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The Irish rivals, or, Muldoon and his hungry boarders

Tom Teaser

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SNAPS

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THE IRISH RIVALS; OR, MULDOON AND HIS HUNGRY BOARDERS

BY TOM TEASER.



Edwardo, Terry Rafferty and Johanna fastened onto poor Muldoon's feet. Hippocrates, Mrs. Muldoon and the alderman collared the stove-pipe. "If yez as much as scratch me, I'll bury yez all," said Muldoon, inside of the stove-pipe.

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THE IRISH RIVALS;

OR,

Muldoon and His Hungry Boarders.

By TOM TEASER.

CHAPTER I.

Terrence Muldoon kept a boarding house in the lower part of the great city of New York, on the East Side of town.

Muldoon was an Irishman, as you may have guessed, was somewhere about middle age, was well fixed, but in want of company, and so he took boarders.

There were plenty who would live with him, for he was an easy mark, was not strict about money matters and could be touched by whoever would.

He had a large and varied collection of boarders, male and female, among whom were Mr. Edwardo Geoghegan, a walking delegate, Hippocrates Burns, a poet, Alderman Lobsconse, Miss Sadie Fresh, Miss Krouse, Mike Magee, Stuyvesant Riley, Terry Rafferty and others whose acquaintance you will make as you proceed.

Muldoon had come over from Ireland, settled in Harlem, married the widow Halorahan, adopted his nephew, Roger O'Malley, who was a sharp practical joker, and then, wanting something to do, had moved downtown and had opened a boarding house.

When we make his acquaintance the place had been running for some time, was quite full, as were the boarders also at times, and it was in the early summer when sitting on the stoop was in vogue and gossip flew on every breeze.

Muldoon had a neighbor, Mulcahy, between whom and himself no love was lost, and one day about this time, Mrs. Muldoon came to the boss of the boarding house and said:

"What do ye suppose, Terry—the Mulcahys had private theatricals last night. Mrs. Malone was there, and she said it wur just iligant."

"What did they play?"

"It wur 'The Ruins av Nineveh.' Mulcahy played the Ruins, while Mary Ann Gallagher, Tim Dolan's wife's sister, played Nineveh. It wur in the papers."

"Bedad, I belave so, Mrs. M. I saw an article headed 'Riot in the Sixth Ward,' but I did not read it. It tuk well, did it?"

"Beautifully," Mrs. Muldoon responded. "All av the 'Emerald Guard' wur there, an' they went home together in a truck at three A. M., wid heads as big as barrels. Iverybody had a great time, intirely."

"We will bate the Mulcahys," decidedly said Muldoon.

"How?"

"We will play 'Pinafore!'"

Mrs. Muldoon gazed at him with evident admiration.

"Ah, Terry," cried she, "ye have a stupendous intellect. 'Pinafore' will be grand. What part will I take?"

"Ye may play chorus," Muldoon replied. "We will get it up recheche, which is Frinch for top-shelf, Mrs. M. I will hire Patrick Levi's band, and invite all av the nobility av Cherry street.

Shure we can vocalize in the parlor, and Owen Fogarty, the wagon painter, will decorate the scenery for us. Let me give it to the group."

The "group" was a metaphor for the boarders, and Muldoon gave it to them.

They were delighted.

"So nice!" exclaimed Miss Krouse. "What parts shall we take?"

"I play Little Buttercup," said Muldoon; "it is a splendid prisine I have for the part. Listen to me second bases:

"Oi'm called Little Buttercup,

Dear Little Buttercup,

Swate Little Buttercup, Oi!"

"Shure that takes the figure out av the carpet completely. Miss Krouse, ye may play Josephine."

After these two parts were decided upon, the rest were cast.

Of course there was grumbling; who ever saw private theatricals where there was not?

The cast decided upon was as follows:

Captain Corcoran.....	Terry Rafferty
Sir Joseph Porter, V. A.....	Hippocrates Burns
Dick Deadeye.....	Mike Magee
Ralph Rackstraw.....	Edwardo Geoghegan
Bob Bobstay.....	Stuyvesant Riley
Little Buttercup.....	Muldoon
Josephine.....	Miss Krouse
Hebe.....	Miss Sadie Fresh
Little Tommy Tucker.....	The Alderman

The performance was billed for a week off.

Rehearsals were held every day.

The whole boarding-house went "Pinafore" crazy.

Terry Rafferty got his head full of Captain Corcoran, almost persuaded himself that he was a veritable captain in the service, and got two beautiful black eyes for trying to steer an oyster boat through a dock without the pilot's permission.

Edwardo studied his part incessantly, and was constantly paralyzing old opple women, ash cart men, and so on, by absently stopping them in the street, and addressing them as:

"A maiden fair to see,

The pearl of minstrelsy,

A bud of blushing beauty."

Poor Hippocrates sat up every night till debauched small hours, howling forth that he was the ruler of the sea, until a big red-

shirted fireman, who lived across the way, stepped over one night with two clubs and a bull-dog, and remarked that though Hippocrates might be the ruler of the sea, he wasn't ruler of that block by a d—d sight, and if he didn't shut up his infernal noise he (the fireman) would be compelled to cave in his head.

Muldoon, too, got crazy. He drove everybody wild with his Little Buttercup, and got fired bodily out of church at early mass for informing the congregation that he sold:

"Pipes an' terbacky
An' excellent jacky,"

finishing up by gravely requesting them to:

"Buy of their Buttercup—buy!"

But the alderman was the worst. He had just two words to say: "Ay—ay, sir." He got to hitching his trousers nautically, chewed tobacco furiously, rolled down the street like a regular old salt, and "ay—ay'd" everybody and everything so terrifically that a rumor floated about the ward that the alderman had been appointed captain of a six-decked frigate.

The infection spread to the kitchen. Johanna caught it and nearly startled the old dorky, who peddled hot corn, out of his boots by lovingly informing him that:

"She was his sisters and his cousins and his aunts."

As for Fogarty, the wagon painter, he had been doing wonders.

He had painted a big acre of canvas for a back drop, representing a harbor.

It was a most realistic and true to life harbor, representing a fleet of what appeared to be red clam sloops, riding gracefully upon a green sea, while a blue and pink sky smiled admiringly down upon them.

"Arrah," approvingly said Muldoon, as he gazed upon it, "that is the proper kibosh, O'wney, me bye. I'll bet there is more paint upon it than any picture av its size."

At last the eventful night arrived.

The parlors were separated by a curtain, and the back one set as a stage, by aid of skillful carpentry.

All was in confusion.

Hippocrates was pale as death, and it was feared that he would try to commit suicide.

Muldoon had started at three o'clock to "make up" as Little Buttercup, and was yet in his room.

As for the rest, they were trooping around in every variety of costume, Muldoon having almost sacked several second-hand clothing stores in his efforts to procure proper habiliments for the opera.

Soon the audience began to arrive. They were blue-blood all through.

There was Felix Murphy, Esq., the landlord, the Whalens, the Phalens, Bryan McSwegan, whose cousin was a lord, the Mac-Rileys from Mayo, Tim Durfee, boss of the big pipes, Mr. Sweeney, who owned six liquor stores, and scores of others.

Mrs. Muldoon, in a stiff starched ruffle, which fairly dwarfed her, and a gaudy silk dress, received them, and two guilty-looking young men, with scared faces and awful white ties, ushered them to their seats.

Patrick Levi's band was in their place, too, and Patrick himself, with a pound of suet on his hair and a swallow-tailed coat, led them gallantly away into "The Little Widow Dunn."

Right in the midst of the general arrival, Johanna, the servant girl, rushed up to Muldoon's room.

"Fhat is it?" queried Muldoon; "for Heaven's sake kape away, Johanna; I have only my petticoat on. Sure, me hoopskirt is stuck in me boot, and I can't move. Divil take yez woman frippery!"

"Seventeen jintlemen have gone in Mulcahy's," said Johanna.

"What sort av jintlemeu?"

"High-hatted. One av them had a bass drum. An' I say, Musther Muldoon?"

"Eject it, ye kitchen coquette."

"They have decorated their back yard wid Chinese lanterns."

"Faix," meditated Muldoon, "I wondher what the darty web-footed Mick is up to now? Chinese lanterns! He can't be going to set up a tay-store. Johanna."

"Yis, sir."

"Has he a keg of beer in ther yard?"

Johanna fled to see.

"Yis, sir; six!" responded she, breathlessly.

"Bogorra, I have it!" said Muldoon; "it is going to establish a summer beer garden he is. He's purchased the big drum to give promenade concerts. Niver moind, he'll be ready to kill himself whin he hears about me 'Pinafore.'"

Here the alderman arrived.

The alderman had been persuaded to take the part of little Tom-

my Tucker, supposed to be about five years old, and he was arrayed in a costume suitable for his age.

As the alderman was only six feet high, it is needless to say that he was a sight to scare the hair onto a bald-headed baby. Such a first-class premium gawk as he was would be hard to find again.

"Are ye ready, Muldoon?" asked he.

"Just as soon as I round out me bust wid towels," whispered Muldoon. "Ye go below—I will be wid yez in a second."

The alderman strolled out into the back yard for a while, to brace up for the performance.

"Ay—ay, sir—ay—ay, sir," repeated he, hoarsely. "I bet I will know me part to the letter. Ay—ay, sir—ay—"

Surprise caused the alderman's repetition to stop here.

Leaning over Mulcahy's fence in attitudes which expressed elaborate surprise, were seventeen gentlemen, each gentleman with a glass of beer in his hand and a cigar in his mouth.

"Oh, cover my head!" gasped one of the gentlemen, as he pointed to the alderman. "Will you tell me what it is, and what it is doing?"

"The spring broke and they put it out into the yard."

"It's a cabbage on tooth picks."

"Look at its half-mast pants."

"Put a string into its head and jump it up and down."

"Ah! be aisy, it's one av the inmates av Muldoon's asylum. Lave it alone, it don't bite."

Thus jocularly commented the rest of the seventeen gentlemen.

The alderman felt his dignity grossly insulted.

"Do yez comprehend me individuality?" pompously he asked.

The seventeen gentlemen counterfeited extreme and idiotic terror.

"S—say it again and s—say it s—slow," begged one.

"Do yez know me name?" the alderman repeated. "I am Michael Emmet O'Connell Lobscouse, alderman."

The seventeen gentlemen were about making some reply, when Muldoon's voice was heard.

"Alderman," he cried, "all is ready."

"Have ye the corpse's hands folded?" solemnly asked a voice from Mulcahy's fence.

"What are ye talking about?" the alderman growled.

"It is a funeral ye are having in Muldoon's, is it not?"

"No, sir; it is 'Pinafore.'"

There was a simultaneous downfall of the seventeen Mulcahyites from the fence, and groans of apparent deep and heart-rending anguish were heard issuing from the yard.

As for the alderman, he stalked solemnly in.

"Muldoon!" cried he, "there are a colony av jail-berruds in Mulcahy's yard. It is thry to bust up our 'Pinafore' they will."

"Let them thry it," returned Muldoon. "Shure Justice Duffy av the Sixth District Court is in the audience, an' he'll give ivery wan of the funny suckers six months if they do. Ah, alderman, I have a grip wid the law."

All was bustle behind the curtain.

Everything was in confusion, everybody in everybody else's way, and Muldoon, who was leading lady, stage manager, scene-shifter, callboy and general nuisance, shouted himself hoarse.

"Howly Heavens!" cried he, "ye have the scenery on upside down. Alderman, fur Heaven's sake sit off av the moon; we want to use it by and by. Edwardo, do ye know ye have whiskers on one side av yer face only? Do yez take this for a peep-show av natural curiosities? There, Hippocrates, ye wall-eyed idiot, I knew ye would do it! Yez have promenaded up to your thigh in a pot av red paint, and now ye are happy. Miss Krouse, as ye seem determined to burn yourself up wid the footlights, if I war yez I would go an' sit down onto thim, and end the agony as soon as possible."

Thus did Muldoon scold, cajole and direct generally about everything in particular and the footlights in general, said footlights being composed of bottles with candles stuck into them, alternated by candles adorning turnips.

He also succeeded in getting the first scene set, said scene being a marvel of theatrical skill, being half room and half ship's deck. Occasionally the back-drop, representing Portsmouth Harbor, would fall down, and the bare wall be revealed.

Besides, the company were always mussing with the properties. For example: Muldoon had placed a main-mast on the stage to improve the nautical effect.

Before the "Pinafore" had progressed five minutes, the alterman fell over the main-mast and broke it, and Edwardo strolled onto the stage and carried off the cabin to black his boots on.

Altogether it was a scene of constant surprises.

But we will not anticipate.

At last all was ready; the band played the last strains of the overture, and the audience settled down into delightful anticipation.

"Up wid the rag," directed Muldoon.

The curtain arose in a sort of semi-intoxicated style, and disclosed the opening scene of the "Pinafore," the effect of which was a little spoiled by the alderman persisting in leaning against the main-mast, which was about two feet shorter than he.

The audience heartily applauded, and Muldoon stuck his head through the sky and bowed.

"Sing, yez mummies," he audibly said; "do yez take yezselves for wax-works?"

"We sail," chirped Stuyvesant Riley, and then suddenly stopped while the rest of the crowd stared blankly at him.

"We sail," faintly remarked Mike Magee, in a sort of muffled bellow. Then he, too, was seized with a fit of fright, and absently walked off into the open sea.

"For Heaven's sake sail, thin!" roared Muldoon. "Chorus, all!"

Somewhat reassured, the gallant crew, composed for the most part of members of a half-orphan asylum, kindly loaned for the occasion, feebly sang:

"We sail the ocean blue,
Our saucy ship's a beauty;
We are sober men and true,
Accustomed to our duty."

Here there was a pause. As if it was part of the programme, a thundering chorus, apparently over their heads, roared out:

"Hang Muldoon on a crab-apple tree!
Hang Muldoon on a crab-apple tree!
Hang Muldoon on a crab-apple tree!
But his soul goes marching on!"

Glory—glory, hallelujah! Glory—glory, hallelujah!
Glory—glory, hallelujah! forever—evermore!"

Which rattling ditty was supplemented by what appeared to be a terrific and insane solo upon a bass drum.

The audience took it to be upon the bills, a new interpolation, and applauded most vigorously.

The performers gazed in complete surprise at one another.

"Have yez hired yer roof out for a free-and-easy, Muldoon?" asked Edwardo.

"Begob, it is an individual insult. I believe it is ventriloquism," replied Muldoon.

"Oh, go ahead wid the pantomime," whispered the alderman. "Faix, I belave me pants are falling off."

Muldoon swaggered on.

His appearance was so grand that Mrs. Fitz Murphy's baby began to roar like a bull.

"Will somebody take the kid out to the woodpile and chop its head off wid a saw?" Muldoon requested.

The baby was carried out, with kicks, and Muldoon began:

"Oi'm called Little Buttercup,
Dear Little Buttercup,
Sweet Little Buttercup, Oi—
Oi'm called Little Buttercup,
Dear Little Buttercup,
Swate——"

"Hang Muldoon on a hot corn tree!
Hang Muldoon on a hot corn tree!
Hang Muldoon on a hot corn tree!
But his soul goes marching on!"

broke in the invisible chorus once more, followed by the "glory, hallelujahs," and a second emphatic solo on the bass drum.

"Begorra, somebody is putting up a job," declared Muldoon, red with rage. "Show him to me, and I will pulverize the sucker!"

Just here Hippocrates Burns came staggering in.

Hippocrates was suffering from a terrible stage fright.

His face was pale as death, his wig flopped over his eyes, and he hung onto his sword as if that alone intervened between him and instant destruction.

"I am monarch of the seas!" he shrieked, tottering forward.

"Get off the stage, ye fool!" Muldoon howled; "it isn't your turn yet."

Hippocrates smiled idiotically, fell over a wooden gun, knocked down the cabin, and was ingloriously and unresistingly dragged off by the heels by the half-orphans.

Not wanting to give Muldoon a second chance at his song, Terry Rafferty, as Captain Corcoran, came on and began:

"For I am the captain of the 'Pinafore,'" whereupon the half-orphans feebly declared that he was:

"A real good captain, too!"

He sang all right till he got to the—

"What! never?"

"No, never!"

"What! never?"

"Hardly ever!"

"Hang Muldoon on a red-herring bush!"

Hang Muldoon on a red-herring bush!

Hang Muldoon on a red-herring bush!

But his soul goes marching on!"

came peeling over the house, varied this time by an artistic concert on what sounded like a million fish horns.

"This is one av Mulcahy's outrages," Muldoon stamped. "He has bribed a Mastodon Minstrels to break up me 'Pinafore.' I'll——"

At this point Hippocrates moved in crab fashion through a port-hole, with a death-grip onto his sword, and monotonously chanted:

"I am the Ruler of the Sea,
The Monarch of——"

"Suffering Moses, will somebody kill the innocent?" gasped Muldoon, as seizing Hippocrates, he fired him bodily through the back scene.

Miss Krouse and Edwardo were allowed to sing their solos in peace, and Muldoon felt better.

At last it was really Hippocrates' turn.

Whereas, before he had only been too ready to get upon the stage, it now required the united persuasions of the whole company to get him there.

Even then he emerged, in some utterly unaccountable manner, up through the stage, as if he were a demon in a pantomime, and his surprise at doing so reduced him to a gibbering idiot.

He stood at the head of his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts, with both arms around his sword and a broad grin upon his face.

"Sing!" yelled Muldoon.

"In what?" asked Hippocrates.

"Your part, ye donkey!"

"Oh, yes," placidly replied Hippocrates, sucking the head of his sword, and fixedly staring at the footlights, as if he half expected to see them change into fire balloons.

"Will ye sing?" Muldoon repeated.

"Of course—certainly," Hippocrates answered, making an insane attempt to put his sword in his pocket. "What—who—where?"

Muldoon darted forward, but his voice was drowned with:

"Hang Muldoon on an ice-cream tree,
Hang Muldoon on an ice-cream tree,
Hang Muldoon on an ice-cream tree,
But his soul goes marching on!"

finishing with a grand burst of "glory hallelujah," and a choice and elegant extract upon a bass drum.

"Begorra, I will stand this no longer!" roared Muldoon. "Faix, they're turning me 'Pinafore' into a dog show. Indicate to me the devils!"

"Hey, pop!" squeaked a small voice, and young Roger Muldoon waddled on the stage in his night-gown.

"What?" asked Muldoon.

"There's robbers on the wood-shed."

Edwardo Geoghegan sprang forward off the stage and undid a window.

There on Muldoon's wood-shed were the seventeen gentlemen visiting at Mulcahy's, pounding away in turns upon the bass drum.

"Fetch me me carbine!" bawled Muldoon, "an' me powdher demi-jack. I have ye now, ye sons av guns!"

"Who's that Irish idol?" asked a Mulcahyite, alluding to our hero.

"Muldoon," responded a second.

"All right," said the first speaker; "tell yer what we'll do with him. We'll——"

"Hang Muldoon on a sweet-potato tree!"

Hang Muldoon on a sweet-potato tree!

Hang Muldoon on a sweet-potato tree!

But his soul goes marching on!"

Glory—glory, hallelujah!

Glory—glory, hallelujah!

Glory—glory, hallelujah!

Five cents to shoot the Mick!"

CHAPTER II.

To say that Muldoon was exasperated at the personal verse addressed to him is not enough to say.

He was simply wild.

Like a flash he flew up to his room, and grasped his musket.

It was a musket which Muldoon had purchased cheap at an auction sale—a musket with a barrel like a bow, and an aim which could never be depended upon.

In fact, a musket which, when aimed at a cat upon the back fence, had been known to send a bullet around the block, and kill a mule in front of the house.

Nevertheless, it was Muldoon's pleasure and pride. He would not have exchanged it for the most approved patent pin-fire, telescopic sight yet invented.

He loaded it with about a quart of powder, a bushel of fine bird shot, a tooth-brush, a dozen of Mrs. Muldoon's pet hairpins, and a cake of soap.

"Bedad, if I had toime I would sind a chariot for the reporthers, for the slaughter will be worth chronicling," he muttered, as he put a cap on the musket's nipple. "'The Battle in Muldoon's Back Yard,' they could call it."

He opened the window of his room. A dark form was on its hands and knees on the wood-shed, peering down into the darkness.

"It is the last av the Mulcahyites," thought Muldoon. "Begorra, I will sind him off av me wood-shed quicker thin he iver got onto it. Howly Moses, whin me gun goes off the vicinity will swear that Hell Gate has blown up again!"

Muldoon took good and careful aim.

"I will hit the bull's-eye at wanst," declared he; "listen to the bell ring, an' the little joker ride out onto a string."

He pulled the strigger.

There was a noise as if a powder mill had burst up, and a cloud of sulphurous smoke enveloped the rifle shooter.

The report was followed by a terrific yell, and the dark form performed a rapid and ungraceful somersault off the shed.

A feminine shriek arose from Muldoon's back stoop.

"Blessed Patrick!" ejaculated Muldoon. "I hope the devil's gun has not carried over the river and kilt the young Leddies' Seminary on Hoboken highlands."

"Oh, Terry!" yelled the feminine voice, which Muldoon recognized as his wife's.

"Well, ye ould screech-owl?" politely he replied.

"Whirra—whirra! ye unlucky man! Do ye know what ye have done?"

"Kilt one av Mulcahy's minstrels."

"Whirra, no! Ye have shot the alderman mortally."

"The Lord preserve me! Where is Mulcahy's Sing Sing coterie?"

"Shure, they flew over into his yard loike pigeons. They are all in his kitchen area now."

In support of Mrs. Muldoon's words there was a vigorous pounding onto the bass drum, the fish horns bleated with awful energy, and a chorus of semi-intoxicated but enthusiastic voices rang out:

"Hang Muldoon on a gin-fizz tree!

Hang Muldoon on a gin-fizz tree!

Hang Muldoon on a gin-fizz tree!

But his soul goes marching on!"

Glory—glory, Hallelujah—glory—glory, Hallelujah!

Glory—glory, Hallelujah! Muldoon, the cross-eyed Turk!"

Muldoon dropped his musket and darted down into the yard.

All was excitement.

The alderman lay with his head in Miss Krouse's lap; Mrs. Fitz Murphy was fainting with great rapidity, the rest of the ladies and gentlemen were clustered about in various states of excitability, while Hippocrates Burns was helplessly holding a lantern which he flashed about in a most astonishing style, blinding everybody in turn with its light in a truly phenomenal style.

"Is the alderman all there?" Muldoon queried.

"Yis," was Miss Krouse's reply.

"Then carry him carefully into the house or he'll drop apart. If he got all of the shot into him, he will never hould together. Ye'd better tie him up wid the clothes-line to make sure certain."

By the aid of Edwardo and Terry Rafferty the wounded man was conveyed into the parlor, and laid upon what but lately had been the deck of the good ship *Pinafore*, the audience having all retreated home, paralyzed by the event of the night.

"Are you much hurt?" asked Muldoon.

"It's a corpse I am," growled the alderman. "Sind for a surgeon."

Hippocrates at once volunteered to go for a surgeon.

Meanwhile it was discovered that the alderman had received a liberal dose of bird-shot in that part of his body which sits next to a chair. It was highly probable that he would be compelled for a month or so to carry a feather tied to him, to be able to sit down with any degree of comfort.

Hippocrates returned with a surgeon, two policemen, and a large expectant crowd of ragamuffins.

In his haste he had forgotten to change his stage dress, and his appearance on the street was the signal for a general riot.

The crowd at once set him down for a lunatic, and hunted him down the streets as if he was a wild Texan steer.

By blind luck he succeeded in reaching a surgeon, and persuading him to come home with him.

The crowd, beholding Hippocrates emerging with the surgeon, was sure that Hippocrates was a madman.

"Take him home, doctor!"

"Stave the crank's head!"

"Ere's a cab. Drive yer right round to the lunatic asylum for six shillens."

"Stick him in a strait-jacket!"

Thus addressing the perplexed surgeon, the crowd escorted the pair to Muldoon's house, being joined by the two zealous policemen on the way.

Muldoon explained everything.

The policemen went away grinning, with a trade dollar apiece.

The mob got disgusted, began to think themselves intensely misused because Hippocrates had not turned out to be a particularly ferocious madman, and started to break Muldoon's windows for him.

Whereupon the two policemen clubbed several small boys, arrested a crippled old woman, dispersed the crowd, and struck Muldoon for more trade dollars with officious zeal.

Meanwhile the surgeon had examined the alderman, extracted about a bushel or so of bird-shot, advised rest for several weeks, pocketed his fee and left.

But Muldoon was rewarded a little by an accident which happened to the Mulcahyites.

Flushed with their victory, they left the Mulcahy homestead and started to make a night of it.

It struck them that it would be intensely humorous to ring every door-bell on the block and yell, "milk!" "ice!" "butcher!" and all the other traditional announcements of tradesmen.

Several policemen, devoid of all sense of humor, attempted to stop it; a free fight ensued, more policemen arrived, and with bruised heads and bloody noses the festive Mulcahyites were marched off to the station-house, from whence, next morning, they were arraigned at court to hear the familiar sentence: "Ten dollars or ten days."

And thus ended Muldoon's great and memorable "Pinafore!"

"Niver spake to me av 'Pinafores' again," said Muldoon. "I wud rather have a fire in me house. It wud cost less and be more fun. Shure, the next sucker that suggests 'Pinafore' will get a belt in the gob."

About this time the walking craze struck New York.

Everybody was wild over Weston, Rowell, Blower Brown and all of the other famed walkers.

Muldoon got it bad.

He had a track laid out in his back yard—three or four hundred laps to a mile.

He paced around it each day in a style which evoked the cheers of the boarders and the sneers of Mulcahy.

Mulcahy also testified his disgust of the affair by hurling over damaged potatoes, sick eggs, and cabbage corpses.

One day he ventured above the fence upon a step-ladder.

Muldoon was just walking his fifty-ninth lap.

"Luk at it—luk at it!" cried Mulcahy; "see it go around. Faix, I belave it is wound up for eight days. I wondher does it strike the quarther hours?"

"Mr. Mulcahy, sir, do yez allude to me wid yer Frinch conversation?" haughtily asked Muldoon.

"Howly Virgin, it spakes!" cried Mulcahy, in well-assumed surprise.

"Mr. Mulcahy, sir, ye are altogether too loose wid yer remarks," Muldoon continued; "if yez do not break off wid yer sarcasm, I will forget me gentle breeding an' knock yez off the fence, same as I wud any other ould Tom-cat, wid a brick!"

