Barry Lyndon

William Makepeace Thackeray

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A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Barry Lyndon—far from the best known, but by some critics acclaimed as the finest, of Thackeray's works—appeared originally as a serial a few years before VANITY FAIR was written; yet it was not published in book form, and then not by itself, until after the publication of VANITY FAIR, PENDENNIS, ESMOND and THE NEWCOMES had placed its author in the forefront of the literary men of the day. So many years after the event we cannot help wondering why the story was not earlier put in book form; for in its delineation of the character of an adventurer it is as great as VANITY FAIR, while for the local colour of history, if I may put it so, it is no undistinguished precursor of ESMOND.

In the number of FRASER'S MAGAZINE for January 1844 appeared the first instalment of 'THE LUCK OF BARRY LYNDON, ESQ., A ROMANCE OF THE LAST CENTURY, by FitzBoodle,' and the story continued to appear month by month—with the exception of October—up to the end of the year, when the concluding portion was signed 'G. S. FitzBoodle.' FITZBOODLE'S CONFESSIONS, it should be added, had appeared occasionally in the magazine during the years immediately precedent, so that the pseudonym was familiar to FRASER'S readers. The story was written, according to its author's own words, 'with a great deal of dulness, unwillingness and labour,' and was evidently done as the instalments were required, for in August he wrote 'read for "B. L." all the morning at the club,' and four days later of '"B. L." lying like a nightmare on my mind.' The journey to the East—which was to give us in literary results NOTES OF A JOURNEY FROM CORNHILL TO GRAND CAIRO—was begun with BARRY LYNDON yet unfinished, for at Malta the author noted on the first three days of November—'Wrote Barry but slowly and with great difficulty.' 'Wrote Barry with no more success than yesterday.' 'Finished Barry after great throes late at night.' In the number of Fraser's for the following month, as I have said, the conclusion appeared. A dozen years later, in 1856, the story formed the first part of the third volume of Thackeray's MISCELLANIES, when it was called MEMOIRS OF BARRY LYNDON, ESQ., WRITTEN BY HIMSELF. Since then, it has nearly always been issued with other matter, as though it were not strong enough to stand alone, or as though the importance of a work was mainly to be gauged by the number of pages to be crowded into one cover. The scheme of the present edition fortunately allows fitting honour to be done to the memoirs of the great adventurer.

To come from the story as a whole to the personality of the eponymous hero. Three widely-differing historical individuals are suggested as having contributed to the composite portrait. Best known of these was that very prince among adventurers, G. J. Casanova de

Seingalt, a man who in the latter half of the eighteenth century played the part of adventurer—and generally that of the successful adventurer—in most of the European capitals; who within the first five-and-twenty years of his life had been 'abbe, secretary to Cardinal Aquaviva, ensign, and violinist, at Rome, Constantinople, Corfu, and his own birthplace (Venice), where he cured a senator of apoplexy.' His autobiography, MEMOIRES ECRIT PAR LUI MEME (in twelve volumes), has been described as 'unmatched as a self-revelation of scoundrelism.' It has also been suggested, with I think far less colour of probability, that the original of Barry was the diplomatist and satiric poet Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, whom Dr Johnson described as 'our lively and elegant though too licentious lyrick bard.' The third original, and one who, there cannot be the slightest doubt, contributed features to the great portrait, is a certain Andrew Robinson Stoney, afterwards Stoney-Bowes.

The original of the Countess Lyndon was Mary Eleanor Bowes, Dowager Countess of Strathmore, and heiress of a very wealthy Durham family. This lady had many suitors, but in 1777 Stoney, a bankrupt lieutenant on half pay, who had fought a duel on her behalf, induced her to marry him, and subsequently hyphenated her name with his own. He became member of Parliament, and ran such extravagant courses as does Barry Lyndon, treated his wife with similar barbarity, abducted her when she had escaped from him, and then, after being divorced, found his way to a debtors' prison. There are similarities here which no seeker after originals can overlook. Mrs Ritchie says that her father had a friend at Paris, 'a Mr Bowes, who may have first told him this history of which the details are almost incredible, as quoted from the papers of the time.' The name of Thackeray's friend is a curious coincidence, unless, as may well have been the case, he was a connection of the family into which the notorious adventurer had married. It is not unlikely that Thackeray had seen the work published in 1810—the year of Stoney-Bowes's death—in which the whole unhappy romance was set forth. This was 'THE LIVES OF ANDREW ROBINSON BOWES ESQ., and THE COUNTESS OF STRATHMORE. Written from thirty-three years' Professional Attendance, from letters and other well authenticated Documents by Jesse Foot, Surgeon.' In this book we find several incidents similar to ones in the story. Bowes cut down all the timber on his wife's estate, but 'the neighbours would not buy it.' Such practical jokes as Barry Lyndon played upon his son's tutor were played by Bowes on his chaplain. The story of Stoney and his marriage will be found briefly given in the notice of the Countess's life in the DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY.

Whence that part of the romantic interlude dealing with the stay in the Duchy of X——, dealt with in chapter x., etc., was inspired, Thackeray's own note\books (as quoted by Mrs Ritchie) conclusively

show: ‘January 4,1844. Read in a silly book called L’EMPIRE, a good story about the first K. of Wurtemberg’s wife; killed by her husband for adultery. Frederic William, born in 1734 (?), m. in 1780 the Princess Caroline of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, who died the 27th September 1788. For the rest of the story see L’EMPIRE, OU DIX ANS SOUS NAPOLEON, PAR UN CHAMBELLAN: Paris, Allardin, 1836; vol. i. 220.’ The ‘Captain Freny’ to whom Barry owed his adventures on his journey to Dublin (chapter iii.) was a notorious highwayman, on whose doings Thackeray had enlarged in the fifteenth chapter of his IRISH SKETCH BOOK.

Despite the slowness with which it was written, and the seeming neglect with which it was permitted to remain unreprinted, BARRY LYNDON was to be hailed by competent critics as one of Thackeray’s finest performances, though the author himself seems to have had no strong regard for the story. His daughter has recorded, ‘My father once said to me when I was a girl: “You needn’t read BARRY LYNDON, you won’t like it.” Indeed, it is scarcely a book to LIKE, but one to admire and to wonder at for its consummate power and mastery.’ Another novelist, Anthony Trollope, has said of it: ‘In imagination, language, construction, and general literary capacity, Thackeray never did anything more remarkable than BARRY LYNDON.’ Mr Leslie Stephen says: ‘All later critics have recognised in this book one of his most powerful performances. In directness and vigour he never surpassed it.’

