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THE IRISH LEGEND OF M'DONNELL, AND THE NORMAN DE BORGOS. A BIOGRAPHICAL TALE. BY ARCHIBALD M'FARRAN. CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

"Why have you not come to your charge sooner?" said she, "we have been quite solitary since you left us."

"I hoped otherwise," said he, "and, in honor to your friend, I think you must revoke the last declaration."

"I am always absolute," said she, "and when an ordinance is once delivered, never wish to recall it. And, again, you know my friend is only one individual, and there are a plurality of us."

"Had I known," said he, "that I could in the smallest degree have contributed to your happiness by my most sedulous attention, be assured it would not have been wanting, for I must candidly confess that such a charge was to me altogether pleasing."

"Are you fond, Sir Coll, of an excursion by sea in fine weather?" said M'Quillan.

"Yes, I cannot say but I am; howe'er, I would like meikle to get sicna night as the one in which I cam to these shores."

"Perhaps," said O'Neill, "the gods were enraged with you, I mean the deities of the watery elements, seeing you were embarked in an improper cause."

"The wrath of these divinities," said Sir Coll, "together with that of the zealots who believe in them, never costs a M'Donnell a second thought. We love our friends, and have no fear for our enemies," turning himself rather about on his chair.

"And yet," said the other, "you ought to love your enemies if you intend meriting the promised reward."

"I beg your pardon," said M'Donnell, smiling, "if your intention is to examine our moral conduct, why do you not include others as well as me?"

"If my friend, Sir Hugh, be come upon a mission among us," said Daniel, "I fear he may have more trouble in making proselytes to his cause than he is aware of."

"That depends greatly," said M'Donnell, "upon the nature of his cause, for, if it be consonant with justice, we maunna doubt it; but should it be an improper one, as he imputed to me to-night, I am persuaded his converts, if we may call them by that name, will be few."

"Money," said O'Neill, "has powerful charms; it has frequently induced renowned heroes to come over to a cause even if it were not to be found among the best. When Philip of Macedon inquired at the oracle of Delphi, he was ordered to fight with silver spears, and Demosthenes himself was bribed by a very small cup; and it is sincerely my opinion that we still can find men like the Swiss, pliant enough to fight for gold in any cause."

"As your discourse, sir," said M'Donnell, "seems altogether directed toward me, I must in justice to my family," laying his hand on his breast, "say, that such mean ideas as you mention were eternally unknown to them. But in regard of your allusion," clapping his hand on his thigh where his sword usually hung—

"I have something in particular to say to you both," said M'Quillan.

"Let him finish his sentence," said O'Neill; "a few harmless words from a Highlander, can do us little harm, and I am aware he means nothing further."

"You may boast securely," said the other, "since our present company and the hospitable roof of our friend screen you now from chastisement, but I must tell you that there breathes not a Hy-Nial in the lands of Inisfalla, against whom I fear to maintain the cause of my family."

"Now," said Daniel M'Quillan, "will you both allow me to speak a few words on the subject in question, as I am positive each of you mistakes the other, and hence has arisen all the warmth of argument. When you, Sir Hugh O'Neill, spoke of obtaining allies through the means of gold, deducing authority from classical history, for which I must compliment you, I say, did you individually and personally allude to the family of Sir Coll M'Donnell? and I also ask you, had you cause for that allusion?"

"I shan't explain. I have told my opinion, and let every one read it as it suits him."

"This," said M'Quillan, "corroborates my statement; you pointed it at no particular people; only when my friend, looking toward M'Donnell, 'made a wrong construction, you would not withdraw your hypothesis, a term which, I think, I may lawfully call it.'"

"Now," said he, turning to M'Donnell, "before this misconception, may I as a friend ask, was there any spark of resentment in your breast against Sir Hugh? I am certain none," answering himself, and still having hold of each by the hand, "and you see it has all arisen from nothing."

At the time he put the interrogation to M'Donnell regarding a cause of resentment, he, looking over to Aveline, and totally unknown to himself, said,—"I would be acting a base part if I could conceive such without sufficient grounds; but the man who would falsely brand my family, points more than to myself."

"If it had been so," said the other; "but you hear he has half confessed otherwise, and I am certain it is not the character of a M'Donnell to bear animosity in his breast without a cause."

"I should hope so," said M'Donnell, smiling.—"And you, Sir Hugh, in regard of an O'Neill, I should think, must confess the same. We are all fond enough," said M'Quillan, "of attributing magnanimity to our family and connexions, be they deserving or not; and I must certainly partake of human nature as my fellow brethren. Come," said he, joining their hands, "I'll not allow you to disobey my orders longer; cast away this childlike, we don't know but we may be attacked to-morrow by our enemy, Coocoy Na Gall O'Cahan, from beyond the Bann."