"Oh, it's Muldoon," Mulcahy said, as if he had just discovered the fact; "begob, Muldoon, I tuk ye for a cuckoo clock that somebody had wound up and set to going in the back yard."

"Shure, I tuk ye for a crockery idol that somebody had put on the fence to scare bad pie down yer boarders' throats," rejoined Muldoon.

"Phat are yez at, Muldoon?"

"Walking."

"For a cake?"

"For exercise."

"Yez are no walker. Ye are a lepper, and yer name is Hughes. Begob, there is a kangaroo walk at Barnum's aquarium. Why don't yez jine it? I walk myself next week."

"In a rope walk?"

"Devil a bit. Paddy Gallagher gives a great tournament at Emerald Hall next week."

"Is it stuffed?"

"What?"

"The tournament?"

"Go 'way, ye dummy. Tournament is Murray Hill for a grand walking match. Intrace fee, ten dollars. Firse prize, a gould medal and half of the walk's receipts."

"Can anybody join?"

"Yis."

"Thin, Mulcahy, beware, I will enter myself. Is it go where yez plaze?"

"Yis; but yez are debarred."

"Why?"

"No gorillas allowed."

Mulcahy thought this last sally was so awful funny that he laughed till he got red in the face, and thought that he was too comic to live.

But his mirth was soon changed into sorrow, for yelling like a bull, he suddenly disappeared off the fence.

"Whist, murder! it's a jack-in-a-box. Somebody's pulled it down and shut it up," Muldoon declared, as he gazed in surprise at the spot where Mulcahy had been.

He soon learned the reason, though, of his foe's sudden vanishment.

Young Roger Muldoon, a remarkably knowing child, had procured an auger, and bored through the fence till he reached Mulcahy's leg, inserting about a half inch of auger point into said leg.

"Good for ye, Roger," Muldoon delightedly said, patting his son's head. "Ye are a credit to yer ould man. I have great hopes av making a great man out av ye. Here's a big cint; run around to Mrs. Kildear's, the baker's, an' gorge yerself on hot-cross buns."

The more Muldoon thought of it, the more he determined to enter into Gallagher's tournament at Emerald Hall.

He confided his idea to the boarders at supper that night.

Edwardo and Terry Rafferty looked astounded, while Hippocrates Burns turned pale and choked himself on a fish cake in his agitation.

"Me and Terry have already entered," said Edwardo.

"Me, too," faltered Hippocrates, who had had previous visions of walking alone, unknown to anybody, and returning in victorious splendor with the "gould medal" to paralyze the boarding-house.

"The more the merrier," Muldoon declared. "Hippocrates, ye should put weights on yer feet."

"What for, Mr. Muldoon?"

"To prevint yerself being blown away by the breeze."

To cover Hippocrates' confusion, Mrs. Muldoon remarked that the sea-serpent had been discovered off Fulton ferry, and an animated discussion ensuing relating to the noble bird following, Hippocrates was able to recover his equanimity.

Muldoon's next idea was a trainer.

He secured one.

In the person of a six-footed, shavy-head, square-shouldered gentleman, named One-eyed Rafferty, who proudly boasted of having trained the Keokuk Chicken in the great fight with the Peoria Ass, for the championship of Rehaboth Beach, and pounded him to pieces after a hard-fought battle of one hundred and thirteen rounds.

Mr. Rafferty at once established an absolute monarchy at Muldoon's.

"If I'm goin' to train yer, yer duffer," he told Muldoon, "I'm going ter be boss—understand? If yer don't do just as I say, I'll make yer—understand? If anybody thinks dey can give sugar to dis canary bird, dey is way off—understand?"

Muldoon faintly said he guessed so. For the next week his life was a gigantic nightmare.

He was aroused at 5 A. M., and forced to run a mile. At six he was rubbed down, and allowed to eat a half-raw chop. Then he practiced for the rest of the morning with Indian clubs, dumb-bells, etc., dining upon stale bread and a small portion of roast beef. The rest of the day was programmed about the same, varied by ten-mile runs, five-mile walks, and other pleasant little leg stretches.

As for Mr. Rafferty, he had a gilt-edged picnic.

He got drunk regularly each night, made love to every female in the house, from Mrs. Muldoon to Johanna, the cook, and otherwise acted in a most high-toned and gentlemanly style.

At last the night appointed for the opening of Gallagher's tournament arrived.

Muldoon was brought down into the parlor for the edification and admiration of the household in general.

He was gaudily arrayed in a suit of dear old Ireland's green, and looked like a solid man, but not quite as solid as he looked before he went into training.

"Mother av Moses, Terry!" cried Mrs. Muldoon, "ye luk as if ye had grown up in a gas-pipe."

"My bloat has diminished," proudly replied Muldoon. "It is solid flesh I have now. Where are the other chromo pedestrians?"

"Do yez mane Terry Rafferty and me Edwardo?" queried Miss Krouse.

"Tis those two sylphs I refer to."

"They went long ago in a cab."

"Be Heavens, they will come back in an ambulance. Where is Hippocrates?"

"He wint to get blue ribbon sewed on to his shirt," answered Mrs. Muldoon.

"The tone av the sucker," Muldoon gasped, "and owing av me two weeks' board for his parrots. Faix, he'll be buyin' seal-skin socks and glass slippers loike me nibbs Cinderella to walk in next."

"Sa-ay!" interrupted Mr. Rafferty, the trainer, at this juncture, "are yer going ter walk, or ain't yer? If yer don't come along, and stop yer chin-music, yer'll git left—understand?"

Muldoon took the hint, and suffered himself to be meekly pushed into a carriage.

About half of the small boys in the ward were at the door, and they cheered him loudly.

"Hurray for Muldoon—give us a cent!" they cried.

"Arrah, Rafferty," whispered Muldoon in delight, "do yez hear them? It is terrible popular I am wid ther boys. It's a regular Muldoon boom."

"Give us a cent," persisted the boys.

"Wid pleasure," said Muldoon, putting his head out of the cab window, "only I haven't wan. Widdy Dunn borried me last two to put on poor Mick's eyes. Shure he fell off a scaffold and kilt himself completely, and they wake him to-morrow. O'Brien's band furnishes the music. Wait till I return from me walk, b'yes. I'll presint yez all wid a bouquet an' a piece of cake."

The boys positively refused to be elated with such brilliant promissory presents.

They wanted present pennies.

"Who put green spectacles on his horse and fed him shavings for hay?" they yelled.

"Red-muzzled Muldoon, the miser!" they chanted back.

"Who fed his boarders on cobble-stone soup?"

"Red-muzzled Muldoon, the miser!"

"Who gets drunk and beats his wife?"

"Red-muzzled Muldoon, the miser!"

"Who's going to get licked in the walking match acos he was to stingy to eat?"

"Red-headed Muldoon, the miser!"

To the music of the beautiful chant improvised for the occasion by the disappointed boys who had reckoned on taffy money from Muldoon, sure, the carriage rolled off, followed by a volley of stones, mud, old vegetables and sticks.

"Yer are intensely popular, Muldoon," sarcastically remarked Rafferty. "They give yer the biggest boom I ever saw—understand?"

Muldoon shut up.

"Ah! the fickleness av the masses," was all he could say.

The carriage soon drew up before the door of Emerald Hall.

Crowds blocked up the entrance; the brassiest sort of a brass band was playing: "The Day I Walked Against O'Leary;" agents were shouting themselves hoarse, and distributing circulars broadcast.

"The populace is very enthusiastic," observed Muldoon. "They are too enthusiastic. Let us climb down the coal-hole incognito."

"I'll fix dat—understand?" emphasized One-eyed, as he threw a cloak over Muldoon's shoulders, and rushed him through the crowd to a private door.

Inside the hall was arranged into a perfect walking track, with wooden conundrums, a cross between a tent and a switch-house, for the use of the pedestrians.

Muldoon was ushered into one of them, and told to take up his abode therein.

He looked around it in disgust.

"Begorra, wud yez luk at the hay matthress?" he growled. "Do yez expect the loikes av me to slape into it? Why didn't they stuff the pillow wid bricks, and be done wid it? Shure, the feathers are petrified."

"Yer too darned toney," rebuked the One-eyed. "What did yer expect, a closet wid a Turkish bath into it, and an elevator to carry yer up to the roof? Yer won't get it—understand?"

Muldoon submitted.

While he was trying to comb his whiskers in his usual fascinating way a gong rang vigorously.

"Is it a signal for supper?" questioned he.

"No," drawled his trainer; "it's a signal for yer to git onter the track. Drop that comb—do yer take this for a beauty-show—and git."

Muldoon got.

A big crowd had collected to witness the start of Gallagher's great tournament.

Muldoon's appearance upon the sawdust circle was the signal for a general chorus of remarks, the reverse of complimentary in most cases.

"Holy smoke—look at it!"

"It's an effigy."

"No, it's alive, for it grows hair."

"It's Stewart's body."

"Shure, it can go in five-nineteen."

"I wonder has it any friends?"

"It was built in a rope walk."

"Do ye suppose he grew up on a hill, or in the bushes?"

"It's one of Barnum's gorillas they've brought down here for a judge."

"Whist, lave it alone, byes. It dropped in through the roof, and they'll swape it out in the morning."

This last sally produced a grand laugh, and Muldoon was glad to reach the starter.

The other pedestrians were already there, including Edwardo, Terry Rafferty and Hippocrates. Hippocrates was looking pale, and evidently felt the derision of the spectators keenly, they having facetiously baptized him "Broomsticks."

Mulcahy was there, too.

"I have been buying crape to-day, Muldoon," said he.

"For what?"

"To go to yer funeral in. Yez will be dead before ye walk one hundred miles."

"Kape the crape," replied Muldoon, "yer widdy'll nade it. Be jabers, if I couldn't outwalk a monkey-man I wud die!"

"Do yez refer to me as a monkey-man?" bristled up Mulcahy.

"Be still," cried the starter. "Are you all ready, men?"

"Yes," cried the contestants.

"Then go!"

Amidst the cheers of the crowd the pedestrians started upon their tramp, Muldoon plainly walking to win.

He led for the first lap, and while passing a group of friends he was presented with a basket of flowers bearing the label:

"One for the tarrier."

Holding the basket in his hand, he made a vigorous spurt, and cries of "Hurrah for Muldoon!" rent the air.

CHAPTER III.

Muldoon was still ahead.

He put on his best licks and circled around the track in a style which was applauded, except from a corner where a delegation from Mulcahy's sat.

They hissed and scoffed at Muldoon and his efforts.

"Close your eyes whin Muldoon comes around," advised one. "He can't walk."

"Av coarse not," responded a second. "He's a regular rank!"

"I hear he feeds his boarders on roasted dog from the pound, and tells thim it's grouse."

"Faix, it is foin grub they have at Muldoon's morgue ivery day. Peruvian woodcock—a fish-ball wid a feather in it—for breakfast all the year 'round."

"Arrah, Muldoon ought to be ashamed of himself walking around here while his poor wife is out wid a basket begging av cold victuals for the boarders' dinner."

Muldoon stood these allusions just about as long as he could.

Then when his temper arose to the boiling point he turned square around and faced Mulcahy, who was second man in the walk.

"Mr. Mulcahy," requested he, "will yez plaze request the mimbers of yer menagerie to kape their mouths shut?"

"Who?" asked Mulcahy.

"The chromos from yer penitentiary," responded Muldoon. "They are altogether too quaint wid their remarks."

"I can't help it," grinned Mulcahy.

"Yez can."

"Oi can't."

"Mr. Mulcahy," said Muldoon, "it breaks me heart to doubt yez worruid, but it is a mane, dirty liar that yez are!"

Whack! went Mulcahy's fist against Muldoon's eye, and over toppled Muldoon in a most skillful style, followed by Mulcahy, who fell on top of him.

There was the utmost excitement in the hall. A fight beat a walking match all hollow in the minds of the spectators.

"Give it to him, Muldoon!"

"Sock it to him, Mulcahy!"

"Break his neck!"

"Kick him in the jaw!"

"Get him down and punch his head!"

Cries similar to these rang out from all parts of the hall, while the two pedestrians pummeled each other with a hearty good-will.

But at last, by the efforts of Gallagher, the manager, assisted by several special policemen, they were parted.

"Let me get at the buck-toothed image av a mule!" entreated Muldoon. "Shure, I'll finish him in wan blow!"

"Lave go av me!" Mulcahy pleaded. "Why did yez catch hold av me? Begob, I had me hand down his throat, reaching for his fut. Another second an' I wud have pulled him inside out!"

Despite these remonstrances, the two were held fast, conveyed to the back door, placed in cabs and driven home. Their career as walkers, in that tournament, at least, was over.

"I tould yez so," says Mrs. M. to her lord and master; "I conjectured as much. After all yez training, as ye call it, an' turning av yer house upside down, ye walk just three-quarters av a mile. It is put into a lunatic asylum yez should be."

Muldoon bore her reproaches very calmly.

He had another great idea in his head.

"Bridget," said he, "I intend to astonish the vicinity."

"How?"

"Wid a party."

"What sort av a party?"

"Listen, woman. Ye know there was a great many invited to our 'Pinafore' who did not come. There were the MacRileys and Long John Brennan, an' Dump Cart Inspector Hooligan, an' quite a squadron av the other high-tones av me acquaintances who sint excuses."

"Yis."

"Well, I intind to give a party and ax thim again. Bring me pen, ink and papetrie, Mrs. M. I intind to compose an invitation."

Mrs. Muldoon soon brought the designated articles, and placed them beside her husband.

Letter writing was a serious work with Muldoon; he went at it as if he was plowing.

He took off his coat.

Next he dipped his pen into the ink, glared ferociously at the ceiling, and scratched his head savagely, as two infallible aids to composition.

At last, after he had blotted four sheets of paper, upset the ink stand twice, ruined six pens, and used his mouth for a pen-wiper until it looked like the entrance to a coal mine, he succeeded in evolving the following "invitashun:"

"MR. ———."

"DEAR SIR:—Mr. and Mrs. Muldoon, in compulsion with the boarders, respectfully ax yerself to a small but elegant party, to be given at Mr. Muldoon's celebrated Boording-House (rooms fifty cents per day, males ixtra), on Saturday night, October —, 1878. Mr. Muldoon having axed yez wanst before to a reprisentashun av 'Pinafore,' which yez did not attend, Mr. M. will fale hurt if yez do not honor him wid yer presince at the party. Collation by Fogarty—Music by O'Brian. Respectfully yours wid love,

"TERENCE MULDOON,

of Muldoon's Great Boording-House. Hot and cold water on every floor, an' use av bath tub free."

This missive having been copied as many times as necessary by Muldoon, the copies were carefully folded, tucked away into envelopes and mailed to the persons blessed with them.

For the rest of the week Muldoon worked like a hero for the party.

The parlors were decked with Irish and American flags lovingly interwoven, big wreaths of evergreen festooned the walls and dangled over the window curtains, the front door was repainted and a new handle put into it, and stupendous efforts were made to make the occasion a grand success.

"Yez must have a man to wait upon the door, Terry," said Mrs. Muldoon.

"What for?" asked her husband.

"For style, av course."

"Thin I will get Paddy Levi, the blacksmith; he will do it for six shillings."

"Paddy Levi!" rejoined Mrs. M.; "he's a foin chrome to wait upon the door. Shure, he wud handle the card rayceiver as if it wus a horse's hoof."

"Thin I have a second statuette."

"Who?"

"Hog-eye."

"Is it a man, woman or baste?"

"It's Mr. Hog-eye, from Canton. He is a moon-eyed leper, Bridget. A haythen Peruvian from China. Faix, his father was a mandarin wid two tails, an' he wud have siven himself if he had his roights. But he hasn't, an' now he is champion water-squirter in a laundry."

"He moight do."

"Be Heavens, he will do! It will be very kibosh, Bridget—a rare Chinaman imported especially for this occasion only by Muldoon. Whin Mulcahy hears av it he'll be drownin' himself in a wash-tub."

Accordingly, it was decided that Hog-eye was to be the door-keeper and announce the guests.

At last the eventful night arrived, as eventful nights have a way of doing, and the guests flocked in.

Hog-eye was at the door, and he looked so sweet and childlike that Muldoon felt like patting him on the head, and giving him a stick of barley candy.

"Hog-eye, ye daisy," he said, "yez must announce the guests. Call thim out, so that I may know who they are."

"Yellee loud?" asked Hog-eye.

"Yis—aquill to a fog-horn."

"Callee so you knowee lem?"

"That is the proper caper sauce for an illivated party loike me own. It is a blue-blooded affair, yez know."

"Allee yite," and Hog-eye took his station at the door.

Muldoon walked into the parlor where his wife and the boarders were collected, all agonizingly conscious that they had their best clothes on.

"Animate yerselves," ordered Muldoon; "ye look loike a set of wooden dummies on front av a hand-organ which only move whin the music goes. Begorra, Mrs. Muldoon, the guests will be taking yez for a hat-rack and hanging their hats onto yer fairy form."

Just here the bell rang.

Hog-eye's voice sounded sweet as maple sugar:

"Fattee old gal wid hoopee-skirt. Lilliee man wid biggee nose—gleatee red!"

Muldoon was fairly paralyzed with astonishment, and the boarders looked at each other in surprise.

Hog-eye's voice was heard for the second time.

"Solid ole cussee muchee belly. Mellican gal allee paintee. Lilliee Mellican slideblords an' licumpilly collar."

"Howly Mother av Moses!" Muldoon groaned, "that is the way the haythen is announcing me guests. He will be massacred in a few seconds!"

Muldoon's words proved true.

Hog-eye answered the door for the third time, and started to announce:

"Glass-eyed son ub glun with hair biggee red an——"

Then there sounded a noise as if somebody was being thrown through the front door, followed by a Chinese death wail, and a volley of vigorous Irish oaths.

Immediately afterward, Mr. Bryan O'Shaughnessy, the big butcher from Centre market, stalked in with a face as red as his own beefsteaks.

"Mr. Muldoon," said he, in a thunderous voice, "ye may send a messenger for the dump-cart."

"What for?" asked Muldoon.

"There is a dead Chinaman outside on the walk. I never was so insulted in me loife—never. What do ye mane, sir, by employin' sich vermin?"

Muldoon humbly apologized.

But it was a long time before he could pacify his guests, whose tempers were greatly ruffled by their unique introductions, and it took several visits to Muldoon's private rooms and several interviews with a roguish-looking black bottle to assuage Mr. O'Shaughnessy's wrath.

Gradually, though, the parlors filled, and the party began.

Hippocrates Burns took a seat at the piano, rolled up his eyes as if he were trying optical gymnastics, and began to sing: "I'd Like to be a Birdie."

Muldoon stopped him.

"Be Heavens, Hippocrates, I wish ye wur a birdie," he said, "I wud shoot ye inside av a minute. But ye don't burst up the festivities wid yez vocalization. Remember, Hippocrates, this is not a funeral, though yez wud made it so. Go sit down upon the sofa an' ax ould Miss McTurk to tell yez the name of the folks who died in 1812."

"Let Mr. Burns make a spache, or a recitation," proposed Terry Rafferty, with a mischievous smile, as he gently squeezed Miss Fresh's dainty waist.

Hippocrates needed no second invitation.

He mounted a stool, did some more eye-rolling, and began, to a wind-mill accompaniment of his hands:

"At miyid-night in his ge-yarded te-ent,

The T-yerk was dre-yeeming of the yhour,

When G-reece her ka-nee in——"

The guests got enough of it already.

"Tie a brick to his feet and throw him out of the windy!" roared Muldoon.

"Put him on ice till he gets well!" suggested Edwardo.

"Take him down off av the stool—he draws flies!" said Rafferty.

"Shure, the pimple he calls a head is ripe!" yelled Mike Magee, astonishing himself by saying something. "Prick it with a pin!"

With a face suffused with blushes and a heart full of rage, Hippocrates stepped down. But his poetical nature asserted itself.

"Bah, ye base-born serfs!" he hissed, as he walked stately out of the parlor. "I lave yez all to your born ignominy!"

"Whirra—whirra, it's cursing av us he is!" said Mrs. Muldoon. "Johanna, go up and tie him to his bed. He'll have fits before morning!"

"Aisy," protested Muldoon, "he wur blessing us in hog Latin. Hippocrates has a great head. Shure, he learned how to say 'milky cocoanuts' in Choctaw inside av three years, though what good it done him I niver could conjecture. What shall we do now?"

"Let's play some game," proposed Miss Krouse.

"Blind-man's-buff," said Mrs. Muldoon.

"Hold on!" pleaded Muldoon, "I have no life insurance upon the furniture. Mrs. M., are yez crazy? Blind-man's-buff in the parlor. Ye moight as well go around to McSwegan's livery stables, borry two jackasses and play polo. No, woman, blind-man's-buff is barred."

"Let's play puss in a corner," remarked the alderman.

"Wud yez look at the baby that wants to play puss in a corner?" sarcastically said Muldoon; "bring me some string till I make a cat's-cradle for him. It is down in Mulligan's alley playing 'Little Sally Waters' wid the rist of the babies on the block yez shud be, alderman."

"I know a game," said Edwardo.

"Is it brand-new, loike yerself?" asked Muldoon.

"Yes."

"How do you work it?"

"Aisy. Everybody takes a littler. Dhraws it out av a bag. No wan but himself knows what it is. Then one man, called the interlocutor——"

"The which?"

"Interlocutor?"

"Does any salary go wid the name?"

"No. This inter—I'll break it off short—axes a question, and a second sardine, called the respondent, replies wid a letter for an answer. See?"

Muldoon said he didn't. By aid of a pair of opera glasses he might be got to comprehend, but at present he didn't. But if the rest were willing to risk their lives, he was.

The rest were eager to try it.

The alderman was chosen interlocutor and Edwardo Geoghegan respondent.

All drew their letters from the bag, Master Roger Muldoon's letter blocks having been pressed in for the occasion.

The alderman hemmed and hawed and finally asked:

"Who is the prettiest person and the most accomplished lady in the room?"

"H," said Edwardo.

"H" was discovered to be Miss McTurk, who was about one hundred and eighteen years old, had skin as hard as leather and a nose like a lobster claw. Whereupon Miss McTurk braced up and giggled, and wondered if her false teeth were cut on the bias all right.

"Whose legs are so bandy that he has to have his pants cut with a circular saw?" queried the alderman.

"B," said Edwardo.

Muldoon roared and kicked himself, for it was so awfully funny.

"What poor devil has got 'B'?" he asked.

"You've got it yourself, Terry," said his wife, peeping over his shoulder.

Then there was a roar from the rest of the party, and Muldoon did not think it was half so funny.

"Go ahead wid the ould game," he growled, as he drew another letter, for the letters were redrawn after each query.

"Who's got a hand like a gang-plank av a Coney Island boat?" the alderman asked.

"Z," came the answer.

"Howly Moses!" shrieked Terry Rafferty.

"Pick me teeth wid an ax, Muldoon's got 'Z.'"

Muldoon had "Z."

And he wanted to get an axe and cut Edwardo's head.

"It is a put-up job to ridicule me before me guests," he said.

"Let me be the sucker what answers riddles."

So Muldoon stepped up.

He drew a letter himself, for mere form.

He noticed that Edwardo took what he supposed was the letter M.

Here was a grand chance to get square.

"What ould bog-trotter has got mud on his teeth?" asked the polite alderman.

"M," cried Muldoon, with a grin as broad as his face.

"Who's got 'M?' " asked several.

"Edwardo!" cried Muldoon. "Arrah, Edwardo, ye gypsy coquette, ye are in for it now."

But Edwardo did not appear to care.

He squinted curiously at Muldoon's letter.

"Yez have it yerself, Muldoon," declared he.

"Yez are out of yer head completely," pityingly replied Muldoon.

"I have 'W.' "

"Not much," answered Edwardo. "Yez have 'M' turned upside down. I dhrew 'W' meself. Begorra, the beers are on Muldoon again."

Such a shout as went up! It fairly shook the block, and woke up the policeman on the beat.

"To the devil wid the ould game," Muldoon cried; "it is only fit for a lunatic asylum. Faix, it is one assemblage of idiots I have collected. Perhaps next yez will be wanting to secure hooks and lines and go fishing into the butter-tub for croton bugs."

Having delivered himself of this tremendous sarcasm, Muldoon retreated sulkily to the rear end of the parlor, sat down upon a sofa, and relieved himself somewhat by asking Mrs. Fitz Murphy, in an audible voice, how long it was before Edwardo's sister was coming down off of the island.

"Now we'll dance," said a chorus of young ladies.

"What?" queried a male chorus.

"The nine-pin," said Miss Krouse. "It's awfully jolly."

"The slug nine-pin," interpolated Edwardo, with a wink.

The set was soon made up.

"Please be the nine-pin, Mr. Muldoon," begged Miss Krouse, with her sweetest smile.

Muldoon refused.

"I won't be a nine-pin, or a ten-pin, or a clothes-pin either."

"What is the slug nine-pin?"

"You'll see," archly said Miss Krouse. "It's lots of fun, and you are such a nice dancer."

"So graceful."

"So easy."

"So light on the feet."

"Such an illigant stepper."

"No speeler—but a rale sweetie dancer."

Chorused the rest of the ladies, while Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, the butcher's buxom wife, tickled Muldoon gently under the chin, and requested:

"Plaze oblige us, Mr. Muldoon. Yez know yez are the loife av a dance. You will be rale mane if you don't."

How could Muldoon refuse?

"I'll do it to plaze the laddies," said he, "but I bet, begob, there's a figure in it when I get fired downstairs. Are yez all ready?" They were.

Muldoon was put in the middle of the dancers, and the music started. Off they went in the maze and intricacies of the favorite and fun-provoking nine-pin.

Suddenly the music stopped.

"Slug the nine-pin!" cried Edwardo.

The whole merry crowd of dancers went for Muldoon.

He got "slugged."

They banged him in the eye and clubbed him in the face. They got upon stools and chairs to strike him, and when they got him down, they got down, too, to walk over and jump onto him.

They tore his coat and blacked his optics, bloodied his nose and had lots of fun with him.

Muldoon fought bravely, but he was no match for the scientific crowd who figured as his assaulters, particularly as the ladies were his chief tormentors, and of course he could not hit them.

Finally a late arrival, a gallus, just-landed Dutchman, came in, and the crowd spotted a new victim.

In a second they left Muldoon lying completely "laid out" on the floor, and surrounded the poor Dutchman.

Soon a new nine-pin set was composed, and the jokers were circling eagerly about the fresh "nine-pin."

