"Have you written down what I have said? Well, take it to your master who waits for you in the barrack. Take it, take the very words I used. Shall I say them over again for you? Take them, and tell him this from me, that I have not broken or counselled other men to break even the vile tyranny which he calls law. Tell him to point out if he can even in the old code of the penal days one statute which compels, I say compels, an honest man to have traffic with traitors. If he can find any such law I shall walk into his prison of my own free will and hold my hands out for his iron fetters. And now, my men, go home. There is no more to do or say to-night."

The police officer turned on his heel and walked back to the barrack with his notebook in his hand. The crowd, watched by the constables, kicked the remains of the bonfire to pieces and trampled the glowing fragments into the mud, Then, some on foot, some on the patient ponies, they set off home. Most of the tired policemen were allowed to lie down in the barrack. Father O'Sullivan, dismissing the committee, walked up and down the street to satisfy himself that the people were really going home. He noticed as he passed that a light burned in the upper room of the barrack, Major Thorne sat there working at his warrants and his reports.

CHAPTER XX

MR. MANDERS sat smoking beside the fire in the office of the police barrack while Major Thorne worked at the pile of papers on the table before him. Now and then a sergeant entered the room bringing news that the street of the village was clearing and the people going quietly home. At last word came that Father O'Sullivan had also gone home, taking the last member of

the committee with him. Mr. Manders knocked the ashes out of the bowl of his pipe into a grate already littered with the remains of the tobacco he had consumed since he entered the room.

"Well," he said, "that's over. I suppose you don't want me any more to-night? I'm glad there was no row."

"A great deal can be done by vigour and determination," said Major Thorne.

He was particularly pleased with the result of the arrangements he had made for dealing with the crowd. Mr. Manders looked at him out of the corners of his eyes. Major Thorne was an Englishman, and Englishmen invariably afforded Mr. Manders a good deal of amusement. He did his best to help the magistrate to be funny.

"Your display of force overawed the crowd," he said.

Major Thorne smiled complacently. He was quite sure that he had overawed the crowd.

"Do you know," went on Mr. Manders, "I think you ought to write a note of grateful acknowledgment of the value of his services to Father O'Sullivan?"

"I have a note of another sort for the priest, a note he'll not relish when he gets it at about five o'clock this morning."

Mr. Manders turned his head quickly.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"Merely that I have a warrant for his arrest, made out a week ago at the Castle, and I've got an excellent opportunity for executing it now."

"You're surely not going to arrest Father O'Sullivan?"

"Yes, I am, and every member of his committee with him."

Mr. Manders had himself more than once spoken of the advisability of making a clean sweep of the League committee, of putting the whole lot of them, with the priest at their head, safely into gaol. But he had never dreamed of any one

actually doing such a thing. It is a pleasure to most men to talk at large about what ought to be done so long as no one shows any intention of doing it. Thus several people have said that the best solution of the Irish question would be the submersion of the island in the Atlantic; but if the American syndicate who supplies the world with earthquakes were to put in an estimate for shaking Ireland into little bits and drowning all the inhabitants, the fiercest of these politicians would cast his vote against the scheme. There are also men of science who advocate the control of all marriages in the interests of posterity by a board of properly qualified medical men. Their proposal is not at present within the range of the most radical Government's activities; so they and their friends argue comfortably about its reasonableness. But if the British Nonconformist, tired of wrangling about the best way to teach other people's religion to the children, were to take the marriage question up, these same scientists would be found proclaiming the sanctity of human freedom and the indefeasible right of every man to marry a consumptive woman if he chooses. So Mr. Manders, having from time to time aired an opinion that Father O'Sullivan ought to be in prison and perhaps hanged, felt outraged when a migratory Englishman not only agreed with him, but proposed to give effect to his wishes.

"But, damn it all, man, what will you arrest Father O'Sullivan for?"

"He is, in my opinion, a danger to the public peace."

