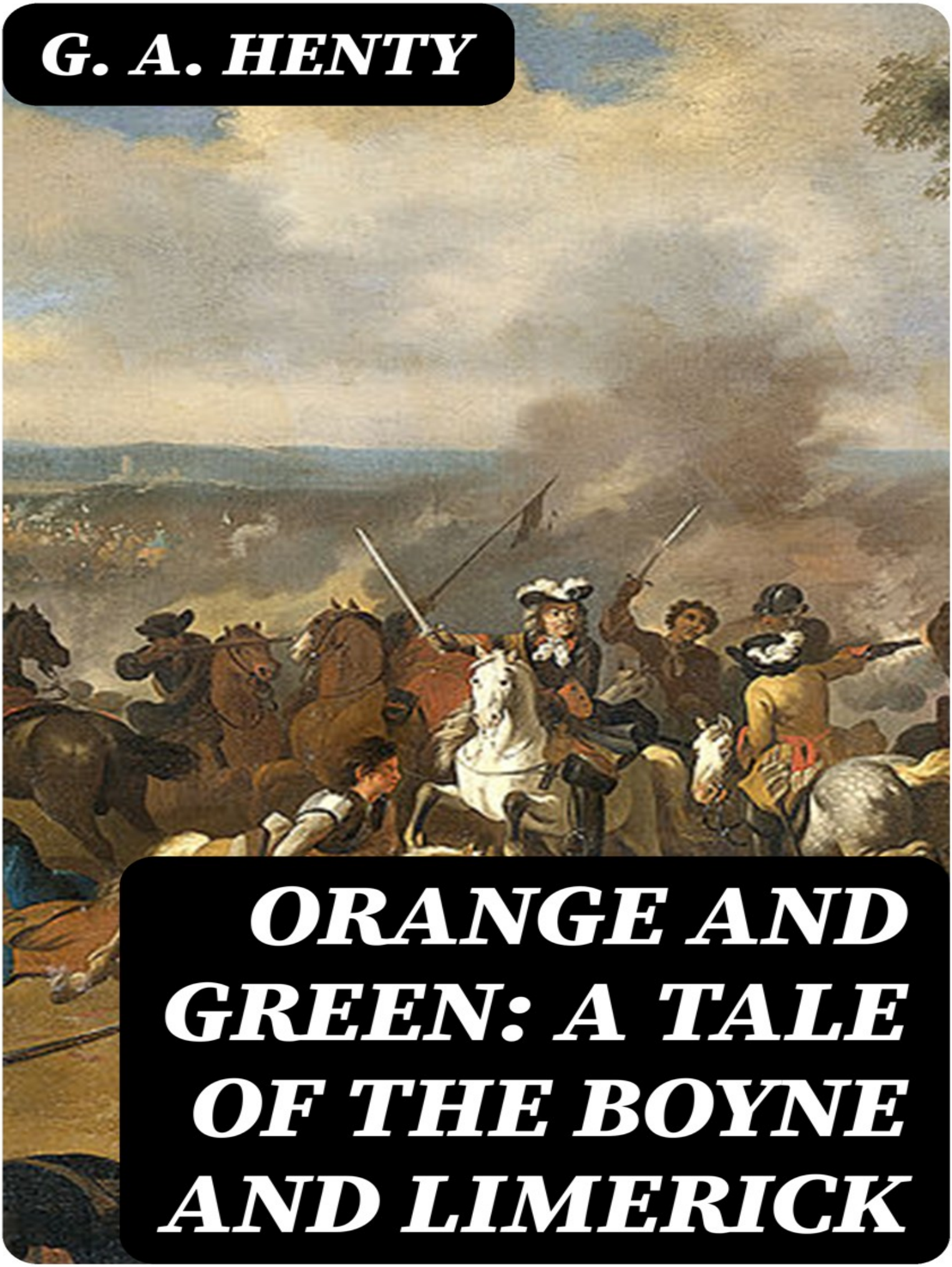
G. A. HENTY



ORANGE AND GREEN: A TALE OF THE BOYNE AND LIMERICK

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Preface.

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The subject of Ireland is one which has, for some years, been a very prominent one, and is likely, I fear, for some time yet to occupy a large share of public attention. The discontent, manifested in the troubles of recent years, has had its root in an old sense of grievance, for which there was, unhappily, only too abundant reason. The great proportion of the soil of Ireland was taken from the original owners, and handed over to Cromwell's followers, and for years the land that still remained in the hands of Irishmen was subject to the covetousness of a party of greedy intriguers, who had sufficient influence to sway the proceedings of government. The result was the rising of Ireland, nominally in defence of the rights of King James, but really as an effort of despair on the part of those who deemed their religion, their property, and even their lives threatened, by the absolute ascendency of the Protestant party in the government of the country. I have taken my information from a variety of sources; but, as I wished you to see the matter from the Irish point of view, I have drawn most largely from the history of those events by Mr. O'Driscol, published sixty years ago. There is, however, but little difference of opinion between Irish and English authors, as to the general course of the war, or as to the atrocious conduct of William's army of foreign mercenaries towards the people of Ireland.

