

In The Summer of 1810

Recollections of an artillery officer: adventures in Ireland, America, Flanders, and France

Benson Earle Hill

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In the summer of 1810, I was ordered to Ireland, and embarked at Bristol in a Cork packet. The evening on which we sailed was serene and beautiful; and, although this was my first voyage, I was spared the misery and degradation usually attending novices on ship-board. After keeping the deck till near eleven at night, I descended to the cabin, and found every berth, my own included, (which had been secured many days) occupied. The personage who had taken possession of it was a young lady, already a dreadful sufferer from the motion of the vessel. I begged her to consider my bed quite at her service, and stoutly ordered the mate “to shake me down some signals aft, as I should sleep on deck.” By the few lady-passengers who could crawl next morning, I was complimented on my gallantry, in very flattering language. To atone for my contact with hard planks, I had, on rising, paid scrupulous attention to my toilet; and the contrast of my appearance to those of my own sex, who bore on their habiliments very evident marks of having slept in them, (added to the favour I found in the eyes of the ladies) rendered me an object of petty jealousy with the gentlemen, and gave me a consequence that I did not expect a boy like myself could possess.

The wind blew dead in our teeth; and we were forced, on the third morning, to put into the romantic little harbour of Ilfracombe. Two days on shore afforded me the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the tenant of my berth; and, amongst other things, I vowed to the lovely girl that, for her sake, I should brave the deck for the rest of the voyage, even should it last as long as one to the West Indies. Fortunately, I was sincere, for my professions were put to a tolerable proof, as we beat about for six days and nights in the Channel. My well supplied hampers, even with the additions made at Ilfracombe, of fresh bread, butter, milk, &c. were soon exhausted, for my appetite was enormous, and my spirits excited to their highest pitch by the novelty of my situation. The ladies here stood my friends; chicken, ham, tongue, Madeira, and brandy, were profusely offered and most gratefully accepted. At length, after nearly bumping against “the big head of Kinsale,” we made the mouth of Cork harbour.

I will not here omit to mention, that I have constantly heard the bay of Dublin extolled by Irishmen, nay, some have gone so far as to compare it with that of Naples! Yet they are silent on the splendid and picturesque variety of Cork harbour, in my humble judgment infinitely superior to their boasted Dublin bay, which possesses nothing that I could ever think so very remarkable as to warrant the fuss made about it.

On landing, I found I had no time to lose, if I wished to escape being reported “Absent without leave,” in the Dublin returns; this I regretted, as I much wished to make myself better acquainted with Cork.

I was somewhat surprised at the vast quantity of Quakers I saw there, and amused by hearing their formality of address united with a strong brogue. I secured the only two vacant places for my servant and self, and left for Dublin by the mail at ten o'clock on the night of my landing.

Absent for the first time from England, every thing was interesting; the mud cabins by the road side, the military town of Fermoy, the dress of the peasantry, the number of beggars, their rags, filth, and misery, their appeals for charity, so earnest, yet so whimsical, all occupied my attention. Amongst the first groupe of these unfortunate devils, (chiefly women)

I encountered one who had quickly remarked my military cloak, (a thing not *then* indifferently worn by soldiers and haberdashers) and who had overheard some orders of mine about the luggage to my servant, in spruce livery and cockaded hat.

“ Ah, then, captin, darlint,” began the mendicant, “ throw down a fi’penny amongst us ould cratures, and the blissins of the poor attind you. Do, jewel o’ the world, if it’s only the price of a bit of backy. Devil a ha’porth I’ve got this blessid mornin.”

“ That’s true for you,” joined in another, “ and by raison that the coaches is filled, in and out, any way, by the counsellors and the thaiving lawyers from Cork ’sizes, and sorrow the bit of kindness in the hearts of one of them, the niggers !”

“ But,” continued the first applicant, “ bless your sweet face, your honour ! ’tis aisy to see you are an officer and an Englishman, come to reign over us, so throw down a tenpenny for the honour of the blissid Virgin ! ’Tis you that has the kind heart, captin dear !”

It was not in human nature to resist these joint appeals to my vanity, my country, and my (supposed) rank in the army ; so I threw two or three five-pennies amongst the groupe, for which they commenced scrambling, fighting, cursing, and kicking, like lunatics.

