Like the stout old oak he was, he presented a more dignified figure under the lightning-stroke than while the miserable parasites were clinging to him with all their family of gnawing fungi. One of the few things he knew, outside the accomplishments of his own butterfly world, was how to die. Hans Harman could have taken much more cheerfully one of his old fiery eruptions than his present calm, pathetic, scarcely reproachful silence. Not that his lordship even remotely suspected the real scope of his agent's projects. Unluckily for himself, he had so accustomed himself to Hans Harman's easy guidance in financial matters that the very thought of figures had become to him as offensive as a chemical analysis of the constituents of his pernicious drug would be to a confirmed opium-eater. All he knew was that he, the lord of a princely extent of country, he who had the portraits of more than twenty ancestors in his dining-room, was invited now to enter villanious-smelling law courts in some dubious bankrupt capacity, and, if ever he was to emerge from that frouzy precinct, would come out a dingy incumbered old wreck, no more like the Ralph Westropp who had once sparkled in the eye of Europe than the decrepid fogey who scrambles for the fire at the Old Man's Hospital in Kilmainham was like the dashing hussar who had once curvetted and kissed hands on his way to fight Napoleon.

(To be continued.)

The Story of Ireland

(By A. M. SULLIVAN.)

CHAPTER LXXXV.—(Continued.)

In those days the Irish peasantry—the wreck of that splendid population, which a few years before were matchless in the world—were enduring all the pangs of famine, or the humiliations of "out-door" pauper life. Amidst this starving peasantry scores of political fugitives were now scattered, pursued by all the rigors of the Government, and with a price set on each head. Not a man—not one—of the proscribed patriots who thus besought asylum amidst the people was betrayed. The starving peasant housed them, sheltered them, shared with them his own scanty meal, guarded them while they slept, and guided them safely on their way. He knew that hundreds of pounds were on their heads but he shrank as from perdition from the thought of selling for blood-money men whose crime was that they had dared and lost all for poor Ireland.*

Dillon, Doheny, and O'Gorman, made good their escape to America. O'Brien, Meagher, and MacManus, were sent to follow Mitchel, Martin, and O'Doherty into the convict chain-gangs of Van Diemen's Land. One man alone came scathless, as by miracle, out of the lions' den of British law; Gavan Duffy, the brain of the Young Ireland party. Three times he was brought to the torture of trial, each time defying his foes as proudly as if victory had crowned the venture of his colleagues. Despite packing of juries, the crown again and again failed to obtain a verdict against him, and at length had to let him go free. "Free"—but broken and ruined in health and fortune, yet not in hope.

Thus fell that party whose genius won the admiration of the world, the purity of whose motives, the chivalry of whose actions, even their direst foes confessed. They were wrecked in a hurricane of popular enthusiasm, to which they fatally spread sail. It is easy for us now to discern and declare the huge error into which they were impelled—the error of meditating an insurrection—the error of judging that a famishing peasantry, unarmed and undisciplined, could fight and conquer England at peace with all the world. But it is always easy to be wise after the fact. At the time—in the midst of that delirium of excitement, of passionate resolve and sanguine hope—it was not easy for generous natures to choose and determine otherwise than as they did. The verdict of public opinion—the judgment of their own country—the judgment of the world—has done them justice. It has proclaimed their unwise course, the error of noble, generous, and self-sacrificing men.

LXXXVI.—How the Irish Exodus Came About, and the English Press Gloated over the Anticipated Extirpation of the Irish Race.

Eighteen hundred and forty-nine found Ireland in a plight as wretched as had been hers for centuries. A year before, intoxicated with hope, delirious with enthusiasm—now, she endured the sickening miseries of a fearful reaction. She had vowed daring deeds—deeds beyond her strength—and now, sick at heart, she looked like one who wished for death's relief from a lot of misery and despair. Political action was utterly given up. No political organisation of any kind survived Mr. Birsh and Lord Clarendon. There was not even a whisper to disturb the repose of the "Jailer-General":—

> Even he, the tyrant Arab, slept;
> Calm while a nation round him wept.

The parliament, for the benefit of the English people, had recently abolished the duty on imported foreign corn. Previously Ireland had grown corn extensively for the English market; but now, obliged to compete with corn-growing countries where the land was not weighted with such oppressive rents as had been laid on and exacted in Ireland under the old system, the Irish farmer found himself ruined by "tillage" or grain-raising. Coincidently came an increased demand for cattle to supply the English meat-market. Corn might be safely and cheaply brought to England from even the most distant climes, but cattle could not. Ireland was close at hand, destined by nature, said one British statesman, to grow meat for "our great hives of human industry"; "clearly intended by Providence," said another, "to be the fruitful mother of flocks and herds." That is to say, if high rents cannot be paid in Ireland by growing corn, in consequence of "free trade," they can by raising cattle.

But turning a country from grain-raising to cattle-raising meant the annihilation of the agricultural population. For, bullock-ranges and sheep-runs needed the consolidation of farms and the sweeping away of the human occupants. Two or three herdsmen or shepherds would alone be required throughout miles of such "ranges" and "runs," where, under the tillage system, thousands of peasant families found employment and lived in peaceful contentment.

Thus, cleared-farms came to be desirable with the landlords. For, as a consequence of "free-trade," either the old rents must be abandoned, or the agricultural population be swept away *en masse*.

Then was witnessed a monstrous proceeding. In 1846 and 1847—the famine years—while the people lay perishing, the land lay wasted. Wherever seed was put in the ground the hunger-maddened victims rooted it out and ate it raw. No crops were raised, and of course no rents were paid. In any other land on earth the first duty of the State would be to remit, or compound with the land-owners for any claims advanced for the rents of those famine years. But, alas! in cruelties of oppression endured, Ireland is like no other country in the world. With the permission, concurrence, and sustainment of the Government, the landlords now commenced to demand what they called the arrears of rent for the past three years! And then—the object for which this monstrous demand was made—failing payment, "notices to quit" by the thousand carried the sentence of expulsion through the homesteads of the doomed people! The ring of the crowbar, the crash of the falling roof-tree, the shriek of the evicted, flung on the roadside to die, resounded all over the island. Thousands of families, panic-stricken, did not wait for receipt of the dread mandate at their own door. With breaking hearts they quenched the hearth, and bade eternal farewell to the scenes of home, flying in crowds to the Land of Liberty in the West. The

*This devotedness, this singular fidelity, was strikingly illustrated in the conduct of some Tipperary peasants brought forward compulsorily by the crown as witnesses on the trial of Smith O'Brien for high treason. They were marched in between files of bayonets. The crown were aware that they could supply the evidence required, and they were now called upon to give it. One and all, they refused to give evidence. One and all they made answer to the warnings of the court that such refusal would be punished by lengthened imprisonment:—"Take us out and shoot us if you like, but a word we won't swear against the noble gentleman in the dock." The threatened punishment was inflicted, and was borne without flinching.