

### O'Donovan Rossa's recollections.

One Sunday afternoon, in this month of April, 1863, I, with some of the boys of the town, made a visit to Union Hall, a seaside village, some four miles to the south of Skibbereen. We remained there till eleven o'clock at night ; met many men of the district, and enlivened the place with speech, recitation and song. Next morning Kit-na-Carraiga and a few more of the wives of the Myross fishermen came in to my shop and told me as they were passing through Union Hall they met the magistrate, John Limerick ; that he was raging mad, and swearing that if he caught Jerrie-na Phoenix and his crowd in Union Hall again, they would not leave it as they left yesterday. Kit spoke in Irish, and I said to her : " Kit ! Innis do a maireach, go riaghmid sios aris de Domhnaig seo chughain." " Kit ! tell him to-morrow that we will go down again next Sunday."

Next Sunday came, and we were as good as our word.

After mass, some twenty of us left the town, and

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broke into the fields. We started hares and cimsed them with our screeching. Many of the farmers' sons on the way joined us, and, as we were entering Union Hall, we had a pretty big crowd. But there was a far bigger crowd in the village. It was full of people, because all the morning, police had been coming in on every road from the surrounding police stations, and the people followed the police. The threat of John Limerick, the magistrate, had gone out, and the people came in to see what would be the result. Five or six of the magistrates of the district had come in too. Across the little harbor from Glandore we saw a fleet of boats

facing for Union Hall. They conveyed men from Ross, some three miles at the other side of Glandore. As the boats approached our quay John Limerick stood on it, and forbade them to land. "Boys," said T, "never mind what this man says ; this is a part of Ireland, your native land, and you have as good right to tread its soil as he has."

With that, Pat Donovan (now in New York), jumped from his boat into the shallow shoal water; others followed him ; Limerick left the quay, and they marched through the village, with their band playing, up to the house of Father Kingston.

Limerick gave orders to close all the public houses in the village. I was in at the house of Mrs. Collins, an aunt-in-law of mine, when the police came in, with orders to clear the house. "If you tell me to go out," said I to Mrs. Collins, "I will go out." "I won't turn you out of my house," said she. "If you put your hands on me, and tell me to leave this house," said I to

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Sergeant William Curran, or to Dockery (who now keeps a hotel in Queenstown), "I will leave it." "I won't put my hand on you," said the policeman ; "my orders are to have Mrs. Collins clear the house, and I can't do more." The police went out; I and my friends went out after them, telling Mrs. Collins it was better for her to close up, for Limerick was lord of the manor, and lord of her license to keep house.

The police in the street arrested Patrick Donovan. Some girls named Dillon, first cousins of his,

snatched  
him away from the police and rushed him into their  
house. John Limerick read the Riot Act. Potter, the  
Chief of Police gave the order of " fix bayonets," et  
cetera. The women in the windows, at each side of  
the street, were screaming in alarm. Patrick  
Spillane,  
the Master-instructor of the Skibbereen band (now in  
Rochester, N. Y.), stood up in his carriage and ad-  
dressed the people, denouncing the village tyranny  
they  
were witnessing; Dan. O'Donoghue, one of the bands-  
men (a Protestant), in a scuffle with a policeman,  
broke  
his trombone. I asked Potter, the Chief of Police,  
what did he mean to do now, with his drawn swords  
and fixed bayonets ? He said he meant to quell this  
riot. I told him there was no riot but what was made  
by Mr. Limerick.

Five or six other magistrates were there. I knew  
Doctor Somerville and John Sidney Townsend. I got  
talking to them ; they told me to go home. I told  
them I would stay at home that day only that threats  
from John Limerick had been coming to my house all

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the week lliat if I set my foot in Union Hall again  
it  
^would be worse for me.

Things gradually quieted down ; the police were or-  
dered off the ground, and peace was restored. There  
were lots of summonses next day ; McCarthy Downing  
was employed for our defence, and some fines were  
adjudged against a few of the people. But that was  
not the worst of it. Many of them who filled situa-  
tions lost their places. A few national  
schoolmasters,  
who were in the village that day weie suspended, and  
did not teach school in Ireland since. One of them  
was John O'Driscoll, who died in Boston a few years  
ago.

A few days after this Union Hall affair I called into

the Beecher Arms Hotel in Skibbereen and met John Sydney Townsend. We talked of the affair of the previous Sunday. I said affairs liad come to a queer pass when an Irishman, in his own country, would be forbidden to tread its soil. Why, said I, if you your-  
self were in a foreign land, and if any one insulted you  
because that you were an Irishman, you would resent the insult. He took off his coat and his vest, took hold  
of my hand and placed it on his shoulder, to let me feel  
his shoulder-blade that was out of joint. '' I got that,"  
said he, '\*' in Australia, in a fight with fellows that were  
running down the Irish." He got that middle name, Sidney, from having lived several years in Sydney, Australia. Wliat a pity it is that men like him will not fight for Ireland in Ireland. Most of them are found on the side of Ireland's deadliest enemy –  
their  
enemy, too, if they would only rightly understand it.  
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The S2:)iiit of the men in the south of Irehind was running ahead of the times – running into fight with the hiws of the English enemy before the Fenian organ-  
ization in America or Irehind had made any adequate preparation for a successful fight. Many of the men had gone to America, and many of them went into the American army, to learn the soldier's glorious trade –  
as much for the benefit of Ireland's freedom as for the  
benefit of America's freedom.