Muldoon raised himself up and gazed at the dancers.

"Luk at me—luk at me!" cried he. "I luk loike the loife av the party, don't I? Be Heavens, I will niver dance 'Slug the Nine-pin' again as long as I live. Lay low for the Dutchman, ye devils!"

CHAPTER IV.

Around the smiling and totally unconscious Dutchman circled the dancers.

Muldoon got up.

"Begorra, I will have a hand in the funeral," he said.

The Dutchman looked at his general dilapidated appearance as he walked up.

"Vos you had a fit, Mr. Muldoon?" asked he.

"It was timporary insanity," replied Muldoon. "So ye are the nine-pin?"

"Yaw," answered the other.

"Thin allow me to recommend Tim Donohue, the undertaker. He gives yez the boss twelve-dollar funeral on the avenue."

"Vat you mean? I vants nicht to get buried. I vas nod dead!"

"Yez are nixt to it. Stop the music, for Heaven's sake!" bawled Muldoon. "Shure, a Dutchman ran over me sister's bye tin years ago, and I intind to get square on the sex!"

The music stopped.

The Dutchman grinned amiably.

"Vas dis de end of de dance?" he queried, placidly.

"Divil a bit, it wor the ind av ye," promptly replied Muldoon. "Slug the nine-pin."

Muldoon wanted to get first crack bad.

He struck out wildly.

The Dutchman dodged.

Muldoon's fist landed against Mrs. O'Donnell's face, and temporarily flattened her nose.

"Murther!" she bawled, appealing to her husband. "Mr. Muldoon is gone crazy. Shure, we will all be kilt!"

Mrs. O'Donnell was six feet high and built like an ox.

As a natural result, Mr. O'Donnell was four feet five, and resembled a lead pencil with a head onto it.

But he was game.

He hit boldly out at Muldoon. It resembled a fly attacking an ox.

"Mrs. O'Donnell," apologized Muldoon, "plaze accept me apologies. It wur an accident. I meant to slaughter the beer-gorger. If I have spiled yez fairy nose I will purchase yez a putty wan wid pink nostrils."

The lady consented to be pacified.

"Michael," said she to her husband, "ye may stop yer assault and battery. Mr. Muldoon declares it wur a casualty."

"Wur he hitting av me?" Muldoon asked, looking down.

"Av coorse," responded Mrs. O'Donnell; "an' quite roight he wur, too."

"Bejabers, I didn't know it," Muldoon grinned. "Michael, it wur lucky I didn't foind it out, or I moight have stepped onto yez an' squashed yez. Where is the Dutchman?"

"Laid out onto the refrigerator," declared Edwardo; "they're trying to bring him to by burning his hat before his nose."

"Arrah, it's a purty dance," soliloquized Muldoon. "It's almost aqil to being run over by a horse car. But allow me to insinuate that it would not be long-lived for any tarrier to ax me to be nine-pin again; it would be a direct road to Calvary Cemetery."

By this time the poor Dutchman, whom nobody seemed to know, and who must have got into the party by mistake, had been helped out of it through the back door by Edwardo.

Peace was thus restored, and dancing started again, being kept up till late, or rather early in the morning.

Everybody went home pleased, and Muldoon was delighted.

"It was the biggest society success av the sayzun," he declared to his wife, upon going to bed; "barring the fact that Mr. McShally mistook the ice cream pail for a cuspidor, and Mrs. Finnegan broke her leg attempting to walk out av the dining-room through the cellar door, everything passed off with great eclat. There is a noble worrud for yez, Bridget. I intend to presarve it in camphor to kape the moths out av it."

The next day Muldoon felt a trifle stale.

Not even the excitement of Mulcahy's servant girl falling down the front steps and breaking the beer jug aroused his spirits.

"I think I will go down and take a drop in upon Danny Rourke," he said, after supper. "Danny's black tom cat has just had a red, white and blue kitten, and I intend surveying it. It wud be a big card for me boarding-house, and if Danny will take our eight-day clock, I will make the trade."

Accordingly he sauntered down to Mr. Rourke's.

Mr. Rourke was a bachelor.

Being not ostentatious, he abode in a fifth floor room in a tenement house in Mulligan's alley.

Arriving at the house, Muldoon noticed a number of colored folks ascending the stairs into the house.

"I wondher have they a cake-walk onto the roof?" reflected he, and he stopped a big negro with a dandy dress and an air of graveyard solemnity.

"Ah, ye colored pedestrian," gayly said Muldoon, "where are yez steering for? Have ye a bush-meeting upstairs?"

The darky assumed a very sad expression and rolled his eyes upward.

"Nudder bressed lamb gone to sit upon de throne," he said.

"Shure, wasn't he contented wid a chair? Was it a female lamb, or an ould buck sheep?"

"Youse don't understand, brudder. He's gone dead."

"Dead broke?"

The darky threw up his hands with a sigh of disgust.

"Brudder Montague am dead," he said. "We are going to keep de watch ober him. Gwine fo' to watch an' pray fo' de good ob his soul."

"Arrah, it's nothing but a naygur's funeral," groaned Muldoon. "Begob, I thought it moight be a cock fight."

By way of a slight consolation Muldoon mashed the darky's tall hat over his eyes and passed on.

"If I iver get elected to the United States penitentiary at Washington I'll vote for another naygur exodus," he said.

After knocking at eight or nine rooms and getting into eight or nine fights with their occupants, he succeeded in reaching Mr. Rourke's.

Mr. Rourke was at home.

But his red, white and blue kitten was not. It had been lent out to a church fair, where they had issued tickets to see it to everybody who bought ten cents' worth of tracts.

Mr. Rourke was keenly glad to see Muldoon, and they soon got talking over old times, for they had both been boys together in Dublin.

Suddenly the sound of music broke out upon the air.

"Gwine to put on de golden wings—

Fly—fly wid de angels;

Dean't care nuffin' for earthly things—

Fly—fly wid de angels.

Den wait till we sit on de thrones,

Den wait till we sit on de thrones,

Den wait till we sit on de thrones—

Walk on de golden street!"

"Be Heavens, it is a boy wid an accordeon," declared Muldoon; "loan me a brick till I drop it out av the windy an' make an inquest out av him."

"Hould on!" Rourke laughed; "it is the naygurs."

"What naygurs."

"In the next room."

"Are they rehearsing av a murder?"

"Arrah, no—it's a wake."

"Shure, it is lucky the corpse is dead," said Muldoon; "the vocalism would kill him if he wasn't. Who is the gentleman that is to be planted?"

"Montague, the whitewasher. He wor struck by a falling telegraph pole yisterday and laid out."

"Wan Republican voter the less," Muldoon sagely said. "Danny, have ye no way of amusing yerself an' yer friends? I'd rather play butter-scotch than listen to the massacrers av music in the next flat."

First Rourke suggested playing dominoes.

But investigation disclosed the fact that part of the dominoes had been thrown out at a cat, and the baby on the next floor had swallowed the rest.

Then Muldoon discovered a pair of boxing gloves upon the wall.

To be sure, the thumb of one of them was gone, and straw stuck conspicuously out of the other, but Muldoon said:

"It makes no odds. It is only a friendly bout."

So he and Rourke put on the gloves and squared off.

"Luk out now, Danny," warned Muldoon; "if I double yez up beyant the door raymimber I bear no malice," and the flow of his eloquence was only stopped by suddenly perceiving his heels rising above his head, the effect of a well-delivered body blow of Mr. Rourke's.

But he got up, and they were soon at it again.

Meanwhile the negroes in the next room were bewailing the sudden and unexpected departure of Brother Montague for another sphere.

Mrs. Montague, a stout, buxom wench, sat at the head of the coffin, fully alive to the fact of her important position, while her friends clustered about.

They were loud in their praises of the deceased.

"He war such a good fader," remarked one, which, seeing that the corpse had no children was certain to be taken in an allegorical sense.

"Amen!" chorused the rest.

"Such a good husband!"

"Amen! Halleloo!"

"He's gwine up to glory, shuah!"

"We'll be dar—we'll be dar!"

"Gwine to walk 'round de track wid de angels!"

"Bress de spirit—Halleloo!"

Thus they went on in regular negro style, until at last they got so enthusiastic that they could hold in no longer.

"Brudder Jeff'son—Brudder Jeff'son," appealed the widow, "gib us a hymn."

Brudder Jeff'son was the darky whose hat Muldoon had crushed. Brudder Jeff'son considered himself a daisy with the wenches,

and as Mrs. Montague was a cream-colored beauty, and the lamented Mr. Montague was lying a totally uninterested spectator, Brudder Jeff'son concluded he would try and get up a mash on the widow.

Brudder Jeff'son had a voice like a cow choked on an apple, but he sang by main strength and didn't care.

Standing up, he began a popular camp-meeting melody:

"Say, Peter, will you let me in?"

Done dropped de key ob Hebben;

White as snow an' free from sin,

Done dropped de key ob Hebben."

Just as Brudder Jeff'son had finished the last word, there was a terrible racket heard from the next room, where Muldoon and Danny Rourke were boxing.

Suddenly there was a crash; the thin apartment wall fell through and Muldoon came tumbling through the aperture.

"Howly Moses!" came Rourke's voice, in accents of surprise, "if I had hit the Tip much harder I'd a knocked him clane out into the strate."

Muldoon struck the coffin.

It tilted violently, and somehow the corpse sat up.

The darkies screeched and shrieked and cowered in terror.

The widow deserted her post, and flew to Brudder Jeff'son, who clasped her fervently.

As for Muldoon, he caromed off onto the floor, rolled over once or twice, and finally staggered to his feet with an air of consternation.

"Begorra," said he, "I belave I have broken up the festivities. Och, but Danny Rourke's fist is as hard as a brick, an' he hits loike the kick av a mule. Faix, I must beg the naygurs' pardon. A thrue gentleman wud aven be polite to Chinese."

Muldoon proceeded to put his intention into execution.

"I did not mane to discontinue yer reunion," he said, with a graceful wave of his boxing glove; "it was a casualty. Go ahead wid the picnic."

But nobody appeared to pay the slightest attention to his words.

The mourners were gazing with fear-distended eyes at the coffin, which was at his back.

"Can't yez spake?" angrily asked Muldoon, turning his attention especially to Brudder Jeff'son. "Bedad, yez big, black, buck naygur, if yez squeeze that woman much harder yez'll break her an' have a double-header of a funeral."

Brudder Jeff'son made no reply.

He pointed one finger tremblingly toward the supposed dead man.

Muldoon turned around.

The corpse was rubbing his eyes and looking fiercely at the party in general, and the widow and Brudder Jeff'son in particular.

Muldoon was as superstitious as most of his race.

He made a bolt for somewhere, he didn't quite know where.

Standing near him on a table was a wicker-covered bottle which looked as if it might contain some courage raiser.

Muldoon grabbed it and put it to his lips.

It was whisky.

In his agitation he swallowed about a pint.

Meanwhile the corpse had clambered out of the coffin.

He had not been killed by the telegraph pole falling upon him, but only rendered unconscious, from which condition Muldoon's abrupt and original entrance had aroused him.

He glared fiercely around.

The tableau of his wife and Brudder Jeff'son did not seem to please him.

He whipped out a razor from the pocket of his pants, which hung on the wall, and started for Brudder Jeff'son.

How those mourners did scatter! They went out of doors, under beds, through the hole in the wall, and Muldoon afterward declared that he saw three or four go out of the window.

They found their tongues, too, and shouted as they ran:

"He's alive!"

"He's got a razor."

"Dar's kill in his eye!"

"It's a miracle!"

"Raving crazy. 'Spect he'll cut deep."

Brudder Jeff'son dropped his lovely burden and danced over a chair with the corpse right at his heels.

"Wha' youse doing wid my wife?" demanded the corpse.

"Wanted to bury me alibe an' marry her. Yah, I'se de wust ole dead niggah youse eber seed. Whoo! gwine to cut youse lung right out!"

"Sabe me!" appealed Brudder Jeff'son, flying over a table and getting it between him and his pursuer. "I neber done nuffin Mis-tah Montague; deedy I didn't, sah!"

"Don't sah me," replied the corpse, making spear thrusts with his razor. "I'se ain't a sah. My initials is N. G., an' dey stan' fo'

no good. Dat's de sort ob a black coon I is. Jest lemme cut dat yere nigger lip of youse off fo' to wipe my feet on!"

Muldoon was regarding the performance sort of dazedly.

He and Danny Rourke had been drinking a good deal in the evening, and the whisky that he had swallowed afterward went right to his head.

In fact, to speak plainly, Muldoon was tight—full as a beer barrel.

He watched the struggle between Brudder Jeff'son and the resuscitated dead man with a confused intellect.

He could not get it through his muddled brain.

There had ought to be a funeral.

There was the coffin, there were the mourners; there was everything except the corpse.

That necessary adjunct of a first-class, regulation funeral had basely come to life and spoiled the whole business.

Clearly it was not right, so Muldoon reasoned.

He staggered over to the these contestants, and grabbed Mr. Montague.

"Fhat are yez doing, ye stiffy?" he queried.

"Who!" howled Mr. Montague, digging his razor at Brudder Jeff'son. "I'se jess wants to cut dat niggah into fish-balls, dat's all. I'se wicked flesh, I is—borned bad!"

"Just put up the razor and go back to yer coffin," ordered Muldoon, whose speech, like many other men's, was noticeably affected by intoxication.

"Wha' fo'?" asked Mr. Montague, surprised at this gentle mandate.

"Ye're dead!"

"Who is?"

"Ye, ye naygur."

"'Specks I'se ain't. Jess lemme touch dat baboon wid de razor. Dead men can't cut."

"Luk a here," resumed Muldoon, "it is a nice sardine yez are. Be Heavens, if I was going fishing I wud put yez on a hook to catch clams wid. Retrate to yer coffin."

"I won't!"

"But yez will. Here yer friends go to work an' get all ready to plant yez in iligant stoyle. Ye spile the whole festivity by getting out av yer coffin."

"But I'se alibe."

"Ye ain't."

"Wha' am I?"

"Yez are dead. Didn't the docthor say so, and wud yez be makin' him out a liar?"

Mr. Montague wouldn't listen.

He said he was alive.

He wasn't going back to any cramped, uncomfortable coffin

He wanted to butcher Brudder Jeff'son, and he was going to do it if Brudder Jeff'son would only be courteous enough to step from the seclusion which the table granted, and consent to be butchered.

"Arrah, it's no good talking sinse to a corpse," declared Muldoon. "I must use muscle. Come wid me, ye walking blacking box."

He grabbed Montague by the collar.

"Play loight wid yer ham-cutter," he said, "or I'll reduce yer facial proportion by shaving off yer nose, and making a beautiful jewel av yer countenance."

Mr. Montague tried to resist.

But he was like a baby in Muldoon's powerful arms.

Brudder Jeff'son was delighted.

"Frow him out ob de window," he proposed.

"Divil a bit," Muldoon replied, as he gripped the frightened Montague. "I have a better use for him than that."

"Gwine to gib him up to the police?" questioned Brudder Jeff'son.

"No, ye flamingo."

"Wha' den?"

"Watch and see. Do yez suppose I wud see aven a naygur disappointed av a little enjoyment? Yez have come to a funeral and yez will have it."

Muldoon righted the coffin with his foot.

He proceeded to cram Montague into it despite that gentleman's resistance and reluctance to be a dead man twice.

But at last Muldoon got him in.

"Shut yer eyes, ye daisy, and cross yer arms," ordered Muldoon. "If yez thry to kick the foot out av the coffin I'll murther yez."

Poor Montague lay still.

He was paralyzed.

"Youse ain't gwine fo' to bury me alive?" faltered he.

"Shut up. Yez ain't got no right to speak," replied Muldoon.

"Ye shud be completely satisfied. It is a splendid plant we will give yez. Shure, I'm going to ride in an ice wagon as head mourner! Here, ye Wooster street belle."

This last remark Brudder Jeff'son applied to himself.

"Call in the gang," continued Muldoon. "Aftther an intermission av tin minutes the entertainment will go on."

Brudder Jeff'son did.

The sable mourners gathered together again, half scared to death, and regarding Muldoon as a ferocious lunatic whom it would be wise to humor.

"Proceed wid the hymns," Muldoon ordered. "Faix, I'll lade on the first lap. Here is a foiné chant fur yez:

"Wait till I put on me sealskin ulster;

Wait till I put on me sea-green robe;

Wait till I——"

Here the corpse attempted to climb out from his unpleasant quarters.

Muldoon fixed him by shutting down the coffin-lid and sitting upon it.

"Go ahead with the funeral," he said; "we will have no more resurrection!"

CHAPTER V.

The mourners were gathered in groups, like scared sheep, watching Muldoon, whom they regarded as a dangerous maniac who was liable to murder anybody upon the slightest pretext.

Plainly he must be humored, or, if thwarted, thwarted in such a way as not to provoke his ire.

Muldoon got completely disgusted with the lack of interest manifested at the funeral.

"Begorra, I have witnessed more grief at the obsequies of an ox!" said he. "It is no use of waking him any longer—let us carry the sarcophagus down to the hearse."

"Oh, Lawd!" groaned Mrs. Montague, "am de niggah really alibe? Wha' will we do? Dat yeah Mick would bury de bressed lamb, shuah."

A solemn-looking nig with an alarming air consisting of all cravat motioned her aside.

The solemn-looking nig was named Deacon Pillsbury, and if he had been only whitewashed and stood up in a graveyard he would have made a most excellent monument.

"Lemme strategize wid de lush!" he said, alluding to Muldoon.

The mourners gladly consented.

They didn't know whether "strategize" meant to hit Muldoon with a club, or to secretly assassinate him or not.

"Belubbed brudder," began Deacon Pillsbury, "we can't convey de deah departed to de funeral vehicle."

"Why?" asked Muldoon.

"Dere was a severe rain last night, an' de stairs hab shrunk! Dere am no way ob getting de coffin down."

"Shure we'll cut a hole in the roof an' lift her out wid a derick!" proposed Muldoon.

The mourners objected to this method decidedly.

So Muldoon proposed a second.

He caught sight of a coil of clothes-line rolled up in a corner of the room.

"Bedad, I'll put a slip-knot about the coffin and lower it out av the windy," he said. "Nate, convaynient and artistic!"

In order to do so he got off of his perch and grabbed the clothes-line.

Mr. Montague gripped his opportunity of escape.

He beat the record in getting out of the coffin and out of the room, followed closely by his wife, the intellectual Deacon, and the rest of the mourners.

When Muldoon secured his clothes-line and turned to put it into practical use, he was alone in his glory.

"I belave it wor another naygur exodus," said he, as he braced himself up against the coffin. "Go to worruk I do to bury him with polish and pomp, and the divil resurrects himself and runs away. I wish I wor down south, by Heaven, I'd join the Ku-Klux-Klan an' ate roast naygur!"

To atone for his disappointment in not being head marshal at the funeral, he proceeded to mash things generally.

Just as he had fired a chair through the looking-glass, and was about pitching the bed out of the window, two policemen arrived and basely collared him.

So, in the end, his innocent excursion to gaze at Mr. Rourke's red, white and blue Thomas cat kitten, cost him ten dollars, which a despotic judge said was the correct caper, the next morning.

"To the divil with curiosities anyhow," he confided to his wife. "I wud not go six fate to see a Chinese aigle wid horns on his head."

"Talking about cats," said Mrs. Muldoon, "Mulcahy's pie-bald kitten was just into me cellar and walked away wid a halibut."

"Faix, she must have tunneled in," Muldoon answered. "I stopped up the hole through which she used to come, yesterday."

"Yez did?"

"Do yez desire me to make an affidavit to the fact, before the Boored av Common Scoundrels?"

"Phat did yez stop it wid?"

"A stove-pipe, begorra. If the cat comes in again I will coat it wid kerosene oil, and intrude it into Mulcahy's cellar wid its tail set on fire. Yez will witness a conflagration in the Mulcahy domicile."

Muldoon swaggered off, wondering, as he expressed it to Edwardo:

"How the divil the four-footed scourge iver found egress."

The next day there was a fine circus around the back yards of Muldoon and Mulcahy.

Mrs. Muldoon put up a clothes-line.

Mrs. Mulcahy did likewise.

They extended from fence to fence, and, of course, were intended to hold the washing of the respective boarding-houses.

It happened, while Mrs. Muldoon was arranging her clothes, preparatory to putting them out to dry, that young Roger strolled out into the yard and chanced to view the clothes-line.

Roger had borrowed a billy-goat, and was desirous of taking a ride in a soap box phaeton which he had constructed.

But he had no harness for the goat.

It occurred to him that his mother's clothes-line would suit exactly.

So without a word to anybody, he cut down the line, coiled it up closely, placed it under his coat, and put for the street.

The result was that when Mrs. Muldoon struggled out into the yard with soapy arms and a bundle of wet clothes, she did not have any place to put them onto.

"Murther!" cried she, "me clothes-line is gone. Where can it be?"

With feminine wisdom she peered under the cellar-door, looked into her pocket, scrutinized the grass-plot as if the line had gone and buried itself there, but all to no effect.

"Whirra—whirra, the fairies have been here. It has vanished completely," she said; "shure I wonder could the ram have ate it for—"

Just then her eye beheld a piece of the Mulcahy rope which was dangling over the fence.

Her countenance at once assumed an expression of joy.

"Ah! ha—ha—ha!" cried she. "Mrs. Mulcahy has tuk it. I knew she was red-headed and chopped up kindling wood in her cod-fish balls, but not a bit did I suspect she was a thafe. Nothing is safe now; they'll be staling the top of the woodshed to cover their skylight wid!"

Mrs. Muldoon peered trough a hole in the fence at the line.

"Yis, there it is," said she, "wid ould Mulcahy's red flannel shirt a-waving in the wind, and those petticoats av Mrs. Mulcahy's that were won at a raffie before the flood. It is demoralize them I will, or me name is German for Johanna!"

In pursuance of the noble scheme, she, by standing upon a saw-buck, succeeded in unfastening one end of the line.

A vigorous pull uncoupled the other, and the various articles upon the line were soon being dragged through the dust Muldoonward.

At this moment Mrs. Mulcahy appeared in her yard, with four or five clothes-pins in her teeth and a sheet in her hands.

"Howly murther!" shrieked she, "me line is aloive! It is pedestrianating. Luk at it crawl!"

Yet Mrs. Mulcahy was not going to lose her line if it was alive, and she grabbed it.

Mrs. Muldoon, who had got down off of the saw-buck as soon as she experienced a check in the line's progress, looked through the hole in the fence to ascertain the wherefore.

"Ha—ha!" sneered she, "it is that ould wildcat, Mrs. Mulcahy."

"What?" answered that lady.

"Yez have hould av me line."

"Who are ye?"

"Mrs. Muldoon."

"Have yez the cheek to confess it, afther trying to stale me line?"

"Mother av glory!" groaned Mrs. Muldoon, "wud yez listen to the jail-hen! She has brass enough to make a boiler! Mrs. Mulcahy, ye can give me no liquorice; it is my line."

"It ain't," replied Mrs. Mulcahy.

"It is."

"Yez are a liar!"

"Yez are a liaress!"

"Lave go av me line, or I will crawl over the fence and skate upon yer African nose!"

"Come over, if yez dare. I will tache yez to purloin me line. If there is a law in the land I will have it on yez. Come over, ye

feather-tongued gorilla! It is in the Museum av Antiquity wid the rist av the mummies yez should be!"

This torrent of eloquence fairly closed Mrs. Mulcahy's mouth for a while, but she never let go her hold upon the line. She pulled for all she was worth.

Mrs. Muldoon pulled, too.

Mrs. Muldoon was twice as muscular as her opponent, and slowly but surely the line went inch by inch over into Muldoon's yard, Mrs. Mulcahy desperately holding on to her end, but being out-pulled.

"Ah, ye thafe, I have yez," groaned Mrs. Muldoon; "bedad, I'll put a lock on the back fence after this. Perhaps yer monkey husband is around front now, confiscating av our area palings to pick his reservoir teeth wid."

"I wish Mulcahy was here now," answered his wife; "he wud blow on yez wanst, and ye wud brake. Bah, ye ould hen, I knew yer folks whin they fed upon cold victuals and cinders, and whin yez went wild wid enthusiasm if yez had mate wanst a year!"

"It is ye are the pretty sylph to be alluding to daycent people's pedigree," answered Mrs. Muldoon. "It is well I raymimber whin your father, poor soul, was niver out av jail except on election day, and yer mother ran away wid a tin-peddler."

All of this time the clothes-line was gradually getting over into Mrs. Muldoon's yard.

At last, in order to hold on to her end, Mrs. Mulcahy had to get on to an empty barrel which was upon her side of the fence.

It was a pretty sight for a picture.

There was Mrs. Muldoon pulling on her end of the line, and Mrs. Mulcahy, up on the barrel, pulling onto her end, and the innocent clothes between.

"Will yez quit?" asked Mrs. Muldoon.

"Never!" stoutly replied Mrs. Mulcahy.

"If yez don't I'll land yez pell-mell onto me property."

"Heaven preserve yez property if yez do!" prophesied Mrs. Mulcahy.

But luck was against her.

Her weight was altogether too much for the barrel-head to sustain, and it gave in.

With a yell she sank down into the barrel, and the disputed over but innocent clothes-line flew over the fence into Mrs. Muldoon's victorious possession.

As for Mrs. Mulcahy, she yelled like a bull for help to extricate her from the barrel.

It happened that her husband, Mulcahy, who was busily engaged wondering how he could carve a two-pound turkey so as to satisfy nineteen boarders, heard her appeals.

He rushed out into the yard.

A barrel, apparently in convulsions, with a pair of feet protruding from the end, met his gaze.

"Beggorra, it's a robber!" cried he, as, grasping an ax, he struck the barrel a desperate blow.

One stave flew off, revealing a woman's form.

"'Tis a faymale pirate!" Mulcahy yelled. "Get thee gone, woman—get thee gone!"

"Oh! Michael, don't ye know me?" asked a female voice.

"I recognize yer accentuation. Who are ye?"

"Yer wife, Norah."

"I will not belave it," dignifiedly returned Mulcahy; "the spouse av Michael Mulcahy wud niver have fits in an ash-barrel. Ye are fooling me."

"No, I ain't," and Mrs. Mulcahy crawled forth from the barrel, a sorry-looking sight.

"Ye luk loike the Queen av the Rag-pickers," expressed Mulcahy. "How did ye iver git into the barrel, Norah?"

"Mrs. Muldoon made me."

