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# W. H. MAXWELL



**THE FORTUNES OF HECTOR O'HALLORAN,  
AND HIS MAN, MARK ANTONY O'TOOLE**

**W. H. Maxwell**

# **The Fortunes of Hector O'Halloran, and His Man, Mark Antony O'Toole**

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THE FORTUNES  
OF  
HECTOR O'HALLORAN,  
AND HIS MAN  
MARK ANTONY O'TOOLE.

BY  
W. H. MAXWELL,  
AUTHOR OF "STORIES OF WATERLOO," "THE LIFE OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON,"  
"THE BIVOUCAC," ETC. ETC.

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"Faugh a Ballagh."

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. LEECH.

# Original



# CHAPTER I. A FIRST ANNIVERSARY

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“Although you open force disdain.  
Of secret guile beware!”  
John Leyden.

It was a cold frosty evening in December, seventeen hundred and ninety-five, and the whole of the month had been unusually tempestuous. Throughout wide Britain, there are no shores on which the wind rages with wilder fury than upon those naked promontories which abut into the Atlantic, along the iron-bound coast of Donegal. Harbours are few and far between—the peasantry are a hardy and adventurous race—and the fishing grounds distant from the land. In the winter, snowstorms come suddenly on, and the sea rises with fearful rapidity. The boatmen are caught in the gale, and too frequently courage and skill struggle in vain,

“Contending with the fretful elements;”

and a calamitous loss of life robs many a family of its protectors, making the humble roof-tree desolate.

During the continuation of these fearful storms, this wild coast had not escaped its customary visitations. An island smack had foundered with all its crew; and farther to the northward, a transport, homeward-bound from Holland with sick and wounded soldiers, having been dismasted in the gale, was driven a wreck upon the coast. By the fearless

intrepidity of some fishermen, the sinking vessel was carried through a fissure in the rocks into a sandy bay; and, by what appeared miraculous interposition, the lives of all on board were saved, even when hope was over.

On the second evening after this fortunate deliverance our story opens. Indeed, the epoch was memorable. That disastrous campaign which brought disgrace upon the British arms, had just terminated in the evacuation of the Low Countries, and the withdrawal to its own shores of the débris of a splendid force, which, under luckless auspices, had left England buoyant with the assurance of success. Nor was a foreign failure the only circumstance which at this eventful period gave cause for apprehension. In England, the public mind was agitated, monetary confidence deeply shaken, and revolutionary principles were gaining ground; while in Ireland the peasantry united in lawless associations, and murder, with robbery of arms, intimated that some insurrectionary movement was at hand. In a word, everything was gloomy and discouraging abroad, and at home life and property had no security. With few exceptions the resident gentry had repaired for protection to garrisoned towns. Some however, with more spirit than discretion, determined to remain within their houses, and my father was of that number.

Yet there were few persons excepting its owner, who, even in peaceful times, would choose Knockloftie for an abiding place. It was an old and dreary-looking fabric,—one portion consisting of a dark square tower, the keep of a former stronghold of the O'Hallorans,—and the others, additions built at different periods, according to the wants or

fancies of succeeding proprietors. The house was perched upon a cliff, which rose in sheer ascent two hundred feet above the beach beneath it. Although sheltered by some high grounds behind, still, as the building looked upon the ocean, it was necessarily exposed and cold; while dwarfed and sickly copse-wood—all that repeated efforts to grow timber could produce—instead of improving the general appearance of the place, gave a silent but striking evidence of its hopeless sterility.

To my father, however, Knockloftie had hereditary endearments. For five centuries his ancestors had been born and died there; and he clung with a family attachment to that ancient roof-tree, where the O'Hallorans, in better days, had exercised a boundless hospitality, which even yet was chronicled in the traditions of the neighbourhood.

But local associations apart, my father would have scorned to yield to the threatening appearances of the times, and leave his mansion in alarm. He was "every inch" a soldier; and in all relations between landlord and tenant, it was universally admitted that he was both liberal and kind. He had vainly endeavoured to rouse the spirit of the gentry, and induce them, by bold and united efforts, to crush the increasing disaffection; and at a recent county meeting, after delivering a stirring appeal, he concluded by a declaration, that, "while the old tower of Knockloftie had a roof, it never should want an arm to defend it,"—and he raised his own.