The beldame who had first accosted me adroitly secured the greatest share ; then, jingling the coin in her hands, and looking at me with a strong expression of pity and contempt, said, in a peculiarly insulting tone, “ Ah, then ! God speed ye, my poor soft lad ! Has your mother any more of your sort ?”

We stopped to dine at Kilkenny ; and, whilst dinner was serving, I could not resist running out to look at the castle, so celebrated in the annals of private theatricals.

On returning to my inn, I entered the dinner-room just as the rest of my fellow passengers were sitting down to their meal, and was obliged to look about for a chair in a remote corner. The waiter was a character : a furious red wig scarcely concealed his own profusion of black locks. All anxiety to please the “ Mail-coach gentlemen-passengers,” he bustled up, and, not being provided with a napkin to brush the dust off the seat I was about to occupy, took off his wig, and gave the chair what he called “ an ilegant wipe.” I concealed my surprise at this extraordinary application of his peruke, but was determined to learn something of its history ; so, having made an excellent dinner, and swallowed sundry glasses of “ shuparior” port, I said, byway of commencement, “ Why do you wear that wig over your hair?”

“ Ah, then, sir,” said he, looking at two or three of his countrymen for support against the attack of an Englishman, “ is it *under* my hair you would have me wear it ?”

Need I say I asked no more questions of my friend in the carroty jasey.

The rest of the journey was very wearisome. I was so overcome by fatigue as to require being strapped to my seat ; and most heartily rejoiced I was, on reaching Dublin next morning.

The unexpected delay at Ilfracombe, and the enormous charges there, had so exhausted my purse, that I paid away my last ten-pennies to the guard and coachman, who drove me to Falconer’s hotel, in Dawson Street. I was shown to an excellent and comfortable bed-room.

“ What time would you like to be called, your honour ?” demanded the waiter ; “ ’tis six o’clock just struck.”

“ Call me at six in the afternoon ; I have a long arrear of sleep to make up.”

The man, somewhat astonished, retired, but I will do him the justice to say that he obeyed my orders. About seven, I descended to breakfast ; and, forced by the rain to remain within-doors, I occupied my time in writing to my friends in England till past nine o'clock.

“ Bring me the bill of fare, waiter, and I'll order my dinner.”

“ You'll get no dinner here, sir,” said he.

“ No dinner ! what the devil d'ye mean ? Is it possible,” thought I, “ that he knows the present state of my finance ?”

“ We don't find dinners, only beds and breakfasts ; but never fear, your honour, you've only to step across the passage to Morrison's, next door, and I'll engage you'll have an elegant dinner !”

Every thing in Ireland is elegant, thought I ; but, unless I have the means, I must forego the elegance of a dinner to-day. “ Send your master to me.”

“ He's in the draw'n'-room, sir.”

“ Take this card, and say I wish to speak with him.”

“ I'll do that same ; please to come this way.”

“ Mr. Falconer,” said I, when the well-dressed and highly-powdered host made his appearance, “ I have arrived in Dublin to join the Artillery, and literally without a penny in my pocket ; independently of its being Sunday, 'tis too late to call on the agent, where I have some cash awaiting me. To-morrow I can draw as much as I want ; but, as your waiter tells me, you give no dinners. I must trespass on you for the means of procuring one elsewhere.”

“ With all possible pleasure, sir,” said the courteous landlord. “ Mighty proud I am to serve an officer of the Royal-Artillery”—accenting the first syllable in the last word—“ the gentlemen belonging to your corps have always been very good friends to my house. What shall I have the honour of giving you ? Here's a five pound bank of Ireland completely at your service.”

“ One will suffice, my good sir.”

“ Oh, you'd better take the five, or more, if you please, and we can arrange it after you have seen your agent.”

I thanked Mr. Falconer for his extreme kindness ; and, thus armed, to Morrison's I went, and, although so late in the day, was served with a capital dinner. I had not been many minutes in the coffee-room, when I had the gratification of seeing one of the country's great men. Struck with his remarkable face, the moment he entered I whispered to the waiter, “ That must be a personage of note.”

“ Faith and troth ! you're right, sir, and in high luck to get a sight of him : 'tis Mr. Curran himself ; he's just stepped in to speak to Counsellor O'Regan, and is going over to England on some parliament business this blessed night.”

