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# COUNTRY



# DOLLAR.

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## THE FATHER AND SON.

FROM DICKENS'S "HOUSEHOLD WORDS."

One evening in the month of March, 1838,—that dark time in Ireland's annals, when memory (overlooking all minor subsequent calamities) is still preserved among the "year of the rebellion"—a lady and gentleman were seated near a blazing fire in an old-fashioned dining-room of a large and lonely mansion. They had just finished a glass of wine and fruit were on the table, untouched, while Mr. Hewson and his wife sat silently gazing at the fire, watching its flickering light becoming gradually more vivid as the short Spring twilight faded into darkness.

At length the husband poured out a glass of wine, drank it off, and then broke silence saying—

"Well, well, Charlotte, these are awful times; there were ten men taken up to-day for burning Coter's house at Knockane; and Tom Dwyer says that every magistrate in the country is a marked man."

Mrs. Hewson cast a frightened glance towards the windows, which opened nearly to the ground, and gave a view of a wide tree-besprinkled lawn, through whose centre a long straight avenue led to the high bad. There was also a foot path at either side of the house, branching off through dense thickets of trees, and reaching the road by a circuitous route.

"Listen, James!" she said after a pause; "what noise is that?"

"Nothing but the sighing wind among the trees. Come, wife, you must not give way to imaginary fears."

"But really I heard something like footsteps on the gravel, round the gable end—wish—"

A knock at the parlor door interrupted her.

"Come in."

The door opened, and Tim Gahan, Mr. Hewson's confidential steward and right-hand man, entered, followed by a fair-haired, delicate looking boy of six years' old, dressed in deep mourning.

"What took me round the house, is it?"

"Well, Gahan, what do you want?"

"I ask your Honor's pardon for disturbing you and the mistress; but I thought it right to come and tell you the bad news I heard."

"Something about the rebels, I suppose?"

"Yes, Sir; I got a whisper just now that there is going to be a great rising to-morrow; thousands are to gather before daybreak at Kilkenny bar, where I'm told they've a power of pikes lying; and then they are to march on and sack every house in the country. I'll engage, when I heard it, I didn't let grass grow under my feet, but came off straight to your Honor, thinking maybe you'd like to walk over this fine evening to Mr. Warren's and settle with him what's best to be done."

"Oh, James! I beseech you, don't think of going."

"Make your mind easy, Charlotte; I don't intend it; not that I suppose there would be much risk; but all things considered, I think I'm just as comfortable at home."

The steward's brow darkened, as he glanced nervously towards the end window, jutting out in the gable, formed a deep angle in the outer wall.

"Of course 'tis just as your Honor pleases, but I'll warrant you there would be no harm in going. Come, Billy," he added, addressing the child, who by this time was standing close to Mrs. Hewson, "make your bow, and bid good night to master and mistress."

The boy did not stir, and Mrs. Hewson taking his little hand in hers, said—

"You need not go home for half-an-hour, Gahan; stay and have a chat with the servants in the kitchen, and leave little Billy with me—and with the apples and nuts"—she added with a smile, as she filled the child's hands with fruit.

"Thank you, Ma'am," said the steward hastily. "I can't stop—I'm in a hurry home, where I wanted to leave this brat to-night; but he would follow me. Come Billy; come this minute, you young rogue."

Still the child looked reluctant, and Mr. Hewson said peremptorily—

"Don't go yet, Gahan; I want to speak to you by and by; and you know the mistress always likes to pet little Billy."

Without replying, the steward left the room; and the next moment his hasty footsteps resounded through the long flag-god passage that led to the offices.

"There's something strange about Gahan, since his wife died," remarked Mrs. Hewson. "I suppose 'tis grief for her that makes him look so darkly, and seems almost jealous when any one speaks to his child. Poor little Billy! your mother was a sore loss to you."

The child's blue eyes filled with tears, and pressing closer to the lady's side, he said—

"Old Peggy doesn't wash and dress me as nice as mammy used."

"But your father is good to you!"