Although Colonel O'Halloran had failed to produce the reaction he desired, still the bold example he had given was not without effect. The government was appealed to for

assistance, rewards were offered largely for the apprehension of the guilty, vigorous measures proposed and agreed to, and the dormant energies of the aristocracy seemed awakening. Of course, my father occupied a prominent place in the estimation of both the loyal and the disaffected. With the former he was considered the master-spirit, who was to direct them in this their hour of difficulty; while the latter set him down as the most dangerous enemy they had to dread. In a moment, former kindness and consequent popularity vanished like a dream, the *delenda est* of Knockloftie was pronounced, and in the black list to guide the future murderer my father's name stood first.

Such was the state of the times, and such the local condition of the country in which the opening scene of this true history is laid. My first anniversary had come round; and although the hospitable relations which had formerly existed among the gentry had been interrupted, still, on this occasion, there was a semblance of rejoicing in my father's house, though, sooth to say, it was after all a sickly effort at festivity.

In the great chamber of Knockloftie the lord of the mansion, with his lady and two guests, were seated. The apartment was a large, square, and ill-lit room, occupying the lower portion of the tower. Both floor and ceiling were framed of native oak, which time had nearly blackened, and the walls were half-concealed by portraits rudely executed. Many indications of the danger of the times were apparent in this ancient chamber. The windows were jealously secured, and everywhere weapons of all descriptions were seen. Two arm-racks, holding a dozen muskets each, were

placed in either corner, while some silver sconces dependent from the cornice shed on the polished arms a flickering light. But the chamber was better illuminated; for the huge hearth was heaped with bog-wood, and the ruddy flare this cheerful fire emitted reached the remotest extremity of the apartment, and half-dispelled its gloom.

As Scott would say, "the tables were drawn," and dinner had disappeared. My mother sat in an antique high-backed chair, busily employed in knitting shooting-stockings for her husband; my father had extracted another cork; the parson pronounced the wine unexceptionable; and the priest, "good easy man," was stirring an obdurate piece of sugar, deposited in the bottom of his second tumbler. The clock upon the mantelpiece struck seven, and the butler, after replenishing a bent-basket with firewood, quitted the presence and closed the door. All these events had passed, and it is high time that the gentle reader should be formally introduced to the company.

The history of my parents must be intermixed. Lieutenant-Colonel Denis O'Halloran was now some thirty-one, but he looked older by a dozen years. He was a tall, athletic man, well formed and well set-up, with an air and bearing which did not require the attestation of an empty sleeve, to prove him "no carpet knight" and stamp him soldier. He entered the service a boy of sixteen—and at six-and-twenty, the women said he was the handsomest fellow in garrison. At twenty-seven, the old major having signified his intention to retire, my grandsire, *more Hibernico*, secured his son's promotion by parting with another town-land. At twenty-eight, Major O'Halloran further promoted

himself, for he carried off the pretty brunette who was now demurely knitting stockings in the corner. Heaven forgive him!—my mother was boarder in a convent—and one blessed moonlight morning, when the nuns were dreaming of heaven, and the superior sleeping “fast as a watchman,” with the assistance of a ladder and three grenadiers, Miss Emily Clifford was liberated from holy pupilage, and at Gretna Green she became Mrs. O’lalloran, and that too, without taking the opinion of the parish as to whether there was just cause or impediment against the same.

My mother was the only daughter of a Catholic gentleman of large estate, he had however a son by a former marriage, fifteen years older. The boy grew up wild and extravagant—and at twenty-one had dissipated a handsome fortune. At last his angry parent totally discarded him, and to support his endless debaucheries, the unhappy youth resorted to discreditable means for obtaining the money he required. With some profligate companions he became involved in a transaction which rendered them obnoxious to the law, and in consequence, Edward Clifford left England secretly. Eighteen years had elapsed—none could say whether he was dead or living—but the general belief was, that he filled an early and dishonoured grave.

