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THE RIVALS.

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CHAPTER VII.

The school-house, at Glendalough, was situated near the romantic river which flows between the wild scenery of Drumgoff and the seven Churches. It was a low, stone building, indifferently thatched; the whole interior consisting of one oblong room, floored with clay, and lighted by two or three windows, the panes of which were patched with old copy-books, or altogether supplanted by school-slates. The walls had once been plastered and whitewashed, but now partook of that appearance of dilapidation which characterized the whole building. In many places, which yet remained uninjured, the malign spirit of Satire (a demon for whom the court is not too high, nor the cottage too humble) had developed itself in sundry amusing and ingenious devices. Here, with the end of a burnt stick, was traced the hideous outline of a human profile, professing to be a likeness of "Tom Guerin," and here might be seen the "woeful lamentation, and dying declaration, of Neddy Mulcahy," while that worthy dangled in effigy from a gallows overhead. In some instances, indeed, the village Hogarth, with peculiar hardihood, seemed to have sketched in a slight hit at "the Master," the formidable Mr. Lenigan, himself. Along each wall were placed a row of large stones, the one intended to furnish seats for the boys, the other for the girls, the decorum of Mr. Lenigan's establishment requiring that they should be kept apart, on ordinary occasions, for Mr. Lenigan, it should be understood had not been favored with any Pestalozzian light. The only chair, in the whole establishment, was that which was usually occupied by Mr. Lenigan himself, and a table appeared to be a luxury of which they were either ignorant or wholly regardless.

On the morning after the conversation detailed in the last chapter, Mr. Lenigan was rather later than his usual hour in taking possession of the chair above alluded to. The sun was mounting swiftly up the heavens. The rows of stones, before described, were already occupied, and the babble of a hundred voices, like the sound of a beehive, filled the house. Now and then, a school-boy, in frieze coat and corduroy trowsers, with an ink-bottle dangling at his breast, a copy-book, slate, Voster, and "reading-book," under one arm, and a sod of turf under the other, dropped in, and took his place upon the next unoccupied stone. A great boy, with a huge slate in his arm, stood in the centre of the apartment, making a list of all those who were guilty of any indecorum in the absence of "the Master." Near the door, was a blazing turf fire, which the sharp autumnal wind already rendered agreeable. In a corner behind the door lay a heap of fuel, formed by the contributions of all the scholars, each being obliged to bring one sod of turf every day, and each having the privilege of sitting by the fire while his own sod was burning. Those who failed to pay their tribute of fuel sat cold and shivering the whole day long at the further end of the room, huddling together their bare and frost bitten toes, and casting a long, envious eye toward the peristyle of well-marbled slates that surrounded the fire.

Full in the influence of a cherishing flame, was placed the hay-bottomed chair that supported the person of Mr. Henry Lenigan, when that great man presided in person in his rural seminary. On his right, lay a close bush of hazel, of astonishing size, the emblem of his authority and the instrument of castigation. Near this was a wooden "stroker," that is to say, a large rule of smooth and polished deal, used for "strok-ing" lines in copy-books, and also for "strok-ing" the palms of the refractory pupils. On the other side, lay a lofty heap of copy-books, which were left there by the boys and girls for the purpose of having their copies "sot" by "the Master."

About noon, a sudden lush was produced by the appearance, at the open door, of a young man dressed in rusty black, and with something clerical in his costume and demeanor. This was Mr. Lenigan's classical assistant; for to himself the volumes of ancient literature were a fountain sealed. Five or six strong young men, all of whom were intended for learned professions, were the only portion of Mr. Lenigan's scholars that aspired to those lofty sources of information. At the sound of the word "Virgil" from the lips of the assistant, the whole class started from their seats, and crowded round him, each bran-

A traveller in Ireland who is acquainted with the ancient Chronicles of the country, must be struck by the resemblance between the manners of the ancient and modern Irish in their mode of education. In that translation of Stanihurst, which Hologhshed admits into his collection, we find the following passage: "In their schools they grovel upon couches of straw, their books at their noses, themselves lie flat prostrate, and so they chaunt out with a loud voice their lessons by piecemeal, repeating two or three words thirty or forty times together." The system of mnemonics, described in the last sentence, is still in vigorous use.

dishing a smoky volume of the great Augustan poet, who could he have looked into this Irish academy, from that part of the infernal regions in which he has been placed by his pupil Dante, might have been tempted to exclaim in the pathetic words of his own hero:

Suat hic etiam sua promia laudi,
Suat lachryma rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.
"Who's head?" was the first question proposed by the assistant, after he had thrown open the volume at that part marked as the day's lesson.

