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REDMOND O'CONNOR; OR, THE SECRET PASSAGE.

A PAGE OF TRISH HISTORY.

(From the N. Y. Irish-American.)

CHAPTER IX .- BURROUGH'S DEFEAT.

Long before the morning dawned, the Irish were under arms, anxiously awaiting the approach of day, and the enemy at the same time. As soon as it was light, the English commenced crossing opposite the camp at Drouomflinch, where the cavalry of Maguire were stationed .-Company after company crossed, and formed in front of the Irish; who, having no artillery, and being too weak in numbers, contented themselves with awaiting the attack behind their entrench-ments. Burrough, although far superior in numbers, was afraid to weaken his force, by causing a diversion; and accordingly pushed forward his squadrons, with a view of piercing the centre of the Irish line. O'Neil, seeing this, left his own position, and united his forces with those of his brothers. This roused the enthusiasm of his gallant troops, who could not bear to await the

attack of their foes, and the signal was given for the onset. With a wild cheer, they left their entrenchments, and advanced steadily, each body under the command of its own chief. The haughty Burrough, he who had gained such renown on foreign fields, was now face to face with the "arch rebel," Hugh O'Neil. His reputation was at stake, and he made his dispositions with his wonted skill and daring. He stood in the front of his men, cheering them by his own example. For an instant his tall plume shone above the crash, as the Irish closed upon his serried ranks. The next moment a pike was thrust between the joints of his armor and he fell

among his followers. The English, seeing the overthrow of their commander, fell back, panic-stricken and dismayed; but the Earl of Kildare, on whom the command devolved, again rallied them, and the Irish, in their turn, were obliged to give ground. The English were continually reinforced, and their cavalry were forming for a charge. At this crisis, O'Neil, who was stationed on an eminence, and foresaw the havoc this

splendid body of horsemen must make in his naked ranks, calling up his own cavalry, gave the word to charge. Like the thunderbolt let loose, Maguire bounded forward, followed by his city of their charge, that they bore down their

opponents without striking a blow. It was not till Maguire reached the river brink that he drew rein, and, wheeling round, attacked them, sword in hand. The melce was terrific. For a moment they fought hand to hand; neither yielding, but with life. The English leaders were conspicuous from their rich armor, and Maguire

had already defeated one of them in single com-

bat. O'Connor, singling out the other, made his way through the ranks, exclaiming—"Let me measure brands with this champion!" All bore back from the powerful arm of the Englishman. They engaged, and the troops on either side ceased the strife for a moment, as the champions dealt their blows with the fury of national ani-

mosity. At length the Englishman received a blow on the arm, and the sword dropped from "Yield!" shouted O'Connor.

The English seeing their leaders fall, thought

reply. And, with the word, he was cloven to

"A Turner never yields to a rebel," was the

only of saving themselves, and fled across the river, closely followed by their now exulting enemy.

The infantry, all this time, had been fighting with little advantage on either side. Upon the retreat of their cavalry, the English again retired, and some even threw down their arms and fled. But the energy of Kildare rallied them, and the cavalry recrossing, advanced again to the scene of strife. It was only to suffer a greater defeat. The whole of the Irish line, with the valiant Tyrone at its head, made a last desperate charge. In the onset Kildare was wounded, and his two foster-brothers were killed in putting him on horseback. His followers were thrown into disorder, and rushed madly for the ford; but here they were met by a detachment under Art O'Neil, who hurled them back upon their enemies. Thus pressed in front and rear, they threw themselves into the river, and were either drowned or slain, few reaching the opposite bank. The cavalry endeavored in vain to protect the retreat. The Irish, nerved by the memories of their wrongs, cut them to pieces, and their horses flew riderless into the ranks of the infantry, increasing their disorder. The field was at length cleared; and those who were so fortunate as to escape, took the road to Armagh to tell the defeat they had suffered on the banks of the Blackwater. The Irish were too much fatigued to follow this flying remnant, and con-

longing to a well-appointed army fell into the power of the victors.