Mr. Clifford was a bigot in religion. All his hopes had long since centered in his daughter; and the great object of his life was to marry her to a person of his own persuasion, and a union was negotiated, and nearly concluded, between Emily and the son of a Catholic peer. In the meantime, her education had been entrusted to the sisterhood of a convent, alike celebrated for sanctity and strictness, where,

as Mr. Clifford believed, his daughter would be equally secure against attempts upon her faith or her affections. What must have been his rage and astonishment when the news of her elopement was communicated! She who had been designed to wed a peer—whose loved society he had relinquished, that her religious opinions might be confirmed by spiritual instruction—she was lost to him for ever; united by an indissoluble tie to the son of a distressed gentleman—and worse still, to the professor of a creed from which Mr. Clifford fearfully recoiled, as a system founded in heresy and error.

After a sufficient time had been allowed to permit the first burst of parental displeasure to exhaust itself, letters were written to Mr. Clifford by the offenders, to deprecate his anger and solicit pardon and forgiveness; but they came back with unbroken seals, while other circumstances concurred to convince my parent that, for a time at least, the old gentleman's anger was implacable. Rich in mutual regard, they sought and found consolation in reciprocated affections—and soon after there was promise of another tie, that should bind their hearts together even more closely than before.

Short was the season when their course of love ran smooth. An order of readiness arrived unexpectedly from the war office—the destination of the regiment was France—and in another week a rout was received for Deal.

A separation was now inevitable—and when my mother most required a husband's gentle attentions, the order to divide them had arrived. But the rector of her father's parish had heard of the intended embarkation, and hastened to

offer the home my mother needed. Thus, cheered by “the good man’s counsels,” and nursed tenderly by his excellent wife, my mother gave birth, in four months afterwards to a son—I made an *entrée* on the world,—and commenced, as the reader may probably admit hereafter, an adventurous career.

The young soldier’s history in the meantime, is shortly told. Lord Moira, despairing of effecting any good by the intended descent on Brittany, changed the direction of his force, landed at Ostend, and finally joined the Duke of York at Mechlin. In my father’s regiment, the lieut.-colonel had become sick, and the senior major retired—consequently the command had devolved upon himself—and could any thing have reconciled the severance of young love, it would have been the early prospect of military distinction.

Major O’Halloran proved that fortune had not vainly offered him her favours. His regiment was brigaded with the rear-guard, and on every occasion the battalion was admirably commanded. The service of retiring constantly in front of a victorious army is most discouraging, but still that disheartening duty was performed with a spirit deserving better fortune. At last the Duke of York was recalled, and for a time his successor, Count Walmoden, assumed the offensive. An attack on the Republicans at Tuy had partial success, and my father heading the grenadier company, carried the town by assault. With that exploit his military career was prematurely closed—his left arm was fractured by a grape shot, amputated afterwards, and he returned to England invalided.

The rest is briefly told. He found himself a father, and his own sire had paid the debt of nature. His health was shaken by fatigue, his wound healed slowly, and after some consideration, he retired from the army upon half pay, obtaining a colonel's rank and pension, and fixed his residence in his native country, taking possession of an ancient house, and what proved afterwards an unquiet home.

The guests who on the anniversary of my birth had honoured Knockloftie with their presence, were different both in character and appearance. The priest was a strong-built, good-humoured, under-sized man, of jovial habits and easy disposition, careless how matters went, and consequently, ill-adapted to repress the turbulence of a disobedient flock, who would have required the religious coercion of a sterner monitor. As confessor to the establishment, Father Dominic Kelly made Knockloftie his abiding place. He was of gentle blood himself, and preferred being domiciled in the house of a gentleman, to a wandering life among the rude dwellings of a lawless community. Hence Father Dominic was by no means popular—and his influence over a wild and rebellious people was far less extensive than that which is generally possessed by the Irish priesthood.

The other churchman formed a singular contrast to the burly priest. He was a small, attenuated, intelligent-looking personage, possessing natural courage and a restless and irascible disposition. A fellow of the university, he had retired upon a college living—and having obtained, unhappily for himself, a commission of the peace, he

exercised his powers with greater zeal than discretion; in short, he had made himself so obnoxious to the peasantry that his life was not worth a pin's fee. Like Colonel O'Halloran, he too was doomed to death, and in the *black list* his name was second to that of my father. A few nights before, his glebe-house had been burnt to the ground; and, having escaped assassination by a miracle, he found that protection at Knockloftie, which, from a more timid proprietor, might have been sought and asked in vain.

