

tunity to attack the house—aise him of his money, for he's as rich as a Jew—and take away the *Coleen Bawn*? We'll call at Shane Bearna's stables on our way, and bring the other boys along wid us. What do you say?"

"Why, that you'll hang yourself, and every man of us."

"Nonsense, you cowardly dogs," replied their leader, indignantly; "can't we lave the country?"

"Well, if you're bent on it," replied his followers, "we won't be your hindrance."

"We can break up, and be off to America," he added.

"But what will you do with the *Coleen Bawn*, if you take her?"

"Why, lave her behind us, after showin' the purty creature the inside of Shane Bearna's stables. She'll be able to find her way back to her father's, never fear. Come, boys, now or never. To say the truth, the sooner we get out of the country, at all events, the better."

The Rapparee and his men had moved up to the door of the old chapel already alluded to, whilst this conversation went on; and now that their dreadful project had been determined on, they took a short-cut across the moors, in order to procure additional assistance for its accomplishment.

No sooner had they gone, however, than an individual, who had been concealed in the darkness within, came stealthily to the door, and, peeping cautiously out, at length advanced a few steps and looked timidly about him. Perceiving that the coast was clear, he placed himself under the shadow of the old walls—for there was now sufficient light to cast a shadow from any prominent object; and thence having observed the direction which the Rapparee and his men took, without any risk of being seen himself, he appeared satisfied. The name of this individual—who, although shrewd and cunning in many things, was nevertheless deficient in reason—or rather the name by which he generally went, was Tom Steeple, a *sobriquet* given to him on account of a predominant idea which characterised and influenced his whole conversation. The great delight of this poor creature was to be considered the tallest individual in the kingdom, and indeed nothing could be more amusing than to witness the manner in which he held up his head while he walked or sat or stood. In fact, his walk was a complete strut, to which the pride arising from consciousness of, or rather the belief in, his extraordinary height gave an extremely ludicrous appearance. Poor Tom was about five feet nine in height, but imagined himself to be at least a foot higher. His whole family were certainly tall, and one of the greatest calamities of the poor fellow's life was the bitter reflection that he himself was by several inches the lowest of his race. This was the only exception he made with respect to height, but so deeply did it affect him that he could scarcely ever allude to it without shedding tears. The life he led was similar in most respects to that of his unhappy class. He wandered about through the country, stopping now at one farmer's house, and now at another's, where he always experienced a kind reception, because he was not only amusing and inoffensive, but capable of making himself useful as a messenger and drudge. He was never guilty of a dishonest act, nor ever known to commit a breach of trust; and as a quick messenger, extraordinary speed of foot rendered him unrivalled. His great delight, however, was to attend sportsmen, to whom he was invaluable as a guide and director. Such was his wind and speed of foot that, aided by his knowledge of what is termed the *lie* of the country, he was able to keep up with any pack of hounds that ever went out. As a *solo* man he was unrivalled. The form of every hare for miles about was known to him, and if a fox or a covey of partridges were to be found at all, he was your man. In wildfowl-shooting he was infallible. No pass of duck, widgeon, barnacle, or curlew was unknown to him. In fact, his principal delight was to attend the gentry of the country to the field, either with harrier, foxhound, or setter. No coursing match went right if Tom were not present; and as for night shooting, his eye and ear were such as, for accuracy of observation, few have ever witnessed. It is true he could subsist a long time without food, but, like the renowned Captain Dalgetty, when an abundance of it happened to be placed before him, he displayed the most indefensible ignorance as to all knowledge of the period when he ought to stop; considering it his bounden duty on all occasions to clear off whatever was set before him—a feat which he always accomplished with the most signal success.

"Ala!" exclaimed Tom, "dat Red Rapparee is tall man, but not tall as Tom; him no steeple like Tom; but him rogue and murderer, and Tom honest; him won't carry off *Coleen Bawn* dough, nor rob her fader ayder. Come, Tom, Steeple Tom, out wid yer two legs, one afore toder, and put Rapparee's nose out o' joint. *Coleen Bawn*, dat's good to everybody. Catliocks (Catholics) an' all, an' often ordered Tom a bully dinner. Hicco! hicko! be the bones of Peter White, off I go!"

