The True Witness AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. XIV. MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 1864. No. 38

LARRY GILLESPIE'S ESCAPE.

A STORY OF '98.

Of that intrepid band of heroes who forsook the peace labors of the field for the hazards of the insurrectionary war, none brought to the fearful struggle of the French in 1798, a bolder heart, a stronger arm, or a deeper hatred of oppression, than Larry Gillespie, whose enterprising feats of muscular powers at Castlebar caught the attention of the armed loyalists, and who, when the outbreak ended in disaster, was one of the men with a price on their heads.—Engaging with a mounted dragoon near Sion Hill, he no sooner had him borne off his saddle by a thrust from his long handled pike, than he was assailed by three of his mounted companions. Ere they could reach him with their naked blades, his foot was on the throat of his fallen foe, and, wrenching the carbine from his grip, he shot one antagonist of the three. 'Bravo, Larry,' said a stentorian voice behind him, 'You will not have all the glory no, by jabers, one at a time is enough,' and in a moment he recognised his friend, Captain Timlin (the famous outlaw, afterwards gibbeted at Castlebar) who rushed at one of the fellows, and while a candle would be snuffing, horse and man were put into the dike, and down the rider tumbled with Timlin's pikehead kissing his ribs. 'Quarter, quarter,' shouted the trooper. 'Lie there in the dike,' said Timlin, 'I scorn to kill a wounded man; I make King George a present of you for the rest of the campaign.'

Larry during this time was engaged with the other trooper. He was a powerful swordsman, and for a while parried Larry's pike thrusts, when Timlin turned from the wounded trooper. 'Bravo,' said he to Larry, 'spike him in the arm-pit.' So Larry thrusting the steel as desired, down fell the trooper on the ground.

A tremendous cheer burst from the vast insurgent host, blended by the *vivas* of the republicans. The route was general. Down Stoball rolled the retreating tide; across the narrow bridge swept the beaten squadrons and battalions of the King—after them rushed the insurgent mass. A single curricle gun, manned by Corporal Gibson, and about a dozen of Highlanders, for a moment stopped the rebel torrent.

Foremost in that second Macedonian Phalanx were Timlin and his friend Larry; they dashed against the gun whilst the Highlanders fell back under the bridge, and in the tumult the brave gunner was borne with the wedged mass, and a voice was heard crying, 'Hurrah for the green, hurrah for the green,' and a thousand voices responded. Lake and Hutchinson were routed; the former sought in India to redeem his lost prestige, and the latter among the hills of Egypt.

Next day Larry and his friend Timlin parted, never to meet in this world, and early next morning Larry was to be seen with a broken pike-shaft in his hand passing the narrow defile of *Barnanagee*.

In a village on the northern shore of Lough Con, Larry's choicest treasure, next to the honor of his country, a young and faithful wife, panted for his return. Surrounding it were the studded and sylvan groves of Deel Castle. The Deel swept on through a meadowy valley, here and there thickly wooded, and the princely piles of Deel Castle, the old Elizabethan fortress of the Gorges, and the new mansion erected by Colonel Cuffe, stood embosomed in the foliage of autumn. The broad blue lake expanded from his door, and the giant mountain crags of Pontoon and Addergoole, with Mount Nephin soaring upwards until it kissed a cloud of fleecy whiteness, and rose in tapering grandeur towards the sky. Here was a scene over which Naiades might preside, and it was through this valley, among these groves, and in the depth of these woods, along the flowery banks of the lake and river, that Larry Gillespie and his young bride sauntered when their lips sealed those vows which ended in the holy bonds of matrimony. It was from among those scenes that he left to take a run into Ballina to see the *French*, with a promise that he would be back in three days, and to the moment, he entered with his broken pike in his hand, and a standard torn from the retreating red-coats. When Peggy Gillespie gazed on her young husband, a smile of delight lit her fine open countenance, just losing its former natural blush, for she was fast approaching to be a mother.

'Arrah, Larry, avourneen,' said she, 'I hope you did not come without leavin' a legacy with them bloody red-coats, acushla, you paid them as Davy Rorke paid the Tithe Proctors long ago, by given' them an ounce o' lead for every sheaf o' corn.'