"Jim Naughten, sir."
"Well, Naughten, begin. Consther, consther," now, an' be quick:
At puer Ascanius mediis in vallibus acri
Gaudet equo; jamque hos cursu, jam proterit illos;
Spumantemque dari.

"Go on, sir, why don't you consther?"
"At puer Ascanius," the person so addressed began, "but the Ascanius; *mediis in vallibus*, in the middle o' the valleys; *gaudet*, rejoices."
"Exults, a'ra gal, exults is a better word."
"*Gaudet*, exults; *acri equo*, upon his bitter horse."

"Oh, murder alive, his bitter horse, inagh? Erra, what would make a horse be bitter, Jim? Sure tisn't of sour beer he's talkin'? Rejoicin' upon a bitter horse! Dear knows, what a show he was, what reason he had for it! *Acri equo*, upon his mettlesome steed, that's the construc-tion."

Jim proceeded.
"*Acri equo*, upon his mettlesome steed; *jam-que*, an now; *proterit*, he goes beyond";
"Outstrips, a-chree."

"*Proterit*, he outstrips; *hos*, these; *jamque illos*, and now those; *cursu*, in his course; *que*, and; *optat*, he longs."

"Very good, Jim, *longis* is a very good word there, I thought you were goin' to say *wishes*.—Did any body tell you that?"

"Dickins a one, sir."
"That's a good boy. Well?"
"*Optat*, he longs; *spumantem aprum*, that a foaming boar; *dari*, shall be given; *volis*, to his desires; *aut fulvum leonem*, or that a tawney lion."

"That's a good word, again. *Tawney* is a good word; better than *yellow*."
"*Descendere*, shall descend; *monte*, from the mountain."

"Now, boys, observe the beauty o' the poet. There's great nature in the picture of the boy Ascanius. Just the same way as we see young Mither Kealey, of the Grove, at the fox chase the other day, batin' the whole o' 'em, right an' left, *jamque hos*, *jamque illos*, and now, Mither Cleary, an' now Captain Davis, he outstripped in his course. A beautiful picture, boys, there is in them four lines of a fine high-blooded youth. See; people are always the same; times an' manners change, but the heart o' man is the same now as it was in the days of Augustus. But consther your task, Jim, an' then I'll give you an' the boys a little commentary upon its beauties."

The boy obeyed, and read as far as *proterit nomine culpam*, after which the assistant proceeded to pronounce his little commentary. Unwilling to deprive the literary world of any advantage which the mighty monarch of the Roman epopee may derive from his analysis, we subjoin the speech without any abridgment:

"Now, boys, for what I told ye. Them seventeen lines, that Jim Naughten consthered this minute, contains as much as fifty in a modern book. I pointed out to ye before the picture of Ascanius, an' I'll back it again' the world for nature. Then there's the incipient storm—

Interea magno misceri murmure cœlum
Incipit:
Erra, don't be talkin', but listen to that! There's a rumblin' in the language like the sound of com-in' thunder—

—insequitur commista grandine nimbus,
D'ye hear the change? D'ye hear all the S's? D'ye hear 'em whisin'? D'ye hear the black squall comin' up the hill side, brushin' up the dust an' d'ry laves off the road, and hiss'n' through the trees and' bushes? an' d'ye hear the hail drivin' afther, an' spatterin' the laves, and white-nin' the face of the country? *Commista grandine nimbus!* That I mightn't sin, but when I read them words, I gather my head down between my shoulders, as if it was halin' a top o' me. An' then the sight of all the buntin' party! Dido, an' the Trojans, an' all the great court ladies, and the Trojan companions scattered like cracked people about the place, lookin' for shelter, an' peltin' about right and left, hether and thether, in all directions for the bare life, an' the floods swellin' an' comin' thunderin' down in rivers from the mountains, an' all in three lines:

Et Tyrii comites passim, et Trojana juvenus,
Dardaniœ nepos Veneris, diversa per agros
Tecta metu petiere: ruit de montibus amnes.