"Oh, yes, Ma'am, but he's out all day busy, and I've no one to talk to me as mammy used; for Peggy is quite deaf, and besides she's always busy with the pigs and chickens."

"I wish I had you, Billy, to take care of, and to teach you for your poor mother's sake."

"And so you may, Charlotte," said her husband.

"I'm sure Gahan, with all his odd ways, is too sensible a fellow not to know how much it would be for his child's benefit to be brought up and educated by us, and the boy would be an amusement to us in this lonely house. I'll speak to him about it before he goes home. Billy, my fine fellow, come here," he continued, "jump up on my knee, and tell me if you'd like to live here always and learn to read and write."

"I would, sir, if I could be with my father too."

"So you shall;—and what about old Peggy?"

The child paused—

"I'd like to give her a pen'orth of snuff and a piece of tobacco every week, for she said the other day that that would make her quite happy."

Mr. Hewson laughed, and Billy prattled on, still seated on his knee; when a noise of footsteps on the ground, mingled with low suppressed talking was heard outside.

"James, listen! there's the noise again."

It was now nearly dark, but Mr. Hewson, still holding the boy in his arms, walked towards the window and looked out.

"I can see nothing," he said,—"stay"—there are figures moving off among the trees, and a man running round to the back of the house—very like Gahan he is too!"

Seizing the bell rope, he rang it loudly, and said to the servant who answered his summons—

"Fasten the shutters and put up the bars, Connell; and tell Gahan I want to see him."

The man obeyed; candles were brought and Gahan entered the room.

Mr. Hewson remarked, though his cheeks were flushed, his lips were very white, and his bold dark eyes were cast on the ground.

"What took you round the house just now, Tim?" asked his master in a careless manner.

"What took me round the house, is it? Why, then, nothing in life, Sir, but that just as I went outside the kitchen door to take a smoke, I saw the pigs, that Shaneeen forgot to put up in the sty, making right for the mistress's flower garden; so I just put my duddie, lighting as it was, into my pocket, and ran after them. I caught them on the grand walk under the end window, and indeed, Ma'am, I had my own share of work turning them back to their proper spear."

Gahan spoke with unusual volubility, but without raising his eyes from the ground.

"Who were the people," asked his master, "whom I saw moving off through the western grove?"

"People! your Honor—not a sign of any people moving there, I'll be bound, barring the pigs."

"Then," said Mr. Hewson smiling to his wife, "the miracle of Circé must have been reversed, and swine turned into men; for, undoubtedly, the dark figures I saw were human beings."

"Come, Billy," said Gahan, anxious to turn the conversation, "will you come home with me now? I'm sure it was very good of the mistress to give you all them fine apples."

Mrs. Hewson was going to propose Billy's remaining, but her husband whispered—"Wait till to-morrow." So Gahan and his child were allowed to depart.

Next morning the magistrates of the district were on the alert, and several suspicious looking men found lurking about, were taken up. A hat which fitted one of them was found in Mr. Hewson's grove; the gravel under the end window bore many signs of trampling feet; and there were marks on the wall as if guns had rested against it. Gahan's information touching the intended meeting at Kilkenny bog proved to be totally without foundation; and after a careful search not a single pike nor a weapon of any description could be found there. All these circumstances combined certainly looked suspicious; but, after a prolonged investigation, as no guilt could be actually brought home to Gahan, he was dismissed. One of his examiners, however, said privately, "I advise you take care of that fellow, Hewson. If I were in your place, I'd just trust him as far as my eye could throw him, and not an inch beyond."

All indolent hospitable Irish country gentlemen, such as Mr. Hewson, is never without an always shrewd and often rough prime minister, who saves his master the trouble of looking after his own affairs, and manages everything that is to be done in both the home and foreign departments, from putting a new door on the pig sty, to letting a farm of an hundred acres on lease. Now in this or rather these capacities, Gahan had long served Mr. Hewson; and some seven years previous to the evening on which our story commences, he had strengthened the tie and increased his influence considerably by marrying Mrs. Hewson's favorite and faithful maid. One child was the result of this union; and Mrs. Hewson, who had no family of her own, took much interest in little Billy,—more especially after the death of his mother, who, poor thing! the neighbors said, was not very happy, and would gladly, if she dared, have exchanged

her lonely cottage for the easy service of her former mistress.

