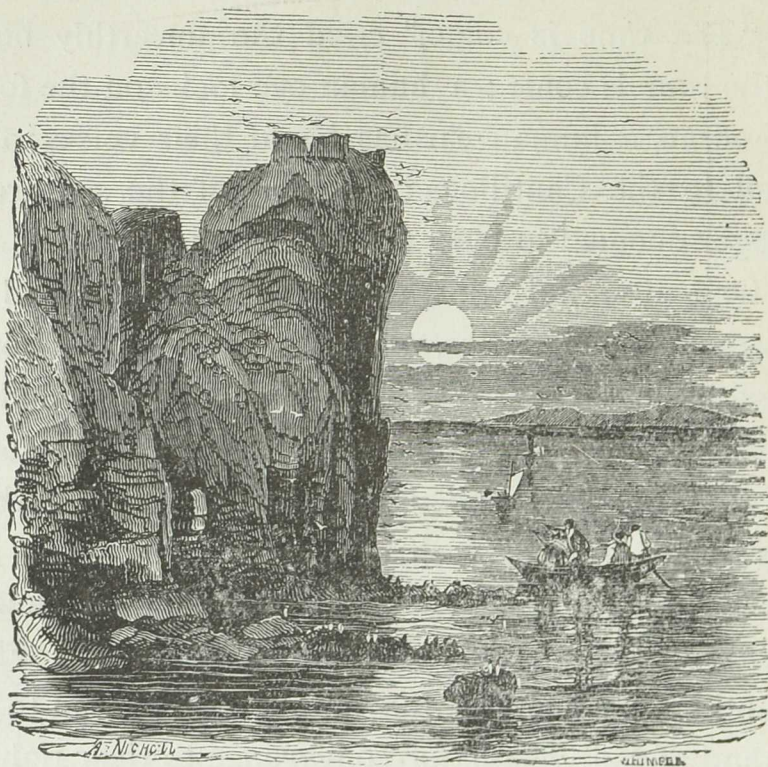
"Then," said a fourth, "our burial of the Cantillons is at an end for ever!"

As this was spoken the coffin was borne from the beach by a retiring wave, and the company of sea people prepared to follow it; but at the moment one chanced to discover Connor Crowe, as fixed with wonder and as motionless with fear as the stone on which he sat.

"The time is come," cried the unearthly being, "the time is come ; a human eye looks on the forms of ocean, a human ear has heard their voices : farewell to the Cantillons ; the sons of the sea are no longer doomed to bury the dust of the earth !"

One after the other turned slowly round, and regarded Connor Crowe, who still remained as if bound by a spell. Again rose their funeral song ; and on the next wave they followed the coffin. The sound of the lamentation died away, and at length nothing was heard but the rush of waters. The coffin and the train of sea people sank over the old churchyard, and never since the funeral of old Flory Cantillon have any of the family been carried to the strand of Ballyheigh, for conveyance to their rightful burial-place, beneath the waves of the Atlantic.





THE SOUL CAGES.

JACK DOGHERTY lived on the coast of the county Clare. Jack was a fisherman, as his father and grandfather before him had been. Like them, too, he lived all alone (but for the wife), and just in the same spot. People used to wonder why the Dogherty family were so fond of that wild situation, so far away from all human kind, and in the midst of huge shattered rocks, with nothing but the wide

ocean to look upon. But they had their own good reasons for it.

The place was just the only spot on that part of the coast where anybody could well live ; there was a neat little creek, where a boat might lie as snug as a puffin in her nest, and out from this creek a ledge of sunken rocks ran into the sea. Now when the Atlantic, according to custom, was raging with a storm, and a good westerly wind was blowing strong on the coast, many a richly laden ship went to pieces on these rocks ; and then the fine bales of cotton and tobacco, and such-like things, and the pipes of wine, and the puncheons of rum, and the casks of brandy, and the kegs of Hollands that used to come ashore ! Dunbeg Bay was just like a little estate to the Doghertys.

Not but they were kind and humane to a distressed sailor, if ever one had the good luck to get to land ; and many a time indeed did Jack put out in his little *corragh* (which, though not quite equal to honest Andrew Hennessy's canvas lifeboat, would breast the billows like any gannet), to lend a hand towards bringing off the crew from the wreck. But when the ship had gone to pieces, and the crew were all lost, who would blame Jack for picking up all he could find ?

"And who is the worse of it ?" said he. "For as

to the king, God bless him! everybody knows he's rich enough already without getting what's floating in the sea."

Jack, though such a hermit, was a good-natured, jolly fellow. No other, sure, could ever have coaxed Biddy Mahony to quit her father's snug and warm house in the middle of the town of Ennis, and to go so many miles to live among the rocks, with the seals and seagulls for next door neighbours. But Biddy knew that Jack was the man for a woman who wished to be comfortable and happy; for, to say nothing of the fish, Jack had the supplying of half the gentlemen's houses of the country with the *Godsends* that came into the bay. And she was right in her choice; for no woman ate, drank, or slept better, or made a prouder appearance at chapel on Sundays, than Mrs. Dogherty.

Many a strange sight, it may well be supposed, did Jack see, and many a strange sound did he hear, but nothing daunted him. So far was he from being afraid of Merrows, or such beings, that the very first wish of his heart was to fairly meet with one. Jack had heard that they were mighty like Christians, and that luck had always come out of an acquaintance with them. Never, therefore, did he dimly discern the Merrows moving along the face of the waters in their robes of mist, but he made direct for them;

and many a scolding did Biddy, in her own quiet way, bestow upon Jack for spending his whole day out at sea, and bringing home no fish. Little did poor Biddy know the fish Jack was after!

It was rather annoying to Jack that, though living in a place where the Merrows were as plenty as lobsters, he never could get a right view of one. What vexed him more was that both his father and grandfather had often and often seen them; and he even remembered hearing, when a child, how his grandfather, who was the first of the family that had settled down at the creek, had been so intimate with a Merrow that, only for fear of vexing the priest, he would have had him stand for one of his children. This, however, Jack did not well know how to believe.

Fortune at length began to think that it was only right that Jack should know as much as his father and grandfather did. Accordingly, one day when he had strolled a little farther than usual along the coast to the northward, just as he turned a point, he saw something, like to nothing he had ever seen before, perched upon rock at a little distance out to sea: it looked green in the body, as well as he could discern at that distance, and he would have sworn, only the thing was impossible, that it had a cocked hat in its hand. Jack stood for a good half-hour straining his

eyes and wondering at it, and all the time the thing did not stir hand or foot. At last Jack's patience was quite worn out, and he gave a loud whistle and a hail, when the Merrow (for such it was) started up, put the cocked hat on its head, and dived down, head foremost, from the rock.

Jack's curiosity was now excited, and he constantly directed his steps towards the point; still he could never get a glimpse of the sea-gentleman with the cocked hat; and with thinking and thinking about the matter, he began at last to fancy he had been only dreaming. One very rough day, however, when the sea was running mountains high, Jack Dogherty determined to give a look at the Merrow's rock (for he had always chosen a fine day before), and then he saw the strange thing cutting capers upon the top of the rock, and then diving down, and then coming up, and then diving down again.

Jack had now only to choose his time (that is, a good blowing day), and he might see the man of the sea as often as he pleased. All this, however, did not satisfy him—"much will have more;" he wished now to get acquainted with the Merrow, and even in this he succeeded. One tremendous blustering day, before he got to the point whence he had a view of the Merrow's rock, the storm came on so furiously that Jack was obliged to take shelter in one of the caves

which are so numerous along the coast ; and there, to his astonishment, he saw sitting before him a thing with green hair, long green teeth, a red nose, and pig's eyes. It had a fish's tail, legs with scales on them, and short arms like fins : it wore no clothes, but had the cocked hat under its arm, and seemed engaged thinking **very** seriously about something.

Jack, with all his courage, was a little daunted ; but now or never, thought he : so up he went boldly to the cogitating fishman, took off his hat, and made his best bow.

"Your servant, sir," said Jack.

"Your servant, kindly, Jack Dogherty," answered the Merrow.

"To be sure, then, how well your honour knows my name!" said Jack.

"Is it I not know your name, Jack Dogherty? Why, man, I knew your grandfather long before he was married to Judy Regan your grandmother ! Ah Jack, Jack, I was fond of that grandfather of yours ; he was a mighty worthy man in his time : I never met his match above or below, before or since, for sucking in a shellful of brandy. I hope, my boy," said the old fellow, with a merry twinkle in his little eyes, "I hope you're his own grandson !"

"Never fear me for that," said Jack ; "if my

mother had only reared me on brandy, 'tis myself that would be a sucking infant to this hour !”

“Well, I like to hear you talk so manly ; you and I must be better acquainted, if it were only for your grandfather's sake. But, Jack, that father of yours was not the thing ! he had no head at all.”

“I'm sure,” said Jack, “since your honour lives down under the water, you must be obliged to drink a power to keep any heat in you in such a cruel, damp, *could* place. Well, I've often heard of Christians drinking like fishes : and might I be so bold as to ask where you get the spirits ?”

“Where do you get them yourself, Jack ?” said the Merrow, twitching his red nose between his forefinger and thumb.

“Hubbubboo,” cries Jack, “now I see how it is ; but I suppose, sir, your honour has got a fine dry cellar below to keep them in.”

“Let me alone for the cellar,” said the Merrow, with a knowing wink of his left eye.

“I'm sure,” continued Jack, “it must be mighty well worth the looking at.”

“You may say that, Jack,” said the Merrow ; “and if you meet me here, next Monday, just at this time of the day, we will have a little more talk with one another about the matter.”

Jack and the Merrow parted the best friends in the

world. On Monday they met, and Jack was not a little surprised to see that the Merrow had two cocked hats with him, one under each arm.

"Might I take the liberty to ask, sir," said Jack, "why your honour has brought the two hats with you to-day? You would not, sure, be going to give me one of them, to keep for the *curocity* of the thing?"

"No, no, Jack," said he, "I don't get my hats so easily, to part with them that way; but I want you to come down and dine with me, and I brought you the hat to dive with."

"Lord bless and preserve us!" cried Jack, in amazement, "would you want me to go down to the bottom of the salt sea ocean? Sure I'd be smothered and choked up with the water, to say nothing of being drowned! And what would poor Biddy do for me, and what would she say?"

"And what matter what she says, you *pinkeen*? Who cares for Biddy's squalling? It's long before your grandfather would have talked in that way. Many's the time he stuck that same hat on his head, and dived down boldly after me; and many's the snug bit of dinner and good shellful of brandy he and I have had together below, under the water."

"Is it really, sir, and no joke?" said Jack; "why,

then, sorrow from me for ever and a day after, if I'll be a bit worse man nor my grandfather was! Here goes—but play me fair now. Here's neck or nothing!" cried Jack.

"That's your grandfather all over," said the old fellow; "so, come along, then, and do as I do."

They both left the cave, walked into the sea, and then swam a piece until they got to the rock. The Merrow climbed to the top of it, and Jack followed him. On the far side it was as straight as the wall of a house, and the sea beneath looked so deep that Jack was almost cowed.

"Now, do you see, Jack," said the Merrow: "just put this hat on your head, and mind to keep your eyes wide open. Take hold of my tail, and follow after me, and you'll see what you'll see."

In he dashed, and in dashed Jack after him boldly. They went and they went, and Jack thought they'd never stop going. Many a time did he wish himself sitting at home by the fireside with Biddy. Yet, where was the use of wishing now, when he was so many miles as he thought below the waves of the Atlantic? Still he held hard by the Merrow's tail, slippery as it was; and, at last, to Jack's great surprise, they got out of the water, and he actually found himself on dry land at the bottom of the sea. They

landed just in front of a nice house that was slated very neatly with oyster shells ! and the Merrow, turning about to Jack, welcomed him down.

Jack could hardly speak, what with wonder, and what with being out of breath with travelling so fast through the water. He looked about him and could see no living things, barring crabs and lobsters, of which there were plenty walking leisurely about on the sand. Overhead was the sea like a sky, and the fishes like birds swimming about in it.

“Why don’t you speak, man?” said the Merrow: “I dare say you had no notion that I had such a snug little concern here as this? Are you smothered, or choked, or drowned, or are you fretting after Biddy, eh?”

“Oh ! not myself, indeed,” said Jack, showing his teeth with a good-humoured grin ; “but who in the world would ever have thought of seeing such a thing?”

“Well, come along and let’s see what they’ve got for us to eat?”

Jack really was hungry, and it gave him no small pleasure to perceive a fine column of smoke rising from the chimney, announcing what was going on within. Into the house he followed the Merrow, and there he saw a good kitchen, right well provided with everything. There was a noble dresser, and plenty of pots

and pans, with two young Merrows cooking. His host then led him into the room, which was furnished shabbily enough. Not a table or a chair was there in it; nothing but planks and logs of wood to sit on, and eat off. There was, however, a good fire blazing on the hearth—a comfortable sight to Jack.

“Come now, and I’ll show you where I keep—you know what,” said the Merrow, with a sly look; and opening a little door, he led Jack into a fine cellar, well filled with pipes, and kegs, and hogsheads, and barrels.

“What do you say to that, Jack Dogherty? Eh! may be a body can’t live snug under the water?”

“Never the doubt of that,” said Jack, with a convincing smack of his under lip, that he really thought what he said.

They went back to the room, and found dinner laid. There was no table-cloth, to be sure—but what matter? It was not always Jack had one at home. The dinner would have been no discredit to the first house of the country on a fast day. The choicest of fish, and no wonder, was there. Turbots, and sturgeons, and soles, and lobsters, and oysters, and twenty other kinds, were on the planks at once, and plenty of the best of foreign spirits. The wines, the old fellow said, were too cold for his stomach.

Jack ate and drank till he could eat no more : then taking up a shell of brandy, "Here's to your honour's good health, sir," said he ; "though, begging your pardon, it's mighty odd that as long as we've been acquainted I don't know your name yet."

"That's true, Jack," replied he ; "I never thought of it before, but better late than never. My name's Coomara."

"And a mighty decent name it is," cried Jack, taking another shellfull : "here's to your good health, Coomara, and may you live these fifty years to come!"

"Fifty years!" repeated Coomara ; "I'm obliged to you, indeed ! If you had said five hundred, it would have been something worth the wishing."

"By the laws, sir," cries Jack, "*youz* live to a powerful age here under the water ! You knew my grandfather, and he's dead and gone better than these sixty years. I'm sure it must be a healthy place to live in."

"No doubt of it ; but come, Jack, keep the liquor stirring."

Shell after shell did they empty, and to Jack's exceeding surprise, he found the drink never got into his head, owing, I suppose, to the sea being over them, which kept their noddles cool.

Old Coomara got exceedingly comfortable, and

sung several songs ; but Jack, if his life had depended on it, never could remember more than

*Rum fum boodle boo,
Ripple dipple nitty dob ;
Dumdoo doodle coo,
Raffle taffle chittibob !*

It was the chorus to one of them ; and to say the truth, nobody that I know has ever been able to pick any particular meaning out of it ; but that, to be sure, is the case with many a song now-a-days.

At length said he to Jack, " Now, my dear boy, if you follow me, I'll show you my *curosities* ! " He opened a little door and led Jack into a large room, where Jack saw a great many odds and ends that Coomara had picked up at one time or another. What chiefly took his attention, however, were things like lobster-pots ranged on the ground along the wall.

" Well, Jack, how do you like my *curosities* ? " said old Coo.

" Upon my *sowkins*, sir," said Jack, " they're mighty well worth the looking at ; but might I make so bold as to ask what these things like lobster-pots are ? "

" Oh ! the Soul Cages, is it ? "

" The what ? sir ! "

" These things here that I keep souls in. "

"*Arrah!* what souls, sir?" said Jack in amazement; "sure the fish have got no souls in them?"

"Oh! no," replied Coo, quite coolly, "that they have not; but these are the souls of drowned sailors."

"The Lord preserve us from all harm!" muttered Jack, "how in the world did you get them?"

"Easily enough: I've only, when I see a good storm coming on, to set a couple of dozen of these, and then, when the sailors are drowned and the souls get out of them under the water, the poor things are almost perished to death, not being used to the cold; so they make into my pots for shelter, and then I have them snug, and fetch them home, and keep them here dry and warm; and is it not well for them, poor souls, to get into such good quarters?"

Jack was so thunderstruck he did not know what to say, so he said nothing. They went back into the dining-room, and had a little more brandy, which was excellent, and then, as Jack knew that it must be getting late, and as Biddy might be uneasy, he stood up, and said he thought it was time for him to be on the road.

"Just as you like, Jack," said Coo, "but take a *duc an durrus* (parting cup) before you go; you've a cold journey before you."

Jack knew better manners than to refuse the part-

ing glass. "I wonder," said he, "will I be able to make out my way home?"

"What should ail you," said Coo, "when I'll show you the way?"

Out they went before the house, and Coomara took one of the cocked hats, and put it upon Jack's head the wrong way, and then lifted him up on his shoulder that he might launch him up into the water.

"Now," says he, giving him a heave, "you'll come up just in the same spot you came down in; and, Jack, mind and throw me back the hat."

He canted Jack off his shoulder, and up he shot like a bubble—whirr, whirr, whiz—away he went up through the water, till he came to the very rock he had jumped off, where he found a landing-place, and then in he threw the hat, which sank like a stone.

The sun was just going down in the beautiful sky of a calm summer's evening. *Feascor* was seen dimly twinkling in the cloudless heaven, a solitary star, and the waves of the Atlantic flashed in a golden flood of light. So Jack, perceiving it was late, set off home; but when he got there, not a word did he say to Biddy of where he had spent his day.

The state of the poor souls cooped up in the lobster-pots gave Jack a great deal of trouble, and how to release them cost him a great deal of thought. He at first had a mind to speak to the priest about

the matter. But what could the priest do, and what did Coo care for the priest? Besides, Coo was a good sort of an old fellow, and did not think he was doing any harm. Jack had a regard for him, too, and it also might not be much to his own credit if it were known that he used to go dine with Merrows. On the whole, he thought his best plan would be to ask Coo to dinner, and to make him drunk, if he was able, and then to take the hat and go down and turn up the pots. It was first of all necessary, however, to get Biddy out of the way; for Jack was prudent enough, as she was a woman, to wish to keep the thing secret from her.

Accordingly, Jack grew mighty pious all of a sudden, and said to Biddy that he thought it would be for the good of both of their souls if she was to go and take her rounds at Saint John's Well, near Ennis. Biddy thought so too, and accordingly off she set one fine morning at day-dawn, giving Jack a strict charge to have an eye to the place. The coast being clear, away went Jack to the rock to give the appointed signal to Coomara, which was throwing a big stone into the water. Jack threw, and up sprang Coo!

"Good morrow, Jack," said he; "what do you want with me?"

"Just nothing at all to speak about, sir," returned

Jack, "only to come and take a bit of dinner with me, if I might make so free as to ask you, and sure I'm now after doing so."

"It's quite agreeable, Jack, I assure you; what's your hour?"

"Any time that's most convenient to you, sir—say one o'clock, that you may go home, if you wish, with the daylight."

"I'll be with you," said Coo, "never fear me."

Jack went home, and dressed a noble fish dinner, and got out plenty of his best foreign spirits, enough for that matter to make twenty men drunk. Just to the minute came Coo, with his cocked hat under his arm. Dinner was ready, they sat down, and ate and drank away manfully. Jack, thinking of the poor souls below in the pots, plied old Coo well with brandy, and encouraged him to sing, hoping to put him under the table; but poor Jack forgot that he had not the sea over his own head to keep it cool. The brandy got into it and did his business for him, and Coo reeled off home, leaving his entertainer as dumb as a haddock on a Good Friday.

Jack never woke till the next morning, and then he was in a sad way. "'Tis no use for me thinking to make that old Rapparee (rogue) drunk," said Jack, "and how in this world can I help the poor souls out of the lobster-pots?" After ruminating

nearly the whole day, a thought struck him. "I have it," says he, slapping his knee; "I'll be sworn that Coo never saw a drop of *poteen*, as old as he is, and that's the *thing* to settle him! Oh! then, is not it well that Biddy will not be home these two days yet; I can have another twist at him."

Jack asked Coo again, and Coo laughed at him for having no better head, telling him he'd never come up to his grandfather.

"Well, but try me again," said Jack, "and I'll be bail to drink you drunk and sober, and drunk again."

"Anything in my power," said Coo, "to oblige you."