As it would have been unjust to the generous confidence of Mr. Falconer not to spend part of *his* five pound note, and, having heard Dublin claret highly extolled in England, I determined on the trial.

“ A bottle of claret, waiter ; now—” I added *sotto voce*, “ as I hear you have some tolerable wine in Ireland, let me have the best you can give me.”

“ I’ll engage I’ll bring you a bottle of such as niver a nobleman or gentleman, let alone general or admiral, ever tasted but *in* Ireland, and you’ll say the same, I’ll be bail, after a glass or two.”

In a few minutes, back came my friend with a handsome cut glass jug, filled with Chateau Margaux, and placed it before me.

“ There, your honour, if you don’t call that a good bottle of claret I’m not a Munster man.”

“ I call it a jug of claret.”

“ Well, Where’s the differ ? only the genteels” (looking archly at me) “ prefers the jug in this part of the world.”

To have insisted on a bottle would have endangered my gentility, and so I gave him his way.

Whilst sipping my wine, and faith it was excellent, my attention was attracted by an old woman attired in a large-pattern chintz gown, drawn through the pocket-holes, and falling in ample drapery over a capacious crimson quilted petticoat ; a lace cap surmounted a roll of grey hair, and she carried before her a large flat basket, filled with strawberries, raspberries, cherries, and other fruits. This privileged person moved about the room, disposing of her tempting ware, quite independent of the hotel-keeper, who, contenting himself with his own profits on our dinners, disinterestedly allowed another to make *her’s* of our deserts. I never saw the maxim of ‘ Live and let live’ acted on in this fashion before.

Next morning, I waited on General Trotter to report my arrival. From thence to the agent’s handing him my card, I said, “ You will find my name placed on the Irish establishment for some mouths past, Mr. C—— . I wish to draw some money.”

“ I dare say you do,” answered the sulky man of cash, “ but you’ll get none from me, ’till I know who you are.”

“ I have given you my name, sir, if you will take the trouble of looking at it.”

“ That’s not my way of doing business, young gentleman ; I must have a note from the general, authorising me to pay you, before I advance a farthing.”

“ I don’t ask an advance,” said I angrily, much nettled at the contrast between this hunks and my worthy landlord, with whom I was most anxious to keep faith ; “ I have four months’ pay due to me, as you will see by reference to your books.”

“ If you had four years due, you shouldn’t have a single tenpenny, ’till I was sure you were the person you represent yourself to be.”

“ I’ll soon convince you of that, you very suspicious and remarkably rude person.”

In a towering passion, I flew to General Trotter’s, and explained to him, as well as my agitation would permit, the extraordinary conduct of C—— .

“ My dear boy,” said he, “ if you knew him as well as I do, you would not be annoyed.

C—— is a very honest person, but the greatest bear in Ireland. He is only a clerk to the regimental pay-masters, but fancies himself of much more consequence than the Lord Lieutenant—take this, however,” giving me a note, “ and he will attend to your wishes and settle your business. But you must favour me with your company at six.”

“ A thousand thanks, my dear general ! but—”

“ But what ?—unless you are better engaged, I shall expect you.”

“ Better engaged, sir—no—only—Young is here.”

“ Is he ? that’s strange ! for I received his half-yearly returns from Cork to-day.”

The dear unconscious genial supposed that I had alluded to the commandant of Artillery in that district.

“ I mean that the celebrated Mr. Young plays Sir Edward Mortimer to-night, and I must see him.”

“ Oh, if that’s the case, dine with me, and you can go to the play afterwards.”

To this I readily assented, sufficiently pleased with the prospect of a dinner with the general, so long as it did not interfere with a feast, which I presumed to consider of a far higher relish.

I hastened back to the “ Paynutster’s clerk.” “ There, sir, I hope your scruples will be satisfied.”

C—— coolly examined the note. “ That’s quite right,” he said.

“ I wish you had said it was quite wrong.”

“ Why, young gentleman ?”

“ That I might have had the pleasure of breaking your head.”

“ You are very hasty,” he continued, in the same unmoved tone. “ Let me see, E. F. G. H. Four months you have been on the Irish establishment—how much would you like to draw ?”

“ Every farthing out of your hands, so make out a receipt for the whole.” And I foolishly imagined that the withdrawal of so immense a sum as a second lieutenant’s pay for four months would annoy the man through whose hands thousands past daily.

