

"We're at the end of our tether, Dick," replied Bob Lloyd.

"I'll get over the ditch and take him by surprise," said the doctor.

And suiting the action to the word he climbed over the fence, and walked quickly towards the pond. The wild duck seemed really taken by surprise, for it remained hid behind a fragment of ice till the doctor reached the brink of the pond. He stood panting for a few seconds, with his gun half raised to his shoulder, but the duck never stirred. He advanced a step or two on the ice, and was beginning to think that the duck had got off in some inexplicable manner, when a tremendous splash and clatter in the water made him start. The duck rose so close to him that his first impulse was to step back. In doing this his feet slipped from under him, and he came down with extraordinary celerity on the end of his spine. The shock caused a queer sensation in his throat, and, in fact, he was much in the same state as Mrs. Slattery when she implored Father Hannigan to inform her whether she was killed.

"Why the blazes didn't he fire?" exclaimed Bob Lloyd.

"And why doesn't he get up?" Mr. Lowe asked, as he stood on his toes and looked over the fence.

"Faith, he's taking it easy," said Bob Lloyd. "Let us come down to him."

"What's the matter, Dick?" he asked, on reaching the pond.

In reply Doctor Richard Kearney informed his friends in a quiet, matter-of-fact manner, and in the fewest and shortest words, that the part of his person upon which he had fallen was "broke."

"Misfortunes never come alone, Dick," said Bob Lloyd. "Get up, and let us be at the jack again."

"Yes, 'tis the pleasantest," replied the doctor. "Help me up. For, hang me if I'm quite sure whether I can stand."

He found, however, that he had the use of his limbs; and then returned to the well in pursuit of the jack-snipe.

But the jack-snipe was not to be found. In vain they tramped through the rushes, and along the drains and ditches, and everywhere that a snipe would be likely to be found. The invulnerable jack had disappeared from the scene altogether.

"He's dead," said the doctor. "I knew I peppered him the last time."

"But if he was dead," Mr. Lowe remarked, "wouldn't the dogs find him?"

They took one more round through the rushes; and then, as if moved by a single impulse, the three sportsmen grounded arms.

Bob Lloyd rested his elbow on the muzzle of his gun, and dropped his chin into the palm of his hand.

"Bad luck to that duck," said Bob Lloyd solemnly. "We lost our day's shooting on account of it."

"What is Hugh up to?" the doctor asked, pointing to his brother, who was standing on a little bridge on the bog road, and waving his handkerchief to them.

"I think it is calling us he is," said Mr. Lowe.

"Let's have another glass of grog," the doctor suggested.

"Ay, faith," replied Mr. Lloyd. "Come over."

They returned to the house; and after another application to the square bottle, retraced their steps to the bog road, where Hugh was waiting for them.

"Ye had good sport it would seem," Hugh remarked. "Game must be plenty in Mr. Lloyd's preserves?"

"Well, we didn't meet much," replied Mr. Lowe.

"And we lost our day's shooting on account of that duck," said Richard, putting his hand under his coat-tails with a look suggestive of a disagreeable sensation.

"If we cross over to the turf-ricks on the high bank," Hugh remarked, "we may get a shot or two at the plover coming into the bog. They are flying low."

"I vote for going home," replied the doctor. "I have got enough of it for one day."

"I dare say you will have a good appetite for your dinner."

"Well, rather; but we had lunch at Bob's."

"What do you say, Mr. Lowe?" Hugh asked. "Shall we cross the bog and try and add a few grey plover to our bag?"

"Well, I confess, I'm inclined to vote with the doctor for home."

"Home is the word," said the doctor. And on seeing some country people approaching he managed to let the head and neck of his snipe hang out of his pocket, and, with the long gun on his shoulder, stepped out at a quick pace, looking as if he had done wonders during the day.

(To be continued.)

Evening Memories

(By WILLIAM O'BRIEN.)

CHAPTER XXIII.—A BAD LOSER (1889).

A man who was not afflicted with the subtlety of Mr. Balfour would have found no difficulty in understanding the lesson of Manchester. The course he now took can only be accounted for by the quality of all others that might seem least applicable to him—stupidity. Far from recognising that he had been outraging the British sense of decency, he proceeded to outrage it more insolently than ever. Instead of sensibly closing the chapter of his prison theories with the surrender of six months before, at Tullamore, he wilfully reopened it under every circumstance that could suggest personal chagrin, as well as ineptitude in a ruler of men. His Irish prisoner, who was received with provoking honor by the people of Manchester, and lodged in the State apartments of his Royal Highness of Clarence by their Lord Mayor, was the morning after his transfer to Ireland felled to the ground by Mr. Balfour's warders in his prison of Clonmel, with every accessory of stupid barbarity, for refusing to do the very thing respecting which after a long struggle he had been formally justified, a few months before, in his refusal; now as then, the Chief Secretary gloried in these not very valorous insults to his captive, and this time with a perceptible ingredient of spite running through his misrepresentations and jests; and now, even more decisively than then, it was to end in a capitulation on every point dictated by his prisoner, and the final disgrace of the policy of prison degradation which he had made the touchstone of his Irish Administration. If one need not dispute the Jove-like aloofness from human infirmities which Mr. Balfour claimed when he told Mr. Dillon in the House of Commons "he could assure the hon. gentleman that no articles he ever read, either in Irish or in English newspapers, had ever given him a moment's uneasiness, or the least desire to inflict vengeance on the editor," it can only be observed that his words and his official acts were chosen with an infelicitous gift for throwing suspicion upon his own boast.

First let me recall the terms in which the Chief Secretary saw fit to address a festive Unionist banquetting party in Dublin at a moment while the people of Ireland, and, perhaps, a considerable portion of the people of Britain, were distressed by the unequal struggle going on within the walls of Clonmel gaol. It need only be prefaced that the press was excluded from the banquet, and the names of the hilarious company suppressed, and that the "prolonged laughter," and the "roars of laughter," with which his patrician humor was rewarded, were expressly inserted in "the official report."

"I had the honor of receiving at about a quarter to one last night—(prolonged laughter)—a telegram from the Lord Mayor of Dublin—(renewed laughter)—which I allude to now because I take it, it represents the Nationalists' case with regard to Mr. William O'Brien's treatment in prison, and in this document, the original of which I have got in my hand, I read—(I won't read it all)—'illegal and brutal violence'—(laughter)—that isn't it—(laughter)—'unexampled indignation'—(laughter)—'system of attacking and beating down your political adversary by torture'—(laughter)—No, that is not it. Here it is—'Mr. O'Brien has now been naked in his cell for thirty-six hours—(roars of laughter)—and to-night we learn that he is lying speechless, and that the prison authorities, considering his condition dangerous, have applied to you for instructions.' That, gentlemen, is the operative, the important part of the telegram which you will probably have all seen in the *Freeman's Journal*, and which I shall have to allude to in quite another connection in a few moments. Now, I want to say to you that every single substantial statement in that passage I have read is wholly and absolutely incorrect—(cheers). What has happened is this: Mr. O'Brien,

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