At this dinner Jack took care to have his own liquor well watered, and to give the strongest brandy he had to Coo. At last, says he, "Pray, sir, did you ever drink any *poteen*—any real mountain dew?"

"No," says Coo; "what's that, and where does it come from?"

"Oh, that's a secret," said Jack, "but it's the right stuff—never believe me again, if 'tis not fifty times as good as brandy or rum either. Biddy's brother just sent me a present of a little drop, in exchange for some brandy, and as you're an old friend of the family, I kept it to treat you with."

"Well, let's see what sort of thing it is," said Coomara.

The *poteen* was the right sort. It was first-rate, and had the real smack upon it. Coo was delighted: he drank and he sung *Rum bum boodle boo* over and over again; and he laughed and he danced, till he fell on the floor fast asleep. Then Jack, who had taken good care to keep himself sober, snapt up the cocked hat—ran off to the rock—leaped in, and soon arrived at Coo's habitation.

All was as still as a churchyard at midnight—not a Merrow old or young was there. In he went and turned up the pots, but nothing did he see, only he heard a sort of a little whistle or chirp as he raised each of them. At this he was surprised, till he recollected what the priests had often said, that nobody living could see the soul, no more than they could see the wind or the air. Having now done all that he could do for them he set the pots as they were before, and sent a blessing after the poor souls to speed them on their journey wherever they were going. Jack now began to think of returning; he put the hat on, as was right, the wrong way; but when he got out he found the water so high over his head that he had no hopes of ever getting up into it, now that he had not old Coomara to give him a lift. He walked about looking for a ladder, but not one could he find, and not a rock was there in sight. At last he saw a spot where the sea hung rather lower than anywhere else, so he

resolved to try there. Just as he came to it a big cod happened to put down his tail. Jack made a jump and caught hold of it, and the cod, all in amazement, gave a bounce and pulled Jack up. The minute the hat touched the water away Jack was whisked, and up he shot like a cork, dragging the poor cod, that he forgot to let go, up with him, tail foremost. He got to the rock in no time, and without a moment's delay hurried home, rejoicing in the good deed he had done.

But, meanwhile, there was fine work at home; for our friend Jack had hardly left the house on his soul-freeing expedition, when back came Biddy from her soul-saving one to the well. When she entered the house and saw the things lying *thrie-na-helah* (topsy turvy) on the table before her,—“Here's a pretty job!” said she; “that blackguard of mine—what ill-luck I had ever to marry him! He has picked up some vagabond or other, while I was praying for the good of his soul, and they've been drinking all the *poteen* that my own brother gave him, and all the spirits, to be sure, that he was to have sold to his honour.” Then hearing an outlandish kind of grunt, she looked down, and saw Coomara lying under the table. “The blessed Virgin help me,” shouted she, “if he has not made a real beast of himself! Well, well, I've often heard of a man

making a beast of himself with drink! Oh hone! oh hone—Jack, honey, what will I do with you, or what will I do without you? How can any decent woman ever think of living with a beast?"

With such-like lamentations Biddy rushed out of the house, and she was going she knew not where, when she heard the well-known voice of Jack singing a merry tune. Glad enough was Biddy to find him safe and sound, and not turned into a thing that was like neither fish nor flesh. Jack was obliged to tell her all, and Biddy, though she had half a mind to be angry with him for not telling her before, owned that he had done a great service to the poor souls. Back they both went most lovingly to the house, and Jack wakened up Coomara; and perceiving the old fellow to be rather dull, he bid him not be cast down, for 'twas many a good man's case; said it all came of his not being used to the *poteen*, and recommended him, by way of cure, to swallow a hair of the dog that bit him. Coo, however, seemed to think he had had quite enough: he got up, quite out of sorts, and without having the manners to say one word in the way of civility, he sneaked off to cool himself by a jaunt through the salt water.

Coomara never missed the souls. He and Jack continued the best friends in the world, and no one, perhaps, ever equalled Jack at freeing souls from

purgatory; for he contrived fifty excuses for getting into the house below the sea, unknown to the old fellow, and then turning up the pots and letting out the souls. It vexed him, to be sure, that he could never see them; but as he knew the thing to be impossible, he was obliged to be satisfied.

Their intercourse continued for several years. However, one morning, on Jack's throwing in a stone as usual, he got no answer. He flung another, and another, still there was no reply. He went away, and returned the following morning, but it was to no purpose. As he was without the hat, he could not go down to see what had become of old Coo, but his belief was that the old man, or the old fish, or whatever he was, had either died, or had removed away from that part of the country.



THE LORD OF DUNKERRON.



HE lord of Dunkerron—O'Sullivan More,
Why seeks he at midnight the sea-beaten
shore ?

His bark lies in haven, his hounds are
asleep ;

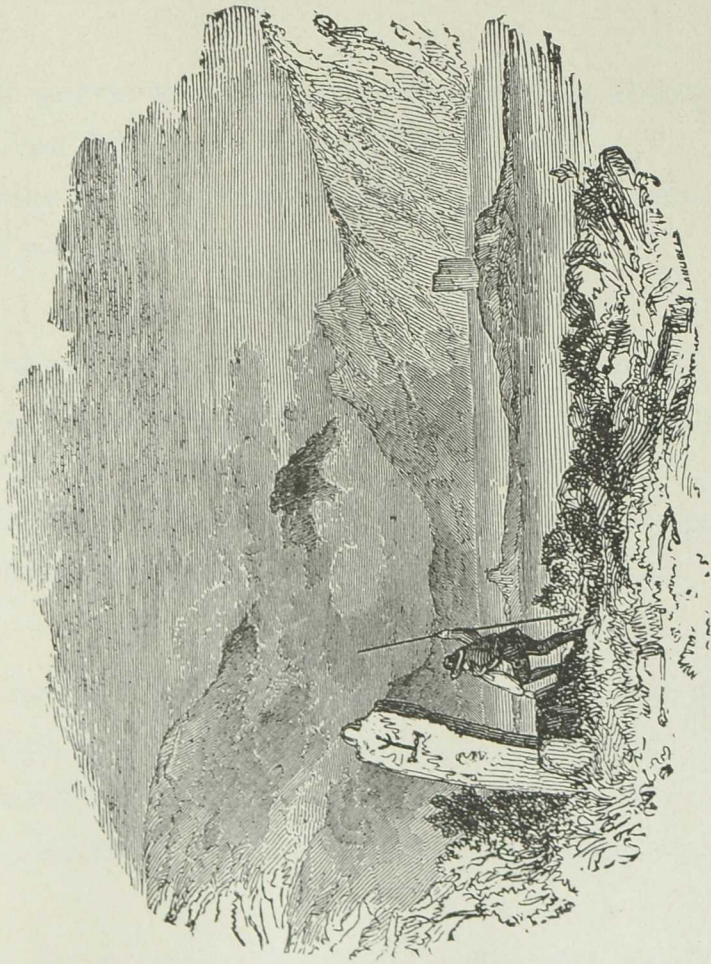
No foes are abroad on the land or the
deep.

Yet nightly the lord of Dunkerron is known
On the wild shore to watch and to wander alone ;
For a beautiful spirit of ocean, 'tis said,
The lord of Dunkerron would win to his bed.

When, by moonlight, the waters were hushed to
repose,

That beautiful spirit of ocean arose ;
Her hair, full of lustre, just floated and fell
O'er her bosom, that heaved with a billowy swell.

Long, long had he loved her—long vainly essay'd
To lure from her dwelling the coy ocean maid ;
And long had he wander'd and watch'd by the tide,
To claim the fair spirit O'Sullivan's bride !



The maiden she gazed on the creature of earth,
Whose voice in her breast to a feeling gave birth :
Then smiled ; and abash'd as a maiden might be,
Looking down, gently sank to her home in the sea.

Though gentle that smile, as the moonlight above,
O'Sullivan felt 'twas the dawning of love,
And hope came on hope, spreading over his mind,
As the eddy of circles her wake left behind.

The lord of Dunkerron he plunged in the waves,
And sought, through the fierce rush of waters, their
caves ;

The gloom of whose depths, studded over with spars,
Hid the glitter of midnight when lit up by stars.

Who can tell or can fancy the treasures that sleep
Intombed in the wonderful womb of the deep ?
The pearls and the gems, as if valueless thrown
To lie 'mid the sea-wreck conceal'd and unknown.

Down, down went the maid,—still the chieftain
pursued ;

Who flies must be follow'd ere she can be woo'd.

Untempted by treasures, unawed by alarms,
The maiden at length he has clasped in his arms !

They rose from the deep by a smooth-spreading
strand,

Whence beauty and verdure stretch'd over the land.
Twas an isle of enchantment! and lightly the breeze,
With a musical murmur, just crept through the trees.

The haze woven shroud of that newly born isle
Softly faded away from a magical pile,
A palace of crystal, whose bright-beaming sheen
Had the tints of the rainbow—red, yellow, and green.

And grottoes, fantastic in hue and in form,
Were there, as flung up—the wild sport of the storm :
Yet all were so cloudless, so lovely, and calm,
It seem'd but a region of sunshine and balm.

“ Here, here shall we dwell in a dream of delight,
Where the glories of earth and of ocean unite!
Yet, loved son of earth ! I must from thee away ;
There are laws which e'en spirits are bound to obey !

“ Once more must I visit the chief of my race,
His sanction to gain ere I meet thy embrace.
In a moment I dive to the chambers beneath :
One cause can detain me—one only—'tis death ! ”

They parted in sorrow, with vows true and fond ;
The language of promise had nothing beyond.

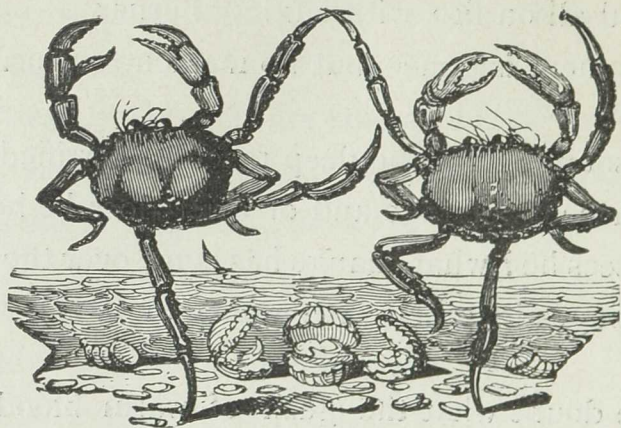
His soul all on fire, with anxiety burns :
The moment is gone—but no maiden returns.

What sounds from the deep meet his terrified ear—
What accents of rage and of grief does he hear ?
What sees he ? what change has come over the flood —
What tinges its green with a jetty of blood.

Can he doubt what the gush of warm blood would
explain ?
That she sought the consent of her monarch in vain !—
For see all around, in white foam and froth,
he waves of the ocean boil up in their wrath !

The palace of crystal has melted in air,
And the dyes of the rainbow no longer are there ;
And grottoes with vapour and clouds are o'ercast,
The sunshine is darkness—the vision has past !

Loud, loud was the call of his serfs for their chief ;
They sought him with accents of wailing and grief ;
He heard, and he struggled—a wave to the shore,
Exhausted and faint, bears O'Sullivan More !



THE WONDERFUL TUNE.

MAURICE CONNOR was the king, and that's no small word, of all the pipers in Munster. He could play jig and planxty without end, and Ollistrum's March, and the Eagle's Whistle, and the Hen's Concert, and odd tunes of every sort and kind. But he knew one far more surprising than the rest, which had in it the power to set everything dead or alive dancing.

In what way he learned it is beyond my knowledge, for he was mighty cautious about telling how he came by so wonderful a tune. At the very first note of that tune the brogues began shaking upon the feet of all who heard it—old or young, it mattered not—just as if their brogues had the

ague ; then the feet began going, going, going from under them, and at last up and away with them, dancing like mad ! whisking here, there, and everywhere, like a straw in a storm—there was no halting while the music lasted !

Not a fair, nor a wedding, nor a patron in the seven parishes round, was counted worth the speaking of without “ blind Maurice and his pipes.” His mother, poor woman, used to lead him about from one place to another just like a dog.

Down through Iveragh—a place that ought to be proud of itself, for 'tis Daniel O'Connell's country—Maurice Connor and his mother were taking their rounds. Beyond all other places Iveragh is the place for stormy coasts and steep mountains : as proper a spot it is as any in Ireland to get yourself drowned, or your neck broken on the land, should you prefer that. But, notwithstanding, in Ballinskellig bay there is a neat bit of ground, well fitted for diversion, and down from it, towards the water, is a clean smooth piece of strand, the dead image of a calm summer's sea on a moonlight night, with just the curl of the small waves upon it.

Here it was that Maurice's music had brought from all parts a great gathering of young men and the young women—*O the darlints !* for 'twas not every day the strand of Trafraska was stirred up by

the voice of a bagpipe. The dance began: and as pretty a rinkafadda it was as ever was danced. "Brave music," said everybody, "and well done," when Maurice stopped.

"More power to your elbow, Maurice, and a fair wind in the bellows," cried Paddy Dorman, a hump-backed dancing-master, who was there to keep order. "'Tis a pity," said he, "if we'd let the piper run dry after such music; 'twould be a disgrace to Iveragh, that didn't come on it since the week of the three Sundays." So, as well became him, for he was always a decent man, says he, "Did you drink, piper?"

"I will, sir," said Maurice, answering the question on the safe side, for you never yet knew piper or schoolmaster who refused his drink.

"What will you drink, Maurice?" says Paddy.

"I'm no ways particular," says Maurice; "I drink anything, and give God thanks, barring *raw* water: but if 'tis all the same to you, Mister Dorman, may be you wouldn't lend me the loan of a glass of whisky."

"I've no glass, Maurice," said Paddy; "I've only the bottle."

"Let that be no hindrance," answered Maurice; "my mouth just holds a glass to the drop; often I've tried it sure."

So Paddy Dorman trusted him with the bottle—more fool was he ; and, to his cost, he found that though Maurice's mouth might not hold more than the glass at one time, yet, owing to the hole in his throat, it took many a filling.

"That's no bad whisky neither," says Maurice, handing back the empty bottle.

"By the holy frost, then !" says Paddy, "'tis but *could* comfort there's in that bottle now ; and 'tis your word we must take for the strength of the whisky, for you've left us no sample to judge by ;" and to be sure Maurice had not.

Nor need I tell any gentleman or lady with common understanding, that if he or she was to drink an honest bottle of whisky at one pull, it is not at all the same thing as drinking a bottle of water ; and in the whole course of my life I never knew more than five men who could do so without being overtaken by the liquor. Of these Maurice Connor was not one, though he had a stiff head enough of his own. He was fairly tipsy. Don't think I blame him for it ; 'tis often a good man's case ; but true is the word that says, "when liquor's in sense is out ;" and puff, at a breath, before you could say "Lord, save us !" out he blasted his wonderful tune.

'Twas really then beyond all belief or telling the dancing. Maurice himself could not keep quiet ; staggering now on one leg, now on the other, and rolling about like a ship in a cross sea, trying to humour the tune. There was his mother too, moving her old bones as light as the youngest girl of them all ; but her dancing, no, nor the dancing of all the rest, is not worthy the speaking about to the work that was going on down upon the strand. Every inch of it covered with all manner of fish jumping and plunging about to the music, and every moment more and more would tumble in, out of the water, charmed by the wonderful tune. Crabs of monstrous size spun round and round on one claw with the nimbleness of a dancing-master, and twirled and tossed their other claws about like limbs that did not belong to them. It was a sight surprising to behold. But perhaps you may have heard of Father Florence Conry, a Franciscan friar, and a great Irish poet ; *beig an dana*, as they used to call him—a wallet of poems. If you have not, he was as pleasant a man as one would wish to drink with of a hot summer's day ; and he has rhymed out all about the dancing fishes so neatly, that it would be a thousand pities not to give you his verses ; so here's my hand at an upset of them into English :—

The big seals in motion
Like waves of the ocean,
Or gouty feet prancing,
Came heading the gay fish,
Crabs, lobsters, and cray-fish,
Determined on dancing.

The sweet sounds they followed,
The gasping cod swallow'd ;
'Twas wonderful, really !
And turbot and flounder,
'Mid fish that were rounder,
Just caper'd as gaily.

John-dories came tripping ;
Dull hake by their skipping
To frisk it seemed given ;
Bright mackrel went springing,
Like small rainbows winging
Their flight up to heaven.

The whiting and haddock
Left salt water paddock
This dance to be put in :
Where skate with flat faces
Edged out some odd plaices ;
But soles kept their footing.

Sprats and herrings in powers
Of silvery showers
All number out-number'd.
And great ling so lengthy
Were there in such plenty
The shore was encumber'd.

The scallop and oyster
Their two shells did roister,
Like castanets fitting ;

While limpets moved clearly,
And rocks very nearly
With laughter were splitting.

Never was such an ullabullo in this world, before or since ; 'twas as if heaven and earth were coming together ; and all out of Maurice Connor's wonderful tune!

In the height of all these doings, what should there be dancing among the outlandish set of fishes but a beautiful young woman—as beautiful as the dawn of day! She had a cocked hat upon her head : from under it her long green hair—just the colour of the sea—fell down behind, without hindrance to her dancing. Her teeth were like rows of pearl ; her lips for all the world looked like red coral ; and she had an elegant gown, as white as the foam of the wave, with little rows of purple and red sea-weeds settled out upon it ; for you never yet saw a lady, under the water or over the water, who had not a good notion of dressing herself out.

Up she danced at last to Maurice, who was flinging his feet from under him as fast as hops—for nothing in this world could keep still while that tune of his was going on—and says she to him, chaunting it out with a voice as sweet as honey—

“ I'm a lady of honour
Who live in the sea :

Come down, Maurice Connor,
And be married to me.
Silver plates and gold dishes
You shall have, and shall be
The king of the fishes,
When you're married to me."

Drink was strong in Maurice's head, and out he chanted in return for her great civility. It is not every lady, may be, that would be after making such an offer to a blind piper ; therefore 'twas only right in him to give her as good as she gave herself—so says Maurice,—

"I'm obliged to you, madam :
Off a gold dish or plate,
If a king, and I had 'em,
I could dine in great state.
With your own father's daughter
I'd be sure to agree ;
But to drink the salt water
Wouldn't do so with me !"

The lady looked at him quite amazed, and swinging her head from side to side like a great scholar, "Well," says she, "Maurice, if you're not a poet, where is poetry to be found ?"

In this way they kept on at it, framing high compliments ; one answering the other, and their feet going with the music as fast as their tongues. All the fish kept dancing too : Maurice heard the clatter and was afraid to stop playing lest it might be displeasing to the fish, and not knowing what so

many of them may take it into their heads to do to him if they got vexed.

Well, the lady with the green hair kept on coaxing of Maurice with soft speeches, till at last she overpersuaded him to promise to marry her, and be king over the fishes, great and small. Maurice was well fitted to be their king, if they wanted one that could make them dance ; and he surely would drink, barring the salt water, with any fish of them all.

When Maurice's mother saw him, with that unnatural thing in the form of a green-haired lady as his guide, and he and she dancing down together so lovingly to the water's edge, through the thick of the fishes, she called out after him to stop and come back. "Oh then," says she, "as if I was not widow enough before, there he is going away from me to be married to that scaly woman. And who knows but 'tis grandmother I may be to a hake or a cod—Lord help and pity me, but 'tis a mighty unnatural thing! and may be 'tis boiling and eating my own grandchild I'll be, with a bit of salt butter, and I not knowing it! Oh, Maurice, Maurice, if there's any love or nature left in you, come back to your own *ould* mother, who reared you like a decent Christian!" Then the poor woman began to cry and ullagoane so finely that it would do any one good to have heard her.

Maurice was not long getting to the rim of the

water ; there he kept playing and dancing on as if nothing was the matter, and a great thundering wave coming in towards him ready to swallow him up alive ; but as he could not see it, he did not fear it. His mother it was who saw it plainly through the big tears that were rolling down her cheeks ; and though she saw it, and her heart was aching as much as ever mother's heart ached for a son, she kept dancing, dancing all the time for the bare life of her. Certain it was she could not help it, for Maurice never stopped playing that wonderful tune of his.