But there were others besides Doctor Hamilton, who during this reign of terror had been obliged to abandon their own homes, and elsewhere seek a shelter. Several of the poorer farmers had given testimony in recent prosecutions which led to the conviction of an assassin, on whom the extreme penalty of the law had been justly executed. This in the eyes of his guilty companions was a crime beyond the pale of mercy, and the unfortunate men were accordingly denounced. They fled for protection to Knockloftie—there, they were now residing—and, as if the measure of my father's offendings was not already full, the daring act of interposing between a lawless confederacy and its victims had heaped it even to an overflow. No wonder therefore, that the full fury of rebel vengeance was to be turned against himself and all whom his roof-tree covered.

"Well, William," said my mother, as she renewed a conversation which had been accidentally interrupted, "when you were struck down—"

"My foster brother sprang from the ranks, threw away his musket, lifted me lightly as even with this lone arm I would lift you, and carried me—"

“In safety from the danger?”

“No, no, love—we had to pass through a cross fire of musketry—a ball struck him, and when he fell dead—I was in his arms.”

“Would,” said my mother with a sigh, “that our Hector had a foster brother!”

“Would that he had! and one so faithful and devoted!”—my father drew his hand across his eyes—“this is too womanly, but—”

As he was speaking, the mastiff chained in a kennel beside the hall door began to growl, and the priest rose and peeped cautiously through a shot-hole in the shutters, to ascertain what might have disturbed the dog. Nothing to cause alarm was visible—and the churchman returned to the table, observing, that the night froze keenly.

My mother had dropped her knitting on the carpet.—“What a horrid state of things,” observed the lady, as she picked the worsted from the floor, “that a growl from Cæsar sets my heart beating for an hour, and a knock after dark terrifies me almost to death!”

“Thou a soldier’s wife, and play the coward!” exclaimed my father. “Fear nothing, Emily; the old tower from roof to basement is secured—there is not a cranny that would admit the cat that I have not under a flanking fire—the lower windows save one are built up—I have retrenched the hall with a barricade, nailed up the back door, and the front one is enfiladed by that embrasure,”—and he pointed to a window in an angle of the room, at either side of which a blunderbuss was standing ready for instant use.

“Would that for one night thou and the baby were safe within the convent walls! then let the scoundrels come! By Heaven! next morning there should be more shirts \* upon the lawn than were ever spread upon the bleaching ground, and the coroner should have occupation, not by single files, but by the cart-load.”

\* The *Defenders* wore shirts over their clothes at night, and hence were also called *White-boys*.

While my father spoke, the whole scene was passing in his “mind’s eye,” and *Defenders* were dropping by the dozen. His face lighted up, and springing from the chair he waved his solitary arm, strode across the chamber, and looked with conscious pride at all his military preparations. My mother grew pale as death, and turning her eyes up she fervently ejaculated, “God forbid!” and crossed herself devoutly. The priest performed a similar ceremony, and uttered a sincere “Amen!”

“Pshaw!” said my father, as he passed his arm round my mother’s waist and kissed her tenderly; “do not alarm yourself. This house is strong; nothing but treachery could force it.”

“Beware of that,” said the parson; “for that I feared and proved. I was betrayed by the villain who ate my bread, and saved providentially by the babbling folly of an idiot.”

“Indeed!” said my mother, with an inquiring glance, as she laid her knitting down.

