

THE THREE GIUSEPPES.

I HAVE been for some time very much distressed for my excellent friend the Honourable Tom Shuffleback. There is not alive a fellow of a more agreeable vein of humour, or so utterly regardless of the rules of the world; yet when I last visited him at his hunting box, the remnant of a baronial property, which has long since ceased to acknowledge him as an owner, I perceived a heart-brokenness about him altogether unaccountable. He possesses the same delicacy of taste and power of digestion which he has always manifested in matters of venison and turtle; and the racy Burgundy and cool Bourdeaux meet with the like homage as heretofore. But yet he is a changed man. I staid an additional week with him on purpose to unravel the mystery, and help him to finish a quarter cask of La Fitte. For a long time I was as unsuccessful in the one as successful in the other. At length I remarked, that, ever and anon, after the third bottle, he carefully removed a volume of manuscript from a cunningly-carved oaken box; and having cast his eye over a few pages, threw back the book, and instantly yielded to wayward moodiness. "More wine in the library," he would say to his butler—a sure sign of wo and thurst.

I was resolved to discover the secret: therefore, one evening after we had picked the bones of a cold turkey and a brace of widgeons (I never saw him more dejected), and emptied a flaggon of home-brewed (on this occasion he scarcely swallowed a drop), I loitered behind; and the instant he disappeared, sprung to the book-case, took down the box, inserted my pen-knife below the edges of the nails of the hinges, and thus, in a moment, foiled one of Bramah's best patent locks—slipped out the volume, hugged it, like my first born, to my bosom, and, with candle in hand, stalked, like Lady Macbeth, to my chamber. Poor Tom! I heard him desire the butler to bring him a mug of hot wine, with a toast in it. His agony of heart must have been bitter. Grief is, indeed, catching—and, from the bottom of my heart, acutely feeling for my friend—I gave the same order.

The secret soon disclosed itself. I hastily made a copy of the melancholy detail, and, with sunrise, re-deposited the volume, re-screwed the box, and came to breakfast, with a yawn that expressed nothing but "this moment out of bed." I was now obliged to proceed to London without delay, taking a provincial tour in my route. My readers will judge of my astonishment—if they read a little farther—when I tell them that the first intelligence I received on reaching the capital was, that my poor friend, on the very day I left him, had run off with his cook.

I thought this removed all hesitation about giving publicity to my felonious acquisition, especially as I had a hankering after the young woman myself. I therefore present you the extract, as I took it from poor Tom's Diary.

"Roma—O, Roma!"—I find that it is usual, and considered classical, to indulge in a fervid exclamation on entering this imperial city. I forgot that ceremony when I arrived; but it is never too late to be well doing either in morals or taste. If the matter had been left to my own judgment, I would rather have said, "Lady Ellen—O, Lady Ellen Roselle!" she is the most splendid model of nature's workmanship. Canova's chisel fell from his fingers when he looked upon her, and so would Chantry's, if such an enviable moment of contemplation had been given to him. I see her before me. Tall, but not lengthy; a bust heaving with life and warmth; and which, in symmetry, outdoes all the swelling of Parian marble; lips, which close with a smile; glossy hair, jet as the tresses of the daughters of Italy, but not hanging lank and wicky over mahogany shoulders—it curls on her neck, and touches a skin which vies in hue with the snow-flake in mid-heaven; eyes mild and swimming, not ever on the glare, straining to flash like clouds surcharged with summer lightning, but allowing looks of benignity to steal forth, which sink the deeper in the heart because they are not dreaded; and, when her soul is kindled, letting loose a flood of fire, which, to resist or

endure, is given to no mortal man; her carriage dignified—she is connected with the most influential families in England; her deportment polished—she has manors in five counties; her voice harmony—she can command four boroughs; her attitudes perfection—she has a freehold in a ring fence of thirty-two miles; her gait majestic—she has one hundred and eighty thousand pounds in the three per cents.

It cannot, therefore, appear unnatural (I have sold my lands almost to my last acre; and owe more than many a great don was ever worth), that I should exclaim, "O, Lady Ellen—Lady Ellen Roselle!"

Neither can it be regarded as a matter of wonder, that for the same reason I keep a sharp eye on Baron Grosham. He is—but I must be correct—he says, he has a principality near Heidelberg; but then he is as empty as a drained tun. Our American friend, Dick Schuykill, is of comely exterior and insinuating address; but still, I never saw my Ellen but she shrunk from intimacy with the Virginian savage, as if she had plucked from off the branch an evening slug instead of a rennet. As for Ned Thelusion, he is too much a book-worm to be a redoubtable rival; besides, he has no shoulders—he stoops, and the only colour in his cheeks is the hectic flush of early dissolution—his heel is slipping over the grave's edge, while he thinks, silly fool, that he stands on adamant. Then he is everlastingly contaminating the air with scraps and odds and ends of those knaves who made my early years miserable. To be sure, it is strange how Lady Ellen will listen to him when he speaks of gray turreted castles—rocks shrouded with black pine—valleys alive with the wanton birds, and glittering with the fluttering wings of the red grasshopper—snow masses poised on the precipice's brink—and the contentious stream frozen into bonds at the moment of its most unruly pride. But what is all that but words! So courage, Tom Shuffleback! the day, the manors, the ring fence, and Lady Ellen, shall be thine.

My plan is a very pretty one. Lady Ellen has resolved to steal away to Tivoli, with no other companion than the green-faced Mrs. Toady, and a

short-legged woman of France. I don't take into account the Yahoo who attends as major domo—an accursed thing of six feet by three, and deriving its origin from a barbarous country north of Northumberland, and which Providence is said only to permit to exist in order to give our premier (in power) forty-five votes when they are needed. Now this idea of Lady Ellen immuring herself in a greasy village because it has a brawling waterfall, a grotto, and a few merry-andrew houses, tottering over mouldering, shelvy ledges, is altogether prejudicial to her real comforts and my views. How could a gentleman be expected to leave Rome (where truly the *consommé de perdrix* is admirable, and the quails and kirscher wasser without compare), and go and starve at Tivoli, where buffalo beef, boiled in olive oil, and powdered with a nefarious mixture of pounded garlic and pestiferous *gruyère*, is served up as the *chef-d'œuvre* of cookery, by a monster unshaven, and with his shirt sleeves turned above his elbows? Still, I must not lose the step I have taken in her good opinion. I certainly made a deep impression upon her yesterday. She had ordered her carriage for an hour or two's drive in the neighbourhood. The blockhead of a coachman drove towards the Capo di Bove, which another blockhead told us was the tomb of a lady dead, Heaven knows when! *Dio mio!* as if an old gray ruin rotting under a coating of ivy, alive with every crawling iniquity, rising over the shrivelled skin and parched bones of an old Roman woman, whose non-existence would not have mattered the dropping of a dried leaf, and whose death was of equal importance as crushing a gnat disporting in a sun-beam, was an object meriting a half day's jolting under a sun hot enough to have made a Salamander gasp. It was a foolish whim in Lady Ellen; yet, when I saw her stand, with arms folded over her bosom, and her full black eyes bent on the tower, rising singly in a melancholy mephitic waste, uncheered by habitation, hedge, or tree—my heart filled with a sense of her excellences, and a recollection of her manors and ring fence—I pressed her hand. The green lizard rustled through the grass, and its diminutive friends peeped from the crevices in the wall, as the tiny fly hummed past in false security. Birds

flitted from stone to stone, and a flock of goats, with jingling bells, paused on the road; while the kids, mounting a broken arch, peeped over to see what novelty now characterised the scene.

