

to show his devotion to the enemies of family and country. It would appear as if the terror of his imprisonment in the Tower was always with him. The English required him after their kind. They charged him with treason, with soliciting aid from foreign Powers, with assisting in the late treasonable outbreak. Forged letters were produced; it is astonishing how history repeats itself. The truth was that Earl Gerald was possessed of 570,000 acres of the best land in Ireland and the English, at the time, found it difficult to "forgive" such a crime. He was proclaimed a traitor, with sound of trumpet and beat of drum, in the town of Kilmallock; so he was forced to follow in the steps of Fitz-Maurice. But, having neither the ability nor the courage of his cousin, he, after a few inconsiderable successes, was forced into the fastnesses of the country.

An Act of Oblivion was passed for the benefit of those who would desert the archtraitor; and it had its intended effect; for it left him the support only of his devoted followers. In this state he wandered from the Great Wood, across the mearings of Limerick into Connelloe, and thence to Harlow Wood.

It was rarely, indeed, the outlawed rebel left his hiding place. These were well known to the peasantry; but even the large prices set on his head never tempted them to betray him. On one occasion he rode in the little village of Bruff, disguised as a dealer in flannels. A soldier from the Castle (it was held by Pierce De Lacy, one of the warmest bloods of the time—and no lover of English), after buying some flannel, whispered to the merchant, that "it stood not with the dignity of my Lord of Desmond to come from the woods of Connelloe with less than a hundred armed followers."

On another occasion, while staying in the house of a farmer named Bruce with his Countess, in the character of wandering minstrel and minstrel's wife, the farmer insisted on dancing with her ladyship while the Earl played on a small harp. When the dance was finished, the farmer thanked her at gracefully as he could, saying "that the honor her ladyship did him would never be forgotten." While the outlaw stayed in Connelloe, the peasantry always had sure intelligence, at least so they informed the soldiers of the Kilmallock garrison when they scoured the woods, that the traitor Desmond was hiding in the fastness of Kerry.

As the Christmas of 1583 approached the weather was more and more severe. Frost and snow, alternated with heavy rains. The little cabin of Desmond became a poor shelter, and to add to his trouble, he could learn continually from his few faithful followers that the English were apparently aware that he was living in Connelloe, for continually search parties went here and there through the woods, which, by the way, occupied the center of Limerick from Cork to the Shannon. The Countess continually importuned him to seek for safety in the Wood of Aherlow, but as this would involve passing through the most populous, and most English portion of the country, he was loth to do it. The day before the Eve of Christmas, however, he received intelligence that his hiding place was discovered by a spy in the employ of the Governor of Kilmallock; so he was forced to take action at once. At nightfall he procured a horse, on which he placed the Countess, and, accompanied by his faithful servant, Edward Walsh, he left the wood of Connelloe, and striking across the country by secluded paths, left Bruff on his left, and marched towards the county of Tipperary. The night was bitterly cold, prosing snow, and as dark as pitch, so that he went astray many times, and at last determined to take the first safe shelter and await the coming of the day. After much aimless wandering the party was attracted by a light, and Walsh went

forward to reconnoitre. He returned with the intelligence that the light came from Inch castle, in old times a stronghold of the Geraldines, now much dilapidated. Earl Gerald remembered the owner for an old soldier of Fitz-Maurice's who had taken advantage of the Act of Oblivion to make his peace with the Queen. He determined to throw himself and his wife on the hospitality of Sir Henry Burgat, for so the owner of Castle Inch was called, to await the arrival of the morning.

CHAPTER III.

Earl Gerald sat by the great fire, in the hall over the kitchen, at Castle Inch. His host, Sir Henry Burgat, sat on the opposite side, and the Countess of Desmond lay on a settee which occupied a nook near the fire, and at the right hand of her husband. The night was far advanced, and the few household servants had long since retired. It being the Eve of Christmas, it was customary in that age, in purely Irish districts, to pass the night in moderate revelry until the time for early Mass arrived. And though the neighborhood of Kilmallock was not one of those districts where a priest could with impunity practice his sacred calling, yet out of mere old time habit, Sir Henry and his guests kept their vigil.

The Earl and Countess had rested themselves thoroughly during the preceding night; indeed, the fatigue of watching was generally borne by the faithful adherents, of whom Edmond, the Earl's personal servant, was the principal.

