

## THE MAN AT THE DOOR.

BY FITZ-JAMES O'BRIEN.

How joyous to-day is the little old town,  
With banners and streamers and that sort of thing :  
They flutter on turrets and battlements brown,  
And the ancient Cathedral is fine as a king.  
The sexton a nosegay has put in his breast,  
And his face is as bright as a Jericho rose  
That, after a century's withering rest,  
Unwrinkles its petals and suddenly blows.

The brown-breasted swallows aloft and alow,  
Swoop faster and farther than ever before,  
And I'm sure that the cock on the steeple will crow  
When he hears from the city the jubilant roar.  
The girls are as gay as a holiday fleet,  
And ribbons are streaming from bosom and hair,  
And they laugh in the face of each young man they meet,  
And the young men reply with an insolent stare.

'T is not without reason the old town is gay,  
And banners and ribbons are reddening the air,  
For beautiful BERTHA will marry to-day  
With gallant young ALBERT, the son of the Mayor.  
He is brown as a nut from the hazels of Spain :  
Her face, like the twilight, is pensive and sweet ;  
As they march hand in hand through the murmuring lane,  
Low blessings, like flowers, fall unseen at their feet.

While they sweep like twin barks through the waves of the crowd,  
A story is falling from many a tongue  
Of the young Gipsy Prince who a year ago bowed  
At the shrine where a hundred their passion had sung.  
And how BERTHA heaped scorn on his love and his race,  
How she flung in the street the rich presents he sent,  
Until he with the hatred of hell in his face,  
Went sullenly back to his tribe and his tent.

Soon all stories are hushed in a gathering roar,  
And the people sway back like the ebb of a tide,  
And the rosy old sexton stands by the church door,  
To merrily welcome the bridegroom and bride :

But his glee is so great that he does not behold  
 The tall man that stands near the pillar hard by,  
 Nor the flash of the dagger that's hafted with gold,  
 Nor the still keener flash of the lowering eye.

On they come, and the sexton bows low to the ground,  
 The bride smiles a welcome, the bells ring a chime,  
 While a grand acclamation in surges of sound  
 Thrills up through the sky like a sonorous rhyme.  
 They are under the porch — when one dash through the crowd,  
 One flash of a dagger — one shriek of despair,  
 And BERTHA falls dead; while stern-faced and proud,  
 The swarthy-skinned Prince of the Gipsies is there!

How sombre to-day is the little old town,  
 With mourning and sables and funeral display;  
 Long weepers are hanging from battlements brown,  
 And the ancient Cathedral is haggard and gray.  
 The sexton a white rose has put in his breast,  
 While his face is as blank as a snow-laden sky,  
 For BERTHA and ALBERT have gone to their rest,  
 And the Prince of the Gipsies is swinging on high.

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## THE VAN GELDERS OF MATINECOCK.

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BY JOHN T. IRVING, AUTHOR OF 'THE QUOD CORRESPONDENCE.'

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MANY years since I had a relative on the mother's side, an elderly gentleman, who prepared to write a history of Long Island. He was a man of great acquirements and thorough research. He was eminently qualified for the task, for there was no fact so astounding that it staggered him, nor any tale so remarkable that it was beyond his belief. He did not confine his investigations to books alone. He visited spots rendered classic by the deeds of departed worthies. He commenced his explorations at Coney Island, and terminated them at Montauk Point. To sum up his character and qualifications: he was a gentleman of great perseverance and extraordinary swallow. Under these circumstances, it is much to be regretted that he did not live to complete his work. The odd scraps of information, and the strange tales which he had gathered in the course of his labors, fell into my hands — for he was my third-cousin, on the mother's side; and after careful examination, I am satisfied that there is much information contained in these blotted manuscripts of a kind that is not often met with; and that I shall be doing a great favor to the pub-