— "Who was she, the lady of the dead, Tomb'd in a palace?"

repeated Lady Ellen, thoughtfully.

"Was she a matron of Cornelias' mien?" she continued.

"No; I am wrong. Pray, Mr. Shuffleback, what *does* Lord Byron say?"

"At this moment, my dear Lady Ellen," I answered, "I do not precisely remember: it has escaped me. A minute past I could have told you. But it will recur immediately, and you may depend on Byron. He was marvellously acquainted with all the black-eyed donnas of the south."

"Cecilia Metella has been dead centuries, Mr. Shuffleback," replied Lady Ellen, rather gravely.

"Ah! very true," I hastily observed. "I had forgot. But the antiquity of this place really bewilders me. She could not have been acquainted with his lordship:" and looking imposing, waving an adieu to the gray deformity, and whispering a few unintelligible words, I handed my lovely angel to the carriage, and stole back to the city. She did not utter a syllable, and I was equally silent; but I saw that the sensibility of my feelings had struck her. Virginian Dick, if he had been present, would have spoiled all. He would have compared the (detestable) ruins to the Town-hall at Williamsburgh; and the deep blue sky to the colour of his frock coat. The German would have killed us with his "yaw wohls," and Thelluson would have been a mile a-head of us deciphering the name of every stone, and raising to new existence the boobies who fought and died in this atrocious country. I remember what a trick he played us when her ladyship would pass a day at a grotto, in the valley of Caffarelli, where, with all the contumaciousness which beauty is certainly entitled to indulge in, she tried to make us believe that a young woman presided aerially. The rain fell in torrents, and was sucked up by the spongy moss under our feet; and yet the Baron, Dick, and I, dare not enter into the protecting archway, which hung over Thelluson and Lady Ellen, on account of the impertinent questions Ned would

ask us as to all and sundry matters connected with a hole not fit for a dog-kennel, and a trickling stream, which a water-newt would have curled its nose at. It was altogether a disagreeable morning. As the clouds flew past, and the deep blue sky opened, and a flood of heat again parched up the grass, a serpent uncoiling itself, issued from below a matted thicket of alder bushes, and raising its many-coloured neck, waved its crested head.

"What a graceful creature," said Lady Ellen; "you may touch it, Mr. Shuffleback, with the utmost safety: it is of a species perfectly harmless. Is it not, Mr. Thelluson?"

"I pray you to excuse me, madam," I answered—"my hands are so wet that I should dim the colours. But the Baron has had the benefit of a capacious cloak. So, Baron, lift the beauty, preferring always the tail. Ged! Grosham, it is not a horse. Nay, it would be friendly. Schuykkill is short-sighted, and loves to have objects of taste under his very nose."

As I spoke, Virginian Dick disappeared; and when I turned to the Baron to repeat my request, I saw him receding as quickly, and Ned standing with the horrid reptile curling round his arm, its keen villainous eyes glaring in his very face, and its crest raised with the fury of a game chicken on its first turn-up with the monarch of the dunghill. Mrs. Toady had early crept into the carriage, and the short-legged woman of France taken to the right a series of strides, which would have qualified her to be spouse to the Colossus of Rhodes. Lady Ellen, when we were again gathered like chickens under her wing (Thelluson had given freedom to his new friend), scarcely took notice of us all the way home. Indeed, she only spoke to Thelluson, except once when she desired her Scotch Yahoo to look out for another of these infernal vermin.

Lady Ellen has gone to Tivoli; and we must, after the gentlest fashion, try to frighten her back to Rome. The means I have in contemplation are as ingenious as simple. She has taken a vast inclination to ruminate among the ruins of Adrian's villa—a mass of confusion, full of caverns, recesses, and desolate buildings, only fit for wintering cattle in, or breaking up to mend the roads with. "Now," says I, (I was breakfasting with Virginian Dick, the

Baron, and Thelluson,) "we shall confederate together, my lads, and get up a small plot; we shall assume the guise of minions of the moon—gentlemen of the road, you dull varlets,—were not they your forefathers, Dick?—and so the moment we perceive Lady Ellen on a sentimental excursion among the old chambers, we shall appear before her as tip-top brigands. I have ascertained that the originals have all left the neighbourhood; or, I can assure you, Baron, and you, Dick, I would not, for a moment, have thought of such a thing. I shall be your leader—the far-famed, the bloody Giuseppe Decesaris."*

"But should Giuseppe happen to be there!" observed Thelluson, very gravely.

"Ay," said the Baron, in a low tone.

"Ay," repeated Dick, in a lower. "That is a consideration, certainly," I remarked, somewhat catching the solemnity which had so suddenly come over us,— "a most important consideration."

"But, Tom," resumed the Baron, with an effort, "you said that you had ascertained that these ruffians had left the hills."

"Oh, did I so?" I hastily replied. "Yes, to be sure, I did. Ged! the serious way Thelluson spoke took me by surprise. And, after all," I added, not liking a particular expression in Ned's countenance, "suppose Giuseppe did happen to come, by the magnanimous powers! he would find a Giuseppe there before him."

In short, every thing was arranged as I wished. Ned, no doubt, made considerable resistance; but he is a fastidious fellow, and at length yielded to take a part in our plans.