In old times Sir Henry had been a faithful follower of the Earl, and, indeed, had received knighthood at his hands on the battle-field; but his nature was too straightforward to sympathize much with a character like the weak Earl. For a long time there was a cloud betwixt these two, for, on the occasion of Fitzmaurice's arrival from Rome the Knight saw that the time had come when, by united effort, the English power in Desmond might be broken, and he despised the Earl's temporising policy. When he found Desmond unwilling to join his kinsmen he himself rode away to the Golden Fort with twenty men-at-arms—no wild Irish kernes fresh from the plough—but sturdy soldiers who had seen much service and in many parts. With these he had been through most of the late war; but being seriously wounded at the fight on Dromin Green, he retired into the Wood of Harlow where, owing to unskilful surgery he was lamed for life. He took advantage of the Act of Oblivion, for he saw nothing could come of further resistance to the English. The Earl he had seen unwilling to risk a title when success was probable, for fear of injury to himself, and he was not disposed to remain an outlaw for the sake of such a man. He had lived since at Castle Inch, now some what fallen into decay, but still habitable, keeping as clear with the ruling powers as he could, and strictly attending to his own affairs.

"I think, my lord," he was saying to the Earl, "that your fears are groundless. It is impossible that the Governor of Kilmallock hath wind of your quarters."

"Well, well, good Sir Henry, let it even be so. They must have a constant eye to her security. It is a nature to her from habitade."

"And, again," continued the Knight, "I see no immediate reason for a midnight sitting to Harlow Wood. It hath at present all the appearance of a continuance of severe weather, and the garrison of Kilmallock will stick closely to their quarters, so that you will have time to overcome thoroughly your late fatigues."

"We give you thanks, but cannot forget there is danger to you as well as to us. It is a crime to harbor outlaws."

"My Lord, I am very little removed from one myself, and it appears to me I would soon be one, if a ruined house

and a few barren acres had charms for those who now lord it in Desmond."

"Yes, that is a thought for many," said the Earl. "Would that it had forced itself on my mind in time. As it is, my dearest hope—thought it be humble—is a safe retreat in Harlow now, and a prosperous voyage to Spain hereafter."

"My Lord, is there no chance of pardon?"

"A pardon quotha" and Desmond laughed long and bitterly. "Did the wolf ever pardon the lamb? You tickle me to death Sir Harry."

"But—your large connection?"

"Pooh!—an Irish one! A Protestant English yeoman bath now more influence than any Popish lord in Munster."

At this moment a loud knocking was heard at the Castle door. Sir Henry went to the casement to enquire its cause.

"Open quickly, open for God's sake! I would see my lord."

Sir Henry went down the winding stairs which ended in the kitchen, and from thence he went to the door which he at once unbolted. A man whom he recognised as Edmond rushed past with the cry, "My lord is betrayed!" He followed quickly, and was again in the presence of his guests.

The Countess looked at him with burning eyes: "And thou, too, Sir Henry Burgat! thou hast joined the hunters, and wouldst take the price of blood." (TO BE CONTINUED.)



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	CLOSE.	DUE.
G. T. R. East.....	a.m. p.m.	a.m. p.m.
O. and Q. Railway.....	7.30 7.45	7.25 9.40
G. T. R. West.....	7.45 8.00	7.35 7.40
N. and N. W.	7.30 3.25	12.40pm 8.00
T. G. and B.	7.30 4.30	10.10 8.10
Midland	7.00 4.30	10.55 8.50
C. V. R.	7.00 3.35	12.50pm 9.30
	7.00 3.00	12.35pm 8.50
	a.m. p.m.	a.m. p.m.
	noon	8.35 2.00
G. W. R.	2.00	7.50
	6.30 4.60	10.45 8.30
	9.30	
U. S. N. Y.	6.30 12.00n	8.35 5.45
	4.00	12.35 10.50
	9.30	
U.S. West'n States	6.30 12 noon	5.45 8.30

English mails close on Mondays at 9.30 p.m., and on Thursdays at 7.15 p.m. Supplementary mails to Monday and Thursday close occasionally on Tuesdays and Fridays at 12 noon. The following are the dates of English mails for the month of January: 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 26, 28, 31.

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