G. A. Henty.

Chapter 1: A Shipwreck.

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A few miles to the south of Bray Head, on the crest of a hill falling sharply down to the sea, stood Castle Davenant, a conspicuous landmark to mariners skirting the coast on their way from Cork or Waterford to Dublin Bay. Castle Davenant it was called, although it had long since ceased to be defensible; but when it was built by Sir Godfrey Davenant, who came over with Strongbow, it was a place of strength. Strongbow's followers did well for themselves. They had reckoned on hard fighting, but the Irish were too much divided among themselves to oppose any serious resistance to the invaders. Strongbow had married the daughter of Dermid, Prince of Leinster, and at the death of that prince succeeded him, and the greater portion of Leinster was soon divided among the knights and men-at-arms who had followed his standard. Godfrey Davenant, who was a favourite of the earl, had no reason to be dissatisfied with his share, which consisted of a domain including many square miles of fertile land, stretching back from the seacoast.

Here for many generations his descendants lived, for the most part taking an active share in the wars and disturbances which, with scarcely an interval of rest, agitated the country.

The castle had continued to deserve its name until forty years before the time this story commences, when Cromwell's gunners had battered a breach in it, and left it a heap of smoking ruins. Walter Davenant had died, fighting

to the last, in his own hall. At that time, the greater part of his estate was bestowed upon officers and soldiers in Cromwell's army, among whom no less than four million acres of Irish land were divided.

Had it not been that Walter Davenant's widow was an Englishwoman, and a relation of General Ireton, the whole of the estate would have gone; but his influence was sufficient to secure for her the possession of the ruins of her home, and a few hundred acres surrounding it. Fortunately, the dowry which Mrs. Davenant had brought her husband was untouched, and a new house was reared within the ruins of the castle, the new work being dovetailed with the old.

The family now consisted of Mrs. Davenant, a lady sixty-eight years old; her son Fergus, who was, when Cromwell devastated the land, a child of five years; his wife Katherine, daughter of Lawrence McCarthy, a large landowner near Cork; and their two sons, Walter, a lad of sixteen, and Godfrey, twelve years old.

Two miles west of the castle stood a square-built stone house, surrounded by solidly-constructed barns and outbuildings. This was the abode of old Zephaniah Whitefoot, the man upon whom had been bestowed the broad lands of Walter Davenant. Zephaniah had fought stoutly, as lieutenant in one of Cromwell's regiments of horse, and had always considered himself an ill-treated man, because, although he had obtained all the most fertile portion of the Davenant estate, the old family were permitted to retain the castle, and a few hundred acres by the sea.

He was one of those who contended that the Amalekites should be utterly destroyed by the sword, and he considered that the retention of the corner of their domains, by the Davenants, was a direct flying in the face of the providence who had given them into the hands of the faithful. Not that, had he obtained possession of the ruined castle, Zephaniah Whitefoot would have repaired it or set up his abode there. The followers of Cromwell had no eyes for the beautiful. They were too much in earnest to care aught for the amenities of life, and despised, as almost sinful, anything approximating to beauty, either in dress, person, or surroundings. The houses that they reared, in this land of which they had taken possession, were bare to the point of ugliness, and their interior was as cold and hard as was the exterior. Everything was for use, nothing for ornament. Scarce a flower was to be seen in their gardens, and laughter was a sign of levity, to be sternly repressed.

Their isolation, in the midst of a hostile population, caused them no concern whatever. They cared for no society or companionship, save that of their own households, which they ruled with a rod of iron; and an occasional gathering, for religious purposes, with the other settlers of their own faith. They regarded the Irish as Papists, doomed to everlasting perdition, and indeed consigned to that fate all outside their own narrow sect. Such a people could no more mix with the surrounding population than oil with water. As a rule, they tilled as much ground in the immediate vicinity of their houses as they and their families could manage, and the rest of the land which had fallen into their possession they let, either for a money

payment, or, more often, for a portion of the crops raised upon it, to such natives as were willing to hold it on these terms.