We mustered company to-day. My valet, for a few crowns, got me a most becoming disguise from the theatre. I had allowed my beard a three-day's jubilee, and, with the aid of a little burnt cork, so ingeniously connected my whiskers with my lip-stubble, as to exhibit altogether a very ferocious front. A little gum supported, close under my mouth, a tuft which might have made Henri Quatre envious. A brown hat, sprouting with crimson

feathers, rising from a paste buckle, threw a shadow of darkness over my already gloomy countenance, and spoke unutterable things. A great sabre swung at my side, (I am told it could draw out), and the hilts of two pistols jutted from my girdle. The barrels I removed: they were irksome in walking, and I dislike playthings of that kind. Dick and Grosham were tastefully belted in red jerkins, rich with lace, with most sinister unflapped hats. A perfect horse-tail of raven hair hung over their ears and streamed on their shoulders. They really looked very like their part;—one could have thought them born for it. I was struck at Thelluson's garb. He was attired in the black sugar-loaved beaver common to the peasantry, ornamented merely with a velvet band and steel buckle. His clothes were gray, or rather drab;—his knees were unbuttoned, and disclosed pure white linen drawers, girded by a red garter;—his jacket hung looped to one shoulder. There was no finery about him, except that his waistcoat was broadly barred with gold lace. A belt, studded with cartridges, and bearing a little powder-horn, supported a straight sword; and he carried in his hand the most mischievous-looking, short, blunderbuss-trombone I ever saw. Its bore was truly murderous, and (I expostulated with him about it in vain) I remarked it was loaded—the hammer brilliant as fire, and the flint ready, almost of itself, to give escape to the deadly spark. This seemed very foolish: such weapons are sometimes known to go off of themselves most unaccountably; and do the wearer, and even innocent bystanders, grievous injury. Then his pistols were double-barrelled; and, on my friend the Baron's inspection, (I begged him to do me that favour), proved to be rifles, and charged to the muzzle. I again represented to Ned the indiscretion of his conduct; but there are some people with whom it is in vain to argue. We therefore said no more on the subject. Our preparations, however, had been a little premature. The gipsy, Lady Ellen's maid, whom I had bribed to give us intelligence of the interesting moment of her mistress's visit to the Villa, contrived to tell me that the

* Namesake and successor of the noted banditti leader, shot, we believe, in 1819, in the woods of Terracina.

expedition was delayed until to-morrow. It was no great matter.

We again assembled, and repaired secretly to the woods shading part of the ruins, and thence stole down to one of the innermost recesses of the buildings. My valet, in the shaggy garb of a shepherd, carried with him a delicious invention of modern times—a silver pan, with lamp below. In the former we nestled a few dozen of *becca ficus*, and, with the aid of a shower of crumbs and a little larding of Florence oil, and the presence of an anchovy toast, turned out a *dejeuner* which would have made an anchorite's teeth water. I had slept uneasy the night before—I thought Thelluson's conduct so foolish; and therefore, as a bracer to the nerves, slipped into the provision-basket a handful of *eau-de-cologne* bottles, filled with a *liqueur* I have ever affected most as a cure for mental and bodily affliction—pure Schiedam. I owe it to the Baron. The ladies of his family, he said, were never without it. As we took our places round an elevated marble slab, whose cracked and splintered surface had secured to it repose in the dungeon where we had collected, the gray light stealing half-way in by the doorway, while the lamp threw a glare on our faces, and the curling smoke wasted itself in eddies along the roof, the interest of the moment became delicious. I thought on the manors and ring fence. As our hearts filled with delight, our appetites increased; and as each individual bird disappeared, a sigh of sincere but irremediable grief arose. I would have despatched my valet for more; but I was afraid he might tell tales, and thus ruin our plans. "Besides," I observed jocularly, "if I were to send him for any thing, it should be for the monarch of the Bovi, one of the largest dimensions. Fellows of our fashion, instead of picking at the pigmy feathered creation, ought to be, amidst oaths and execrations, rending the wing of an ox, crushing between our teeth interminable strings of onions, and quaffing whole oceans of generous wine. By the by, what a pity we had not thought of trussing up my valet here, as an unransomed prisoner, whose ears are about to pay forfeit! Suppose we still give him a slight nicker;—it would add much to the reality of the scene, and be to him no particular

detriment. Eh! what say you, Thelluson?"

"Nay," answered Ned, "we do not require any thing further to perfect the picture. I never saw a party of more rascally-looking galley slaves in my life. Indeed—(and he dropped his voice into that solemn earnest cadence which is sometimes so disagreeable)—indeed, I feel very much satisfied that if the *sbirri*, who, I rather believe, are still loitering about, not very far off, in search of a stray ruffian, should happen to stumble upon us, we should make an exhibition on the ladder, with the merciful hangman at our heels, to save us pain, long before we could get any friend to redeem us by vouching for our identity."

"Now, Thelluson," observed Virginian Dick, choaking on a bird, "how can you poison the fleeting comforts of life? Here are we engaged in the most innocent pleasure, and the very last mouthful you force me to gulp down in bitterness. I guess you do it on purpose. Such personal jokes are a bore—Tarnation!"

"Nay," answered Thelluson, "I spoke sincerely. Justice, in this country, is apt to be most prompt where the innocent are to suffer. If they do not tie us up, and, when half-dead, shew their skill as marksmen, by firing at our dangling legs, they will shoot us off-hand, and then set our heads on hedge-stakes to dry."

"Hush!" I interrupted. "These observations are most unkind. But, as Providence is all-powerful, who of you whistled? By the saints! I never knew that was one of Lady Ellen's accomplishments." The alarm, however, was speedily removed, or rather, its cause explained. My valet, either disliking my proposition, or disapproving of the view taken by Thelluson, had edged to the door, and was on the point of fugitating, when, seeing Lady Ellen already treading the smooth sward, running in front of our den, his sense of duty returned, and he hastened back to give information by the indiscreet method he chose to select. "Thank God, gentlemen," I said, (for we ought to recognise all our mercies),—"thank God, we know the whistler; and now for action. Cheer up, Baron; Thelluson must have been only facetious."

Thereupon we re-assumed our arms, which we for a moment had laid aside;

and having arranged our garments into the utmost degree of ferocious elegance, and ruffled up our whiskers, and drawn our hats over our eyes, sallied forth. Lady Ellen was seated on a fragment of a reversed column, and was engaged in earnest conversation with Mrs. Toady and the short-legged woman of France; while the Yahoo was busy removing, with a branch which he had torn off a decayed tree, the soil and dust that filled up the crevices of the sculptured capital—the subject, I fancy, of this day's rumination.