W.J.

THE MEMOIRES OF BARRY LYNDON, ESQ.

CHAPTER I. MY PEDIGREE AND FAMILY—UNDERGO THE INFLUENCE OF THE TENDER

PASSION

Since the days of Adam, there has been hardly a mischief done in this world but a woman has been at the bottom of it. Ever since ours was a family (and that must be very NEAR Adam's time,—so old, noble, and illustrious are the Barrys, as everybody knows) women have played a mighty part with the destinies of our race.

I presume that there is no gentleman in Europe that has not heard of the house of Barry of Barryogue, of the kingdom of Ireland, than which a more famous name is not to be found in Gwillim or D'Hozier; and though, as a man of the world, I have learned to despise heartily the claims of some PRETENDERS to high birth who have no more genealogy than the lacquey who cleans my boots, and though I laugh to utter scorn the boasting of many of my countrymen, who are all for descending from kings of Ireland, and talk of a domain no bigger than would feed a pig as if it were a principality; yet truth compels me to assert that my family was the noblest of the island, and, perhaps, of the universal world; while their possessions, now insignificant and torn from us by war, by treachery, by the loss of time, by ancestral extravagance, by adhesion to the old faith and monarch, were formerly prodigious, and embraced many counties, at a time when Ireland was vastly more prosperous than now. I would assume the Irish crown over my coat-of-arms, but that there are so many silly pretenders to that distinction who bear it and render it common.

Who knows, but for the fault of a woman, I might have been wearing it now? You start with incredulity. I say, why not? Had there been a gallant chief to lead my countrymen, instead or puling knaves who bent the knee to King Richard II., they might have been freemen; had there been a resolute leader to meet the murderous ruffian Oliver Cromwell, we should have shaken off the English for ever. But there was no Barry in the field against the usurper; on the contrary, my ancestor, Simon de Bary, came over with the first-named monarch, and married the daughter of the then King of Munster, whose sons in battle he pitilessly slew.

In Oliver's time it was too late for a chief of the name of Barry to lift up his war-cry against that of the murderous brewer. We were princes of the land no longer; our unhappy race had lost its possessions a century previously, and by the most shameful treason. This I know to be the fact, for my mother has often told me the story, and besides had worked it in a worsted pedigree which hung up in the yellow saloon at Barryville where we lived.

That very estate which the Lyndons now possess in Ireland was once the property of my race. Rory Barry of Barryogue owned it in Elizabeth's time, and half Munster beside. The Barry was always in feud with the O'Mahonys in those times; and, as it happened, a certain English colonel passed through the former's country with a body of men-at-arms, on the very day when the O'Mahonys had made an inroad upon our territories, and carried off a frightful plunder of our flocks and herds.

This young Englishman, whose name was Roger Lyndon, Linden, or Lyndaine, having been most hospitably received by the Barry, and finding him just on the point of carrying an inroad into the O'Mahonys' land, offered the aid of himself and his lances, and behaved himself so well, as it appeared, that the O'Mahonys were entirely overcome, all the Barrys' property restored, and with it, says the old chronicle, twice as much of the O'Mahonys' goods and cattle.

It was the setting in of the winter season, and the young soldier was pressed by the Barry not to quit his house of Barryogue, and remained there during several months, his men being quartered with Barry's own gallowglasses, man by man in the cottages round about. They conducted themselves, as is their wont, with the most intolerable insolence towards the Irish; so much so, that fights and murders continually ensued, and the people vowed to destroy them.

The Barry's son (from whom I descend) was as hostile to the English as any other man on his domain; and, as they would not go when bidden, he and his friends consulted together and determined on destroying these English to a man.

But they had let a woman into their plot, and this was the Barry's daughter. She was in love with the English Lyndon, and broke the whole secret to him; and the dastardly English prevented the just massacre of themselves by falling on the Irish, and destroying Phaudrig Barry, my ancestor, and many hundreds of his men. The cross at Barrycross near Carrignadihioul is the spot where the odious butchery took place.

Lyndon married the daughter of Roderick Barry, and claimed the estate which he left: and though the descendants of Phaudrig were alive, as indeed they are in my person,[Footnote: As we have never been able to find proofs of the marriage of my ancestor Phaudrig with his wife, I make no doubt that Lyndon destroyed the contract, and murdered the priest and witnesses of the marriage.—B. L.] on appealing to the English courts, the estate was awarded to the Englishman, as has ever been the case where English and Irish were concerned.

Thus, had it not been for the weakness of a woman, I should have been born to the possession of those very estates which afterwards came to me by merit, as you shall hear. But to proceed with my family, history.

My father was well known to the best circles in this kingdom, as in that of Ireland, under the name of Roaring Harry Barry. He was bred like many other young sons of genteel families to the profession of the law,

being articled to a celebrated attorney of Sackville Street in the city of Dublin; and, from his great genius and aptitude for learning, there is no doubt he would have made an eminent figure in his profession, had not his social qualities, love of field-sports, and extraordinary graces of manner, marked him out for a higher sphere. While he was attorney's clerk he kept seven race-horses, and hunted regularly both with the Kildare and Wicklow hunts; and rode on his grey horse Endymion that famous match against Captain Punter, which is still remembered by lovers of the sport, and of which I caused a splendid picture to be made and hung over my dining-hall mantelpiece at Castle Lyndon. A year afterwards he had the honour of riding that very horse Endymion before his late Majesty King George II. at New-market, and won the plate there and the attention of the august sovereign.

Although he was only the second son of our family, my dear father came naturally into the estate (now miserably reduced to L400 a year); for my grandfather's eldest son Cornelius Barry (called the Chevalier Borgne, from a wound which he received in Germany) remained constant to the old religion in which our family was educated, and not only served abroad with credit, but against His Most Sacred Majesty George II. in the unhappy Scotch disturbances in '45. We shall hear more of the Chevalier hereafter.