I strolled about the principal streets till it was time to make my toilet, and at six repaired to the general’s. He was alone, and kindly addressed me.

“ I am sorry to lose you so soon ; but, since your morning visit, I find your company is stationed at Athlone ; and Colonel Hutton has written to me, requesting you may be ordered to join as soon as possible. I therefore request you will proceed tomorrow. During the winter, I shall be most happy to grant you leave to visit Dublin, for the purpose of our becoming better acquainted.”

There was no appealing from orders so given. The moment I could with propriety rise from the dinner-table, I took leave of the good general, and made my way to the Crow Street theatre. The last act of the “ Iron Chest” had commenced, and the extraordinary appeals from

the gallery to the actors during the performance astonished me. Fancy a performer in the exercise of his calling being thus addressed :

“ What time did you leave the Struggler’s last night, Ned ? Is the whisky as good as ever there, old boy ?”

Young’s fine acting had not the effect of silencing the gods ; in the midst of Wilford’s examination, a voice cried out, “ A groan for the lady in the pink bonnet, boys !” which was followed by a hideous yell. The curtain dropped, the boxes and pit applauded ; but the galleries were divided on the question whether “ Patrick’s Day” or “ Garry Owen” should be played by the orchestra, each party roaring out for its favourite, accompanied by the beating of sticks and other rough music. Presently I had the first sample of the theatre being also made the scene of political feeling and party-spirit. “ A groan for b——dy Foster !” naming the Irish chancellor, was immediately answered by “ Turn out those Croppies,” and a vociferous call for “ Boyne Water.” Such infernal discord I never heard, excepting that during the memorable O. P. war. Here I was informed it was so usual, as to pass unheeded, and that the moment persons of any singularity or unusual fashion in their dress appeared, so surely were they assailed.

Not feeling disposed to sit out the farce, I returned to my hotel before eleven, gave my servant directions to pack up, and sent again for Mr. Falconer.

“ My good sir, let me beg you to accept my best thanks for your kind loan, which I now return ; I had hoped to pass some days in your house, but am ordered to Athlone to-morrow.”

“ Don’t mention any thing like obligation, sir. I am sorry you leave us so soon. I know Athlone well ; ’tis an excellent military quarter, with plenty of hunting, shooting, and fishing.”

“ All very fine in their way, but I should have preferred Dublin. Once more I thank you, and wish you good night !”

The worthy host bowed, and was about to leave the room.

“ I beg your pardon, one moment ; as you know Athlone, pray tell me, have they a theatre there ?”

“ No.”

" Oh !"

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Athlone—Destiny decided by a Shoulder of Mutton—The Horse and his Rider—A spacious Bed-chamber—A Funeral—The Beggar—Midnight Adventure.

Early next morning, my man Joseph and myself started for Athlone. It being assize time, the coach was filled and covered with barristers and attorneys. The mother wit and rich brogue of these sucking Currans amused me. I was much struck by the first view I obtained of the Irish bogs, through some of which our road passed ; they were covered with a rich purple tint, and, in some cases, were so vast and with so great a rise towards their centre as to prevent the eye from reaching the firm land on the opposite side.

After a very merry day, I reached Athlone, and made myself known, or, to speak more correctly, reported myself, to my commanding officer. I found a large garrison, occupying

extensive barracks ; the town small and dirty, but, (thanks to its bridge across the Shannon, uniting the provinces of Leinster and Connaught, and its irregularly built old castle), a somewhat picturesque one.

I must here gratefully acknowledge the hospitality of the gentry of the town and neighbourhood : my table was speedily loaded with cards, followed up closely by “ invites,” as the natives term them ; and certainly I never was treated with more unbounded kindness. I shall hasten to relate an anecdote, arising out of the following circumstance, which happened some months after my arrival.

Attending, “ as in *duty* bound,” Divine service, I saw, instead of my friend Dr. Sterling, a stranger mount the pulpit stairs, a man of haughty and orthodox bearing. Some noise arising in the gallery caused the preacher to stop abruptly, and, in a tone of angry authority, desired the worthy vicar to have the gallery cleared and the congregation kept in order. Peace restored, the discourse, which was dull and dignified enough, was concluded. The soldiers fell-in to march to the barracks; the space usually allotted to the artillery was occupied by a splendid carriage with four beautiful horses. The Lord Bishop of Meath, for it was no less a personage who had done the duty, (followed by Dr. Sterling, and the principal officers), now came forth, and, stepping into his vehicle, drove off with such speed, as somewhat to endanger the lives and limbs of “ the boys and childer,” who had assembled on the bridge to see “ the army.”