As we formed a ring round my lovely enthusiast, I clapped my hands together smartly. Lady Ellen sprang up at the noise, and instantly we enclosed her and her party, and rung our muskets on the ground. I did so with a smartness that reverberated through the vaults; but I plucked Thelluson's arm, that he might be cautious in that movement. I need not, however, have taken that trouble, for he was evidently hanging back, as if he did not like the joke. I suspect he recollected his trombone was loaded. I assumed the banditti exterior as powerfully as I could. Lady Ellen was still standing silent: her face flushed; but she neither fainted nor screamed. I expected either or both. And what surprised me most was, that Mrs. Toady seemed wonderfully placid, and the short-legged woman of France did not run away. For a moment the Yahoo raised the branch of the tree (it was by no means a mere twig,) and I verily expected to have seen the desperate creature wield it aloft in the air, preparatory to an onset; but the monster, with a most insulting mien, threw it down, and sunk his hands in his pockets.

"Who are you?" now inquired Lady Ellen, with a look of hauteur and pride, and some slight sprinkling of contempt: "Who are you that thus unasked intrude into our company?"

"Madam," I answered, moving a step forward, "I am one with whom the word *intrude* has no place when and where he chooses to *appear*;" and again I rung my musket upon the ground, and dexterously allowed my jacket to open, and display the radiant hilts of my pistols,—“I am Giuseppe Decesaris!"

As the name passed my lips, a rustling noise was heard in the adjacent brake, and, as Heaven will be my judge, every myrtle and laurel bush grew, as

it were, into life, and forth stalked a gang of armed men. They were dressed in mournful funeral cloaks, gathered together by a bright belt. Their feet were enclosed in unprepared leather sandals, and a gay ostentatious cap and plume sat on their brows. They had duck guns, of a length that was truly alarming. A cross-made saturnine ruffian, evidently the leader, placed a whistle to his lips, and blew a call which cut like a knife through my brain. "I knew not," he said, in the husky tone of one inured to all weathers, "that the blood of Giuseppe ran in the veins of another human creature. Pray, who is he that dares to spoil our house of its name—now its sole wealth, except what the sword—(and he bared a huge Damascus blade)—purchases in contention and strife?" I remained silent. Really the situation was very unpleasant. American Dick and the Baron were evidently watching an apt moment to carry into execution an independent retreat. I was too far forward to be able to extricate myself by the same means. Ned, however, stood firm; but the booby, instead of blazing away with his trombone, and thus, under cover of the smoke, giving us our only opportunity of escaping, had stepped before Lady Ellen, and grounded his gun. "I shall make no resistance," he cried, "if no insult or injury be offered to this lady: allow her safe retreat, and I am your prisoner: or say what ransom you require, and it shall be paid. But hark ye, sirrahs!" and he inclosed Lady Ellen in the hollow of his arm, and plucked one of his double-barrelled rifles from his belt, "whether I fall a sacrifice or not, the first of you who places his hand upon this lady, dies on the spot." As he spoke, his eyes glared, but his cheeks and his lips were bloodless: he must have been deucedly frightened,—and no wonder,—matters were far from comfortable. The crisis was fast approaching. I heard the lock of Thelluson's pistol click as he cocked it. He was, I suppose, keeping the trombone for a *bonne bouche*. "For God's sake," exclaimed Lady Ellen, seizing his hand, "be composed! For Heaven's sake, Mr. Thelluson, as you love me"—(I heard her say the very words)—"listen to me! Spill no blood! Oh, what folly is here, and I the cause!"

"It is folly," answered Ned; "yet our presence here may be of use, when

we only meditated a piece of idle mummery. Shuffleback, Dick, Baron, stand up like men! When Lady Ellen is concerned, shall we act the craven? I shall rather die than yield a foot. By the crest of our house, the felons hesitate! Nay, then, here's for close quarters;" and, changing his pistol to the hand that inclosed Lady Ellen, he plucked his sword from the scabbard.

"Ay," I added, with the most determined air of resolution I could command (for often a great deal is done by the appearance of boldness): "Pray, sir, who may you be, who speak of line and lineage like a king at arms? Pray, sir—"

"Oh, hear me! I entreat you, hear me!" interrupted Lady Ellen.

"Nay, my lady," I resumed; for I felt myself getting very valorous. "Let me deal with the fellow"—(I had Ned covering me.) "Pray, sirrah, who may you be, who thus interrupt a small party of pleasure who had a little joke of their own to indulge in? Lady Ellen, you know us,—you know me—I am Tom Shuffleback; and here are—(ah, gentlemen, no retrograding)—Virginian Dick and the Baron."

"Who am I?" answered the fellow, apparently anxious to come forward, but only treading time with his feet, not liking, I do verily believe (and I don't wonder at it), the cut of Ned's straight blade. "Who am I? Then, know," and he sawed the air with his great arm, "I am Giuseppe—Giuseppe Decesaris!" Scarcely had he spoken but, as I am a living man, and have ever eschewed untruths, and hope to be pardoned for my sins, I saw issue from below a mass of these infernal ruins a fantastic hat, encircled with ribands; then the shock head of a deep chocolate-coloured ruffian, carrying in his hand a musket partaking of the trombone's bore and the duck-gun's length. He crept out with the contortious winding of a serpent, then, springing up, and sending to the heavens a whistle, which made the other fellow's seem the low sigh of a love-sick maiden, a band of the most hang-dog felons that these eyes ever rested on, rose, as it were, out of the earth. "Aha!" he cried. "Aha! Both Giuseppe Decesaris!! A miracle, by our Mother of Loretto. But what say you to a third?—to the Giuseppe Decesaris! He who expects not mercy, and gives none. Let every woman's son of you throw your arms

to the ground, or your lives are at your lips. *Faccia terra!*—I never give that order twice."

It was an awful moment. Oh, that I had been shooting quails among the ripe grapes on the banks of the lovely Arno! But this was no time for unavailing repining. I therefore dropped down, or rather I was upset by the clumsy way in which Virginian Dick and the Baron obeyed the brigand's directions. The first party of banditti, at least as many of them as could escape the grasp of the new comers, had fled, casting away, in their hurry, their hats, cloaks, and wigs; and what was my astonishment, when, as I lay recumbent, I saw in the saturnine knave who had originally alarmed us, the coachman of Lady Ellen, and in his companions the servants of her hotel, who had been disguised, no doubt, with the design of catching us in the snare which we had laid for their mistress? That gipsy of a lady's-maid must have betrayed us.

My head now became quite bewildered. I looked round me. Mrs. Toady had also disappeared. It was afterwards said that she had climbed a tree. I doubt that: she had a stiff knee, which would not have permitted such an experiment; besides, she was a personage of great delicacy of mind, and would not have shewn her legs for the world. I rather think that she crept into a little fenny spot close to us, and there, hidden amidst the reeds and bulrushes, escaped notice. The colour of her face was naturally in admirable concordance with the yellow and green hues of her retreat. The short-legged woman of France had trusted to pure speed, and was seen scampering over the ground, like a milk-white heifer stung with a gad-fly. A shot or two were fired after her, but it only quickened her pace.