He only turned the bothered ear to the sound of his mother's voice, fearing it might put him out in his steps, and all the answer he made back was, "Whisht with you, mother—sure I'm going to be king over the fishes down in the sea, and for a token of luck, and a sign that I'm alive and well, I'll send you in, every twelvemonth on this day, a piece of burned wood to Trafraska." Maurice had not the power to say a word more, for the strange lady with the green hair, seeing the wave just upon them, covered him up with herself in a thing like a cloak with a big hood to it, and the wave curling over twice as high as their heads, burst upon the strand, with a rush and a roar that might be heard as far as Cape Clear.


That day twelvemonth the piece of burned wood came ashore in Trafraska. It was a queer thing for

Maurice to think of sending all the way from the bottom of the sea. A gown or a pair of shoes would have been something like a present for his poor mother; but he had said it, and he kept his word. The bit of burned wood regularly came ashore on the appointed day for as good, ay, and better than a hundred years. The day is now forgotten, and may be that is the reason why people say how Maurice Connor has stopped sending the luck-token to his mother. Poor woman, she did not live to get as much as one of them; for what through the loss of Maurice, and the fear of eating her own grandchildren, she died in three weeks after the dance. Some say it was the fatigue that killed her, but whichever it was, Mrs. Connor was decently buried with her own people.

Seafaring people have often heard, off the coast of Kerry, on a still night, the sound of music coming up from the water; and some, who have had good ears, could plainly distinguish Maurice Connor's voice singing these words to his pipes,—

“ Beautiful shore, with thy spreading strand,
Thy crystal water, and diamond sand;
Never would I have parted from thee,
But for the sake of my fair ladie.”

THE GOOD WOMAN.

N a pleasant and not unpicturesque valley of the White Knight's Country, at the foot of the Galtee mountains, lived Larry Dodd and his wife Nancy. They rented a cabin and a few acres of land, which they cultivated with great care, and its crops rewarded their industry. They were independent, and respected by their neighbours; they loved each other in a marriageable sort of way, and few couples had altogether more the appearance of comfort about them.

Larry was a hard-working, and, occasionally, a hard-drinking, Dutch-built, little man, with a fiddle head and a round stern; a steady-going straightforward fellow, barring when he carried too much whisky, which, it must be confessed, might occasionally prevent his walking the chalked line with perfect philomathical accuracy. He had a moist, ruddy countenance, rather inclined to an expression of gravity, and particularly so in the

morning ; but, taken all together, he was generally looked upon as a marvellously proper person, notwithstanding he had, every day in the year, a sort of unholy dew upon his face, even in the coldest weather, which gave rise to a supposition (amongst censorious persons, of course), that Larry was apt to indulge in strong and frequent potations. However, all men of talents have their faults—indeed, who is without them ?—and as Larry, setting aside his domestic virtues and skill in farming, was decidedly the most distinguished breaker of horses for forty miles round, he must be in some degree excused, considering the inducements of “the stirrup cup,” and the fox-hunting society in which he mixed, if he had also been the greatest drunkard in the country—but in truth this was not the case.

Larry was a man of mixed habits, as well in his mode of life and his drink, as in his costume. His dress accorded well with his character—a sort of half-and-half between farmer and horse-jockey. He wore a blue coat of coarse cloth, with short skirts and a stand-up collar ; his waistcoat was red, and his lower habiliments were made of leather, which in course of time had shrunk so much that they fitted like a second skin, and long use had absorbed their moisture to such a degree that they made a strange sort of crackling noise as he walked along. A hat

covered with oil-skin ; a cutting-whip, all worn and jagged at the end ; a pair of second-hand, or to speak more correctly, second-footed greasy top-boots, that seemed never to have imbibed a refreshing draught of Warren's blacking of matchless lustre ! and one spur without a rowel, completed the everyday dress of Larry Dodd.

Thus equipped was Larry returning from Cashel mounted on a rough-coated and wall-eyed nag, though, notwithstanding these and a few other trifling blemishes, a well-built animal ; having just purchased the said nag, with a fancy that he could make his own money again of his bargain, and may be turn an odd penny more by it, at the ensuing Kildorrery fair. Well pleased with himself, he trotted fair and easy along the road in the delicious and lingering twilight of a lovely June evening, thinking of nothing at all, only whistling, and wondering would horses always be so low. "If they go at this rate," said he to himself, "for half nothing, and that paid in butter buyer's notes, who would be the fool to walk ?" This very thought, indeed, was passing in his mind, when his attention was roused by a woman pacing quickly by the side of his horse, and hurrying on, as if endeavouring to reach her destination before the night closed in. Her figure, considering the long strides she took, appeared to be

under the common size—rather of the dumpy order ; but further, as to whether the damsel was young or old, fair or brown, pretty or ugly, Larry could form no precise notion, from her wearing a large cloak (the usual garb of the female Irish peasant), the hood of which was turned up, and completely concealed every feature.

Enveloped in this mass of dark and concealing drapery, the strange woman, without much exertion, contrived to keep up with Larry Dodd's steed for some time, when his master very civilly offered her a lift behind him, as far as he was going her way. "Civility begets civility," they say ; however, he received no answer ; and thinking that the lady's silence proceeded only from bashfulness, like a man of true gallantry, not a word more said Larry, until he pulled up by the side of a gap and then says he, "*Ma colleen beg* (my little girl), just jump up behind me without a word more, though never a one have you spoke, and I'll take you safe and sound through the lonesome bit of road that is before us."

She jumped at the offer, sure enough, and up with her on the back of the horse as light as a feather. In an instant there she was seated up behind Larry, with her hand and arm buckled round his waist, holding on.

"I hope you're comfortable there, my dear," said Larry, in his own good-humoured way ; but there was no answer ; and on they went—trot, trot, trot—along the road ; and all was so still and so quiet that you might have heard the sound of the hoofs on the limestone a mile off : for that matter there was nothing else to hear except the moaning of a distant stream, that kept up a continual *cronane* (a monotonous song), like a nurse *hushoing*. Larry, who had a keen ear, did not, however, require so profound a silence to detect the click of one of the shoes. "'Tis only loose the shoe is," said he to his companion, as they were just entering on the lonesome bit of road of which he had before spoken. Some old trees with huge trunks, all covered, and irregular branches festooned with ivy, grew over a dark pool of water, which had been formed as a drinking-place for cattle ; and in the distance was seen the majestic head of Galtee-more. Here the horse, as if in grateful recognition, made a halt ; and Larry, not knowing what vicious tricks his new purchase might have, and unwilling that through any odd chance the young woman should get *spilt* in the water, dismounted, thinking to lead the horse quietly by the pool.

"By the piper's luck, that always found what he wanted," said Larry, recollecting himself, "I've a nail

in my pocket: 'tis not the first time I've put on a shoe, and may be it won't be the last; for here is no want of paving-stones to make hammers in plenty."

No sooner was Larry off than off with a spring came the young woman just at his side. Her feet touched the ground without making the least noise in life, and away she bounded like an ill-mannered wench, as she was, without saying "by your leave," or no manner what else. She seemed to glide rather than run, not along the road, but across a field, up towards the old ivy-covered walls of Kilnaslattery church—and a pretty church it was.

"Not so fast, if you please, young woman—not so fast," cried Larry, calling after; but away she ran, and Larry followed, his leathern garment, already described, crack, crick, crackling at every step he took. "Where's my wages?" said Larry: "*Thorum póg, ma colleen oge* (give me a kiss, my young girl), sure I've earned a kiss from your pair of pretty lips—and I'll have it too!" But she went on faster and faster, regardless of these and other flattering speeches from her pursuer; till at last she came to the church-yard wall, and then over with her in an instant.

"Well, she's a mighty smart creature anyhow. To be sure, how neat she steps upon her pasterns! Did any one ever see the like of that before; but I'll not be baulked by any woman that ever wore a head, or

any ditch either," exclaimed Larry, as with a desperate bound he vaulted, scrambled, and tumbled over the wall into the churchyard. Up he got from the elastic sod of a newly-made grave in which Tade Leary that morning was buried—rest his soul!—and on went Larry, stumbling over head-stones and foot-stones, over old graves and new graves, pieces of coffins, and the skulls and bones of dead men—the Lord save us!—that were scattered about there as plenty as paving-stones; floundering amidst great over-grown dock-leaves and brambles that, with their long prickly arms, tangled round his limbs, and held him back with a fearful grasp. Meantime the merry wench in the cloak moved through all these obstructions as evenly and as gaily as if the churchyard, crowded up as it was with graves and gravestones (for people came to be buried there from far and near), had been the floor of a dancing-room. Round and round the walls of the old church she went. "I'll just wait," said Larry, seeing this, and thinking it all nothing but a trick to frighten him; "when she comes round again, if I don't take the kiss, I won't, that's all, and here she is!" Larry Dodd sprung forward with open arms, and clasped in them—a woman, it is true, but without any lips to kiss, by reason of her having no head!

"Murder!" cried he. "Well, that accounts for her

not speaking." Having uttered these words, Larry himself became dumb with fear and astonishment ; his blood seemed turned to ice, and a dizziness came over him ; and, staggering like a drunken man, he rolled against the broken window of the ruin, horrified at the conviction that he had actually held a Dullahan in his embrace !

When he recovered to something like a feeling of consciousness he slowly opened his eyes, and then, indeed, a scene of wonder burst upon him. In the midst of the ruin stood an old wheel of torture, ornamented with heads, like Cork gaol when the heads of Murty Sullivan and other gentlemen were stuck upon it. This was plainly visible in the strange light which spread itself around. It was fearful to behold, yet Larry could not choose but look, for his limbs were powerless through the wonder and the fear. Useless as it was, he would have called for help, but his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, and not one word could he say. In short, there was Larry gazing through a shattered window of the old church, with eyes bleared and almost starting from their sockets ; his breast rested on the thickness of the wall, over which, on one side, his head and out-stretched neck projected, and on the other, although one toe touched the ground, it derived no support from it : terror, as it were, kept him balanced. Strange noises assailed

his ears, until at last they tingled painfully to the sharp clatter of little bells, which kept up a continued ding—ding—ding—ding : marrowless bones rattled and clanked, and the deep and solemn sound of a great bell came booming on the night wind.

'Twas a spectre rung
That bell when it swung—
 Swing-swang !
And the chain it squeaked,
And the pulley creaked,
 Swing-swang !
And with every roll
Of the deep death toll,
 Ding-dong !
The hollow vault rang
As the clapper went bang,
 Ding-dong !

It was strange music to dance by ; nevertheless, moving to it, round and round the wheel set with skulls, were well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, and soldiers and sailors, and priests and publicans, and jockeys and jennys, but all without their heads. Some poor skeletons, whose bleached bones were ill covered by moth-eaten palls, and who were not admitted into the ring, amused themselves by bowling their brainless noddles at one another, which seemed to enjoy the sport beyond measure.

Larry did not know what to think ; his brains were

all in a mist, and losing the balance which he had so long maintained, he fell head-foremost into the midst of the company of Dullahans.

"I'm done for and lost for ever," roared Larry, with his heels turned towards the stars, and souse down he came.

"Welcome, Larry Dodd, welcome," cried every nead, bobbing up and down in the air. "A drink for Larry Dodd," shouted they, as with one voice, that quavered like a shake on the bagpipes. No sooner said than done, for a player at heads, catching his own as it was bowled at him, for fear of its going astray, jumped up, put the head, without a word, under his left arm, and, with the right stretched out, presented a brimming cup to Larry, who, to show his manners, drank it off like a man.

"'Tis capital stuff," he would have said, which surely it was, but he got no further than cap, when decapitated was he, and his head began dancing over his shoulders like those of the rest of the party. Larry, however, was not the first man who lost his head through the temptation of looking at the bottom of a brimming cup. Nothing more did he remember clearly, for it seems body and head being parted is not very favourable to thought, but a great hurry-scurry with the noise of carriages and the cracking of whips.

When his senses returned, his first act was to put up his hand to where his head formerly grew, and to his great joy there he found it still. He then shook it gently, but his head remained firm enough, and somewhat assured at this, he proceeded to open his eyes and look around him. It was broad daylight, and in the old church of Kilnaslattery he found himself lying, with that head, the loss of which he had anticipated, quietly resting, poor youth, "upon the lap of earth." Could it have been an ugly dream? "Oh no," said Larry, "a dream could never have brought me here, stretched on the flat of my back, with that death's head and cross marrow-bones fore-nenting me on the fine old tombstone there that was *faced* by Pat Kearney of Kilcrea. But where is the horse?" He got up slowly, every joint aching with pain from the bruises he had received, and went to the pool of water, but no horse was there. "'Tis home I must go," said Larry, with a rueful countenance; "but how will I face Nancy? what will I tell her about the horse, and the seven I O U's that he cost me? 'Tis them Dullahans that have made their own of him from me—the horse-stealing robbers of the world, that have no fear of the gallows! but what's gone is gone, that's a clear case!" So saying, he turned his steps homeward, and arrived at his cabin about noon, without encountering any further

adventures. There he found Nancy, who, as he expected, looked as black as a thundercloud at him for being out all night. She listened to the marvellous relation which he gave with exclamations of astonishment, and, when he had concluded, of grief, at the loss of the horse that he had paid for like an honest man in I O U's, three of which she knew to be as good as gold.

"But what took you up to the old church at all out of the road, and at that time of the night, Larry?" inquired his wife.

Larry looked like a criminal for whom there was no reprieve; he scratched his head for an excuse, but not one could he muster up, so he knew not what to say.

"Oh! Larry, Larry," muttered Nancy, after waiting some time for his answer, her jealous fears during the pause rising like barm; "'tis the very same way with you as with any other man—you are all alike for that matter—I've no pity for you—but confess the truth!"

Larry shuddered at the tempest which he perceived was about to break upon his devoted head. "Nancy," said he, "I do confess;—it was a young woman without any head that——"

His wife heard no more. "A woman I knew it was," cried she; "but a woman without a head,

Larry!—well, it is long before Nancy Gollagher ever thought it would come to that with her!—that she would be left *dissolute* and alone here by her *baste* of a husband, for a woman without a head! O father, father! and O mother, mother! it is well you are low to-day! that you don't see this affliction and disgrace to your daughter that you reared decent and tender. O Larry, you villain, you'll be the death of your lawful wife, going after such—O—O—O—”

“Well,” says Larry, putting his hands in his coat-pockets, “least said is soonest mended. Of the young woman I know no more than I do of Moll Flanders; but this I know, that a woman without a head may well be called a Good Woman, because she has no tongue!”

How this remark operated on the matrimonial dispute history does not inform us. It is, however, reported that the lady had the last word.





HANLON'S MILL.

ONE fine summer's evening Michael Noonan went over to Jack Brien's, the shoemaker, at Ballyduff, for the pair of brogues which Jack was mending for him. It was a pretty walk the way he took, but very lonesome; all along by the riverside, down by the oakwood, till he came to Hanlon's mill, that used to be, but that had gone to ruin many a long year ago.

Melancholy enough the walls of that same mill looked; the great old wheel black with age, all

covered over with moss and ferns, and the bushes all hanging down about it. There it stood, silent and motionless : and a sad contrast it was to its former busy clack, with the stream which once gave it use rippling idly along.

Old Hanlon was a man that had great knowledge of all sorts ; there was not a herb that grew in the field but he could tell the name of it and its use, out of a big book he had written, every word of it in the real Irish *karacter*. He kept a school once, and could teach the Latin ; that surely is a blessed tongue all over the wide world ; and I hear tell as how “the great Burke” went to school to him. Master Edmund lived up at the old house there, which was then in the family, and it was the Nagles that got it afterwards, but they sold it.

But it was Michael Noonan’s walk I was speaking of. It was fairly between lights, the day was clean gone, and the moon was not yet up, when Mick was walking smartly across the Inch. Well, he heard, coming down out of the wood, such blowing of horns and hallooing, and the cry of all the hounds in the world, and he thought they were coming after him ; and the galloping of the horses, and the voice of the whipper-in, and he shouting out just like the fine old song,—

“Hallo Piper, Lily, agus Finder ;”

and the echo over from the grey rock across the river giving back every word as plainly as it was spoken. But nothing could Mick see, and the shouting and hallooing following him every step of the way till he got up to Jack Brien's door ; and he was certain, too, he heard the clack of old Hanlon's mill, going through all the clatter. To be sure, he ran as fast as fear and his legs could carry him, and never once looked behind him, well knowing that the Duhallow hounds were out in quite another quarter that day, and that nothing good could come out of the noise of Hanlon's mill.

Well, Michael Noonan got his brogues, and well heeled they were, and well pleased was he with them ; when who should be seated at Jack Brien's before him, but a gossip of his, one Darby Haynes, a mighty decent man, that had a horse and cart of his own, and that used to be travelling with it, taking loads like the Royal mail coach between Cork and Limerick ; and when he was at home Darby was a near neighbour of Michael Noonan's.

"Is it home you're going with the brogues this blessed night ?" said Darby to him.

"Where else would it be?" replied Mick ; "but, by my word, 'tis not across the Inch back again I'm going, after all I heard coming here ; 'tis no good that old Hanlon's mill is busy again."

"True, for you," said Darby; "and may be you'd take the horse and car home for me, Mick, by way of company, as 'tis along the road you go. I'm waiting here to see a sister's son of mine that I expect from Kilcoleman."

"That same I'll do," answered Mick, "with a thousand welcomes." So Mick drove the car fair and easy, knowing that the poor beast had come off a long journey; and Mick—God reward him for it!—was always tender-hearted and good to the dumb creatures.

The night was a beautiful one; the moon was better than a quarter old; and Mick, looking up at her, could not help bestowing a blessing on her beautiful face, shining down so sweetly upon the gentle Awbeg. He had now got out of the open road, and had come to where the trees grew on each side of it: he proceeded for some space in the half-and-half light which the moon gave through them. At one time, when a big old tree got between him and the moon, it was so dark that he could hardly see the horse's head; then, as he passed on, the moonbeams would stream through the open boughs and variegate the road with lights and shades. Mick was lying down in the car at his ease, having got clear of the plantation, and was watching the bright piece of a moon in a little

pool at the road-side, when he saw it disappear all of a sudden, as if a great cloud came over the sky. He turned round on his elbow to see if it was so, but how was Mick astonished at finding, close alongside of the car, a great high black coach drawn by six black horses, with long black tails reaching almost down to the ground, and a coachman dressed all in black sitting upon the box. But what surprised Mick the most was that he could see no sign of a head either upon coachman or horses. It swept rapidly by him, and he could perceive the horses raising their feet as if they were in a fine slinging trot, coachman touching them up with his long whip, and the wheels spinning round like hoddy-doddies ; still he could hear no noise, only the regular step of his gossip Darby's horse, and the squeaking of the gudgeons of the car, that were as good as lost entirely for want of a little grease.

Poor Mick's heart almost died within him, but he said nothing, only looked on ; and the black coach swept away, and was soon lost among some distant trees. Mick saw nothing more of it, or indeed of anything else. He got home just as the moon was going down behind Mount Hillery—took the tackling off the horse, turned the beast out in the field for the night, and got to his bed.

Next morning, early, he was standing at the road

side thinking of all that had happened the night before, when he saw Dan Madden, that was Mr. Wrixon's huntsman, coming on the master's best horse down the hill, as hard as ever he went at the tail of the hounds. Mick's mind instantly misgave him that all was not right, so he stood out in the very middle of the road, and caught hold of Dan's bridle when he came up.

"Mick, dear—for the love of God! don't stop me," cried Dan.

"Why, what's the hurry?" said Mick.

"Oh, the master—he's off—he's off—he'll never cross a horse again till the day of judgment!"

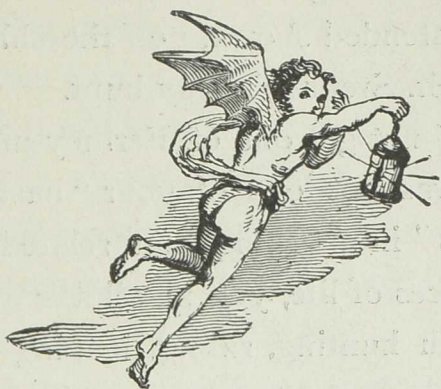
"Why, what would ail his honour?" said Mick; "sure it is no later than yesterday morning that I was talking to him, and he stout and hearty; and says he to me, Mick, says he ——"

"Stout and hearty was he?" answered Madden; "and was he not out with me in the kennel last night, when I was feeding the dogs? and didn't he come out to the stable, and give a ball to Peg Pullaway with his own hand, and tell me he'd ride the old General to-day; and sure," said Dan, wiping his eyes with the sleeve of his coat, "who'd have thought that the first thing I'd see this morning was the mistress standing at my bedside, and bidding me get up and ride off like fire for Doctor Johnson; for the master

had got a fit, and"—poor Dan's grief choked his voice—"oh, Mick! if you have a heart in you, run over yourself, or send the gossoon for Kate Finnigan, the midwife; she's a cruel skilful woman, and may be she might save the master till I get the doctor."

