

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

Imprisonment and Execution

OF

# POOR DENNIS

*An Irishman,*

who was Hung for Robbery, and afterwards  
restored to life by his Friends, and is *now living in*  
*America!!!*

WITH AN ACCOUNT

## OF A HIGHWAYMAN

WHOM HE EMPLOYED

### TO ROB HIS MASTER.



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## W. & R. INGLIS & CO..

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**W. & A. JACKSON & CO.**

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МАМЕ ВА УССОЛА

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Singapore for Robert, and arranging

W. & A. JACKSON & CO.

**FOR DENNIS**

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# POOR DENNIS

## AN IRISH TALE

At this instant his eyes rested on  
 the countenance of the stranger—the  
 expression struck him as so singular  
 that he discontinued his reading.

IN the harvest of 1798, a stranger  
 applied to Mr. S.—for employ-  
 ment; he was an uncommonly able  
 young man, and did as much work  
 as any two of the labourers, yet he  
 never threw off his coat as the others  
 did, and his left arm was tied up;  
 he said he had received a slight hurt  
 in it from a splinter of wood: as he  
 looked very pale and thin, Mr. S.—  
 from motives of humanity, allowed

him to sleep in the house.

Mr. S——conversed with him often on the fields, and found, though an untutored man, he had great strength and uncommon energy of mind and expression. He was always anxious to hear the newspapers, which Mr. S——, as is not unusual in this part of Ireland, of ten read to the labourers of an evening, after their work was finished. On one of those occasions he stumbled on a paragraph, beginning with, “Whereas a most daring robbery.” At this instant his eyes rested on the countenance of the stranger—the expression struck him as so singular that he discontinued, his reading. On retiring to his room he read the article in question. It gave an account of a most daring robbery, committed a short time before, by four armed ruffians, one of whom, was killed and another supposed to be desperately wounded; an exact description of the person of the latter followed, and Mr, S——had little doubt that he was the stranger whom he had taken into his family. He did

not hesitate a moment on what he should do, but brought the stranger in, shut the door, and read to him, the paragraph without comment, the other listened without betraying any emotion.

"I see what you suspect," said he; "you think I am the person."

Mr. S—— was silent.

"You may give me up to justice, if you will," proceeded the man. "I shall make no resistance; I am innocent, and have nothing to fear."

"Were you innocent, I should give you up to justice," said Mr. S——, "for then you would have nothing, but I know you are guilty, and have every thing to fear. Go your ways; then, and betake yourself to a place of safety."

"Do you mean," said the man, "that you will not send the officers after me?"

"I mean," said Mr. S——, "to do you no harm; I shall pay you your wages, and you may go your ways."

The man instantly threw aside his coat, which hung loose over his left



arm; in the same hurried manner he tore off the dressing from the sore; the hand had been shattered by a ball, and had been amputated by a country apothecary in a bungling manner. The sight of the wound filled Mr. S— with horror: it was covered with filth, and crawling with maggots.

"I have suffer'd this," said the robber, "without a groan; I could go to the gallows without a tear; but cannot bear your goodness, it overcomes me."

It did fully overcome him, for he wept and sobbed aloud. He then, to the astonishment of Mr. S—, confessed that he was not in his employment by accident, but in consequence of a scheme of his manservant, Dennis. He had been sheltered in the cabin of the father of the latter, before he applied to Mr. S— for employment. The misguided man had often meditated robbing his master, but shrunk dismayed from so daring a crime. The presence of so adventurous a robber encouraged him. He opened his plan to him to which

the other readily consented. They only waited until Mr. S—— should receive his half year's stipend, to carry it into execution.

His master summoned him, and charged him with the crime he had meditated. He was sulky, and would confess nothing. Mr. S—— gave them much good advice, which the robber repaid with tears and blessings; the servant with threats of revenge for the injury he had done his character.

A few weeks afterwards, he learned, that, the unfortunate robber had died of a mortification in his arm, in a cabin on a neighbouring mountain.

The following year Mr. S—— had occasion to go to a town 30 miles distant: towards evening, when he was very near it, he was surrounded by a party of men, who pulled him from his horse, and proceeded to rifle his pockets. Among them he recognised his man Dennis, who, notwithstanding the manner in which he parted with his employer, interfered on his behalf, and his companions allowed him to proceed.