The next generation had fallen away somewhat from their fathers' standards. It is not in human nature to stand such a strain as their families had been subjected to. There is an innate yearning for joy and happiness, and even the sternest discipline cannot keep man forever in the gloomy bonds of fanaticism. In most cases, the immediate descendants of Cromwell's soldiers would gladly have made some sort of compromise, would have surrendered much of their outlying land to obtain secure and peaceful possession of the rest, and would have emerged from the life of gloomy seclusion, in which they found themselves; but no whisper of any such feeling as this would be heard in the household of Zephaniah Whitefoot, so long as he lived.

He was an old man now, but as hard, as gloomy, and as unlovable as he had been when in his prime. His wife had died very many years before, of no disease that Zephaniah or the doctor he called in could discover, but, in fact, of utter weariness at the dull life of repression and gloom which crushed her down. Of a naturally meek and docile disposition, she had submitted without murmuring to her husband's commands, and had, during her whole married life, never shocked him so much as she did the day before her death, when, for the first time, she exhibited the possession of an opinion of her own, by saying earnestly:

"You may say what you like, Zephaniah, but I do think we were meant to have some happiness and pleasure on earth. If we were intended to go through life without laughing, why

should we be able to laugh? Oh, how I should like to hear one hearty, natural laugh again before I die, such as I used to hear when I was a girl!"

Jabez Whitefoot inherited his mother's docility of disposition, and, even when he grew to middle age, never dreamt of disputing his father's absolute rule, and remained strictly neutral when his wife, the daughter of an old comrade of his father, settled a few miles away, fought stoutly at times against his tyranny.

"You are less than a man, Jabez," she would say to him, indignantly, "to put up, at your age, with being lectured as if you were a child. Parental obedience is all very well, and I hope I was always obedient to my father; but when it comes to a body not being permitted to have a soul of his own, it is going too far. If you had told me that, when I became your wife, I was to become the inmate of a dungeon for the rest of my existence, I wouldn't have had you, not if you had been master of all the broad lands of Leinster."

But, though unable to rouse her husband into making an effort for some sort of freedom, Hannah Whitefoot had battled more successfully in behalf of her son, John.

"You have had the management of your son, sir, and I will manage mine," she said. "I will see that he does not grow up a reprobate or a Papist, but at least he shall grow up a man, and his life shall not be as hateful as mine is, if I can help it."

Many battles had already been fought on this point, but in the end Hannah Whitefoot triumphed. Although her husband never, himself, opposed his father's authority, he

refused absolutely to use his own to compel his wife to submission.

"You know, sir," he said, "you had your own way with my mother and me, and I say nothing for or against it. Hannah has other ideas. No one can say that she is not a good woman, or that she fails in her duty to me. All people do not see life from the same point of view. She is just as conscientious, in her way, as you are in yours. She reads her Bible and draws her own conclusions from it, just as you do; and as she is the mother of the child, and as I know she will do her best for it, I shall not interfere with her way of doing it."

And so Hannah won at last, and although, according to modern ideas, the boy's training would have been considered strict in the extreme, it differed very widely from that which his father had had before him. Sounds of laughter, such as never had been heard within the walls of the house, since Zephaniah laid stone upon stone, sometimes issued from the room where Hannah and the child were together alone, and Zephaniah was out with Jabez about the farm; and Hannah herself benefited, as much as did the child, by her rebellion against the authorities. Jabez, too, was conscious that home was brighter and pleasanter than it had been, and when Zephaniah burst into a torrent of indignation, when he discovered that the child had absolutely heard some fairy stories from its mother, Jabez said quietly:

"Father, I wish no dispute. I have been an obedient son to you, and will continue so to my life's end; but if you are not satisfied with the doings of my wife, I will depart with her.

There are plenty who will be glad to let me a piece of land; and if I only work there as hard as I work here, I shall assuredly be able to support her and my boy. So let this be the last word between us."

This threat put an end to the struggle. Zephaniah had, like most of his class, a keen eye to the main chance, and could ill spare the services of Jabez and his thrifty and hard-working wife; and henceforth, except by pointed references, in the lengthy morning and evening prayers, to the backsliding in his household, he held his peace.

Between the Castle and Zephaniah Whitefoot there had never been any intercourse. The dowager Mrs. Davenant hated the Cromwellite occupier of her estate, not only as a usurper, but as the representative of the man who had slain her husband. She never alluded to his existence, and had always contrived, in her rides and walks, to avoid any point from which she could obtain so much as a distant view of the square, ugly house which formed a blot on the fair landscape. She still spoke of the estate as if it extended to its original boundaries, and ignored absolutely the very existence of Zephaniah Whitefoot, and all that belonged to him. But when her son and Jabez grew to man's estate, at about the same period, they necessarily at times crossed each other's paths; and as in them the prejudices and enmities of their elders were somewhat softened, they would, when they met on the road, exchange a passing nod or a brief "Good morning."