Tom, like many other individuals of his description, was never able to get over the language of childhood—a characteristic which is often appended to the want of reason, and from which, we presume, the term "innocent" has been applied in an especial manner to those who are remarkable for the same defect.

Having uttered the words we have just recited, he started off at a gait peculiar to fools, which is known by the name of "a sling trot," and after getting out upon the old road he turned himself in the direction which Willy Reilly and his party had taken, and there we beg to leave him for the present.

The old squire felt his animal heat much revived by the warmth of the frieze coat, and his spirits, now that the dreadful scene into which he had been so unexpectedly cast had passed away without danger, began to rise so exuberantly that his conversation became quite loquacious and mirthful, if not actually, to a certain extent, incoherent.

"Sir," said he, "you must come home with me—d—n me, but you must, and you needn't say nay now, for I shall neither take excuse nor apology. I am a hospitable man, Mr.—what's this your name is?"

"My name, sir," replied the other, "is Reilly—Willy Reilly, or, as I am more generally called, Willy Reilly. The name, sir, though an honorable one, is, in this instance, that of an humble man, but one who, I trust, will never disgrace it."

"You must come home with me, Mr. Reilly. Not a word now."

"Such is my intention, sir," replied Reilly. "I shall not leave you until I see that all risk of danger is past; until I place you under your own roof."

"Well, now," continued the old squire, "I believe a Papist can be a gentleman—a brave man—a man of honor, Mr. Reilly."

"I am not aware that there is anything in his religion to make him either dishonorable or cowardly, sir," replied Reilly, with a smile.

"No matter," continued the other, who found a good deal of difficulty in restraining his prejudices on that point, "no matter, sir, no matter, Mr.—a—a—O yes, Reilly—we will have nothing to do with religion—away with it—confound religion, sir, if it prevents one man from being thankful, and grateful too, to another, when that other has saved his life. What's your state and condition in society, M—? D—n the scoundrel! he'd have shot me. We must hang that fellow—the Red Rapparee they call him—a dreadful scourge to the country; and, another thing, Mr.—Mr. Mahan—you must come to my daughter's wedding. Not a word now—by the great Boyne, you must. Have you ever seen my daughter, sir?"

"I have never had that pleasure," replied Reilly, "but I have heard enough of her wonderful goodness and beauty."

"Well, sir, I tell you to your teeth I deny your words—you have stated a falsehood, sir—a lie, sir."

"What do you mean, sir?" replied Reilly, somewhat indignantly. "I am not in the habit of stating a falsehood, nor of submitting tamely to such an imputation."

"Ha, ha, ha, I say it's a lie still, my friend. What did you say? Why, that you had heard *enough* of her goodness and beauty. Now, sir, by the banks of the Boyne, I say you didn't hear *half enough* of either one or t' other. Sir, you should know her, for although you are a Papist, you're a brave man and a gentleman. Still, sir, a Papist is not—D—n it, this isn't handsome of me, Willy. I beg your pardon. Confound all religions, if it goes to that. Still, at the same time, I'm bound to say as a loyal man, that Protestantism is my *forte*, Mr. Reilly—there's where I'm strong: a touch of Hercules about me there, Mr. Reilly—Willy, I mean. Well, you are a d—d good fellow, Papist and all though you—ahem!—never mind, though, you shall see my daughter; you shall hear my daughter; you shall feel my daughter; for by the great Boyne, she must salute the man that saved her father's life, and prevented her from being an orphan. And yet see, Willy, I love that girl to such a degree that if heaven was open for me this moment, and that Saint Peter—hem!—I mean the Apostle Peter, said to me, 'Come, Folliard, walk in, sir,' by the great Deliverer that saved us from Pope and Popery, brass money, and—ahem! I beg your pardon—well, I say if he was to say so, I wouldn't leave her. There's affection for you; but she deserves it. No, if ever a girl was capable of keeping an old father from heaven, she is."

"I understand your meaning, sir," replied Reilly, with a smile, "and I believe she is loved by everyone who has the pleasure of knowing her—by rich and poor."

"Troth, Mr. Reilly," observed Andy, "it's a sin for anyone to let their affections, even for one of their own childer, go between them and heaven. As for the mather, he makes a god of her. To be sure, if ever there was an angel in this world, she is one."