"How?"

"I strongly suspect she struck me on the head wid a brick. She stole our clothes-line, Mike."

"Be Heavens, I will go over the fence and chastise her," said Mulcahy; "no woman can insult me wife and survive."

In order to sustain his haughty words, Mulcahy raised himself above the fence.

Mrs. Muldoon had received reinforcements in the shape of Muldoon himself.

"Ah, Mulcahy!" ironically said Muldoon, "are ye after yer red shirt? Bedad, we were just going to sind it down to Memphis for a yellow faver flag!"

"This is not a circus and we have no clowns," solemnly said Mulcahy. "Mrs. Muldoon has put me cherub wife into a barrel and stole the family clothes-line. I demand satisfaction."

"Shure, we'll presint yez wid a photograph av the line?" offered Muldoon.

"If I were as fresh as yez I wud be baptized in a salt mine," returned Mulcahy. "Mr. Muldoon, Esq.—jackass—ye are no man."

"Phat am I?"

"Beggorra, I give it up."

"If yez will come over here, yez Wallahalla Hall mock orange," politely returned Muldoon, "I will show yez what I am. Faix, I am afraid to spit in your vicinity; I moight drown yez!"

This was too much for Mulcahy. He jumped over the fence and grasped Muldoon by the throat.

"Begob, I will shake the clothes-line out av yez," he threatened. Muldoon didn't see it.

He resisted the shake part of the programme, and got the best of the brave Mulcahy. Especially when Mrs. Muldoon did a concertina solo on the intruder's head with a broom.

"Pitch him back into his own yard," advised she.

It was done.

Mulcahy flew disgracefully over into his personal domains.

"Yez are a lemon and I have squeezed all av the juice out av yez," crowed Muldoon. "Begorra! I will challenge Johnny Dwyer to-morrow to foight me a square heel and toe match for the championship av Mulligan's alley!"

Almost simultaneously, Edwardo Geoghegan flew out of a second most violent uproar in the kitchen.

"The refrigerator's bust!" said Muldoon.

"Roger's blew himself up wid the kerosene can!" wailed his wife.

Hardly had they uttered the words before Johanna, the cook, shot out of the back window as if she had been bounced out by electricity.

Almost simultaneously, Edwardo Geoghegan flew out of a second window.

"Howly smoke! it's a pantomime," Muldoon exclaimed; "it's a—"

Before Muldoon had time to finish his remark a sort of cyclone whirled out of the back door.

The cyclone was composed of a big billy-goat—plainly in a murderous state of mind—a soap-box wagon, on one wheel, and a pale but desperate small boy.

The billy-goat was monarch of all he surveyed in a few seconds.

He butted Muldoon up against the fence, and flung Mrs. Muldoon into the woodshed.

But success was too much for him. He made a big mistake in trying to climb up a clothes-pole, got entangled in his harness, and was finally secured by the pale but desperate small boy before named, who turned out to be young Roger.

"Roger—Roger!" sternly asked Muldoon, "where did yez procure the ferocious mammalia?"

"Billy Jones," informed Roger.

"Fhat species av bird is it? If it had tusks I would take it for a dodo."

"Tain't nothin' but a billy-goat," Roger practically said. "I was just tryin' to see if I couldn't drive it downstairs, and it runned away and bucked Edwardo and Johanna."

"Och hone!" suddenly cried Mrs. Muldoon, who had peered curiously at the goat.

"Have yez wind colic, woman?" asked Muldoon.

"No, Terry; yez chastised Mulcahy for nothing."

"An' why?"

"Shure, Roger's got our clothes-line onto the goat."

Muldoon made a dive for his promising son, and caught him by the ear.

"Come up into the garret, ye young senator," he said, "till I introduce yez to a strap. Roger, yez are too precocious altogether. I will knock some av yer seductiveness out av yez."

For ten minutes ensuing, a rumor circulated about the neighborhood that somebody was dying with delirium tremens in Muldoon's house.

There was not. It was only Roger, expressing his joy at getting whipped.

Soon after this a new element of discord arrived in Muldoon's boarding-house.

It was Major Halloran.

The major was a fiery-colored, red-whiskered, big-nosed personage, who, according to his own stories, had fought all over the globe at the same time.

He was as boastful as Baron Munchausen, and probably as truthful; and, worst of all, he was Mrs. Muldoon's cousin.

She admired him greatly.

"Ah, Terry," she would remark to Muldoon, who, needless to say, was terribly jealous of the major, "hasn't me cousin Tim a fine prinsince?"

"For a hen-roost robber," growled Muldoon.

"Sich a beautiful face."

"Bedad, it wud stop a clock."

"Such taking ways."

"Ye are roight there, Bridget. He takes iverything he can lay his hands on."

Then Mrs. Muldoon would get mad, say Muldoon was a brute, and a low, vulgar idiot, and go off in tears, while Muldoon wished

he could hire some good, thorough assassin who would get rid of the major for a reasonable stipend.

At the supper table, too, the major quite outshone Muldoon with his conversation.

The amount of taffy which he could concentrate into one square inch of space was marvelous.

Muldoon for a long while tried to hatch up some joke which would cover the major with confusion before all of the boarders.

At last he hit on one, as he congratulated himself.

He procured a lot of chestnuts.

Cracking several open, he scooped their meat out, and then filled their shells with red pepper, closing the sides so skillfully with paste that the tampering could not be discovered except by careful examination.

The chestnuts were dished out to be handed around after supper was over, as a sort of premature dessert.

Muldoon was careful to see that the fixed chestnuts all got into the plate.

They were a little larger than the others, and he magnanimously told his wife:

"Be sure yez give those to the major. It is no more than roight, seeing he is our guest."

Mrs. Muldoon promised.

Supper time came.

The meal was disposed of.

The chestnuts were handed around, and Muldoon anxiously awaited developments.

"Arrah, this is foine fruit," remarked the major, glancing at his plate.

"Illigant," hypocritically replied Muldoon; "have yez ate any chxtnuts lately, major?"

"Not since I left Labrador."

"Are there any there?"

"Bedad, they grow so big," yawned the major, "that the native niggers which live there use the shells for houses. They don't grow on trees there."

"They don't?"

"No; they are found beneath the surface av the ground. You have to lift them out wid derricks."

Having thus proved his reputation for veracity, the major daintily picked up a chestnut and bit it.

Muldoon wanted to go out into the back yard and laugh till the top of his head flew off.

He expected to see the major get up and spit, and cry, and howl, and try to chuck his mouth inside out.

But he didn't.

He calmly ate the chestnut and observed that it was very good.

"Howly smoke!" thought Muldoon, "the sucker has either his mouth lined wid tin or I forgot to pepper that wan."

The major picked up a second nut.

"Tin cints to luk at him now," grinned Muldoon; "here is where he kicks over chairs and breaks plates, and goes lu-nat-ic completely."

Muldoon was wrong again.

The major ate the nut with every appearance of satisfaction, and said its flavor reminded him of a Portuguese tamarind.

Muldoon was disgusted.

"The tarrier's jaw is shingled," he muttered; "he cud ate hot lead wid relish!"

In despair he attacked his own plate of nuts.

He bit into the first one.

There was an agonizing sensation, as if his mouth had caught fire.

His head reeled, his brain swam, the tears poured out of his eyes, and it seemed as if he would cough his feet up.

"Help! docthor! water!" bawled he, executing a sort of maniac breakdown on top of his chair. "For Heaven's sake, play a hose onto me! Take me out into the strate and drown me in the gutther!"

The boarders jumped up in alarm.

"Are yez sick, Mистер Muldoon?" solicitously queried the major.

"The divil fly away wid yez, ye red-headed ape!" shrieked Muldoon; "do yez think I am doing this for fun?"

CHAPTER VI.

Muldoon was still kicking and splurging around with his face aflame and his mouth full of peppered chestnuts, while his boarders stood aghast at his remarkable behavior.

"He's crazy!" cried Mrs. Muldoon.

"Permanent insanity!" said the alderman.

"Begorra, it comes av gorging himself upon fried fish. Too much brain food saps the vitality."

"I wud lasso him before he makes a shipwreck av the dining-room," advised Edwardo.

"Arrah, Terry—Terry, do yez know me?" pleaded Mrs. Muldoon. "Look at Roger's face—don't yez recognize yez own child?"

"Shut up! Howly Moses, I'll kill the whole mob!" roared Muldoon. "Get me some water—me mouth is one conflagration!"

Mrs. Muldoon hurriedly handed him a pitcher, spilling about a pint of water down the alderman's neck, greatly to his delight.

Muldoon swallowed the water, and nearly the pitcher, at a gulp. "Are yez more aisy?" anxiously asked his wife.

"I am better now," Muldoon replied, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. "Bridget, ye have played me false!"

"How, Terry?"

"Ye transformed the nut-plate. Ye gave me the major's."

Mrs. Muldoon confessed that she had done so.

"They loked so much bigger, the nuts on the major's plate," she confessed, "that I thought I wud give them to ye, Terry, dear—"

"Woman, ye nearly paralyzed me wid yer good intentions," sorrowfully answered Muldoon, and the supper went on in peace.

"Bedad, but I must have been born across the bed," meditated Muldoon to himself soon after. "Everything always goes tail-first wid me. I belave if I should place the barrel av a pistol at a man's head and pull the thrigger, the devilish thing would shoot out av the handle and kill meself."

Meanwhile the memorable feud with Mulcahy blazed up again.

Mrs. Muldoon caught young Patrick Mulcahy leaning over the fence fishing in her back yard.

Young Patrick had his hook baited with bread, and was fishing for chickens.

When Mrs. Muldoon discovered him he had just had a bite, and was about hooking the old rooster.

It is needless to remark that he did not, for Mrs. Muldoon hit him a welt with the slop-pail which she chanced to have in her hand, which knocked young Patrick off of the fence.

In his agitation he forgot all about the fish-hook, and, in some surprising style, common to fish-hooks, it caught in his nose.

He ran howling into the house, had it cut out by his sympathizing mother, and vowed revenge against the Muldoons.

Then it happened that Muldoon, coming home aristocratically at five that night, was surprised by the sight of a group of laughing spectators surrounding his door.

"Ha, ha!" exclaimed he, "I wondher what is the cause av the jocularity? I wondher has Edwardo put spectacles upon Mrs. Muldoon's ram again and set him up in the parlor windy wid a night-cap on, like he wanst did?"

He drew nearer to his domicile.

A square piece of pasteboard was pinned to the front door, and the crowd appeared to be laughing at that.

Muldoon reconnoitered it.

Upon it, in big black letters, drawn in a school-boy hand, was inscribed the following pretty verse:

"House to let,
Inquire within,
Muldoon kicked out
For drinking gin!"

It wasn't over two seconds before Muldoon tore the uncomplimentary verse down.

His face was as red as a turkey-cock's comb, and he shook his fist at the crowd.

"Be Heavens!" said he, "I will offer six shillings for the apprehension av the sucker who put this valentine upon me portico!"

This munificent reward, however, did not appear to produce the required information.

Indeed, one boy declared that he guessed it "grewed there," and was immediately fired into the gutter by Muldoon as a reward. Still that was all of the information obtained until the butcher's boy recollected that he had seen a small boy fooling about Muldoon's door a short time previously.

"Was he a blonde-brunette?" queried Muldoon.

"Yis."

"And cross eyes?"

"Yis."

"Begorra! I know him," Muldoon ejaculated; "it was young Patrick Mulcahy;" and with gritted teeth Muldoon marched into the house.

"Bridget," said he, "have ye started a family magazine?"

"No; why?" answered and interrogated Mrs. Muldoon, all in one breath, as she held the door open for him to enter.

"Faix, they are leaving ballad poetry upon me stoop. Read it, will ye, ould colleen?"

With that he handed the pasteboard over to Mrs. Muldoon, who read it with horrified eyes.

"Musha murder!" cried she, "it wor a libel. Ye niver drink gin, Terry. It is respectably boiling yez get upon whisky some

times, but niver gin. Gin is an Italian tonic beneath the notice of us Americans!"

"Do yez know who wrote it?"

"No."

"It wor Mulcahy's bye, Patrick."

"I belave it," rejoined Mrs. Muldoon. "Always up to some divilment is that bye. He wor angling for me chickens this morning. But I have wan onto the Mulcahys."

"Phat is it?"

"Ye know the cat?"

"The piebald Thomas?"

"Yis. He crept into our cellar this morning through the hole which yez stopped wid the stove-pipe, and I caught him. I have hid him in the hen-coop downstairs. It is cut his head off wid an ax I will after supper."

"Ye will do nothing av the sort," replied Muldoon. "Begorra! I will demoralize Mulcahy completely."

Taking the kerosene can from its abode in the closet, Muldoon proceeded down into the cellar.

There was plenty of light enough for him to see, and he soon discovered the hen-coop with the confined cat.

He lifted the beast out.

"Pretty pussy," he soothingly said, as he patted her head; "pussy want a cracker? Begob, it's a Turkish bath I will be afther giving yez."

He poured the contents of the kerosene can over the unfortunate feline.

"Arrah, ye smell loike a lamp—it is too aromatic yez are, entirely," disgustedly remarked he.

He pulled out a match, and placed the cat into the mouth of the stove-pipe which led from his cellar to that of the Mulcahy's.

Of course the cat desired to put for home immediately

But Muldoon was not willing to have her skip.

He held her by her tail until he scratched his match and got it to blazing.

Then he warily applied the match to the poor cat's tail.

The kerosene ignited in a second; the tail blazed up beautifully.

"Whirra! it's a regular Fourth of July!" crowed Muldoon. "Animated pyrotechnics, be Heavens!"

It is hardly necessary to state that Muldoon released his hold when he "set off" the cat.

Away she went, with horrible me-yows, through Mulcahy's cellar, as Muldoon could see by putting his head inside of the stove-pipe to listen.

"Phat a foine voice the fairy has!" grinned he. "If she don't set fire to somebody's chateau, I am an Italian. Faix, I'd better be going around to the butcher's shop to procure the key to the fire-alarm!"

Meanwhile, in the Mulcahy home all was peace.

Mrs. Mulcahy was in the throes of house cleaning. With usual feminine industry, she had succeeded in getting the house completely topsy-turvy, and she was respectably happy.

In consequence of her intense exertions, the drawing-room looked more like an old junk shop than anything else, and therefore supper was spread in the kitchen.

The family were all seated at the table, and Felix Brophy, a table boarder, and a young doctor, had just been explaining the beautiful way in which he had sawed a tumor off a patient that morning, explaining the modus operandi, by aid of the bread knife and a banana.

"How is the poor man," asked Mulcahy, solicitously.

"Dead—but it was a bully tumor," professionally replied Mr. Brophy. "I'll bring it around and show it to you."

He put on his hat and started off.

"There is a foine man-killer fur ye," remarked Mulcahy. "I wish he wud operate on Muldoon. Bad cess to that web-footed tarrier, he is—"

What Mr. Muldoon was in Mr. Mulcahy's estimation at that particular moment will never be known, for a most dreadful uproar arose from the cellar.

"Holy mother, what is it?" cried Mrs. Mulcahy, jumping up, and in her agitation knocking over a cup of tea into her husband's lap.

"Oh, yes, av coorse, ye excitable ould hen!" roared Mulcahy, trying to brush the tea off of his pants; "upset the milk jug next, kick over the tay kettle. The lunatic blood in yer veins is always breaking out! Why did I marry a mad-house?"

The yowling from the cellar still continued.

"It's the cat!" suddenly cried Mrs. Mulcahy; "it is in pain. Open the door, Mike; it may have a fit."

"Is the kitchen a proper place for cats to have fits in, Nora?"

"Shut up, ye growler. Open the door."

Mulcahy, being a good husband, yielded the point, and opened the door.

He wished he hadn't the very next minute.

In rushed the cat.

The flames had spread from her tail until they now covered all of her body.

She was a ball of fire.

"Begorra, it is a comet!" shrieked Mulcahy, hopping up onto a step-ladder which stood behind him.

The rest followed his example.

There was some remarkably lively scattering in that kitchen during the next minute.

Old Grandmother Mulcahy skipped up on top of the table with an agility which was perfectly surprising in an old lady of eighty-one, and what is more, she dragged her favorite grandchild up with her.

The rest gained any coign of vantage which they could.

Around and around circled the poor cat, with piteous shrieks.

"Oh, what shall we do?" wailed Mrs. Mulcahy. "It will set fire to the kitchen, sure."

"Put it out," brilliantly answered Mulcahy. "We want no election bonfires around here."

His advice was followed.

Streams from the tea kettle, coffee pot, and all other utensils which could be pressed into service were poured upon the cat.

Gradually she was "put out," that is to say, the flames were extinguished.

But the cat was dead.

Some of the flames had entered its lungs and killed it.

"What will we do with the corpse?" queried Mrs. Mulcahy, as she held it up for inspection upon a shovel.

"Chuck it over into Muldoon's yard," readily replied Mulcahy; "faix, they'll have pot-pie for breakfast if they get it in time."

The cat being thusly disposed of, the question arose before the Mulcahys as to who could have been the cause of the cat's transformation from a docile feline into a sort of amateur prairie fire?

Various queries were proposed and rejected, until young Patrick Mulcahy squeaked out:

"I know who did it."

"Who?" sternly asked Mulcahy. "No surmising now, ye cherub, or I'll bate yez black in the face!"

"It was Muldoon, pop."

"How do ye know?"

"'Cause his boy Roger put his head out of the windy when I came past, and said that they had our cat in their hen-coop, and they were going to make it lay eggs."

"As I suspected," said Mulcahy. "I will go down to the cellar and reconnoiter. I bet he has shoved the cat through the stove-pipe."

Mulcahy went down.

He knelt upon his hands and knees upon the cellar floor, and peered through the stove-pipe.

To his great astonishment, he discovered Muldoon's face regarding him from the other end.

"Ah-ha, Mister Muldoon," said he; "ye are there, are ye?"

"If yez wud say I wur anywhere else, yez wud loi!" replied Muldoon.

"I suppose ye know nothing about me cat, Mister Muldoon?"

"Is it aloive yet? Shure, I thought ye baked it in a cake at yer wife's sixty-eighth birthday."

"No blaggard dialect, if yez plaze, Mister Muldoon. Me cat was set on fire."

"Was it playing wid matches?"

"No, sir. It was a plot to burn down me home. Did yez do it?"

"Niver!"

"Thin what are yez gazing through the stove-pipe for?"

"For raycreation. Mr. Mulcahy. Hasn't a respectable citizen a roight to luk through his own stove-pipe if he wants to?"

Mulcahy acknowledged the fact.

"But I wud loike to catch the low, darty sucker who turned me cat into fire-works," he said.

"Don't yez call me a low, darty sucker," unguardedly cried Muldoon. "Shure, the Muldoons were white whin the Mulcahys were naygurs."

"Ye gave yerself away!" yelled Mulcahy, in delight; "it was ye who combusted the cat!"

Muldoon made reply by actions, not by words.

He was chewing tobacco.

With careful aim he injected a jet of tobacco juice into Mulcahy's north eye.

Mulcahy disappeared from his end of the stove-pipe with remarkable celerity.

"Howly murther!" bawled he, "I am blinded for loife!"

"No such good news," callously replied Muldoon. "Sure, yer eye needed washing, ould man. I wanted for to take the grane out av it."

Mulcahy's first impulse was to run upstairs and get a gun, use the stove-pipe for a shooting gallery, and Muldoon as the target.

His second, which he acted upon, was to give the stove-pipe a

vicious and energetic kick, which jammed that article over Muldoon's head, up to his shoulders.

Muldoon's joy was turned into sorrow.

The stove-pipe positively refused to come off. It seemed bound to stay with Muldoon for the rest of his life.

How he did blackguard Mulcahy!

But it did not affect that gentleman in the least, because he didn't hear a word of it—Muldoon's voice being lost in the recesses of the stove-pipe, and entirely inaudible through the cellar wall.

"Begorra, I caught yez then, Terry Muldoon!" exultantly triumphed Mulcahy; "caught loike a rat in a trap yez are! It is a foine figure yez will make going to mass on Sunday—a man wid a stove-pipe head," and content with this parting sarcasm, Mulcahy went upstairs to wash the tobacco juice out of his eye and relate Muldoon's fix to his delighted family.

As for poor Muldoon, he was in a pretty pickle.

Stove-pipes, in their proper places, are well enough, and command a certain degree of respect.

But a stove-pipe on top of a man's head is as much out of place as a pair of wings would be on a jackas rabbit.

At first Muldoon tried to free himself by knocking his obnoxious possession against posts and beams, with but one unsatisfactory result—the bruising of his head.

"Bedad, I must stop this," he reflected. "If I kape on me head will be pulverized to a jelly, and will be running out av itself in liquid form. I will go upstairs and obtain aid, and then, be Heavens, I will blow Mulcahy up wid dynamite!"

There being no holes in the stove-pipe, Muldoon was not able to see, and, consequently, had to feel his way to the cellar stairs.

After he had spent about three-quarters of an hour in falling over everything there was to fall over, and fetching up at intervals of a minute head-first into the coal bin, he succeeded in reaching the stairs.

By some great good luck he did not fall down them more than twice, and at last succeeded in reaching the kitchen.

He was a nice chromo for an art gallery.

His clothes were dusty, dirty and torn. His hands were begrimed with coal dust, and the undismayed stove-pipe protruded from his shoulders, his head not being visible at all.

His wife and Johanna, the cook, were in the kitchen when he staggered in.

The noise of his arrival caused them to turn around.

Both shrieked together.

"It's a robber!" cried Mrs. Muldoon.

"It's the devil!" bawled Johanna, hurling at him a big pan of potatoes which she was peeling.

"Woogie! google! goo!" replied Muldoon from the interior of the stove-pipe.

"Who—what does he say?" asked Mrs. Muldoon, stopping for a second in her interesting occupation of yelling as if she was wound up for a week.

"Wants to kill us, I suppose," answered Johanna. "I belave it is a maniac, mum!"

"Oh—oh, help—help!" bawled Mrs. Muldoon, at this awful supposition. "Throw the carving knife at him, Johanna!"

"Woo—goo—google—google—hoo—hoodle—hoo!" roared Muldoon, wishing to relate that he was Muldoon himself, and if the stove-pipe was not removed from his head quickly there would be blue murder around that house.

Seeing that the intruder did not appear anxious to deluge his hands with gore, and stretch two corpses on the kitchen floor, Johanna plucked up courage to bawl at the top of her voice:

"Who are yez?"

"Muldoon!" hoarsely replied our hero, who just heard Johanna's question.

"Shure, he says his name is Balloon, mum," said Johanna.

"Ask him what he wants," suggested Mrs. Muldoon. "Tell him we are poor, Johanna, but say he can take the clothes-line and the bread dish if he will only go peaceably away. Oh, if Muldoon was only here!"

"Muldoon is here, my daisy," was what Muldoon wanted to reply, but instead, in spite of all his exertions, all he could mutter was:

"Mul'oon 'ere's aisy."

"Troth, he says his ears are aisy," translated Johanna; "it is an idiot I belave he is, mum. But, bless Hiven, here comes Mr. Geoghegan wid the alderman and Hippocrates Burns."

Sure enough the three designated individuals appeared from the dining-room, where they had been making a raid on the cake closet.

They started in perfect surprise at Muldoon.

"What dime novel did yez get it out av?" at last queried Edward.

"It's somebody been going to a massacra ball in the character av a stove," said the alderman.

In chorus Mrs. Muldoon and Johanna told the tale of the strange object's appearance.

Muldoon tried to explain his appearance, too, but his google—google—goo, was all that was audible.

"It's lost its teeth," compassionately said Edwardo, who, to tell the truth, discovered it was Muldoon almost at first sight, but was too fond of fun to give it away.

"Give it pencil and paper, and let it write," suggested Hippocrates.

"Good for ye, Hippy," said Edwardo; "if ye wud only lave poethry alone an' stick to horse-shoeing ye wud be a foine boy."

He furnished Muldoon with pencil and paper.

Muldoon at once comprehended what was desired of him.

Very illegibly and scarcely decipherable, for writing when you can't see pencil or paper is not quite as easy as going to sleep, Muldoon produced the following note:

"Take off the stove-pipe, or begob, I'll kill the gang! I am smothered complately already. MULDOON."

"Terence, me ould man!" cried Mrs. Muldoon, as she heard the note read, "how in the worruld did iver he get the stove-pipe onto his head? He's aither drunk again, or else he's been thyrin' to climb through into Mulcahy's cellar."

"The first thing to do, dogmatically asserted Mr. Geoghegan, "is to worruk, not chin. We must get the stove-pipe off."

He felt of it.

"Troth, it's stuck as fast to his head as a pimple," he said. "How will we iver get it off?"

"Rip it open with a chisel," proposed the alderman.

"Saw it off," said Johanna.

"Cut it wid an ax!" brilliantly said Hippocrates, forgetting that the adoption of his plan was liable to end in the decapitation of Muldoon.

The alderman's plan was first taken up.

Muldoon was carefully stretched out upon the long kitchen table.

Edwardo raked up an old chisel from the wood-house.

It wasn't very sharp, for young Roger had been picking nails out of horse-shoes with it, yet Edwardo said he guessed it would do.

He inserted the chisel into the seam where the stove-pipe was joined, and hit it vigorously with a hammer.

CHAPTER VII.

The chisel was the reverse of sharp. The hammer was a lawless sort of hammer, which had a predilection for slipping off of the chisel's top and bruising Edwardo's fingers.

As for the stove-pipe, that was stubborn and rusty and slippery.

Therefore Edwardo worked away for ten minutes with no practical results, save a hand which looked as if he had held it in a hay cutter.

"Ah—ha!" deliberately said the alderman, who had been watching the proceedings with great interest; "yez will never resuscitate him from the pipe in that way. It is die av hunger and lack av exposure that he will before yez free him. Yez moight just as well wait for the stove-pipe to dhrap apart av our ould age."

"But he can't remain inside av it foriver," sobbed Mrs. Muldoon. "Shure, he would be the ridicule av the neighborhood, an' how foine it wud be for me to have a husband with a sheet-iron head!"

"Suppose—suppose we get a stick just the size of the stove-pipe, and punch him out wid it?" brightly suggested Hippocrates Burns.

"Suppose we get a stick and punch yer head wid it," growled the alderman. "Ye are too theoretical, Hippocrates."

"Wash him out wid a hose," remarked Terry Rafferty.

"Another maniac wid a big head," criticised the alderman. "If I wur ye, Rafferty, I would double up wid Hippocrates as the Lunatic Twins, an' get an engagement at the vulgarities."