"Good Lord!" said Mr. Manders. "Excuse my speaking plainly, but that's skittles, you know—infernal skittles. Why, only for Father O'Sullivan there would have been murder done in Cuslough to-night. That crowd would have had out Heverin and shot him as easy as you'd drink a pint of porter. You couldn't have stopped them. You can't seriously suppose that you and your

police kept that crowd in order? If Father O'Sullivan had given the word, they'd have run your little lot into the barrack in ten minutes. Then half a dozen of them would have broken open the door of Heverin's house and made a public example of him."

"I have here," said Major Thorne, "a report of Father O'Sullivan's speech. It is a most violent speech. He deliberately incites people to boycott Heverin."

"And a jolly good job if they do," said Mr. Manders. "I wouldn't walk across the street to save Heverin if they wanted to crucify him with his head down. No decent man would help Heverin. Boycotting is too good for the like of him. If that's all you have against the priest, you'd better put your warrant into the fire. Besides, damn it all, you're acting illegally. You can't arrest a man on a charge like that."

Major Thorne, with a smile of conscious superiority, handed a document across the table to Mr. Manders. It was a warrant regularly made out and countersigned in Dublin Castle for the arrest of the Rev. Michael O'Sullivan, curate of Dhulough.

"I made up my mind about this matter a week ago," said Major Thorne. "I went up to Dublin and talked the business over. I am determined to maintain the majesty of the law."

"Well, all I can say is, that if you arrest Father O'Sullivan, there'll be no law left in the place at all, so it won't be worth while bothering yourself about its majesty. I tell you there's just that priest between us and wholesale murder this minute. Was it to help you in this job that you sent for me to-night?"

"Certainly. My orders are to co-operate as far as possible with the local magistrates. I understood that you were a loyal man, and a man of determination and courage, so I sent for you."

It struck Mr. Manders that this particular Englishman had ceased to be amusing. The best of jokes can be carried too far, and an air of dictatorship, amusing enough in itself, becomes a source of anxiety when the man who assumes it begins to believe in himself too seriously.

"Have you consulted Mr. Butler?" he asked.

"No; and I don't mean to. Mr. Butler is a nationalist politician and a disloyal man. If I have any dealings with Mr. Butler it will be to issue a warrant for his arrest."

"Mr. Butler is a magistrate for the county, the owner of a large estate and a Member of Parliament. Your instructions are to co-operate with the local magistrates. I insist on your doing so."

Major Thorne turned to the table without a word. He wrote a note and then rang the small bell which stood beside him. Mr. Manders returned to his seat at the hearth and piled more turf upon the fire. A sergeant entered the room.

"Sergeant," said Major Thorne, "you will dispatch a mounted man at once to Dhulough House with this note for Mr. Butler."

"And Sergeant," said Mr. Manders, as the man turned to leave the room, "if there is such a thing in the house as a kettle with a drop of water in it you might send it up here to me. I have my flask with me, thank God, and a drop of whisky in it. Send a tumbler too, and a bowl of sugar and a lemon, if you have one. Of course I don't make a point of the lemon. Here, wait a minute; you'd better send two tumblers when you're at it."

The man left the room grinning. Mr. Manders glanced at Major Thorne and observed that he was not grinning but scowling.

"You needn't have asked for two tumblers," said Major Thorne. "I don't propose to spend the night drinking. I've work to do."

"Of course you have," said Mr. Manders. "I never thought of offering you a drop. The second tumbler was for Stephen Butler. A man

like you with the Lord Lieutenant and the whole blessed Government in his pocket wouldn't be seen drinking whisky and water in a police barrack with the like of me, whether it had the squeeze of a lemon in it or not."

An obliging constable brought up a kettle, a bowl of sugar, and the two tumblers. Mr. Manders brewed himself some punch. Then Major Thorne rang again and sent for the police inspector. That unfortunate young man, after drying himself very imperfectly before the fire in the men's room, had dropped off into an uneasy doze on a straight-backed wooden chair. He eyed Mr. Manders' punch enviously, but was allowed no opportunity of receiving an invitation to drink some of it.