For the conversion of my father I have to thank my dear mother, Miss Bell Brady, daughter of Ulysses Brady of Castle Brady, county Kerry, Esquire and J.P. She was the most beautiful woman of her day in Dublin, and universally called the Dasher there. Seeing her at the assembly, my father became passionately attached to her; but her soul was above marrying a Papist or an attorney's clerk; and so, for the love of her, the good old laws being then in force, my dear father slipped into my uncle Cornelius's shoes and took the family estate. Besides the force of my mother's bright eyes, several persons, and of the genteelest society too, contributed to this happy change; and I have often heard my mother laughingly tell the story of my father's recantation, which was solemnly pronounced at the tavern in the company of Sir Dick Ringwood, Lord Bagwig, Captain Punter, and two or three other young sparks of the town. Roaring Harry won 300 pieces that very night at faro, and laid the necessary information the next morning against his brother; but his conversion caused a coolness between him and my uncle Corney, who joined the rebels in consequence.

This great difficulty being settled, my Lord Bagwig lent my father his own yacht, then lying at the Pigeon House, and the handsome Bell Brady was induced to run away with him to England, although her parents were against the match, and her lovers (as I have heard her tell many thousands of times) were among the most numerous and the most wealthy in all the kingdom of Ireland. They were married at the Savoy, and my grandfather dying very soon, Harry Barry, Esquire, took

possession of his paternal property and supported our illustrious name with credit in London. He pinked the famous Count Tiercelin behind Montague House, he was a member of 'White's,' and a frequenter of all the chocolate-houses; and my mother, likewise, made no small figure. At length, after his great day of triumph before His Sacred Majesty at Newmarket, Harry's fortune was just on the point of being made, for the gracious monarch promised to provide for him. But alas! he was taken in charge by another monarch, whose will have no delay or denial,—by Death, namely, who seized upon my father at Chester races, leaving me a helpless orphan. Peace be to his ashes! He was not faultless, and dissipated all our princely family property; but he was as brave a fellow as ever tossed a bumper or called a main, and he drove his coach-and-six like a man of fashion.

I do not know whether His gracious Majesty was much affected by this sudden demise of my father, though my mother says he shed some royal tears on the occasion. But they helped us to nothing: and all that was found in the house for the wife and creditors was a purse of ninety guineas, which my dear mother naturally took, with the family plate, and my father's wardrobe and her own; and putting them into our great coach, drove off to Holyhead, whence she took shipping for Ireland. My father's body accompanied us in the finest hearse and plumes money could buy; for though the husband and wife had quarrelled repeatedly in life, yet at my father's death his high-spirited widow forgot all her differences, gave him the grandest funeral that had been seen for many a day, and erected a monument over his remains (for which I subsequently paid), which declared him to be the wisest, purest, and most affectionate of men.

In performing these sad duties over her deceased lord, the widow spent almost every guinea she had, and, indeed, would have spent a great deal more, had she discharged one-third of the demands which the ceremonies occasioned. But the people around our old house of Barryogue, although they did not like my father for his change of faith, yet stood by him at this moment, and were for exterminating the mutes sent by Mr. Plumer of London with the lamented remains. The monument and vault in the church were then, alas! all that remained of my vast possessions; for my father had sold every stick of the property to one Notley, an attorney, and we received but a cold welcome in his house—a miserable old tumble-down place it was. [Footnote: In another part of his memoir Mr. Barry will be found to describe this mansion as one of the most splendid palaces in Europe; but this is a practice not unusual with his nation; and with respect to the Irish principality claimed by him, it is known that Mr. Barry's grandfather was an attorney and maker of his own fortune.]

The splendour of the funeral did not fail to increase the widow Barry's reputation as a woman of spirit and fashion; and when she wrote to her

brother Michael Brady, that worthy gentleman immediately rode across the country to fling himself in her arms, and to invite her in his wife's name to Castle Brady.

Mick and Barry had quarrelled, as all men will, and very high words had passed between them during Barry's courtship of Miss Bell. When he took her off, Brady swore he would never forgive Barry or Bell; but coming to London in the year '46, he fell in once more with Roaring Harry, and lived in his fine house in Clarges Street, and lost a few pieces to him at play, and broke a watchman's head or two in his company,—all of which reminiscences endeared Bell and her son very much to the good-hearted gentleman, and he received us both with open arms. Mrs. Barry did not, perhaps wisely, at first make known to her friends what was her condition; but arriving in a huge gilt coach with enormous armorial bearings, was taken by her sister-in-law and the rest of the county for a person of considerable property and distinction. For a time, then, and as was right and proper, Mrs. Barry gave the law at Castle Brady. She ordered the servants to and fro, and taught them, what indeed they much wanted, a little London neatness; and 'English Redmond,' as I was called, was treated like a little lord, and had a maid and a footman to himself; and honest Mick paid their wages,—which was much more than he was used to do for his own domestics,—doing all in his power to make his sister decently comfortable under her afflictions. Mamma, in return, determined that, when her affairs were arranged, she would make her kind brother a handsome allowance for her son's maintenance and her own; and promised to have her handsome furniture brought over from Clarges Street to adorn the somewhat dilapidated rooms of Castle Brady.

But it turned out that the rascally landlord seized upon every chair and table that ought by rights to have belonged to the widow. The estate to which I was heir was in the hands of rapacious creditors; and the only means of subsistence remaining to the widow and child was a rent-charge of L50 upon my Lord Bagwig's property, who had many turf-dealings with the deceased. And so my dear mother's liberal intentions towards her brother were of course never fulfilled.

It must be confessed, very much to the discredit of Mrs. Brady of Castle Brady, that when her sister-in-law's poverty was thus made manifest, she forgot all the respect which she had been accustomed to pay her, instantly turned my maid and man-servant out of doors, and told Mrs. Barry that she might follow them as soon as she chose. Mrs. Mick was of a low family, and a sordid way of thinking; and after about a couple of years (during which she had saved almost all her little income) the widow complied with Madam Brady's desire. At the same time, giving way to a just though prudently dissimulated resentment, she made a vow that she would never enter the gates of Castle Brady while the lady of the house remained alive within them.