The career of a robber is short : a few weeks after this event, Dennis and one of his companions were taken in the act of robbery, tried and convicted. Mr. S—— received a message from his unfortunate man, begging some money to assist in burying him. This is one of the strongest appeals that can be made to charity, and a man who refused this assistance, would be considered a barbarian. Mr. S—— was not the man to refuse it ; he resolved even to go himself, and administer consolation to the poor condemned. It was the night before the execution. As he approached the gaol, he endeavoured to summon up resolution to meet the scene of woe he expected. It was a scene of noise and confusion. A crowd was assembled before the grated door of the cell. Dennis was mounted on his coffin, from which, as from a pulpit, he addressed them, begging money to bury him, and pray his soul out of purgatory. He rated those who were tardy in drawing out their purses, scolded others who had already given, for not standing back to make room for



new comers; wept, preached, and prayed, all in the course of a few minutes. No sooner did he see Mr. S——, than he descended from his rostrum. He wept bitterly as they went apart together.

“To think of my ill-luck,” said he, “in quitting the trade. I was coming with my comrade to see my friends, and then take up, as you advised me, to go to America; and to be taken for nothing else, and hanged like a dog.”

“Nothing else!” said Mr. S——, “did you not rob a gentleman and lady?”

“Of nothing but seven two-pound notes, and a handful of silver,” said the other, “and that was to pay our passage: we couldn’t go to America without money, you know.”

Mr. S——, now attempted to give him some spiritual advice.

“Don’t, dear master,” interrupted he; don’t, for the love of—— speak about it. I have settled all them things with priest Higgins; and it might be the loss of my poor *soul*, if a man of another sect meddled with it.”

Mr. S. — then turned to his companion, who was seated on a stone at the extremity of the cell.

“Is there any thing I can do for you?” said he to him, — “Nothing,” replied the other.

Mr. S. — however prevailed on him to hear a prayer or two, and left him in a better state of mind.

The following day he and his companion were put on a car, and brought, under the escort of a party of soldiers, to the neighbourhood where the robbery was committed. A gallows was erected in a field. The criminals were allowed to rest themselves for a few minutes in a cabin. They, here, as is the universal custom of the unfortunate persons who are to be executed in Ireland, put on their dead dress. This consists of a shroud and cap, with a black ribbon, and gives a person clothed in it, the look of a spectre, as imagination forms it, or of a corpse newly raised from the tomb. Poor Dennis came out with a show of great fortitude; but it entirely forsook him when he cast his eyes on his fellow-sufferer, and beheld in

him, as in a mirror, the reflection of his own funeral appearance. He uttered a wild shriek, and fell senseless on the ground. The reality of death seemed now, for the first time, fairly to have struck him. It seemed never to have made a thorough impression upon him, until presented thus to his imagination through the medium of his senses. When the car arrived at the fatal spot, he could scarcely be said to be alive; his eyes were closed, his heart scarcely beat, and all colour had left his face. The conduct of his fellow-sufferer was calm and intrepid.

Mr. S——, took a kind leave of him; he was affected, and even felt his cheek moistened; he could not be mistaken, for by the force of sympathy, a tear started in the poor sufferer's eye; but he instantly recovered himself, and shook Mr. S—— by the hand. "I have lived the life of a brute," said he, "but I wish to die like a man." Mr. S—— rode to his own house, which was about seven miles from the place of execution. It was the latter end of

summer. About dawning day, he was awakened by a noise in the room; he drew the curtains, and a figure, like one of the hanged men, in its shroud and dead cap, stood pale and sad at the window. He rubbed his eyes, he strove to waken himself; he turned himself in his bed; he stretched himself forward, and endeavoured to penetrate the gloom; the figure of sleep did not, as he imagined it would, melt into thin air; it moved its eyes even, it opened and shut its mouth, it seemed preparing itself to speak. Nature was now too strong either for reason or philosophy; a cold damp bedewed his forehead, and he lay speechless and almost senseless. The phantom approached the bed, and fell on its knees before him.—“Master,” said it, remember I have “saved your life, now save mine.”