“The tale is briefly told,” said Doctor Hamilton. “For some time past I suspected that my servants were disaffected. I watched them closely, and circumstances convinced me that my fears were true. I had business in the next town; my tithe agent dared not venture out of doors, and it was

imperatively necessary that I should see him. By a lane, the distance between the glebe-house and the village was only four miles—all I wanted done would occupy but a few minutes—and I took, as I supposed, effectual means to enable me to accomplish the object I had in view, and return home even before my absence was known in my treacherous household. At dusk I despatched my servant with a letter to the curate, and when he was out of sight I saddled a fast horse, quitted the stable by a back door, and rode off at speed for the village. I was unexpectedly delayed—but as a precaution against danger, returned by another and longer road. Night had set in; I passed through the last hamlet at a sharp trot, and, but a mile from home, pulled up at a steep hill that leads directly to the bridge. A lad who was running in an opposite direction stopped when he observed me coming, and I recognised him at once to be an idiot boy who occasionally visited the glebe-house, where he always received meat or money by my orders. As I came closer he began dancing and gabbling in a sing-song tune, “Ha, ha! Hamilton, ha, ha! somebody will get his fairin. There’s Dick Brady and the smith behind the hedge, and Jack Coyne, and Patsy Gallagher, and twenty more besides, only I don’t know them with their white shirts and black faces. Ha, ha! ha, ha! somebody to-night will get his fairin!” He repeated this rhyme, and kept dancing for a few moments with idiot glee, and then, under a sudden impulse, ran off towards the hamlet which I had but just passed through.”

Again an angry growling was heard from the mastiff’s kennel, and the priest looked a second time through the

shot-hole. The night was clear and star-lit, but nothing was visible from the window. Father Dominic resumed his seat, and Doctor Hamilton thus continued:

“My danger was imminent, and my resolution must be prompt. I dismounted, turned my horse loose, and as I had expected, he galloped off directly towards his stable. I sprang into the next field, and lay down under cover of the hedge, to consider what was the best direction that I should take to escape the blood-hounds, who doubtlessly would be soon upon my trail.

“I had not been above a minute in concealment when footsteps were heard approaching rapidly from the bridge. Two men came on at speed, and one had outstripped the other. ‘Stop!’ cried the hindmost, ‘what a devil of a hurry you are in! I can’t keep up with you.’

“‘I want to be in at the death,’ returned the well-known voice of my villain servant; ‘I would not miss it for a ten-pound note. He thought to give me the slip—put me on a wrong scent, and sent me with a letter. He asked me a question about bridling a horse, and that betrayed his secret. I knew there was something in the wind—doubled back upon the house after he thought me clear away—saw him go off through the back lane in a canter, and—’ Two shots were heard in quick succession. ‘He’s down, by ——,’ he exclaimed, with savage exultation. ‘Run Murtaugh! they’ll be into the house in no time. I know where the money is. Run—the devil’s luck to you! and off both ruffians started.

“The rest you know. Speedily a glare of red light was seen, and a burning house—my own—guided my flight, for I

took the opposite direction. I know not whether I was pursued—but, if I was the villains were unsuccessful. At midnight I reached this place of refuge, and here, for a time at least, I am safe.”

“What boundless treachery!” exclaimed my father, as the parson ended the narrative of his escape. “We may set an open enemy at defiance, but who can guard against secret villany? By Heaven! a dark suspicion at this moment flashes across my mind. Have you noticed the servant who waits at table?”

“I have—and as a disciple of Lavater I denounce him; he never looks you fairly in the face.”

“And yet the only vulnerable point in the garrison is at that fellow’s mercy. When I closed up every aperture besides, Hackett remonstrated so strongly, and pleaded the inconvenience it would cause should I build up the window of his pantry, that I consented to leave it open, merely adding a second shutter for security. It is but small—a man however could creep through it—but to-morrow the mason shall brick it up.”

“It may be fancy,” said my mother, “but Hackett’s manner appears lately to have undergone a change. There is at times a freedom in his language that borders upon insolence; but hush! here comes the nurse.”

The door opened as she spoke, and I was added to the company. My mother placed me on her knee,—the parson proposed my health, Father Dominie added a supplication, that “God would make me a better man than my father, and, above all things, keep me out of convents,”—and the latter responded an amen. Every glass was emptied to the

bottom—the host rang for more wine and the priest replenished his tumbler. It was a moment of hilarity, joyous and brief. Suddenly Cæsar gave the alarm—not as before, in under growls, but in the “full-mouthed diapason” of a bark audible a mile off. The greyhound and the terrier sprang up and answered,—I cried, frightened by the “loud alarum,”—the nursemaid caught me from my mother, and hurried from the room,—while my father, exclaiming “a true challenge, by Heaven!”” leaped from his chair, and placed himself before the wicket that looked upon the lawn.