She fitted up her new abode with much economy and considerable taste, and never, for all her poverty, abated a jot of the dignity which was her due and which all the neighbourhood awarded to her. How, indeed, could they refuse respect to a lady who had lived in London, frequented the most fashionable society there, and had been presented (as she solemnly declared) at Court? These advantages gave her a right which seems to be pretty unsparingly exercised in Ireland by those natives who have it,—the right of looking down with scorn upon all persons who have not had the opportunity of quitting the mother-country and inhabiting England for a while. Thus, whenever Madam Brady appeared abroad in a new dress, her sister-in-law would say, 'Poor creature! how can it be expected that she should know anything of the fashion?' And though pleased to be called the handsome widow, as she was, Mrs. Barry was still better pleased to be called the English widow.

Mrs. Brady, for her part, was not slow to reply: she used to say that the defunct Barry was a bankrupt and a beggar; and as for the fashionable society which he saw, he saw it from my Lord Bagwig's side-table, whose flatterer and hanger-on he was known to be. Regarding Mrs. Barry, the lady of Castle Brady would make insinuations still more painful. However, why should we allude to these charges, or rake up private scandal of a hundred years old? It was in the reign of George II that the above-named personages lived and quarrelled; good or bad, handsome or ugly, rich or poor, they are all equal now; and do not the Sunday papers and the courts of law supply us every week with more novel and interesting slander?

At any rate, it must be allowed that Mrs. Barry, after her husband's death and her retirement, lived in such a way as to defy slander. For whereas Bell Brady had been the gayest girl in the whole county of Wexford, with half the bachelors at her feet, and plenty of smiles and encouragement for every one of them, Bell Barry adopted a dignified reserve that almost amounted to pomposity, and was as starch as any Quakeress. Many a man renewed his offers to the widow, who had been smitten by the charms of the spinster; but Mrs. Barry refused all offers of marriage, declaring that she lived now for her son only, and for the memory of her departed saint.

'Saint forsooth!' said ill-natured Mrs. Brady.

'Harry Barry was as big a sinner as ever was known; and 'tis notorious that he and Bell hated each other. If she won't marry now, depend on it, the artful woman has a husband in her eye for all that, and only waits until Lord Bagwig is a widower.'

And suppose she did, what then? Was not the widow of a Barry fit to marry with any lord of England? and was it not always said that a woman was to restore the fortunes of the Barry family? If my mother fancied that SHE was to be that woman, I think it was a perfectly justifiable notion on her part; for the Earl (my godfather) was always

most attentive to her: I never knew how deeply this notion of advancing my interests in the world had taken possession of mamma's mind, until his Lordship's marriage in the year '57 with Miss Goldmore, the Indian nabob's rich daughter.

Meanwhile we continued to reside at Barryville, and, considering the smallness of our income, kept up a wonderful state. Of the half-dozen families that formed the congregation at Brady's Town, there was not a single person whose appearance was so respectable as that of the widow, who, though she always dressed in mourning, in memory of her deceased husband, took care that her garments should be made so as to set off her handsome person to the greatest advantage; and, indeed, I think, spent six hours out of every day in the week in cutting, trimming, and altering them to the fashion. She had the largest of hoops and the handsomest of furbelows, and once a month (under my Lord Bagwig's cover) would come a letter from London containing the newest accounts of the fashions there. Her complexion was so brilliant that she had no call to use rouge, as was the mode in those days. No, she left red and white, she said (and hence the reader may imagine how the two ladies hated each other) to Madam Brady, whose yellow complexion no plaster could alter. In a word, she was so accomplished a beauty, that all the women in the country took pattern by her, and the young fellows from ten miles round would ride over to Castle Brady church to have the sight of her.

But if (like every other woman that ever I saw or read of) she was proud of her beauty, to do her justice she was still more proud of her son, and has said a thousand times to me that I was the handsomest young fellow in the world. This is a matter of taste. A man of sixty may, however, say what he was at fourteen without much vanity, and I must say I think there was some cause for my mother's opinion. The good soul's pleasure was to dress me; and on Sundays and holidays I turned out in a velvet coat with a silver-hilted sword by my side and a gold garter at my knee, as fine as any lord in the land. My mother worked me several most splendid waistcoats, and I had plenty of lace for my ruffles, and a fresh riband to my hair, and as we walked to church on Sundays, even envious Mrs. Brady was found to allow that there was not a prettier pair in the kingdom.

Of course, too, the lady of Castle Brady used to sneer, because on these occasions a certain Tim, who used to be called my valet, followed me and my mother to church, carrying a huge prayer-book and a cane, and dressed in the livery of one of our own fine footmen from Clarges Street, which, as Tim was a bandy-shanked little fellow, did not exactly become him. But, though poor, we were gentlefolks, and not to be sneered out of these becoming appendages to our rank; and so would march up the aisle to our pew with as much state and gravity as the Lord Lieutenant's lady and son might do. When there, my mother would give the

responses and amens in a loud dignified voice that was delightful to hear, and, besides, had a fine loud voice for singing, which art she had perfected in London under a fashionable teacher; and she would exercise her talent in such a way that you would hardly hear any other voice of the little congregation which chose to join in the psalm. In fact, my mother had great gifts in every way, and believed herself to be one of the most beautiful, accomplished, and meritorious persons in the world. Often and often has she talked to me and the neighbours regarding her own humility and piety, pointing them out in such a way that I would defy the most obstinate to disbelieve her.

When we left Castle Brady we came to occupy a house in Brady's town, which mamma christened Barryville. I confess it was but a small place, but, indeed, we made the most of it. I have mentioned the family pedigree which hung up in the drawingroom, which mamma called the yellow saloon, and my bedroom was called the pink bedroom, and hers the orange tawny apartment (how well I remember them all!); and at dinner-time Tim regularly rang a great bell, and we each had a silver tankard to drink from, and mother boasted with justice that I had as good a bottle of claret by my side as any squire of the land. So indeed I had, but I was not, of course, allowed at my tender years to drink any of the wine; which thus attained a considerable age, even in the decanter.