O'Connor was dispatched with a body of cavalry, to take possession of the enemy's baggage on the right bank of the river. He had fulfilled his mission; and was about to recross when, looking to the West, he beheld a cloud of dust advancing toward him. The thought flashed across his mind that this might be a fresh enemy, and resolving not to be driven from the field of victory, he formed his men to await the result. The cloud advanced against the wind, and he knew it must be a body of cavalry. As they left the main road, and struck across the fields, the dust rolled away, revealing about fifty horsemen, still advancing with the same rapid pace.— When they approached near enough to recognise the banner of the "Red Hand," they slacked their speed, and their leader approached to where O'Connor was stunding.

"I should know the owner of that device," he said, courteously, doffling his helmet and point-

ing to the Knight's shield.
"Redmond O'Connor hath no reason to conceal either his arms or his name," replied the

"Then we are half known already," said the stranger, grasping the Knight's hand. "Did I not spend two hours in listening to my father, Richard Tyrrell, relate your adventures?"

"If you are, indeed, Henry Tyrrell, of whom I have heard, I am glad to meet you, and hope that our friendship will not end with a day."

"So be it, from my heart. But I see ye have nchieved a glorious victory; and here have we ridden ten mortal miles to have a share in the fight, and all for nothing. I would have given my golden rosary for a single charge into their ranks. Bal Dearg O'Donnell will hardly be pleased to see us return with unsoiled armor."

The youth's eyes flashed with enthusiasm as he looked upon the evidences of victory. O'Connor had at last found a wild chivalrous spirit like his own, and every moment increased their friend-ship. The two united their strength, and recrossed to the battle ground. Parties of troops were moving over the field, some removing the wounded, others burying the dead, and all with melancholy looks, for numbers of their own com-rades strewed the plain, amid the heaps of their enemies. The day was spent in these offices of charity; and when night set in not a vestige of fierce riders. The ground shook beneath them the strife was visible, except the torn up soil and as they advanced, and so terrible was the velo- faded grass. The river flowed on as tranquilly as before, and the stars shone as brightly over the new-made graves as if hundreds of bodies did not tenant them—a bloody sacrifice to blind intolerance.

In the camp the scene was different from without. The troops were allowed a double share of spirits, and songs and rejoicings filled the air .-The chiefs were invited to the general's tent to celebrate the victory. When the revel was about to conclude O'Neil rose to his feet, and every tongue was silent.

"My friends," he said, "ye have all heard of the melancholy end of our common friend, Shane O'Connor, and his daughter Eva, and how the assassin usurpeth his patrimony and oppresseth his faithful followers. Ye have seen the services that his son hath rendered to his country and religion in the short time he hath been with us. Richard Tyrrell hath told you the service he did in Meath, and he hath behaved himself this day as becometh his illustrious descent .--Now, I propose, as we will not be troubled with the English for some time to come, that he have a guard and retinue suited to his rank, and that he go to demand his rights. What is the answer, my friends? Have I said well?"

"Ay, 'tis well said," resounded from all parts

of the tent. "Then," said O'Neil, rising, with a flowing goblet in his hand; "I drink this to the success of the enterprise of our brother in arms." "Success to O'Connor!" was echoed from

every lip, as each pledged the toast. "And if our general will permit me," said Henry Tyrrell, rising, "I will be his companion

on the expedition." "But what will become of the men you have brought from Tyrconnell?" asked the chief,

smiling. "As for that matter he will be glad to see them return under any leader; for, I give you

my word, he never expected to see any of us alive, and considered us as a sacrifice to Mars." "I see you are determined to make up for the loss of this day's fighting," said O'Neil, "so I promise to gratify you and arrange the matter broken nature of the ground would permit.-

with O'Donnel." It was arranged that O'Connor should start for Offaly the next morning, and the banquet concluded.

