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THE LIMERICK VETERAN; OR, THE FOSTER SISTERS. BY THE AUTHOR OF "FLORENCE O'NEILL."

(From the Baltimore Catholic Mirror.)

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER XI.—A ROYAL WANDERER.

Spending but one day in the hospitable home of John Mackinnon, Charles Edward, after many hardships and narrow escapes, arrived at Borrodale, the residence of Angus Macdonald having been conveyed thither by Mackinnon himself, after he had taken leave of his friend Macleod.

On approaching the wretched hut in which Angus was then residing, Charles was seized with an unutterable aversion to enter. At every step, indeed, in this dreadful wandering through the Highlands, his heart was wrung with sorrow by beholding the misery into which all those were plunged who were loyal to his race. In no instance, however, had he felt so acutely as in the present. The former comfortable and happy home of the brave Highlander had been burnt to the ground, and he had also lost a son at the fatal field of Culloden.*

The Prince paused as he entered the hut, his eyes overflowed with tears, and then advancing to Mrs. Macdonald, who had come forward to meet him, he exclaimed:

"Is it possible, Madam, you can endure the sight of one who has caused so much misery to yourself and your family?"

"Yes," and a mournful smile lighted up her face as the poor lady spoke, "even had I lost all my sons in your Royal Highness' service."

Carefully, then, did this noble woman and her husband supply his wants, whilst the poor wanderer lingered yet a few days in a hut hard by, and then a little in another, until one morning Angus received news from Glenaladale, one of the Prince's friends, that he had prepared at Morae a more secure asylum for the hunted-down royal wanderer.

The enemies of the unhappy Charles Edward had, however, traced him from Skye, and he was now encompassed on all sides. Near Loch Nevis vessels of war were stationed, also several bodies of troops, a cordon of which was placed around the entire district, and no person was allowed to pass without being examined by sentries placed at frequent and equal distances from each other.

Having bade farewell to Angus and his wife, Charles Edward, accompanied only by Glenaladale, wended his way through mountainous passes and a rugged district, from whence, on reaching the brow of a hill, he sent a message to a chief, Cameron of Glenpean, to send him help in his direst need.

* On his way home, Mackinnon was seized by two of the militia, and at once taken before a certain Captain Ferguson, whose name is still held in abhorrence. He was sharply questioned, and subjected to the most rigorous examination; and when it was found that no information could be elicited from him concerning the Prince, Ferguson commanded him to be stripped and tied to a tree, where he was lashed till the blood gushed from both his sides. He was then in company with the old chief, sent to London, and kept in prison till the July of the following year.

It was drawing near midnight as they descended into a deep ravine, having ascertained that a body of Argyllshire militia were approaching the hill on which they had been stationed; and it was not without a feeling of alarm that they beheld a man advancing towards them. It proved, however, to be Cameron himself, laden with a small supply of bread and butter, and that was the only food Charles Edward tasted during the next four days.

Then they wandered on again through rugged ravines and mountainous passes almost inaccessible, so choked up were they by rocks and trees, and, at length, on reaching the summit of a hill, he could perceive the enemy's camp within a mile of him; and in the silence which reigned around when night had fallen, he could hear distinctly the challenge of the sentries, and could see the blaze of light issuing from the watch-fires, which made it evident to him that he had no greater chance of escape by night than by day.

Charles and his companions then proceeded to a hiding place on the brow of a hill, the poor Prince keeping himself concealed when those who were with him left him in search of food, but they quickly hastened back with the intelligence that a party of soldiers were drawing near. Their only hope of avoiding detection consisted in their remaining close together.— They therefore concealed themselves in a cave, the entrance to which was nearly choked up with trees, whilst the soldiers searched around in vain. Desperately small as the chance of escape through the military cordon drawn around them would seem to be, to remain where they were was scarcely less so, added to which it was utterly impossible to procure provisions. Therefore they resolved to brave the worst, and made the attempt that same night.

They made their way over a steep hill, and, in consequence of his foot slipping, Charles would have been dashed to atoms by falling over a steep precipice, had not his companions caught him, one by each arm.

On reaching the summit of the hill, they crept stealthily along till within earshot of the sentinels; and as the day began to break, they crawled up a deep and narrow ravine, and watching an opportunity till the back of the men were turned towards them, they crept on all fours, in the deepest silence, till they found themselves out of sight of their enemies.