And see the beauty o' the poet, followin' up the character of Ascanius, he makes him the last to

quit the field. First the Tyrian comrades, an effeminate race, that ran at the sight of a shower, as if they were made o' salt, that they'd melt under it, and then the Trojan youth, lads that were used to it, in the first book; and last of all the spirited boy Ascanius himself (Silence near the doore!)

Speluncam Dido, dux et Trojans eandem,
Deveniunt:

Observe, boys, he no longer calls him, as of old, the *pious Aeneas*, only *dux Trojans*, the Trojans laider, in condemnation o' his crime.—There's where Virgil took the crust out of Homer's mouth, in the neatness of his language, that you'd rather gather a part o' the feelin' from the very shape o' the line an' turn o' the prosody. As, formerly, when Dido was asking Aeneas concerning where he came from, an' where he was bound? he makes an answer:

Est locus, Hesperiam Graii, cognomine dicunt:
Terra antiqua, potens armis, atque ubere gleboæ,
Huc cursus fuit:

And here the line stops short, as much as to say, just as I cut this line short in spakin' to you, just so our course was cut, in going to Italy. The same way, when Juno is vexed in talkin' o' the Trojans, he makes her spake bad Latin to show how mad she is: (silence!)

—Mene incepto desistere victam,
Nec posse Italiam Teucorum avertere regem?
Quippe vetor fati! Pallasæ exurere classem
Argivum, atque ipsos potuit submergere ponto,

So he laves you to guess what a passion she is in, when he makes her lave an infinitive mood without any thing to govern it. You can't attribute it to ignorance, for it would be a droll thing in earnest, if Juno, the queen of all the gods, didn't know a common rule in syntax, so that you have nothing for it but to say that she must be in the very moral of a fury. Such, boys, is the art o' poets, an' the *janinus* o' languages.

"But I kept ye long enough. Go along to ye'r Greek, now, as fast as ye can, an' rehearse. An' as for ye," continued the learned commentator, turning to a mass of English scholars, "I see one comin' over the river that'll taich ye how to behave ye'rselfes, as it is a thing ye wo'n't do for me. Put up ye'r Virgils, now, boys, an' out with the Greek, an' remember the beauties I pointed out to ye, for they're things that few can explain to ye, if ye have'n't the luck to think o' 'em ye'rselfes."

The class separated, and a hundred anxious eyes were directed towards the open door. It afforded a glimpse of a sunny green and babbling river, over which Mr. Lenigan, followed by his brother David, was now observed in the act of picking his cautious way. At this apparition, a sudden change took place in the condition of the entire school. Stragglers flew to their places, the incipient burst of laughter was cut short, the growing fit of rage was quelled, the uplifted hand dropped harmless by the side of its owner, merry faces grew serious, and angry ones peaceable, the eyes of all seemed poring on their books, and the extravagant uproar of the last half hour was hushed, on a sudden, into a diligent murmur. Those who were most proficient in the study of "the Master's" physiognomy, detected in the expression of his eyes, as he entered, and greeted his assistant, something of a troubled and uneasy character. He took the list, with a severe countenance, from the hands of the boy above mentioned, sent all those whose names he found upon the fatal record, to kneel down in a corner until he should find leisure to "hoise" them, and then prepared to enter upon his daily functions.

Before taking his seat, however, he conferred, for a few moments, apart with his brother David, who, with a dejected attitude and a countenance, full of sorrow, stood leaning against the open door.

"Ah, 't isn't thinkin' of her I am at all, man alive," he said, in answer to some remonstratory observation from the school-master, "for, sure, what more could be expected, afther what she done? or what better luck could she hope for? But its what kills me, Harry, is how I'll meet him or tell him of it at all. Afther what I see of him the other night, what'll he do to me at all, when 'tis this news I bring him, afther he a' most killin' me before for sayin' less."

"If he was to kill any one," replied Mr. Lenigan, "it ought to be Doctor Jervas, for sure what had you to do with the business?"