Thus, though for a time Mr. and Mrs. Hewson regarded Gahan with some doubt, the feeling gradually wore away, and the steward regained his former influence.

After the lapse of a few stormy months the rebellion was quelled: all the prisoners were severally disposed of by hanging, transportation, or acquittal, according to the nature and amount of evidence brought against them; and the country became as peaceful as it is in the volcanic nature of our soil ever to be.

The Hewsons' kindness towards Gahan's child was steady and unchanged. They took him into their house, and gave him a plain but solid education; so that William while yet a boy, was enabled to be of some use to his patron, and daily enjoyed more and more of his confidence.

Another evening, the twentieth anniversary of that with which this narrative commenced, came round. Mr. and Mrs. Hewson were still hale and active, dwelling in their hospitable home. About eight o'clock at night, Tim Gahan, now a stooping, grey-haired man, entered Mr. Hewson's kitchen, and took his seat on the corner of the settle next the fire.

The cook, directing a silent significant glance of compassion towards her fellow servant, said—

"Would you like a drink of cider, Tim, or will you wait and take a cup of tay with myself and Kitty?"

The old man's eyes were fixed on the fire, and a wrinkled hand was planted firmly on each knee, as if to check their involuntary trembling. "I'll not drink anything this night, thank you kindly, Nelly," he said, in a slow, musing manner, dwelling long on each word.

"Where's Billy?" he asked, after a pause, in a quick hurried tone, looking up suddenly at the cook, with an expression in his eyes, which as she afterwards said, "took away her breath."

"Oh, never heard Billy! I suppose he's busy with the master."

"Where's the use, Nelly," said the coachman, "in hiding it from him?—Sure, sooner or later, he must know it. Tim," he continued, "God knows 'tis sorrow to my heart this blessed night to make yours sore,—but the truth is, William has done what he oughtn't to do to the man that was all one as a father to him."

"What has he done? what will you say again my boy?"

"Taken money, then," replied the coachman, "that the master had marked and put by in his desk; for he suspected this some time past that gold was missing.—This morning twas gone; a search was made, and the marked guineas were found with your son William."

The old man covered his face with his hands, and rocked himself to and fro.

"Where is he now?" at length he asked, in a hoarse voice.

"Locked up safe in the inner store room; the master intends sending him to goal early to-morrow morning."

"He will not," said Gahan slowly—"I got the boy that saved his life—no, no."

"Poor fellow! the grief is setting his mind astray—and sure no wonder!" said the cook, compassionately.

"I'm not astray!" cried the old man, fiercely. "Where's the master?—take me to him."

"Come with me," said the butler, and I'll ask him will he see you?"

With faltering steps the father complied; and when they reached the parlor, he trembled exceedingly, and leaned against the wall for support, while the butler opened the door, and said:

"Gahan is here, Sir, and wants to know will you let him speak to you a minute?"

"Tell him to come in," said Mr. Hewson, in a solemn tone of sorrow, very different from his ordinary cheerful voice.

"Sir," said the steward, advancing, "they tell me you are going to send my boy to prison,—is it true?"

"Too true, indeed, Gahan. The lad who was reared in my house, whom we watched over in health and nursed in sickness,—whom we loved almost as if he were our own, has robbed us, and that not once or twice, but many times. He is silent and sullen, too, and refuses to tell us why he stole the money, which was never withheld from him when he wanted it—I can make nothing of him, and must give him up to justice in the morning."

"No, Sir, no. The boy saved your life; you can't take his."

"You're raving, Gahan."

"Listen to me, Sir, and you won't say so. You remember this night twenty years ago, I came here with my motherless child, and you and the mistress pitied us, and spoke loving words to us. Well for us all, you did so! That night—little you thought it—I was banded with them that were rogues to take your life. They were waiting for you outside the window, and I was for to inveigle you out, the rascal!"