Then bidding farewell to one of his faithful friends, Cameron of Glenpean, Charles, as soon as night again set in, commenced his journey with Glenaladale, his brother, and whose father had been killed by the soldiers on the previous day. Suddenly, Glenaladale discovered that he had lost the Prince's purse, containing all they possessed, about forty guineas, and, notwithstanding the objections of Charles, he went in search of it, accompanied by his friends, Charles concealing himself behind an activity till they should return.

Charles had only been a few moments concealed when the sound of many footsteps struck upon his ear, and a party of soldiers defiled along the very path by which he would have proceeded but for the loss of his purse. The loss was but temporary, too, for Glenaladale shortly returned with it. Its loss had been the means, under God, of saving the life of Charles, and they all united in returning Him hearty thanks, the Prince expressing his conviction that he was under the special care of Providence.

All that night did Charles and his companions pursue their way through glen and valley. On the following morning, seeking a hiding place for a few hours, the painful march was again resumed, but what was their surprise and horror when they heard the sound of the shots of the brutal soldiery driving away the unfortunate people who had fled to the hills with their cattle?

For many hours the rain fell in one ceaseless downpour, and neither bit nor drop had passed the lips of Charles and his companions all the day. The night had again closed in, it was still raining heavily, and the wind by fits and starts was howling in dismal gusts.

At length he reached the braes of Glenmoriston, and without food or fire, drenched to the skin, his only shelter was a cave, into which he crept. It was narrow in extent, the ground rugged and rocky, but it saved him from the pitiless storm.

CHAPTER XII.—THE SEVEN MEN OF GLENMORISTON.

The Seven Men of Glenmoriston were individuals proscribed by the English Government on account of their having taken up arms for the House of Stuart. These men had beheld their homes laid waste, these they loved slain, and their fellow-clansmen sent as slaves to the Plantations.

They then formed an association, binding themselves by a solemn vow to let no opportunity slip of avenging themselves on the Duke of Cumberland and his soldiers, to stand by each other, and never to yield up their arms.

They lurked in caves by the lonely hillside, and skulked about amongst the rugged fastnesses of the wildest districts, whence they emerged to attack the military parties in the neighborhood, carrying off their cattle and other spoil.

Their daring exploits at length made them the terror of the military, four of them having on one occasion attacked a party of seven soldiers who had some wine and provisions in their custody; they shot two of them dead, and also an informer, whose head they cut off and stuck on a tree by the high road. They had also attacked and kept up a running fire in a narrow ravine on a large body of the military, headed by three officers, till the former fled, leaving their cattle behind them.

A Highlander had appeared before these men, in their own stronghold, and had craved their protection for Glenaladale and two Jacobite gentlemen, mentioning a desolate spot in the midst of the braes as that in which they might be seen. Three of the seven at once set forth, little dreaming whom they were to meet. Ragged, forlorn, and miserable was the condition of Charles Edward; but no sooner had he appeared before them than they recognized the Prince, and transported with delight, they led him in triumph to their cave.

For forty-eight long and weary hours he had borne a severe fast and exposure to the inclemency of the weather, and he did indeed rejoice in the warmth and comfort he met with in the robbers' stronghold, in which he was at once refreshed with a plentiful meal of mutton, butter, cheese, and whiskey.

The four men who were absent were away on a foraging expedition; they returned on the morrow, and these also recognized the Prince, and Glenaladale, at his request, administered the awful oath in use in the Highlands, "that all the curses the Scriptures did pronounce might come upon them and all their posterity if they did not stand firm to the Prince in the greatest danger, and if they should discover to any person, man, woman, or child, that the Prince was in their keeping till once his person should be out of danger."

So faithfully did they keep this oath, that not one of them mentioned the Prince had been their guest until a year after his escape to the Continent.

Three weeks did Charles abide in caves and hiding places known to the Glenmoriston men, during which time they served him with the most devoted attention, though the means they often had recourse to were odd and faulty enough.

The tattered state of his clothing shocked them, and to remedy the difficulty, they stopped on their way some servants who were going to Fort Augustus, seized a portmanteau belonging to their master, and gave its contents to the Prince.

Not long had he been with these lawless men before he obtained an influence over them. He saw the power he possessed, and turned it to a good purpose. He made Glenaladale his interpreter, and discovering that they were much given to the practice of swearing, reproved them so often, that they at last gave up the custom; and he also set them a powerful example for good in the exactitude with which they beheld him retire from their company morning and evening to offer up his devotions in private.