CHAPTER X .- CASTLE DEARG.

wished for expedition, we will now, with the and Alice, who had got accustomed to the ridreader's permission, change the scene to the cot- ing, had more leisure to think of her hapless tented themselves with securing the booty.— tage of the outlaw, in Fertullagh. On this par- situation. Her destination to her was a secret, field; but as for the color, that will depend on Sir Geoffry Wingfield. You were not so nig-

Standards, guns, ammunition, and everything be- | ticular morning, Alice O'More arose from her | but well she knew that a hopeless captivity was | how ye receive him, for, take my word for it, he humble cot, unrefreshed and weary. She had before her. As she reflected on the hints droppassed the night in frightful dreams and visions of blood and slaughter, and filled with melancholy forebodings, sought out the kind Ailcen, death—the wife, perhaps, the slave of some soulher comforter on all occasions. The frugal less tyrant. Her good old nurse rode beside breakfast was spread, but the mind of Alice was too much troubled to heed it.

"Mother," she said, addressing her nurse, by that endearing name, "I fear something bath befallen our friends in Ulster. I could get no rest all night for dreaming of blood and carnage."

"Do not give way to these thoughts, my child," replied the anxious nurse. "All is well with our friends, I trust."
"I pray to the Virgin it may be so; but I

have strange misgivings. I am not wont to dream such terrible dreams."

"Would to heaven," sighed the nurse, "this O'Connor had never crossed our humble door .-You are losing your bloom and spirits day by day, and on his account, I see too well."

"This is a cruel wish, mother." And Alice threw arms about her neck. "When first he came, was he not, in your opinion, the handsomeest cavalier in Meath?"

"That was before he stole your young heart from us, my dear."

"Then wait till you are mistress, and my father seneschal, of the strongest castle in Meath, you will change this cruel opinion."

" But you are building castles in the air, child Castle Dearg is not yet taken.

"It will not long remain so, mother, if Redmond is on his feet, and if beaven will take the side of justice."

The nurse seemed anxious to turn the conversation, which she perceived was oppressing her tair charge, and, going to the window, she ob-

"Brien should be here ere now. He pro-mised to be home by eight of the clock, and this must be him, for I see the gleam of steel coming through the trees. But, no! may heaven help us, they are Barnewell's or Wingfield's catthroats, I see by their livery."

Alice sprang, trembling, to the window; and, sure enough, there, riding up to the door, were a dozen men at arms, whom she took, from their dress, to be a party of marauders. Overcome with terror, she sank on a seat as the leader of the band entered; a short, burly fellow, with a ferocious and repulsive countenance.

"I see," he observed, surveying the apartment, "we have missed the old fox himself, and it is well for him. Come, my pretty mistress," he continued, addressing Alice, " prepare to ride with us this morning. I think the fresh air will be good for your pretty face."

"By what authority do ye thus make prisoners of defenceless women?" asked the nurse, for Alice was unable to speak.

"By the authority of the strongest, my good dame. Your husband, or whoever he may be, is a traitor and a rebel, and, failing to have the pleasure of his acquaintance, we will take his pretty ward here, where she will learn more of loyalty, and it may be, get a right loyal husband to boot. Eh? Walden," he said, winking to another of the band.

"You are right there, captain; better than her Irish blood deserves."

"Keep your opinions till they are asked," was the snappish reply. "Yes or no, is plenty for such canaille as thou art."

Turning to Alice, he again commanded her to prepare for the road.

"Is there no alternative?" she tremblingly asked, looking up into his cruel face. "Think if you had a mother or a sister, you would not see them insulted. We are but poor women, and cannot add to the glory of your mistress by our submission to her laws, which we never own-

ed nor never broke." "Ha, ha, ha," laughed the fellow. "By heaven, but that you are in petticoats, you would make a dashing preacher, in those times of free thinking. Had I so sweet a tongue, I would try a little of that myself; 'tis the best paying progo you must."