A faint heave of the breast, for a good master's oath to the rogues was they of and were of.

I'll not do that.

if you want to shoot him, you must do it through the window, thinking they'd be afraid of that; but they weren't—they were daring fellows, and one of them, sheltered by the angle of the window, took deadly aim at you. That very moment you took Billy on your knee, and I saw his fair head in a line with the musket. I don't know exactly then what I said or did, but I remember I caught the man's hand, threw it up, and pointed to the child.—Knowing I was a determined man, I believe they didn't wish to provoke me; so they watched you for a while, and when you didn't put him down they got daunted, hearing the sound of soldiers riding by the road, they stole away through the grove.—Most of that gang swung on the gallows, but the last of them died this morning quietly on his bed. Up to yesterday he used to make me give him money—sums of money to buy his silence—and it was for that I made my boy a thief. It was wearing out his very life. Often he went down on his knees to me, and said: 'Father, I would die myself sooner than rob my master, but I can't see you disgraced. Oh, let us fly the country! Now, Sir, I have told you all—do what you like with me—send me to goal—I deserve it—but spare my poor deluded innocent boy!'

It would be difficult to describe Mr. Hewson's feelings, but his wife's first impulse was to liberate the prisoner. With a few incoherent words of explanation she led him into the presence of his master, who, looking at him sorrowfully but kindly said: "William, you have erred deeply, but not so deeply as I supposed. Your father has told me everything. I forgive him freely and you also."

The young man covered his face with his hands, and wept tears more bitter and abundant than he had ever shed, since the day when he followed his mother to the grave. He could say little, but he knelt on the ground, and clasping the kind hand of her who had supplied him with that mother's place, he murmured:

"Will you tell him I would rather die than sin again."

Old Gahan died two years afterwards, truly penitent, invoking blessings on his son and his benefactors; and the young man's conduct now no longer under evil influence, was so steady and upright, that his adopted parents felt that their pious work was rewarded, and that, in William Gahan, they had indeed a son.

## The Reign of Terror at Rome.

Under this significant title, the correspondents of the *London Times*, and *News* speak of the doings in Rome. Under date of the 18th ult. they say:

"Last night the domicile of the British Consul's Secretary was forcibly broken into by a band of Government ruffians, amid the cries and remonstrances of his wife and family. Signor Ercole, who was not at home, is a most respectable Roman gentleman, and has acted as pro-consul in Mr. Freeborn's absence, in which character he was de facto recognized by the papal authorities. The *sbirri*, with a gang of carbiniers, threatening to blow out the brains of the lady, ransacked book cases, drawers, desks and cupboards in search of pamphlets or new testaments, all in vain. The same night a band of ten carbiniers broke into the house of Signor Bonifazi, formerly tutor to the Throgmorton family, and late under Secretary of State, rummaged his books and papers, and carried off a good many English works, Macchiavelli's *Florentine History*, and a volume of the *Panthea*. In a chemist's shop, *Piazza Ludovica*, seven doctors were captured in the act of listening to a letter which one of them had received, when a spy, through the shop window, deeming their attitude suspicious, ran for policemen and had the whole party in prison in ten minutes. A simple police order is now enough to banish any citizen. Vannini, the Tuscan cow merchant is ordered off to Florence from his milk shop in *Piazza di Spagna*. Yesterday, twenty or thirty *sbirri* passed through the whole length of the Corso, confiscating all the red cloth caps of every kind in the hatter's shops. So many forged notes are afloat that even good ones don't pass; and a desperate fight with knives was the result, the other day, between Jew money brokers and the *trasteverini*.

Happiness as a moral Agent.—That virtue gives happiness, we all know; but if it be true that happiness contributes to virtue, the principle furnishes us with some sort of excuse for the errors and excesses of able young men, at the bottom of life, fretting with impatience under their obscurity, and hatching a thousand chimeras of being neglected and overlooked by the world. The natural of these errors is the sunshine.

The *N. O. Delta* (Loco) is a

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