Dan struck his spurs into the hunter, and Michael Noonan flung off his newly-mended brogues, and cut across the fields to Kate Finnigan's; but neither the doctor nor Katty was of any avail, and the next night's moon saw Ballygibblin—and more's the pity—a house of mourning.





THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN.

“**G**OD speed you! and a safe journey this night to you, Charley,” ejaculated the master of the little shebeen house at Ballyhooley after his old friend and good customer, Charley Culnane, who at length had turned his face homewards, with the prospect of as dreary a ride and as dark a night as ever fell upon the Blackwater, along whose banks he was about to journey.

Charley Culnane knew the country well, and, moreover, was as bold a rider as any Mallow boy that ever *rattled* a four-year-old upon Drumrue racecourse. He had gone to Fermoy in the morning, as well for the purpose of purchasing some ingredients required for the Christmas dinner by his wife as to gratify his

own vanity by having new reins fitted to his snaffle, in which he intended showing off the old mare at the approaching St. Stephen's Day hunt.

Charley did **not** get out of Fermoy until late ; for although he was not one of your "nasty particular sort of fellows" in anything that related to the common occurrences of life, yet in all the appointments connected with hunting, riding, leaping—in short, in whatever was connected with the old mare—"Charley," the saddlers said, "was the devil to *plase*." An illustration of this fastidiousness was afforded by his going such a distance for a snaffle bridle. Mallow was full twelve miles nearer Charley's farm (which lay just three-quarters of a mile below Carrick) than Fermoy ; but Charley had quarrelled with all the Mallow saddlers, from hard-working and hard-drinking Tim Clancey up to Mister Ryan, who wrote himself "Saddler to the Duhallow Hunt ;" and no one could content him in all particulars but honest Michael Twomey of Fermoy, who used to assert—and who will doubt it?—that he could stitch a saddle better than the lord-lieutenant, although they made him all as one as king over Ireland.

This delay in the arrangement of the snaffle bridle did not allow Charley Culnane to pay so long a visit as he had at first intended to his old friend and gossip, Con Buckley of the "Harp of Erin." Con,

however, knew the value of time, and insisted upon Charley making good use of what he had to spare. "I won't bother you waiting for water, Charley, because I think you'll have enough of that same before you get home; so drink off your liquor, man. It's as good *parliament* as ever a gentleman tasted, ay, and holy church too, for it will bear 'X waters,' and carry the bead after that, may be."

Charley, it must be confessed, nothing loth, drank success to Con, and success to the jolly "Harp of Erin," with its head of beauty and its strings of the hair of gold, and to their better acquaintance, and so on, from the bottom of his soul, until the bottom of the bottle reminded him that Carrick was at the bottom of the hill on the other side of Castletown Roche, and that he had got no further on his journey than his gossip's at Ballyhooley, close to the big gate of Convamore. Catching hold of his oil-skin hat, therefore, whilst Con Buckley went to the cupboard for another bottle of "the real stuff," he regularly, as it is termed, bolted from his friend's hospitality, darted to the stable, tightened his girths, and put the old mare into a canter towards home.

The road from Ballyhooley to Carrick follows pretty nearly the course of the Blackwater, occasionally diverging from the river and passing through rather wild scenery, when contrasted with the beauti-

ful seats that adorn its banks. Charley cantered gaily, regardless of the rain which, as his friend Con had anticipated, fell in torrents: the good woman's currants and raisins were carefully packed between the folds of his yeomanry cloak, which Charley, who was proud of showing that he belonged to the "Royal Mallow Light Horse Volunteers," always strapped to the saddle before him, and took care never to destroy the military effect of it by putting it on. Away he went, singing like a thrush—

"Sporting, bellowing, dancing, drinking,
Breaking windows—(*hiccup*!)—sinking;
Ever raking—never thinking,
Live the rakes of Mallow.

Spending faster than it comes,
Beating—(*hiccup*, *hic*),—and duns,
Duhallow's true-begotten sons,
Live the rakes of Mallow."

Notwithstanding that the visit to the jolly "Harp of Erin" had a little increased the natural complacency of his mind, the drenching of the new snaffle reins began to disturb him; and then followed a train of more anxious thoughts than even were occasioned by the dreaded defeat of the pride of his long-anticipated *turn out* on St. Stephen's Day. In an hour of good fellowship, when his heart was warm, and his head not over cool, Charley had backed the old mare

against Mr. Jepson's bay filly Desdemona for a neat hundred, and he now felt sore misgivings as to the prudence of the match. In a less gay tone he continued,—

“Living short, but merry lives,
Going where the devil drives,
Keeping——”

“Keeping,” he muttered, as the old mare had reduced her canter to a trot at the bottom of Kilcummer Hill. Charley's eye fell on the old walls that belonged, in former times, to the Templars; but the silent gloom of the ruin was broken only by the heavy rain which splashed and pattered on the grave-stones. He then looked up at the sky to see if there was, among the clouds, any hope for mercy on his new snaffle reins; and no sooner were his eyes lowered, than his attention was arrested by an object so extraordinary as almost led him to doubt the evidence of his senses. The head, apparently of a white horse, with short cropped ears, large open nostrils, and immense eyes, seemed rapidly to follow him. No connection with body, legs, or rider could possibly be traced—the head advanced—Charley's old mare, too, was moved at this unnatural sight, and, snorting violently, increased her trot up the hill. The head moved forward, and passed on; Charley pursuing it with astonished gaze and wondering, by

what means, and for what purpose, this detached head thus proceeded through the air, did not perceive the corresponding body until he was suddenly startled by finding it close at his side. Charley turned to examine what was thus so sociably jogging on with him, when a most unexampled apparition presented himself to his view. A figure, whose height (judging as well as the obscurity of the night would permit him) he computed to be at least eight feet, was seated on the body and legs of a white horse full eighteen hands and a half high. In this measurement Charley could not be mistaken, for his own mare was exactly fifteen hands, and the body that thus jogged alongside he could at once determine, from his practice in horseflesh, was at least three hands and a half higher.

After the first feeling of astonishment, which found vent in the exclamation "I'm sold now for ever!" was over, the attention of Charley, he being a keen sportsman, was naturally directed to this extraordinary body, and having examined it with the eye of a connoisseur, he proceeded to reconnoitre the figure so unusually mounted, who had hitherto remained perfectly mute. Wishing to see whether his companion's silence proceeded from bad temper, want of conversational powers, or from a distaste to water, and the fear that the opening of his mouth might subject him

to have it filled by the rain, which was then drifting in violent gusts against them, Charley endeavoured to catch a sight of his companion's face, in order to form an opinion on that point. But his vision failed in carrying him further than the top of the collar of the figure's coat, which was a scarlet single-breasted hunting frock, having a waist of a very old-fashioned cut reaching to the saddle, with two huge shining buttons at about a yard's distance behind. "I ought to see further than this, too," thought Charley, "although he is mounted on his high horse, like my cousin Darby, who was made barony constable last week, unless 'tis Con's whisky that has blinded me entirely." However, see further he could not, and after straining his eyes for a considerable time to no purpose, he exclaimed, with pure vexation, "By the big bridge of Mallow, it is no head at all he has!"

"Look again, Charley Culnane," said a hoarse voice, that seemed to proceed from under the right arm of the figure.

Charley did look again, and now in the proper place, for he clearly saw, under the aforesaid right arm, that head from which the voice had proceeded, and such a head no mortal ever saw before. It looked like a large cream cheese hung round with black puddings: no speck of colour enlivened the

ashy paleness of the depressed features ; the skin lay stretched over the unearthly surface, almost like the parchment head of a drum. Two fiery eyes of prodigious circumference, with a strange and irregular motion flashed like meteors upon Charley, and a huge mouth reached from either extremity of two ears, which peeped forth from under a profusion of matted locks of lustreless blackness. This head, which the figure had evidently hitherto concealed from Charley's eyes, now burst upon his view in all its hideousness. Charley, although a lad of proverbial courage in the county Cork, yet could not but feel his nerves a little shaken by this unexpected visit from the headless horseman, whom he considered this figure doubtless must be. The cropped-eared head of the gigantic horse moved steadily forward, always keeping from six to eight yards in advance. The horseman, unaided by whip or spur, and disdaining the use of stirrups, which dangled uselessly from the saddle, followed at a trot by Charley's side, his hideous head now lost behind the lappet of his coat, now starting forth in all its horror as the motion of the horse caused his arm to move to and fro. The ground shook under the weight of its supernatural burthen, and the water in the pools was agitated into waves as he trotted by them.

On they went—heads without bodies, and bodies

without heads. The deadly silence of night was broken only by the fearful clattering of hoofs, and the distant sound of thunder, which rumbled above the mystic hill of Cecaune a Mona Finnea. Charley who was naturally a merry-hearted and rather a talkative fellow, had hitherto felt tongue-tied by apprehension, but finding his companion showed no evil disposition towards him, and having become somewhat more reconciled to the Patagonian dimensions of the horseman and his headless steed, he plucked up all his courage, and thus addressed the stranger,—“Why, then, your honour rides mighty well without the stirrups!”

“Humph!” growled the head from under the horseman’s right arm. “’Tis not an over-civil answer,” thought Charley; “but no matter, he was taught in one of them riding-houses, may be, and thinks nothing at all about bumping his leather breeches at the rate of ten miles an hour. I’ll try him on the other tack. Ahem!” said Charley, clearing his throat, and feeling at the same time rather daunted at this second attempt to establish a conversation. “Ahem! that’s a mighty neat coat of your honour’s, although ’tis a little too long in the waist for the present cut.”

“Humph!” growled again the head.

This second humph was a terrible thump in the face to poor Charley, who was fairly bothered to

know what subject he could start that would prove more agreeable. "'Tis a sensible head," thought Charley, "although an ugly one, for 'tis plain enough the man does not like flattery." A third attempt, however, Charley was determined to make, and having failed in his observations as to the riding and coat of his fellow-traveller, thought he would just drop a trifling allusion to the wonderful headless horse that was jogging on so sociably beside his old mare; and as Charley was considered about Carrick to be very knowing in horses, besides being a full private in the Royal Mallow Light Horse Volunteers, which were every one of them mounted like real Hessians, he felt rather sanguine as to the result of his third attempt.

"To be sure, that's a brave horse your honour rides," recommenced the persevering Charley.

"You may say that, with your own ugly mouth," growled the head.

Charley, though not much flattered by the compliment, nevertheless chuckled at his success in obtaining an answer, and thus continued,—

"May be your honour wouldn't be after riding him across the country?"

"Will you try me, Charley?" said the head, with an inexpressible look of ghastly delight.

"Faith, and that's what I'd do," responded

Charley, "only I'm afraid, the night being so dark, of laming the old mare, and I've every half-penny of a hundred pounds on her heels."

This was true enough. Charley's courage was nothing dashed at the headless horseman's proposal; and there never was a steeple-chase, nor a fox-chase, riding or leaping in the country, that Charley Culnane was not at it, and foremost in it.

"Will you take my word," said the man who carried his head so snugly under his right arm, "for the safety of your mare?"

"Done," said Charley; and away they started, helter-skelter, over everything, ditch and wall, pop, pop; the old mare never went in such style, even in broad daylight; and Charley had just the start of his companion, when the hoarse voice called out, "Charley Culnane, Charley, man, stop for your life—stop!"

Charley pulled up hard. "Ay," said he, "you may beat me by the head, because it always goes so much before you; but if the bet was neck and neck, and that's the go between the old mare and Desdemona, I'd win it hollow!"

It appeared as if the stranger was well aware of what was passing in Charley's mind, for he suddenly broke out quite loquacious.

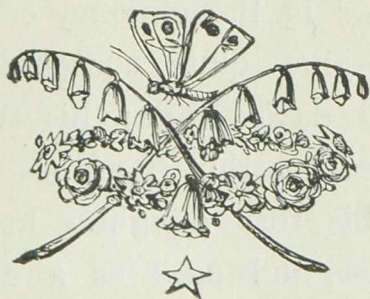
"Charley Culnane," says he, "you have a stout

soul in you, and are every inch of you a good rider. I've tried you, and I ought to know ; and that's the sort of man for my money. A hundred years it is since my horse and I broke our necks at the bottom of Kilcummer Hill, and ever since I have been trying to get a man that dared to ride with me, and never found one before. Keep, as you have always done, at the tail of the hounds, never baulk a ditch, nor turn away from a stone wall, and the headless horseman will never desert you nor the old mare."

Charley, in amazement, looked towards the stranger's right arm, for the purpose of seeing in his face whether or not he was in earnest, but behold ! the head was snugly lodged in the huge pocket of the horseman's scarlet hunting-coat. The horse's head had ascended perpendicularly above them, and his extraordinary companion rising quickly after his avant courier, vanished from the astonished gaze of Charley Culnane.

Charley, as may be supposed, was lost in wonder, delight, and perplexity ; the pelting rain, the wife's pudding, the new snaffle—even the match against squire Jepson—all were forgotten ; nothing could he think of, nothing could he talk of, but the headless horseman. He told it, directly he got home, to Judy ; he told it the following morning to all the neighbours ; and he told it to the hunt on St.

Stephen's Day ; but what provoked him after all the pains he took in describing the head, the horse, and the man, was that one and all attributed the creation of the headless horseman to his friend Con Buckley's "X water parliament." This, however, should be told, that Charley's old mare beat Mr. Jepson's bay filly Desdemona by Diamond, and Charley pocketed his cool hundred ; and if he didn't win by means of the headless horseman, I am sure I don't know any other reason for his doing so.





DIARMID BAWN, THE PIPER.

ONE stormy night Patrick Burke was seated in the chimney corner, smoking his pipe quite contentedly after his hard day's work; his two little boys were roasting potatoes in the ashes, while his rosy daughter held a splinter (dipped in tallow, and used as a candle) to her mother, who, seated on a siesteen (straw-seated chair), was mending a rent in Patrick's old coat; and Judy, the maid, was singing merrily to the sound of her wheel, that kept up a beautiful humming noise just like the sweet drone of a bagpipe. Indeed, they

all seemed quite contented and happy ; for the storm howled without, and they were warm and snug within by the side of a blazing turf fire. "I was just thinking," said Patrick, taking the dudeen from his mouth and giving it a rap on his thumb-nail to shake out the ashes, "I was just thinking how thankful we ought to be to have a snug bit of a cabin this pelting night over our heads, for in all my born days I never heard the like of it."

"And that's no lie for you, Pat," said his wife ; "but, whisht ! what noise is that I *hard* ?" and she dropped her work upon her knees, and looked fearfully towards the door.

"The *Vargin* herself defend us all !" cried Judy, at the same time rapidly making a pious sign on her forehead, "if 'tis not the banshee !"

"Hold your tongue, you fool !" said Patrick, "it's only the old gate swinging in the wind ;" and he had scarcely spoken, when the door was assailed by a violent knocking. Molly began to mumble her prayers, and Judy proceeded to mutter over the muster-roll of saints ; the youngsters scampered off to hide themselves behind the settle-bed ; the storm howled louder and more fiercely than ever, and the rapping was renewed with redoubled violence. "Whisht, whisht !" said Patrick ; "what a noise ye're all making about nothing at all. Judy aroon,

can't you go and see who's at the door?" for notwithstanding his assumed bravery, Pat Burke preferred that the maid should open the door.

"Why, then, is it me you're speaking to?" said Judy, in a tone of astonishment; "and is it cracked mad you are, Mister Burke; or is it, maybe, that you want me to be *rund* away with, and made a horse of, like my grandfather was?—the sorrow a step will I stir to open the door, if you were as great a man again as you are, Pat Burke."

"Bother you, then! and hold your tongue, and I'll go myself." So saying, up got Patrick, and made the best of his way to the door. "Who's there?" said he, and his voice trembled mightily all the while. "In the name of Saint Patrick, who's there?"

"'Tis I, Pat," answered a voice which he immediately knew to be the young squire's. In a moment the door was opened, and in walked a young man with a gun in his hand and a brace of dogs at his heels.

"Your honour's honour is quite welcome, entirely," said Patrick, who was a civil sort of a fellow, especially to his betters. "Your honour's honour is quite welcome; and if ye'll be so condescending as to demean yourself by taking off your wet jacket, Molly can give ye a bran new blanket, and ye

can sit forenent the fire while the clothes are drying."

"Thank you Pat," said the squire, as he wrapped himself, like Mr. Weld, in the proffered blanket.

"But what made you keep me so long at the door?"

"Why, then, your honour, 'twas all along of Judy, there, being so much afraid of the good people; and a good right she has, after what happened to her grandfather—the Lord rest his soul!"

"And what was that, Pat?" said the squire.

"Why, then, your honour must know that Judy had a grandfather; and he was *ould* Diarmid Bawn, the piper, as personable a looking man as any in the five parishes he was; and he could play the pipes so sweetly, and make them *spake* to such perfection, that it did one's heart good to hear him. We never had any one, for that matter, in this side of the country like him, before or since, except James Gandsey, that is own piper to Lord Headly—his honour's lordship is the real good gentleman—and 'tis Mr. Gandsey's music that is the pride of Killarney lakes. Well, as I was saying, Diarmid was Judy's grandfather; and he rented a small mountainy farm; and he was walking about the fields one moonlight night, quite melancholy-like in himself for want of the *tobaccy*; because why, the river was flooded, and

he could not get across to buy any, and Diarmid would rather go to bed without his supper than a whiff of the dudeen. Well, your honour, just as he came to the old fort in the far field, what should he see—the Lord preserve us!—but a large army of the good people—'coutered for all the world just like the dragoons! 'Are ye all ready? said a little fellow at their head, dressed out like a general. 'No,' said a little curmudgeon of a chap all dressed in red, from the crown of his cocked hat to the sole of his boot. 'No, general,' said he; 'if you don't get the Fir Darrig a horse he must stay behind, and ye'll lose the battle.'

"'There's Diarmid Bawn,' said the general, pointing to Judy's grandfather, your honour, 'make a horse of him.'

"So with that master Fir Darrig comes up to Diarmid, who, you may be sure, was in a mighty great fright; but he determined, seeing there was no help for him, to put a bold face on the matter; and so he began to cross himself, and to say some blessed words, that nothing bad could stand before.

"'Is that what you'd be after, you spalpeen?'" said the little red imp, at the same time grinning a horrible grin; 'I'm not the man to care a straw for either your words or your crossings.' So, without

more a-do, he gives poor Diarmid a rap with the flat side of his sword, and in a moment he was changed into a horse, with little Fir Darrig stuck fast on his back.

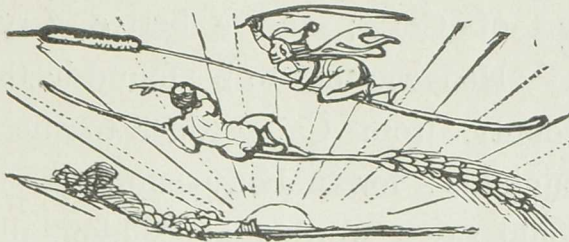
Away they all flew over the wide ocean, like so many wild geese, screaming and chattering all the time, till they came to Jamaica ; and there they had a murdering fight with the good people of that country. Well, it was all very well with them, and they stuck to it manfully, and fought it out fairly, till one of the Jamaica men made a cut with his sword under Diarmid's left eye, and then, sir, you see, poor Diarmid lost his temper entirely, and he dashed into the very middle of them, with Fir Darrig mounted upon his back, and he threw out his heels, and whisked his tail about, and wheeled and turned round and round at such a rate that he soon made a fair clearance of them—horse, foot, and dragoons. At last Diarmid's faction got the better, all through his means ; and then they had such feasting and rejoicing, and gave Diarmid, who was the finest horse amongst them all, the best of everything.

“ ‘ Let every man take a hand of *tobaccy* for Diarmid Bawn,’ said the general ; and so they did ; and away they flew, for 'twas getting near morning, to the old fort back again, and there they vanished like the mist from the mountain.