A minute—an anxious minute, elapsed.

“I hear.” said the Doctor, “the footsteps of a mob, as they tread upon the frozen gravel.”

“Hush!” replied, my father, as he turned his ear attentively in the direction whence the noise proceeded; “that is not the movement of a mob—they step too well together. Soldiers on march, for a hundred!” At the Colonel’s observation, my mother, who had nearly fainted, gradually recovered courage, and left the apartment for the nursery to re-establish mine,—my father remained at his post, to ascertain what the party were, who at this late hour approached his fortilage,—while Father Dominic ejaculating a pious “Heaven stand between us and evil!” turned down his tumbler to the bottom. Well, it was only his third one, after all.





## CHAPTER II. THE PLOT THICKENS.

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Now Christie's Will peep'd from the tower,  
And out at the shot-hole peeped he,  
And, "Ever unlucky," quo' he, "is the hour,  
When a woman comes to speer for me."

Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.

**I**n a short time "the heavy tread of marching men" ceased, as a party of ten or twelve soldiers halted immediately in front of my father's barricade.

"Stand! who goes there?" was demanded from the loop-hole.

"A friend," replied a voice, redolent of the richness of the Shannon.

"Advance, friend, and give the countersign," returned my father, whose phraseology, from military habitude, still retained the parlance of the camp.

"Countersign!" responded the leader of the belated wayfarers; "devil a countersign have I but one. If my ould Colonel's above the sod, he's spakin to me now fair and asy from the windy."

"Who are you?" demanded my father.

"Oh! by Jakers, you'll hardly mind me, Colonel;—Private Phil Brady of 'number eight' when you had the regiment; but now, glory be to God and good conduct, lance-sergeant in 'number five.'"

“What is your party, Brady?”

“Upon my conscience, Colonel, a quare one, enough; tin invalids, a dyin woman, ami a fine man-child.”

“Unclose the door, Father Dominie!”

The priest lifted a heavy key from the side-board, and proceeded to give admission to the travellers, when Hackett, who had been hitherto an anxious listener, ventured a remonstrance. “Why not,” said he, “give them meat and whisky before the door? Every room was already crowded with idle people, whom nobody would have harmed, had they remained where they ought,—at home. If the house was to be turned into an hospital for sick trampers and their trulls, why every servant would quit a place liker a jail than a gentleman’s.”

Colonel O’Halloran preserved an ominous tranquillity; and Hackett, mistaking the cause, became more insolent as his speech proceeded without interruption. But the storm burst at last.

“Villain!” said my father in a voice which induced the chief butler to recede some paces backwards,—“dare you, a menial, prescribe to me, your master, who shall be received and who rejected? Tell me that a comrade shall be turned from my door, and recommend that the weary soldier be ejected from the house of him under whom he has fought and bled! Off—we part to-morrow. The roof of Knockloftie shall never cover for a second night a sneaking scoundrel who has neither welcome for a brave man nor pity for a helpless woman;—show in the sergeant!”

Without venturing to reply, Hackett shrank from the presence of his angry master; and in another minute

sergeant Philip Brady made his military salaam, and, with a capacious bundle in his arms, stood full front before his former commander.

“Phil!” said the Colonel, as he examined the soldier’s outer man, “if I judge rightly, thou like myself art but lightly indebted to the Low Countries and my father held up an empty sleeve.

“Feaks! and ye may say that, Colonel,” replied the sergeant. “All that I have gained in Holland—barrin the stripes—is a slashed cheek, a threadbare jacket, and a fine child.”

“Your kit, however, seems extensive, Phil; that which you carry looks to be a well-filled bundle.”

“It’s only the child, your honor; the night was cold, the mother wake, so I wrapped the baby in this ould coat, and for its father’s sake kept it, the cratur, as snug as could be.”

“It’s not your own, then?”

“Divil a wife or child has Philip Brady,” returned the honest sergeant. “Ye may remember corporal O’Toole,—he was one of the finest men in the grenadiers, when your honor had the company.”