Another generation still, and the boys of the two houses met as friends. Thanks to his mother's successful rebellion,

John Whitefoot grew up a hearty, healthy boy, with a bright eye, a merry laugh, and a frank, open bearing.

"One would think," his grandfather remarked angrily one day, as the boy went out, whistling gaily, to fetch in a young colt Jabez was about to break, "that John was the son of a malignant, or one of the men of Charles Stuart, rather than of a God-fearing tiller of the soil."

"So long as he fears God, and walks in the right way, he is none the worse for that, father," Jabez said stoutly; "and even you would hardly say that his mother has failed in her teachings in that respect. I do not know that, so long as one has the words of Scripture in his heart, he is any the better for having them always on his lips; in other respects, I regret not that the boy should have a spirit and a fire which I know I lack myself. Who can say what may yet take place here! The Stuarts are again upon the throne, and, with James's leaning towards Papacy, there is no saying whether, some day, all the lands which Cromwell divided among his soldiers may not be restored to their original possessors, and in that case our sons may have to make their way in other paths of life than ours; and, if it be so, John will assuredly be more likely to make his way than I should have done."

"We would never surrender, save with our lives, what our swords have won. We will hold the inheritance which the Lord has given us," the old man said fiercely.

"Yes, father; and so said those whose lands we have inherited. So said Walter Davenant, of whose lands we are possessed. It will be as God wills it. He has given to us the lands of others, and it may be that he will take them away again. The times have changed, father, and the manners;

and I am well pleased to see that John, while I am sure he is as true to the faith as I am myself, will take broader and, perhaps, happier views of life than I have done."

Zephaniah gave a snort of displeasure. He grieved continually at the influence which his daughter-in-law exercised over her son, and which now extended clearly to her husband; but Jabez was now a man of five-and-forty, and had lately shown that, in some respects at least, he intended to have his way, while Zephaniah himself, though still erect and strong, was well-nigh eighty.

"Remember, Jabez," he said, "that it goes hard with those who, having set their hands to the plough, turn aside."

"I shall not turn aside, father," Jabez said quietly. "I have gone too long along a straight furrow to change now; but I am not ill pleased that my son should have a wider scope. I trust and believe that he will drive his furrow as straight as we have done, although it may not be exactly in the same line."

But neither Zephaniah nor old Mrs. Davenant knew that their respective grandsons had made friends, although both the boys' fathers knew, and approved of it, although for somewhat different reasons.

"The Whitefoot boy," Mr. Davenant had said to his wife, "is, I fancy from what I have seen of him, of a different type to his father and grandfather. I met him the other day when I was out, and he spoke as naturally and outspokenly as Walter himself. He seems to have got rid of the Puritanical twang altogether. At any rate, he will do Walter no harm; and, indeed, I should say that there was a solid good sense about him, which will do Master Walter, who is somewhat

disposed to be a madcap, much good. Anyhow, he is a better companion for the boy than the lads down in the village; and there is no saying, wife, how matters may go in this unhappy country. It may be that we may come to our own again. It may be that we may lose what is left to us. Anyhow, it can do no harm to Walter that he should have, as a friend, one in the opposite camp."

Somewhat similar was the talk between Hannah and Jabez, although, in their case, the wife was the speaker.

"John has told me, Jabez, that he has several times met young Davenant, and that the boy is disposed to be friendly with him; and he has asked me to speak with you, to know whether you have any objection to his making a friend of him."

"What do you say, Hannah?" Jabez asked cautiously. "My father, I fear, would not approve of it."

"Your father need know nothing about it, Jabez. He is an old man and a good man, but he clings to the ways of his youth, and deems that things are still as they were when he rode behind Cromwell. I would not deceive him did he ask; but I do not see that the matter need be mentioned in his presence. It seems to me that it will be good for John to be friends with this boy. He is almost without companionship. We have acquaintance, it is true, among the other settlers of our faith, but such companionship as he has there will not open his mind or broaden his views. We are dull people here for a lad. Had we had other children it might have been different.

"I have heard my mother speak of her life as a girl, in England, and assuredly it was brighter and more varied than

ours; and it seems not to me that the pleasures which they had were sinful, although I have been taught otherwise; but, as I read my Bible, I cannot see that innocent pleasures are in any way denied to the Lord's people; and such pleasure as the companionship of the young Davenant can give John will, I think, be altogether for his good."

"But the lad is a Papist, Hannah."

"He is, Jabez; but boys, methinks, do not argue among themselves upon points of doctrine; and I have no fear that John will ever be led from the right path, nor indeed, though it is presumption for a woman to say so, do I feel so sure as our ministers that ours is the only path to heaven. We believe firmly that it is the best path, but others believe as firmly in their paths; and I cannot think, Jabez, that all mankind, save those who are within the fold of our church, can be condemned by the good Lord to perdition."