"When Diarmid looked about the sun was rising, and he thought it was all a dream, till he saw a big rick of *tobaccy* in the old fort, and felt the blood running from his left eye ; for sure enough he was wounded in the battle, and would have been *kilt* entirely, if it wasn't for a gospel composed by Father Murphy that hung about his neck ever since he had the scarlet fever ; and for certain it was enough to have given him another scarlet fever to have had the little red man all night on his back, whip and spur for the bare life. However, there was the *tobaccy* heaped up in a great heap by his side ; and he heard a voice, although he could see no one, telling him 'that 'twas all his own, for his good behaviour in the battle ; and that whenever Fir Darrig would want a horse again he'd know where to find a clever beast, as he never rode a better than Diarmid Bawn.' That's what he said, sir."

"Thank you, Pat," said the squire ; "it certainly is a wonderful story, and I am not surprised at Judy's alarm. But now, as the storm is over, and the moon shining brightly, I'll make the best of my way home." So saying, he disrobed himself of the blanket, put on his coat, and, whistling his dogs, set off across the mountain ; while Patrick stood at the door, bawling after him, "May God and the

blessed Virgin preserve your honour, and keep ye from the good people ; for 'twas of a moonlight night like this that Diarmid Bawn was made a horse of for the Fir Darrig to ride."





NED SHEEHY'S EXCUSE.

NED SHEEHY was servant-man to Richard Gumbleton, Esq., of Mountbally, Gumbletonmore, in the north of the county of Cork; and a better servant than Ned was not to be found in that honest county, from Cape Clear to the Kilworth Mountains; for nobody—no, not his worst enemy, could say a word against him, only that he was rather given to drinking, idling, lying, and loitering, especially the last, for send Ned of a five minutes' message at nine o'clock in the morning, and you were a lucky man if you saw him before dinner. If there happened to be a publichouse in the way, or even a little out of it, Ned was sure to mark it as dead as a pointer; and knowing everybody, and everybody liking him, it is not to be wondered at he

had so much to say and to hear, that the time slipped away as if the sun somehow or other had knocked two hours into one.

But when he came home he never was short of an excuse; he had, for that matter, five hundred ready upon the tip of his tongue, so much so, that I doubt if even the very reverend Doctor Swift, for many years Dean of St. Patrick's in Dublin, could match him in that particular, though his reverence had a pretty way of his own of writing things which brought him into very decent company. In fact, Ned would fret a saint; but then he was so good-humoured a fellow, and really so handy about a house, for, as he said himself, he was as good as a lady's maid, that his master could not find it in his heart to part with him.

In your grand houses—not that I am saying that Richard Gumbleton, Esquire, of Mountbally, Gumbletonmore, did not keep a good house; but a plain country gentleman, although he is second cousin to the last high sheriff of the county, cannot have all the army of servants that the lord-lieutenant has in the castle of Dublin—I say, in your grand houses you can have a servant for every kind of thing, but in Mountbally, Gumbletonmore, Ned was expected to please master and mistress; or, as Counsellor Curran said,—by the same token the counsellor was

a little dark man,—one day that he dined there, on his way to the Clonmel assizes, Ned was minister for the home and foreign departments. But to make a long story short, Ned Sheehy was a good butler, and a right good one too, and as for a groom, let him alone with a horse ; he could dress it, or ride it, or shoe it, or physic it, or do anything with it but make it speak : he was a second whisperer ! there was not his match in the barony, or the next one either. A pack of hounds he could manage well—ay, and ride after them with the boldest man in the land. It was Ned who leaped the old bounds ditch at the turn of the boreen of the lands of Reenascreena, after the English captain pulled up on looking at it, and cried out it was “No go.” Ned rode that day Brian Boro, Mr. Gumbleton’s famous chestnut, and people call it Ned Sheehy’s leap to this hour.

So, you see, it was hard to do without him ; however, many a scolding he got, and although his master often said, of an evening, “I’ll turn off Ned,” he always forgot to do so in the morning. These threats mended Ned not a bit ; indeed, he was mending the other way, like bad fish in hot weather.

One cold winter’s day, about three o’clock in the afternoon, Mr. Gumbleton said to him, “Ned,” said he, “go take Modderaroo down to Black Falvey, the

horse-doctor, and bid him look at her knees, for Doctor Jenkinson, who rode her home last night, has hurt her somehow. I suppose he thought a parson's horse ought to go upon its knees ; but, indeed, it was I was the fool to give her to him at all, for he sits twenty stone if he sits a pound, and knows no more of riding, particularly after his third bottle, than I do of preaching. Now mind and be back in an hour at furthest, for I want to have the plate cleaned up properly for dinner, as Sir Augustus O'Toole, you know, is to dine here to-day. Don't loiter, for your life."

"Is it I, sir?" says Ned. "Well that beats anything ; as if I'd stop out a minute!" So mounting Modderaroo, off he set.

Four, five, six o'clock came, and so did Sir Augustus and Lady O'Toole, and the four Misses O'Toole, and Mr. O'Toole, and Mr. Edward O'Toole, and Mr. James O'Toole, which were all the young O'Tooles that were at home, but no Ned Sheehy appeared to clean the plate, or to lay the table-cloth, or even to put dinner on. It is needless to say how Mr. and Mrs. Dick Gumbleton fretted and fumed, but it was all to no use. They did their best, however, only it was a disgrace to see Long Jem the stable-boy, and Bill the gossoon that used to go of errands, waiting, without anybody to direct them, when there was a

real baronet and his lady at table, for Sir Augustus was none of your knights. But a good bottle of claret makes up for much, and it was not one only they had that night. However, it is not to be concealed that Mr. Dick Gumbleton went to bed very cross, and he awoke still crosser.

He heard that Ned had not made his appearance for the whole night, so he dressed himself in a great fret, and taking his horsewhip in his hand he said,—

“There is no further use in tolerating this scoundrel; I’ll go look for him, and if I find him, I’ll cut the soul out of his vagabond body! I will by——”

“Don’t swear, Dick, dear,” said Mrs. Gumbleton (for she was always a mild woman, being daughter of fighting Tom Crofts, who shot a couple of gentlemen, friends of his, in the cool of the evening, after the Mallow races, one after the other), “don’t swear, Dick, dear,” said she, “but do, my dear, oblige me by cutting the flesh off his bones, for he richly deserves it. I was quite ashamed of Lady O’Toole, yesterday,—I was, ’pon honour.”

Out sallied Mr. Gumbleton; and he had not far to walk; for not more than two hundred yards from the house he found Ned lying fast asleep under a ditch (hedge), and Modderaroo standing by him, poor beast, snaking every limb. The loud snoring of Ned, who was lying with his head upon a stone as easy and as

comfortable as if it had been a bed of down or a hop-bag, drew him to the spot, and Mr. Gumbleton at once perceived, from the disarray of Ned's face and person, that he had been engaged in some perilous adventure during the night. Ned appeared not to have descended in the most irregular manner, for one of his shoes remained sticking in the stirrup, and his hat, having rolled down a little slope, was embedded in green mud. Mr. Gumbleton, however, did not give himself much trouble to make a curious survey, but with a vigorous application of his thong soon banished sleep from the eyes of Ned Sheehy. "Ned," thundered his master in great indignation; and on this occasion it was not a word and blow, for with that one word came half a dozen. "Get up, you scoundrel," said he.

Ned roared lustily, and no wonder, for his master's hand was not one of the lightest; and he cried out, between sleeping and waking, "Oh, Sir! don't be angry, sir! don't be angry, and I'll roast you easier—easy as a lamb!" "Roast me easier, you vagabond!" said Mr. Gumbleton; "what do you mean? I'll roast you, my lad. Where were you all night? Modderaroo will never get over it. Pack out of my service, you worthless villain, this moment; and, indeed, you may give God thanks that I don't get you transported."

"Thank God, master dear," said Ned, who was

now perfectly awakened, "it's yourself anyhow. There never was a gentleman in the whole county ever did so good a turn to a poor man as your honour has been after doing to me; the Lord reward you for that same. Oh! but strike me again, and let me feel that it is yourself, master, dear. May whisky be my poison——"

"It will be your poison, you good-for-nothing scoundrel," said Mr. Gumbleton.

"Well, then, *may* whisky be my poison," said Ned, "if 'twas not I was—God help me!—in the blackest of misfortunes, and they were before me, whichever way I turned 'twas no matter. Your honour sent me last night, sure enough, with Modderaroo to Mister Falvey's—I don't deny it, why should I? for reason enough I have to remember what happened."

"Ned, my man," said Mr. Gumbleton, "I'll listen to none of your excuses; just take the mare into the stable and yourself off, for I vow to——"

"Begging your honour's pardon," said Ned, earnestly, "for interrupting your honour; but, master, master! make no vows—they are bad things; I never made but one in all my life, which was to drink nothing at all for a year and a day, and 'tis myself repinted of it for the clean twelvemonth after. But if your honour would only listen to reason; I'll just

take in the poor baste, and if your honour don't pardon me this one time may I never see another day's luck or grace."

"I know you, Ned," said Mr. Gumbleton. "Whatever your luck has been, you never had any grace to lose: but I don't intend discussing the matter with you. Take in the mare, sir." Ned obeyed, and his master saw him to the stables; here he reiterated his commands to quit, and Ned Sheehy's excuse for himself began. That it was heard uninterruptedly is more than I can affirm; but as interruptions, like explanations, spoil a story, we must let Ned tell it his own way.

"No wonder, your honour," said he, "should be a bit angry—grand company coming to the house and all, and no regular serving-man to wait, only Long Jem; so I don't blame your honour the least for being fretted like; but when all's heard, you will see that no poor man is more to be pitied for last night than myself. Fin MacCoul never went through more in his born days than I did, though he was a great *joint* (giant), and I only a man. I had not rode half a mile from the house, when it came on, as your honour must have perceived clearly, mighty dark all of a sudden, for all the world as if the sun had tumbled down plump out of the fine clear blue sky. It was not so late, being only four o'clock at

the most, but it was as black as your honour's hat. Well, I didn't care much, seeing I knew the road as well as I knew the way to my mouth, whether I saw it or not, and I put the mare into a smart canter; but just as I turned down by the corner of Terence Leahy's field—sure your honour ought to know the place well, just at the very spot the fox was killed when your honour came in first out of a whole field of a hundred and fifty gentlemen, and may be more, all of them brave riders."

Mr. Gumbleton smiled.

"Just then, there, I heard the low cry of the good people wafted upon the wind. 'How early you are at your work, my little fellows,' says I to myself; and, dark as it was, having no wish for such company, I thought it best to get out of their way; so I turned the horse a little up to the left, thinking to get down by the boreen that is that way, and so round to Falvey's, but there I heard the voice plainer and plainer close behind, and I could hear these words:—

'Ned ! Ned !
By my cap so red !
You're as good, Ned,
As a man that is dead.'

'A clean pair of spurs is all that's for it now,' said I; so off I set as hard as I could *lick*, and in my hurry knew no more where I was going than I do the road

to the hill of Tara. Away I galloped on for some time, until I came to the noise of a stream, roaring away by itself in the darkness. 'What river is this?' said I to myself—for there was nobody else to ask; 'I thought,' says I, 'I knew every inch of ground, and of water too, within twenty miles, and never the river surely is there in this direction.' So I stopped to look about; but I might have spared myself that trouble, for I could not see as much as my hand. I didn't know what to do; but I thought in myself, it's a queer river, surely, if somebody does not live near it; and I shouted out as loud as I could, 'Murder! murder! fire! robbery!' anything that would be natural in such a place; but not a sound did I hear except my own voice echoed back to me, like a hundred packs of hounds in full cry, above and below, right and left. This didn't do at all; so I dismounted, and guided myself along the stream, directed by the noise of the water, as cautious as if I was treading upon eggs, holding poor Modderaroo by the bridle, who shook, the poor brute, all over in a tremble, like my old grandmother, rest her soul, anyhow, in her age. Well, sir, the heart was sinking in me, and I was giving myself up, when, as good luck would have it, I saw a light. 'Maybe,' said I, 'my good fellow, you are only a jacky lanthorn, and want to bog me and Mod-

deraroo.' But I looked at the light hard, and I thought it was too *study* (steady) for a jacky lantern. 'I'll try you,' says I, 'so here goes ;' and walking as quiet as a thief, I came towards it, being very nearly plumping into the river once or twice, and being stuck up to my middle, as your honour may perceive clearly the marks of, two or three times in the *slob* (mire). At last I made the light out, and it coming from a bit of house by the roadside ; so I went to the door, and gave three kicks at it, as strong as I could.

" 'Open the door for Ned Sheehy,' said a voice inside. Now, besides that I could not, for the life of me, make out how any one inside should know me before I spoke a word at all, I did not like the sound of that voice, 'twas so hoarse and so hollow, just like a dead man's !—so I said nothing immediately. The same voice spoke again, and said, 'Why don't you open the door to Ned Sheehy?' 'How pat my name is to you,' said I, without speaking out, 'on the tip of your tongue, like butter ;' and I was between two minds about staying or going, when what should the door do but open, and out came a man holding a candle in his hand, and he had upon him a face as white as a sheet. 'Why, then, Ned Sheehy,' says he, 'how grand you're grown, that you won't come in and see a friend as you're passing by.'

“‘Pray, sir,’ says I, looking at him—though that face of his was enough to dumbfounder any honest man like myself—‘pray, sir,’ says I, ‘may I make so bold as to ask if you are not Jack Myers that was drowned seven years ago, next Martinmas, in the ford of Ah-na-fourish?’”

“‘Suppose I was,’ says he; ‘has not a man a right to be drowned in the ford facing his own cabin door any day of the week that he likes, from Sunday morning to Saturday night?’”

“‘I’m not denying that same, Mr. Myers, sir,’ says I, ‘if ’tis yourself is to the fore speaking to me.’”

“‘Well,’ says he, ‘no more words about that matter now; sure you and I, Ned, were friends of old; come in, and take a glass; and here’s a good fire before you and nobody shall hurt or harm you, and I to the fore, and myself able to do it.’”

“Now, your honour, though ’twas much to drink with a man that was drowned seven years before, in the ford of Ah-na-fourish, facing his own door, yet the glass was hard to be withstood—to say nothing of the fire that was blazing within—for the night was mortal cold. So tying Modderaroo to the hasp of the door—if I don’t love the creature as I love my own life—I went in with Jack Myers.

“Civil enough he was—I’ll never say otherwise to my dying hour—for he handed me a stool by the fire

and bid me sit down and make myself comfortable. But his face, as I said before, was as white as the snow on the hills, and his two eyes fell dead on me like the eyes of a cod, without any life in them. Just as I was going to put the glass to my lips, a voice—'twas the same that I heard bidding the door be opened—spoke out of a cupboard that was convenient to the left-hand side of the chimney, and said, 'Have you any news for me, Ned Sheehy?' 'The never a word, sir,' says I, making answer before I tasted the whisky, all out of civility; and, to speak the truth, never the least could I remember at that moment of what had happened to me, or how I got there; for I was quite bothered with the fright. 'Have you no news,' says the voice, 'Ned, to tell me, from Mountbally, Gumbletonmore; or from the Mill; or about Moll Trantum that was married last week to Bryan Oge, and you at the wedding?' 'No, sir,' says I, 'never a word.' 'What brought you in here, Ned, then?' says the voice. I could say nothing; for whatever other people might do, I never could frame an excuse; and I was loth to say it was on account of the glass and the fire, for that would be to speak the truth.

"'Turn the scoundrel out,' says the voice; and at the sound of it, who would I see but Jack Myers making over to me with a lump of stick in his hand,

and it clenched on the stick so wicked. For certain, I did not stop to feel the weight of the blow; so, dropping the glass, and it full of the stuff too, I bolted out of the door, and never rested from running away, for as good I believe as twenty miles, till I found myself in a big wood.

“The Lord preserve me! what will become of me now!’ says I. ‘Oh, Ned Sheehy!’ says I, speaking to myself, ‘my man, you’re in a pretty hobble; and to leave Modderaroo after you!’ But the words were not well out of my mouth when I heard the dismallest ullagoane in the world, enough to break any one’s heart that was not broke before, with the grief entirely; and it was not long till I could plainly see four men coming towards me, with a great black coffin on their shoulders. ‘I’d better get up in a tree,’ says I, ‘for they say ’tis not lucky to meet a corpse: I’m in the way of misfortune to-night if ever man was.’

“I could not help wondering how a *berrin* (funeral) should come there in the lone wood at that time of night, seeing it could not be far from the dead hour. But it was little good for me thinking, for they soon came under the very tree I was roosting in, and down they put the coffin, and began to make a fine fire under me. ‘I’ll be smothered alive now,’ thinks L ‘and that will be the end of me;’ but I was

afraid to stir for the life, or to speak out to bid them just make their fire under some other tree, if it would be all the same thing to them. Presently they opened the coffin, and out they dragged as fine-looking a man as you'd meet with in a day's walk.

"'Where's the spit?' says one. 'Here 'tis,' says another, handing it over; and for certain they spitted him, and began to turn him before the fire.

"'If they are not going to eat him,' thinks I, 'like the *Hannibals* Father Quinlan told us about in his *sarmint* last Sunday'

"'Who'll turn the spit while we go for the other ingredients?' says one of them that brought the coffin, and a big ugly-looking blackguard he was. 'Who'd turn the spit but Ned Sheehy?' says another.

"'Burn you!' thinks I, 'how should you know that I was here so handy to you up in the tree?' 'Come down, Ned Sheehy, and turn the spit,' says he. 'I'm not here at all, sir,' says I, putting my hand over my face that he might not see me. 'That won't do for you, my man,' says he; 'you'd better come down, or maybe I'd make you.' 'I'm coming, sir,' says I, for 'tis always right to make a virtue of necessity. So down I came, and there they left

me turning the spit in the middle of the wide wood.

“‘Don’t scorch me, Ned Sheehy, you vagabond,’ says the man on the spit. ‘And my lord, sir, and ar’n’t you dead, sir,’ says I, ‘and your honour taken out of the coffin and all?’ ‘I ar’n’t,’ says he. ‘But surely you are, sir,’ says I, ‘for ’tis no use now for me denying that I saw your honour, and I up in the tree.’ ‘I ar’n’t,’ says he again, speaking quite short and snappish.

“So I said no more until presently he called out to me to turn him easy, or that maybe ’twould be the worse turn for myself.

“‘Will that do, sir?’ says I, turning him as easy as I could. ‘That’s too easy,’ says he; so I turned him faster. ‘That’s too fast,’ says he; so finding that turn him which way I would I could not please him, I got into a bit of a fret at last, and desired him to turn himself, for a grumblin’ spalpeen as he was, if he liked it better.

“Away I ran, and away he came hopping, spit and all, after me, and he but half roasted. ‘Murder!’ says I, shouting out; ‘I’m done for at long last—now or never!’—when all of a sudden, and ’twas really wonderful, not knowing where I was rightly, I found myself at the door of the very little cabin by the roadside that I had bolted out

of from Jack Myers; and there was Modderaroo standing hard by.

“‘Open the door for Ned Sheehy,’ said the voice, for ’twas shut against me, and the door flew open in an instant. In I ran without stop or stay, thinking it better to be beat by Jack Myers, he being an old friend of mine, than to be spitted like a Michaelmas goose by a man that I knew nothing about, either of him or his family, one or the other.

“‘Have you any news for me?’ says the voice, putting just the same question to me that it did before. ‘Yes, sir,’ says I, ‘and plenty.’ So I mentioned all that had happened to me in the big wood, and how I got up in the tree, and how I was made come down again, and put to turning the spit, roasting the gentleman, and how I could not please him turn him fast or easy, although I tried my best, and how he ran after me at last, spit and all. ‘If you had told me this before, you would not have been turned out in the cold,’ said the voice. ‘And how could I tell it to you, sir,’ says I, ‘before it happened?’ ‘No matter,’ says he, ‘you may sleep now till morning on that bundle of hay in the corner there, and only I was your friend, you’d have been *kilt* entirely.’ So down I lay, but I was dreaming, dreaming all the rest of the night, and when you, master dear, woke me with that blessed blow I

thought 'twas the man on the spit had hold of me, and could hardly believe my eyes when I found myself in your honour's presence, and poor Modderaroo safe and sound by my side ; but how I came there is more than I can say, if 'twas not Jack Myers, although he did make the offer to strike me, or some one among the good people befriended me."

"It is all a drunken dream, you scoundrel," said Mr. Gumbleton ; "have I not had fifty such excuses from you ?"