In the mean time a bitter contest was raging round me,—I may almost say upon me,—as once or twice I felt myself very much in the situation of Sancho Panza when ensconced in two bucklers, "like a flitch of bacon between two trays," and bearing a horrid fellow on his back, shrieking for fire-pots, and kettles of melted pitch, rosin, and boiling oil. I heard Lady Ellen cry for mercy, in a tone which the shouts of the combatants could not overpower. "Save him, at least," she screamed, and threw herself before Thelluson, from whom, in the strife, she had been disengaged. "Take my brooch, my

purse, my golden ornaments—send for my jewels: let them be his redemption. I care not for the price—give him but his life."

At this moment I turned more round, and saw Thelluson over and over again making a free space round him. Blood streamed over the faces of several of the assailants; and his own forehead was laid open, and part of his ear hung flapped upon his shoulder. But he neither spoke nor shrunk. He had discharged his pistols, the trombone had been wrested from him, and his sword was red even to the handle. Others of the band had by main force overthrown the Scotch Yahoo. I saw him for an instant, with his knees on a ruffian's breast, and his knuckles kneaded into his throat; but, alas! a heavy blow on the nape of the neck loosened his hold, and a gasp, like the death-rattle, was for a time the only token that he lived. In another direction, some suttling, thievish-looking miscreants, to whom the rest appeared like gentlemen, were occupied in despoiling Virginian Dick and Grosham. My friends lay stock still. Their hats were removed in a trice: their doublets disappeared as rapidly: their undergarments fled. "Good Heavens!" I thought; "are the reckless gallows-birds going to set poor Schuykill and the Baron loose to be laughing-stocks to the merry milk-maids and the brunettes of the ever-to-be-execrated Tivoli?" But I was mistaken. The rogues were only acting up to the old adage,—"A fair exchange is no robbery." In an instant Dick and Grosham were adorned with the abominations which their captors had stripped off, to make room for the gorgeous apparel of the captured.

Thelluson was still fighting sturdily. Giuseppe stood with his arms crossed. "Are you going to be foiled?" he said to his followers—"baffled, and beat by a great boy and a girl? Bungling cowards! can't you seize and tie him neck and heel? But take heed how you sully that lovely woman with the impression of your fingers: she is worth a city's ransom. Confound the fellow, will he cut my men to pieces before my face?" and at the instant that Thelluson had lifted his hand to wipe from his eyes the stream of blood which blinded him, Giuseppe stepped within Ned's guard, and, vigorously embracing him, held him, as it were in a vice, until two of the ruffians collared and pinioned

him. Lady Ellen did not speak, and I now saw the reason. She had swooned; and as Thelluson's arm was removed, she fell. Luckily, she dropped upon me. "Repose upon my bosom," I said: "feel, my dear Ellen, how my heart beats: it is through the fervency of my passion for thee!" But I don't believe she heard me; and I had not an opportunity of repeating the address, as one of the insolent slaves began to make me undergo the same treatment practised upon Dick and Grosham. My elegant jacket disappeared. The Turkish-sort of trowsers which I had worn were plucked off, and I was constrained to draw on a pair of tight leathers, which seemed to have been made of a putrid skin, softened into unreasonable pliability by a month's soaking in a ditch. Shakespeare says somewhere, "Misery acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows." It is the same with small-clothes.

"Tie him tight," said Giuseppe to the two men who held Thelluson. "*Razza di cane!*—have you again forgotten ropes?"

"These are the best ropes," answered one of the ruffians, and he pressed his thumb against the edge of his sword: it seemed uncommonly sharp. "Right, Bruno," continued Giuseppe; "and there's a fellow (pointing to me) who deserves your good offices. He lies so still, that I suppose he means us to carry him." I instantly sprang up, and, pressing my elbows to my side to give the idea of being already in bonds, I took my place in the line of march which I now saw forming. Virginian Dick and the Baron led the way, under escort, but very slowly; for I never saw men more adverse to advance. Two of the brigands hung like bull dogs on each ear of the Scotchman. Lady Ellen, now recovered, was permitted, at her urgent entreaty, and on handing to Giuseppe her encased gold watch, to have the support of Ned's arm; but I almost thought her object was to support him. I followed, walking, what is vulgarly called cheek by jowl, with Bruno, a rude fellow, whose sole amusement was approaching me with the edge of a sharp stiletto, as if I had been a sulky mule, and needed spurring. The few of Lady Ellen's suite whose heels had not purchased safety brought up the rear, guarded by a bevy of rogues with gallows marked on their foreheads, and

armed with large clasp-knives, like Dutch snigasnees.

Immediately after quitting the ruins, we entered on a path intersecting a thicket of low shrubs. I am told that our way led through another series of old towers, temples, and tombs; and that a rippling stream washed the base of a shrine of the Madonna, rising amidst a grove of white mulberry, laced with ivy and clematis, and rich with wild flowers. But I do not believe it. I only recollect tumbling over a mass of gray *tufa*, almost into the arms of a country lad attending a few wretched sheep. He took no notice of me, and, I fancy, dared not appear sensible of our presence. Giuseppe now went in front, and, when under the screen of a jutting rock, wheeled round, and beckoning to us to follow, entered a narrow defile, and, pressing through bushes that seemed, from their interlacing, to be impervious, at length halted us in a hollow dell, closely fringed with maple and willow, hanging with vetches and convolvuluses, and topped by gigantic chestnut-trees. It opened at one narrow spot to the country, and there stood a black cross, the memorial of some of the brigands' handy-work. "This is the devil's bowl," said Bruno; and the ruffian never spoke more truthfully.

Here we were obliged to sit, with hands on knees, doubled up like so many half-drunken satchels at a Canadian parley. We were specially informed, that the breath which gave utterance to a whisper would be our last; and the banditti made out of some ozier plants a bundle of withes, which would have enabled them to have carried their threat into instant execution. The Scotchman, however, was still inclined to be restive, and, indeed, was only kept in order by Lady Ellen, who, at my entreaty, lest we might be all strangled through the stupid fellow's perverseness, at length persuaded him to be calm and discreet. Virginian Dick and the Baron sat with their lips pursed together, straining their eyes on the yawning gap above. Whatever the one did, so did the other. They seemed like two mocking-birds. But these motions were merely mechanical. I do not think my friends were in their right senses. To this hour they deny the existence of the longest and most heavy day I ever passed. All had been a blank to them. Thelluson sat gazing mournfully on Lady Ellen; her arms lay folded across her bosom,

the attitude which she always, unconsciously, assumed when deeply affected. Her eye-brows were slightly knitted, and her eyes were alternately scorched with dry fire, or gushing with tears. The drops were those of agony. "This I cannot endure," muttered Thelluson; "the strength still left to me may yet be of avail." But as the ruffians turned at the sound of his voice, she placed her hand in his, and bending on him a look of earnest expostulation, "Be calm," she said. "In your self-possession rests my whole hope. It would be madness to attempt opposing your single force to the numbers which surround us." "Ah, Lady Ellen!" I was observing, "why count only on one friend?—surely I"—But Bruno plucked at my skirts. "There are some fools," he said, "whose ears we crop; there are others who have to eat what has been cropped. Take a hint, friend." I did so, and spoke no more.