"Your words are bold, Hannah, and I know not what my father and the elders of the church would say, were they to hear them. As to that I will not argue, but methinks that you are right in saying that the companionship of the young Davenant will do our boy no harm.

"But the lad must have his father's consent. Though I reckon that we could count pounds where they could count shillings, yet, in the opinion of the world, they assuredly stand above us. Moreover, as it is only in human nature that they should regard us as those who have despoiled them, John must have no dealings with their son without their consent. If that be given, I have nought to say against it."

And so John told Walter, next time they met, and learned in reply that Walter had already obtained his father's

consent to going out rambles with him; so the boys became companions and friends, and each benefited by it. To John, the bright, careless ease and gaiety of Walter's talk and manner were, at first, strange indeed, after the restraint and gloom of his home; but in time he caught something of his companion's tone, until, as has been said, his altered manner and bearing struck and annoyed his grandfather.

On the other hand, the earnestness and solidity of John's character was of benefit to Walter; and his simple truthfulness, the straightforwardness of his principles, and his blunt frankness in saying exactly what he thought, influenced Walter to quite as large an extent as he had influenced John.

So the companionship between the lads had gone on for two years. In fine weather they had met once or twice a week, and had taken long rambles together, or, throwing themselves down on the slopes facing the sea, had talked over subjects of mutual interest. Walter's education was far in advance of that of his companion, whose reading, indeed, had been confined to the Scriptures, and the works of divines and controversialists of his own church, and whose acquirements did not extend beyond the most elementary subjects.

To him, everything that Walter knew was novel and strange; and he eagerly devoured, after receiving permission from his mother, the books which Walter lent him, principally histories, travels, and the works of Milton and Shakespeare. As to the latter, Hannah had at first some scruples; and it was only after setting herself, with great misgivings as to the lawfulness of the act, to peruse the

book, that she suffered her son to read it. The volume only contained some ten of Shakespeare's plays; and Hannah, on handing the book to her son, said:

"I do not pretend, John, to understand all that is written there, but I cannot see that there is evil in it. There are assuredly many noble thoughts, and much worldly wisdom. Did I think that your life would be passed here, I should say that it were better for you not to read a book which gives a picture of a life so different from what yours would be; but none can say what your lot may be. And, although I have heard much about the wickedness of the stage, I can see no line in this book which could do harm to you. I do not see it can do you much good, John, but neither do I see that it can do you any harm; therefore, if you have set your mind on it, read it, my boy."

It was a stormy evening in the first week of November, 1688. The wind was blowing in fierce gusts, making every door and casement quiver in Davenant Castle, while, between the gusts, the sound of the deep roar of the sea on the rocks far below could be plainly heard. Mrs. Davenant was sitting in a high-backed chair, on one side of the great fireplace, in which a pile of logs was blazing. Her son had just laid down a book, which he could no longer see to read, while her daughter-in-law was industriously knitting. Walter was wandering restlessly between the fire and the window, looking out at the flying clouds, through which the moon occasionally struggled.

"Do sit down, Walter," his mother said at last. "You certainly are the most restless creature I ever saw."

"Not always, mother; but I cannot help wondering about that ship we saw down the coast, making for the bay. She was about ten miles out, and seemed to be keeping her course when I saw her last, half an hour ago; but I can see, by the clouds, that the wind has drawn round more to the north, and I doubt much whether she will be able to gain the bay."

"In that case, Walter," his father said, "if her captain knows his business, he will wear round and run down for Waterford.

"I agree with you," he continued, after walking to the window and watching the clouds, "that a vessel coming from the south will hardly weather Bray Head, with this wind."

He had scarcely spoken when the door opened, and one of the servants entered.

"Your honour, a boy has just come up from the village. He says that John Considine sent him to tell you that a large ship is driving in to shore, and that he thinks she will strike not far from the village."

"Why, on earth," Mr. Davenant exclaimed, "doesn't he tack and stand out to sea!"

"The boy says her foremast is gone, and they have lost all management of her."

"In that case, God help them! There is little chance for them on this rocky coast. However, I will go down at once, and see if anything can be done.

"Katherine, do you see that there are plenty of hot blankets ready, in case any of the poor fellows are washed ashore. I shall, of course, send them up here.

"I suppose, Walter, you will come down with me."

But Walter had already disappeared, having slipped off as soon as he had heard the message.

"Don't let that boy get into mischief, Fergus," old Mrs. Davenant said.

"I am afraid, mother, he is beyond me," her son said, with a smile. "No Davenant yet could ever keep out of mischief, and Walter is no exception. However, fortunately for us, we generally get out of scrapes as easily as we get into them."