"But never one, your honour, that really happened before," said Ned, with unblushing front. "Howsomever, since your honour fancies 'tis drinking I was I'd rather never drink again to the world's end, than lose so good a master as yourself, and if I'm forgiven this once, and get another trial——"

"Well," said Mr. Gumbleton, "you may, for this once, go into Mountbally Gumbletonmore again ; let me see that you keep your promise as to not drinking, or mind the consequences ; and above all, let me hear no more of the good people, for I don't believe a single word about them, whatever I may do of bad ones."

So saying, Mr. Gumbleton turned on his heel, and Ned's countenance relaxed into its usual expression.

"Now I would not be after saying about the good

people what the master said last," exclaimed Peggy, the maid, who was within hearing, and who, by the way, had an eye after Ned: "I would not be after saying such a thing; the good people, maybe, will make him feel the *differ* (difference) to his cost."

Nor was Peggy wrong; for, whether Ned Sheehy dreamt of the Fir Darrig or not, within a fortnight after, two of Mr. Gumbleton's cows, the best milkers in the parish, ran dry, and before the week was out Modderaroo was lying dead in the stone quarry.



as is commonly believed, unfathomable lake, the only inhabitant of which is a huge serpent, which has been sometimes seen to stretch its enormous head above the waters, and frequently is heard to utter a noise which shakes the very rocks to their foundation.

But, as I was saying, everybody knew Tim Jarvis to be a decent, honest, quiet, hard-working man, who was thriving enough to be able to give his daughter Nelly a fortune of ten pounds; and Tim himself would have been snug enough besides, but that he loved the drop sometimes. However, he was seldom backward on rent day. His ground was never distrainted but twice, and both times through a small bit of a mistake; and his landlord had never but once to say to him, "Tim Jarvis, you're all behind, Tim, like the cow's tail." Now it so happened that, being heavy in himself, through the drink, Tim took to sleeping, and the sleep set Tim dreaming, and he dreamed all night, and night after night, about crocks full of gold and other precious stones; so much so, that Norah Jarvis his wife could get no good of him by day and have little comfort with him by night. The grey dawn of the morning would see Tim digging away in a bog-hole, maybe, or rooting under some old stone walls like a pig. At last he dreamt that he found a mighty great crock of gold and silver

—and where, do you think? Every step of the way upon London Bridge itself? Twice Tim dreamt it, and three times Tim dreamt the same thing; and at last he made up his mind to transport himself, and go over to London, in Pat Mahoney's coaster—and so he did!

Well, he got there, and found the bridge without much difficulty. Every day he walked up and down looking for the crock of gold, but never the find did he find it. One day, however, as he was looking over the bridge into the water, a man, or something like a man, with great black whiskers, like a Hessian, and a black cloak that reached down to the ground, taps him on the shoulder, and says he, "Tim Jarvis, do you see me?"

"Surely I do, sir," said Tim; wondering that anybody should know him in the strange place.

"Tim," says he, "what is it brings you here in foreign parts, so far away from your own cabin by the mine of grey copper at Balledehob?"

"Please your honour," says Tim, "I'm come to seek my fortune."

"You're a fool for your pains, Tim, if that's all," remarked the stranger in the black cloak; "this is a big place to seek one's fortune in to be sure, but it's not so easy to find it."

Now Tim, after debating a long time with him-

self, and considering, in the first place, that it might be the stranger who was to find the crock of gold for him, and, in the next, that the stranger might direct him where to find it, came to the resolution of telling him all.

"There's many a one like me comes here seeking their fortunes," said Tim.

"True," said the stranger.

"But," continued Tim, looking up, "the body and bones of the cause for myself leaving the woman, and Nelly, and the boys, and travelling so far, is to look for a crock of gold that I'm told is lying somewhere hereabouts."

"And who told you that, Tim?"

"Why, then, sir, that's what I can't tell myself rightly—only I dreamt it."

"Ho, ho! is that all, Tim?" said the stranger, laughing; "I had a dream myself; and I dreamed that I found a crock of gold in the Fort field, on Jerry Driscoll's ground at Balledehob; and by the same token, the pit where it lay was close to a large furze bush, all full of yellow blossom."

Tim knew Jerry Driscoll's ground well; and, moreover, he knew the Fort field as well as he knew his own potato garden; he was certain, too, of the very furze bush at the north end of it—so, swearing a bitter big oath, says he, "By all the crosses in a yard

of check, I always thought there was money in that same field !”

The moment he rapped out the oath the stranger disappeared, and Tim Jarvis, wondering at all that had happened to him, made the best of his way back to Ireland. Norah, as may well be supposed, had no very warm welcome for her runaway husband—the dreaming blackguard, as she called him ; and so soon as she set eyes upon him, all the blood of her body in one minute was into her knuckles to be at him ; but Tim, after his long journey, looked so cheerful, and so happy like, that she could not find it in her heart to give him the first blow. He managed to pacify his wife by two or three broad hints about a new cloak and pair of shoes, that, to speak honestly, were much wanting to her to go to chapel in ; and decent clothes for Nelly to go to the patron with her sweetheart, and brogues for the boys, and some corduroy for himself. “ It wasn’t for nothing,” says Tim, “ I went to foreign parts all the ways ; and you’ll see what’ll come out of it—mind my words.”

A few days afterwards Tim sold his cabin and his garden, and bought the Fort field of Jerry Driscoll, that had nothing in it, but was full of thistles, and old stones, and blackberry bushes ; and all the neighbours—as well they might—thought he was cracked !

The first night that Tim could summon courage to begin his work he walked off to the field with his spade upon his shoulder ; and away he dug all night by the side of the furze bush till he came to a big stone. He struck his spade against it, and he heard a hollow sound ; but as the morning had begun to dawn, and the neighbours would be going out to their work, Tim, not wishing to have the thing talked about, went home to the little hovel, where Norah and the children were huddled together under a heap of straw ; for he had sold everything he had in the world to purchase Driscoll's field, that was said to be "the back-bone of the world, picked by the devil."

It is impossible to describe the epithets and reproaches bestowed by the poor woman on her unlucky husband for bringing her into such a way. Epithets and reproaches which Tim had but one mode of answering, as thus : "Norah, did you see e'er a cow you'd like?" or, "Norah, dear, hasn't Poll Deasy a feather-bed to sell?" or, "Norah, honey, wouldn't you like your silver buckles as big as Mrs. Doyle's?"

As soon as night came Tim stood beside the furze bush spade in hand. The moment he jumped down into the pit he heard a strange rumbling noise under him, and so, putting his ear against the great stone, he listened, and overheard a discourse that made the

hair on his head stand up like bulrushes, and every limb tremble.

“How shall we bother Tim?” said one voice.

“Take him to the mountain, to be sure, and make him a toothful for the old serpent; ’tis long since he has had a good meal,” said another voice.

Tim shook like a potato-blossom in a storm.

“No,” said a third voice; “plunge him in the bog, neck and heels.”

Tim was a dead man, barring the breath.

“Stop!” said a fourth; but Tim heard no more, for Tim was dead entirely. In about an hour, however, the life came back into him, and he crept home to Norah.

When the next night arrived the hopes of the crock of gold got the better of his fears, and taking care to arm himself with a bottle of potheen, away he went to the field. Jumping into the pit, he took a little sup from the bottle to keep his heart up—he then took a big one—and then, with a desperate wrench, he wrenched up the stone. All at once, up rushed a blast of wind, wild and fierce, and down fell Tim—down, down, and down he went—until he thumped upon what seemed to be, for all the world, like a floor of sharp pins, which made him bellow out in earnest. Then he heard a whisk and a hurra, and instantly voices beyond number cried out—

“Welcome, Tim Jarvis, dear !
Welcome, down here !”

Though Tim's teeth chattered like magpies with the fright, he continued to make answer, “I'm he-he-har-ti-ly ob-ob-liged to-to you all, gen-gen-tlemen, fo-for your civility to-to a poor stranger like myself.” But though he had heard all the voices about him, he could see nothing, the place was so dark and so lonesome in itself for want of the light. Then something pulled Tim by the hair of his head, and dragged him, he did not know how far, but he knew he was going faster than the wind, for he heard it behind him, trying to keep up with him, and it could not. On, on, on he went, till all at once, and suddenly, he was stopped, and somebody came up to him, and said, “Well, Tim Jarvis, and how do you like your ride?”

“Mighty well! I thank your honour,” said Tim; “and 'twas a good beast I rode, surely!”

There was a great laugh at Tim's answer; and then there was a whispering, and a great cugger-mugger, and coshering; and at last a pretty little bit of a voice said, “Shut your eyes, and you'll see, Tim.”

“By my word, then,” said Tim, “that is the queer way of seeing; but I'm not the man to gainsay you, so I'll do as you bid me, anyhow.” Presently he felt a small warm hand rubbed over his eyes with an ointment, and in the next minute he saw himself in the

middle of thousands of little men and women, not half so high as his brogue, that were pelting one another with golden guineas and lily-white thirteens (an English shilling was thirteen-pence Irish currency), as if they were so much dirt. The finest dressed and the biggest of them all went up to Tim, and says he, "Tim Jarvis, because you are a decent, honest, quiet, civil, well-spoken man," says he, "and know how to behave yourself in strange company, we've altered our minds about you, and we'll find a neighbour of yours that will do just as well to give to the old serpent."

"Oh, then, long life to you, sir!" said Tim, "and there's no doubt of that."

"But what will you say, Tim," inquired the little fellow, "if we fill your pockets with these yellow-boys? What will you say, Tim, and what will you do with them?"

"Your honour's honour, and your honour's glory," answered Tim, "I'll not be able to say my prayers for one month with thanking you—and indeed I've enough to do with them. I'd make a grand lady, you see, at once of Norah—she has been a good wife to me. We'll have a nice bit of pork for dinner; and, maybe, I'd have a glass, or maybe two glasses; or sometimes, if 'twas with a friend, or acquaintance, or gossip, you know, three glasses every day; and I'd

build a new cabin ; and I'd have a fresh egg every morning, myself, for my breakfast ; and I'd snap my fingers at the squire, and beat his hounds, if they'd come coursing through my fields ; and I'd have a new plough ; and Norah, your honour, should have a new cloak, and the boys should have shoes and stockings as well as Biddy Leary's brats—that's my sister that was ; and Nelly should marry Bill Long of Affadown ; and, your honour, I'd have some corduroy for myself to make breeches, and a cow, and a beautiful coat with shining buttons, and a horse to ride, or maybe two. I'd have everything," said Tim, "in life, good or bad, that is to be got for love or money—hurra-whoop !—and that's what I'd do."

"Take care, Tim," said the little fellow ; "your money would not go faster than it came, with your hurra-whoop." But Tim heeded not this speech : heaps of gold were around him, and he filled and filled away as hard as he could, his coat and his waistcoat and his breeches pockets ; and he thought himself very clever, moreover, because he stuffed some of the guineas into his brogues. When the little people perceived this they cried out, "Go home, Tim Jarvis, go home, and think yourself a lucky man." "I hope, gentlemen," said he, "we won't part for good and all ; but maybe ye'll ask me to see you again, and to give you a fair and square

account of what I've done with your money." To this there was no answer, only another shout, "Go home, Tim Jarvis—go home; fair play is a jewel; but shut your eyes, or ye'll never see the light of day again."

Tim shut his eyes, knowing now that was the way to see clearly; and away he was whisked as before—away, away he went, till he stopped all of a sudden. He rubbed his eyes with his two thumbs—and where was he? Where but in the very pit in the field that was Jerry Driscoll's, and his wife Norah above with a big stick ready to beat her "dreaming blackguard." Tim roared out to the woman to leave the life in him, and put his hands in his pockets to show her the gold; but he pulled out nothing only a handful of small stones mixed with yellow furze blossoms. The bush was under him, and the great flag-stone that he had wrenched up, as he thought, was lying, as if it was never stirred, by his side: the whisky-bottle was drained to the last drop; and the pit was just as his spade had made it.

Tim Jarvis, vexed, disappointed, and almost heart-broken, followed his wife home: and, strange to say, from that night he left off drinking, and dreaming, and delving in bog-holes, and rooting in old caves. He took again to his hard-working habits, and was soon able to buy back his little cabin and former

potato-garden, and to get all the enjoyment he anticipated from the fairy gold.

Give Tim one or, at most, two glasses of whisky punch (and neither friend, acquaintance, nor gossip can make him take more), and he will relate the story to you much better than you have it here. Indeed, it is worth going to Balledehob to hear him tell it. He always pledges himself to the truth of every word with his forefingers crossed; and when he comes to speak of the loss of his guineas, he never fails to console himself by adding, "If they staid with me I wouldn't have luck with them, sir; and Father O'Shea told me 'twas as well for me they were changed; for if they hadn't, they'd have burned holes in my pocket, and got out that way."

I shall never forget his solemn countenance, and the deep tones of his warning voice, when he concluded his tale by telling me that the next day after his ride with the fairies Mick Dowling was missing, and he believed him to be given to the serpent in his place, as he had never been heard of since. "The blessing of the saints be between all good men and harm," was the concluding sentence of Tim Jarvis's narrative, as he flung the remaining drops from his glass upon the green sward.

SCATH-A-LEGAUNE.

“**W**ELL, for sure and certain, there must be something in it,” said Johnny Curtin, as he awoke and stretched himself one fine morning; “for certain there must be something in it, or he’d never have come the third time. Troth and faith, as I can’t do it myself without help, I’ll just speak to the master about it, for half a loaf is better than no bread any day in the year.”

Johnny Curtin was a poor scholar; he had been stopping for the last week at the house of Dick Cassidy, a snug farmer, who lived not far from the fine old abbey of Holy Cross, in the county of Tipperary. Mr. Cassidy was a hearty man, and loved a story in his soul: and Johnny Curtin had as good a budget of old songs, and stories of every kind and sort, as any poor scholar that ever carried an ink-bottle dangling at his breast, or a well-thumbed book and a slate under his arm. He was, moreover, as good a man in a hay-field, for a boy of his years, as

need to be, so that no one was a more welcome guest to Dick Cassidy in harvest time than Johnny Curtin.

The third night after Johnny had taken up his quarters at Cassidy's farmhouse, after sitting up very late, and telling his most wonderful stories to Dick and the children, Johnny went to sleep on a shake-down (of straw) in a corner, and there he dreamed a dream. For he thought that an old man, with fine long beard, and dressed from head to foot in the real old ancient Irish fashion, came and stood beside him, and called him by his name.

"Johnny Curtin, my child," said the old man, "do you know where you are?"

"I do, sir," said Johnny, though great was his surprise. "I do, sir," said he; "I am at Dick Cassidy's."

"John, do you know," says he, "that this land belonged, in the good old times, to your own people?"

"Oh, I'm sure," says Johnny, "it's little myself knows about my own people, beyond my father and my mother, who, when one would catch the fish, the other would sell it; but this I know, if 'tis as your honour says, and not doubting your word in the least, that I wish my own people had kept their land, that I might have got the *larning* without begging for it from door to door through the country."

"John," said the old man, "there's a treasure not

far from this that belonged to the family, and if you get it, it will make you, and fifty like you, as rich as kings. Now, mind my words, John Curtin, for I have come to put you in the right way. You know the height above the abbey—the blessed spot where the piece of the holy cross fell from its concealment at the sweet sound of the abbey bells, and where the good woman met her son, after his having travelled to Jerusalem for it? You know the old bush that is standing there—*Scath-a-Legaune*—in the bleak situation, close to the road, upon the little bank of earth and stones? Dig just six feet from it, in a line with the tower of the old abbey: the work must be done in the dead hour of the night, and not a word must be spoken to living man.”

When Johnny woke next morning he recollected every part of his dream well, but he gave no great heed to it. The next night he dreamed that the same old man came to him again, and spoke the very same words; and in the course of the day following, he could not help going up to *Scath-a-Legaune*, to take a look at the old bush and the little bank of stones and earth, but still he thought it all nonsense going digging there. At last, when the old man came to him in his sleep a third time, and seemed rather angry with him, he resolved to broach the matter to Dick aiter breakfast, and see if he would

join him in the search. Now Dick Cassidy, like many wiser men, was a firm believer in dreams ; and Dick was also a prudent man, and willing to better himself and his family in any honest way, so he gave at once into Johnny's proposal, that they should both go the next night and dig under the bush. When Cassidy mentioned this scheme to Peggy, his wife, she being a religious woman was much against it, and wanted Dick not to go, and tried to persuade him to take neither hand, nor act, nor part in it ; but Dick was too sensible a man, and too fond of his own way, to be gainsaid by any foolish woman : so it was settled that at twelve o'clock he and Johnny Curtin should take spade, pickaxe, and crowbar with them, and set out for the bush, having agreed to divide fairly between them whatever they should get.

After a good supper, and a stiff jug of punch to keep their hearts up, Mr. Cassidy and Johnny Curtin, regardless of the admonitions of Peggy, set out. They had to pass close under the walls of the old abbey, and the wind, which was rather high, kept flapping the branches of the ash and ivy backwards and forwards, and now and then some of the old stones would tumble down, and the boughs would move and creak with a sound just like the voice of some Christian that was in pain.

Dick and Johnny, with all their courage, were not

much assured at hearing this ; but they did not remain very long to listen, and crossing the bridge with all convenient speed, directed their steps towards Scath-a-Legaune. When they got to the old bush, Dick, without a moment's delay, threw off his coat, stepped the six feet of ground from the little bank towards the tower of the abbey, and began to turn up the sod, and then to dig hard and fast. Johnny all the time stood by, praying to himself, and making pious signs on his forehead and breast. When Dick had dug for better than an hour, he found his spade strike against something hard. He cleared out the loose earth from the hole he had made, and then found that he had come to a great broad flag-stone which was lying quite flat : he saw plainly that he and Johnny could no more lift it than they could fling the rock of Cashel back again into the Devil's Bit ; so he got up out of the hole and made motions to Johnny Curtin, minding well not to speak a word ; and they threw in part of the clay to cover up the flag, and went home to bed planning to get more help against the next night, and fully convinced of success.

The next day Cassidy pitched on three of his best and stoutest men, and in the evening early took them down to the sign of the Saint (Patrick), kept by one Mullowney in the village, and proposed the job to

them, after giving each a rummer of Roscrea (whisky). They hesitated at the first, saying it was not lucky, and they never heard of good that came out of money that was got at through the means of dreams, and so on, until Dick ordered a second rummer for every man ; then he made Johnny tell them his dream over again from beginning to end, and he asked them if they could see any reason upon earth to doubt what Johnny Curtin told them, or that the old man came to him through his sleep, and he able to mention every pin's worth of his dress. Dick argued with them in this manner, saying a thousand things more of the same kind, until they made an end of their drink, and then he made an offer of giving them a fair share of whatever money was under the flag-stone.

The men at last were over-persuaded ; and between eleven and twelve they set out, provided with spades, shovels, and good crowbars. When they came to the rise of the height, Johnny stopped, and again told them that all their work was sure to fail if any one spoke a word ; and he said that silence must be kept, let what would happen, otherwise there was no chance of making out the treasure that beyond all doubt was lying there buried down in the ground.

They cleared away the earth from off the stone

and got the crowbars under it. The first prise they gave they thought they heard a rumbling noise below: they stopped and listened for a minute or more, but all was silent as the grave. Again they heaved, and there was a noise like as if a door was clapped to violently. The men hesitated, but Dick Cassidy and Johnny, by signs, encouraged them to go on. They then made a great effort and raised the stone a little, while Johnny and Tom Doyle wedged in the handles of their spades, and with their united strength the flag was canted fairly over.

Beneath there was a long flight of steps, so they lit a piece of candle which they had brought with them, and down the steps they went, one after the other. The steps, when they got to the end of them, led into a long passage, that went some way, and there they would have been stopped by a strong door, only it was half open. They went in boldly, and saw another door to the left, which was shut. There was a little grate in this door, and Dick Cassidy held up the light while Ned Flaherty looked in.

"Hurra!" cried Ned, the minute he put his eye to the bars, and straightways making a blow at the door with the crowbar in his hand; "Hurra, boys!" says he; "by Noonan's ghost, we are all made men!"

The words had hardly passed his lips when there was a tremendous crashing noise, just as if the whole place was falling in, and then came a screeching wind from the inner room that whisked out the light, and threw them all on the ground flat on their faces. When they recovered themselves they hardly remembered where they were, or what had happened, and they had lost all the geography of the place. They groped and tumbled about for a long time, and at last they got, with falling and roaring, to the door where they had come in at, and made their way up the steps into the field. On looking towards the abbey, there was a bright flame on the top of its tower, and Bill Dunn would have sworn he saw a figure of something, he could not rightly make out what, in the middle of it, dancing up and down.