Drearly the hours lagged. Here we lay captives to a handful of felons, and expecting every moment the most ruthless violence. Elsewhere all was peace and tranquillity. The day had become sultry; but occasionally a breeze of wind, loaded with sweets, came in eddies into our retreat. The thrush and dove, from time to time, peeped through the latticed branches, and then, scared with the unusual occupants of their place of repose (I must have presented a very strange figure), flitted away. We heard the jocund voice of the peasants driving their flocks to the river's brink. Even the heavy tread of travellers, perhaps of the very parties in search of us, reached our ears, and yet we dare not mutter a word. I am certain, from a wild look which Thelluson gave, when the sound as of one of our names broke upon the stillness, that he was on the point of shouting for aid, careless of being himself the instant sacrifice; but he saw a sneaking rascal draw forth a pistol, curiously chip the flint's edge, and then, resting that deadly instrument on his knee, direct the muzzle towards Lady Ellen,—and Ned mastered himself.

Giuseppe was walking about utterly unconcerned. He was richly dressed; his waistcoat and jacket hung with filigreed silver buttons. His body and limbs were tightly embraced in blue velvet; and heavy sandals were laced half way up his legs. His shirt was open, and the collar thrown off the

neck. A large silver heart, from which he occasionally took a Virgin and Child, and pressed them to his lips, was suspended from a button. A pure piece of crystal—an amulet in which he was known to put great faith, as having the power of blinding his pursuers (it had belonged to a namesake, a brother rogue, shot some years before)—was suspended so as to be partially concealed in the opening of his jerkin. His people were nearly in the same garb, though less decorated. Some of them were sleeping, others kept watch; one was reading aloud. Suddenly Giuseppe sat down, and plucking pen and ink from his belt, he wrote an order, which I afterwards learned was an injunction upon some unfortunate farmer, to deposit by a time certain, in a place appointed, a supply of clothes and provisions, under pain of death and pillage. "Here, Solomon," he said to a bald idiotic-looking fellow, "stick this with your stiletto into the back of the first contadino you meet; let him be our courier: fix it firm, or the rogue may drop it." Solomon grinned, and pressed his finger on the point of his weapon, as if to ascertain its power of penetration.

As evening arrived, preparations were made for our departure. Latterly, the gang had been fortifying themselves against the fatigues of the coming march, by devouring great gobbets of sodden meat, and washing them down with potent draughts of country wine, contained in a skin, carried by the idiot Solomon. I was offered a lump of black, gritty bread, larded with fearful butter. I declined in as courteous a manner as possible. But I thought I should have fainted when the idiot, with a grin, took out from his wallet a couple of blue shrivelled kidneys, and stringing them on a ramrod, asked me if I loved a relish! When evening closed we resumed our march along an antique pavement. It was a magnificent night. The sky was nearly black, and the moon hung in the heavens like a silver shield. A stream of light touched the summit of the trees and edges of the rocks, and, as we passed into an open glade, fell with dazzling splendour on a solitary arched portal, in which was sunk a red tile bearing the image of the Madonna. Each ruffian signed the cross, and raised from his neck his little saint, kissed it, and muttered an invocation. Again we were entangled in dark thickets, and

once more entering a wide expanse, a flood of fire poured on the whole party.

"Curse on the moon," said Giuseppe: "the jade will betray us. I never yet had a good foray, but that infernal lamp burnt as if lighted with all the faggots of hell."

"Ye'll ken mair anent that, I'm thinking," said the Scotchman, with asperity, and squeezing his lips together in the energy of expressing the words.

"Silence, sirrah," answered Giuseppe, striking with a clubbed musket the poor wretch. "Silence, or your life!"

"Ah!" growled out the Scotchman; "it's wonderful valour belabouring a maister'd man—truly, casting water on a drowned mouse."

"Simon! Simon!" exclaimed Lady Ellen, "how can you be so imprudent? You are only increasing exasperation, and adding to our misery. Sir! Captain!" she continued, addressing Giuseppe, and restraining his upraised arm, "I shall answer for my servant—pray excuse him this once."

"Nay, my lady," replied Giuseppe, with a look of sweetness that made him ferociously ugly, "your words are my law. We are rough soldiers; but beauty may, without fear of refusal, dictate to us. You are more charming than the loveliest daughter of Italy—can England boast many such?" and the fellow's eyes sparkled; and he snuffled with his nose, and looked with a look that made Lady Ellen shriek and shudder, as if, in the heyday of mirth and merriment, her hand had suddenly rested on death.

"But, *per Dio*," said Giuseppe, "what noise is that? There should be only silence in these regions."

"It is nothing," answered Bruno, "but the river breaking over the stones. Listen!—It is the blast that brings the roar of the waters."

We continued our route; Giuseppe, however, anxiously watching every sound. "You are right, Bruno," he at length said. "This little serpent, that winds at our feet, when it reaches its cage of rocks, makes an uproar worthy of old Tiber itself. Come, let us push on—we shall soon be in our dominions."

"I wish ye were in Satan's," burst forth the Scotchman.

"Now," said Giuseppe, in a tone of unrestrained violence, "one other

word, and I shall set thee on that felled tree which lies across the chasm at thy feet, and then wheel thee into the gulf below."

As he spoke I looked where his arm pointed. We had turned sharply round a corner; and in a moment was disclosed to us a torrent leaping from rock to rock, covering with silver spray the jagged points which impeded its course, then in a sheet of light rushing over a precipice, and burying its radiance in an inky pool: then, again, stealing away in a glittering flow, once more to be broken into vapour, and lost in darkness. "I have," continued Giuseppe, "but to mount thee on that courser, and a kick will send thee to perdition."

"Sure, Captain," I could not help interrupting, "that is not intended for the feet of rational creatures. It is tempting Providence to essay passage by such a twig, when other means of communication are, no doubt, in command."