"Not always, Fergus," she said, shaking her head.

"No, not always, mother; but exceptions, you know, prove the rule."

"Well, Godfrey, do you want to go?" he asked the younger boy, who had risen from the table, and was looking eagerly at him. "Of course you do; but, mind, you must keep close to me.

"Ah, Father John!" he broke off, as an ecclesiastic, muffled up to the throat in wrappings, entered the room. "Are you going down, too?"

"Assuredly I am, Fergus. You don't think a trifle of wind would keep me from doing my duty?"

In another two minutes, the two men and Godfrey sallied out. They staggered as the wind struck them, and Godfrey clung to his father's arm. Not a word was spoken as they made their way down the steep descent to the village, which consisted of about a dozen fishermen's huts. Indeed, speaking would have been useless, for no word would have been heard above the howling of the storm.

The vessel was visible to them, as they made their way down the hill. She was a complete wreck. The light of the

moon was sufficient for them to see that she had, as the boy said, lost her foremast. Her sails were in ribbons, and she was labouring heavily in the sea, each wave that struck her breaking over her bows and sweeping along her deck. There was no hope for her. She could neither tack nor wear, and no anchor would hold for a moment on that rocky bottom, in such a sea.

On reaching the village, they joined a group of fishermen who were standing under the shelter of the end of a cottage.

"Can nothing be done, Considine?" Mr. Davenant shouted, in the ear of one of the fishermen.

"Not a thing, yer honour. She has just let drop one of her anchors."

"But they could not hope it would hold there," Mr. Davenant said.

"Not they, your honour, onless they were mad. They hoped it would hoult so as to bring her head round; but the cable went, as soon as the strain came. I saw her head go sharp up to the wind, and then fall off again; not that it would have made much difference in the end, though it would have given them half an hour longer of life."

"Could we get a boat off with a line, if she strikes?"

"Look at the sea, yer honour. Mr. Walter has been asking us; but there's no boat could get through that surf, not if all Ireland dipinded on it."

"Where is Walter?"

"Sure and I can't tell ye, yer honour. He was here a few minutes since; but what's come of him is more nor I can tell ye."

"He went off with Larry Doolan," a boy, who was standing next to the fisherman, shouted.

"Then, as sure as fate, they are up to some mischief," Mr. Davenant said. "Walter is bad enough by himself, but with Larry to help him, it would take a regiment to look after them."

"They can't be in much mischief tonight, yer honour," the fisherman said.

"Look, sir, she's coming in fast. She draws a power of water, and she will strike in a minute or two."

"She seems crowded with men. Can nothing be done to help them?" the priest asked.

"Nothing, your reverence. Praying for them is the only thing that can help the poor sowls now."

"You are sure it's not possible to launch a boat, Considine?"

"Look for yourself, yer honour. There's not a boat on the coast that could get through them breakers."

"There she goes."

Even above the noise of the storm, a loud cry was heard, and the crash of breaking timber as, with the shock, the main and mizzen masts, weakened by the loss of the foremast, went over the sides. The next great wave drove the vessel forward two or three fathoms.

"That's her last move," Considine said. "The rocks will be through her bottom, now."

"They are off," a boy shouted, running up.

"Who are off?" Considine asked.

"The young squire and Larry Doolan."

"Off where?" Mr. Davenant exclaimed.

"Off in the curragh, yer honour. Me and Tim Connolly helped them carry it round the Nose, and they launched her there. There they are. Sure you can see them for yourself."

The party rushed out from the shelter, and there, a quarter of a mile along on the right, a small boat was seen, making its way over the waves.

"Be jabers, yer honour, and they have done it," the boatmen said, as Mr. Davenant gave a cry of alarm.

"I didn't think of the curragh, and if I had, she could not have been launched here. Mr. Walter has hit on the only place where there was a chance. Under the shelter of the Nose it might be done, but nowhere else."

The Nose was a formidable reef of rocks, running off from a point and trending to the south. Many a ship had gone ashore on its jagged edge, but, with the wind from the northeast, it formed somewhat of a shelter, and it was under its lee that Walter and Larry had launched the curragh.

The curragh is still found on the Irish coast. It is a boat whose greatest width is at the stern, so much so that it looks like a boat cut in two. The floor is almost flat, and rises so much to the bow that three or four feet are entirely out of water. They are roughly built, and by no means fast, but they are wonderfully good sea boats, for their size, and can live in seas which would swamp a boat of ordinary build.

Walter had, with the assistance of Larry Doolan, built this boat for going out fishing. It was extremely light, being a mere framework covered with tarred canvas. As soon as Walter had reached the village, and found that the

fishermen considered that no boat could possibly be put out, he had found and held a consultation with Larry.