"I was determined," said M'Donnell, "the first fair wind, that we should take the opportunity of it in returning to Scotland; but if you are in apprehension of a visit from this chieftain and his clans, I shall willingly accompany you, that I may see how the temper of the Highland and Irish swords agree, for I have been told they are equally red-hot."

"You will find the O'Cahans," said O'Neill, "good men, take them individually. I don't know, however, whether their clans be numerous; but there was a day, I am well convinced, when they were more powerful than at present." It had been only a few days back that old Daniel M'Quillan received a letter, sealed with the Imperial arms of the house of Austria, proposing to his two sons high commissions in the Emperor's service, besides other marks of distinction as an inducement.

Charles the Great, who then filled the Imperial chair, I mean Charles the Fifth of Germany, who was the wonder and terror of Europe for thirty years, now carried on wars with the neighboring potentates, and being often informed of the adventurous prowess of Irishmen, was anxious to procure commanders for some newly raised levies; and, therefore, through his friendship with the English court, addressed himself to the descendants of De Borgos.

No people living were possessed of a more independent mind than the same family, nor had a greater aversion to hold a situation under a higher power, no matter to what degree of supremacy that power was raised. Such was the unbending mind of an Irish chieftain in the sixteenth century, that he considered no man existing superior to himself, a good instance of which we find in history:—"The native Irish chiefs even then continued to consider themselves as being so independent that they made express treaties of peace with the king and his lieutenant. Treaties of alliance were more than once made with them, for making war on turbulent lords of the English race."

"One of the chieftains, named M'Gillpatrick, and chief of Ossory in the neighborhood

of Wexford, conceiving himself on a certain occasion to have been aggrieved by the Earl of Ormond, then Lord-Deputy of Ireland, sent a declaration of war to Henry the Eighth, if he did not punish him, which declaration the ambassador, whom the Irish chieftain had made choice of, delivered in good Latin to the king as he was returning from the chapel."

I have been induced to make this digression in order to show the importance in which this prince held his good or evil intentions, not fearing to declare war against such a mighty king, although, perhaps, his own dominions did not exceed the bounds of a county. However, in regard of the two M'Quillans, as they were fond of adventure, and longed to improve in military tactics, it being the arena on which their chivalric genius could best shine, their father, although reluctantly, was persuaded to gratify them in this particular wish, and, therefore, a day was set apart for their taking leave of Dunluce and their grieving friends, and not only Dunluce, but the green island with all her fascinating beauties.

"I hope," said Daniel M'Quillan, "Sir Coll, you will not set out for the Isles until the time that my brother and I are about to depart, and then let us all go together, so that the trouble at our departure may happen all at one time; when we do separate, my dear friend, I might almost say, that we shall never meet again in the same place, for such are the vicissitudes of life, that the fortunes even of two brothers are often cast in different lands, and although we set out in the morning of our days with hearts buoyed up with hopes of returning at a fixed time, yet, alas! seldom have I seen these hopes realised. Around my heart," said he, "I must confess the shamrock of our Island is entwined, but I must, with a determined hand, pull it away."

Far westward lies an isle of ancient fame, By nature blest, and Scotia's is her name, An island rich—exhaustless in her store, Of veinsy silver and of golden ore. Her fruitful soil for ever teems with wealth; With gems her water and her air with health; Her verdant fields with milk and honey flow; How woolly fleeces vie with virgin snow; Her waving furrows float with bearded corn, And arms and arts her envied sons adorn. No savage bear with lawless fury roves, No avenging lion through her sacred groves; No poison there infects, no scaly snake Creeps through the grass, nor fog annoys the lake. An island worthy of its pious race, In war triumphant, and unmatched in peace.

M'Donnell having offered his services to his host against the O'Cahans, the expedition was undertaken, and, after hard fighting, and a good deal of skirmishing for two or three days, they returned to the castle, bringing some cattle with them, but their forces fewer in number.

"Since it is settled past a doubt," said old Daniel M'Quillan, "that my sons are about to the castle, bringing some cattle with them, but their forces fewer in number."

"Since it is settled past a doubt," said old Daniel M'Quillan, "that my sons are about to depart for Germany, and as I am uncertain when they may return, perhaps, indeed, I will look in vain for that pleasure—you and your men are welcome to the accommodation of the castle and the surrounding villages as long as you shall please to accept it, or, as you find it convenient, to stop on the Irish shore."

