

variance with religion or morality. It is enough to say, that I wish to prevent a beautiful and innocent girl from being sacrificed. My lord, you know too well that persecution is abroad; and when I tell you that through the influence which this admirable creature has over her father—who, by the way, has himself the character of a persecutor—many Catholics have been protected by him, I am sure you will not blame me for the interest which I feel in her fate. In addition to this, my lord, she has been a ministering angel to the Catholic poor in general, and has contributed vast sums, privately, to the relief of such of our priesthood as have been brought to distress by the persecution of the times. Nay, she has so far influenced her father, that proscribed priests have found refuge and protection in his house."

The bishop, on hearing this, stood, and taking off his hat, raised his right hand, and said: "May the blessing of the Almighty—God rest upon her, and guard her from the snares of those who would make her unhappy! But, Reilly, as you say you are determined, if possible, to rescue her from ruin, you know that if you go at large in your usual dress you will unquestionably be taken. I advise you, then, to disguise yourself in such a way as that you will not, if possible, be known."

"Such, my lord, is my intention—but who is this? What—eh—yes, 'tis Fergus O'Reilly, a distant and humble relation of mine, who is also in disguise. Well, Fergus, where have you been for some time past?"

"It would be difficult to tell you that, God knows; I have been everywhere—but," he added in a whisper, "may I speak freely?"

"As free as the wind that blows, Fergus."

"Well, then, I tell you that Sir Robert Whitecraft has engaged me to be on the look-out for you, and said that I would be handsomely rewarded if I could succeed in enabling the scoundrel to apprehend you."

"But how did that come about, Fergus?"

"Faith, he met me one day—you see, I have got a bag at my back—and, taking me for a beggarman, stopped me on the road. 'I say, you poor man,' says he, 'what's your name?' 'Paddy McFud,' says I—'I belong to the McFuds of Ballymacnoken.' 'You're a beggar,' says he, 'and travel from place to place about the country.' 'It's true enough, your honor,' I replied. 'I travel about a good deal, of course, and it is only that way I get my bit and sup.' 'Do you know the notorious villain called Willy Reilly?' 'Not by sight, your honor, but I have often heard of him. Wasn't he in love with the beautiful *Coleen Bawn*, Squire Follard's daughter?' 'That's not the question between us,' he said, 'but if you enable me to catch Reilly, I will give you twenty pounds.' 'Well, your honor,' says I, 'have the thing to myself; if he's to be had, it'll go hard but I'll find him.' 'Well, then,' says he, 'if you can tell me where he is, I will give you twenty pounds, as I said.' 'Well, sir,' says I, 'I expect to hear from you; I'm not sure he's in the country—indeed, they say he is not—but if he is, I think I'll find him for you'; and so we parted."

"Fergus," said Reilly, "I feel that a disguise is necessary. Here is money to enable you to purchase one. I do not know where you may be able to find me; but go and buy me a suit of frieze, rather worn, a dingy caubeen hat, coarse Connemara stockings, and a pair of clouted brogues; some coarse linen, too, because the fineness of my shirts, should I happen to be apprehended, might betray me. Leave them with Widow Buckley, and I can find them there."

It was so arranged. Fergus went on his way, as did Reilly and the bishop. The latter conducted him to the house of a middling farmer, whose son the bishop had sent, at his own expense, to a Continental college. They were both received with the warmest affection, and so far as the bishop was concerned with every expression of the deepest gratitude. The situation was remote, and the tumult of pursuit did not reach them. Reilly privately forced upon the farmer compensation for their support, under a solemn injunction that he should not communicate that circumstance to the bishop; and neither did he. They were here, then, comparatively safe; but still Reilly dreaded the active vigilance of his deadly enemy, Sir Robert Whitecraft. He felt that a disguise was absolutely necessary, and that, without it, he might fall a sacrifice to the diabolical vengeance of his powerful enemy. In the course of about ten days after he had commissioned Fergus to procure him the disguise, he resolved to visit Widow Buckley, in order to make the necessary exchange in his apparel. He accordingly set out—very foolishly, we must admit—in open day to go to the widow's house. The distance was some miles. No appearance of danger or pursuit was evident, until he came to the sharp angle of the road, where he was met by four powerful constables, who on looking at him immediately surrounded

him and made him prisoner. Resistance was impossible; they were well armed, and he was without any weapon with which he could defend himself.

