sitting on his tail. As soon as he judged that Mrs. Murrin must have departed he crept to the window. It was a back window, fully forty feet above the level of the ground. Desperate thoughts of tying the bedclothes in a rope occurred to him, but, when he looked into the blank abyss underneath, he dismissed these boy burglar's resources as inventions of the penny novelists. The only gleam of comfort he ecould see in the darkness came through a skylight in the printing-office, whose glass roof lay slightly to his right in the yard underneath the window. There was light in the printing-office, and the idea of arousing the Staff to the rescue of their Chief began to take possession of him. The situation was an ignominious one; but a charge of cowardice was more ignominious still. The world knew what an unreasonable woman Mrs. Murrin was, and was not quite so well provided with evidence what a hero her husband was. He dropped a halfpenny quietly in the direction of the skylight. It was never heard of more. It probably found its grave in a cesspool close by. This time he determined to try a heavier and more reliable coin. He aimed a penny viciously at the skylight. It had scarcely left his hand when he heard the crash of glass in the roof of the printing-office, and heard at the same moment Noble Nolan's pious exclamation of astonishment: "Oh, glory be to God!" He immediately thrust his body half out of the window, and began to shout in a heavy stage whisper, making a trumpet of his hands: "Noble Nolan—Noble Nolan, I say! Noble Nolan!" again.

"My God, sir, is it yourself?" at last came the weak voice from below. "Where, in the name of God, are you, and what is the matter?"

"Here, at the second-floor bedroom window, locked in by that ridiculous woman. Come up, and terminate the tension of this intolerable situation," he said, unconsciously lapsing into one of his own leading articles. "Come up, and unlock the door, like a Christian man."

"Hould on for a minute, sir," said the voice, and for a short while there was a suspenseful silence, after which the voice was heard, more cautiously—"Are you there, sir?"

"I am; but why the devil are you there and not here?"

"Oh, begor, sir, I daren't. The missis is on the landing with the fire-shovel."

"Noble Nolan," roared Mat, like a general in the field, "order up the Staff, and let them carry that landing by assault, if necessary; do you hear—by assault? They have my authority. I now issue it as an order to the Staff."

"Begor, sir," was the apologetic reply, "every man and boy an the Staff is on his way to Coomhola this hour back. The whole country is out!"

"Well," said Mat, after a few moments of wild recurrence to the rope-of-blankets idea, "I'm pleased to know that the *Banner* is adequately represented, at all events. Noble Nolan, you can be of some slight assistance to me, without encountering Mrs. Murrin or the fire-iron. I have discovered a ball of twine here on the table—a ball of twine. Do you follow me?"

"Indeed I do, sir," said the gentle foreman, who had followed his master for many a year through graver intricacies than the ball of twine was likely to produce.

"Well," proceeded Mat, "the arrangements up here, if this outrage is to continue, are of a highly inadequate character—in short, I'm develish thirsty, and I want a drink. Do you follow me?"

"I think I do, sir," came the answer, more diffidently than ever.

"Noble Nolan, you were always a decent fellow, though never a good judge of a glass of whisky yourself. Well, now, I want you to go across the street, to Mr. Tummulty's public-house, with my compliments, for a bottle of his John Jameson of '38, and when I let fall the slight mode of communication the gods have devised for us in growing the hemp that made this ball of twine, you will, with your accustomed fidelity to the best interests of the *Banner*, affix the bottle securely to the end thereof, and I will myself perform the remainder of the enterprise. Do you observe?"

"There is only one thing more, Noble Nolan," he said, ten minutes afterwards, after triumphantly hauling in the refreshment. "I wish you to convey to the boys my deep indignation that various causes over which I have no control —that, in fact, the conduct of a misguided woman—precludes me from having the pleasure of their society in Coomhola; and you will, please, convey to the general in command my special wish that, on their capturing the town, their first operation shall be directed to the deliverance of Mat Murrin from this preposterous captivity."

"Now," he soliloquised, as he pulled out a pocket corkscrew and proceeded to open the bottle, "perhaps, after all, trials like Aloysia are sometimes designed by a merciful Providence for a man's good. Next to bearing a hand in whatever is going in Coomhola, this isn't altogether so bad of a cold night for a gentleman on the freezing side of forty."

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THE AMERICAN SHIP.

Mr. Froude, who loves Irish scenery with the same intensity with which he misreads Irish character, has lavished some of his finest art in pen-and-ink pictures of the beautiful promontory which divides Bantry Bay from Kenmare Bay. The backbone of twisted mountains lies along the whole length of the peninsula for thirty miles, like the skeleton of a fallen Titan, from which Dursey Island has got separated like a gigantic toe-joint. To the three chief peaks the poetic Irish gave the names of the Hill of Anger, the Hill of Battle, and the Hill of Weeping. Once a soldier of a surveying party benighted on the bleak top of the Hill of Anger (Cnocdhiad) jokingly remarked that it would be better christened the Hill of Hunger; and a prosy posterity has ever since seen on the brow of Cnocdhiad, not the storm-clouds of its Irish title, but the breakfastless private of Engineers, and has agreed to call it Hungry Hill. What a miniature portrait of the two nations! and how like the fate of that other romantic tapering peak over Glengariff, to which the dreamy Celt assigned the name of the Witches' Hill (Cnocnacalliagh) and some tourist in the wholesale grocery line that of the Sugarloaf!

Hastening from the Waterfall through the Wolves' Glen, Ken Rohan found his mountain pony at the appointed trysting-place near the bridge of Trafrask, and, leaving Bantry Bay behind him, faced for the steep mountain road which climbs straight over the shoulders of the Old Cow Mountain into Glanloch. The stillness of the atmosphere gave place to a subtle, chilly tremor, and as the pony dived deeper into the gloom of the mountains strange lurid tints began to shoot through the dense grey clouds. The short twilight had already set in, and if Ken had not traversed every mile of the mountains by night as well as by day on many a daybreak appointment with the grouse and cock, he might have been daunted by the darkening and apparently inextricable maze of heights and glens that was closing around him. The sun, which was going down behind the crooked back of Slieve Miskish, was still shimmering bravely through a tawny gold shower, and lit the strangest shades of peuce and lurid red among the storm-clouds in the opposite side of the sky, like the reflection of some dull conflagration among the woody recesses of Glanmore. The beautiful glen could still be seen stretched away to the north-east in soft realms of limpid lake and evergreen woods and tenderly circling mountains, like a beautiful maiden in a camp of rough warrior men. On the horseman's left hand the small sister glen of Glanbeg—a still more charming, shrinking little rustic beauty—was sinking quite away into the gloom of the angry overhanging mountains between it and the dying sun. The suspenseful stillness of the air began to be broken by a low crooning sound, such as might be emitted by great lonesome mountains in pain. Ken knew the sound as familiarly as if it were part of a local code of signals. The road sank deeper into the long, wild ravine of Clugher, bordered on one side by the giant black escarpments of Hungry on its northern face, and on the other by great naked stone-coffin like piles of rocks, littering the whole bleak line of descent towards Cooiloch Bay, like some uncovered cemetery of dead sons of Anak. The sun's brief struggle behind Slieve Miskish was already over. A bright gold scroll of cloud gleamed out for a moment, epitaph-like, over its grave; and then, like most florid epitaphs, was rubbed out by the heavy blood-shot thunderclouds that now in all directions began to pour in, rending one another for the dead sun's inheritance. Suddenly a short