"You will have ten parties of men ready at 4 a.m.," said Major Thorne. "There will be three men in each party in charge of a sergeant or a reliable man. I shall hand a warrant to the commander of each party. He will then proceed with his men to the residence of the person named in the warrant and make the arrest. The prisoners will all be marched to the Dhulough police barrack, not back here you will observe, and confined there."

"So," said Mr. Manders, "you're going to make a clean sweep of the whole boiling. Twelve of them there were. The priest, I suppose, you mean to reserve for your own bag. It's quite like the apostles over again, only turned inside out. Judas, I mean to say Heverin, in this case isn't a devil, but the respectable law-abiding citizen whom we're all going to protect."

Major Thorne took no notice of the remark.

"I shall expect," he said, addressing the inspector, "to have all the prisoners lodged in Dhulough Barrack by six o'clock. You will also have eight mounted men, under your own command, ready at five o'clock. I shall accompany that party myself."

The officer left the room. Mr. Manders and Major Thorne sat in silence, which was broken only by a curious wheezing noise made by Mr. Manders' pipe, and an occasional word of reproach which he addressed to it for not drawing properly. Shortly before three o'clock Stephen Butler drove up to the door of the barrack and was shown into the office.

"I am sure you're annoyed with us for routing you out of bed," said Mr. Manders.

"I wasn't in bed," said Stephen. "I was sitting up in the library. I came on as soon as I could get the groom awakened."

He spoke wearily. Mr. Manders, glancing at him keenly, noticed that he looked fagged and miserable.

"What kept you up till this hour?"

"There was no use going to bed," said Stephen. "I couldn't have slept if I had."

Major Thorne seemed uninterested in the condition of Stephen's nerves, and impatient to get at his business.

"I sent for you, Mr. Butler, to tell you——"

"To consult you," corrected Mr. Manders.

"To tell you," repeated Major Thorne, "that I intend to arrest Father O'Sullivan and the Committee of the local branch of the League.

"What on earth for?!" asked Stephen. "What has Father O'Sullivan done?"

"The best thing for you to do is to read the report of to-night's proceedings, and the notes of Father O'Sullivan's speech, which I have prepared to send up to the Castle."

"You needn't wade through that rigmarole," said Mr. Manders. "I can give you the gist of the whole thing in one sentence. Father O'Sullivan recommended the people to boycott Heverin. I should say myself that he deserves well of the Government."

"To boycott Heverin!" said Stephen. "But surely Heverin is——"

"Heverin," said Mr. Manders slowly, "is the most unmitigated scoundrel west of the Shannon, and richly deserves whatever he gets."

"I'm not concerned with Heverin's character," said Major Thorne. "I'm here to see that the law is obeyed and order maintained."

"What law?" asked Stephen.

"There's no use arguing technical points," said the magistrate. "There's the warrant. You'll see it's properly signed and in order. Are you, as a magistrate, prepared to assist me in executing it?"

"Certainly not. I regard your action as an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the subject. I shall complain of it from my place in Parliament."

The magistrate smiled. He did not much fear the parliamentary eloquence of a Nationalist member. Mr. Manders rose and yawned.

"As I don't intend to assist either, I may as well be toddling off home to my little bed. I don't take my friend Mr. Butler's high ground in this matter. I don't care a tinker's curse about the liberty of the subject or anything of that sort. But I tell you plainly that if you arrest Father O'Sullivan, there'll be trouble. He's the head an front of this infernal League business, and the whole conspiracy against paying rent. But he's running the thing here without actual bloodshed, so far. I am of opinion that when he's gone there'll be nobody to stop the boys from beginning to shoot in earnest. Good-night, gentlemen."

"Stop a minute," said Stephen. "Will you drive back with me to the presbytery and warn Father O'Sullivan?"

"I shall not permit you to do that," said the magistrate to Mr. Manders.

"Ah, well, I shouldn't have done it even if you'd wanted me to. It would be rather too funny a position for the local land agent to be aiding and abetting the leader of the League in

an escape from the police. Good-night again, gentlemen."