Sir Coll returned him thanks for his offer, and told him he would make himself happy in benefiting by this kind proposal, at least until the coming of spring, but first he must send and acquaint his father in the isles.

On the day that Garry and Daniel M'Quillan intended to set out, Sir Hugh Roe M'Phelim O'Neill proposed also to return to Tyrone; and as it was evident that these events would break up the company at Dunluce, so old M'Quillan was more anxious for detaining his guest, and, therefore, M'Donnell and Aveline were likely to have the mansion to themselves.

The departure of the brothers, however, was deeply lamented by all for many days. 'Twas now only the father and the daughter around the hearth, chatting the night away with the young Highlander, who exerted himself to an extreme in furnishing amusement for the winter evenings, which, when they were fine, began now to have an appearance of spring.

When the old man was engaged in arranging matters with his tenantry, fortune frequently brought them together in a small anti-chamber, where her harp stood, and where M'Donnell often retired to practise on the violin, an instrument of which he was remarkably fond, and in which he excelled.

Reaching up his hand one day when they were here alone, and taking down the violin next to him, he toned it, and began to perform a melody that he and her brothers were wont to play together. As he turned round toward the window where she was, he found her hanging her head, and bathed in tears. Then, lay-

* The former name of Ireland. † These lines are by St. Donatus, bishop of Struzia, who died in 840.

ing the violin aside, he reflected severely on himself for having so unthoughtfully given cause to awaken her grief.

"I am unfortunate," said he to her, "in this rude act which I, so unthinkingly, have committed; might not I have known that it would agitate you? But why do I talk; it is out of my power to atone for such misconduct otherwise than by taking an obligation that I shall not receive that instrument in my hand before I tread the shores of Caledonia."

"I do not wish," said she, "that you should take upon you a promise, or even be unhappily affected for all that has occurred. To shed a few tears as a small tribute to the recollection of my dear brothers is certainly as little as I can do; and, in place of creating pain to me, I think I feel a pleasure in the sensation. I have often inquired at my father respecting the spot of ground where my brother Finn lies, and he says it is pleasantly situated by the side of a little brook, rising in the mountains southwest of the Bann, and a few miles from its source, murmuring past the green habitation of my brother and my friend."

"How ungrateful have I been, that, during the tedious space since he died, never went to see his grave. My father also tells me that it is planted round with shrubs, and he has engaged a peasant to fence it about, and take every care of it."

"I have formed a plan with myself, but whether ever I shall get it realised is uncertain; however, although ideal, it has greatly quieted my mind, and is the subject of meditation for many a lonely hour. The plan is simply this: if we are fortunate enough to obtain a peace with the O'Cahans, I intend requesting my father to accompany me to the place, that I may visit the residence of my dear friends, and see whether it resembles what I have in my imagination."

As she concluded the last sentence, she shed tears in abundance, and never before appeared to him possessed of half the charms. I have always thought, and I am almost positive many will agree with me, that a pretty face never shines so bewitchingly, as through a veil of silent tears. It brings to my mind the picture of an April morn, wherein the brilliant rays of the sun are thinly skirted over by a moist cloud, only rendering its second appearance more agreeable.

Sometime in the succeeding summer a peace happened between these families, for Daniel M'Quillan was not now as formerly, when surrounded by his three brave sons, whose glory alone was in martial clangour and the blast of the trumpet, and the valor of whom was well known to all their enemies; moreover, he was now sinking into the vale of years, and sincerely wished, if he could obtain it, to end the remainder of his days in peace with all mankind. He now willingly acquiesced in the request of his daughter, and appointed the next Monday morning as the day of their departure for the woods of Dreenagh, in O'Kane's country, a place where the two younger never had been, and one of them in particular longed more for that day than she had ever done when at school for the approach of the summer or Christmas recess.

About six o'clock on a fine morning in June, the three found themselves well mounted, and on their way to Culrathain, with a servant following up behind, and having Aveline's harp slung across his shoulders, with a basket laid behind him on his horse, containing provisions for them, as they could not expect, at the place of their destination, to meet with any good house of entertainment.

Each advance which they made, discovering something new to Aveline's romantic mind, served as a field of interrogation until the appearance of another object banished the first impression.

The morning was calm, and on nature's carpet lay a weighty dew, which gave an additional beauty to the green blades of corn hanging all over the furrows pendent with the pearly dew, and on which, as her morning beverage, light-heeled puss was to be seen feeding in every field.