'Troth, Peggy,' said the gallant Larry, 'I left a whole dozen of the spalpeens killed and wounded in the dike; I am sorry I did not meet big Jack Ormsby, I'd make his big stomach as flat as a tombstone, and let his inside see the light o' day anyhow.'

Mrs. Gillespie being impatient to see the French, she and Larry took their departure for Ballina next day, carrying with him his broken pike shaft and the torn ensign of King George. Passing on through the fields, the thrilling sound of martial music was heard blended with the wild shouts of the peasantry. It was a large body of the insurgents going out to rob and hoot the houses and cellars of the aristocracy. Meeting this formidable gang with their leader, Hugh McGuire, the latter accosted Larry, and called on him to go to the fun. 'No, Hugh,' said Larry, 'I have an arm to strike a blow for our country, but not one for smashin' locks and robbin' cellars,' (pointing with exultation to his broken pike shaft and the torn flag,) 'come on, I often hear Father Roche say that Ireland was lost in Wexford by drinkin' up the cellars.'

Larry and his young bride entered Ballina, and going down by the Druid's Monument (*cloch otho gaul*) there was a large fire with several pots of boiling beef, and an idle gang of half armed stragglers lounging along the ditches.—Seeing that Mrs. Gillespie was approaching to be a mother, a stout matronly looking woman stuck the long prongs of a stable fork into the meat, and running over, presented it to the young wife. 'By the pot-hooks, ma'am,' said she, 'you never will pass until you keep the youngster's tongue in; here, this is no harm, take it.' Mrs. Gillespie called for a knife to cut a slice off the beef, and called for a pench of salt. 'Bless you, ma'am,' said the female cicerone, 'salt is as dear in Ballina as diamond dust at the jewellers.' So Mrs. Gillespie to keep the youngster from putting his tongue out, eat the beef without salt.

When Larry went as far as the market cross, he had the pleasure of showing his wife one of the French detachments left after the invading army. 'Why, Larry,' said Peggy, (pointing at one of the officers,) this gentleman is light enough to dance a jig on the palm of your hand.'

'Then, Peggy,' said Larry, 'these little fellows have all Europe under their feet.'

'Shame on my countrymen,' said Peggy, 'to be under their heavy load of rents, tithes, and taxes and duty-work, when these little Lochramauns of fellows have all Europe under their feet.'

A few weeks rolled on, Humbert committed the fault of Hannibal after Cannae; he made a second Capua of Castlebar, and rejected the advice of the Irish leaders to march direct for the South. The triumph of Lake at Ballinamuck scattered the insurgent hosts, and Ireland was crushed beneath the heels of her oppressors. Larry Gillespie was a prisoner in Ballina, and tried before Lord Portarlington; Colonel Jackson and Captain Ormsby sat there, and mercy was stifled in the cry for blood. As soon as the tall, erect, and powerful figure of Larry was brought in, tied and manacled, 'On my honor, as a Peer of Ireland,' said the fat lord, 'it is a pity to swing this fine fellow; we will send him to his majesty's ally, the King of Prussia;—he will make a splendid Grenadier of the Royal Guard.'

'Swing him,' said Colonel Jackson; 'he has a traitor's eye; the king's enemies must perish.'

''Tis false; I am no traitor,' said Larry.—'I loved my country and stuck to her cause to the last.'

'Away with him, guard,' said Jack Ormsby. 'If there is a rope in Ballina he must be hanged.'

'I fear,' said Portarlington, 'you are too rash; what proof is there that this man carried arms and levied war on the king?'

'He has a rebel's face and a traitor's eye,' said Colonel Jackson, 'which is all the proof I require.'

'If we don't gibbet them in scores,' said Jack Ormsby, 'the king's authority is a dead letter.—I was told that this very fellow was one of the first that struck down the gunner on the bridge of Castlebar.'

'But we will put him from ever doing harm to the king,' said Portarlington, 'by making a present of him to the King of Prussia.'

'We will give up our swords to the king,' said Jackson, 'unless his enemies are put to death.'