"Thou art an ignorant jackanapes," answered the impertinent fellow. "For a league right and left I defy any human foot to cross. Aha! he would be an active knave that could stem that current or master these rocks. Try the bridge's footing, Bruno." And, is it to be believed? the graceless villain walked on the slippery tree as if it had been a causeway road, and gave it a shake with his foot, and a stamp with his heel, till the earth crumbled from the banks. "It will serve our purpose," he said, "and the next comer may look to himself. It is not yet our hour to bespatter the rocks with our blood and brains."

"Hush, Bruno, hush!" broke in Giuseppe; "that was not the rushing of the stream. No—it is a whistle—my love's signal. Ah, in a minute all will be right."

"I rather think," observed idiot Solomon, "that the sound comes from Carlo, who went to keep a look out on the road to Poli."

"Is it so? then the sbirri are on our heels—so over—we have no time to lose. Nay, by our holy mother, I was right—Solomon, you are a block-head—it is my love's cry, hastening me home. I shall see my boy too—Ah! *ma bella donna, et cara fanciulla!* Well, but her eyes must not witness my infidelity—Annetta would never pardon me if she knew I pressed another's

red lips." And the monster took Lady Ellen in his arms.

By this time Virginian Dick and the Baron had been led, or rather pushed, along the detestable beam. Bruno had shewn the way. This gave Thelluson a little more liberty; and scarce had Giuseppe been able to sully Lady Ellen's cheeks more than a matter of three times (the fellow was wonderfully rapid), when Ned struck him such a blow with his doubled fist, straight on the mouth, that the rogue, altogether unaccustomed to this mode of expostulation, retreated upon the toes of the party behind him, now, from the nature of the defile, gathered into a knot. The Scotchman repeated the application with such fury as beat Giuseppe to the ground. In an instant Thelluson and Simon carried, or drew, Lady Ellen across. I also got over—but how, I never knew, nor can I well guess. If it were not for the tight leathers and the width of the gap, I should almost think I leaped it. I have some strange vision of feeling myself in mid air—my feet touching nothing, and my eyes bent on the roaring stream below—but I really was much excited, and that is the reason my narrative is little better than a string of shreds and patches. But it is the best I can give—I'm sure it is candid.

Well, as Thelluson reached the other side, he stooped; and while the blood poured from his opening wounds, and, with the exertion, burst from his eyes and ears, he tore up one end of the tree, then, aided by Simon, pushed it from the bank, and let it fall into the hollow. But as Thelluson rose, Bruno, wheeling round, struck him to the earth. Unable to regain his feet, Ned slipped and rolled, and his clenching fingers grappled in vain the yielding grass. The next instant would have been his last, but Lady Ellen seized me by the arm, and, straining forward, caught Thelluson on the very ledge. Bruno's triumph was short. The Scotchman lifted him, as Goliath would have handled a bantling, and hurled him in the air. I saw him straddling and sprawling, in idle hopes of reaching either bank, then drop into the white foam: for a time one arm was visible, stretched above water, like a flag-staff upon a sea-buoy; then he was lost for ever in the deep pool, which boiled in darkness.

I had been able to support Lady Ellen by grasping in my turn the Baron, who applied for the same purpose to Dick; but, while in this act of kindness to a distressed fellow-creature, I heard a shrill voice. It was strange to my ears. I at first thought it was the piling whining of the idiot Solomon. I looked up, wondering how he had got over, and expecting that he would soon follow Bruno; but I saw a young woman hastily approaching. I was in too much jeopardy to think long on such matters; but my eye never rested on (always excepting Lady Ellen) such a figure of light. Her floating head-dress had dropped to her feet, and her raven hair streamed in the wind. A chubby, brown-faced, little varlet was keenly clasped to her breast. "Have I lost you, Giuseppe?" she exclaimed; "monsters, have you slain my husband?"

As she spoke, Giuseppe, who had recovered from the blow which had mastered him, and had ranged his men on the very points of the jutting rocks, levelled his musket at us. His gang followed the example. There was no hurry on their part; they took cool and steady aim. Escape was impossible, if their fingers pressed the trigger. One fellow had me covered as if he touched me with the end of a pole. The word "fire!" was on Giuseppe's lips, when Simon, suddenly stooping down, snatched a pistol that had dropped from Bruno on his elevation, and presented it to the young woman's breast.

"Fire, Maister Decesaris, gin ye daur," said the indomitable North Briton (I began to love and reverence the barbarian)—"fire gin ye daur, and yeer wife's blood shall reddden the grass, and her flesh feed the hoody craws and the night hawk."

I don't believe Giuseppe understood a word; but the attitude spoke for itself. He grounded his gun—Simon removed the pistol—again Giuseppe levelled the musket, and again the pistol was at the woman's breast. The moon was shining with intense splendour; you could see, in the varying expression of the girl's face, the agitation the horror of the moment excited: but it was speechless agony of heart when Simon, slightly altering the direction of the weapon, turned it against the infant, who, unconscious of the danger, pressed its little fingers round the fearful tube—(I would not have

done so for Torlonia's fortune)—"Spare—spare my child," she at length sobbed with convulsed utterance: "Giuseppe, what are prisoners, wealth, booty, ransom, if our Pietro's dead?—Save my boy!" Then she shrieked, until the awful sound rung and was repeated from the hills.

At this moment Virginian Dick had contrived to loosen the grasp of the Baron, and was stealing away under cover of some long grass. He always afterwards maintained to me, that, being accustomed to bush-fighting in his own country, he was merely going to take up a position best adapted to that species of warfare; but as he was disappearing, the idiot Solomon, averse to part with him so easily, pursued him with the contents of a carbine, and Dick dropped in the foliage of a thicket, riddled like a partridge at twenty feet. Fire flashed from Simon's eyes—he pressed his finger on the trigger—he removed it—"It's a gallant laud bairn," he said; "I'm loth to shed its young blood." And as he spoke, Decesaris threw his gun to the earth, and his men followed the example. "A truce," Giuseppe shouted; "do no injury to that woman or child—they are mine. Depart in peace—I shall not pursue or annoy: but tarry not—I can answer for myself, but not for others."

"Not a moment shall be lost, I assure you," I loudly answered; "I speak, Captain, from the bottom of my heart. Here, Lady Ellen—here is sure footing for you and Ned—Nay, that's kindly, Madam Decesaris," I continued, as the brigand's wife helped to extricate Lady Ellen from her jeopardy, and drew, as it were, into life the almost insensible Thelluson.

"Praised be the Holy Virgin!" said Annetta to Lady Ellen, "our husbands are safe. Have you a little boy like mine?"