Entirely did bonny Prince Charlie win the love of the warm-hearted Highlanders. They esteemed him for the pleasure he took in athletic sports; they loved him because he made himself one of themselves and identified himself with their own interests, scorning not to become their associate; and to make them perfectly at their ease in his company, he forbade them to take off their bonnets, and during his meals made them eat with him, with their food upon their knees.

Charles ardently desired to meet with Lochiel, whom he fancied was concealing himself in the wilds of Badenoch, and when little more than a month had elapsed, he prepared to bid farewell to the Seven Men of Glenmoriston, how earnestly did those outlawed mountaineers beseech him not to leave them.

"Remain with us," they one and all exclaimed before he left them; "the mountains of gold which the Government has set as a price on your head may lead some gentleman to betray you who can live on the wages of his dishonor in a foreign land; to us there is no such temptation; we speak no language but our own; we cannot live in any other country; were we to touch a hair of your head, the very mountains would crush us beneath their weight."*

It was not indeed without a feeling of regret that the Prince bade them farewell, first presenting them with twenty-four guineas, to be divided amongst them.

CHAPTER XIII.—CONDEMNED TO DEATH.

On the same day on which Charles Edward

* Chambers' Hist. Rebellion.

fled for shelter to the braes of Glenmoriston, Lord Balmerino was summoned to take his trial at Westminster Hall on a charge of high treason, together with the Earls of Cromartie and Kilmarnock. Lord Balmerino was the first person of rank who fell into the hands of the Government. He had been taken to Inverness after the battle of Culloden; he was then sent by sea to London, and, with the two earls, committed to the Tower, and brought to trial before their peers on the 28th of July, 1746.

The scene is said to have been of a most impressive and solemn character.

Bills of indictment had been found against these unfortunate noblemen by the grand jury of Surrey. They were very long, and stated, amongst many other things, "that not having the fear of God in their hearts, and being moved by the instigation of the devil, they had tried to exalt the person pretending to be Prince of Wales."

The Sergeant-at-Arms was then called to make proclamation for the Lieutenant of the Tower to bring his prisoners to the Bar, which he did in the following manner:

"O yes, O yes, O yes, Lieutenant of the Tower, bring forth your prisoners to the Bar, together with copies of commitments, pursuant to the order of the House of Lords."

With the axe carried before them, but the edge turned from them, Lord Balmerino and his companions were brought to the Bar, and falling on their knees, were ordered to rise by the Lord High Steward. The copy of commitment having been read, the Clerk of the Court severally arraigned the three noblemen. Lord Balmerino's turn came the last.

"Are you guilty or not guilty of this treason, Arthur, Lord Balmerino?"

With pale but composed countenance, the prisoner replied:

"Will your Lordship be pleased to hear me? I will be very brief. I have only two or three words to say. I shall not take up your time long, my Lord."

"Your Lordship is now arraigned," said the Lord High Steward; "the indictment has been read to you; now is your time to plead."

"If I should plead guilty, there is no occasion to speak after that."

"This is not a proper time to speak of other matters. It is my duty to inform your Lordship of the rules of law, which require that you should first plead to the indictment."

"Then, my Lord, you will oblige me to take up more of your time than I had intended, for I cannot plead guilty. I will not waste your time. I require to be heard, and then I will plead."

"If your Lordship has anything material to say, you may mention it."

"My Lords," said Balmerino, looking on the assembled peers, "if there be any fault in the form of indictment, or if it is so faulty that no judgment can be given upon it, I wish to know whether I can be indicted again?" Then he went on to say that he could prove he was twelve miles from Carlisle when he was indicted for being present at the taking of the city.

This objection, he was told, would depend on the evidence, which could not be entered into till he had pleaded. The question being again put to him:

"Arthur, Lord Balmerino, are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty," he replied, in a loud voice.

"Culprit, how will your Lordship be tried?"

"By God and my peers," replied the venerable old man.

"God send your Lordship a good deliverance," was the reply, and the Sergeant-at-Arms made proclamation:

"O yes, O yes, O yes, all manner of persons that will give evidence against Arthur, Lord Balmerino, on behalf of our sovereign lord the King, let them come forth and they shall be heard, for now he stands at the Bar upon his deliverance."

Then Sir Richard Lloyd, counsel for the King, observed that as he had pleaded "not guilty," it was incumbent on those who had the honor to serve the Crown to prove his guilt.