"Then," said Stephen, after Mr. Manders had left the room, "I shall go and warn him myself."

"I am sorry," said Major Thorne, "that I cannot allow that. You must not leave the barrack until I do."

Stephen flushed and then grew suddenly pale. Major Thorne expected a violent outburst. He rose from his chair and stood rigid, like a soldier at attention. Stephen, with clenched teeth and lips pressed tight together, turned and walked across the room to the window. He stared out into the darkness. The rain could be seen pouring steadily down through the belts of light which stretched across the road from the barrack windows. Now and then Stephen's horse and trap, driven slowly up and down the road, passed into the lighted space and out into the darkness again. Nothing else was to be seen. For fully five minutes Stephen stood motionless. Then he turned. His face was quite white. His eyes were fixed in a stare. He walked over to Major Thorne and held out his hands.

"You had better handcuff me," he said, "and put me into one of the cells where you keep your prisoners."

Major Thorne looked at him curiously. Stephen was a young man, from the point of view of Major Thorne, a mere boy. He was also an Irishman. Major Thorne remembered the lines which one of his own poets had written about the "blind hysterics of the Celt." He bethought himself that he was a member of a superior race, that he owed patience to the temper of a boy, and indulgence to the tragedy airs of an Irishman. He spoke with the utmost kindness—

"Sit down by the fire, Mr. Butler. I won't keep you very long, and, of course, if you give me your word not to go to Father O'Sullivan, you are at liberty to go home at once."

Stephen hesitated for an instant. He might give the promise asked of him and sneak home like a whipped schoolboy. He might assault Major Thorne. The one course seemed contemptible, the other ridiculous. He sat down and waited. It seemed the only thing to do. Major Thorne was not wholly wanting in tact. He understood that conversation under the circumstances would be difficult and unpleasant.

"You will excuse me, I am sure," he said, "if I go on with some writing which I want to get finished."

His pen travelled rapidly over page after page of blue foolscap paper. It is not given to every official to capture a whole Land League committee in one sweep of his net. He was determined that his exploit should not escape the notice of the Government for want of being properly reported. Stephen sat still. His mind worked in a dull, weary manner over the problem which earlier in the night had kept him feverishly sleepless in the library at Dhulough House. He admitted the justice of the tenants' claims. He loathed the methods by which the claims were supported. He was by tradition and personal conviction a Nationalist. He saw in the agrarian agitation an obscuring of the national ideal. It seemed to him that the miserable history of ancient times was being repeated, that Irishman was being pitted against Irishman, and that the strife could only end, as such strife always had ended, in the grip of the foreigner upon the country tightening, tightening to the point of strangulation. He was an idealist; and here was a struggle in which both sides sought material gain. He hated the arbitrary powers conferred upon men like Major Thorne. Father O'Sullivan had refused to speak to him on the roadside; but he recognised the injustice of arresting the priest. The members of the Land League committee disliked him, and the people who followed the League's teaching dis-

trusted him; but he did not think that the League ought to be broken by the use of arbitrary power. He bitterly resented the magistrate's interference with his own liberty; but he saw no effective way of asserting himself.

His troubled reverie was interrupted at last. The police officer entered the room.

"It's four o'clock, sir, and the men are ready to start as you ordered."

"Very well," said Major Thorne. "Here are the warrants. Or stay, perhaps I had better go and give them to the men myself."

He went down to the door of the barrack. Stephen rose and crossed the room to the window. It was still almost dark, and a constable followed the magistrate with a lantern so that he could read the names on the papers in his hand. But the faint light which was spreading in the east enabled Stephen to see the tall figures of the men in their grey capes and helmets, with carbines in their hands. The rain had ceased, but the road was wet and patched over with broad pools which caught and reflected the light from the barrack windows and the glimmer of the lantern which the constable carried about. One by one the little parties received their orders and tramped off in one direction or the other. Stephen watched the dark forms grow dimmer and disappear into the gloom. He understood what they were going to do. Lonely farmhouses would be approached along muddy, almost impassable bohireens. Dogs roused from their sleep would bark furiously. Sleepers would turn in their beds and then sleep again. Perhaps here or there a voice would cry to the animals—

"Lie down, Shep. Be quiet, and bad luck to you."