Many years ago, in a remote district, the inhabitants of a Shebeen house, by the road-side, received, with warm and kindly hospitality, a young pedestrian traveller, who, on entering, pronounced the usual benediction of “ God save all here !” in a clear and musical voice. The people of the house were anxious to show their respect for him and for his habit.

“ Shure ’tis the clargy shall have the best bit and sup that we have,” said the landlord. “ By dad !” added his spouse, “ ’tis mighty lucky that I put down the shoulder of mutton to the fire awhile agoe ; there’ll be just anuff for the three of us, for ’tis off one of the cruel small breed, that Lord —— sent over from England to this poor country.”

The object of their kindness was on his way to Maynooth, in hopes of finding some employment in the establishment there ; he was not in orders, but his garb and manner amply justified the supposition that he belonged to the “ Clargy.”

The shoulder of mutton, gracefully twirling by the fire, now and then received fresh impetus from the fingers of our traveller, whose appetite was somewhat sharp-set. The *Vanathe* was making the onion-sauce, while Murphy was taking the jackets off his namesakes ; all was in admired preparation, when suddenly a Gossoon rushed breathlessly into the cabin, calling on them, ‘ for the lore of Christ, to run and help some travellers whose carriage had upset at the turn of the road, close to the big stone that had been put up to mark the bounds of the barony.’

Both host and guest hurried to the spot, and the latter shortly returned with two English gentlemen, whom he had extricated from their perilous situation ; the landlord remained to assist the smith in repairing the damage which the vehicle had sustained. The Englishmen, after felicitating each other on their escape, asked what they could have by way of refreshment—a sod of turf hanging at the door being sufficient intimation that they were in a house of entertainment. The good woman apologized to her newly-arrived customers, and honestly confessed that “ there was nothing at all to the fore, barrin’ the shoulder of mutton roasting for the clargy.” Thus singled out as the sole proprietor of the good cheer, our young traveller, with much grace and modesty, begged that it might be appropriated to the English gentlemen,

which, after the due preliminaries were settled that he should partake, was accordingly arranged.

The strangers soon found their companion to be a well-educated young man, with a pleasing address and manner. The eldest inquired his present pursuits and future prospects, and learned that an ushership at Maynooth College was the height of his ambition. Some home-thrusts were put in by the querist, touching the difficulty attending the rise of one professing the Roman Catholic faith ; hints were given that, if the “ errors of Popery ” were renounced, something might be done to his great advantage ; a promise, at length, was extorted that he would, for the present, forego the idea of the ushership, and make his way to England, a bank-note for fifty pounds being graciously presented for the purpose.

Nothing now remained for our poor scholar but to learn the *name* of his patron ; a card was handed to him, “ The Duke of ——, —— House, Piccadilly.” They parted. In less than three years, the Rev. Mr. O’B was private secretary and chaplain to his grace ; and he it was who, having arrived at the dignity of lord Bishop, had this day preached at Athlone. Need I add, that to the latest hour of his life his lordship professed a profound veneration for a shoulder of mutton !

As long as I live, I shall remember the avenue at Belleville, having been nearly killed by a fall from my horse there. I am not about to inflict on you, gentle reader, the particulars of my hurt, but relate what once befel in the vicinity of the spot where I was “ spilt.”

A distant relation of Mr. Jones’s, the worthy proprietor of this sweet place, had ridden into Athlone to dine, begging the family ‘ by no means in the world to think of sitting up for him, as he might be late, by reason that he was going to give his judgment on some of Sneed’s claret, that had just been sent down from Dublin.’ The family retired to rest at their usual hour : the footman and helper had discussed all the news of the neighbourhood ; the former had fallen asleep in his chair, and enjoyed a full hour’s snooze, from which he was awakened by the helper’s returning with the stable-lantern in his hand.

“ Musha, then. Corny,” said he of the stable, “ if I had been you, I’d have gone to my bed long ago. Sure, Mr. Stanley has been home this hour and more, for, by the same token, I’ve been making up the bay mare that he has been riding as if the doul druv him. Sorrow the bit did he care for the threuble he’d give, to put the baste in such a thundering sweat !”