"Well, you tell us how to get him out," sulkily said Terry, "fore ye chin to other gentlemen."

"Aisy as falling off a log, ye cockatoo!" replied the alderman.

"How?"

"Part av us get a hold av his feet, part av us grapple wid his stove-pipe extension, an' we'll pull for dear loife."

"A tug of war," said Edwardo.

"Begorra, it will be a murder!" discontentedly said Rafferty.

But the alderman's scheme was adopted.

Edwardo, Terry Rafferty and Johanna fastened onto poor Muldoon's feet.

Hippocrates, Mrs. Muldoon and the alderman collared the stove-pipe.

Poor Muldoon was conscious of the new racket, and didn't know what it meant.

"If yez as much as scratch me, I'll bury yez all," he said, inside of the stove-pipe.

But when it got outside of the pipe it was nothing but a mumble-jumble of inarticulate words.

"What did he say?" queried Mrs. Muldoon.

"He was only perspiring," said Hippocrates. "Ye see the narrowness of the limits expands the sweat tubes and causes the noise yez just heard."

"Bind Hippocrates in leather, and put him in the bookcase for a docther's book," grinned Edwardo. "I think Muldoon asked us all to have a dhrink."

"Arrah, what a man Muldoon is," exclaimed the alderman, shaking his head; "sinsible to the last. Johanna, take the wash boiler and go down to the Dutchman's ather a gallon av beer. Tell him to charge it to Muldoon."

Johanna readily disappeared.

"We needn't waste toime, boys," continued the alderman; "we can get Muldoon out first and have our beer afterward. Wan—two—six—pull, ye Galway Blazers!"

They did pull.

Pulled so hard that Muldoon yanked his feet away and kicked Hippocrates in the jaw with so much force that Hippocrates retired very suddenly into a wash tub, from which he was rescued with wet coat-tails and a pair of soaking socks clinging to his rear.

"Hadn't we better give him chloroform before we pull again?" sadly suggested Hippocrates, as he tied his jaw up in his handkerchief.

"Shure, it was only a relapse av his muscles," said the alderman. "We will give wan more pull for O'Connell and free Oireland."

It was done.

The stove-pipe glided partly off of Muldoon's face, leaving his mouth and chin exposed.

At least the structure of his mouth and chin, anatomically speaking, for most of the skin had gone off in company with the stove-pipe.

"He luks loike a skinned eel!" remarked Terry Rafferty. "I wondher if the rest av his face is raw, too?"

All further remarks were prevented by the torrent of cuss-words that issued from Muldoon's lips.

He gave the gang the biggest setting-out that they had had for a year, winding up by profanely inquiring if they were bound to butcher him, why they didn't do it with an ax instead of slow torture.

"Arrah, be aisy," said the alderman, quietly, as he gave the stove-pipe a yank upon his own personal responsibility.

The result was certainly astonishing. Edwardo had made some impression, after all, with his hammer and chisel, and the result of the alderman's effort was to split the stove-pipe and expose Muldoon's face—the stove-pipe looking like a sort of new-fangled bonnet.

Muldoon jumped off of the table with the stove-pipe yet clinging on to his head.

"Begorra, I will massacre the mob," he shouted. "Stand still till I get at ye—ye butchers."

But the "butchers" respectfully declined the invitation.

They dusted out of that kitchen in a most fascinating style, Edwardo prudently locking the dor behind them, to prevent an active and perhaps murderous chase by Muldoon.

Left to himself, Muldoon succeeded in getting the stove-pipe all off.

"Let me catch Mulcahy," he vowed, as he washed himself and put his attire in order as well as he could—"let me catch Mulcahy, and blood will flow like hot wather. Here I am, feeling as if I wur out av a thrashing machine, while he, I suppose, is giving a popular lecture to his boarders regarding me dilemma."

Johanna arrived at this juncture with the beer.

Muldoon gazed at it curiously.

"What have ye got there, ye kitchen trash?" asked he.

"The—the wash boiler," stammered Johanna.

"Phat is in it?"

"Beer."

"Who tould yez to traffic for it?"

"The alderman—it wur to be charged to you, sir."

"Oh, yis, av coorse," sarcastically said Muldoon: "why didn't yez take out the bath tub, Johanna? the wash boiler don't hold enough for me society guests. It's a wondher they wur not ather taking off me cupola an' filling that full of beer. Charge it to me, will they? Begob, I expict to see the alderman purchasing trapeze camels and giraffes, that can play on the accordeon, and charging them to me. But I will fix them."

He did.

He poured about a quart of kerosene oil into the beer, and threatening to chop Johanna's head off if she said anything, allowed her to proceed upstairs with it.

Johanna kept mum, and the boarders laughed heartily as they drank the beer, although Edwardo did say it was the nastiest tasting beer he had ever drank.

The next minute they were not laughing so loud, for a sicker

crowd it would have been hard to find than what Muldoon's boarding-house held that night.

Of course the proprietor of it was delighted.

"Be Heavens! ye can't play me for a sucker!" he cackled. "Wouldn't yez loike to have fat pork fried in soft-shell clams for breakfast to-morrow A. M., wid lager sauce into it?"

Naturally the mention of such a delicacy made the crowd feel worse, and Muldoon was happy once more. So ended the episode of the merry—merry Mulcahy's cat and the stove-pipe.

One day not long after this, when peace and good feeling had been restored all around. Muldoon was standing shaving at his mirror, while Mrs. Muldoon was making up the bed.

"Terry," she suddenly exclaimed, stopping in a valiant wrestle with a pillow case.

"Och!" groaned Muldoon, "kape yer mouth shut, woman. Here I have tuk the roof off me pet pimple. For Heaven's sake, who's been using me razor? It is to shave meself wid a pie knife I'd rather."

"Johanna was cutting soap wid it," replied Mrs. Muldoon, unreservedly; "but I say, Terry," and she twitched his arm.

Muldoon had just assumed a tiptoe position, and was peering into the glass with a most distorted face, while he elaborately scraped one cheek.

The result of his wife's touch was that the razor slipped and cut an elegant gash in his cheek.

"Howly Moses, ye've done it now," he howled, dropping his razor and jumping around as if he was on wires. "Ye've maimed me for a loife toime. Worra! worra! send for a surgeon; I will bleed to death!"

"Faith, yez make more noise than a two-year-old calf," laughed Mrs. Muldoon. "Here, how does that feel?" and spitting professionally onto a piece of brown paper, she slapped it onto his cheek.

"If ye had listened to me at first ye wouldn't have cut yerself," she composedly remarked.

"Ye're worse nor a parrot for talking," Muldoon genially replied; "here is yer husband, wid a cut big as a sabre in his countenance, and ye are bothering him wid yer nonsense. What do ye want to say?"

"To-night is All-Hallow Eve, Terry."

"So it is—so it is, an' I clane forgot it!" exclaimed Muldoon. "Bedad, we must have a small parthy and play the ould games."

He was so taken up with the idea that he forgot all about his recent wound, but proceeded to make preparations for the party at once.

That he must have done so successfully is to be inferred from the fact that the same night found quite a party at his house.

Besides his own boarders there were the Misses Gilhooly, Mr. Casey, Dump Inspector O'Reardon, and a side-whiskered and awfully-awful young man named Reginald de Vere, who came in tow of the Misses Gilhooly, and who was said to be intensely wealthy, and nephew to a British baronet.

When Muldoon came into the parlor Reginald was bending over Miss Krouse, whispering sweet taffy, while Edwardo was fiercely regarding him as if he would have liked to have knocked him down and jumped upon him.

"Luk at the bow-legged blonde, will ye?" whispered Edwardo to Muldoon. "It is very high-toned and heart-crushing he is. He puts me in mind av a cigar sign."

"Faix, it's a baby mine," replied Muldoon. "He has hen-feathers on aich cheek. He is captivating your girl, Edwardo; ye are left."

"He'll get left—left for dead in the hall if he tries any funny business with my Mary Ann," grimly said Edwardo.

"Mr. Muldoon," called Miss Krouse, sweetly, "won't you come here?"

Muldoon obeyed.

"Mr. Muldoon," said she, "allow me to introduce you to Reginald de Vere."

"Happy to know ye," politely said Muldoon; "are ye any relation to Owney de Vere, the Centre Market butcher?"

"Naw," languidly replied Reginald; "nothing so low, you know. My folks all belong to the—aw—awistocwacy."

"Have ye a gum-boil in yer mouth?" interestedly asked Muldoon.

"Naw—why?"

"I can't conjecture so from your dialect. Make yerself at home, De Vere. Shure, we don't care if ye do wear your hair wid a split in the middle. Ye will foind the beer can on the refrigerator, and if yez loike some cowlid pigs' feet before the collation is served, Miss Krouse will give yez the proper steer."

While Reginald was slowly recovering from the mental paralysis induced by this friendly speech, Mrs. Muldoon announced:

"Loddies and gents, will ye plaze retoire into the kitchen, and we will duck for apples. Ye see if we held the festivities here we moight drown the carpet."

The guests eagerly flocked down into the kitchen, which had been all swept out and cleaned up as brightly as a new pin.

In the centre, on a chair, was a big wash tub, with a noble greening apple floating on top of the water.

Hippocrates Burns was the first one to go ducking.

He succeeded in strangling himself at the first attempt, and was taken out into the back yard, and hit with a club for half an hour before he came to.

Terry Rafferty was the next apple diver.

He did not catch the apple.

The only thing he did catch was a nail which protruded from the inside of the tub, and which ripped his lips open most artistically, and gave him a most beautiful lisp for the remainder of the evening.

It seemed as if the apple was to float on the surface of the water unconquered.

But Muldoon wouldn't hear of it.

He took off his gigantic collar and his maroon necktie, with his dollar-and-a-half Koh-i-noor in it.

Then he folded up his coat and vest and put them onto a chair.

"What are ye going to do, Terry?" asked his wife; "shure, ye are not going to give us a ballet dance?"

"Be Heavens, I am Muldoon, the Man Fish!" declared he. "I can stay under water for three hours. Bridget, direct the coterie to luk at me till I collar and elbow wid the apple."

Muldoon took a long breath and dove down after the apple.

He stood on tiptoe, and had his head and neck in the water. A most terrific gurgling and bubbling was heard.

"He has a paroxysm!" cried Mrs. Muldoon.

"I believe he has met wid a say-sarpent," soberly said Edwardo.

"How the—how the deuce could he?" earnestly asked De Vere.

"My dear boy, there couldn't be a—a sea-serpent in a—a wash tub, you know."

"Ye have a mathematical head," put in the alderman, "but ye are a little wrong. Begorra! many's the toime I've seen say-serpents in me boots."

Just then Muldoon appeared, red-faced, water-dripping, but with no apple clutched victoriously in his jaws.

"I have a wurrud to say to this gang," he remarked, after calling for a towel.

"What is it?" queried several.

"Ye cannot catch the apple except wid a harpoon."

"Why?"

"Some domned sucker put candle grease onto it!"

"Oh, try again," said the alderman; "remember the ould proverb, Muldoon—it's a wise bird that knows its own father."

Muldoon allowed himself to be cajoled into trying again.

"I will either secure the cider-berry or strangulate," he said.

Down went his head into the tub.

The guests pressed around him to see what success he would have.

Somebody—who it was is not known—gave Muldoon's foot an upward hoist.

He was already bent double, and the touch was just sufficient to throw him off his balance.

Kerslop he went into the wash tub, upsetting it and rolling over with it onto the floor, spilling its watery contents all over himself.

He was wet from head to foot when he got up.

"Luk at me new all-cotton pants," he cried, "that I purchased made to order from Cohen, the Irish tailor, for two dollars—club ticket. Spiled completely. It is walk around the rest av the night I will have to in red flannel drawers. Tell me who upset me, and begorra, we will close the party with a wake!"

Nobody knew—or, at least, they said they didn't—but it was reserved for Edwardo to whisper softly into his ear:

"It was the bow-legged blonde."

"Who—monkey-man, De Vere?"

"Yis."

"Bedad, his doom is sealed!" tragically replied Muldoon. "I can't kill him inside av me house, because it wud violate the laws av hospitality; but just wait till he gets outside—I'll break his head wid a brick! There is blood on the moon, Edwardo."

Whether there was or not the rest of the party did not allow it to interfere with their games.

"Here is a rale ould Far-down sport," exclaimed Mrs. Muldoon.

"Ye fill your mouth ful av salt, run around the block widout spaking to a sowl, and the fust man ye mate will be your husband, if you are a girrul, and the fust girrul ye mate will be your wife, if ye are a man."

Now the alderman was crushing one of the Misses Gilhoolys with his shape, and he wanted to make her believe that he was young—very young—a veritable fledgling, who could hardly fly without the aid of a mother bird.

"I will run around the block," he volunteered.

"Ah, alldherman, ye're too ould," jokingly said Edwardo.

The alderman threw out his shoulders and pulled up his collar.

"I will have ye to understand, Mr. Geoghegan, that I was only twenty-three last St. Patrick's Day," he statelily said. "I wur supernaturally aged by the climate whin I lived in Peru for three weeks. Mrs. Muldoon, if yer salt is ready, I am."

Impressed by the alderman's dignity, Mrs. Muldoon produced the salt, and placed it into the alderman's spacious food-trap.

"Shure," whispered Terry Rafferty to Miss Fresh, "if the alderman iver goes traveling he will need no Saratoga. He can carry all his luggage in his mouth."

The alderman not hearing the remark did not heed it, and started out upon his journey around the block.

Having been told by Mrs. Muldoon to run, he did run.

The sight of a respectable-looking old gentleman in full evening dress running at full speed, naturally evoked considerable comment from the ever-present small boy.

"It's Rowell!"

"Hey, Billy, here's O'Leary!"

"Go it, old cock! Bet yer take the belt!"

"Got time to carry a trunk?"

"Where's yer corn-cob, yer bloody old duffer?"

Thus they yelled, but the alderman kept right on.

At the corner of the street he was bumped into by a gentleman with a blue shirt, smashed high white hat, and a lovely black eye. Said gentleman was grossly intoxicated, and he was caroling forth to the evening winds that:

"Zere wuz a sharming little widow,

Who kept—hic—candy store,

Where zer little shildren buy yer shewin'-gum——"

He reached forth and grabbed the alderman.

"Hold on!" he said.

As the alderman was already held, it was not necessary for him to hold on.

"Shay," asked the sweet singer, "have you got mushick in your shoul?"

The alderman made no reply. He couldn't very well, for the salt in his mouth prevented it.

"Whazzer masher, you drunk?" queried the other. "Whazzer rest of zer shong? Zash wash I wantser know. Whaz is after little shildren buys zer shewin'-gum?"

The alderman nodded his head violently, and tried to get away.

"You deaf 'n' dumb?" asked the other.

A contrary nod of the alderman's head.

"Zen why don't you speak? Zis is—hic—not a funeral. Whaz is after shewing-gum in song?"

The alderman went through a brief pantomime to intimate that he didn't know and didn't want to know.

The blue-shirted and alcoholic-stimulated gentleman got on his dignity. Also on his muscle.

"Little birds whaz—hic—can't shing mush be made to shing," he tipsily said. "Old—hic—frauds whaz won't speak mush be made to speak."

With which sapient declaration the gentleman promptly and expertly knocked the alderman over into the mud gutter, and tacked piratically up the street, looking for some individual who know the rest of the song.

The poor alderman picked himself up.

He wished that the man who first got a patent on All-Hallow E'en had never been born.

But the salt was still in his mouth, and he had not met a female as yet.

He persevered on.

All at once a female form with a basket appeared, coming right out of Muldoon's house.

Perhaps it was one of the Miss Gilhoolys, bashfully coming forth to confirm the truth of the superstition.

He chuckled and rapidly ran toward her.

At last he was by her side.

"Look a yeah, Mistah Aldahman," said she, in rebuking tones, "wha's de money fo' last week's wash? I'se ain't no hog, I'se ain't, but I can't chew air."

The salt ran out of the alderman's mouth.

This was the first female he had met, his colored washerwoman! And to make matters worse, every window in Muldoon's boarding-house was full of grinning faces.

"It is a put-up job!" he groaned.

CHAPTER VIII.

It is needless to say that the alderman realized the joke put up on him.

At first he thought of getting mad, but the smiles and good na-

ture of the party were too much for him, and he at last laughed at himself as heartily as anybody did.

Mr. Reginald de Vere thought that it was a splendid joke.

"Deuced devilish funny, you know," he said, to one of the Miss Gilhoolys; "colored female—aw—waiting to be wife of Iwish image. What a wegaral old Turk your fwend is, Miss Gilhooly—weminds me forcibly of a—of a Indwian idol, you know."

Edwardo heard the ill-timed joke. He hurried to the alderman.

"Aldherman," said he, "ye are recaiving great compliments from the bow-legged blonde."

"Fhat did he flatter?"

"He said ye wur an Indian idol."

The alderman tucked up his coat sleeves and pulled down his vest.

"I will allow no dressmaker's sign to insult me wid impunity," he said. "I have patrician blood in me veins. Ye will carry a challenge for me to the tin-cint aristocrat for a duel at Tompkins Square to-morrow at nine."

"Nonsense," laughed Edwardo. "I will tell you a better way than that to get square."

"How?"

"Listen—but keep it dark!" and Edwardo whispered quite a long sentence into the alderman's ear.

"How's that?" he asked, in conclusion.

"Very primogenial," said his hearer; "it is immense, Edwardo. Sure, afther we get through wid the Gussie we can stick him to a paper and sind him home on a plate."

Edwardo whispered a few words to Miss Krouse, and then vanished for half an hour.

At the end of this time, the guests who were up in the parlor were told that there was to be a new game downstairs in the kitchen.

They flocked down.

Standing in the middle of the apartment were two chairs covered with sheets. Between them was what appeared to be an ottoman, also loosely sheeted.

Edwardo stood upon on side, and Miss Krouse upon the other.

"The game," said Edwardo, "is called 'Court.' Miss Krouse is the Queen av Beauty; I am the King av——"

"Jackass," remarked Muldoon.

"Av Elegance," continued Edwardo.

"Will yez hearken to it," burst out Muldoon; "a tarrier wid a mouth loike a sewer, and ears yez kin skate on, the King av Iligance! Bedad, I must be Imperor av Greece. Edwardo, ye will be wanfing yez pictur in a fashion plate nixt."

"Be aisy," responded Edwardo; "I want to go on wid the game."

"Shure, the policeman wanted to go on wid ye last night, whin he found ye having the nightmare on Casey's cellar-door," grinned Muldoon, whose tongue was always going.

But finally, after Mike Magee, the blacksmith, had threatened to carry Muldoon downstairs and lock him up in the coal bin if he didn't shut up, Muldoon consented to be still for at least ten minutes.

Then Edwardo explained that in order to carry on the game successfully a Prime Minister of Decorum was wanted.

"Bedad, I know the man," cried the alderman. "Mr. De Vere, troth, he combines the intellect av a goat wid the beauty av a toad-fish. Allow me to escort yez to the funeral pyre, Mr. De Vere, ye Central Park charmer."

Mr. De Vere allowed himself to be marched up.

Muldoon grabbed one of his arms while the alderman took the other.

"Ye must sit upon the throne between us," said Edwardo, who had seated himself upon one chair while Miss Krouse graced the second.

"You flatter me, you know; do me pwoud, by Jove," simpered De Vere, glancing most killingly at Miss Krouse.

"All ready," frowned Edwardo.

"Toss the Zulu!"

Mr. De Vere was pushed violently down upon the supposed ottoman.

Greatly to Mr. De Vere's surprise, he experienced no resistance when he reached it. Instead, it gave way beneath him.

There was a muffled yell, a splash, and only Mr. De Vere's nicely tipped patent leather boots were visible to the spectators.

"Howly Heaven—what a collapse!" yelled Johanna, the cook.

"Help—help—wuffians!" bawled a frantic voice, which was recognized to be Mr. De Vere's. At the same time the sheet came off, disclosing a wash tub.

"Help—help!" he repeated, and his dear little boots did a sort of air clog dance upon nothing.

"Throw him a life-preserver!" advised Muldoon.

"Fish it out wid a boat hook," said Terry Rafferty.

"Let me get a magnet and see if I can attract it," proposed

Stuyvesant Riley, by a great brain effort, which scared him into silence for the rest of the night.

"Oh, rescue him!" pleaded Miss Krouse, her feminine heart feeling for the poor dandy.

"We have no loife boat," replied Muldoon, with a grin.

"You are too cruel," said Miss Krouse; "if you don't take him out I will."

That settled it.

Edwardo and Muldoon pulled the hapless snob out of the wash tub. He was drenched from head to foot with molasses. There was molasses on his head, arms, hands and body—molasses dripping and dropping in all directions.

"Sell him to a sugar house!" groaned the alderman.

The secret was divulged.

The wash tub had been half filled with molasses and tar. De Vere had taken an unexpected and not particularly refreshing bath in it.

At first De Vere was mad in a feeble way, and wanted to "chastise evewy vulgaw bwute of a low Iwish" in the room. Next he relapsed into tears and wanted to be sent home.

This last request was complied with, and, all grief and molasses, the poor fop rolled home in a cab all by himself.

After his departure the festivities continued merrily.

As Muldoon said, the next morning, when he got up to put a wet towel around his head:

"Shure, it was just iligant. The two Doolan brothers went home paralyzed in a coach, with their legs sticking out av the windy; and Mr. Burns, the distiller, was shaking hands wid the ash barrel for an hour before he left."

That very same day Muldoon got a letter.

Not a plain missive, such as are disgustingly apt to contain bills, but a fancy letter, with a most imposing monogram onto it.

"I suspect it is a Fifth avenue belle who is crushed on me winning ways," groaned Muldoon. "Bedad, they ought to charge three cints extra for the monogram. I wondher what it is?"

By hard study and great facial gymnastics, Muldoon managed to make out the three letters: "T. H. D."

"T. H. D.," he soliloquized. "I wondher what they stand for?"

"Terrible Hard Drinker, probably," sarcastically said Mrs. Muldoon. "Such are generally yer boon companions. De ye know that Edwardo Geoghegan wasted seven dollars' worth of syrup last night with his wash tub comicality?"

"Bother me with no syrup," loftily said Muldoon; "charge it to Edwardo's board bill. Do ye know what this letther contains, Bridget?"

"Is it a valentine?"

"Divil a bit. Bridget, I am a made man. Ye may put a silver bell onto yer ram, and three more carrots into the vegetable soup. T. H. D. stands for Tammany Hall Democracy."

"What av it?"

"Listen, ye culprit fay. It is an invitation asking me to deliver a political address at Shamrock Hall in favor av the Hon. Patrick McMud for Congress. It is an orator I am, Bridget. Will yez plaze to lay out me circus crush hat, and me sealskin socks wid me claw-hammer coat. I expect if I make a successful speech I will be Chief of the Sparrow Police, at least, nixt spring."

All that day Muldoon boasted about his speech of the night. It was going to be the grandest effort of this century.

At six o'clock he got a carriage, and, with Hippocrates Burns started forth for Shamrock Hall, which was away up in Harlem. Of course they had to stop at several whisky mosques on the way uptown.

One drink followed another, and Muldoon got to feeling tip-top. As for Hippocrates, he was easily affected, and he got maudlin.

"Ah," said Muldoon, as they rolled up Third avenue, "Levi O'Brien is running against McMud. I must give it to Levi. What do yez think of Levi, Hippocrates?"

Hippocrates lurched solemnly forward, and mechanically repeated:

"She was a—hic—maid of fair face
Shurrounded by a—hic—nameless grace,
A bud of—er—"

"That will do, ye terrible example," interrupted Muldoon; "we will have no more av yez motto-paper poetry. Faix, I think I will paralyze Levi."

On they rolled up Third avenue to Harlem.

"We must be near Shamrock Hall," mused Muldoon, and he poked his head out of the window of the carriage.

Just a block above, a building was brilliantly lighted, fireworks were going off, and a brass band was pounding away at a great rate.

"Here we are," he cried, and he ordered the driver to stop there.

"That ain't—" began the driver.

"Moind me," stately checked Muldoon. "Hippocrates!"

"Whaz?" rejoined that young but not always appreciated poet.

"We're at Shamrock Hall."

"Kin—hic—lick it!" hazily said Hippocrates; "minds me of my—hic—last poem:

"Zer were lion's heads upon zer wall,
An' carved deer in Locksly Hall."

"Yez are a liar!" deliberately said Muldoon, "it is not Locksly Hall; it is Shamrock Hall, an' devil a lion's head is there on the wall. As for the carved deer, ye will find him in the dime restaurant."

Just then the carriage stopped.

Muldoon got out.

"Come along, Hippocrates," he said.

But Hippocrates wouldn't.

Hippocrates feebly said "Po'keepsie—ten minutes for 'freshments,'" and went to sleep on the floor of the carriage.

"Keep an eye on the paralyzed lush, Mike," ordered Muldoon of the driver; "if he attempts to climb out of the windy lasso him wid the whip."

Mike promised, and Muldoon went up to the door of the illuminated building.

A dapper gentleman met him.

"Ah, general," he said, "we have been expecting you. All is ready upstairs for your address; the audience are patiently waiting."

"Whisht!" complacently reflected Muldoon; "it is a general I am now. Bedad, I will have me monogram put on every towel in me boarding-house."

The dapper gentleman, whose name was Slammers, conducted Muldoon upstairs into a tastily-decorated and well-lighted hall.

An anxious audience of about the toughest-looking men possible were waiting and amusing themselves by smoking and chewing tobacco.

"What an elegant gang for store breaking!" mentally exclaimed Muldoon. "I belave this is the commencement av the Isle de Blackwell graduating class. But they are a foine crowd for a dog match."

Muldoon's entrance was the signal for various remarks by the audience, such as:

"Luk at the galvanized Mick!"

"It is a gorilla in full dress!"

"There is a bog in his breath!"

"Stag the fly-specks on his teeth!"

"Shure, ye could slide down hill upon his nose!"

While one gentleman of musical tendencies sweetly warbled:

"And we wash him wid a hose,
Baby mine—baby mine."

"It's only their geniality," whispered Mr. Slammers to Muldoon.

"Geniality is a good word for it," loftily said Muldoon; "begorra, if I had them down in my ward, I would knock some av the geniality out av them wid a club. I suppose whin they hit yez wid bricks, ye call it enthusiasm?"

"Oh, no," objected Mr. Slammers; "just step upon the platform, general."

