

**LORD NIAL, A ROMANCE,
IN FOUR CANTOS. THE
WIZZARD'S GRAVE, THE
ORIGIN OF BACCHUS, ETC.**

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Lord Nial, a romance, in four cantos. The Wizzard's grave, The origin of Bacchus, etc. by J. M. M.

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L O R D N I A L ,

R O M A N C E ,

IN FOUR CANTOS.

—

THE WIZARD'S GRAVE,

THE

ORIGIN OF BACCHUS, ETC.

BY J. M. MOORE

"On Lough Neagh's banks as the fisherman strays,
When the clear calm eve's declining;
He sees the round towers of other days
In the waves beneath him shining."

MOORE.

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TO DANIEL O'CONNELL, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR:

As one to whom the welfare of Ireland is dearer than any thing else, either in this world or out of it, I feel it my duty to inscribe to you this little volume as a slight, but sincere, testimony of my gratitude for your glorious and unbending efforts to alleviate the sufferings of that most unhappy country. I will make no apology for essaying to save my name, from a, perhaps, merited oblivion, by the introduction of yours; for, though the result of my effort should be deemed unworthy, the motive that led to it was pure, and as such I feel it cannot be altogether unacceptable. I have scarcely a hope that you will ever notice this volume — less, that you will waste any of your invaluable time in the perusal of it, and yet I would fain seduce you to the task: — I would tell you that the plot of the chief story is laid among the most sublime and beautiful portions of your own beautiful county — that the subject is FREEDOM, and, above all, that it is the production of one to whom even his very doubtful chance of fame is dearer than life and fortune, and yet who would cheerfully relinquish all claim to it — if, by so doing, he could in any way advance the prosperity of your beloved Erin.

Believe me, Dear Sir, to be your's most
devotedly for ever,

THE AUTHOR.

New York, March, 1834.

PREFACE.

I WILL not trouble the reader with my reasons for publishing this volume, and yet there are some even more binding than those of profit or ambition. Neither will I detain him with long arguments, eulogising its merits, or apologising for its defects — the one (if he takes pains) he will be enabled to discover of himself — the critics will save him the trouble of looking for the other; and so, without further comment, I shall make my obeisance in the words of Byron, and commit myself to the storm:

Gentle reader, and
Still gentler purchaser, the bard — that's I,
With due permission, shakes you by the hand,
And so your humble servant, and good bye;
We 'll meet again if we should understand
Each other, and if not, I shall not try
Your patience further than by this short sample;
'T were well if others followed my example.

LORD NIAL.

It was at the close of a pleasant day, in the latter end of April, in the year 18—, that a traveller, who seemed weary of his way, entered a little village within a short distance of the lakes of Killarney, in the south of Ireland. He approached, and left behind him, though with some hesitation, the village inn; for his eye had caught, and evidently lingered, on the "Dry lodging and good entertainment for man and beast," that seemed to bow to him from the swinging sign-board as he passed. However, the impression was not lost, for our traveller had hardly proceeded a hundred paces further, when the sky suddenly lowered, and a heavy shower so decided his wavering opinions in favor of good entertainment, that he returned by the run.

McDermott was such a man as you would pause to look at—young, handsome, and by his eye an enthusiast; but his faded cheek, and veteran garb, denoted him to be on rather so-so terms with the world. Were there a few more furrows on his brow, he might have been a superannuated

curate: as it was, he was most likely a poet, worn to the stump like an old goose-quill on his first epic, and now just set out in quest of a patron—we say *just*, because there was an occasional dash of hope in his glance, which told, plainly enough (if such was the case), that at all events he had not been very long on the road.

Mine host of the village inn was something of an oddity; for lacking all anticipation of profit, he welcomed his guest with a warm heart and an open hand; he had seen him linger in the first instance, and it struck him at the time that his only reason for not sojourning then was, that he had not the wherewithal to purchase a welcome. "He is wrong," thought the publican; and had such been the case, the publican would have been perfectly right; for there was a virtue in the seedy coat, and hollow cheek, of the stranger, that gave him a more decided and acknowledged claim to the hospitality of Tom Murphy, than if he had worn the costume of a prince. However, as was subsequently discovered, it was neither the poverty of his heart or pocket that obliged the traveller to take the road under the damning influence of a shabby coat.

* * * * *

Supper being over, Mrs. Murphy mixed a jug of punch for her husband and his guest, and sat down on a boss by the fire-side, to hear, and, if occasion occurred, take part in the conversation.

The rain had turned out to be more than an "April shower;" for it still made an audible clattering on the roof, and the low sigh that was just beginning to whistle round the house, gave certain indication of the coming storm.

"It is an awful night," observed Murphy, "and if it continues till twelve o'clock, there will be close fists and sour faces among the farmers by the morrow."

"As how?"

"It is only a foolish tale, sir, but we poor folks about the water here can't help believing it for all that, it so often turns out to be true. Some people, indeed, use very wise, and seemingly incontrovertible, arguments about chance, and so forth; but it often struck me as very singular, that, so far as regards the meeting of April and May in tears, or sunshine, as they call it, Chance always behaves herself as if she went by clock work. You have no doubt heard of a mighty prince that formerly lived in these parts, named O'Donohoe."

The stranger assented.

"Then of course the story is old with you; so I will merely subject you to the fag end in explanation of the close fists and sour faces. After many years spent in promoting the glory and happiness of his people, he one day like the present (the last of April), sent an invitation to his friends and vassals to meet him at his castle on

the following morning. At the hour appointed, he rode into the court-yard where they were assembled, mounted on his favorite white charger, and to the indescribable astonishment and grief of all, informed them that he was about to take a last leave of his beloved subjects for ever. After a most affectionate farewell, he proceeded slowly, and with an air of mysterious grandeur, towards the lower lake, and in the sight of thousands who followed to witness the result, rode over the water, nor did his horse's hoofs appear to make any more impression on the surface of the deep, than if it had been a plain of marble. Arrived in the centre, he reined his steed and bowed three times to the admiring spectators, when the water at his command opened beneath and received him into its bosom for ever. His subjects mourned him rather as one that was absent than dead; for he was often seen early in the mornings of summer, astride of his white steed, riding over the lakes, followed by ten thousand beings all as bright as angels. In time, however, as sin crept more into the world, his visits became less frequent, and for many years he has never honored Lough Desmond with his presence, save when he comes to celebrate the anniversary of the day that he retired from our world, and as the harbinger of a sunny summer and plentiful harvest; for there is an old tradition that whenever May sets in clouded by an April storm, he fails to make his appearance