"Kill Doctor Jervas?" said a sweet voice at the door of the school-house, while at the same time a female shadow fell upon the sunny floor. "Why then, that would be a pity and a loss.—What is it he done?"

"Ayeh, nothin', nothin', woman," said David, impatiently.
The new comer was a handsome young woman, who carried a fat child in her arms and held another by the hand. The sensation of pleasure which ran among the young culprits, at her appearance, showed her to be their "great captain's captain;" the same, in fact, whom our readers may remember to have already met at

the dispensary, and who, by a strict attention to the advice of her physician, had since then become the loved and loving helpmate of Mr. Lenigan. Casting, unperceived by her lord, an encouraging smile towards the kneeling culprits, she took an opportunity, while engaged in a wheedling conversation with her husband, to purloin his dead rule, and to blot the list of the prescribed from the slate, after which she stole out, calling David after her to dig the potatoes for dinner. That faithful adherent went out in deep dejection, and Mr. Lenigan, moving towards his official position near the fire, resumed the exercise of his authority.

Seated in his chair, and dropping the right leg over the left knee, he laid a copy-book upon his primitive desk, and began to set the boys and girls their head lines; displaying his own proficiency in penmanship, through all the several gradations of "strokes, pot-hooks-an'-hangers, large-hand, round-hand, small-hand, and running-hand." The terror, which his first appearance had excited, dying away by degrees, the former tumult began to be renewed, and a din arose, in the midst of which, the voice of the Master and his scholar were hardly distinguishable. Occasionally, cries of "One here, sir, scroodging!" "One here, sir, calling names!" "One here, sir, if you please, runnin' out his tongue under us," and similar complaints, were heard amidst the general babble. Mr. Lenigan never took notice of those solitary offences, but when they became too numerous, when the cup of iniquity seemed filled to the brim, and the uproar was at its height, it was his wont suddenly to place the pen between his teeth, lay aside the copy-book, seize the great hazel-bush before described, and walk rapidly along the two lines of stones, lashing the bare legs and naked feet of the young miscreants, heedless of the yells, groans, and shrieks of terror and of anguish, by which he was surrounded, and exclaiming, as he proceeded, in a hoarse and angry tone, "Rehearse! Rehearse! Rehearse! Now will ye heed me, now will ye rehearse?" Then, returning to his seat, amid the dying sounds of pain and suffering, which still broke faintly from various quarters, he resumed his occupations, enjoying, like a governor-general, a peace, procured by the scourge! by involving the guilty and the innocent in one common affliction. And this Lancasterian mode of castigation Mr. Lenigan was in the habit of repeating several times in the course of the day.

Frequently, while he continued his avocations, he looked with an absent and uneasy eye towards the river already mentioned, as if in the expectation of some visitor. Evening, however, approached, or (to use the school chronometer), the second lesson was over, and nobody appeared. This circumstance seemed to throw additional ill-humor into his physiognomy, and he seemed to long for some good opportunity of indulging it. The same absence of mind and depression of spirits was observed in his conversation with those neighbors who strolled in upon him in the course of the afternoon, and talked of the politics of the day, the prospects of Europe, and other trivial subjects, such as suit the understanding and information of politicians in a country village.

It was the custom at Lenigan's academy, as it is at most Irish seminaries of a similar description, that no one should be permitted to leave the precincts of the school-room without taking with them a huge bone, (the femur of a horse) which lay for that purpose in the centre of the floor, and which, on account of the privilege of furlough which it conferred, was designated by the name of "The Pass." There were many conveniences attending this regulation. It protected Mr. Lenigan from the annoyance of perpetual applications for leave of absence, and it prevented the absence of more than one at a time from the immediate sphere of the master's surveillance. There were, indeed, a few of the grown boys, who were already forward in their classes, who understood book-keeping, compound interest, and enough of geometry to demonstrate the ass's bridge, and who, upon the strength of their acquirements, considered themselves privileged to contemn this boyish regulation, and to use their own discretion about studying in the open air and sunshine, stretched along the river's side, or under the shelter of the school-house.