The cruelity of faction drowned the voice of justice; though Portarlington's heart was not insensible to the voice of pity, the blood-thirsty cruelty of local satraps frustrated the natural bent of his mind. Larry Gillespie was removed a condemned felon with the sentence of death upon his head. As he was dragged from Colonel King's manson across the street to the military barracks, one gazed on that noble and athletic frame in whose bosom all hope was not lost—it was his beloved wife. No tear dropped from her blue and dazzling eye; her life she resolved to devote for his, and if every resource failed, the proud consciousness remained, that she was bearing in her bosom the pulsation of young life, that might in the course of events avenge a fathers death. The intrepid hero recognised her and his face beamed radiant when he saw that she preserved her wonted courage unimpaired. A smile of recognition lighted up his lip, and the eye fixed for a moment told that he felt her expression of sympathy would follow him to the grave.

On the evening of October, 1798, Larry Gillespie heard the blows of a hatchet in the guard-room where he was confined; they were the blows of a carpenter constructing the rude scaffolding for his execution with his brother felons. On an ash tree in Lloyd's Garden, with only a narrow street way between itself and the barrack, the tragedy of the death was to go on.—Sitting under the shadow of the high wall, opposite the towering instrument of terror, as if counting the blows, sat a woman, young, pale, and thoughtful, evidently soon to be a mother; it was the young wife of Larry Gillespie.

The early shades of night had fallen, the loud blast of the equinox shook the huge tree and scaffolding, nature seemed to conspire in wrath against this tragedy of blood, and though the trees and houses cracked in the storm and the sentinel sought the shelter of the sentry-box, there sat that lone woman with the young life that throbbed in her bosom; her hour had come; 'where there is a will, God sends a way;' the night favored her; she rose at last when night waned in the storm and the footsteps ceased about the barrack. Stepping over to the sentry she said, 'Please, sir, to take a small drop; the night is long and cold—a *cruiskeen* will keep out the cold.'

'Eh, lass, you are my guardian angel, 'tis honey to me now;' said the soldier, with an English accent, taking a full swig from a wooden measure which she filled out of a half-gallon jar. Continued the soldier, with his frank English nature, 'I expect, lass, some dear friend is about to swing up here to-morrow,' pointing with his screwed bayonet towards the tree.

'Yes, in throth, my dear husband will be murdered there,' said she, 'they condemned him without judge or jury.'

'They'd do anything in Ireland, from cutting a throat to taking the life of an innocent man; her gentry are tyrants, her middlemen are robbers, and her soldiers are cowards, only fit for killing innocent people,' said the soldier. 'I myself saved dozens from the yeomen.'

'God bless your English heart,' said Mrs. Gillespie; 'I feel as strong as a trooper's horse by the courage you give me,' and she filled another goblet, which the soldier drank to the bottom.

The two hours on guard passed away; the soldier told her not to stir, and that he would get her in to see her husband. He got time to tell his comrade, who succeeded him, of the succor that was at hand, and after giving him a full cruiskeen she was led to the guard house.

This was a long dark room, without any fire place, and in a corner a few sods of half-kindled turf raised a smoke which half obscured the one candle that threw a dim flickering flame, the soldiers neglecting to use the snuffers. Grouped together on a heap of straw lay four prisoners, three reclined at full length in a sound sleep, while one alone sat with his back against the wall, his arms showing that sleep could not drown the deep mine of thought which flashed in his brain.

When the gentle figure of the pale young wife entered, she only cast a fleeting look at the stern features of her husband. Moments were precious, a life was to be rescued from the felons of the law, and knowing she was a welcome guest with her 'jar of the true religion,' she began to divide it with the guard.

'Your minutes are worth years to you,' said her friend, the first guard; 'give me that and go over to your husband for the short time you have to stay, which is two hours, before the officer of the guard goes his rounds;' and the generous soldier took the first goblet and handed it to the gallant rebel.

The mountain dew went round, the minutes were passing fast. Mrs. Gillespie placed a few damp sods on the fire, which increased the smoke—the moment for action came.

'Larry, Larry,' said she, 'for the sake of all the saints in glory, put on this cap, and jock and be out the way; the sentry will let you out, he will think it's me.'

'Arrah, Peggy, acushla,' said Larry, in a low whisper, 'they'll hang you.'