“ What’s that you’re saying, Mic ? Mr. Stanley home ! it’s humbugging you are. Haven’t I got the key of the hall-door, and how the blazes would he get in without my knowin’ ?”

“ Devil a know I know,” said Mic : “ all I’ve to say is the mare came into the yard a full hour agone, and not a doubt on’t but he’s found his way up to bed in the dark.”

“ I’ll soon know that same, Mic ;” and, taking a candle, Cornelius cautiously stole to Mr. Stanley’s chamber : it was vacant ! He became alarmed—hesitated what course to pursue, but at length resolved to apprise the eldest son of Mr. Jones of his fears.

“ Master Gusty ! whist ! don’t mind, ’tis only me ; but, get up, jewel, and give us your help. The bay mare is come back all alone by herself, and devil a sight of the rider.”

Young Gustavus hastily dressed himself ; and, accompanied by Mic and Corny, sallied forth in quest of his missing relative. The lodge-gate of Belleville is nearly a mile from the house. It was a dark and stormy night, or somewhat nearer morning. Carefully did they patrol the road in vain.

“ We’ll know at the lodge, Master Gusty, if he’s inside the domain, any way,” observed the sapient Mic.

Gustavus found, to his great mortification, that the old woman who kept the gate, wearied with waiting, had thrown it open. They proceeded along the high-road, anxiously searching the ditches on both sides : still no trace was to be found of Mr. Stanley.

“ Thunder and ages, master jewel ! but we'd better go back and get more help.”

“ I think that same,” added Corny, who evidently was alarmed at the prospect of finding a dead man, for he anticipated no less. “ Besides, sir, there’s nobody up, and the side door is open.”

“ True, you can return ; Mic and I will continue our search.”

The valiant Cornelius was in no mood to go back alone ; so, mustering all the eloquence he possessed, he induced his young master to turn his steps homewards.

Poor Gustavus was sadly cogitating on the probable fate of his kinsman, when suddenly his attention was arrested by some indistinct and distant objects.

“ Corny, what are those white marks yonder ? Give me the lantern.”

“ Och, then, for the love of Jasus, don’t venture, master dear !—’t is the good people, in great numbers ;” and Cornelius lifted his hat reverentially, and bowed towards the supposed assemblage of fairies.

“ Fool !” cried young Jones, snatching the lantern from the trembling hands of the superstitious footman.

After advancing some fifty yards, he arrived at a knot or circle of dwarf black-thorn bushes, on one of which he found a white cravat streaming in the wind. He passed hastily into the circle—the body of his relative was lying on the earth before him, stript to his shirt !

Much alarmed at the sight, he put the light close to the face of the prostrate figure ; no mark of violence appeared : he held his breath, and stooped down to ascertain if the unfortunate man still lived. Stanley was sleeping soundly : his coat, waistcoat, and unmentionables, were all huddled together on the top of a bush, by his side.

Gustavus was relieved from a load of anxiety ; the only difficulty now was to convey the sleeping man to his apartment without waking him, as his attendants most positively refused to touch the body. Gustavus at length overcame their fears, and the sleeper was quickly deposited in his bed.

Next morning, on being questioned by his young friend as to the adventure of the past night, Stanley was ready to swear that he left Athlone perfectly sober, and that he remembered quite well his undressing and going to bed in his own room. So much for tasting Sneed’s claret !

Corny, who gave me his version of the story, swore that, “ although the gentleman had been deceived into the belief that he was at home, his sins hadn’t left him, for that he wint so far as to wind up his watch, and hang it upon a twig close to his head.”

Being late for the dinner hour, I was one day riding very fast towards the hospitable mansion of the Rev. Mr. Hudson, at Hudson's Bay, when, as ill-luck would have it, I met, in the midway of a long line of bog-road, a funeral. I had heard of the vast importance attached to the meeting a rider on a grey horse, and of how much consequence it was to the soul of the departed whether the horseman held his way, or had the Christian charity to turn round and follow the corpse until it arrived at the next cross-road.

Late as it was, as my steed happened to be, although not so "gallant," yet the same colour as Fitz James's, I did turn round, and the mourning relatives testified their gratitude by placing me immediately behind the turf-car, on which the rude coffin of the defunct laid.