I thought Lady Ellen looked particularly; and I was glad Ned did not hear the idle and indiscreet observation. Simon had been muttering to himself, "It was its sparkling e'en," he said, "and dimple on either cheek, and its wee curling fingers, that saved baith it and you, Madam Giuseppe;" and he patted the infant's head. "It will be a braw callant gin it lives," he continued; "I hope it will tak after a better trade than its forbears—for there's nae mistaking wha its cam o'.

I wager, gin ye were to nip it, the deil incarnate wad gie as bitter a gurl as its father."

It is not likely that this address was intelligible to the signora; but she took it in kindness, and pointed out the path we ought to follow to gain the sources of the stream, and thus be able to cross to the road leading to a little village not far from Tivoli. I thought Giuseppe's advice to lose no time highly to be prized; so we hastened along, picking up Virginian Dick as we passed. He complained that he could not walk; but it being impossible to carry him over the rugged route we had to pursue, he suddenly found himself able to jog on in very good style. Indeed, on hearing, some time afterwards, very suspicious noises on the other side of the river, his strength became so renovated that he pressed to the very van. I thought he might be lonely there, and therefore joined him. The Baron also, very kindly, did the same thing. But I scarce had been there a moment, when, as we turned round a knot of black pines, I came bolt on a party of armed men. "Oh Lord!" I exclaimed, "are there four Giuseppes?"

Thank Providence for this once, that visitation was spared to us. It was the sbirri, who, on the short-legged woman of France giving the alarm, had spread over the country in search of us. We willingly placed ourselves under their protection, and soon reached Poli. I am told that our accommodation was detestable; yet I never passed such a heavenly night. I hugged the clammy sheets, and kissed the tainted bolster—I swore that the horrid wine, which to look at set the teeth on edge, was true Falernian—and I licked my lips with delight as I knawed a cheese rich with all the perfume of all the goats that ever scratched their ear with their hind foot. "T'would spean a foal," said Simon, who was sitting at my side; but I did not understand the fellow. "This is real comfort," I was heard to repeat, as, candle in hand, I routed a flock of musquitos, and alarmed a myriad of more questionable animals into a precipitate retreat into their fastnesses. "Ged! this is paradise." Next day we proceeded to Tivoli.

It may be supposed that Lady Ellen did not any longer pursue her studies at Tivoli. However, she need not have been afraid that I would again, as a banditti chief, have interrupted her; no, no, there was no danger of that

adventure. She soon went back to Rome; and when sufficient time had elapsed to heal our wounds and make us forget our sorrows, I remembered the manors and ring fence. But when I began to pay my devoirs as heretofore, I found her most unusually and unaccountably shy. It is said, that bearing misfortunes in common creates attachment. This ought to have made Lady Ellen less cold to my suit, independently of other considerations—as to which it would not be becoming for me to speak; but at last she became absolutely unpleasantly repulsive. In vain I sought to win her good graces by every means I could devise: I even essayed reaching her heart through the good offices of her companions. I told Mrs. Toady that Lady Ellen was most fortunate in having so amiable a creature for a friend—I denied that the stiffness of knee was perceptible; and I vowed to the short-legged woman of France that she was taper and graceful as an antelope. It was only throwing away words and time; for one morning (the recollection is dreadful) I called at Lady Ellen's, and on inquiring after her ladyship's health, received the answer, that she had left Rome the day before, the bride of—whom?—by the magnanimous powers! of the pale, silly boy, Ned Thelluson! How can I now sing "O Roma! Roma!" when Lady Ellen is fled, and the manors and ring fence are the property of another? Giuseppe Decesaris! why did you not in mercy terminate my existence? Death would have been to me a blessed relief!—By the by, that is not quite candid; and be my vices and failings what they may, I shall stoop to no guile or deceit. Still it is a *façon de parler*, and therefore justifiable in a diary. I am very unhappy. I shall, for change of scene, go to Florence, to inquire how Virginian Dick is. He cannot stand straight; but stooping is no drawback to bush-fighting. I forgot to mention that the Baron has disappeared, owing me a hundred crowns—and a surtout made by Stultz. He might have taken my leathers—I never see them but my heart sickens. I'll love no woman more—I shall avoid and eschew the whole sex. Alas! how am I changed! Once my lays were redolent with jest and youthful jollity; but night has obscured the freshness of my morning.

Canto solo d' oror.
Oh Lady Ellen—Lady Ellen Roselle!

SPECIMENS OF IRISH MINSTRELSY.

BY T. CROFTON CROKER.

No. I.—KEENS.

MR. BEAUFORD, in a communication to the Royal Irish Academy,* remarks, that "the modes of lamentation, and the expressions of grief by sounds, gestures, and ceremonies, admit of an almost infinite variety. So far as these are common to most people, they have very little to attract attention; but where they constitute a part of national character, they then become objects of no incurious speculation. The Irish," continues that gentleman, "have been always remarkable for their funeral lamentations, and this peculiarity has been noticed by almost every traveller who visited them;" and he adds, "It has been affirmed of the Irish, that to cry was more natural to them than to any other nation; and at length the Irish cry became proverbial."

I am not inclined further to follow Mr. Beauford's elaborate paper, as it is sufficient to refer the curious to it for a musical notation of a *keen* ascribed to the fifteenth century, and the various parts of which this performance is said to have been composed, although it may be remarked, that the construction appears to be extremely artificial for so rude a composition. There, however, can be no doubt that the *keen* was performed by the bards during the period when they flourished; and, on the decline of that order, the *keen* was sung only by women, and instead of a studied, became an extemporaneous effusion of sorrow.

The following *Keens*, which illustrate the modern character of this description of minstrelsy, I have translated from the Irish.

I.

KEEN ON MR. HUGH POWER.

This was obtained from the recitation of a very old man, named Murray, an itinerant surveyor. The author is said to be Edmund Wall; and, to use Murray's words, "Mr. Hugh Power was one of the brightest men in Munster, and was the champion of all sorts of learning. He lived midway between our times and the times of the Sieges of Limerick, at a place called Knockastocaune (the Hill of the Stake), east of Castle Lyons, and north of the river Bride, in the county of Cork."

Last night, to my sorrow,
I heard through my dreaming
The voice of the women
Of fate, † sadly screaming;—
Around me they flitted,
With mourning and weeping;
And the loss of my comfort
I knew through my sleeping.

I found it this morning—
My best friend was taken;—
From the stock of the Powers
The best limb had been shaken—
Hugh, the manly in heart
And the princely in spirit,
Who, from lofty descent,
Did these virtues inherit.

* Published in the fourth volume of the Transactions of that body.
† *The Banshe*, an Irish familiar spirit, supposed to give notice of an approaching death in any honourable family by loud screaming and lamentations.