"How pretty she appears," said Aveline, "when she stands erect, surveying the country all around, and chiefly, I suppose, watching the approach of her enemies! How straight she lays her long ears, and with what ease and agility she can bound over the country! What a pity it is that mankind, who should be engaged on nobler designs, would practise the cruel amusement of persecuting this harmless animal! Providence undoubtedly allowed man the superiority over the irrational creation, and I also believe that he is authorised to use them when necessity requires, but that he should torture this innocent inhabitant of the desert, or make her pain his pastime, I cannot help thinking is disagreeable to the God of Nature."

With such reflections was she busied as they passed along, and being delighted with the notes of the thrush from every brake, and did not fail in returning the compliment of well

merited eulogium to that sweet minstrel of the grove. When they came to the gap of the mountains opening a most interesting prospect over the fertile vale of the Roe, clothed in luxuriant verdure they could discern the plains covered with flocks of sheep, herds of horses, and spotted kine, all the property of Coocoy Na Gall O'Cahan, lord of the soil.

The lowlands, particularly those washed by the above stream, were plentifully loaded with rich crops of oats; but in the neighborhood of Drumaclose, which had lately been the seat of war, there was no appearance of cultivation, but all was overgrown with deep soil, except where the cattle were feeding, and these seemed altogether at liberty to range where they pleased, there not being any place in view the appearance of a herdsman's residence, save Knogher O'Brady's, that remained exactly as it was when the two minstrels passed that way on the embassy to Dunluce.

As they turned the base of the mountain, coming in sight of the bosom of Dreenagh wood, and the very spot so long wished for by them, they saw a flock of sheep winding up the ascent to their left hand, with their lambs following them, and when they got to the top, all turned round looking back with great earnestness, and stamping the foot in a menacing manner, as if to intimidate an approaching enemy.

Some time after this they heard the yelping of a dog, and saw a little black one ascend the hill, exactly in the same path which the sheep took, and whose master stood half way up, looking straight after the dog, and clapping his hands with a thousand whillies and hiroos.—Now, egadly, now a hullian; Scour them up, my old stoorie; and, That's the way, a-halligh;—but all his hopes were damped at once, for a huge ram, the champion of the flock, whose head was wrapped round with an enormous pair of horns, struck him such a bang that he came tumbling down to his master, making the glen of the Curly ring with his cries, and whining and lamenting most piteously.

This man was no other than Knogher O'Brady, who recognised M'Quillan in a moment, and bowing his head a degree lower, changed his voice from the wrathful tone which he had been using a few minutes back to a plaintive strain, heaving betimes a deep sigh, and looking steadfastly towards the spot where all their thoughts at present were centered; and beginning a long prelude with another sigh, and looking to the same place, "Musha, och, och," says he, "how is all at home with yes this mornin', or are they all in health, gran-achree? But maybe yes didn't get breakfast, jantlemen, becase, if yes come over the river, we can roast half-a-dozen of eggs for every one of you, and give yes some bread, far I'm sure and sartin you're starvin', dhira hora."

They returned O'Brady a world of thanks, sending the horses and servant with him; and desiring his attendance as soon as possible, they walked down to the banks of the Curly with anxious and beating hearts, affected something in the manner in which they would be when about to visit a friend long unheard of.

Let any one take the matter to a serious consideration, particularly any one who has ever grieved for the decease of a beloved relative, and he will better conceive these emotions than I can describe them.

As an attempt at describing the feelings of a tender father and affectionate sister, when hanging over the untimely grave of a loving brother and son, would be impossible for a more capable pen than mine, I shall leave the reader to judge of it as he thinks best suiting the melancholy occasion, and proceed to say, that when Knogher O'Brady came over, he found the father and M'Donnell both occupied in restoring Aveline, and she leaning on the former's breast, pale as the lily that hangs its drooping head over the passing stream.

Her first inquiry when she could speak was regarding her father, and where he was. "She hoped," she said, "he would not conceal it, if her father was seriously ill."

In order to tranquillize her mind, M'Donnell assured her that he had a few minutes back walked over to the cottage with O'Brady, and wished that as soon as she would be able they should follow him, that he only awaited her re-suscitation, which he was rejoiced to see returning.

So saying, he gave her his arm, and they walked in silence from the river side, she always retaining his plaid wrapped about her shoulders, for it was now near even, and the air was impregnated with a more than ordinary coolness. Often did she turn back and wish to gain another look of the place which she so often longed to see, and now that she had got her most sanguine hopes gratified in visiting the lonely retreat of her brother and her friend, how unsatisfactory, how unavailing!

"Am I going to leave them," said she, "so soon and so carelessly? Is not this the very season of the year, is not this approaching the