Frightened enough they were at the sight, for they plainly perceived something was going on which they could not understand, so they made the best of their way home; but it was little any of them could sleep, as may well be supposed, after what had happened.

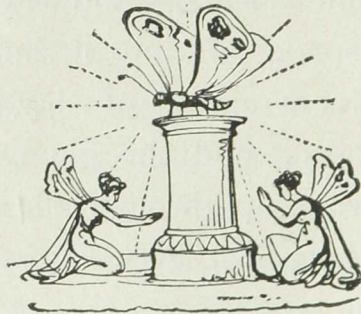
Next morning they all held a council about what was further to be done—Mr. Cassidy and Johnny Curtin, Tom Doyle, and Bill Dunn, and Ned Flaherty, whose tongue was the reason of their not

being all rich men. Some were for giving the business up entirely, but more were for trying it again ; and at last Dick Cassidy said he was resolved to go to it the third time, since he was now certain the coin was there ; for Ned Flaherty swore he saw a mint of money, besides gold and silver vessels in heaps, and other grand things that he could not tell the use of. It was settled, however, to do nothing the next night.

In the middle of the day Dick took Johnny with him, and walked over to look at the place where they had been digging ; but what was their astonishment to find the ground as smooth and as even as if there had not been a spade put into it since the days of Brian Boro ! Not a morsel of clay was to be seen, and the white daisies and the glossy yellow buttercups were growing up through the green grass as gaily as if nothing had ever happened to disturb them.

That night Johnny Curtin had another dream. The very same old man came to him, and looked dark and angry at him for not having followed his directions ; and told Johnny that he had no right to think, and that if his *larning* made him think he was better without it, he had now lost all chance of growing rich, and would be a poor scholar to the end of

his days ; for the place was now shut up for another hundred years, and it would be dangerous for him or any one else to go digging there until that time was out.





THE HIDDEN TREASURE.

TRAVELLERS go to Leinster to see Dublin and the Dargle ; to Ulster to see the Giant's Causeway, and, perhaps, to do penance at Lough Dearg ; to Munster, to see Killarney, the butter-buying city of Cork, and half a dozen other fine things ; but whoever thinks of the fourth province ? whoever thinks of going

“ Westward, where Dick Martin *ruled*
The houseless wilds of Cunnemara ? ”

The Ulster-man's ancient denunciation, “ To hell or to Connaught,” has possibly led to the supposition that this is a sort of infernal place above ground—a

kind of terrestrial Pandemonium ; in short, that Connaught is little better than hell, or hell little worse than Connaught ; but let any one only go there for a month, and as the natives say, "I'll warrant he'll soon see the differ, and learn to understand that it is mighty like the rest o' green Erin, only something poorer ;" and yet it might be thought that in this particular "worse would be needless ;" but so it is.

"My gracious me," said the landlady of the inn at Sligo, "I wonder a gentleman of your *teest* and *curoosity* would think of leaving Ireland without making a *tower* (tour) of Connaught, if it was nothing more than spending a day at Hazlewood, and up the lake, and on to the *ould* abbey at Friarstown and the castle at Dromahair."

Polly M'Bride, my kind hostess, might not in this remonstrance have been altogether disinterested, but her advice prevailed, and the dawn of the following morning found me in a boat on the unruffled surface of Lough Gill. Arrived at the head of that splendid sheet of water, covered with rich and wooded islands, with their ruined buildings, and bounded by towering mountains, noble plantations, grassy slopes, and precipitous rocks, which give beauty, and, in some places, sublimity to its shores, I proceeded at once up the wide river which forms its principal tributary. The

"ould abbey" is chiefly remarkable for having been built at a period nearer to the Reformation than any other ecclesiastical edifice of the same class. Full within view of it, and at the distance of half a mile, stands the shattered remnant of Breffni's princely hall. I strode forward with the enthusiasm of an antiquary, and the high beating heart of a patriotic Irishman. I felt myself on classic ground, immortalized by the lays of Swift and of Moore. I pushed my way into the hallowed precincts of the grand and venerable edifice. I entered its chambers, and, oh my countrymen, I found them converted into the domicile of pigs, cows, and poultry! But the exterior of "O'Rourke's old hall," grey, frowning, and ivy-covered, is well enough; it stands on a beetling precipice, round which a noble river wheels its course. The opposite bank is a very steep ascent, thickly wooded, and rising to a height of at least seventy feet, and for a quarter of a mile this beautiful copse follows the course of the river.

The first individual I encountered was an old cow-herd! nor was I unfortunate in my cicerone, for he assured me there were plenty of old stories about strange things that used to be in the place; "but," continued he, "for my own share, I never met anything worse nor myself. If it bees ould stories that your honour's after, the story about Linn-na-Pay-

shtha and Poul-maw-Gullyawn is the only thing about this place that's worth one jack-straw. Does your honour see that great big black hole in the river yonder below?" He pointed my attention to a part of the river about fifty yards from the old hall, where a long island occupied the centre of the wide current, the water at one side running shallow, and at the other assuming every appearance of unfathomable depth. The spacious pool, dark and still, wore a deathlike quietude of surface. It looked as if the speckled trout would shun its murky precincts—as if even the daring pike would shrink from so gloomy a dwelling-place. "That's Linn-na-Payshtha, sir," resumed my guide, "and Poul-maw-Gullyawn is just the very *moral* of it, only that it's round, and not in a river, but standing out in the middle of a green field, about a short quarter of a mile from this. Well, 'tis as good as fourscore years—I often *hard* my father, God be merciful to him! tell the story—since Manus O'Rourke, a great buckeen, a cock-fighting, drinking blackguard that was long ago, went to sleep one night and had a dream about Linn-na-Payshtha. This Manus, the dirty spalpeen, there was no ho with him; he thought to ride rough-shod over his betters through the whole country, though he was not one of the real stock of the O'Rourkes. Well, this fellow had a

dream, that if he dived in Linn-na-Payshtha at twelve o'clock of a Hollow-eve night, he'd find more gold than would make a man of him and his wife while grass grew or water ran. The next night he had the same dream, and sure enough if he had it the second night, it came to him the third in the same form. Manus, well becomes him, never told mankind or womankind, but swore to himself, by all the books that ever were shut or open, that anyhow he would go to the bottom of the big hole. What did he care for the Payshtha-more that was lying there to keep guard on the gold and silver of the old ancient family that was buried in the wars, packed up in the brewing-pan? Sure he was as good an O'Rourke as the best of them, taking care to forget that his grandmother's father was a cow-boy to the Earl O'Donnel. At last Hollow-eve came, and sly and silent Master Manus creeps to bed early, and just at midnight steals down to the river-side. When he came to the bank his mind misgave him, and he wheeled up to Frank M'Clure's—the old Frank that was then at that time—and got a bottle of whisky, and took it with him, and 'tis unknown how much of it he drank. He walked across to the island, and down he went gallantly to the bottom like a stone. Sure enough the Payshtha was there *afore* him, lying like a great big conger eel, seven yards

long, and as thick as a bull in the body, with a mane upon his neck like a horse. The Payshtá-more reared himself up, and looking at the poor man as if he'd eat him, says he, in good English,—

“‘Arrah, then, Manus,’ says he, ‘what brought you here? It would have been better for you to have blown your brains out at once with a pistol, and have made a quiet end of yourself, than to have come down here for me to deal with you.’

“‘Oh, *plase* your honour,’ says Manus, ‘I beg my life:’ and there he stood shaking like a dog in a wet sack.

“‘Well, as you have some blood of the O’Rourkes in you, I forgive you this once; but by this, and by that, if ever I see you, or any one belonging to you, coming about this place again, I’ll hang a quarter of you on every tree in the wood. Go home,’ says the Payshtá, ‘go home, Manus,’ says he; ‘and if you can’t make better use of your time, get drunk, but don’t come here bothering me. Yet, stop! since you are here, and have ventured to come, I’ll show you something that you’ll remember till you go to your grave, and ever after, while you live.’

“With that, my dear, he opens an iron door in the bed of the river, and never the drop of water ran into it; and there Manus sees a long dry cave, or underground cellar like, and the Payshtá drags

him in and shuts the door. It wasn't long before the *baste* began to get smaller, and smaller, and smaller; and at last he grew as little as a taughn of twelve years old; and there he was, a brownish little man, about four feet high."

"*'Plase* your honour,' says Manus, 'if I might make so bold, maybe you are one of the good people?'

"*'Maybe* I am, and maybe I am not; but, anyhow, all you have to understand is this, that I'm bound to look after the Thiernas (lords) of Breffni, and take care of them through every generation; and that my present business is to watch this cave, and what's in it, till the old stock is reigning over this country once more.'

"*'Maybe* you are a sort of a banshee?'

"*'I* am not, you fool,' said the little man. 'The banshee is a woman. My business is to live in the form you first saw me in, guarding this spot. And now hold your tongue, and look about you.'

"Manus rubbed his eyes, and looked right and left, before and behind; and there was the vessels of gold and the vessels of silver, the dishes, and the plates, and the cups, and the punchbowls, and the tankards; there was the golden methen, too, that every Thierna at his wedding used to drink out of to the kerne in real usquebaugh. There

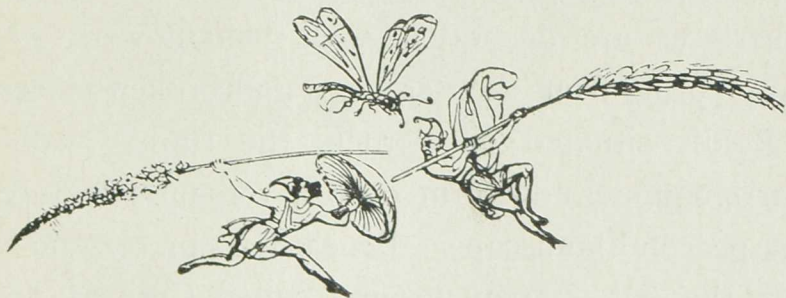
was all the money that ever was saved in the family since they got a grant of this manor, in the days of ~~the~~ Firbolgs, down to the time of their *outer* ruination. He then brought Manus on with him to where there was arms for three hundred men; and the sword set with diamonds and the golden helmet of the O'Rourke; and he showed him the staff made out of an elephant's tooth, and set with rubies and gold, that the Thierna used to hold while he sat in his great hall, giving justice and the laws of the Brehons to all his clan. The first room in the cave, ye see, had the money and the plate, the second room had the arms, and the third had the books, papers, parchments, title-deeds, wills, and everything else of the sort belonging to the family.

“‘And now, Manus,’ says the little man, ‘ye seen the whole o’ this, and go your ways; but never come to this place any more or allow any one else. I must keep watch and ward till the Sassanach is *druv* out of Ireland, and the Thiernas o’ Breffni in their glory again.’ The little man then stopped for a while and looked up in Manus’s face, and says to him in a great passion, ‘Arrah! bad luck to ye, Manus, why don’t ye go about your business?’

“‘How can I?—sure you must show me the way out,’ says Manus, making answer. The little man then pointed forward with his finger.

“‘Can’t we go out the way we came?’ says Manus.

“‘No, you must go out at the other end—that’s the rule o’ this place. Ye came in at Linn-na-Payshtha, and ye must go out at Poul-maw-Gullyawn; ye came down like a stone to the bottom of one hole, and ye must spring up like a cork to the top of the other.’ With that the little man gave him one *hoise*, and all that Manus remembers was the roar of the water in his ears; and sure enough he was found the next morning, high and dry, fast asleep, with the empty bottle beside him, but far enough from the place he thought he landed, for it was just below yonder on the island that his wife found him. My father, God be merciful to him! heard Manus swear to every word of the story.”

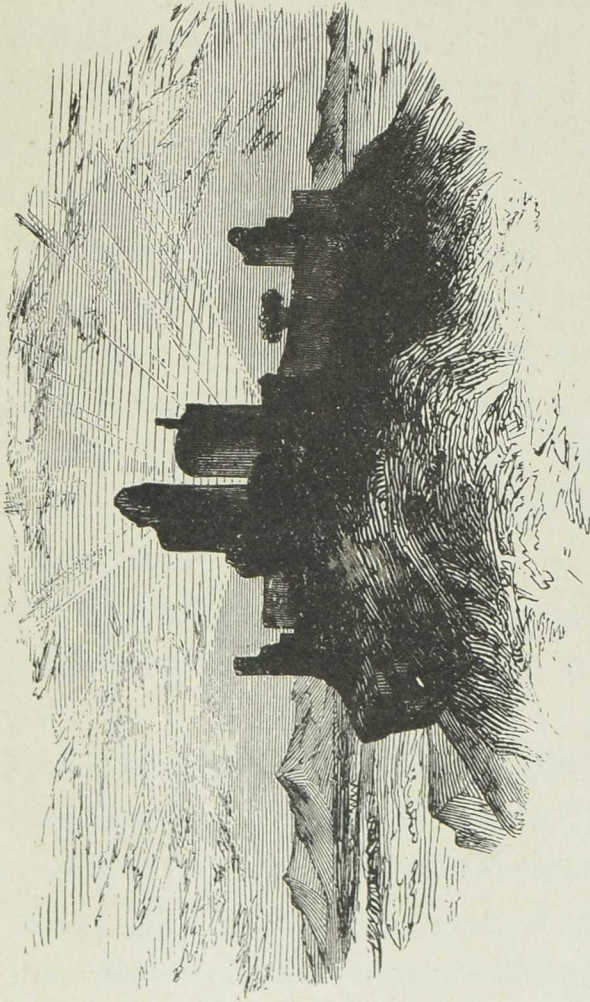


THE ROCK OF THE CANDLE.



FEW miles west of Limerick stands the once formidable castle of Carrigogunnel. Its riven tower and broken archway remain in mournful evidence of the sieges sustained by that city. Time, however, the great soother of all things, has destroyed the painful effect which the view of recent violence produces on the mind. The ivy creeps around the riven tower, concealing its injuries, and upholding it by a tough swathing of stalks ; the archway is again united by the long-armed brier which grows across the rent ; and the shattered buttresses are decorated with wild flowers, which gaily spring from their crevices and broken places.

Boldly situated on a rock, the ruined walls of Carrigogunnel now form only a romantic feature in the peaceful landscape. Beneath them, on one side, lies the flat marshy ground called Corkass Land, which borders the noble river Shannon ; on the other side is seen the neat parish church of Kil-



THE ROCK OF THE CANDLE.

keedy, with its glebe-house and surrounding improvements; and at a short distance appear the irregular mud cabins of the little village of Ballybrown, with the venerable trees of Tervoo.

On the rock of Carrigogunnel, before the castle was built, or Brian Boro born to build it, dwelt a hag named Grana, who made desolate the surrounding country. She was gigantic in size, and frightful in appearance. Her eyebrows grew into each other with a grim curve, and beneath their matted bristles, deeply sunk in her head, two small grey eyes darted forth baneful looks of evil. From her deeply wrinkled forehead issued forth a hooked beak, dividing two shrivelled cheeks. Her skinny lips curled with a cruel and malignant expression, and her prominent chin was studded with bunches of grizzly hair.

Death was her sport. Like the angler with his rod, the hag Grana would toil and watch, nor think it labour, so that the death of a victim rewarded her vigils. Every evening did she light an enchanted candle upon the rock, and whoever looked upon it died before the next morning's sun arose. Numberless were the victims over which Grana rejoiced; one after the other had seen the light, and their death was the consequence. Hence came the country around to be desolate, and Carrigo-

gunnel, the Rock of the Candle, by its dreaded name.

These were fearful times to live in. But the Finnii of Erin were the avengers of the oppressed. Their fame had gone forth to distant shores, and their deeds were sung by a hundred bards. To them the name of danger was as an invitation to a rich banquet. The web of enchantment stopped their course as little as the swords of an enemy. Many a mother of a son—many a wife of a husband—many a sister of a brother—had the valour of the Finnian heroes bereft. Dismembered limbs quivered, and heads bounded on the ground, before their progress in battle. They rushed forward with the strength of the furious wind, tearing up the trees of the forest by their roots. Loud was their war-cry as the thunder, raging was their impetuosity above that of the common men, and fierce was their anger as the stormy waves of the ocean!

It was the mighty Finn himself who lifted up his voice, and commanded the fatal candle of the hag Grana to be extinguished. "Thine, Regan, be the task," he said, and to him he gave a cap thrice-charmed by the magician Luno of Lochlin.

With the star of the same evening the candle of death burned on the rock, and Regan stood beneath it. Had he beheld the slightest glimmer of its

blaze, he, too, would have perished, and the hag Grana, with the morning's dawn, rejoiced over his corse. When Regan looked toward the light, the charmed cap fell over his eyes and prevented his seeing. The rock was steep, but he climbed up its craggy side with such caution and dexterity that, before the hag was aware, the warrior, with averted head, had seized the candle, and flung it with prodigious force into the river Shannon, the hissing waters of which quenched its light for ever!

Then flew the charmed cap from the eyes of Regan, and he beheld the enraged hag, with outstretched arms, prepared to seize and whirl him after her candle. Regan instantly bounded westward from the rock just two miles, with a wild and wondrous spring. Grana looked for a moment at the leap, and then tearing up a huge fragment of the rock, flung it after Regan with such tremendous force that her crooked hands trembled and her broad chest heaved with heavy puffs, like a smith's labouring bellows, from the exertion.

The ponderous stone fell harmless to the ground, for the leap of Regan far exceeded the strength of the furious hag. In triumph he returned to Finn ;

“ The hero, valiant, renowned, and learned ;
White-tooth'd, graceful, magnanimous, and active ”

The hag Grana was never heard of more ; but the stone remains, and deeply imprinted in it is still to be seen the mark of the hag's fingers. That stone is far taller than the tallest man, and the power of forty men would fail to move it from the spot where it fell.

The grass may wither around it, the spade and plough destroy dull heaps of earth, the walls of castles fall and perish, but the fame of the Finnii of Erin endures with the rocks themselves, and *Clough-a-Regaun* is a monument fitting to preserve the memory of the deed





BARRY OF CAIRN THIERNA.

FERMOY, though now so pretty and so clean a town, was once as poor and as dirty a village as any in Ireland. It had neither great barracks, grand church, nor buzzing schools. Two-storied houses were but few: its street—for it had but one—was chiefly formed of miserable mud cabins; nor was the fine scenery around sufficient to induce the traveller to tarry in its paltry inn beyond the limits actually required.

In those days it happened that a regiment of foot

was proceeding from Dublin to Cork. One company, which left Caher in the morning, had, with "toilsome march," passed through Mitchelstown, tramped across the Kilworth mountains, and, late of an October evening, tired and hungry, reached Fermoy, the last stage but one of their quarters. No barracks were then built to receive them; and every voice was raised, calling to the gaping villagers for the name and residence of the billet-master.

"Why, then, can't you be easy now, and let a body tell you?" said one. "Sure, then, how can I answer you all at once?" said another. "Anan!" cried a third, affecting not to understand the sergeant who addressed him. "Is it Mr. Consadine you want?" replied a fourth, answering one question by asking another. "Bad luck to the whole breed of *sogers*!" muttered a fifth villager: "it's come to eat poor people that work for their bread out of house and home you are." "Whisht, Teigue, can't you now?" said his neighbour, jogging the last speaker; "there's the house, gentlemen—you see it there yonder forenent you, at the bottom of the street, with the light in the window; or stay, myself would think little of running down with you, poor creatures! for 'tis tired and weary you must be after the road." "That's an honest fellow," said several of the dust-covered soldiers; and away scampered Ned Flynn,

with all the men of war following close at his heels.

Mr. Consadine, the billet-master, was, as may be supposed, a person of some, and on such occasions as the present, of great consideration in Fermoy. He was of a portly build, and of a grave and slow movement, suited at once to his importance and his size. Three inches of fair linen were at all times visible between his waistband and waistcoat. His breeches-pockets were never buttoned; and, scorning to conceal the bull-like proportions of his chest and neck, his collar was generally open, as he wore no cravat. A flaxen bob-wig commonly sat fairly on his head and squarely on his forehead, and an *ex-officio* pen was stuck behind his ear. Such was Mr. Consadine, billet-master-general, barony sub-constable, and deputy-clerk of the sessions, who was now just getting near the end of his eighth tumbler in company with the proctor, who at that moment had begun to talk of coming to something like a fair settlement about his tithes, when Ned Flynn knocked.