'Never mind,' said Peggy, 'not till what I'm carrying is born, anyhow.'

Larry bounded into the yard, and giving a gentle tap, the door was opened, then stooping, so as not to look so tall, out he went, the soldier bidding the Irish gal good night.

Larry cast an eye at the tree and tall scaffolding where his fellow rebels were to be hanged on the morrow, and, favored by the darkness and the storm, he struck through a lane into the fields, and in the morning was far away from his enemies.

The next day the work of death went on, the three men swung from the ash tree, and a green leaf never grew on it since. Two other trees were also there, and still are in the same garden this day in beautiful bloom, old, tall and stately; but not as much as a vestige of a leaf on the other is to be seen, and any person coming to Ballina can be pointed out this speaking blight.

Mrs. Gillespie fell in a deep slumber, and slept soundly. In the morning she was recognised crouching among the condemned. The report was made to Lord Portarlington, who said with a smothered smile of satisfaction, 'I thought to make a present of that fellow to the King of Prussia, and nothing would satisfy them but his blood. Let them follow him and let the woman go, I will not order a court martial.'

Larry Gillespie struck straight for the wilds of Erris. Fortunately, Captain O'Malley, the Irish smuggler, who saved many a rebel leader from the gallows, was landing a cargo of brandy and tobacco.

Larry Gillespie formed one of a dozen rescued from the vengeance of the law, and was landed at Flushing. There the flag of the great Republic gave him protection, and joining the French army, he became a candidate for glory on the battle-field.

In Napoleon's second campaign of Italy, he often thought of the Deel and Lough Con, in his bivouac on the Adige. In the grand army at Bologne for invading England, his heart yearned for a field where he would meet the oppressors of his country. And at Ulm, Jena and Friedland he escaped the carnage of those days. His prowess at Friedland caught the eagle eye of Napoleon, and he was joined to the old guard.—Having joined Murat's expedition to Spain, he found a field congenial to his wishes during the whole of the Peninsular war, and in Soult's division felled many an English soldier, until Toulouse ended the bloody fray. In the last charge of the old guard at Waterloo, the prowess of the Irishman was felt, and one of the last who departed on that bloody route was *Captain Gillespie*.

In the year 1816 a tall stranger, in military appearance, came to Ballina. A deep scar on his right cheek, and the loss of two fingers showed that he had been a warrior in arms. It was Captain Gillespie; he went to his native village and the haunts of his early bliss, and seeing a tall young man of eighteen digging potatoes in a field, the lines of his dear wife's countenance were marked in his. Making careless inquiries about the village, his heart burst with joy when he learned that his wife was there. Not communicating the parentage to his son, they walked together to the humble cottage, where, rich with two acres of land and a cow, but never deserted by hope, they lived together. A woman, bluff and healthy, approaching forty, was over her spinning-wheel. She lifted her head and gazed on the tall soldier-like man; his face and features were much changed, but looking at the grey twinkling eye, her heart burst, and she fell into a swoon, lisping the name of Larry. There she was, a spotless Irish mother, worthy of his exiled heart. As he lifted her gently up, he implanted a kiss on her lips, her eyes opened, and on his breast she saw the Cross of the Legion of Honor.

In three weeks afterwards, father, mother and son were on their way to America.

THE END.

THE STATES OF THE CHURCH.

(Translated from the French for the Dublin Nation.)