"Do you think the curragh could go out, Larry?"

"Not she, yer honour. She would just be broke up like an eggshell with them breakers."

"But she might float, if we got beyond them, Larry."

"She might that," Larry agreed, "seeing how light she is."

"Well, will you go with me, Larry?"

"Sure and I would go anywhere with yer honour, but she could never get out."

"I am thinking, Larry, that if we carry her along beyond the Nose, we might find it calmer there."

"Well, we might," Larry agreed. "At any rate, we can try."

So, calling together two or three other boys, they had lifted the light boat and carried it with its oars along the shore, until they got beyond the Nose; but even here, it was a formidable business to launch her, for, although the rocks broke the full force of the seas, throwing the spray hundreds of feet up in the air, the waves poured through the intervals, and dashed over the lower rocks in such masses that formidable waves rolled in to the shore.

After much consultation, the boys agreed that their best plan was to scramble out on the rocks as far as possible, so as to launch the boat beyond the break of the surf.

It was a hazardous enterprise, and the whole party were, several times, nearly washed into the water as they struggled out. At last, they reached a spot beyond which they could go no farther, as a deep passage was here broken in the rock. But they were now beyond the line of breakers.

After several vain efforts to launch the boat, in each of which she narrowly escaped destruction, they agreed that the only plan was, after a wave passed, to drop her on to a flat rock, which then showed above the water, and to jump into her.

The two boys on shore were to hold the head rope, to prevent her being dashed towards the land by the next wave, while Larry worked with the oars to get her away from the ridge. The moment the wave had passed under them, the head rope was to be thrown off.

This plan was carried out. The two boys had but just time to jump into the boat and get out their oars, when the next wave lifted the boat high on its crest. The lads holding the rope were nearly torn from the rock, but they held on till the strain ceased, then they threw in the rope, and Walter and Larry bent to their oars.

"Row easy, Larry," Walter said, as the next wave passed under them, "and put her head to each wave."

Terrible as was the sea, the curragh floated buoyantly over it, though several times, as she rose to the steep waves, Walter thought that she would be thrown right over. The worst part of their task was over, when they got beyond the end of the Nose, for up to that point they were forced to row across the course of the waves, and continually to turn the boat, to face the great masses of water which ran between the rocks. But once beyond the end of the reef they turned her head north, and rowed straight towards the ship.

"She has struck, Master Walter," Larry said, glancing over his shoulder, "and her masts are gone."

"Lay out, then, Larry, there's no time to lose."

But, in spite of their efforts, the boat moved but slowly through the water, for the wind caught her high bow with such force that, at times, it needed all their strength and skill to keep her head straight. At last they were close to the ship, which already showed signs of breaking up. They ranged up alongside of it.

"Fasten a line to a keg and throw it in," Walter shouted.

In a minute, a keg was thrown overboard with a line attached. As soon as it drifted a little way from the vessel's side, they hauled it into the boat.

"Now, back, Larry; these waves would sink us in a moment, if we turn our stern to them."

The wreck lay within a hundred yards of the shore, and the boat backed until close to the line where the waves toppled over in a torrent of foam.

"Now, Larry, keep her steady. We are as near as we dare go."

Then Walter stood up in the boat, took the keg and a foot or two of line in his hand, and waited till the next wave passed under the boat. He swung the keg round his head, and hurled it towards the shore. Then he dropped into his seat, and gave two or three vigorous strokes, and, when safely beyond the line of breakers, sat quiet and watched the result.

"They have missed it the first time," he said. "Look! They are going to run into the surf for it."

The group on the shore joined hands, and the next time the keg was borne forward, in the tumble of foam, Considine ran forward and seized it. The back rush took him from his

feet, but the others held on, and before the next wave came, the line was safely on the beach. A strong cable was soon pulled ashore and firmly fixed. A light line was attached to it, and the sailors at once began to pass along.

"Shall we turn back now, Master Walter?"

"We will keep near the wreck for a few minutes longer, Larry. She can't hold together long, and maybe we can pick somebody up."

The vessel was indeed breaking up fast. Her stern was burst in, and the waves, as they poured in at the opening, smashed up the deck. Many of the crew had been washed overboard, and had instantly disappeared.

As the boat approached the wreck, an officer, who had climbed the shrouds, shouted out:

"Will your boat hold another?"

"Yes," Walter shouted back. "She will hold two more."

"I will try and swim to you," the officer said.

He threw off the long cloak, in which he was wrapped, and unbuckled his sword and let it drop, unbuttoned and took off his military coat, and, with some difficulty, got rid of his high boots.

"Can you come a bit nearer?" he shouted.