Uncle Brady (in spite of the family quarrel) found out the above fact one day by calling at Barryville at dinner-time, and unluckily tasting the liquor. You should have seen how he sputtered and made faces! But the honest gentleman was not particular about his wine, or the company in which he drank it. He would get drunk, indeed, with the parson or the priest indifferently; with the latter, much to my mother's indignation, for, as a true blue Nassauite, she heartily despised all those of the old faith, and would scarcely sit down in the room with a benighted Papist. But the squire had no such scruples; he was, indeed, one of the easiest, idlest, and best-natured fellows that ever lived, and many an hour would he pass with the lonely widow when he was tired of Madam Brady at home. He liked me, he said, as much as one of his own sons, and at length, after the widow had held out for a couple of years, she agreed to allow me to return to the castle; though, for herself, she resolutely kept the oath which she had made with regard to her sister-in-law.

The very first day I returned to Castle Brady my trials may be said, in a manner, to have begun. My cousin, Master Mick, a huge monster of nineteen (who hated me, and I promise you I returned the compliment), insulted me at dinner about my mother's poverty, and made all the girls of the family titter. So when we went to the stables, whither Mick always went for his pipe of tobacco after dinner, I told him a piece of my mind, and there was a fight for at least ten minutes, during which I stood to him like a man, and blacked his left eye, though I was myself only twelve years old at the time. Of course he beat me, but a beating makes only a

small impression on a lad of that tender age, as I had proved many times in battles with the ragged Brady's Town boys before, not one of whom, at my time of life, was my match. My uncle was very much pleased when he heard of my gallantry; my cousin Nora brought brown paper and vinegar for my nose, and I went home that night with a pint of claret under my girdle, not a little proud, let me tell you, at having held my own against Mick so long.

And though he persisted in his bad treatment of me, and used to cane me whenever I fell in his way, yet I was very happy now at Castle Brady with the company there, and my cousins, or some of them, and the kindness of my uncle, with whom I became a prodigious favourite. He bought a colt for me, and taught me to ride. He took me out coursing and fowling, and instructed me to shoot flying. And at length I was released from Mick's persecution, for his brother, Master Ulick, returning from Trinity College, and hating his elder brother, as is mostly the way in families of fashion, took me under his protection; and from that time, as Ulick was a deal bigger and stronger than Mick, I, English Redmond, as I was called, was left alone; except when the former thought fit to thrash me, which he did whenever he thought proper.

Nor was my learning neglected in the ornamental parts, for I had an uncommon natural genius for many things, and soon topped in accomplishments most of the persons around me. I had a quick ear and a fine voice, which my mother cultivated to the best of her power, and she taught me to step a minuet gravely and gracefully, and thus laid the foundation of my future success in life. The common dances I learned (as, perhaps, I ought not to confess) in the servants' hall, which, you may be sure, was never without a piper, and where I was considered unrivalled both at a hornpipe and a jig.

In the matter of book-learning, I had always an uncommon taste for reading plays and novels, as the best part of a gentleman's polite education, and never let a pedlar pass the village, if I had a penny, without having a ballad or two from him. As for your dull grammar, and Greek and Latin and stuff, I have always hated them from my youth upwards, and said, very unmistakably, I would have none of them.

This I proved pretty clearly at the age of thirteen, when my aunt Biddy Brady's legacy of L100 came in to mamma, who thought to employ the sum on my education, and sent me to Doctor Tobias Tickler's famous academy at Ballywhacket—Backwhacket, as my uncle used to call it. But six weeks after I had been consigned to his reverence, I suddenly made my appearance again at Castle Brady, having walked forty miles from the odious place, and left the Doctor in a state near upon apoplexy. The fact was, that at taw, prison-bars, or boxing, I was at the head of the school, but could not be brought to excel in the classics; and after having been flogged seven times, without its doing me the least good in my Latin, I refused to submit altogether (finding it useless) to an eighth

application of the rod. ‘Try some other way, sir,’ said I, when he was for horsing me once more; but he wouldn’t; whereon, and to defend myself, I flung a slate at him, and knocked down a Scotch usher with a leaden inkstand. All the lads huzza’d at this, and some or the servants wanted to stop me; but taking out a large clasp-knife that my cousin Nora had given me, I swore I would plunge it into the waistcoat of the first man who dared to balk me, and faith they let me pass on. I slept that night twenty miles off Ballywhacket, at the house of a cottier, who gave me potatoes and milk, and to whom I gave a hundred guineas after, when I came to visit Ireland in my days of greatness. I wish I had the money now. But what’s the use of regret? I have had many a harder bed than that I shall sleep on to-night, and many a scantier meal than honest Phil Murphy gave me on the evening I ran away from school. So six weeks’ was all the schooling I ever got. And I say this to let parents know the value of it; for though I have met more learned book-worms in the world, especially a great hulking, clumsy, blear-eyed old doctor, whom they called Johnson, and who lived in a court off Fleet Street, in London, yet I pretty soon silenced him in an argument (at ‘Button’s Coffeehouse’); and in that, and in poetry, and what I call natural philosophy, or the science of life, and in riding, music, leaping, the small-sword, the knowledge of a horse, or a main of cocks, and the manners of an accomplished gentleman and a man of fashion, I may say for myself that Redmond Barry has seldom found his equal. ‘Sir,’ said I to Mr. Johnson, on the occasion I allude to—he was accompanied by a Mr. Buswell of Scotland, and I was presented to the club by a Mr. Goldsmith, a countryman of my own—‘Sir,’ said I, in reply to the schoolmaster’s great thundering quotation in Greek, ‘you fancy you know a great deal more than me, because you quote your Aristotle and your Pluto; but can you tell me which horse will win at Epsom Downs next week?—Can you run six miles without breathing?—Can you shoot the ace of spades ten times without missing? If so, talk about Aristotle and Pluto to me.’

‘D’ye knaw who ye’re speaking to?’ roared out the Scotch gentleman, Mr. Boswell, at this.

‘Hold your tongue, Mr. Boswell,’ said the old schoolmaster. ‘I had no right to brag of my Greek to the gentleman, and he has answered me very well.’

‘Doctor,’ says I, looking waggishly at him, ‘do you know ever a rhyme for ArisTOTLE?’