So saying, he snatched her cloak from the wall, and throwing it about her shoulders, carried her from the room. The marauders had a couple of led horses; and on these the two the provisions, Alice, thinking it a good opportuwomen were firmly strapped. Their cries for nity, addressing the hagmercy were answered by a loud laugh from their their way to the main road as rapidly as the After gaining this, they set off at a canter, evidently not liking the locality they were in, though answerednot a living soul could be seen till they were clear of Fertullagh. This rapid pace was continued for nearly an hour till they had gained the Having left our hero preparing for his long- level country. Here they dropped to a walk;

ned by her captors, her innocent heart beat wildly at the thought of a life worse to her than her, and vainly tried to soothe her grief by holding out hopes which her own heart told her could never be realized.

On every hand, as they passed, the country presented a scene of ruin and desolution. The blackened walls of once happy cottages peeped out from every dell; their only tenants the ow or the raven. On every commanding eminence were seen the ruins of stately abbeys and lordly castles; their inhabitants buried beneath them, or making the last stand for liberty, beneath the banner of the "Red Hand." Along the rugged hillsides far away the blue smoke curled up from the cottage of the hardy outlaw, driver from his native plains by the hand of the ruthless invader. In these fastnesses, he still maintained a wild independence, subsisting on the fruits of the midnight foray against the invader. Here and there by the wayside a few huts would be seen standing in a cluster, and haggard women would lean upon their spades, and gaze listles-ly on the hand, as they rode along. They lived in terrible loneliness, these women, by their extreme poverty escaping the rapacity of their Saxon tyrants, who permitted them to win, with their own hands, a scanty living for themselves and their famishing orphans. Not a man was seen moving through all these scenes of destruction. War, with all its horrors, had overtaken them, and they perished vainly battling for their hearths. When Alice perceived those signs of sufferings, her own sorrows grew insignificant in comparison, and she mentally resolved to await her fate as became her brave ancestors.

Toward noon, the party halted beside a spring of clear water, which bubbled from beneath the roots of a spreading oak. The prisoners were lifted from their saddles and seated on the grass, and one of the soldiers quenched their thirst with a draught of water from his helmet. Some coarse bread was offered them, which they refused, while their captors devoured it with an evident gusto.

The meal concluded, they were once more on to the left, which was bordered by thick woods gather the "wild Irish"-provided he could catch on either hand. The noise of a torrent fell on them alive! their cars as they advanced, and in a few minutes they came in front of a narrow wooden bridge which spanned the stream. They crossed this, two abreast, and after riding for some distance up a steep hill, they at last emerged into an open in front of a formidable looking castle. This was perched on the extremity of a l-dge of red sandstone, which jutted out into the torrent. It was a square building, with tower at each angle, and seemed to have gained nothing from the architectural changes of centuries. It was built in that age when the Irish borrowed their plans of defence from their Danish invaders, and strength was the only object the architect had in view. Around this building was a wall about twelve feet high, with towers at convenient distances, and pierced with loopholes for musketry. From a flag-staff on the main building hung a blood red flag, with an eagle in the centre, supporting in his talons a skull, the emblem of death, The buildings were of red sandstone, taken from the quarries in the vicinity, and the declining sun reflecting on wall and tower, gave them a still

redder appearance. From the description Alice had heard of Castle Dearg, she at once concludes that the pile before her was no other, and her heart sunk within her as she recalled to mind the cruelties practised by its savage master. She had little time to indulge in these reveries, for the leader of the band, giving a blast on his horn, the gate swung open and they entered the court yard .-The prisoners were conducted by a man-at-arms into a side door of the main hubbling, and after traversing a number of passages, and mounting as many flights of stone stars, they were shown fession I sec. Come, I have no mind to hurt into a small chamber by their golde, who turned you; but I have orders to scatter this den; and the key in the door and left them to their own solitary reflections.

They were about half an hour in their new lodgings when an old woman entered with a light and refreshments. As she proceeded to spread

" Good mother, would it be any offence to ask captors, who, keeping them in the centre, made in what part of the world, or in whose power, we find ourselves?"

The old woman peered at her for some time, from beneath a pair of grey eyebrows, and then

"Ye must have ridden far, not to have heard of the Red Castle, for well I ween, no bird ever was caged here but had reason to know its juilor." "And are we then in the power of the Black Wingfield?' as he is called."

can be black to those who cross his path."