To study, under all its forms, the history of the State of the Church during late times down to Pius IX.—to follow in its interior development, as in its diverse modifications, the state of government and society, so as to submit to an exact appreciation its present situation, and to foresee the future—is a labor which, very far from inviting as easy, presents difficulties sufficient to repel even the thinker most accustomed to reflection; and the more because the task is of a nature to excite the gratitude but of a very small number. Besides this, it will be necessary in order to clear up certain points, to retrace anterior history, which itself has never yet been brought to light in a complete manner. Moreover, many questions of this epoch await, that they may be judged impartially, a light which the future alone can bestow. In this extraordinary country the interior situation, which almost in every case remain concealed from the eye of the stranger, is so enveloped and complicated—opinions here are so varied according to the point of view whence each one regards it—many Italians possess a spirit so credulous, so eager of mere reports, so inclined to falsehood—documents too, are brought forward so numerous, and at the same time detective—that it is difficult to understand how it could be possible for the greater number of those who in our own times have written on the States of the Church, to venture to form their decision in a manner so prompt, so inconsiderate, and to at once tolerate the most positive assertions; whilst, far from having studied all the historical sources, they are not even acquainted with them. If we examine the most recent works, we will discover that they exhibit only the surface of affairs, and that they are stained with a partiality which does little honor to general criticism, and still less to historical impartiality. The majority of these authors imagine that the principal source of the history of the States of the Church in latter days is the book of Dr. Farini of Ravenna, who, after having long been a revolutionary fanatic, was afterwards in Piedmont among the number of Cavour's confidants, and who, not very long ago, in a letter addressed to Lord John Russell, urged the rupture of the treaties of 1815, and insisted on the absolute autocracy of nations without leaving power to a prince to make any opposition whatsoever, and who claimed the absolute right of revolution "when and how the people wish."

His book on "the Roman States" is not written without a certain semblance of moderation, but in a hundred places breaks forth the fanatic hate of the sectarian, and his partiality which proceeds even to the disfiguring of facts, as has been proved over and over in Italy.—These proofs were furnished, it is true, by "Ultramontane organs," but they were so overwhelming that the revolutionary historian was utterly unable to make any rejoinder.

Despite the want of justice and truth, this 'history nevertheless has had some success; and indeed, to legitimate entrance into the ranks of liberalism, did it not possess a real title to adoption in its furious hatred against 'the caste of priests'—against the intolerable yoke of the ecclesiastical aristocracy?' In England and in Germany it has found an echo, the more approved of because in these countries, as everybody knows, any thing which is prejudiced against and hostile to the Papacy—that is to say, against Catholicity which is not the reformed Catholicism of Gioberti or Rouge—is received as an incontestible axiom, as pure truth, not only by the inconsiderate and by newspaper correspondents, but also by would be historians. As we proceed we shall have occasion to bring to light what very pitiable historiographers are those who depend Farini; and again, how, even in the very places where they felt the 'intricacies' of such a manner of writing history with regard to the Roman Ecclesiastical Government, they did not even think it necessary to use that circumspection which in every other case they feel themselves bound to exhibit in the history of other States. A thousand times, again and again, they have repeated that in the States of the Church everything is immutable, unchangeable; that at each installation matters remained just as they were previously; that the ameliorations introduced into Rome by French influence have been, without even a single exception, discarded; that the Clerocracy is the sworn enemy of every reform; that there is no public law there save and except the inflexible Canon Law. Thus, for example, Cavour, in his famous Memorandum of the 24th March, 1856, denounced to the Paris Areopagus the Roman Government as a retrograde and despotic administration—stating that it did not hold in the slightest consideration the ideas and profound reforms of France under Napoleon, and that its clerical organisations opposed themselves as a peculiar obstacle to the generous plans meditated by Pius IX. after 1845, that they might make these projects miscarry, so as to make it quite evident, with the continuation of that administration, all reform was impossible in this unhappy country. Since then La Guerroniere has loudly proclaimed the very same thing; the *Siecle* and all the anti-Catholic press repeat them continually, 'At Rome,' they write,—'everything has remained in the old condition; any progress hinted at by France is reproved, every movement is repressed, the reign of the middle age continues to exercise its influence far and wide.' Perhaps an opponent inclining to reaction, and exactly knowing the state of affairs, might well exclaim here—'It would have been well that this influence should come to us in the same manner from all quarters.'

But, in reality, this attachment to things of the past, generally speaking, does not exist at all; if it did exist, the historian would encounter less difficulty, for he could dispense with examining a vast number of *motuproprio* as well as of the best and most important statistic documents. It seems astonishing that rather the directly contrary reproach would have been directed against the Pontifical Government—namely, of having too much re-touched codes and laws, too far multiplied edicts and organic dispositions; and of having thereby ruined the powerful influence of legislation on public manners, by creating a confusion whose result is disquiet, discontent, and want of stability.

The Papal monarchy, as an absolute elective monarchy, is subject to many changes. After each conclave a change becomes manifest, not only in the person of the Head of the State, but