Muldoon did.

He assumed a graceful position, so he thought.

"That an ilegant liquor store lithograph I wud make, tuk in this position," he murmured. "Faix, they would be putting Christmas greens around me."

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Slammers, "allow me to introduce to you General McCorkey."

"I am under an alibi; they do not want the gang to know me real name," Muldoon thought. "Well, niver moind, I will go for O'Brien, anyhow!"

He gestured most splendidly.

"Luk at the jumping-jack!" called out somebody.

"It goes by electricity," remarked somebody else.

"Oh, give it a show!" begged a third speaker. "Go ahead, old clock-work!"

Muldoon proceeded.

"Gentlemen," said he, "we are upon the eve of a great political crisis. Ivery eye in Ameriky is turned upon us. This district is the most important wan in the city; there wor more people died here last year than in any other. We nade a good, solid man to represint us in Congress. I nade not say that we do not want the wan whom a gang av political bummers and gutter politicians have nominated."

"Hurrah!" yelled the audience.

"He is," continued Muldoon, "a low, darty vagabond—a man who would sell his ould mother for sausages for siven cints and a beer ticket."

"Hurrah!"

"He is a rogue wid cross eyes."

"Hurrah!"

"If he wor where he should be he wud be baking bread in the penitentiary for honest men."

"Hurrah!"

"Gintlemen," went on Muldoon, working himself up into a high pitch of excitement, "ye know his name—it is Levi O'Brien I alude to."

If a thunderbolt had struck that meeting there could not have been a more startled and surprised silence, for a second.

The whole audience arose as one man, after that second was over, and cried:

"He's crazy!"

"Chuck him out!"

"Fire him out of the window!"

"Break his jaw!"

"Kill him!"

"Hold on," gasped Mr. Slammers, with a pale face, "there is some mistake. General, what ails you?"

"I ain't a general!" roared Muldoon, "an' ye can all go to the devil."

"Who are you?"

"I'm Terence Muldoon, be Heavens! an' I am for McMud!"

That was enough.

Mr. Slammers just had time to say:

"Why, you blanked jackass, this is an O'Brien meeting—we took you for one of our speakers," when the O'Brienites got hold of Muldoon.

He fought bravely, but numbers conquered him, and the way he was bounced en grande out of that hall was electric. He got fired downstairs at the rate of a mile a minute.

He struck the sidewalk and bounced out into the friendly arms of Mike, the coachman.

"Did ye spake?" asked Mike, with a groan.

"Be Heaven, do ye suppose I wud luk loike a battle-field if I had kept silent?" groaned Muldoon. "Oh, it wur a barbecue they had wid me."

"I wur going to tell ye ye had struck the wrong place," said Mike, "but ye wouldn't listen to it."

"Where is the inebriated po'try machine?" queried Muldoon, changing the subject.

"In a saloon," replied Mike, with a meaning smile.

"Didn't I tell ye to howld onto him?"

"Yes; but he wur a leaning out av the windy, and he called a red-headed girrul wid a hare lip his pretty Jane. Begorra, her father knocked him clane up through the coach roof, an' I tuk him over to Casey's to get his head tied up wid a towel."

"I think I nade repairing myself," declared Muldoon; and, accompanied by the willing Mike, he went over to Casey's.

Hippocrates was there, adorned with a towel turban, sitting upon a whisky barrel, and reciting the "Water Mill" to a stub-tailed dog, who was watching him in paralyzed surprise.

He stopped, however, to gaze upon Muldoon's mussed-up appearance.

"Run over on elevated railroad?" he asked. "Whazzer-masher? Yer nice-lookin'—hic—pol'tishun. Make a—hic—better shign for—hic—hospital. Minds me of my poem:

"He was dirty and dusty, and—hic—mussed,
And his—hic—nose was deshidedly bust,
And his—"

"Hippocrates, that will do," sternly said Muldoon. "If yez kape on wid yez tooth-powdher epics ye will make a murderér out av me."

"Yer got no po'try in yer shoul," reproved Hippocrates, successfully falling off his barrel, to the stub-tailed dog's evident delight. "Man wor ain't got no po'try in his shoul is N. G.—no gentleman."

"Will somebody plaze to cork up the gas-works?" requested Muldoon, and Hippocrates was promised, if he would only shut up, that he could come around the next night and deliver poems for an hour.

Muldoon was fixed up all right by the genial Casey, and, after a few "braces," started for Shamrock Hall.

He arrived there this time all right.

At first he was for leaving Hippocrates in the carriage, but Hippocrates wouldn't hear of it.

He was going to attend the McMud meeting, and be the biggest man in the room.

"Goin' to speak myself," he declared. "Goin' to shing."

"If ye do," said Muldoon, "ye will be arrested for attempted man-slaughter. Brace up, ye drunkard. Why don't ye put starch in your knees?"

Hippocrates declared he was "or right," and could "walk mile in five sheconds, sure," and at last, by Muldoon's assistance, succeeded in reaching the interior of the hall.

The members of the McMud committee, headed by the Hon. Patrick McMud himself, Mr. O'Grady, Senator O'Neal, Alderman Owen Haley and Supervisor Cornstarch received Muldoon warmly.

Hippocrates was also introduced, and after generously offering to "put a head on any man in the room for two cents," relapsed into a chair and began to drivel.

The Hon. Patrick McMud himself was the first speaker.

He had a habit of gesticulating very violently, and perhaps indecorously.

The unfortunate Hippocrates thought so, at least.

"Wind it up fashter," he said.

"Shut up!" ordered Muldoon.

"Whaz ish it?" queried Hippocrates, in pretended surprise.

"Speck it's a m-m-mechanical doll. Goesh on wires."

"Will yez be still?" asked Muldoon, while the audience grinned, and the committee looked daggers.

Hippocrates would not be still. He had made up his mind that he was in a political circus, and if he couldn't play clown he didn't want to stay.

"Shumping-Shack!" he bawled, alluding to the Hon. Mr. McMud, "where's er—hic—string? Lemme pull it," and he advanced with unsteady gait, and gripped the McMud coat-tails.

Such an indignity could not be tolerated. There was a point where patience ceased to be a virtue, and Hippocrates had reached it.

Two stalwart committeemen grabbed him.

In a trice Hippocrates, struggling desperately, but without avail, was taken out of the hall. Muldoon, to tell the truth, was not sorry to see him go.

Arriving at the foot of the stairs, one of the committeemen put Hippocrates' hat on, and bade him go to his home.

Hippocrates would not.

He careened down the avenue, muttering:

"Home wash never like this. Ain't goin' go home. Get square on Muldoon. He 'sulted me—didn't stand up for me—get square, sure," and he tacked against a post, and stopped to glare upon the passers-by.

Meanwhile McMud had finished his speech, retiring amid great applause, and it was Muldoon's turn.

Mr. Haley introduced him, and Muldoon arose.

"Ladies and jintlemen," said Muldoon, stepping forward, "it is wid feelings av grate gratification that I rise to get up to address ye upon this momentous occasion."

CHAPTER IX.

Hippocrates considered himself deeply injured, and he looked upon Muldoon as the cause of it all.

"Hahn't been for Muldoon, wouldn't got—hic—tight; hahn't got—hic—tight, wooden went political meetin'; hahn't went political meetin' wooden got—hic—chucked out," he reasoned, as he unsteadily braced up against a hydrant. "Muldoon's no gentleman—he's a brocky-faced ole galvanized Mick. Get square wiz him, shure's I'm a po-po-policeman. Hic—no—po-po-poet!"

Just as Hippocrates finished his soliloquy and had narrowly escaped being tripped up by a hadrant, a Hibernian-faced gentleman came along.

He had a high white hat on. However fashionable white high hats are during the summer, yet they are not usually considered the proper racket in November.

At least Hippocrates thought so. "Sh-shoot it," he hiccoughed, "git er gun and—hic—kill it."

The Hibernian-faced gentleman properly construed these remarks as personal to himself, and halted.

"Take it off," continued Hippocrates, coming successfully out of a second encounter with the hydrant; "whazzer hat! Worst I ever saw. St-stab it."

The proprietor of the hat walked up to Hippocrates.

"Do ye know who I am, ye intoxicated communist?" he asked.

"Don't wanter know; know yer no good, anyhow," socially replied Hippocrates; "bust er ole hat; git er goat to step on it."

"Me name is Michael Mulcahy, an' I am a slugger," promptly said the other. "I will have none av yer lager beer wit."

"Yer name Mulcahy?"

"It is."

"I know a Mulcahy."

"Who is he?"

"Ole shon of a gun keeps a bedbug hotel right nex' door me. Feeds his boarders on rat-pie and—hic—boiled dog, and—"

Whatever other delicacies Hippocrates was about to name as forming part of the Mulcahy menu will not be disclosed, for the white-hatted agent promptly knocked him down.

"I am that Mulcahy," he said. "I belave yez are one av Mul-

doon's wild bastes. Faix, I saw an advertisement for a strayed jackass upon a fence, as I passed by."

"Muldoon's an ole snide," said Hippocrates, just catching the name; "goin' ter get square wi' him—bust him—hic—up in bizness."

Mulcahy was now all ears. He picked Hippocrates up as gently as if he were a baby, and escorted him to a beer garden.

There he treated, and Hippocrates grew enthusiastic.

"Musser Mulcahy," declared he, "you're a gemmen—all 'cept white hat. You're sweet as a—hic—rose in June, 'neath Nature's—hic—silvery moon. Zat's po'try. I'm a—hic—poet. Muldoon's grossly 'sulted me—fight him."

By careful questioning and judicious beer Mulcahy succeeded in extracting from him a full account of the proceedings of the evening, Hippocrates winding up with his reiterated declaration to get square.

"Zer ole flannel-mouth," he said. "I'd like to get a—hic—hose an' drown him!"

"Bedad," cried Mulcahy, after a moment's reflection, "I have a better idea than that."

"Goin' to bed?" queried Hippocrates, who began to have a dim idea that he ought to do something of the sort; "I ain't never goin' ter bed—goin' ter sleep in gutter, for I'm—hic—the ruler of the sheas, the—Musser Mulcahy, yer goin' ter sleep—'stonished, sir, at yer; I'm a po—po—poet, an' I never go sleep. Poets never do. 'Tain't—hic—nature of the beast. Goin' to get—hic—square on Muldoon, an'—"

Here Hippocrates' head fell over on his chest, and he sank quietly under the table.

"Bedad, he is asleep," said Mulcahy. "Now for revenge. Ah, Muldoon, ye cunning incendiary, ye wud make a pyrotechnical display av me piebald Thomas cat. I will avenge meself, ye ould Kil-kenny mummy!"

Mulcahy hurried out to a saloon, much frequented by the O'Brienites, with which faction, by the way, he was affiliated.

It was always so with Mulcahy and Muldoon.

If Muldoon was a Republican, Mulcahy would be a Democrat; if Muldoon said the moon wasn't green cheese, Mulcahy said it was; if Muldoon laid out an organ grinder with a club, Mulcahy would hire him to play all day—and so it went on.

Upon going into the O'Brien rendezvous Mulcahy beheld the very man he wanted playfully pitching crackers at a big bull pup.

"Contractor," yelled Mulcahy.

"What is it?" was the reply.

"Have yez a pumping engine?"

"Av course."

"Will yez lind it to me?"

"Whin?"

"Now."

"For Heaven's sake, Mulcahy, are yez temporarily insane? What do yez desire av a pumping engine this time av the night. Ye will be axin' me for a pile-driver next!"

"I want it to drown a tarrier wid," rejoined Mulcahy. "I be-lave we can wash away the whole McMud mass meeting."

"I will lend ye the East River if ye can do that," replied the contractor; "explain, Mulcahy—it is not a nightmare ye are giving us?"

Mulcahy explained.

Right back of where the committee sat in Shamrock Hall was a window, which was open, for Mulcahy had been past the hall before he met Hippocrates.

His idea was to take the pumping engine (a small hand engine used by builders and contractors, mostly for pumping water out of excavations) and pump a big stream of water through the window into the hall, to the discomfiture and thorough wetting of Muldoon and his political associates.

The scheme was received with great applause.

"Mulcahy, ye have a diplomatic brain," praised the contractor; "if O'Brien is elected we will appoint ye consul-gineral from the United States to New Jersey. Come on, byes, and we'll get the ould machine out."

The boys were perfectly willing, and away they went to the shed where the contractor kept his engine.

A dozen busy hands soon had it out, and by the aid of lanterns it was filled and placed in excellent condition to squirt a brilliant stream of water.

Merrily the crowd ran it down toward Shamrock Hall, all of the policemen they met generously looking the other way.

They arrived at the hall without too much noise, and the engine was placed directly under the window, and a hose connected with a near-by hydrant.

"Have ye got stame up?" asked Mulcahy, as he grasped the end of a second hose, which was to throw the stream.

"Yis," muttered the man who was appearing as engineer.

Mulcahy lifted the hose and pointed it at the open window.

"Begorra, Muldoon, yer body will float out with the tide," he said.

Meanwhile we will return to Muldoon.

It was not an A, B, C speech he was delivering.

It was a regular six-day, put-you-to-sleep oration, one half consisting of big words which nobody understood (Muldoon didn't himself), and the other half of smaller words which didn't mean anything. In fact, Muldoon might as well have spoken in Chinese, for all the good it did, but as some of the audience woke up at intervals and applauded, he was happy, and immediately started off on another verbal lap.

He was just beginning one of these when the engine arrived.

All of the committee were snoring away, and the only man awake in the audience was a fellow who had the toothache, and was slowly working up to a pitch of frenzy in which he was liable to kill Muldoon; but that great orator went on just the same.

"We are," bawled Muldoon, "upon the eve av anarchy; we are overburdened by taxation, vexation, resuscitation and resurrection. The optics av past ages regard our voluptuous career, and we career as—"

"Hurray!" bawled the engine crowd outside.

"Bedad, they hear me eloquence outside," reflected Muldoon; "it is a stentorian voice I have. Pretty soon the gang will be building bonfires an' stamping medals wid me head onto thim!"

Encouraged by the thought, Muldoon yelled louder than ever:

"This is the most gorgeous crisis in the history of this republic. The sons av liars upon the opposite side are about to plunge our country in gore! We, as native-born Americans, born in Ireland, will not have it. Bedad, we will foight fur liberty and sinecures, and—"

Muldoon stopped right there.

A stream of water as big as a man's leg struck him in the back of the neck and knocked him clean over.

"Be Heavens!" he yelled, as the flood dashed over him, "I am kilt by a water-spout!" and over he rolled.

The way that the committee woke up was a caution.

They found themselves floating around the floor in a most unexplainable and decidedly uncomfortable style.

The stream from the hose seemed to be everywhere.

It washed their faces and skinned their necks, poured down their backs into their shoes, splashed against their noses and half suffocated them, dashed into their mouths and half strangled them.

But in the midst of their misery they found time to exclaim:

"It is a flood!"

"The Croton reservoir has burst!"

"Shure, the sewer's blew up!"

"McGinty's artesian well has exploded!"

"The Harlem River has overflowed!"

These were a few of the erroneous explanations given by the drenched committee.

Muldoon was the first man up.

He looked like a terrier who had been chucked in a frog-pond and was just emerging.

Water dropped from his hair, his beard, his clothes and his shoes. Verily it was water—water all around.

"Begorra, I'm Venus arising from the wather!" sadly said Muldoon, funny as usual, though he didn't know it.

As the words escaped his lips, he got the hose square in the face again, and sat down with more promptness than grace.

But he caught a glimpse of a face at the window which he well knew.

A face which was to him as a red flag waved in a bull's eyes.

The face of Mulcahy!

He was up again in a second.

"Follow me, byes!" shouted he, as he rushed for the window.

"Muldoon and victory. Ah, Mulcahy, ye dynamite communist, stand there till I get at ye. Faix, I'll knock yer face clane down yer throat!"

Muldoon's wild onslaught seemed to demoralize the two men who held the hose, of whom Mulcahy was one.

They held the pipe in such an uncertain way that Muldoon easily dodged it.

He reached the window and grabbed for Mulcahy, but Mulcahy dropped the hose and dusted.

"That's it, ye white-feathered cockatoo!" bawled Muldoon; "run—run, Mulcahy; yer heart is all in yer heels."

"Wud ye luk at the Coney Island mermaid?" yelled one of the O'Brienites, gazing at Muldoon in affected terror; "see the wather on it!"

"Begob, I'll wather yez," replied Muldoon, grabbing the hose and turning it full upon his enemies.

The boot was upon the other leg now.

The O'Brienites retreated in bad order under the aqueous influence of the hose.

"Arrah, it's a purty argument," grinned Muldoon; "it's as nate as a shillelah and more gineral in its logic. It's as—"

"Put dot hose down!" bawled a wheezy voice just then.

"Who owns the whistle?" pleasantly asked Muldoon, as he looked around to see where the voice came from.

It was owned by a policeman.

It was a Dutch policeman, about the size of a three cent pickle. But he had red whiskers, and big feet, and a big club, and he felt as big as a monument.

"Pud dot vater-bipe down," ordered he again.

Faix, I can't put it down. Me swallow is not aiquil to it," answered Muldoon. "I have not the anatomy av a boar-constrictor."

"I vants no pack talk," said the peeler; "you vas a nuisance. I vas too fresh, dot vas ed. You blocks up der street und makes a growd; vat for you do mit dot hose?"

"Shure, I wash me teeth."

"Where you got it, hey?"

"In a prize package, ye compressed savage."

"You dink you make von fool of me," roared the peppery copper. "You von't. You don't dinks I vas a Dutchman pecos I vas a fool. Shiminy Pismarck, you vas arrested."

"Oh, what are ye giving me?" Muldoon asked. "Take yerself off and arrest the sparrows for ating worms widout a license."

But the peeler wouldn't.

He saw it quite differently.

He grabbed his club and advanced on Muldoon, while the gathering crowd—anything gathers a crowd at any time of the day or night in New York—encouraged him by shouts of: "Go it, Pretzel!" "Collar him, Sourkraut!" "Give him six months, Sweitzer-case!" and so on.

"Vill you surrender myself peacefully?" asked he; "I vas a glubber."

"Bedad, I vas a vater-vork," mimicked Muldoon, as he turned the hose full onto the doughty preserver of the public peace.

He couldn't stand up against it, and down he went in an undignified way, while the fickle crowd jeered and geyed him just as they had encouraged him but a few minutes previous.

Suddenly Muldoon's water supply, though, came to a stop.

Somebody had stopped the engine, and consequently there was no more force to the hose's stream.

The Dutch copper staggered to his feet. He was not going to tackle Muldoon again single-handed, and he rapped for help.

"I vas got you now," he said. "You vill get ten years, you loafer. You vos consulted and addacked a boliceman mit der discharge mit his duty. I vos der man!"

"Yer better cut it, Dublin," called out one of the crowd to Muldoon. "Go off somewhere and get dry."

Muldoon took their advice.

He dropped the hose and scudded around the corner, the friendly crowd hustling and bustling the little policeman so that he could not follow, ending up by smashing his hat over his eyes and stealing his club.

When Muldoon got around the corner he made pretty good time, but he could not see his carriage anywhere.

"Hey, boy!" he called to a red-headed urchin who stood near by, curiously surveying his watery attire, "did yez see a carriage around here?"

"Y-a-a-s," drawled the boy. "S-a-a-y, mister, who spit on yer?"

"Where is the carriage now?" asked Muldoon, disregarding the other's personal query.

"Drove off."

"Anybody in it?"

"Y-a-a-s; reg'lar lush."

"What sort av an inebriate was he?"

"Ah, he had a towel around his heal, an' no hat on; he called the driver 'my pretty Jane,' and told him to go right home, for the other old Mick that he came with had got afire, and they had drowned him putting him out."

Muldoon gave a groan of despair. "It was that machine poet, Hippocrates," said he, "and he has driven home, leaving me in the middle of Harlem wid me clothes as soaked as if I had fallen into the river. Dom politics!"

It wasn't a very nice predicament.

Especially if the night blew up cold. In that case Muldoon stood a good chance of being transformed into a statue of ice.

To add to his joyfulness, he had not five cents in his pocket. Hippocrates had borrowed his pocketbook to pay for a bouquet, and Hippocrates had entirely neglected to return it.

Therefore there seemed a brilliant prospect that Muldoon would have to turn pedestrian and lap it down to his home.

While he was indulging in these mournful reveries, somebody brushed up against him.

"Get out of the way, ye ould bum!" said the somebody. "Stand right where everybody vill have to walk over ye."

"I luk like an ould bum, do I?" repeated Muldoon, on his dignity. "Be Heavens, I will bum ye in the eye, ye fresh canary!"

"Well, I'll be blessed!" cried the somebody, starting back, "if it ain't his royal nibbs—our ould crank, Muldoon."

"Edwardo Geoghegan!" exclaimed Muldoon.

"Ye're roight," replied Edwardo, for it was the boarding-house masher. "What are ye doing out here? Shure, I thought they were to raise ye for a banner at a political meeting."

"Edwardo," solemnly said Muldoon, "there are things which had better be buried in oblivion. We will bury the political meeting. Lind me five cents to pay me fare down upon the elevated railroad an' I will deduct it from yer hash-bill."

Edwardo did, and Muldoon went home.

He found out that Hippocrates had arrived an hour previous, fuller than a tick, had smashed the hat-stand, broke the balusters, and insisted upon fighting everybody in the house simultaneously.

Finally he had been carried off to bed by the alderman and Terry Rafferty, and pitched into his room, where he was peacefully slumbering on the floor with his head in the wash bowl, as Johanna had observed through the key-hole.

"Ah, Hippocrates, ye Judas!" said Muldoon, as he moved up to bed. "I will be aven wid ye. Slape on, ye poetical lush. Terence Muldoon niyir forgives!"

He soon got a chance for revenge.

Hippocrates came down to the supper table a few nights afterwards in an alarming state of full dress.

"Are yez going to be baptized?" jocularly asked Muldoon.

"No," simpered Hippocrates, "I am going to take a lady out—Miss Christabel."

"Has it feathers?"

"Mr. Muldoon, I am alluding to a lady," said Hippocrates, warmly. Her name is Christabel O'Hara."

"Faix, I tuk it for a birrud," laughed Muldoon. "That is a nice name for a young lady. Where are ye going to take her? To Madison Square, to sit on a bench and luk at the moon?"

"To the thayater," answered Hippocrates, "if I can wear me new boots. They are awfully tight, but I stretched them, and they are up in my room now."

"Ah!" remarked Muldoon, as a thoughtful look passed over his face, and presently he excused himself from the table on some trivial plea, leaving Hippocrates dilating upon Miss O'Hara's perfections to the misanthrope alderman, who grunted assent at intervals when he didn't have his mouth full of pot-pie.

Muldoon first went to the kitchen.

Johanna was making pepper sauce, the chief ingredient of which, as you probably know, is green peppers—a most luscious fruit for a man with an iron-plated mouth.

Muldoon cabbaged three.

He then crept silently upstairs to Hippocrates' room with his booty.

Hippocrates' boots were there.

Nice, new, patent leather boots, which had doubtless cost the poet a week's salary.

"Fhat a regular cologne-chewer Hippocrates is arriving at," Muldoon soliloquized; "wud ye luk at his fairy boots? I wondher he don't have red tassels on each side and a decalcomania on the tips."

Lifting the boots, he cut the peppers, and squeezed the juice which issued from them into the articles of foot wear.

"He will belave he is walking on red-hot coals," Muldoon grinned, as he distributed the pepper-juice so that its presence would hardly be noticeable in the boots.

Hardly had he done so before Hippocrates came up the stairs.

Muldoon pretended to be busily at work poking the fire.

"Divil take such a fire!" he exclaimed; "the last coal is all rocks, barring a few slates."

"Oh, don't mind," said Hippocrates; "you know I'm going out."

He sat down upon a chair, and kicking his slippers off, he carefully drew on one boot.

"It feels wet," he said, with a suspicious look at Muldoon.

"It's the atmosphere," readily asserted that gentleman, making a desperate attack upon the fire. "There is fog in the breeze, and it's moist everywhere. Begorra, whin I got up this morning, there were two feet av dew in me socks."

If Hippocrates had acted upon his first suspicion he would have pulled the boot off, examined it, and saved himself a great deal of trouble.

But he didn't.

Instead, he put on its mate, donned his hat and coat, and bade Muldoon good night.

"Needn't mind the fire," said he.

"Ye're roight," muttered Muldoon; "ye will have all the fire ye want, my daisy, before ye get home. It will be in yer feet."

CHAPTER X.

Poor Hippocrates walked briskly along the street, with his thoughts full of the young lady he was about to see.

He reached the house, and of course she was not ready. Therefore, as is usual in such cases, he took his seat on a very ornamental and very fragile chair, and tried to pass away the time by looking at the chamber of horrors comprised in the family photograph album.

While doing so his foot began to smart a little.

The exercise of walking had started the red pepper juice to work.

"Must have a pin in me boot," reflected Hippocrates.

Just then his other foot scratched.

"Faith, I can't have two pins," said he; "I'll off wid me boots and investigate."

But just as he was about to do so, there was a rustle of silk upon the stairs, accompanied by a feminine footfall.

"Miss Christabel," said he, and he abandoned his boot-taking-off idea, for it was assuredly not the proper society dodge to be caught in a parlor in his stocking feet.

It was Miss Christabel.

She beamed down sweetly upon Hippocrates, hoped she had not kept him waiting, and announced herself as all ready to depart to the theatre.

As it was a most beautiful night, she proposed walking, and Hippocrates had to assent.

A block's pedestrianizing got the red pepper juice working away finely. It was burning through Hippocrates' thin socks into the soles of his feet like lunar caustic.

"Ain't the moon elegant?" said Miss Christabel, nestling on his arm.

"Yis—yis," returned Hippocrates, twisting his face, "it's—it's—ele—d—n it!"

"What?" gasped Miss Christabel.

"I—I—said it was superb," answered Hippocrates, standing upon one foot; "it was most—wud ye moind taking a cab to the theatre?"

"Why, it's only two blocks off. Just see the stars, Mr. Burns."

"Bedad, I'm seeing stars and feeling comets now," groaned Hippocrates. "Miss Christabel, wud ye moind me sitting down upon a hydrant for a second to cool me brain. Shure, I belave I have fireworks in me feet."

Miss Christabel did not hear the last part of the speech, and she looked surprised at Hippocrates' request.

"Gentlemen that I am accustomed to go with are not used to stopping to sit on hydrants," she replied, statelily.