With this consoling piece of information, the old woman left the room, and when the sound of her footsteps had died away, Alice clasped her hands together, and, bowing her head, exclaim-

"May God and our Blessed Lady protect us, for here no earthly aid can reach us?"

"On the contrary," said Eileen, " 'tis here we may expect the readiest aid. I will wager that O'Connor will have it beleagured before a week is over. We have only to bear what trials are before us and God will send us succor in good time.

"Amen!" responded Alice, as she went to the window of their prison, and looked out; but it was too late to distinguish anything. She refurned in despair and partook sparingly of the provisions left for their use; after which they fastened the door inside as best they could, and commending themselves to the care of heaven, threw themselves on their bed, and were soon lost to a sense of their situation.

Meanwhile, a different scene was being enacted in the hall of the Castle, where the lord of the mansion sat in the midst of his retainers. -Wingfield occupied a seat raised a few inches above the rest of the company. He was a tall man of about forty years, with a stern, forbidding countenance, rendered more so by a deep scar, extending nearly the whole length of his right cheek. From his dark eye not a ray of pleasure ever beamed. All was brooding crucky and sensualism. On his right sat a young man, his junior by at least ten years, with a brow on which good humor continually sat, and a free and chivalrous bearing, which contrasted strongly with that of his stern superior. On the left of Wingfield was a clerical-tooking personage, who hardly seemed to notice what was passing around. He seemed wrapt in deep meditation on the inerits of the wine, holding a cup daintily between his tingers, sipping a little, and anon casting a wild reproving look around, as an oath would meet his ear. This apostle was sent to preach "the glad tidings" to the "benighted frish," and had fixed upon Castle Dearg as the safest place for commencing his missionary labors. The worthy man was to commence by converting those withthe road, and near sunset turned into a by-road in the Castle, and into this fold he intended to

The conversation had gradually died away, and a delicious drowsy feeling was beginning to be exhibited toward the lower end of the table. The usurper and his worthy colleague on the left began to show signs of soon being hors de combut, as one retainer after another dropped gently under the table, their comfortable snoring, giving the most provoking temptation for their superiors to follow. The young man on the right was the only sober person of the party, and howing to his chief, he exclaimed, half jocosely, as if not exactly confident of the impression his speech would make-

"Congratulate me, most noble Sir Geoffrey. on my very unexpected piece of good fortune. "Tis the first time you have coupled good fortune with yourself since setting foot in Ireland," answered Wingfield, arousing from his stupor. "Pil warrant me you have found a new hen roost or pig pen for the plundering, that your face betrays such signs of delight."

"You are out there for once. I have harried a nest that will make my fortune; but to keep you no longer in suspense I will give you the story. You have heard of the band of outlaws who drove our flocks from the glen when you were on your Spanish expedition, six of whom you had the pleasure of hanging on your return? Well, it seems our friend MacQuaid bere, recognized their leader, and in one of his rambles came upon his den, in the full of Fertullagh .know, then, that this ogie had a foster-daughter belonging to the O'Mores of Leix, and, as MacQuaid swears, more beautiful still than the bird you have caged in the tower. Her father lost his life in the affair of Mullaghmast, and left her in the care of this fellow; so I thought it were a sin to let such a flower pine and wither in solitude, and sent a dozen of our fellows to pounce upon the den. The old fox himself had fled, and they have brought her and her nurse to this good castle. I mean to pay my respects in the morning, and if I am successful, (as I have no doubt I will be,) this reverend doctor will tie the knot, and I hope you will give me the patch of wilderness I have carned from you."

"I wish you all the joy such madness can bring; but before you sent my men on such an errand, it were but common courtesy to acquaint me; and if you bring a swarm of rebels to demand her, you will have to abide the issue on your own bottom; for, by the rood, no help will I give in such a quarrel."

The face of the young man grew purple as he

answered this cutting rebuke-

"Thou art, indeed, in the power of Wing- You are grown wonderfully cautions of late,