‘Port, if you plaise,’ says Mr. Goldsmith, laughing. And we had SIX RHYMES FOR ARISTOTLE before we left the coffee-house that evening. It became a regular joke afterwards when I told the story, and at ‘White’s’ or the ‘Cocoa-tree’ you would hear the wags say, ‘Waiter, bring me one of Captain Barry’s rhymes for Aristotle.’ Once, when I was in liquor at the latter place, young Dick Sheridan called me a great Staggerite, a joke

which I could never understand. But I am wandering from my story, and must get back to home, and dear old Ireland again.

I have made acquaintance with the best in the land since, and my manners are such, I have said, as to make me the equal of them all; and, perhaps, you will wonder how a country boy, as I was, educated amongst Irish squires, and their dependants of the stable and farm, should arrive at possessing such elegant manners as I was indisputably allowed to have. I had, the fact is, a very valuable instructor in the person of an old gamekeeper, who had served the French king at Fontenoy, and who taught me the dances and customs, and a smattering of the language of that country, with the use of the sword, both small and broad. Many and many a long mile I have trudged by his side as a lad, he telling me wonderful stories of the French king, and the Irish brigade, and Marshal Saxe, and the opera-dancers; he knew my uncle, too, the Chevalier Borgne, and indeed had a thousand accomplishments which he taught me in secret. I never knew a man like him for making or throwing a fly, for physicking a horse, or breaking, or choosing one; he taught me manly sports, from birds'-nesting upwards, and I always shall consider Phil Purcell as the very best tutor I could have had. His fault was drink, but for that I have always had a blind eye; and he hated my cousin Mick like poison; but I could excuse him that too.

With Phil, and at the age of fifteen, I was a more accomplished man than either of my cousins; and I think Nature had been also more bountiful to me in the matter of person. Some of the Castle Brady girls (as you shall hear presently) adored me. At fairs and races many of the prettiest lasses present said they would like to have me for their bachelor; and yet somehow, it must be confessed, I was not popular.

In the first place, every one knew I was bitter poor; and I think, perhaps, it was my good mother's fault that I was bitter proud too. I had a habit of boasting in company of my birth, and the splendour of my carriages, gardens, cellars, and domestics, and this before people who were perfectly aware of my real circumstances. If it was boys, and they ventured to sneer, I would beat them, or die for it; and many's the time I've been brought home well-nigh killed by one or more of them, on what, when my mother asked me, I would say was 'a family quarrel.' 'Support your name with your blood, Reddy my boy,' would that saint say, with the tears in her eyes; and so would she herself have done with her voice, ay, and her teeth and nails.

Thus, at fifteen, there was scarce a lad of twenty, for half-a-dozen miles round, that I had not beat for one cause or other. There were the vicar's two sons of Castle Brady—in course I could not associate with such beggarly brats as them, and many a battle did we have as to who should take the wall in Brady's Town; there was Pat Lurgan, the blacksmith's son, who had the better of me four times before we came to the crowning fight, when I overcame him; and I could mention a score

more of my deeds of prowess in that way, but that fisticuff facts are dull subjects to talk of, and to discuss before high-bred gentlemen and ladies.

However, there is another subject, ladies, on which I must discourse, and THAT is never out of place. Day and night you like to hear of it: young and old, you dream and think of it. Handsome and ugly (and, faith, before fifty, I never saw such a thing as a plain woman), it's the subject next to the hearts of all of you; and I think you guess my riddle without more trouble. LOVE! sure the word is formed on purpose out of the prettiest soft vowels and consonants in the language, and he or she who does not care to read about it is not worth a fig, to my thinking.

My uncle's family consisted of ten children; who, as is the custom in such large families, were divided into two camps, or parties; the one siding with their mamma, the other taking the part of my uncle in all the numerous quarrels which arose between that gentleman and his lady. Mrs. Brady's faction was headed by Mick, the eldest son, who hated me so, and disliked his father for keeping him out of his property: while Ulick, the second brother, was his father's own boy; and, in revenge, Master Mick was desperately afraid of him. I need not mention the girls' names; I had plague enough with them in after-life, Heaven knows; and one of them was the cause of all my early troubles: this was (though to be sure all her sisters denied it) the belle of the family, Miss Honoria Brady by name.

She said she was only nineteen at the time; but I could read the fly-leaf in the family Bible as well as another (it was one of the three books which, with the backgammon-board, formed my uncle's library), and know that she was born in the year '37, and christened by Doctor Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin: hence she was three-and-twenty years old at the time she and I were so much together.

When I come to think about her now, I know she never could have been handsome; for her figure was rather of the fattest, and her mouth of the widest; she was freckled over like a partridge's egg, and her hair was the colour of a certain vegetable which we eat with boiled beef, to use the mildest term. Often and often would my dear mother make these remarks concerning her; but I did not believe them then, and somehow had gotten to think Honoria an angelical being, far above all the other angels of her sex.

And as we know very well that a lady who is skilled in dancing or singing never can perfect herself without a deal of study in private, and that the song or the minuet which is performed with so much graceful ease in the assembly-room has not been acquired without vast labour and perseverance in private; so it is with the dear creatures who are skilled in coquetting. Honoria, for instance, was always practising, and she would take poor me to rehearse her accomplishment upon; or the exciseman, when he came his rounds, or the steward, or the poor curate, or the young apothecary's lad from Brady's Town: whom I recollect

beating once for that very reason. If he is alive now I make him my apologies. Poor fellow! as if it was HIS fault that he should be a victim to the wiles of one of the greatest coquettes (considering her obscure life and rustic breeding) in the world.

If the truth must be told—and every word of this narrative of my life is of the most sacred veracity—my passion for Nora began in a very vulgar and unromantic way. I did not save her life; on the contrary, I once very nearly killed her, as you shall hear. I did not behold her by moonlight playing on the guitar, or rescue her from the hands of ruffians, as Alfonso does Lindamira in the novel; but one day, after dinner at Brady's Town, in summer, going into the garden to pull gooseberries for my dessert, and thinking only of gooseberries, I pledge my honour, I came upon Miss Nora and one of her sisters, with whom she was friends at the time, who were both engaged in the very same amusement.

'What's the Latin for gooseberry, Redmond?' says she. She was always 'poking her fun,' as the Irish phrase it.