Or a child would wake, cry, and be comforted, or some frightened woman would lie wide-eyed in the dark, listening for the next sound. And the next sound would come; audible footsteps

round the house, low words spoken, a command given; then the heavy knocking on the door. Sleepers would wake in earnest now. The master of the house, dazed, oppressed with vague doubt and dread, would get up. There would be more knocking, questioning through windows, the answers; a silence of amazement and then women's crying. There would be more knocking still. At last the door would be opened. Perhaps there would be an inspection of the warrant. The paper sloped eastward to catch the glowing light. Perhaps there would be low-growled threats of resistance from grown sons or farm-servants; handling of carbines by the police, loosening of batons in their cases. Certainly there would be much crying of women, crying mingled with shrill curses. The man of the house would make a hurried toilet. The procession would move down the now plainly visible bohireen, the police with their prisoner among them. Other little bodies of men would be sighted along the road; other police with other prisoners, all of them making for the barrack at Dhulough. In the houses left behind there would be wailing and rocking to and fro for a while. Then, since day was coming with duties not to be neglected, fires would be lit and kettles boiled. The cattle would low for their milkers, knowing nothing nor caring. The dogs, wiser than their charges, would wander disconsolately round house and yard with drooping tails. Stephen saw such scenes, many of them, as he stood watching the last of the police pass out of sight.

"What will be the end of it all?" he said. "How long must this go on? How much more of it will the people stand?"

He did not hear Major Thorne re-entering the room. For some time he stood gazing out into the gloom. When at last he turned he found that the lamp on the table had gone out, leaving an abominable smell behind it. The magistrate

had lit a candle, standing it in a little patch of its own grease on a corner of the table. He was working again on a report of his proceedings which he meant to forward to the Castle. The fire was dead in the grate. Its fallen ashes lay among the debris of Mr. Manders' smoked-out pipes. The two tumblers, one still clean, the other dim and sticky, stood on the chimney-piece. The light of dawn began to make its way through the window. Stephen shivered.

The magistrate looked up from his papers as Stephen crossed the room. His face showed signs of the severe strain he had been through. The lines on it seemed deepened. The eyes were sunk far below the sharp ridge of his eyebrows.

"I presume," said Stephen, "that you have no objection to my accompanying you when you go to arrest Father O'Sullivan?"

"None in the world. Let me see. It's after four o'clock, nearly half-past. We shall start in half an hour. I want to get the business over before the people are up and about. I shall stop writing now. I must shave and have a wash before I go out."

He passed his hand over his chin. A thick stubble of grey bristles stood erect on it. They were not pleasant to look at, and yet Stephen wondered that in such circumstances a man should think of shaving.

A few minutes before five Major Thorne returned to the room. He had shaved, washed, brushed, dressed himself, and stood in the doorway erect and spruce as befitted the holder of a commission in the British army.

"I am ready to start now."

Stephen rose and followed him. At the door of the barrack sat the mounted police, motionless on their horses. The young officer stood ready to mount. He was shivering and looked extremely miserable. No opportunity had been given him for shaving or washing. He was on

his way to arrest a priest, and there was a strong probability of unpleasantness before the business was carried through. His men sat apparently impassive, with almost emotionless faces. But a close observer might have noticed an anxious look in the eyes of some of them. They were almost all of them Roman Catholics, and there is a suspicion of sacrilege about arresting a priest. Only one man seemed thoroughly happy and pleased—a red-haired, lean-faced sergeant who came from Portadown. He would have handcuffed an archbishop, or the Pope himself, with the greatest possible satisfaction if any one in authority had ordered him to do so.