"Nayther do they fale as if they were walking on grate fires," murmured Hippocrates. "I wud give a million if I were wooden-legged."

Hippocrates' walk to the theatre was peculiar.

It resembled the stride of a turkey on a hot pan-cake griddle.

Miss Christabel gazed at him in alarm.

"What ails your—your legs, Mr. Burns?" she asked, modestly.

"Nothing," gasped her escort.

"But why do you walk so wobbly?"

"Faix, it's all the style," desperately said Hippocrates. "They call it the Baltimore glide. I was two weeks learning av it. Heaven be blessed, here is the theatre!"

Going into the place of amusement, he, in his suffering, committed all sorts of errors. He paid two dollars too much for his tickets, hired an umbrella instead of an opera-glass, totally forgot to take off his hat when he entered the auditorium, and, as a last result, discovered that he had got a seat for himself in front of the orchestra, while Miss Christabel was in the tenth row upstairs.

Of course this had to be righted, and by the time he had got seated, he had attracted the open derision of the whole audience, and rendered Miss Christabel's face about as hot as his own feet.

He had all of the while nurtured a delusive idea that when he got seated and off his pins, the excruciating burning would stop. It didn't.

The red pepper juice was trying to beat the record.

Up went the curtain, and the young and lovely heroine was discovered in the clutches of a very bad villain, armed with a very bad knife, and of a most murderous and very bad appearance generally.

"Oh—oh!" emitted Miss Christabel; "will he kill her?"

"I hope so," growled Hippocrates, who was in a frame of mind wicked enough to take delight in seeing any one killed. "Howly suffering Moses, I wish I wur legless! Miss Christabel!"

"What?" snapped the lady.

"Do ye perceive smoke?"

"No; why?"

"Bedad, me feet are burning."

"Mr. Burns," icily said Miss Christabel, "you are not a clown and this is not a circus. Please allow me to see the play, and don't ask riddles."

Poor Hippocrates was crushed.

Yet he couldn't keep still.

With two feet almost burning up, I ask how could he?

He got his feet in his hands, and tried to sit upon them; he

scratched the soles of his boots desperately with a pen-knife; he bit his tongue and rolled his eyes and contorted his face until it looked like one of those ten-cent rubber ones you see for sale about Christmas.

"Fhat it is the Lord knows," he groaned. "I belave it is St. Anthony's fire wid a touch av the St. Vitus dance. Fhat a religious set av diseases I have! Whorra—whorra! I wud I had ice soles!"

His contortion act meanwhile had attracted the attention of the audience sitting around him.

"Drunk!"

"Crazy!"

"Going to have a fit!"

"Jim-jams!"

"Fixing for a convulsion!"

"Fly up his pants!"

Such were a few of the comments uttered.

Miss Christabel blushed a rosy red, and glanced at her trick escort. He was insanely jamming his feet into his hat to see if that would do any good.

"Mr. Burns, are you insane?" she queried.

"Yis!" roared Hippocrates, not able to stand it any longer. "Be Heavens, I'm a maniac, I'm a tiger, I'm a lunatic! Miss Christabel, if ye don't want me to go off av me cintre completely and demolish the theatre, ye had better come out wid me."

Scared and affrighted, Miss Christabel obeyed. Hippocrates started to get out, squashed an old lady's bonnet over her head, stepped on at least six stove-pipes, tripped over a fat man and rendered him speechless by an unpremeditated welt in the stomach, finally reaching the door several lengths in advance of Miss Christabel, with somebody's else's cane and a hat which did not belong to him.

His first act when he got outside was to grab the ticket-taker's stool and deposit himself upon it.

With a jerk he got one boot off. Miss Christabel gave a faint yell, and appealed to the ticket-taker.

"Won't you get me a cab, sir?" pleaded she; "this—this man escorted me here, but now he has gone crazy. Mr. Burns, do you intend to walk home in your stocking feet?"

"In me bare feet, begob," said Hippocrates, as he yanked off his sock, and tenderly looked at his foot, which was of the color of boiled ham.

"See here," said the gate-keeper, grabbing Hippocrates by the shoulder, "this ain't no place to undress. Get out of here, yer idiot!"

He was a more muscular man than the poet, and he literally bounced said poet into the street, where he arrived just in time to see Miss Christabel driving off in a cab.

He was a unique sight, with one bare foot, and his boot and stocking in his hand, and the street boys, who were on the tapis as usual, improved the opportunity.

They joined hands and danced about Hippocrates, gayly chanting:

"Billy—Billy Barelegs

Runs through the town,

One shoe off

And the other shoe on!"

till he was fairly wild, and in order to escape from their taunts, had to follow Miss Christabel's example and go home in a cab.

"Did ye have a good toime?" politely asked Muldoon, who was standing on the stoop smoking an evening pipe.

Hippocrates gave him one look.

"Misther Muldoon," said he, "did yez put any chemical preparation for the parboiling of human flesh in me boots?"

"Shure, do I luk like a parboiler?" indignantly said Muldoon. "I didn't know ye had boots, Hippocrates. It was walking on yez uppers ye wur last week."

"All roight," tragically said Hippocrates, "but I shall ferret this out, Misther Muldoon, and there—there will be a murder trial!"

"Bedad," laughed Muldoon, "it wur lucky ye wur not home tin minutes ago, or there wur have been a murder shure."

"Why?"

"There was a young fellow wid shouldhers like an ox around here loking for ye. He had a big club in his grasp, an' he said ye had insulted av his sister!"

With a tragic "Bah!" Hippocrates stalked upstairs.

But Muldoon's joke cost him dear.

Miss Christabel utterly refused to speak to him or hear an explanation. In vain he bombarded her house with notes; they were returned unopened, and at last her big brother swore he would break the poet's head if he didn't stop sending epistles.

As Miss Christabel was rich, it was a sad blow to Hippocrates; for he had fondly calculated upon striking a mash on the fair demoiselle and handling part of her daddy's ducats.

It was a rich joke to Muldoon, though, and he enjoyed it heartily, and went on a celebration of two days, which ended ignominiously in a police court and five dollars' fine.

Presently, though, there was another joke played which he did not enjoy as much.

Probably because it was on himself.

Winter was coming on, and the blustering winds and occasional snow squalls warned people to get ready for Jack Frost.

"Bedad," said Muldoon, as he shinned down the street, "I must provide meself wid some overwear. Faix, I think I can afford it. Mr. Fitz Murphy is out av his head wid brain fever, an' I will swear he got up in the noight and broke ivery windy in the house in his delirium, and charge it to his board bill. He will niver know the difference, the poor sick loon, nayther will his wife, for she is away visiting her mother. I belave after all it was an excess av joy which prostrated Fitz Murphy."

So Muldoon bent his steps to where the sign of "Michael Gugenheimer Cohen, American Tailor," stared all passers-by out of countenance.

That night Muldoon appeared with a radiant face at the supper table.

The alderman noticed it and commented on the fact.

"Ah—ha, Muldoon," said he, "ye look jocular. Is yez mother-in-law about to kick, or has Mulcahy's entire family caught the spotted fever? I hear it is atmospheric now."

"Nayther," replied Muldoon, as he carved the solitary chicken. "Miss Fresh, will ye have the ind that gets over the fence last, or the collar bone? Edwardo, will ye wrestle wid drumsticks? Yis, alderman, I am feeling complaisant. I made a purchase to-day. Guess what it wur, leddies and gentlemen."

"A stomach pump," said Edwardo.

"A new tooth brush, I hope," remarked the alderman; "the public wan ye suspended in the hall for gineral use is played out. Besides, I saw Mr. Rafferty blacking his shoes wid it last Saturday."

"A door mat," growled Mike Magee; "it is tired I am of wiping me fate on the side of the house."

"Oh!" gushed Miss Krouse, "I do hope it is a new piano. Mrs. McLeary says ours has the tune av a tin pan."

"Mrs. McLeary is altogether too brand-new," replied Muldoon; "any woman who patches her husband's black doeskin pants wid red flannel, so that ivery toime he bends to sit down he lukes as if he was afire, shud kape her mouth closed in regard to musical matthers. No, leddies and gentlemen, ye are too hypothetical in yez surmises; I have purchased an ulcer."

"A what?" cried the boarders.

"An ulcer."

"Allow me to ax, Mr. Muldoon," interrogated the alderman, rising, "if ye intind to turn this house into a medical college?"

"Divil a bit."

"Then what are ye speculating in ulcers for?"

"I fail to see the connection between ulcers and medical colleges, alderman," answered Muldoon; "indeed, ye have an ulcer yerself."

A light broke upon the politician's brain.

"Do ye mane an ulster—loike an overcoat?" asked he.

"As coorse. An ulster was what I said, only me accent was different. Arrah! it's a darling."

"How much did it cost?"

"Siven dollars, made ready-made. You should see it. Be Heavens! there is box-pleating all down the sides and a bustle, and the buttons are as big as saucers. Worra, but I will kill all the leddies!"

Naturally the gang desired to see the marvelous ulster.

Muldoon produced it.

It was a pumpkin and no discount.

It was one of those Cheap-John, loud-patterned affairs which look like part of a panorama, and generally blow to pieces in the first good wind.

But you could not persuade Muldoon but that it was one of the best, most modest, truly fashionable garments of its sort to be obtained in New York.

"Arrah, it is artistic; the rale lum-tum," he said, as he held it up for his boarders to admire. "I wore it home from the tailor's, and a swell wid a glass in his eye raised his hat, and says he: 'Good evening, Mr. Rothschild!'"

He was all impatience to wear it out upon the street in a promenade, and break the hearts of the fair sex generally.

Luckily the next day was fair and cold, and in the afternoon he was able to carry out his plans.

He was got up very yammy.

Besides the phenomenal ulster, he sported a glaring red necktie, a regular step-ladder collar, big watch-chain, gloves of a yellow tinge with green stripes, and a gold-headed cane, which was enough in itself to strike all hearts with envy.

Thus equipped for conquest, he started out to paralyze Broadway, accompanied by Edwardo and Terry Rafferty.

Reaching the great avenue of commerce and fashion, he walked two blocks with enormous success, attracting about as much notice as a circus procesion.

At the third corner Edwardo stopped in front of a sample-room.

"Come in, Muldoon, and wet the ulster," said he. "Ye are too early yet. None av the girls are out walking now."

He sashayed into the sample-room and ordered a trio of whisky sours, with great willingness and alacrity.

And Muldoon did an encore upon his original act, until the crowd began to feel jolly.

Muldoon retired to the back part of the bar-room to speak to a friend whom he had just discovered, leaving Edwardo and Terry together.

The former excused himself for a moment.

He darted out of the place, and darted back again, with great quickness. In his hand he held a brown paper parcel.

"What have ye there?" Terry queried.

"Sausages," remarked Edwardo.

"Are they cooked?"

"Nary a cook."

"Howly Heavens! ye don't mean to ate them raw?"

"Shure, I don't mane to ate thim at all," laughed Edwardo. "I bought them to decorate Muldoon's ulster wid. 'Deed it needs ornamentation."

So saying, he undid the brown paper parcel and revealed a string of raw sausages, got up in improved German style.

"I bought thim at a Dutch butchery," Edwardo confessed. "Wait till ye see me attach thim to Muldoon. It's a nice daisy he will make for Broadway."

Just then Muldoon moved over to the speaker.

"Jist wan more drink, byes," said he, "thin we will continue wid our ramble."

It was taken.

During its progress Terry entertained Muldoon with a most remarkable song and dance, relative to a certain two-headed baby born to his cousin, Pat Slattery, while Edwardo carefully fixed the sausages to his ulster.

Muldoon never tumbled.

The only notice he took was to remark that the brace part of his ulster felt heavy, to which Edwardo hurriedly replied that all ulsters did so till they had been worn a while.

"Well," asked Muldoon, after he had heard the end of "he fictitious two-headed baby, "are yez ready to mash the dames?"

Edwardo and Terry assented, and Muldoon swaggered out into the street, followed by a roar of laughter from those in the sample-room, the cause of which he could not divine, and was too careless to investigate.

Up Broadway he proceeded, the sausages pendant from his ulster and flapping behind.

It was not long before he was attracting universal attention from all of the various pedestrians who thronged the great thoroughfare.

"What an intelligint way to carry home his breakfast," said an Irish pipe layer.

"Sa-ay, Billy, would yer look at ther meat-market?" asked a dirty-faced bootblack of his pal.

"Ach Gott! it vos a valking advertisement of somebody's sausages," gasped a spectacled German. "Vot will be next in dis great gountry?"

"Solomon Moshes!" muttered an old clothes peddler, "vat an ulstaire! Shacob Goliah, I sells dem for tree tolla mitout der sausages."

"Hoopee!" cried a delighted Chinaman. "Mellican man hab-bee two tailer."

Muldoon was, if anything, flattered by the universal comment excited by his appearance, but the remarks that he overheard puzzled him.

"Faix, they laud me intinsely," he reflected; "but fhat have I to do wid mate-markets and sausages? Perhaps it is only metaphorical, however. I wondher is Edwardo and the Rafferty sculpture behind me?"

He looked around behind him.

Neither of his two friends were in sight. They were skulking along upon the other side of the street, enjoying the Muldoon pageant.

"Ah—ha, they have shook me!" he said; "well, I don't blame them. The splendor av me appearance collapses their dress."

And away went Muldoon with the rooted idea that he was as pretty as a picture from a fashion plate.

Now dogs like sausages.

There is a particular affinity between a dog and a sausage which is food for philosophical reflection. Not being a philosopher we will not reflect, but simply chronicle.

Attracted by the sausages which fell in graceful loops from Muldoon's dizzy garment, the dogs began to collect from all parts and range behind Muldoon.

Dogs came from all parts.

Petted poodles tried to jump from their mistresses' arms; carriage dogs forsook their carriages, street curs came boldly forth and elbowed their richer companions in the struggle for sausages, and jumped and fawned around the ulster till Muldoon's attention was attracted.

"Be Heavens!" he exclaimed, as the dog of a blind man started to join the band, "even the dogs are mashed on me ulster. Bedad, it's so purty they want to ate it!"

By this time a second crowd, composed of humans, was following Muldoon.

"He acts in a variety show—those are his trained dogs," said one.

"Naw, it's a pedestrian dog-show," corrected a second.

"The dogs recognize a relative in the sausages," smiled a third. But it was reserved for a big, burly policeman to cap the climax. He walked up to Muldoon.

Tapping him on the shoulder, he said:

"Ye are arrested."

"Arristed!" gasped Muldoon.

"Yis."

"What for?"

The policeman tightened his grasp upon Muldoon's collar, and winked very sagaciously.

"Ye don't know, do ye?" he asked.

"No."

"Well, then, I'll tell ye," replied the officer of the law. "Ye are arrested for dog-staling. Ye wore those sausages to entice dogs to yer den, when ye wud wait for a reward. It were a nate dodge, but I dropped onto ye. Come along, now, or I'll club the whole head off av ye!"

CHAPTER XI.

As soon as Muldoon was seized by the zealous policeman, a crowd gathered around.

"What a dratted face," commented an old lady, peering at Muldoon's visage. "I calculate he's a murderer, sure."

"Kidnapper, mum," assured a butcher boy.

"Bank robber," drawled a swell.

"Pickpocket," said a burly truckman; "bet he stole the sausages out of a poor woman's pocket."

As for Muldoon, he was remonstrating with the officer.

"Be Heavens! this is an indignity," declared he. "Do ye know who I am?"

"I belave ye are a Spanish brigand," answered his captor.

"Come along, now. If ye block up the strate and collect a crowd, it will be six months extra for impeding travel."

"But me name is Muldoon."

"I don't care if it is Brannigan."

"I belong to Tammany Hall."

"Ye will get a year, then, shure. The judge went in on the opposition ticket."

"But I have a great pull in the ward."

"Divil a bit do I care if ye have a tug of war. I belave ye stole the sausage."

"What sausage?"

"Ah, ye innocent baby. Look at the rear av yer checked night-gown."

Muldoon twisted himself around and obtained a view of his ulster, with the sausage attachment.

"Bedad," exclaimed he, "it was no wonder I was a magnet to draw dogs. It is a put-up job. I never knew I was tailed with boloneys."

"I worked in a candy shop for six years," growled the policeman, "and I can tell taffy by the smell. Come along, ye Prussian conscript, or I'll feed ye wid club sauce."

Muldoon was forced to go.

Soon the prize ulster was before the sergeant's desk in a police station.

It happened that the sergeant was a political friend of Muldoon's.

Therefore, without stopping to hear the testimony, he instantly discharged Muldoon.

"As for you, O'Riley," he said to the officer, "yez are too indiscriminating. If you want to arrest somebody go out and slaughter an Italian; they've got no friends. Mr. Muldoon, will you come into me office and have a glass of wine?"

The officer retired discomfited, and Muldoon, after a couple of friendly potations, walked victoriously home.

But he never found out who fastened the sausage to him.

He asked Edwardo, but Edwardo had no more idea than the dead.

He asked Terry Rafferty, but Terry protested that he had never seen a sausage in a raw state.

So Muldoon was forced to put the sausage down with the Nathan murder, who struck Billy Patterson, and other kindred mysteries.

"Perhaps," he sagely said, "they wur concealed in me ulster, and the warmth av me body hatched them out!"

But the boarders were not done with him yet.

They gave him a second laughable roast very soon afterward, which for fun eclipsed the sausage racket.

One day an agent called upon Mrs. Muldoon.

He was a peddler of shower baths, and he wanted to sell her one.

In vain she protested that she did not want any. They had a hose, and if any of the boarders wanted a shower bath they could deluge themselves with that.

Yet the agent got the best of it.

He represented that the shower bath was so stylish, so healthful, and, best of all, so cheap.

That was what settled it. Mrs. Muldoon was a woman. Consequently she bought it because it was cheap. If it had been a guillotine, or a sarcophagus, or a patent reaper, she would have bought it for the same reason.

It was put up in the bath-room, the agent went away to buldoze more females, and Mrs. Muldoon felt happy.

"Terry," said she, to her husband, when he came in at supper time, "I made a purchase to-day."

"What was it?" asked Muldoon, as he started combing his hair with a towel.

"Ye cannot guess."

"I don't want to. I suppose it wur a camera obscura, or an electric loight, or something equally as sensible."

"No, sir," replied his wife, "it wur a shower bath!"

Muldoon dropped his towel in dismay.

"Howly Heaven, Bridget!" he exclaimed, "do you take me for Vanderbilt. A shower bath! What did we want of a shower bath? If the boarders wanted a bath they could spit on a sheet and wash themselves. Oh, woman—woman! ye will be buying a galvanic door mat or a magnetic stove next."

Mrs. Muldoon explained.

She showed a circular left by the glib-tongued agent.

It said that the shower bath was good for fits, botts, consumption, pain in the back, mange, dry rot, sore throat, and toothache. It would paralyze the blind staggers, and was simply death to the jim-jams.

Perhaps this last qualification had something to do with Muldoon's toleration of the machine.

Anyhow, he soon ceased to abuse it, and got to taking a shower bath himself every morning and night.

He imagined it did him good, and he became an intolerable nuisance in regard to it.

The boarders got shower bath with their coffee in the morning; shower bath with their soup at lunch, and shower bath with their roast beef at supper. Even when any one was going to bed, Muldoon would come in and talk shower bath, until at last it got to be a question whether it would not be best to kill Muldoon in order to preserve the life of the rest.

Edwardo and Hippocrates put their heads together to cook up some joke which would cure Muldoon of his taste for the shower bath.

At last Hippocrates, wonderful to relate, got an idea, to his own great surprise, and Edwardo's almost utter paralyzation.

"Marking ink!" he said to Edwardo.

"What?"

"Marking ink!"

"What relation has marking ink to a shower bath?" queried Edwardo; "ye might as well say mucilage."

"Listen, ye plebeian," replied Hippocrates; "ye know the shower bath has a reservoir which contains the water."

"Yis."

"We will unscrew the top, fill the reservoir wid marking ink, turn off the water, and whin Muldoon pulls the string, bedad, he'll get baptized wid ink!"

Edwardo thought the idea was bully.

Accordingly, the marking ink was procured, and surreptitiously placed in the shower bath.

That night, as usual, Muldoon left the parlor circle for his shower bath before he retired.

"Arrah," said he, "give me a shower. Ye poor devils don't know what ye miss. A shower bath is so invigorating; it brings the roses to yez cheeks, and it's so nice and clane. I wouldn't go widout it for a small fortune. Ah, Edwardo, ye may snicker, but it is so."

Upstairs he went.

He disrobed, placed himself under the shower bath, pulled the

string, and closed his eyes, expecting to feel the cool, refreshing spray dash over him.

Queer to relate, the spray did not appear to come down, as customary.

Instead, it dropped in liquid chunks. Muldoon opened his eyes and looked around.

He was covered with red daubs.

Everything else around him was spattered with red ink, and he himself had more than his share.

He looked as though he had broken out most horribly with scarlet fever.

"Mother av Moses!" he bawled, "it is raining blood! Bedad, I luk like a butcher's block!"

He shut off the shower bath as soon as possible, and tried to wipe himself off.

It was hard work.

In spite of his endeavors, most of the ink stuck to him.

"It was a mane, scurvy thrick," he said. "I belave the gang suspect I have no more sensibility than a dummy. If they continue their cunning dexterity much longer, it is blow the house up I will be exploding the fire-damp in the cellar."

Just then the boarders, who thought it was about time for Muldoon to have made a sort of involuntary inkstand of himself, appeared.

"Great Lord, boys!" exclaimed Mr. Fitz Murphy, who had got suddenly and deplorably well, "Muldoon has got the canker rash!"

"Spotted faver!" declared the alderman. "Shave his head and put him to bed."

"I have not," roared Muldoon. "It was a dirthy thrick. I was taking me shower bath, whin the flood broke loose and half drowned me!"

"A shower bath is so invigorating!"

"So nate and clane!"

"It brings the rose out all over ye!"

"I wouldn't miss it for a back yard full av trade dollars!"

Thus sarcastically piped the gang, while poor Muldoon worked away for dear life with a cake of sapolio and a scrubbing brush to make himself a white man once more.

He succeeded only partially.

The boarders peered at him and told him he would make his fortune as a tattooed Greek, or as a sign for a hospital, or a pattern for a pair of slippers, until he got wild and raced them bodily out of the bath-room.

"Edwardo Geoghegan, ye Avenue C cockatoo!" he said, "I am onto ye for this iver since the noight whin I slept wid ye and ye woke me up by scratching matches on me porous plaster. I suspect ye of anything."

Muldoon got a little even, though, upon his principal tormentors by locking them out one night in a driving storm of sleet, and compelling them to stay out in the street all night, whereby Hippocrates and Edwardo caught a most superior cold, which laid them up for a couple of weeks.

He also managed to offend the female part of the house so that a secret session was held among the boarders, and it was resolved to punish him.

A plot was concocted by Miss Krouse and Edwardo which was carefully carried through. By careful perusal of what follows you will see how the old thing worked.

One day Muldoon was out walking.

He had on his great ulster, his gaudy gloves, his gold-headed cane, a big cigar graced his mouth, and a dollar sealskin adorned his head, and he was the Grand Kibosh to perfection.

As he was killing all Broadway he saw a young and beautiful blonde smiling at him.

Muldoon ventured on a wink.

She coyly responded.

Muldoon got out a red pocket handkerchief and wiped the atmosphere off of his lips.

She pulled out a dainty, lace-bordered handkerchief, and floated it over her shoulder.

Muldoon pulled down his cuffs and yanked up his collar.

"Tin to wan it is a mash," he cogitated. "Oh, me manly beauty crushes iver!"

He approached the young lady.

"Miss," he began, with his New Year's bow, "excuse me, but—"

"'Sh!" she warningly said; "we are noticed. Look at the *Herald* to-morrow," and off she vanished around the corner, a vision of beauty.

You could not have touched Muldoon that night with a cologne bottle.

His wife was away, and he afflicted the supper table with fairy stories relative to his new mash.

"Ye take yerselves for crushers," he pointedly said to Edwardo and Terry Rafferty, "but ye can't compete wid the ould man. Be

Heavens, I have struck a soft snap! Look at the *Herald* to-morrow, ye guns!"

You can wager your salary that Muldoon got a *Herald* the next morning.

In the "Personal Colmun" was a personal plainly directed to our hero.

It read thus:

"If the stylish Spaniard, with the elegant ulster, who waved a handkerchief and accosted a blonde young lady upon Broadway yesterday afternoon will call at No. — Sixth avenue, she will try to make it pleasant for him. EVA."

He was in ecstasies.

"I knew she war gone!" he exclaimed, "and what a purty name —Eva. Begorra, it war the name av the daisy I saw in the nayer-pantomime, 'Uncle Mike's Cabin.' Faix, I will go down there this afternoon."

He told Edwardo of it.

Edwardo exchanged a sly wink at some of the boarders who were hanging around.

"What are ye winking at?" suspiciously queried Muldoon.

Edwardo said he was not winking. He was troubled with spasms of the eyelid which frequently gave him the appearance of winking.

Then Edwardo laughed, and the rest laughed, and Muldoon got mad and went out.

"If I iver get dead broke," he observed, "I will turn me boarding-house into a menagerie and exhibit Edwardo as head baboon."

At three that afternoon, Muldoon, got up in a most profuse and reckless style, fairly rivaling King Solomon in all his glory, started for No. — Sixth avenue.

He soon found it.

It was a neat, modest-looking house, and Muldoon, upon ringing the bell, was confronted by a pert servant of the feminine gender.

"Is—is Miss Eva in?" queried he, recollecting with feelings of some confusion that he was not aware of the young lady's last name.

"Oh, yes," she replied; "walk right in; we'll make it pleasant for you!"

"They are aware of me identity," he murmured; "they recognize me individuality. Which way, me purty red rose?"

The maid showed him into a large room upon the second floor, furnished very barely, with no carpets upon the floor.

"I belave they have put me in the gymnasium," Muldoon remarked, as he caught sight of a pair of Indian clubs in the corner.

"Eva will be here soon," grinned the maid; "good-by, terrier. Leave me a lock of your hair to send to your friends."

"That faynale is too brand-new," growled he; "the idea av aluding to me as a terrier. I will have her suspended as soon as I get solid wid Eva."

Just then the door opened, and the young lady appeared, dressed in a most bewitching toilet.

Muldoon saluted her with the most excruciating bow.

"Halloo, cully, how's your mother?" she asked very familiarly. Muldoon was somewhat astonished by this free-and-easy salutation.