It was Dennis, the poor hanged Dennis; his fears had saved him. He had to be supported on the car as it was drawn slowly away, and he swung gently off: his fellow-sufferer threw himself with violence, and was almost instantly dead. Dennis was likewise



a tall man, the gallows was low, and his feet at times touched the ground. After hanging the limited time, he was cut down and given to his friends; he was carried to the nearest cabin, and as is almost always done in Ireland, all the vulgar methods in use were practised to recover him; his feet were put in warm water, he was blooded by a countryman with a rusty lancet, and rubbed with spirits, which were likewise applied to his nostrils and lips, and poured down his throat. He opened, at length, his eyes, and milk was given him from a woman's breast, which, in Ireland, is considered a medicine of great efficacy.

When night came on, he resolved to go to his employer's house, which, across the fields, was not more than four miles off. He was advised to lay aside his dead-dress, now that he had so unexpectedly come among the living; but it was too valuable a piece of finery, and had cost Dennis too much oratory the preceding day, to be parted with so readily. He met nobody on the road; but if he had, his dress would have been his protec-



tion ; for every one would have run from him, as from a ghost. He might have gone in any dress, however, in security ; few people, in any country, would be willing to lead to the gallows a man just escaped from it ; few people in Ireland would refuse to run some risk to save him from it. He knew well the room where his master slept, opened the window, and stepped into it from the garden. Mr. S. kept him for some time in his house, and then got him put on board a vessel bound for America, where he arrived in safety. He is at present a porter in Baltimore, is married, and the father of several children. When Time has thrown its dark mantle over the origin of their family, the descendants of poor hanged Dennis may rank with the best in America.

THE EMPEROR SEVERUS

The Emperor Severus being con-  
fused with gout at York, one of his  
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**ANECDOTES.**

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peror replied, Sir, I rule the empire  
with my feet, and not with my head;

**A KING AND A PHILOSOPHER.**

George III. while walking one day  
at Windsor, met a smart little boy  
who was dressed in a suit of new  
clothes. The king, addressing him  
in his familiar way, said, "Well, my  
little fellow to whom do you belong?"  
The boy knew the king, and answer-  
ed, "An't please your Majesty, I  
belong to one of his Majesty's beef  
eaters." The king was so well pleas-  
ed with the little fellow that he said,  
"If you bend down on your knee I  
will allow you to kiss my hand."  
"Nay," said the boy, "I can't do  
that, for I would dirty all my new  
breeches."

## THE EMPEROR SEVERUS.

The Emperor Severus being confined with gout at York, one of his courtiers told him that the world did admire how he could govern so many nations, separated so far from one another, and he so much troubled with that disease. To which the Emperor replied, Sir, I rule the empire with my *head*, and not with my *feet*; with my *temples*, and not with my *toes*.

## CARDINAL WOLSEY.

An extravagant young nobleman having sold a manor which contained one hundred tenements, came ruffling into court in a new suit, saying, "Am not I a mighty man to bear an hundred houses on my back?" Cardinal Wolsey hearing this, said, "You might have employed the money better in paying your debts." "Indeed, my lord," said the other, "you say well, for my father owed your father three half-pence for a calf's head, here is two-pence for it."

## A RETORT.

The late Alexander Bilsland, High Street, was a man of some wit, and very good at a retort; he was very irritable and easily offended. One day a poor student offended him and got some crusty answer, when the dominie said, "Yere unco short the day, Saunders." "Od man," said the other, "Yere no sae lang yeresel."

## A WITNESS

A witness was examined before a judge in a case of slander, who required him to repeat the precise words spoken. The witness hesitated until he rivetted the attention of the court upon him: then, fixing his eyes earnestly on the judge, began—"May it please your honour, you lie, and and steal, get your living by stealing!"

The face of the judge reddened, and he immediately exclaimed, "Turn to the Jury, sir?"

A simple Highland girl, on her way home for the north, called the other day, as she passed by Crieff, upon an old master, with whom she had formerly served. Being kindly invited by him to share in the family dinner, and the usual ceremony of asking a blessing—having been gone through, the poor girl, anxious to compliment, as she conceived, her ancient host, exclaimed, "Ah, master, ye maun hae a grand memory, for that's the grace ye had when I was wi' you seven years ago."

#### A TAVERN INCIDENT.

A traveller domiciling at an American hotel, exclaimed one morning to the waiter, "What are you about, you black rascal, you have roused me



twice from my sleep by telling me breakfast is ready, and now you are attempting to strip off the bed-clothes: what do you mean?" "Why," replied Pompey, "If you isn't goin' to git up, I must hab de sheet any how, 'cause dey'r waitin' for de table clof."