"See who's at the door, Nelly," said the eldest Miss Consadine, raising her voice, and calling to the bare-footed servant-girl.

"'Tis the *sogers*, sir, is come!" cried Nelly, running back into the room without opening the door; "I

hear the *jinketing* of their swords and *bagnets* on the paving-stones."

"Never welcome them at this hour of the night," said Mr. Consadine, taking up the candle, and moving off to the room on the opposite side of the hall which served him for an office.

Mr. Consadine's own pen and that of his son Tom were now in full employment. The officers were sent to the inn; the sergeants, corporals, etc., were billeted on those who were on indifferent terms with Mr. Consadine; for, like a worthy man, he leaned as light as he could on his friends.

The soldiers had nearly all departed for their quarters, when one poor fellow, who had fallen asleep leaning on his musket against the wall, was awakened by the silence, and starting up, he went over to the table at which Mr. Consadine was seated, hoping his worship would give him a good billet.

"A good billet, my lad," said the billet-master-general, barony sub-constable and deputy-clerk of the sessions, "that you shall have, and on the biggest house in the place. Do you hear, Tom! make out a billet for this man upon Mr. Barry of Cairn Thierna."

"On Mr. Barry of Cairn Thierna!" said Tom with surprise.

"Yes; on Mr. Barry of Cairn Thierna—the great Barry!" replied his father, giving a nod, and closing

his right eye slowly, with a semi-drunken wink. "Is not he said to keep the grandest house in this part of the country?—or stay, Tom, just hand me over the paper, and I'll write the billet myself."

The billet was made out accordingly ; the sand glittered on the signature and broad flourishes of Mr. Consadine, and the weary grenadier received it with becoming gratitude and thanks. Taking up his knapsack and firelock, he left the office, and Mr. Consadine waddled back to the proctor to chuckle over the trick that he played the soldier, and to laugh at the idea of his search after Barry of Cairn Thierna's house.

Truly had he said no house could vie in capacity with Mr. Barry's ; for, like Allan-a-Dale's, its roof was

"The blue vault of heaven, with its crescent so pale."

Barry of Cairn Thierna was one of the chieftains who of old lorded it over the barony of Barrymore, and for some reason or other he had become enchanted on the mountain of Cairn Thierna, where he was known to live in great state, and was often seen by the belated peasant.

Mr. Consadine had informed the soldier that Mr. Barry lived a little way out of the town, on the Cork road ; so the poor fellow trudged for some time,

with eyes right and eyes left, looking for the great house ; but nothing could he see, only the dark mountain of Cairn Thierna before him, and an odd cabin or two on the road-side. At last he met a man, of whom he asked the way to Mr. Barry's.

"To Mr. Barry's !" said the man ; "what Barry is it you want ?"

"I can't say exactly in the dark," returned the soldier. "Mr. What's-his-name, the billet-master, has given me the direction on my billet ; but he said it was a large house, and I think he called him the great Mr. Barry."

"Why, sure, it wouldn't be the great Barry of Cairn Thierna you are asking about ?"

"Ay," said the soldier, "Cairn Thierna—that's the very place : can you tell me where it is ?"

"Cairn Thierna," repeated the man ; "Barry of Cairn Thierna—I'll show you the way and welcome ; but it's the first time in all my born days that ever I heard of a soldier being billeted on Barry of Cairn Thierna. 'Tis surely a queer thing for old Dick Consadine to be after sending you there," continued he ; "but you see that big mountain before you—that's Cairn Thierna. Any one will show you Mr. Barry's when you get to the top of it, up to the big heap of stones."

The weary soldier gave a sigh as he walked forward toward the mountain ; but he had not proceeded far when he heard the clatter of a horse coming along the road after him, and turning his head round he saw a dark figure rapidly approaching him. A tall gentleman, richly dressed, and mounted on a noble grey horse, was soon at his side, when the rider pulled up, and the soldier repeated his inquiry after Mr. Barry's of Cairn Thierna.

"I'm Barry of Cairn Thierna," said the gentleman ; "what is your business with me, friend ?"

"I've got a billet on your house, sir," replied the soldier, "from the billet-master of Fermoy."

"Have you, indeed ?" said Mr. Barry ; "well, then, it is not very far off ; follow me, and you shall be well taken care of."

He turned off the road, and led his horse up the steep side of the mountain, followed by the soldier, who was astonished at seeing the horse proceed with so little difficulty, where he was obliged to scramble up, and could hardly find or keep his footing. When they got to the top, there was a house sure enough, far beyond any house in Fermoy. It was three stories high, with fine windows, and all lighted up within as if it was full of grand company. There was a hall door too, with a flight of stone steps before it, at which Mr. Barry dismounted, and the

door was opened to him by a servant man, who took his horse round to the stable.

Mr. Barry, as he stood at the door, desired the soldier to walk in ; and instead of sending him down to the kitchen, as any other gentleman would have done, brought him into the parlour, and desired to see his billet.

“Ay,” said Mr. Barry, looking at it and smiling, “I know Dick Consadine well—he’s a merry fellow, and has got some excellent cows on the Inch field of Carrickabrick ; a sirloin of good beef is no bad thing for supper.”

Mr. Barry then called out to some of his attendants, and desired them to lay the cloth, and make all ready, which was no sooner done than a smoking sirloin of beef was placed before them.

“Sit down now, my honest fellow,” said Mr. Barry ; “you must be hungry after your long day’s march.”

The soldier, with a profusion of thanks for such hospitality, and acknowledgments for such condescension, sat down, and made, as might be expected, an excellent supper ; Mr. Barry never letting his jaws rest for want of helping until he was fairly done. Then the boiling water was brought in, and such a jug of whisky-punch was made, there was no faulting it.

They sat together a long time, talking over the punch, and the fire was so bright, and Mr. Barry himself was so good a gentleman, and had such fine converse about everything in the world, far or near, that the soldier never felt the night going over him. At last Mr. Barry stood up, saying, it was a rule with him that every one in his house should be in bed by twelve o'clock ; "and," said he, pointing to a bundle which lay in one corner of the room, "take that to bed with you, it's the hide of the cow which I had killed for your supper ; give it to the billet-master when you go back to Fermoy in the morning, and tell him that Barry of Cairn Thierna sent it to him. He will soon understand what it means, I promise you ; so good-night, my brave fellow ; I wish you a comfortable sleep, and every good fortune ; but I must be off and away out of this long before you are stirring."

The soldier gratefully returned his host's good-night and good wishes, and went off to the room which was shown him, without claiming, as every one knows he had a right to do, the second-best bed in the house.

Next morning the sun awoke him. He was lying on the broad of his back, and the skylark was singing over him in the beautiful blue sky, and

the bee was humming close to his ear among the heath. He rubbed his eyes; nothing did he see but the clear sky, with two or three light morning clouds floating away. Mr. Barry's fine house and soft feather-bed had melted into air, and he found himself stretched on the side of Cairn Thierna buried in the heath, with the cow-hide which had been given him rolled up under his head for a pillow.

"Well," said he, "this beats cock-fighting! Didn't I spend the pleasantest night I ever spent in my life with Mr. Barry last night? And what in the world has become of the house, and the hall door with the steps, and the very bed that was under me?"

He stood up. Not a vestige of a house or anything like one, but the rude heap of stones on the top of the mountain, could he see, and ever so far off lay the Blackwater, glittering with the morning sun, and the little quiet village of Fermoy on its banks, from whose chimneys white wreaths of smoke were beginning to rise upwards into the sky.

Throwing the cow-hide over his shoulder, he descended, not without some difficulty, the steep side of the mountain up which Mr. Barry had led his horse the preceding night with so much ease, and he proceeded along the road, pondering on what had befallen him.

When he reached Fermoy, he went straight to Mr. Consadine's, and asked to see him.

"Well, my gay fellow," said the official Mr. Consadine, recognizing at a glance the soldier, "what sort of entertainment did you meet with from Barry of Cairn Thierna?"

"The best treatment, sir," replied the soldier; "and well did he speak of you, and he desired me to give you this cow-hide as a token to remember him by."

"Many thanks to Mr. Barry for his generosity," said the billet-master, making a bow in mock solemnity; "many thanks, indeed, and a right good skin it is, wherever he got it."

Mr. Consadine had scarcely finished the sentence when he saw his cow-boy running up the street, shouting and crying aloud that the best cow in the Inch field was lost and gone, and nobody knew what had become of her, or could give the least tidings of her.

The soldier had flung the skin **on the** ground, and the cow-boy, looking at it exclaimed,—

"That **is ner** hide, wherever she is! I'd take my Bible oath to the two small white spots, with the glossy black about them, and there's the very place where she rubbed the hair off her shoulder last Martinmas." Then, clapping his hands together, he

literally sung, to "the tune the old cow died of,"

And oh my black cow—oh my cow,
Oh my black cow, a thousand times dear to me ;
And oh my black cow—alas, alas !
My darling black cow, why did you leave me ?

This lamentation was stopped short by Mr. Consadine.

"There is no manner of doubt of it," said he. "It was Barry who killed my best cow, and all he has left me is the hide of the poor beast to comfort myself with ; but it will be a warning to Dick Consadine for the rest of his life never again to play off his tricks upon travellers."





THE GIANT'S STAIRS.

IN the road between Passage and Cork there is an old mansion called Ronayne's Court. It may be easily known from the stack of chimneys and the gable ends, which are to be seen, look at it which way you will. Here it was that Maurice Ronayne and his wife Margaret Gould kept house, as may be learned to this day from the great old chimneypiece, on which is carved their arms. They were a mighty worthy couple, and had but one son, who was called Philip, after no less a person than the King of Spain.

Immediately on his smelling the cold air of this world the child sneezed, which was naturally taken to be a good sign of his having a clear head ; and the subsequent rapidity of his learning was truly

amazing, for on the very first day a primer was put into his hands he tore out the A, B, C page and destroyed it, as a thing quite beneath his notice. No wonder then that both father and mother were proud of their heir, who gave such indisputable proofs of genius, or, as they called it in that part of the world, "*genus*."

One morning, however, Master Phil, who was then just seven years old, was missing, and no one could tell what had become of him: servants were sent in all directions to seek him, on horseback and on foot, but they returned without any tidings of the boy, whose disappearance altogether was most unaccountable. A large reward was offered, but it produced them no intelligence, and years rolled away without Mr. and Mrs. Ronayne having obtained any satisfactory account of the fate of their lost child.

There lived at this time, near Carrigaline, one Robert Kelly, a blacksmith by trade. He was what is termed a handy man, and his abilities were held in much estimation by the lads and the lasses of the neighbourhood; for, independent of shoeing horses, which he did to great perfection, and making plough-irons, he interpreted dreams for the young women, sung Arthur O'Bradley at their weddings, and was so good-natured a fellow at a christening, that he was gossip to half the country round.

Now it happened that Robin had a dream himself, and young Philip Ronayne appeared to him in it, at the dead hour of the night. Robin thought he saw the boy mounted upon a beautiful white horse, and that he told him how he was made a page to the giant Mahon Mac Mahon, who had carried him off, and who held his court in the hard heart of the rock.

"The seven years—my time of service—are clean out, Robin," said he, "and if you release me this night I will be the making of you for ever after."

"And how will I know," said Robin—cunning enough, even in his sleep—"but this is all a dream?"

"Take that," said the boy, "for a token"—and at the word the white horse struck out with one of his hind legs, and gave poor Robin such a kick in the forehead that, thinking he was a dead man, he roared as loud as he could after his brains, and woke up calling a thousand murders. He found himself in bed, but he had the mark of the blow, the regular print of a horse-shoe upon his forehead as red as blood; and Robin Kelly, who never before found himself puzzled at the dream of any other person, did not know what to think of his own.

Robin was well acquainted with the Giant's Stairs --as, indeed, who is not that knows the harbour? They consist of great masses of rock, which, piled one above another, rise like a flight of steps from

very deep water, against the bold cliff of Carrigmahon. Nor are they badly suited for stairs to those who have legs of sufficient length to stride over a moderate-sized house, or to enable them to clear the space of a mile in a hop, step, and jump. Both these feats the giant Mac Mahon was said to have performed in the days of Finnian glory; and the common tradition of the country placed his dwelling within the cliff up whose side the stairs led.

Such was the impression which the dream made on Robin, that he determined to put its truth to the test. It occurred to him, however, before setting out on this adventure, that a plough-iron may be no bad companion, as, from experience, he knew it was an excellent knockdown argument, having on more occasions than one settled a little disagreement very quietly; so, putting one on his shoulder, off he marched, in the cool of the evening, through Glaun a Thowk (the Hawk's Glen) to Monkstown. Here an old gossip of his (Tom Clancey by name) lived, who, on hearing Robin's dream, promised him the use of his skiff, and moreover offered to assist in rowing it to the Giant's Stairs.

After a supper which was of the best, they embarked. It was a beautiful still night, and the little boat glided swiftly along. The regular dip of the oars, the distant song of the sailor, and some-

times the voice of a belated traveller at the ferry of Carrigaloe, alone broke the quietness of the land and sea and sky. The tide was in their favour, and in a few minutes Robin and his gossip rested on their oars under the shadow of the Giant's Stairs. Robin looked anxiously for the entrance to the Giant's palace, which, it was said, may be found by any one seeking it at midnight; but no such entrance could he see. His impatience had hurried him there before that time, and after waiting a considerable space in a state of suspense not to be described, Robin, with pure vexation, could not help exclaiming to his companion, "'Tis a pair of fools we are, Tom Clancey, for coming here at all on the strength of a dream."

"And whose doing is it," said Tom, "but your own?"

At the moment he spoke they perceived a faint glimmering of light to proceed from the cliff, which gradually increased until a porch big enough for a king's palace unfolded itself almost on a level with the water. They pulled the skiff directly towards the opening, and Robin Kelly, seizing his plough iron, boldly entered with a strong hand and a stout heart. Wild and strange was that entrance; the whole of which appeared formed of grim and grotesque faces, blending so strangely each with the other that it was impossible to define any: the chin

of one formed the nose of another ; what appeared to be a fixed and stern eye, if dwelt upon, changed to a gaping mouth ; and the lines of the lofty forehead grew into a majestic and flowing beard. The more Robin allowed himself to contemplate the forms around him, the more terrific they became ; and the stony expression of this crowd of faces assumed a savage ferocity as his imagination converted feature after feature into a different shape and character. Losing the twilight in which these indefinite forms were visible, he advanced through a dark and devious passage, whilst a deep and rumbling noise sounded as if the rock was about to close upon him and swallow him up alive for ever. Now, indeed, poor Robin felt afraid.

“ Robin, Robin,” said he, “ if you were a fool for coming here, what in the name of fortune are you now ? ” But, as before, he had scarcely spoken, when he saw a small light twinkling through the darkness of the distance, like a star in the midnight sky. To retreat was out of the question : for so many turnings and windings were in the passage, that he considered he had but little chance of making his way back. He therefore proceeded towards the bit of light, and came at last into a spacious chamber, from the roof of which hung the solitary lamp that had guided him. Emerging from such profound gloom, the single

lamp afforded Robin abundant light to discover several gigantic figures seated round a massive stone table, as if in serious deliberation, but no word disturbed the breathless silence which prevailed. At the head of this table sat Mahon Mac Mahon himself, whose majestic beard had taken root, and in the course of ages grown into the stone slab. He was the first who perceived Robin ; and instantly starting up, drew his long beard from out the huge piece of rock in such haste and with so sudden a jerk that it was shattered into a thousand pieces.

"What seek you?" he demanded in a voice of thunder.

"I come," answered Robin, with as much boldness as he could put on, for his heart was almost fainting within him, "I come," said he, "to claim Philip Ronayne, whose time of service is out this night."

"And who sent you here?" said the giant.

"'Twas of my own accord I came," said Robin.

"Then you must single him out from among my pages," said the giant ; "and if you fix on the wrong one, your life is the forfeit. Follow me." He led Robin into a hall of vast extent, and filled with lights, along either side of which were rows of beautiful children, all apparently seven years old, and none beyond that age, dressed in green, and every one exactly dressed alike.

"Here," said Mahon, "you are free to take Philip Romaine, if you will ; but remember, I give but one choice."

Robin was sadly perplexed ; for there were hundreds upon hundreds of children ; and he had no very clear recollection of the boy he sought. But he walked along the hall, by the side of Mahon, as if nothing was the matter, although his great iron dress clanked fearfully at every step, sounding louder than Robin's own sledge battering on his anvil.

They had nearly reached the end without speaking, when Robin, seeing that the only means he had was to make friends with the giant, determined to try what effect a few soft words might have.

"'Tis a fine wholesome appearance the poor children carry," remarked Robin, "although they have been here so long shut out from the fresh air and the blessed light of heaven. 'Tis tenderly your honour must have reared them !"

"Ay," said the giant, "that is true for you ; so give me your hand ; for you are, I believe, a very honest fellow for a blacksmith."

Robin at the first look did not much like the huge size of the hand, and therefore presented his plough-iron, which the giant seizing, twisted in his grasp round and round again as if it had been a potato stalk ; on seeing this all the children set up a shout

of laughter. In the midst of their mirth Robin thought he heard his name called; and all ear and eye, he put his hand on the boy who he fancied had spoken, crying out at the same time, "Let me live or die for it, but this is young Phil Ronayne."

"It is Philip Ronayne—happy Philip Ronayne," said his young companions; and in an instant the hall became dark. Crashing noises were heard, and all was in strange confusion; but Robin held fast his prize, and found himself lying in the grey dawn of the morning at the head of the Giant's Stairs with the boy clasped in his arms.

Robin had plenty of gossips to spread the story of his wonderful adventure: Passage, Monkstown, Carrigaline—the whole barony of Kerricurrihy rung with it.

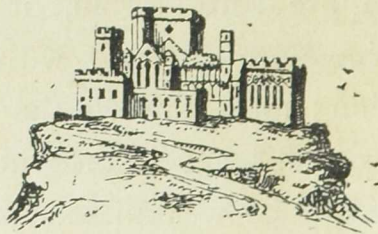
"Are you quite sure, Robin, it is young Phil Ronayne you have brought back with you?" was the regular question; for although the boy had been seven years away, his appearance now was just the same as on the day he was missed. He had neither grown taller nor older in look, and he spoke of things which had happened before he was carried off as one awakened from sleep, or as if they had occurred yesterday.

"Am I sure? Well, that's a queer question," was Robin's reply; "seeing the boy has the blue eye of

the mother, with the foxy hair of the father ; to say nothing of the *purty* wart on the right side of his little nose."

However Robin Kelly may have been questioned, the worthy couple of Ronayne's Court doubted not that he was the deliverer of their child from the power of the giant Mac Mahon ; and the reward they bestowed on him equalled their gratitude.

Philip Ronayne lived to be an old man ; and he was remarkable to the day of his death for his skill in working brass and iron, which it was believed he had learned during his seven years' apprenticeship to the giant Mahon Mac Mahon

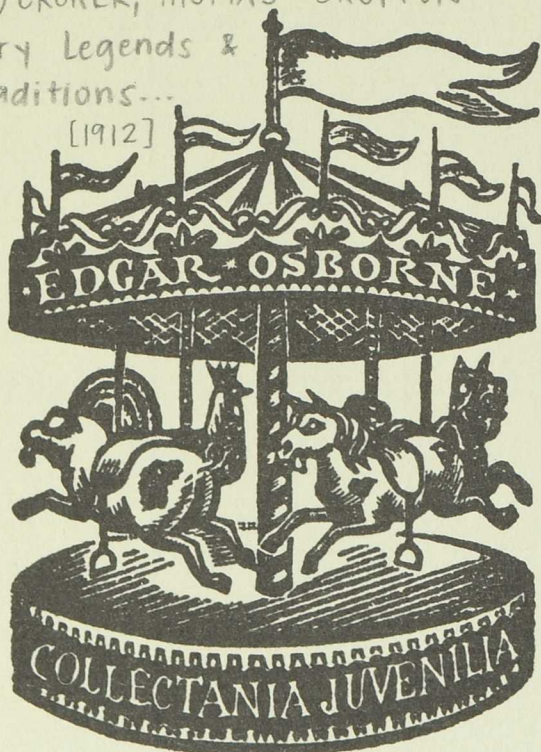


(FT) CROKER, THOMAS CROFTON

Fairy Legends &

Traditions...

[1912]



37131 137 023 537

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Presented to the
Osborne Collection by*

Patricia Cleary