An idle red-haired boy had been absent with the Pass for nearly a quarter of an hour, and Lenigan's countenance began to wax exceeding wroth at his delay. Suddenly he appeared at the door-day, through which the sinking sun now darted a more slanting beam, and tossed the bone into the centre of the floor, where it produced the same effect as if he had thrown it into a kennel of hounds. While they were wrangling for The Pass, the young delinquent pleaded his excuse with Mr. Lenigan, by informing him that a gentleman was waiting for his brother David in the beech wood, at the other side of the river.

Mr. Lenigan committed the charge of the school, for some minutes, to his assistant, appointed a lad to "keep the list," breathed vengeance against all who should make an unruly use of his absence, shook his hand at the kneeling culprits in the corner, buttoned up his coat, and hopped across the threshold, with the view of finding his brother, who had little doubt that the stranger was no other than Francis Riordan.

CHAPTER VIII.

In a little opening of the beech wood, strewed with dry leaves and withered branches, and chequered with dancing gleams of sun shine, the young patriot stood, awaiting the arrival of his humble friend, with extreme impatience. He would himself have made any sacrifice, have endured any privation, have braved any danger, rather than do violence to his own sense of what was honourable; and his attachments, as a natural consequence, were always doubly strong in proportion to the sacrifices which he made on their account. Without entertaining much doubt, as to the effect which his brief note might produce upon the mind of Esther, his anxiety to learn her answer approached a degree of torture.

And, here, it is fitting that the reader should be made aware of that early cause of quarrel which existed between Richard Lacy and our hero, and which was the immediate occasion of the long exile of the latter.

Several years since, it will be remembered, the south of Ireland was proclaimed to be in a state of disturbance, and a constabulary force was formed in all the baronies for the purpose of overawing the discontented peasantry. No great national good can ever be accomplished without drawing many individual afflictions in its train. So it proved on this occasion. The formation of such a body afforded to those persons (so numerous in Ireland) who turn every public work into what is vulgarly termed a *job*, a good opportunity for the exercise of their vocation.

Richard Lacy was one of those magistrates who, at the period of which we speak, sought preferment by an emulative display of zeal and activity in the discharge of their duties. He scrupled the exercise of no cruelty which might place him frequently before the eyes of the privy council in the light of a diligent and useful officer, and he succeeded fully in his design. He became an object of terror to the peasantry, and of high favor at the Castle. He filled the gaols and transport ships with victims; he patrolled the country every night from sun-set to sun-rise, and earned the applause of his patrons, by rendering himself an object of detestation in his neighborhood.

Amongst those persons of his own rank who viewed the proceedings of Lacy with feelings of strong disapproval, was his younger neighbor, Francis Riordan. Highly gifted, highly educated, patriotic even to a want of wisdom, and disinterested to a chivalrous degree, he stood forward in defence of the oppressed, and showed himself a determined and an able opponent of their oppressor. But a circumstance which occurred, at a time when their mutual hostility had reached its highest point, and which showed indeed but little prudence on the part of Riordan, placed him entirely within the power of his magisterial enemy.

A poor cottager in his neighborhood had stolen out before day-break, for the purpose of taking his oats to market, which was at a considerable distance from his home. He fell into the hands of Lacy's night patrol, was tried before the Special Sessions, and received the customary sentence passed on all who were found absent from their homes between sun-set and sun-rise; namely, seven years' transportation to one of the colonies.

On his way to the Cove of Cork, the prisoner was confined for a few days at the police barrack of —, within a few miles of his own neighborhood. It was a fine summer morning; the police were loitering in the sunshine, while their arms were grounded inside the house. Their force was fifteen, including the sergeant and chief. The latter seated on a chair outside the door, with a silk handkerchief thrown over his head, to moderate the fervor of the sunshine, was employed in nursing his right foot in his lap, stroking the leg down gently from the knee to the ankle, and inhaling the fumes of a Havana cigar.

On a sudden, a countryman presented himself before the door of the barrack, almost breathless from speed, and with a face that was flushed and glistening, as after violent exercise. He informed the chief that a number of the country people had detected a notorious disturber of the peace, for whose apprehension a large reward had been held out, and for whom the police had been for a long time on the watch. They were, he said, in the act of dragging him towards the barrack for the purpose of leaving him safe in the custody of the king's servants.

At the same moment a crowd of persons were seen hastily descending a neighboring hill and hurrying along in the direction of the barrack. When they came sufficiently near, it was ob-