

**IN RE GARLAND, A
TALE OF A
TRANSITION TIME**

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In re Garland, a Tale of a Transition Time by Anonymous

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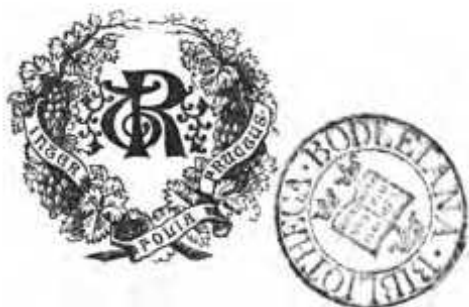
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TO
A TRUE PATRIOT,
AN HONEST MAN AND A GOOD FATHER,
THIS
TALE OF A TRANSITION TIME
IS,
WITH LOVE AND REVERENCE,
INSCRIBED BY
THE WRITERS.

IN *re* GARLAND.

CHAPTER I.

Suddenly, one sultry morning, the still life of Farrenstown was broken by a great man dropped there from the Dublin coach. Excitement spread over town and country, in widening circle, here green, there blue-tinged, till one sunshiny little ripple of it reached the quiet cottage of farmer Connor Kennedy.

The following day the farmer discovered that he had business into town; and as the clock would have struck eight, had the clockmaker been that way, he was sitting to breakfast in preparation for the road. Mrs. Kennedy was superintending him: refilling his basin, floating a *sthoul* of cream over the ropy thick milk of every day use; dusting his Sunday coat from the feathers that caught it in the room; turning a pair of clean stockings in readiness for putting on; meantime postponing her own meal, and, for aught I know, purposing on his departure to comfort herself with a cup of tea.

"An' who 'ill you vote for, Connor?" she asked, as she stood fingering his stockings on the other side of the table fronting him.

"Who 'ill I vote for?" repeated Connor.

"Didn't Mr. Garland send his compliments about it to you yestherday?"

"Sure enough he did. But I didn't know that you were hearing to it; you didn't tell me iv it."

"O, I can hear, an' see, an' say nothing now an again. There's wan thing certain, I won't vote for him or his."

"I know nothing iv either iv 'em, but what the priest said o' Sunday."

"I'm not so," said Connor. "I know a thrifle more o' the chap they're thrying to put in to do their dirty work for 'em. An' divil from me—an' I'll keep my word—if they'll get me to help 'em!"

"Well, an' suppose Mr. Garland keeps his word, too?"

"Let him! But I tell you he won't."

"God send it!" said Mrs. Kennedy. "For, indeed, Connor, it 'ouldn't be very pleasant; faix it 'ouldn't."

"Pleasant or onpleasant," Connor said, pausing as he drew on one stocking, "we must take our chance. How do I know but the Lord left me 'ithout children that I might be able to act independent, an' show a good example? We have nobody looking to us but ourselves; an' you took me for better for worse, ma colleen dhas! an' you must go through elections an' all with me. You 'ouldn't have me—"

"I would not, God knows!"

"That's the way to say it!" returned Connor, rising. "Am I plasing to ye now, Ma'am?" he continued, throwing off his seriousness as he put on his coat, shook himself and, first standing bolt upright, made his wife a scrape of a bow. Mrs.

Kennedy acknowledged the salute in kindred style. "You'll see that I'll come back safe an' sound in body an' soul—an' stocking, too," he added, making a movement with his hand, as though clinking the old guineas sometimes kept in such receptacle. His wife followed him to the door.

"'Pon your conscience, now," he said, stopping and turning round, "which 'ould you rather I'd come home with, a bribe or a broken head to you?"

"Go on about your business, now," said Mrs. Kennedy.

"Well, they 'ont be at the voting till to-morrow; so I'm safe, anyhow, to-day," Connor said, laughing, as he shortened his stick and set off in good earnest.

He stepped on under the sunshine that was favouring the crops; the odour of the furze-blossom from his own hedges overtaking him on the fresh forenoon air. And he thought, with thankful heart, over his position: his rent paid in, and more than enough to meet the running-gale laid up in bank with many year's interest thereon. His spirit rose. There was in his determination—should the worst come to the worst—just that sense of sacrifice that makes a man feel himself more manly whilst bidding defiance to oppression. His landlord could, of course, upon certain penal clauses of the lease, put him out of his farm, the farm that he had married and been ten years happy on. It would cost him a pang; but he should and would get over it—"there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught." And, as Connor, by foot, drew near Farrenstown, he was

by hand carting off his goods and chattels to a farm that he often had cast an understanding eye upon, and which rumour, recently, had advertised "to be let to a solvent tenant." He knew the while, however, that he was very little likely to be dispossessed. He argued with himself that "though Mr. Garland would like to decree the colour of his politics, he still bether liked to see the colour of his money. That he couldn't bether himself in a tenant." For Connor owed his being so well to do simply to his having so few claims on him beside the landlord's. And so, he shrewdly concluded, "that the landlord would let him alone;" as, taking one thing with another, it was his interest to do.

Connor reached Farrenstown by ten o'clock. Yet the streets were in full meridian bustle; each party everywhere giving and taking noisy pledges of its certainty to carry the day, and of its greater glory therefrom because of the contest's promising to be a close one.

It happened that this struggle was of a remarkable character; if, indeed, anything can be said to be so in our dear country of contradictories. The one candidate was a native of a distant county, a well-known liberal-minded Protestant, whose own good deeds were root and branches of his pedigree, and whose property qualification was very possibly a fiction—if the only one put forward for or by him. The other was a local magnate, "high as Gilderoy," but of that despised caste that our folk style expressively, "an Orange-Papist." Thus it was that at the hustings both candidates raised the cry of "green." And each party, add-