The party marched unnoticed by any one over the hilly road which led from one village to the other. Beyond them lay the sea, a desolate waste of water, dimly visible in the morning light. They smelt the breath of it and heard it rushing against the rocks. The road bent sharply to the left, skirted the shore, climbed a hill, and then below them lay Dhulough village.

The scene was scarcely different from that on which old Stephen Butler's eyes had looked nearly a hundred years before, when he rode into Dhulough after the destruction of Ireland's Parliament. Now his grandson drove behind the police and their English commander, and would watch, helpless, the arrest of one of the leaders of the people. A century of union with England had effected just this. The class which old Stephen Butler represented was weaned from the love of Ireland, and its members taught to regard themselves as England's garrison. The bonfires which had once burned in the street of Cuslough in honour of old Stephen Butler had burned that night, not for his grandson's honour, but for a priest. Major Thorne led his men to protect against Irishmen the property and privileges of an aristocracy which had forgotten the service of Ireland in the service of an Empire.

The party entered Dhulough and halted on the road outside the presbytery. A word of command was given. The red-haired sergeant dismounted, strode down the narrow, gravelled path, and knocked at the door. There was no response. He knocked again. Still there was no answer. The blinds remained down. There was not the smallest sign of life in the house.

"Knock louder," said Major Thorne. "Knock so that they must hear."

The sergeant hammered vigorously on the door, first with its own knocker, then with his clenched fist. At last he began to kick it with his boot.

"Stop that," said the magistrate. "I didn't tell you to break open the door"

His tone was sharp and irritable. Stephen looked at him curiously. It seemed that Major Thorne was beginning to feel nervous. The men sat silent on their horses, listening intently for any noise within the house. The sergeant who was standing at the door turned—

"I think I hear somebody stirring within, sir."

If any one did stir he moved softly, and took no notice of the police outside. The door remained shut and the blinds drawn down. The magistrate looked at his watch. It was a quarter to six o'clock. Round the gate of the presbytery were gathered a few men and women. If the sergeant had failed to waken Father O'Sullivan, he had at least succeeded in arousing some of the neighbours. Then one of the parties of police which had gone out to arrest the members of the League committee marched into the village with their prisoner. Behind them came a little crowd, mostly young men, with a woman or two among them. These stopped to gaze in amazement at the police in front of the presbytery. They deserted the friend they were following to his captivity and remained to swell the crowd round the gate. Major Thorne looked at them anxiously. Then he gave another order.

"Go round to the back of the house and knock there."

The sergeant obeyed, and soon his banging on the back door was plainly audible. Another party of police marched in, and the crowd on the road increased again. The magistrate ordered his men to face the crowd. The horses were turned, and a semicircle of armed men made a cordon round the presbytery gate. Major Thorne dismounted, went to the door himself and knocked. This time it opened slightly, and a woman's voice inquired—

"Who's there?"

"I wish," said Major Thorne, "to speak to Father O'Sullivan."

"Well, you can't," said the woman, "till he's done dressing himself."

The magistrate stood back and waited. He looked at his watch again. It was after six o'clock. He looked down the street. The crowd was increasing rapidly. The village was now full of people. He noted with satisfaction that the men seemed dazed and cowed, that no one was busy among them, that no preparations were going forward. He congratulated himself that the whole committee of the League, with the exception of Father O'Sullivan, were safe under lock and key. At half-past six he sent a messenger down to the barrack with orders that all the men who could be spared from guarding the prisoners should patrol the streets. A quarter of an hour later Father O'Sullivan appeared at the door of the presbytery.

"What do you want with me?" he asked.

"I have a warrant here for your arrest," said Major Thorne, "and I have come to execute it."

Father O'Sullivan flushed quickly and then grew quite pale. His eyes rested for a moment on the magistrate. Then he looked at the police. Then beyond them to the crowd. For a moment

he seemed to contemplate an appeal to the people to rescue him.

While he hesitated Stephen Butler got out of his trap, passed through the police, and approached the presbytery.

"I should like," he said to Father O'Sullivan, "to walk with you down to the barrack. I should like you to take my arm if you are willing to do so."