Poor Balmerino, true to the last to the interests for which he died, listened with a still, calm countenance to the speech of the counsel for the King, a few lines of which I transcribe for such as may not have examined the State Trials of that most unfortunate period:

"Rebellion surely is the sin of witchcraft.— Our religion is a reasonable service; its establishment is the law of the land; and for a Protestant peer to endeavor to extirpate our most holy religion, and to introduce superstition and idolatry amongst us is a proposition as absurd as transubstantiation, &c. * * *

"The prisoner, as a reward for his treachery, was advanced to be the captain of the second troop of life guards attending on the Pretender's son, and entered Carlisle with his sword drawn, colors displayed, and drums beating, wearing a white cockade in his hat. He was

present at several places where the Pretender was proclaimed, and was finally defeated with the rest of the rebels, and made a prisoner on the field of Culloden."

Then followed a long speech of the Attorney General, charging him with a desire to dethrone his Majesty, extirpate his royal family, and set up a Popish Pretender in his place.

Several witnesses were then examined, some of which were not very clear as to the time in the month the prisoner was at Carlisle.

At the conclusion of their examination, the Lord High Steward remarked, that though the witnesses could not swear that he was there on the day named in the indictment, yet they had proved he had been in arms at the head of a troop of rebels, and the council and judges expressing the same opinion, Balmerino was removed from the Bar, and the question was put severally to each of the assembled peers by the Lord High Steward, beginning with the youngest, as follows, saying:

"Henry Arthur, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, what says your Lordship? is Arthur, Lord Balmerino, guilty or not guilty of the high treason whereof he stands indicted?"

Amidst breathless silence, the young peer stood up in his place, his head uncovered, and laying his right hand on his breast, he answered:

"Guilty, upon my honor."

He was again summoned in the same order as before, and acquainted that he was found guilty of the crime of high treason.

On the second day he applied for benefit of counsel, which was accorded to him, he being under the belief that the flaw in the indictment relative to the time he was at Carlisle would quash it so as to render it illegal.

The chief plea set up by the friends of Balmerino was, that as the bill of indictment was issued by the grand jury of Surrey, in which county no offence had been committed, that the whole thing should be set aside, or at least an arrest of judgment be granted, and this plea, being submitted to his counsel, was thought by him of no avail.

Resolved to stand by his principles to the last, and never sue for life in the suppliant terms used by his fellow-prisoners or have recourse to their own servile language, in the faint hope that the stony heart of George the Second would be touched by their appeal to his Most Sacred Majesty, he simply expressed his sorrow that he had taken up any unnecessary time, and begged his Lordship to intercede with the King.

The three peers then had sentence of death passed on them, as follows: This sentence was according to the brutal spirit of the times:

"The judgment of the law is, and this high court doth award, that you return to the prison of the Tower from whence you came; from thence you must be drawn to the place of execution; when you come there you must be hanged by the neck, but not till you are dead, for you must be cut down alive; then your bowels must be taken out and burnt before your faces; then your heads must be severed from your bodies, and your bodies must be divided into four quarters, and these must be at the King's disposal. And God Almighty be merciful to your soul."

The sentence of hanging was, as is usual, commuted to that of beheading, on account of the rank of the prisoners. The old peer had not been suffered to be much alone during those sorrowful days that intervened between his committal to the Tower and his execution.

He had been very anxious that "his pretty Peggy," as he was wont to call his heart-broken wife, should be in the Tower with him; but that favor being refused, she took lodgings for her niece, Marion, and herself in East Smithfield; so that the husband and wife were constantly together during the time of his imprisonment.

Attacked by a severe illness when on his way from Lord Balmerino's home in Argyllshire, Edward St. John was incapacitated, perhaps fortunately for himself, from being at the fatal field of Culloden.

He had taken advantage of the very first days of convalescence to repair to London, on hearing of the arrest and approaching trial of Lord Balmerino, passed the best part of his time with the prisoner, and when not so employed, was engaged in the task of soothing the anguish of Marion and her aunt.

Maintaining perfect calmness to the last, without at the same time showing any symptoms of bravado, this good peer prepared for death, his single sorrow consisting in the reflection that he had not died in his armor at Culloden, beside his friend and brother in arms, the veteran Marshal.

The 18th of August being the day appointed for the execution, at six o'clock in the morning a troop of the life guards, another of horse-grenadier guards, and a thousand foot guards, marched to Tower Hill. A large number of them were posted around the scaffold, and the remainder were drawn up in two lines, reaching