I could not help smiling at the contrast exhibited between the tattered costume of the rest of the groupe, and my spruce blue and gold uniform. The arrival at the cross-road terminated my services ; I was "given leave to depart ;" and, overwhelmed with prayers that "good luck might attend my stepa" I turned about, and, making good use of my Latchford's, reached my destination before the soup was off the table.

I accounted for my delay ; and my having yielded to the custom of the country was received as a sufficient excuse by my excellent host. I was invited to repeat my visit on the following Monday. That day arrived : I had arranged to give a seat in my gig to a friend in the 92nd ; but a still-hunting tour of duty deprived me of his society, so off I drove alone.

On the outside of the fortifications thrown upon the Galway side of the town, I had often observed a cripple, whose mutilated form and piteous appeal had several times extracted a five-penny from me. He had built himself a rude shed, under the slope of part of the glacis, within some dozen yards of the road, and from this retreat would implore compassion from all passers-by, suiting his language to the grade of the person addressed.

As I turned the angle leading to the bivouac of the poor *Bauchal*, I saw him hobble out of his nest, and make for the road. I drew up to give him a trifle ; he looked me full in the face, with an expression of earnestness which I shall ever remember, and commenced :

"The Lamb of God, guide, guard, and save yoa, captin ; 't is you have the open hand, and the generous heart; and, may Holy Mary"—here he crossed himself devoutly, and proceeded in a very significant tone—"protect yon from the hands of your enemies ! Who knows but the born cripple may help you in your need, by the blessin' of God !"

I was so aware of the blarney of Irish beggars, that I received the benediction of my mendicant friend as a matter of course.

A numerous party had assembled at Hudson's Bay, and a delightful day it proved. When the carriages were ordered, Mr. Handcock, the sovereign of Athlone, intimated that it would be quite as prudent for those who were returning to town to start together, and keep dose, as he had received information that some desperate characters had passed from the Weatmeath side into Roscommon. There were so many pairs to be put to, that my "one horse chaise" was neglected ; after some time had elapsed, however, I was fairly seated and on my way.

Vainly endeavouring to overtake my friends, I had proceeded about two miles on my road, when, in passing through a collection of miserable cabins, I found, to my surprise, some ten or a dozen men standing across the road ; they were talking loudly, and apparently angrily; but, as their discourse was in Irish, it was all "Greek to me," In plain English, I sung out to them to clear the road ; so far from obeying me, they headed the horse, and one ruffianly-looking fellow put his foot upon the step.

“ What do you want ?” I demanded, by no means pleased with my situation.

“ Money !” cried three or four “ most sweet voices.”

“ My good fellows, you have made a mistake : you have let all the rich slip through your fingers. I am only a poor soldier, with hardly a ten-penny to bless myself.”

“ We’ll try that,” said the man on the step, and was in the act of getting in. I jumped up to prevent it, though my boyish strength would have availed but little against my muscular antagonist.

“ It will be of no use. I gave the last I had to a poor beggar close to the town.”

“ He did ! he did ! the Lord Jasus bless him for that same !” suddenly exclaimed my friend, the cripple ; who, advancing hastily towards those nearest to me, insisted that I should pass.

The fellow, who appeared the leader of the band, and who still held on by the gig, seemed no ways disposed to listen to him, but was about to lay hold of me.

“ Jim Fagan !” roared out the lame man, “ do you wish that your brother Bat’s soul may soon see glory ?”

“ I do ; what of it ?”

“ And didn’t a stranger, on a grey horse, follow the corpse of poor Bat ?—and isn’t that a sign ’tis short purgatory he’ll have, by the blessin’ of Jasus ? And, och, for the love o’ God, why would you harum this young boy, for it was himself, and nobody else in this blessed world, that showed respect to him that’s gone. I seen him foller him, I know him well. Englisher as he is, sorrow the time he rides by the poor and maimed but he gives alms. Och, boys, make way, and let him go.”

Jim Fagan had removed both hand and foot at the bidding of the cripple ; “ the boys” fell back. I bade my preserver “ a good night and God speed ;” adding, as I perceived the road free, “ and the same to the rest of ye.”

I need not say how glad I was to reach my barrack-room ; nor must I omit to mention that my determination to reward my unexpected ally was frustrated. He was never seen again at his old haunt.

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