'I know the Latin for goose,' says I.

'And what's that?' cries Miss Mysie, as pert as a peacock.

'Bo to you!' says I (for I had never a want of wit); and so we fell to work at the gooseberry-bush, laughing and talking as happy as might be. In the course of our diversion Nora managed to scratch her arm, and it bled, and she screamed, and it was mighty round and white, and I tied it up, and I believe was permitted to kiss her hand; and though it was as big and clumsy a hand as ever you saw, yet I thought the favour the most ravishing one that was ever conferred upon me, and went home in a rapture.

I was much too simple a fellow to disguise any sentiment I chanced to feel in those days; and not one of the eight Castle Brady girls but was soon aware of my passion, and joked and complimented Nora about her bachelor.

The torments of jealousy the cruel coquette made me endure were horrible. Sometimes she would treat me as a child, sometimes as a man. She would always leave me if ever there came a stranger to the house.

'For after all, Redmond,' she would say, 'you are but fifteen, and you haven't a guinea in the world.' At which I would swear that I would become the greatest hero ever known out of Ireland, and vow that before I was twenty I would have money enough to purchase an estate six times as big as Castle Brady. All which vain promises, of course, I did not keep; but I make no doubt they influenced me in my very early life, and caused me to do those great actions for which I have been celebrated, and which shall be narrated presently in order.

I must tell one of them, just that my dear young lady readers may know what sort of a fellow Redmond Barry was, and what a courage and undaunted passion he had. I question whether any of the jenny-

jessamines of the present day would do half as much in the face of danger.

About this time, it must be premised, the United Kingdom was in a state of great excitement from the threat generally credited of a French invasion. The Pretender was said to be in high favour at Versailles, a descent upon Ireland was especially looked to, and the noblemen and people of condition in that and all other parts of the kingdom showed their loyalty by raising regiments of horse and foot to resist the invaders. Brady's Town sent a company to join the Kilwangan regiment, of which Master Mick was the captain; and we had a letter from Master Ulick at Trinity College, stating that the University had also formed a regiment, in which he had the honour to be a corporal. How I envied them both! especially that odious Mick as I saw him in his laced scarlet coat, with a ribbon in his hat, march off at the head of his men. He, the poor spiritless creature, was a captain, and I nothing,—I who felt I had as much courage as the Duke of Cumberland himself, and felt, too, that a red jacket would mightily become me! My mother said I was too young to join the new regiment; but the fact was, that it was she herself who was too poor, for the cost of a new uniform would have swallowed up half her year's income, and she would only have her boy appear in a way suitable to his birth, riding the finest of racers, dressed in the best of clothes, and keeping the genteelest of company.

Well, then, the whole country was alive with war's alarums, the three kingdoms ringing with military music, and every man of merit paying his devoirs at the court of Bellona, whilst poor I was obliged to stay at home in my fustian jacket and sigh for fame in secret. Mr. Mick came to and fro from the regiment, and brought numerous of his comrades with him. Their costume and swaggering airs filled me with grief, and Miss Nora's unvarying attentions to them served to make me half wild. No one, however, thought of attributing this sadness to the young lady's score, but rather to my disappointment at not being allowed to join the military profession.

Once the officers of the Fencibles gave a grand ball at Kilwangan, to which, as a matter of course, all the ladies of Castle Brady (and a pretty ugly coachful they were) were invited. I knew to what tortures the odious little flirt of a Nora would put me with her eternal coquetries with the officers, and refused for a long time to be one of the party to the ball. But she had a way of conquering me, against which all resistance of mine was in vain. She vowed that riding in a coach always made her ill. 'And how can I go to the ball,' said she, 'unless you take me on Daisy behind you on the pillion?' Daisy was a good blood-mare of my uncle's, and to such a proposition I could not for my soul say no; so we rode in safety to Kilwangan, and I felt myself as proud as any prince when she promised to dance a country-dance with me.

When the dance was ended, the little ungrateful flirt informed me that she had quite forgotten her engagement; she had actually danced the set with an Englishman! I have endured torments in my life, but none like that. She tried to make up for her neglect, but I would not. Some of the prettiest girls there offered to console me, for I was the best dancer in the room. I made one attempt, but was too wretched to continue, and so remained alone all night in a state of agony. I would have played, but I had no money; only the gold piece that my mother bade me always keep in my purse as a gentleman should. I did not care for drink, or know the dreadful comfort of it in those days; but I thought of killing myself and Nora, and most certainly of making away with Captain Quin!

At last, and at morning, the ball was over. The rest of our ladies went off in the lumbering creaking old coach; Daisy was brought out, and Miss Nora took her place behind me, which I let her do without a word. But we were not half-a-mile out of town when she began to try with her coaxing and blandishments to dissipate my ill-humour.

'Sure it's a bitter night, Redmond dear, and you'll catch cold without a handkerchief to your neck.' To this sympathetic remark from the pillion, the saddle made no reply.

'Did you and Miss Clancy have a pleasant evening, Redmond? You were together, I saw, all night.' To this the saddle only replied by grinding his teeth, and giving a lash to Daisy.

'O mercy! you'll make Daisy rear and throw me, you careless creature you: and you know, Redmond, I'm so timid.' The pillion had by this got her arm round the saddle's waist, and perhaps gave it the gentlest squeeze in the world.

'I hate Miss Clancy, you know I do!' answers the saddle; 'and I only danced with her because—because—the person with whom I intended to dance chose to be engaged the whole night.'

'Sure there were my sisters,' said the pillion, now laughing outright in the pride of her conscious superiority; 'and for me, my dear, I had not been in the room five minutes before I was engaged for every single set.'

'Were you obliged to dance five times with Captain Quin?' said I; and oh! strange delicious charm of coquetry, I do believe Miss Nora Brady at twenty-three years of age felt a pang of delight in thinking that she had so much power over a guileless lad of fifteen. Of course she replied that she did not care a fig for Captain Quin: that he danced prettily, to be sure, and was a pleasant rattle of a man; that he looked well in his regimentals too; and if he chose to ask her to dance, how could she refuse him?

'But you refused me, Nora.'