“Perfectly; a better or braver soldier was not in the regiment. What became of him?”

“He died at sea, God rest his sowl! on the second day after we left Ostend. He was badly wounded when put on board, poor fellow! and we were all, men and women, bundled into the transport like so many hounds, short of water and provisions, and in the hurry they forgot the surgeon too. Well, his wound mortified: ‘I’m oft, Phil;’ says he; ‘you’ll not forget the poor wife, for my sake, and may

God look down upon the orphan! Give me your hand upon it, Phil,' says he, and he squeezed mine with all his feeble strength. When I came down again, his wife was hanging over the dead body. They coaxed her away to see the child, and when she returned to have some comfort in crying over the corpse, it was already overboard with two others, who had dropped off the hooks that evening. From that hour Toole's wife (we called him Toole for shortness) has pined away, and the life was barely in her when your honor, may God reward ye! let us in."

"'Why were you so late upon the road?" inquired the Colonel; "in the present state of things soldiers are no favourites, and the chances are considerable, had you proceeded farther, that you would have been waylaid and abused."

"Feaks! and I believe your honor. We were delayed partly by accident, and partly through design. Our car broke down, the horse lost a shoe, and the rest of the party pushed forward, laving us at a forge to get the cart mended, and the baste shod. The smith—divil's luck to him, the ruffin!—kept us three hours, I think on purpose, and then they directed us astray. So when I found the night falling, and the poor woman all but dead, as I heard there was a gentleman's not far off, I heads the party here on chance, little dreaming, the Lord knows, that I had the luck of thousands and was coming to my ould Colonel's, and no other."

My father was a man of prompt action and few words. The bell was rung, the soldiers sent to the kitchen to refresh themselves, the child committed to the care of a female

domestic, and carried to the apartment whither its dying mother had been previously removed. There, my mother and the woman-kind of the establishment used every means which simple skill suggested; but already the decree had gone forth, and within an hour after the arrival of the party the crisis came, the widow of the dead soldier was at rest, and her babe an orphan.

"The struggle was brief," said the priest, as he re-entered the room, from which he had been so hastily summoned

'By a dying woman to pray.'

May God receive her in mercy! She went off so gently, that though we were all about the bed, no one could tell the moment when she departed. My lady is crying over her as if she were a sister, and the baby sleeping soundly in Sibby Connor's arms, as if it were still resting on that bosom which had been designed by God to be its pillow and support."

My father, as was his wont when any thing particularly excited him, sprang from his chair, and strode thrice across the chamber.—"Tell me not," he exclaimed, "that there is not an especial providence over every thing—ay, from the sparrow to the soldier's child. That orphan has been sent to *me*,—mine it is,—mine it shall be. Pass the wine, Doctor. Here comes *madame*."

My mother timidly approached the side of her husband's chair, and laid her hand upon his shoulder.

"Denis," she said, "will you be very angry with me?"

"Angry, love!" replied my father, reproachfully.

"You never were angry with me yet. But—but—I have done something, upon which I should have previously obtained your sanction, love."

"What was it, Emily?"

"I promised," said my mother, "the dying woman, that her helpless child should find in you and me protectors. Hector's nurse has taken the orphan,—and shall he not be our own boy's foster-brother?"

"You did, my dear, precisely what I had determined to have done myself."

"Before the sufferer's voice failed totally," continued the lady, "she said that the child was still unchristened, and prayed that rite might be performed when convenient."

"There will be no difficulty in complying with her request," replied my father; "there are now two learned Thebans in Knockloftie. To which of the professors does the poor baby belong?"

"His parents were Roman Catholics," said my mother.

"Then, Father Dominic, a cast of your office will be necessary. Ring for Sergeant Brady—and then parade the child."

In a few moments the non-commissioned officer and the soldier's orphan were introduced.

"What name shall I give him?" said the priest.

"His father's," rejoined the Colonel.

"That was Marc," observed the sergeant.

"What's in a name?" said Dr. Hamilton.

"More than one would suppose, Doctor," replied my father. "Our red-headed adjutant married a Bath heiress almost at sight, for after but a two hours' siege she