"We daren't," Walter said. "A touch from one of those floating timbers would send us to the bottom."

The officer waved his hand, and then sprang head foremost into the sea. So long was he in the water, that Walter began to think he must have struck against something, and was not coming up again; when suddenly he appeared, within twenty yards of the boat. They rowed towards him, instantly.

"You must get in over the stern," Walter said.

The officer was perfectly cool, and, placing his hands on the stern, drew himself partly over it, and Walter, grasping his hand, dragged him in. No sooner was he in, than Walter again hailed the wreck.

"We can carry one more."

But those who were still on board were huddled up in the bow, waiting their turn for the rope.

"There is a big un coming now," Larry exclaimed. "That will finish her."

A wave, towering far above its fellows, was indeed approaching. Higher and higher it rose. There was a wild cry from the wreck as it surged over it. When it had passed, the sea was covered with floating timbers, but the vessel was gone.

"We can do nothing now," Walter said. "We daren't go in among that wreckage, and any who get hold of floating planks will drift ashore.

"Now, Larry, back quietly, and let her drift down round the Nose. We must keep her head to the waves."

Ten minutes, and they were abreast of the reef. As soon as they were past it, Walter gave the word, and they rowed along, under its shelter, to the point where they had embarked.

"Now, sir," Walter said, "we will back her up to that rock. When we are close enough, you must jump."

This was safely accomplished.

"Now, Larry, row alongside when the next wave comes. We must both scramble out as well as we can."

But by this time help was at hand. The boat had been anxiously watched from the shore, and when, on the disappearance of the wreck, she was seen to be making her way back to the Nose, Mr. Davenant, with Considine and the priest, and the boys who had assisted in getting her afloat, hurried along the shore to meet her, the rest of the fishermen remaining behind, to aid any who might be washed up from the wreck.

As soon as it was seen that they intended to land at the spot where they had started, Considine and Mr. Davenant made their way along the rock, and joined the officer just as he leapt ashore. The boat came alongside on the top of the wave, and as this sank it grazed the rock and capsized, but Walter and Larry grasped the hands stretched out to them, and were hauled on to the rock, while the next wave dashed the curragh in fragments on the beach.

Chapter 2: For James Or William.

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"My dear Walter," his father exclaimed as he embraced his son, as he scrambled on shore, "you have behaved like a hero, indeed, but you oughtn't to have done it.

"And you too, Larry. You both deserve a sound thrashing for the fright you have given us."

"They may have frightened you, sir," the officer said; "but assuredly, I owe my life to these brave lads. I have scarcely thanked them yet, for indeed, until I felt my foot on the rock, I had but small hopes of reaching shore safely in that cock boat of theirs. After feeling that great ship so helpless against the waves, it seemed impossible that a mere eggshell could float over them.

"My name, sir, is Colonel L'Estrange, at your service."

"My name is Davenant, colonel, and I am truly glad that my son has rescued you; but the sooner you are up at my place, the better, sir. This is no weather for standing talking in shirtsleeves."

They now made their way along the rock back to the shore, and then hurried to the village. There they learned that six men had succeeded in getting to shore along the rope, before the vessel broke up.

Telling Larry he had best have a glass of hot spirits, and then turn into bed at once, and that he was to come up to the house the first thing in the morning, Mr. Davenant, with the priest, Colonel L'Estrange, and Walter made his way up to the house, to which the men who had reached the shore had been already taken.

The party were met at the door by Mrs. Davenant, who had been extremely anxious, for Godfrey had been sent home by his father as soon as the wreck went to pieces, and had brought the news of Walter's doings, up to that time.

"He is quite safe, Katherine," Mr. Davenant said, "but you mustn't stop, either to scold him or praise him, at present.

"Hurry off, Walter, and get between the blankets. I will bring you up some hot spiced wine directly.

"Katherine, this is Colonel L'Estrange, whom Walter has brought ashore in his boat. You will excuse him, at present, for he has been for hours exposed to the storm, and must be half frozen as well as half drowned.

"Now, colonel, if you will come along with me, you will find a bed with hot blankets ready, and, I doubt not, a blazing fire.

"Ah, here is the spiced wine. Take a draught of that before you go upstairs. You can have another, after you are in bed."

Three more survivors from the wreck were presently brought up. They had been washed ashore on planks, as indeed had many others, but the rest had all been beaten to death against the rocks by the breakers.

Walter slept late the next morning, and, when he came downstairs, found that the others had already finished breakfast. When he had eaten his meal, and listened to the gentle scolding which his mother gave him for risking his life, he joined his father, who was, with Colonel L'Estrange, pacing backwards and forwards on the terrace in front of the house. The first fury of the storm was over, but it still blew strongly, and a very heavy sea was running.