"We have a warrant for your apprehension, sir," said one of them.

"Upon what grounds?" replied Reilly. "I am conscious of no offence against the laws of the land. Do you know who I am? and is my name in your warrant?"

"No, but your appearance answers completely to the description given in the *Hue and Cry*. Your dress is the same as that of the robber. And you must come with us to the sheriff, whom you have robbed. His house is only a quarter of a mile from this."

They accordingly proceeded to the sheriff's house, whom they found at home. On being informed that they had captured the man who had robbed him, he came downstairs with great alacrity, and in a spirit replete with vengeance against the robber. The sheriff, however, was really a good-natured and conscientious man, and would not lend himself to a dishonorable act, nor had he ever been known to do so. When he appeared, Reilly addressed him.

"I am here, sir," said he, "under a charge of having robbed you. The charge against me is ridiculous. I am a gentleman, and never was under the necessity of having recourse to such unlawful means of raising money."

"Well," replied the sheriff, "your dress is precisely the same as the fellow wore when he robbed me. But I feel confident that you are not the man. Your hair is black, his was red, and he had large red whiskers. In the excitement and agitation of the moment, I forgot to mark the villain's features distinctly; but I have since thought the matter over, and I say that I would now know him if I saw him again. This, however," he added, turning to the constables, "is not the person who robbed and beat me down from my horse."

"But he may be Willy Reilly, sir, for all that; and you know the reward that is offered for his apprehension."

"I know Willy Reilly," replied the sheriff, "and I can assure you that this gentleman is not Willy Reilly. Go, now, continue your pursuit. The robber lurks somewhere in the neighborhood. You know the reward; catch him, and you shall have it."

The constables departed, and after they had gone the sheriff said:—

"Mr. Reilly, I know you well; but I would scorn to avail myself of the circumstance which has thus occurred. I am aware of the motive which urges Sir Robert Whitecraft against you—so is the whole country. That penurious and unprincipled villain is thirsting for your blood. Mr. Hastings, however, has a rod in pickle for him, and he will be made to feel it in the course of time. The present administration is certainly an anti-Catholic one; but I understand it is tottering, and that a more liberal one will come in. This Whitecraft has succeeded in getting some young profligate Catholics to become Protestants, who have, consequently, ousted their fathers out of their estates and property; younger sons, who, by this act of treachery, will get the estates into their own possession. The thing is monstrous and unnatural. But let that pass; Whitecraft is on your trail in all directions; beware of him, I say; and I think, with great respect to you, Mr. Reilly, it is extremely foolish to go abroad in your usual apparel, and without disguise."

"Sir," replied Reilly, "I cannot express as I would wish my deep gratitude to you for your kindness and forbearance. That Sir Robert Whitecraft is thirsting for my blood I know. The cause of that vengeance is now notorious."

"You know Mr. Hastings, Mr. Reilly?"

"Intimately, sir."

"He took your property in his own name?"

"He did, sir; he purchased it in his own name. The property was hereditary property, and when my title to it, in point of law, as a Catholic, was questioned, and when one of my family, as a Protestant, put in his claim for it, Mr. Hastings came in as the purchaser, and ousted him. The money was supplied by me. The moment, however, that I found Whitecraft was after me, I immediately surrendered the whole of it back to him; so that Sir Robert, in burning what he considered my property, in fact burned Mr. Hastings's."

"And I have reason to know, Mr. Reilly, that it will be the blackest act of his guilty life. This, however, I mention to you in the strictest confidence. Keep the secret, for if it transpires the scoundrel might escape from the consequences of his diabolical cruelty and oppression. In the meantime, do you take care of yourself; keep out of his way, and, as I said, above all things, procure a disguise. Let the consequences be what they may, I don't think the beautiful *Coleen Bawn* will ever marry him."

"But," replied Reilly, "is there no risk of compulsion by her father?"

W. F. SHORT

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