'Oh! I can dance with you any day,' answered Miss Nora, with a toss of her head; 'and to dance with your cousin at a ball, looks as if you could find no other partner. Besides,' said Nora—and this was a cruel, unkind cut, which showed what a power she had over me, and how mercilessly

she used it,—'besides, Redmond, Captain Quin's a man and you are only a boy!'

'If ever I meet him again,' I roared out with an oath, 'you shall see which is the best man of the two. I'll fight him with sword or with pistol, captain as he is. A man indeed! I'll fight any man—every man! Didn't I stand up to Mick Brady when I was eleven years old?—Didn't I beat Tom Sullivan, the great hulking brute, who is nineteen?—Didn't I do for the Scotch usher? O Nora, it's cruel of you to sneer at me so!'

But Nora was in the sneering mood that night, and pursued her sarcasms; she pointed out that Captain Quin was already known as a valiant soldier, famous as a man of fashion in London, and that it was mighty well of Redmond to talk and boast of beating ushers and farmers' boys, but to fight an Englishman was a very different matter.

Then she fell to talk of the invasion, and of military matters in general; of King Frederick (who was called, in those days, the Protestant hero), of Monsieur Thurot and his fleet, of Monsieur Conflans and his squadron, of Minorca, how it was attacked, and where it was; we both agreed it must be in America, and hoped the French might be soundly beaten there.

I sighed after a while (for I was beginning to melt), and said how much I longed to be a soldier; on which Nora recurred to her infallible 'Ah! now, would you leave me, then? But, sure, you're not big enough for anything more than a little drummer.' To which I replied, by swearing that a soldier I would be, and a general too.

As we were chattering in this silly way, we came to a place that has ever since gone by the name of Redmond's Leap Bridge. It was an old high bridge, over a stream sufficiently deep and rocky, and as the mare Daisy with her double load was crossing this bridge, Miss Nora, giving a loose to her imagination, and still harping on the military theme (I would lay a wager that she was thinking of Captain Quin)—Miss Nora said, 'Suppose now, Redmond, you, who are such a hero, was passing over the bridge, and the inimy on the other side?'

'I'd draw my sword, and cut my way through them.'

'What, with me on the pillion? Would you kill poor me?' (This young lady was perpetually speaking of 'poor me!')

'Well, then, I'll tell you what I'd do. I'd jump Daisy into the river, and swim you both across, where no enemy could follow us.'

'Jump twenty feet! you wouldn't dare to do any such thing on Daisy. There's the Captain's horse, Black George, I've heard say that Captain Qui—'

She never finished the word, for, maddened by the continual recurrence of that odious monosyllable, I shouted to her to 'hold tight by my waist,' and, giving Daisy the spur, in a minute sprang with Nora over the parapet into the deep water below. I don't know why, now—whether it was I wanted to drown myself and Nora, or to perform an act

that even Captain Quin should crane at, or whether I fancied that the enemy actually was in front of us, I can't tell now; but over I went. The horse sank over his head, the girl screamed as she sank and screamed as she rose, and I landed her, half fainting, on the shore, where we were soon found by my uncle's people, who returned on hearing the screams. I went home, and was ill speedily of a fever, which kept me to my bed for six weeks; and I quitted my couch prodigiously increased in stature, and, at the same time, still more violently in love than I had been even before. At the commencement of my illness, Miss Nora had been pretty constant in her attendance at my bedside, forgetting, for the sake of me, the quarrel between my mother and her family; which my good mother was likewise pleased, in the most Christian manner, to forget. And, let me tell you, it was no small mark of goodness in a woman of her haughty disposition, who, as a rule, never forgave anybody, for my sake to give up her hostility to Miss Brady, and to receive her kindly. For, like a mad boy as I was, it was Nora I was always raving about and asking for; I would only accept medicines from her hand, and would look rudely and sulkily upon the good mother, who loved me better than anything else in the world, and gave up even her favourite habits, and proper and becoming jealousies, to make me happy.

As I got well, I saw that Nora's visits became daily more rare: 'Why don't she come?' I would say, peevishly, a dozen times in the day; in reply to which query, Mrs. Barry would be obliged to make the best excuses she could find,—such as that Nora had sprained her ankle, or that they had quarrelled together, or some other answer to soothe me. And many a time has the good soul left me to go and break her heart in her own room alone, and come back with a smiling face, so that I should know nothing of her mortification. Nor, indeed, did I take much pains to ascertain it: nor should I, I fear, have been very much touched even had I discovered it; for the commencement of manhood, I think, is the period of our extremest selfishness. We get such a desire then to take wing and leave the parent nest, that no tears, entreaties, or feelings of affection will counter-balance this overpowering longing after independence. She must have been very sad, that poor mother of mine—Heaven be good to her!—at that period of my life; and has often told me since what a pang of the heart it was to her to see all her care and affection of years forgotten by me in a minute, and for the sake of a little heartless jilt, who was only playing with me while she could get no better suitor. For the fact is, that during the last four weeks of my illness, no other than Captain Quin was staying at Castle Brady, and making love to Miss Nora in form. My mother did not dare to break this news to me, and you may be sure that Nora herself kept it a secret: it was only by chance that I discovered it.

Shall I tell you how? The minx had been to see me one day, as I sat up in my bed, convalescent; she was in such high spirits, and so gracious

and kind to me, that my heart poured over with joy and gladness, and I had even for my poor mother a kind word and a kiss that morning. I felt myself so well that I ate up a whole chicken, and promised my uncle, who had come to see me, to be ready against partridge-shooting, to accompany him, as my custom was.

The next day but one was a Sunday, and I had a project for that day which I determined to realise, in spite of all the doctor's and my mother's injunctions: which were that I was on no account to leave the house, for the fresh air would be the death of me.

Well, I lay wondrous quiet, composing a copy of verses, the first I ever made in my life; and I give them here, spelt as I spelt them in those days when I knew no better. And though they are not so polished and elegant as 'Ardelia ease a Love-sick Swain,' and 'When Sol bedecks the Daisied Mead,' and other lyrical effusions of mine which obtained me so much reputation in after life, I still think them pretty good for a humble lad of fifteen:—

THE ROSE OF FLORA.

Sent by a Young Gentleman of Quality to Miss Brady, of Castle Brady.