

## AN IRISH FOOTMAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOURS IN HINDOSTAN."

LADY H—— was one of the most amiable, good creatures that ever existed; yet Lady H—— did not like to acknowledge that she was no longer a young woman. She had arrived at that ticklish age for females, forty-two, when her complexion was no longer fresh as at twenty-five, and her hair suddenly began to show grey tints. She did not like these signs of precocious old age. To remedy the first, there were a thousand ways, but it took her some time to reflect how to hide the second.

At length she determined to have it dyed, very properly considering that a wig, or even false hair, is always detestable. So she sent for Mr. Donegan, a well-known hair-dyer; and, after learning that the process itself only lasted a single half-hour, and that the very following moment her locks would shine in all the resplendency of polished black-jet, she determined, as she was engaged that evening to Hertford House, to make her appearance there in all the glory of renovated youth. She accordingly bid Mr. Donegan to come at eleven at night, when his entrance, his exit, and above all, his business was least likely to be known or observed.

The evening came; the dyer of hair was anxiously expected by Lady H——. Her toilette completed, her ladyship began to watch anxiously the dial of her dressing-room clock. But all in vain. Eleven struck, half-past eleven came, and no Mr. Donegan.

"Run down, Charlton," said Lady H—— to her maid, "run down, and ask Matthew if the hair-dresser has not yet been?"

The appeal was made to Matthew Riley, the Irish footman, who stoutly averred that the *coiffeur* had *not* called.

"It is very odd," said her ladyship when Charlton returned, "for I heard the bell ring twice. But, never mind, he can't be long," and she resumed reading her favourite study, "Rejected Addresses."

The bell again sounded, but without result; and poor Lady H—— began to fear she would lose the pleasure of meeting the Prince Regent for that evening. The patience of a female has always a conclusion; so, when the ring was repeated, she turned round, and desired her maid to run down, as she felt assured that no one but her hair-dresser could possibly call at such an hour.

Charlton went, and found Matthew in a towering passion.

"Is that the hair-dresser?"

"No, it's not," and he turned angrily away.

"Who was it at the door?"

"Don't bother. The dirty blackguard!" and the footman turned away muttering.

Charlton returned to her mistress, who, being anything but satisfied with the answer, again sent her down to know who it was that had been.

Matthew looked very angry when the query was put to him, and began murmuring something to himself about "the rascal," and kicking, and beating, and all sorts of ill-tempered threats.

"That's nothing to do with it," said his fellow-servant. "Who was it rang?"

"A blackguard."

"Who?"

"An impudent blackguard. By dad, if I had him in Ireland, I'd *tache* him better."

"Who was it?"

"I don't know, the thief of the world."

"What did he want?"

"Want, is it? — want? Sure I'll be after telling ye, as ye're so curious, for it's myself asked him the question."

"Well,—go on."

"Says I, 'What do you want at this, my fine lad?'"

"'I'll tell your missus,' said he. 'Divil a bit,' says I, 'till ye've tould me first.' 'My business is with my Lady,' says he. 'It will keep warm till to-morrow, then,' says I; 'for deuce an inch you get in till I know what you want.' 'Can you keep a secret?' says he. 'Can a duck swim?' says I. Upon that he came close to me, and says he—*but arrah you won't belave me.*"

"Indeed, I will."

"Well, then," says he, '*I come to die hare.*' 'Die hare?' says I. 'Yes,' says he. 'And where would you wish to die?' says I. 'In your missus's room,' says he. So with that I slam the door in his face."

"Indeed! Then you have done wrong," said Charlton, ready to die with laughing.

"By dad, he came back again just now, and says he again, as pert as may be, 'Tell your missus I'm come to *die hare.*'"

"Well, what did you say?"

"What did I say? Sure I said what every honest boy would."

"And what was that?"

"'Be Jasus,' said I, 'ye're a big blackguard, and an ugly Christian; and if you die hare, I'll be d—d. Go somewhere else and die, you scamp of the world! Die hare, indeed!' So I gave him a push, and shut the door in his face, and by dad I'm thinking he'll niver come here again to die."

The mistake was too ludicrous. Even Lady H—— laughed at it, although deprived for that night of a pleasant, a royal rout.

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### THE RAINY DAY.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE day is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,  
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,  
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
Memory clings to the mouldering past,  
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,  
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart, and cease repining;  
Above the dark clouds is the sun still shining;  
Thy fate is the common fate of all;  
Into each life some rain must fall,  
Some days must be dark and dreary.