"Good afternoon, me fair beauty," he returned; "ye are luki'g as foine as a violet dipped in dew. Wud ye mark that for poetry?"

"Ah, what are yer giving me?" said the young lady; "you're a nice old sugar beet, ain't you? I'm a fool for getting gone on you, you escaped idiot!"

"From her spache I suspect she wur educated in a beer garden," reflected Muldoon, "but, begorra, she confesses her love."

"Do you love me, Rocksy?" queried the gentle Eva.

"Intinsely."

"Swear to it?"

"Solemnly."

"Then flop down upon your knees and tell me so."

Muldoon got down upon his knees, as he had seen done by heroes at the theatre.

No sooner had he done so, before his fair companion hit him a vigorous slap on the ear which upset him completely, and sent him rolling upon the floor.

Then there was a merry peal of laughter, and she flew out of the door.

"Ta-ta, sugar!" cried she, "we'll make it pleasant for you."

Muldoon got slowly up.

"She has a hand loike a slugger," he said, "and she talks loike a dog-fighter. Begob, I have got meself into a purty kettle av fish."

Here a second door opened, and two apparitions stepped in.

They were enveloped in cloaks and mufflers, high hats in the last stages of dilapidation graced their heads, and they walked with the hilarity of pall-bearers.

"Ah, ha! Charley Ross and Stewart's body, how are ye?" asked Muldoon, resolved to put a bold face on the matter.

Disdaining reply, they stalked solemnly up to him.

One of them produced a measure of tape, the other a blank-book.

The first passed the tape around Muldoon's chest.

"Eight inches," he said, solemnly, while his mate recorded the figure in his book.

Next the tape was passed the length of his body.

"Five feet nine," said the measurer. "Shall the coffin be mahogany or rosewood?"

"Pine," sepulchraly answered the other. "Pine is good enough for terriers."

"Is there any tombstone?"

"No; we'll bury the chromo in the cellar."

Then the two presumable undertakers clasped each other around the waist.

"Ting—ting—ting—ting, tra, la, la, la,

Gayly we sodder his coffin with tar!"

they sang, as they danced out of the room to a ghostly step.

Muldoon looked at them with bulged-out eyes.

"Be Heavens, they're making it pleasant for me!" gasped he.

The door re-opened, and a pale-faced woman, with long, disheveled hair, a crown of straw, a long night-robe, and a book in her hand, came in.

"Bedad, another beauty av the harem!" gasped Muldoon.

The woman advanced to meet him.

"Birdie—birdie," she said, tenderly.

"Do I luk loike a bird?" asked Muldoon.

"Oh, yes; twitter—birdie—twitter."

"Do ve want to die?"

"Ah," said the woman, in accents of scorn, "you have deceived me. You are a cow."

"A calf would be more proper."

Once more the woman looked disgusted.

But a light broke over what was visible of her face.

"You are Douglass—Douglass—Douglass, tender and true. Come to my arms, me bonny love!" she yelled.

Muldoon retreated.

"Niver—niver!" he yelled. "Kape yer distance. Begob, I am virtuous if I am poor. I will never."

"What, never!"

"Hardly ev—"

The woman's face assumed a demoniac expression.

"Great Heaven!" shrieked she, "and now he gives me 'Pinafore.' Die—villain—die!"

She threw herself violently upon him, and for the next moment or so he did not know whether he was alive or dead.

Finally, with a force which denoted the possession of remarkable muscle for a female, she hurled him fiercely away and fled.

Once more Muldoon resuscitated himself.

"I'd like to live here forever," he exclaimed. "I belave it is a private mad-house. I wondher what is next on the bill av fare?"

He soon found out.

There was a terrible yelling outside in the hall, and presently a new figure entered.

It was that of an Indian, decked out as becomes the traditional Indian, and carrying a war-club about as large as himself.

"Shure, it's a cigar sign broke loose," remarked Muldoon. "I wondher will he make it pleasant for me? This must be a museum of curiosities instead av a mad-house."

The Indian advanced, and pointed at him with his long forefinger.

"I am Rolling Thunder!" cried the savage.

"It is plazed I am to mate ye, sur," politely returned Muldoon.

"The white dogs tre-embles at me appearance."

"It would be a miracle if they didn't."

"Me hands are red with the blood of the palefaces."

"Use sapolio, ye sucker."

"You mock me!" roared the Indian, as he lifted his gigantic war-club on high. "Where is my daughter?"

"I never knew her."

"You did! Where is she?"

"Perhaps ye had better luk in the directhory."

With one blow the stalwart warrior felled Muldoon to the floor.

"Perish, you son of a Yenghi!" shouted he. "You took my daughter—my only one—my Minnehaha!"

"I didn't. Her name wud have saved her," Muldoon protested. "Lave me alone. I came to call upon a young lady, and I struck a massacre!"

"Where is my daughter? Give me back my daughter or I kill you!" declared the Indian, as he described circles with his weapon in the air.

"I tell ye I don't know yer daughter," answered Muldoon. "I am

a daycent married man. Go luk in a dairy, ye divil; perhaps she is dishing out crackers and milk for the red necktie gang."

"You lie!" roared the savage, and his war-club descended.

So did Muldoon.

He sprawled over the floor in an entirely unpremeditated manner.

Then the Indian gave a barbaric yell, knocked over a chair for a flyer, jumped up and down half a dozen times, and disappeared.

"I suppose a polar bear comes next," reasoned Muldoon. "But I will not wait to see it. Eva can go to the devil—it is home I go."

Accordingly he started for the door.

But his retreat was cut off.

Half a dozen of the most curious-looking conundrums he had ever seen appeared to check his exit.

They were dressed in all imaginable styles and armed with all imaginable weapons.

"Give it to him!" shouted a voice. "Let him have his Thanks-giving!"

The next moment Muldoon was being bounced everywhere about the room, all of the crowd taking a hand in assaulting him.

CHAPTER XII.

If ever a man was given what is vulgarly denoted as the "grand bounce," Muldoon got it—with all of the variations and trimmings imaginable.

He was bounced clean down two pair of stairs, through a variety of halls, out of the front door and down the stoop.

Striking on the hardest part of him, his head, he rolled over the sidewalk and finally fetched up in the gutter, in close proximity to a cat which had been dead for several days and was rather ripe.

"Howly mother av Moses!" he groaned, as he lay perfectly still, unable to move by reason of his surprise; "I wondher was anybody else strucked wid paralysis at the same time?"

Presently a policeman came along, swinging his club in defiance of regulation.

"Here, you," he howled to Muldoon, "that ain't a lodging-house. Change cars, old man."

Muldoon got slowly up.

"Am I all here?" groaned he.

The officer took a careful survey of his remarkably mussed-up and banged-about-generally appearance.

"Where did you come from?" he he.

"Out av that mad-house," replied Muldoon, indicating the building in which he had called to see his Eva.

"Fall off of the roof?"

"Divil a bit; I came through the side of the house."

"How?"

"Ax me not, for I will niver tell ye. I wint to call upon a young leddy, an' I wur braced by iverything from a she-lunatic to a naygur Injun, who swore I had his darter. Thin, be Heaven, I wur attacked by a crowd from a massacre ball, and here I am. Faix, I'm going to an ould curiosity shop and ascertain me market value."

"Are you speaking the truth?" asked the policeman.

"Do I luk loike a man who would relate a dime novel?" indignantly interrogated Muldoon. "Knock at the door and find out." The officer did.

He rang the bell of the house, and it was responded to by the same servant girl who had let Muldoon in.

In response to inquiries she said that she had never seen Muldoon. She did not know him from a buried Crusader. He had never been in the house. It was a decent, respectable house, inhabited by a widow lady. If the officer did not believe it he could come in and see. Finally, she hinted strongly that Muldoon was either drunk or crazy.

The officer swerved to the same view.

"Go home!" he roared at Muldoon; "you're intoxicated. What do you mean by trying to give me taffy? Go along, now!"

"But—" protested Muldoon.

"None of your 'buts.' Waltz, now, you lush, or I'll break your head and dance you around to the hospital. Climb!"

Argument to a policeman, especially a New York policeman, armed with a club, generally results in one sure thing—a broken head.

Therefore, Muldoon wisely decided to postpone the debate until some future and more favorable time, more especially as a crowd was gathering who were beginning to pronounce him drunk, and virtuously clamor for his arrest.

Taking a car, he slunk into the most obscure corner and rode home, meditating upon his remarkable adventure, and wondering what in the world it all meant.

The boarders at the supper table that night seemed unusually good-humored.

"Ah, Muldoon!" remarked the alderman, as he sipped his soup, "how did yer call turn out?"

"Immense," answered Muldoon, resolved not to give his misfortune away.

"Did ye mash yez fairy?"

"Dead."

"Wur it made pleasant for yez?" queried Edwardo, calmly eating his pie with a knife.

"I niver enjoyed anything as much since I wur run over by a gravel train," groaned Muldoon.

There was a grand outburst of merriment from all around the table, except Muldoon, who could not just perceive the cause of the universal hilarity.

"What a pretty picture he made in the gutter," roared Edwardo.

"He and the cat wur dead gone on each other," murmured Stuyvesant Riley.

"It wur a splendid landscape. I wud loike to have it framed," observed the alderman. "I wud put it up at Tim Donnelly's for a raffle."

Muldoon's face was a picture of surprise and consternation.

How in the world had the gang ever got hold of his misadventure?

"Gintlemen, explain yer remarks," he begged, with as much dignity as he could summon up.

"Twitter, birdie, twitter!" said Stuyvesant Riley in the same tones as those used by the maniac whom Muldoon had met with.

"Where is my daughter?" yelled Terry Rafferty, uttering a wild war-whoop.

"Shall his coffin be pine?" asked Edwardo Geoghegan.

"No; we'll bury the terrier in the cellar," replied Hippocrates Burns.

"And we'll make it pleasant for you!" chanted the boarders in unison.

Muldoon's visage became a puzzler for a physiognomist. He seemed to see the whole racket in a second.

"It wur a put-up job," he gasped. "Ye wur all in it. Av coorse I wur the sucker. Johanna, take the wash boiler and go out afther a sewer av beer—I wur sould again!"

Amid the general warmth of heart occasioned by the beer, Edwardo related the mystery of Muldoon's "*Herald* personal" adventure.

"Eva" had been played by his sister-in-law; the rest of the characters by the boarders.

Muldoon was forced to own that he had got the worst of it, and the rest of the evening was passed so festively that it took four to convey Hippocrates Burns to bed, after he futilely attempted to lick the hat stand in one desperate round.

Now it would appear likely to any reasonable being that Muldoon had had enough fun to last him for several weeks.

But he hadn't.

The next day he was plunged head over heels into another adventure, which, of course, resulted disastrously to himself.

Determined to pass the afternoon in quietness, he had retired to the very top room in the house, pulled his chair up to the old-fashioned, spacious fireplace, and proceeded to read a wildly realistic novel, in which the usual brave Irish boy paralyzed the regular amount of bloody Englishmen.

Suddenly his interest was disturbed by a brick which came tumbling down the chimney, and landed at his feet.

"The wind," he muttered.

Down came a second brick.

"More breeze," he said.

A third bounced playfully down, and skinned his leg.

Muldoon closed his book.

"Begorra! this is getting too monotonous," remarked he, as he peered up the chimney.

He peered just in time to get a last brick on the top of his head. "Whorra!" cried he, "I will not stand this. I will reconnoiter to the top av me dwelling."

Ascending the stairs which led to the roof, he lifted the scuttle, and was soon upon the top of the house.

There he discovered the cause of the shower of bricks.

Young Patrick Mulcahy had gone upon the parental roof for the purpose of kite-flying.

But as there was not any wind, and all his kite would do was to play tag with the neighboring telegraph wires, the sport soon grew to be tiresome.

Young Patrick strayed over to the Muldoon roof, and was encountered by the Muldoon chimney.

It occurred to young Patrick that it would be great fun to pitch bricks down said chimney.

And he was just doing so when he was collared by Muldoon.

"Ah, ye young Nihilist!" grimly remarked Muldoon, "I have

nabbed ye in the act. Perhaps ye wud be afther peeling off me tin roof to play quoits wid nixt. But I will check yer riotous career."

With that he grabbed young Patrick by the collar, and proceeded to warm his rear.

Of course young Patrick kicked and fought like a wild young ass. Of course he scratched like a wild young bluejay.

Presently the Mulcahy scuttle raised, and a new actor appeared upon the scene.

It was Mulcahy himself.

"Oh, pop!" screeched young Patrick, "the old snoozer's killing me."

Mulcahy strode forward.

"Mr. Muldoon," asked he, "what are ye doing to me offspring?"

"Thrying to break his liver!" replied Muldoon. "If I had such a boy I'd fan him wid a war-club till he couldn't stand."

"Just drop him," ordered Mulcahy, "or I'll be afther fanning ye. What did the poor boy do?"

"Only a thrifle. Just thrying to throw me house down the chimney."

"But ye had no business to touch him."

"He had no business to touch me property."

"Ye shud have tould me. I could have paid for yer ould chimney wid a tin-cint piece. It were a nuisance to the whole neighborhood."

"Faix, it were similar to yourself, then."

Mulcahy's spirit could not brook the base insinuation.

"Mr. Muldoon, ye are a liar," he said. "Patrick, grip a brick, and if ye see the Modoc getting the best av yer father hit him on the head," and he jumped upon Muldoon.

Possibly Muldoon could have licked him single-handed. But Patrick proved a valuable auxiliary.

By his aid Muldoon was secured.

"Let's chuck him off of the roof, pop," suggested the piratical Patrick.

"No," answered his father. "I have a more brilliant scheme. We will slide him down his own chimney."

"Bully!" shouted Patrick, in delight, and the suggestion was carried out.

Muldoon, unable to resist, was put head first into the chimney and pushed down.

"Ye will murder me!" he cried.

"No sich good luck," responded Mulcahy; "push his fate, Patrick."

Patrick obeyed.

Muldoon's feet were pushed.

To such an extent that he soon disappeared from sight.

Then Mulcahy pulled up his scuttle and retired triumphantly into his house, followed by the avenged Patrick.

"Ye may dress the children up in their Sunday clothes, Nora," he remarked.

"What for?"

"In all probability there will be a funeral at Muldoon's tomorrow, and they may want to stand on the stoop and see the coffin come out."

Meanwhile we will return to Muldoon.

His progress down the chimney was not sociable or agreeable.

The chimney was old and dirty; soot got into Muldoon's face, into his eyes, up his nose, down his neck, and paraded his clothes. There was also a disagreeable smell of fried onions and ham and pork fat clustering around the chimney.

Besides, he was going down head first, which, in itself, was enough to sicken a sensitive soul.

He tried to right himself.

But it was impossible.

There was no room for him to turn around.

The blood began to rush to his head, and for a while it seemed that Muldoon's fate might be decided then and there.

It wasn't.

For he succeeded in lifting his head so that the blood did not all rush madly into it.

Then it occurred to him that it would be a good scheme to alarm some of the inmates of his house, as he did not propose to figure as an ornament to a chimney for the rest of his days.

Therefore, he yelled at the top of his voice.

The narrow limits of the chimney reverberated the sounds, and gave them the accents of an animal roar.

Now Mrs. Muldoon was scrubbing the top hall, like a good and faithful housewife, when she heard the voice of her imprisoned lord.

She dropped her scrubbing brush and listened.

The noise was repeated.

"Murder—murder!" she bawled; "there are burglars in the house."

Edwardo, Hippocrates and the alderman, aided by Miss Krouse, responded to her appeal.

"Where?" chorused they.

Mrs. Muldoon didn't exactly know, so they listened for a repetition of the roar.

It soon came.

"It is in the attic boudoir," said the alderman. "We will investigate. Arm yourselves, b'ys, it may be vampires!"

The alderman did not have the slightest suspicion of what a vampire was, but it sounded bloodthirsty, and he used it.

It had the anticipated effect of scaring his allies.

Edward Geoghegan produced a most murderous dirk—warranted cast-iron.

Hippocrates produced his phenomenal gun, the gun we have spoken of before, which could shoot around corners and generally lay into the man who fired it.

Miss Krouse fled to woman's weapons—the broom—while Mrs. Muldoon grasped her trusty scrubbing brush.

As for the alderman, he got an ancient horse-pistol. If the horse-pistol didn't fall to pieces before he shot it off, there was a great probability that something or somebody would get hurt.

Headed by Edwardo, the procession advanced upstairs.

Muldoon was yelling his best.

"Is it a common occurrence for robbers to shriek?" asked the alderman. "Begorra, they're making noise enough for a 'Pinafore' troupe."

"Never moind," assured Hippocrates, "we will investigate."

The pageant reached the head of the stairs.

Hippocrates was pointing his gun in all directions. It was an even question if he would not destroy the whole of his party before they had a chance to get at the supposable burglars.

"For Heaven's sake, take his fire-arm away and give him a syringe!" begged Edwardo.

"If ye point that gun in my direction again I will make yez ate it!" threatened the alderman.

"Ow—ow!" bawled Miss Krouse, "he'll shoot me—I know he will!"

"Make a little more noise," pleaded the alderman; "purchase a gong, Edwardo, and bate it so as the robbers will know we intend to surprise them."

"Tain't my fault," assured Edwardo; "it is Hippocrates. I haven't a fire insurance policy on me loife, and I don't want to be slaughtered in cowl'd blood."

"Hippocrates," ordered the alderman, "put down that gun."

"But I want to kill a robber," extenuated Hippocrates.

"Put down the gun, ye assassin!"

Hippocrates obeyed—for the moment.

All the time Muldoon was keeping up his concert in the chimney. He had wriggled and wormed and twisted about till at last he was firmly fixed between the four brick walls. He could move neither one way nor the other, consequently his vocalization improved with time.

Presently the household brigade, headed by the alderman, entered the room.

Muldoon's feet were just visible above the top of the fireplace, dangling helplessly down.

"There he is!" cried Mrs. Muldoon.

"Stuck, be Heavens!" ejaculated Edwardo.

"It is inter he wud by the chimney and massacre us all!" cried Miss Krouse. "Oh, Edwardo, kill him!"

"Pull him down, first," practically suggested the alderman.

"We will take him prisoner. Get hold av his legs, Edwardo."

"But he might shoot."

"Wid his fate?"

But Edwardo protested that he was not going to tackle those feet alone. Besides the possible danger, they were too large.

The alderman scratched his head.

He didn't want to undertake the job either.

The feet might be vicious, and he might get his head knocked off.

At last he got a happy thought.

"Have yez a clothes-line handy?" he asked.

Clothes-lines were not lying around in profusion in the room, but Mrs. Muldoon could go downstairs and get one.

She did.

It was strong, and the adlerman, after the exercise of a good deal of ingenuity and wariness, succeeded in placing a slip-knot around the feet.

Next, all of the crowd grasped the rope.

"Pull!" ordered the alderman.

"A sailor's wife a sailor's bride should be,
Ye ho, my boys, ye ho!"

gayly chanted Hippocrates, as he exerted his entire muscular force—equalling that of a good-sized sparrow—upon the rope.

"Be Heavens!" cried Muldoon from the chimney, "ain't yez contint wid pulling me to pieces wid the rope, without killing me wid Nancy Lee?"

"He is a Spaniard, by his accent," said Miss Krouse.

"Cuban, rather," said Hippocrates.

"Arrah, they're the worst," said Mrs. Muldoon. "It is cut ye they wud as quick as luk at ye. Be careful."

"Are yez going to lave me here all noight?" asked Muldoon; "if ye are, plaze sind me up a barrel of soup and an auburn herring."

"Seems to me I recognize the voice," said Edwardo.

"Loike to Muldoon's," replied Miss Krouse. "It is just as melodious—"

"As a cross-cut saw foighting wid a steel rail," grinned the alderman. "Pull, ye Roman wrestlers!"

They did.

A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether, was successful.

Down came Muldoon, a mass of soot, cinders and dirt generally.

The others dropped the rope, and flew back in consternation.

Only Hippocrates had presence of mind enough to fire off his phenomenal gun.

As it was not pointed at anything, it did not hit anything, and the only result was the downfall of Hippocrates, the gun being as good a kicker as an army mule.

"That's it!" cried Muldoon; "blaze away at me wid artillery. Bring a Gatling gun or a phonograph. Knock me down with a submarine torpedo!"

"Yield, ye scoundrel!" ordered Edwardo, waving his dirk—"yield, ye incendiary, or I'll cut the lung out av ye!"

"Howld on, Texas Jack," begged Muldoon; "don't ye know me?"

"No."

"I am Muldoon."

"No, ye ain't."

"Then get me a towel till I cleanse me countenance."

"I do believe it is Muldoon," said Miss Krouse, cautiously reconnoitering.

"Good for ye, ye giddy girl," joyously said Muldoon; "ye may have two plates av soup hereafter every male."

By diligent exertion he accomplished the feat of rubbing part of the soot off his face with his coat sleeve.

His classic profile was revealed.

"Muldoon!" cried they all.

"No, I ain't!" sarcastically said Muldoon. "I am Red-Headed Billy, the robber av the hills, or Pete Blood, the Dublin assassin. I'm a highwayman, and I climb down chimneys to stale stoves, and yell to kape ye from knowing I am coming. Ye have foine, intelligent faces, all av ye."

"But, Terry, wud we iver expect ye wud climb down yer own chimney for recreation?" asked Mrs. Muldoon.

"Oh, yes, av course I did it for fun," said Muldoon, and smothering his indignation as well as he could, he related how he came to be in the chimney.

Unfortunate Hippocrates laughed.

"Begob, it's very ludicrous, ain't it?" indignantly asked Muldoon, turning upon him; "ye had better write a comic song about it. Hippocrates, ye wud laugh at yer mother's funeral. Take that mountain howitzer av yours and put it away. If I ever lay me eyes on it again, I'll break it wid a trip-hammer!"

Crestfallen Hippocrates retreated upstairs, where he placed his beloved gun carefully under his trunk, and sat down to compose a poem on "Retribution."

As for Muldoon, he spent the rest of the day in blessing Mulcahy.

"There is murder in me being," he confided to his wife, upon going to bed that night; "if some fine morning ye wake up and discover me gone to Arzyna, ye can premeditate that Mulcahy is a corpse, and I am a murderer. There is blood in me being."

After all, however, Muldoon did not kill Mulcahy, nor any one else, for other things came up to take off his attention, and the matter was soon forgotten.

He had politics and various fads to think of, and the house had to be run, and so life went on just as before, but if we were to tell all that happened to the solid man, it would be another story, so here's good-by for the present, and good luck for all time to our honest friend, Terence Muldoon.

THE END.

Read "THE MULDOON GUARD; OR, THE SOLID MAN IN LINE," by Tom Teaser, which will be the next number (41) of "Snaps."

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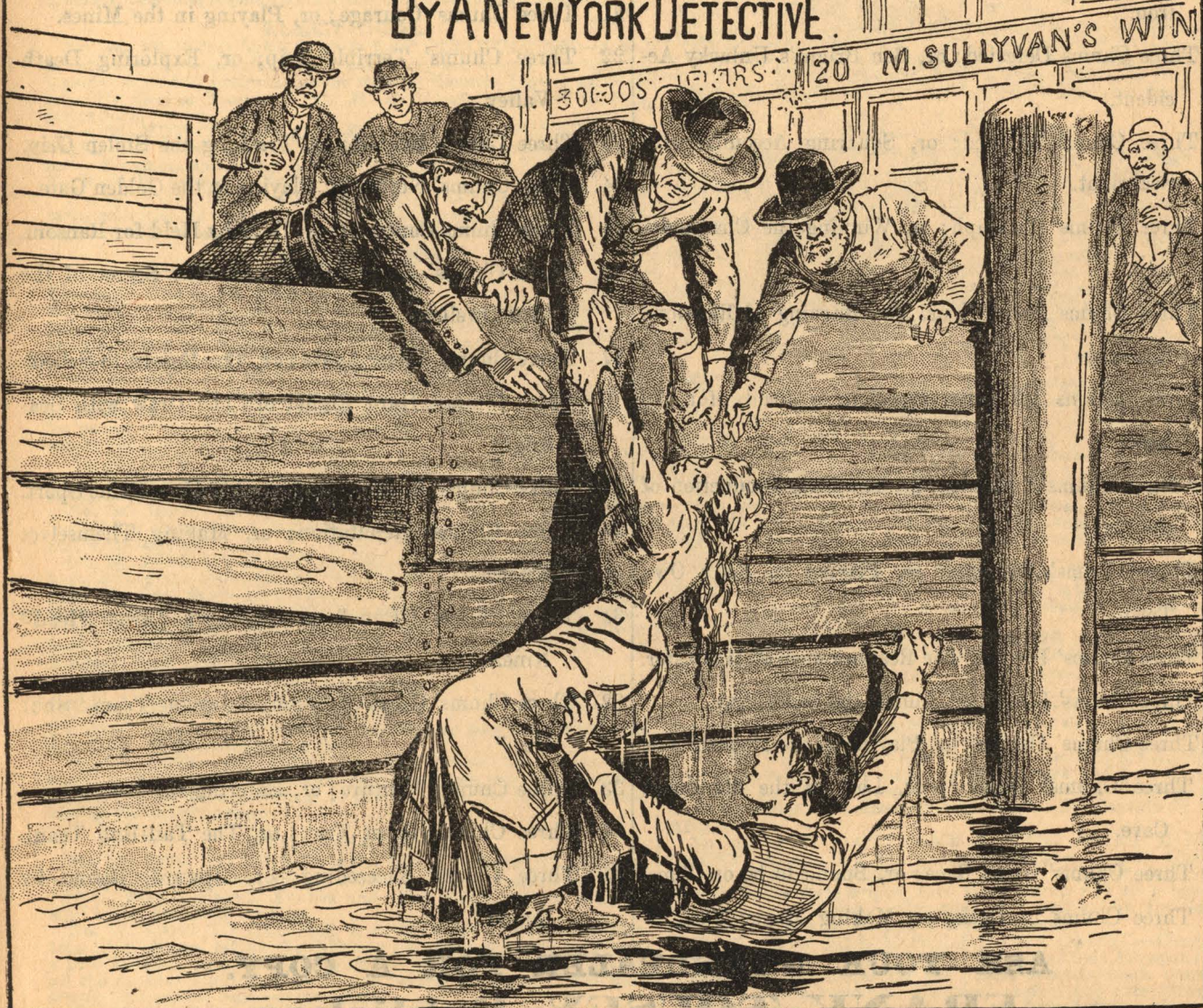
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