### THE LAIRD OF GARSCADDEN.

Garscadden, and another country squire, happened one day, after a keen day's sport, to visit rather unexpectedly the residence of a Water-of-Endrick husbandman. The sportsmen were very cordially received by the family, and among other apologies the landlord regretted that dinner was over, as he had just finished some excellent chickens. "Mak nae apologies, George," said Garscad, "I weel believe what you say, for I see the feathers (alluding to the marks of some pease brose) still on your breast."

### SOUND FOR SMELL.

A poor man went into a cook's shop, in Paris, and remained for a considerable time, inhaling the smell of the meat. When about to depart, the cook, being disappointed of the money, seized him and demanded payment; the other refused, and it was at last agreed that the matter should be submitted to the decision of the first person who went by; this chanced to be an idiot, who gave the following judgment;—that the poor man should put his money betwixt two empty plates and so jingle it at the cook's ear, by which the man having fed on the smell of the meat, the cook would be paid with the sound of the man's money.

### IMPORTANT PROMOTION.

A old woman who had a son in a regiment of Fencibles, then serving in Ireland, received a letter from the young man informing her that he had been promoted, and

now held the rank of corporal. The old woman was much pleased with her son's good fortune, and sallied forth to communicate the good news to her friends. She called on a neighbour woman and told her that Jamie had been made an Admiral. "An admiral!" said Janet, "I thought your son was in the army; an Admiral sails on the sea." "At weel," said the mother, "I'm no vera sure o' the name but it's either an admiral a general or a corporal; it's some o' the rals at ony rate."

**A BEAR WITHOUT A BRIDLE.**

Among the early settlers of Worcester county, in Massachussetts, was a German of the name of Fourpeck, or Foupeck. The wild tenants of the forest had not yet given place to man, and Fourpeck, being employed on a certain time with some others in the manufacturing of maple sugar, saw a large bear coming among taem and without courting the cost, threw htmself on the bear's back. Bruin

unaccustomed to this mode of salutation, began to make off as fast as his load would permit—perhaps thinking, like the man in the play, if that was the way his new acquaintance “backed” his friend, “the devil take such backing!” but he could not help turning round now and then to bite the leg of his daring rider. Nevertheless, the hardy German kept his seat, in spite of the smart and streams of blood which were trickling down his legs, till one of the company came up, knocked the weary bear on the head, and dispatched him. The German was justly proud of his exploits; but when the excitement which had carried him through the perilous adventure was over, he exclaimed, “*der tyfil!*” I’ll never again ride a bear without a pride.

## MUSIC IN CHURCH,

BUT NOT CHURCH MUSIC.

Donald More, a dashing young drover, from somewhere benorth the

Braes o'Doune, had purchased at Carlisle, where he had been with cattle from last Tryst, a Musical Snuff-box, and on his return home, being determined to make a display, he carried the same to church next Sunday. The snuff was prime, but, unfortunately, when handing a pinch to a cronie, and just as the minister had begun to draw his inference, off went the box to the not inappropriate tune of—"We're a' noddin." Donald applied himself to the stop catch, which he mistook and away went the music to the profane tune of Maggy Lauder." In the perturbation of the moment, Donald tried to smother the box within his sporran, but at last took fairly to his heels, and on passing the *ronnel*, dropped it, when the Precentor, enraged at this assumption of his department, with one stamp of his foot silenced for ever this orchestra in miniature. "Tamerst," said Donald, in a large mouthful of Gaelic, "she had mair tunes than 'Tougal, the man that pits out the Psalms, an' tat was nae mair nor twa."



THE BELLMAN

The Bellman of Kirriemuir read a written Advertisement in the midst of the multitude on a Fair day, as follows: "Notish, all persons driving their cattle through the lands of Logie, to or from the market, will be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of law." And immediately added, by way of sedative to the natives, "Ye needna mind a' this, lads, its only a haver o' the griev'e's."



Donald tried to get another the box within his apron, but he last look to his heels, and on passing the way, dropped it, when the entrance of this assumption of his department, with one stamp of his foot silenced for ever this orchestra in miniature. "Tamerat," said Donald, in a large mouthful of Gaelic, "she had more than I could, the man that pits out the Bellman, an' that was main for twa."