The priest looked at him in amazement. He stepped forward to meet Stephen. Then his eyes dropped and there passed over his face an expression of suspicion. Stephen was a man of another class, of another religion. He stood to gain something, the trust of the people, influence to use for the undermining of the power of the League; or hoped by show of sympathy now to win afterwards the priest's place and the priest's leadership. Father O'Sullivan was born in a class that has been taught suspicion by betrayal, and educated for a priesthood which has had suspicion forced on it by being suspected. It was impossible for him, being what he was, to believe in simple generosity. He turned slowly, without raising his eyes, and went back to the door of the presbytery where he had stood at first. Stephen, shamed and miserable, slunk away through the police to his trap. The crowd filled the street now. He could not drive through it. He waited.

A woman's voice, shrill in excited expostulation, was heard inside the presbytery.

"You can't do it, Father. Sure, you wouldn't now. You, that's been in bed this fortnight, and me all the time putting poultices of linseed on your chest. It's murder and suicide, so it is. What's Father O'Sullivan, bad luck to him, or the police, the villains, that you should go killing yourself for the sake of the likes of them?"

Old Father Staunton tottered out and took his stand by the side of his curate on the doorstep.

The housekeeper was clinging to him and trying to wind a red woollen comforter round his neck.

"May the devil roast the whole of ye!" she said when she saw the police and the crowd. "You'll be the death of Father Staunton before you've done, him that's worth the whole lot and litter of ye ten times over, if ye were all rolled into one."

Father O'Sullivan looked round. He had been bitterly angry with the parish priest, so angry that he had not spoken to him since the Sunday on which they had argued about the League. His face suddenly softened now and tears came into his eyes.

"Go back, Father!" he cried. "Go back! You ought to be in your bed. This is enough to be the death of you."

"Give me your arm," said Father Staunton. "I'm going with you as far as they'll let me. Come, now, give me your arm. I'm not so strong as I was. I want a young man to lean upon."

Father O'Sullivan turned to the magistrate.

"Keep your men back," he said, "and keep back yourself. I'll go to the barrack for you. But if there's law to be had or justice outside of law, you'll suffer for this morning's work."

"Hush!" said Father Staunton. "Hush, my son! Remember there's men listening to you out on the street who might take your words up wrong. Ah, Father O'Sullivan, don't be talking any more. Come along now. Aren't you a priest of God? Don't you know what He says, 'Blessed are they that suffer'?"

They started, the old priest leaning on Father O'Sullivan's arm. The people made a way for them to pass through. There was silence, save for the sobbing of women. Men knelt in the mud as the priests passed, caught Father O'Sullivan's hand and kissed it. Blessings and prayers were spoken low and fervently. Then

a woman flung up her arms and cried aloud. Shrieks of wild grief followed.

Suddenly the temper of the crowd changed. Fierce maledictions were shouted, and imprecations horrible to hear. The police, with Major Thorne at their head, rode after the two priests, and the people cursed them. Then high above the tumult rose a man's voice—

"If there's justice outside of the law we'll make these hell-hounds suffer for this morning's work."

They were Father O'Sullivan's own words, almost his exact words, but a terrible meaning had been put into them. The police, who had been patrolling the street, drew together in a compact body and prepared to charge the crowd. Father Staunton tried to speak but failed. He coughed helplessly and leaned more heavily than ever on his curate's arm. At last they reached the barrack, hurrying over the few remaining yards of the way.

"Thank God!" said Stephen Butler.

He got down from his trap and passed through the police to the barrack door where Father Staunton stood. He put his arm round the old man, drew him away, lifted him into the trap and drove him back to the presbytery. There the housekeeper, still breathing out maledictions against the police, the League, and the people, received her master and hurried him unresisting back to his bed.

Stephen with set, white face, drove through the street again and received without flinching the curses which the people showered on him. They knew that he had spent hours in the barrack with Major Thorne. They had seen him arrive in Dhulough with the police. They had watched Father O'Sullivan turn away from him on the presbytery steps. They thought they understood.