



TURLUGH O'BRIEN;  
OR,  
THE FORTUNES OF AN IRISH SOLDIER.  
CHAPTER XLII.—LOVE AND GLORY.

Fast as old Time sweeps in his swarth, fresh weeds and flowers spring up beneath his scythe. Old actors pass away and are forgotten, and new ones take their places.

Thus, as the current of our tale flows on, we lose sight, and mayhap forever, of many a familiar personage and place, while strange faces and new objects rise around us, as we drift onward toward the close. A year has passed—the sunshine, and the rains, and winds of a long year have fallen upon the grave of Lady Willoughby. Sir Hugh—landless now and homeless—still, with his fair child, dwells in the same lodging where we saw him last. To attempt to leave the city were, under existing circumstances, a dangerous, if not an impracticable enterprise. Stern proclamations, dictated by the dread urgency of the impending crisis, and enforced by the prompt and unsparring sanctions of military law, restricted all suspected persons to the immediate neighborhood of their dwellings, and in the majority of cases had even placed them under the rigors of actual imprisonment.

It was the eve of the First of July, 1690, that memorable day on which was fought the battle of the Boyne.

The old city of Dublin was now comparatively deserted. Scarce a red coat was to be seen in its gloomy and shattered streets; a handful of militia kept guard at the Castle, which had sent forth its king, with all his goodly company of generals and courtiers, either to take an active part in the long-deferred struggle, or to witness its issue as spectators.

The stillness and languor of the town, contrasted with the recent hubbub and bustle attending the transit of thousands of stern and reckless soldiery, upon their march to the scene of danger, had in it something at once depressing and indefinitely exciting.

Upon the fortunes of the coming battle each party felt that their destinies were suspended. The hushed and agitating prevalence of a suspense, which came home not only to the soldier and the politician, but to every private man, in the shape of alarm for his property and his safety, pervades every street and dwelling, and clouded every countenance in the city with awe. Business was entirely neglected; men kept restlessly toiling and fro-ing, and grouping together in little knots, gossiping at the street corners, in low tones, and laughing strangely, in the almost hysterical excitement of the crisis—the long-looked-for crisis, that was now at last, in fearful earnest, indeed, present and upon them.

A tall and singularly handsome officer of dragoons, fully equipped in the splendid uniform of those days, and wearing in his face an expression at once lofty and melancholy, was upon the night in question, ascending a dark and old-fashioned stair in the city of Dublin. He paused at a door, which opened from the first landing-place. A feeling which he could not for a moment overcome, held him doubtfully at the threshold.—He entered, however, and, raising his plumed hat, and staking back from his noble features his long black hair, Turlugh O'Brien stood in the presence of Grace Willoughby and her father.

How did her shifting color show the beating of her little heart, as, between smiles and blushes, she greeted her true lover. How did the soldier's eyes, with the passionate fire of his own fierce and melancholy nature, requite her softer looks.

'Sir Hugh,' he said, having returned the old man's cordial greeting, in language not less generous, 'it is long—to me how long—since I have seen you, and it may be long, very long, ere I see you again.' And he glanced towards the fair girl with a fondness all the more touching for the stern and haughty beauty of his face.—'I have but a few hurried moments to stay here. I cannot and will not, waste words. What is so near my heart must be spoken—spoken, perchance, with a soldier's bluntness, but yet with the feeling that all my hopes, my happiness, are wound up in your answer. You remember—you cannot have forgotten—our conversation on the evening when I saw you last. Sir Hugh, it is no light fancy, no trivial feeling, that could lead Turlugh O'Brien thus to sue on in spite of a repulse. I love your daughter—Miss Grace—I love her dearly—desperately—with all the love and all the loyalty—with every feeling, and passion, and thought, and hope of my heart;—say, if I live to-morrow's battle, will you at last consent, and give her to the fondest and truest lover that ever yet in honor and devotion sued for the hand of maiden?'

Sir Hugh was shaken. He looked at his daughter, and then at the noble face of the handsome soldier, and then once more at his own loved child.

'Turlugh, Turlugh O'Brien, she has been my only child—my darling,' he said, at last, in a

broken voice; and the tears, which the dangers of adverse fortune had never yet wrung from his eyes, began to gather thick, and coursed one another down his furrowed cheeks as he spoke—'She has been the comfort, the stay, the pride of my old age; she has been, indeed—indeed—a good child to me: and if she loves you, why should I mar her happiness or yours. Let her, then, choose now and forever for herself.'

'Grace, dearest Grace, you bear him,' said Turlugh, passionately turning to her: 'say but one word; deign but one smile; consent but by look, and flood with joy the heart that loves you well—the heart that by to-morrow night may beat no more.'

The last words of his appeal smote home to her true heart—the bashful struggles of timidity were over in a moment.

'Oh, Turlugh, Turlugh!' she wildly cried;—and, pale and sobbing, the light form of the noble girl, in a moment, lay folded fondly and trustingly to the heart of the soldier.

We need not follow to its close that hurried but eventful interview, nor say how the old man blessed his beautiful and blushing child; how fondly he blessed them both, and how he pressed their hands together. After many and many a fond farewell, at last he was gone, indeed; and even the receding clang of his charger's hoofs sank into silence.

Thus Turlugh O'Brien, in wild and happy ecstasy of triumph, rode rapidly towards the camp of King James, and never thought the while that fortune may interpose "full many a slip between the cup and the lip."

While Turlugh O'Brien, thus absorbed in glorious reveries, spurs onward towards "the tented field," we shall avail ourselves of the interval, unwilling as we are to interrupt his entranced and happy silence, to say a few words touching the progress of events, which we trust may suffice to give the reader some general notion of the actual state of things at the period at which we have now taken up our tale. If, however, as is by no means impossible, the gentle reader care marvellously little for such dissertations, he can easily escape the present by what is technically termed "skipping" the next dozen or so lines.

The presence of William's powerful and splendidly-organized army in the North, and the arrival of the prince himself to take their head, had stimulated the fierce excitement of the country, and intensified by the darkest forebodings the inveterate malignity of old feuds and jealousies. The exhausting fiscal exertions which the state was forced to make, the prostration, or rather the ruin of all trade, the general neglect of tillage, and the frightful waste committed by the rapparees, had so devastated the country, that famine, and its attendant pestilence, threatened, with the invading sword, to consummate the desolation of the land.

In addition to all this, the cause of the unfortunate James had sustained sore loss more directly still, by multitudinous desertions, which transferred in detail much of the energy and influence of the Jacobite party to the camp of the invader. With few exceptions, indeed, such apostacies were confined to men of second-rate importance and ability; but still the traitors, however individually despicable, disheartened the faithful by their numbers, and almost invariably carried with them intelligence of the weakness, the apprehensions, and the plans of their former associates, which proved valuable to their opponents.

Among many better men, Miles Garrett had played his royal master false; incapable of enthusiasm, cold, selfish, and phlegmatic, his calculations were untuned by passion, and need we add, unwarmed by patriotism. He understood the difficulties of the Jacobite cause, and weighing the chances with the nicest scrutiny, it seemed well to him to desert at once, and while yet he might make a merit of so doing, to the party in whose favor the odds seemed multiplying every day.

King William's camp occupied the rising grounds upon the northern side of the river.—The hoarse murmur of the broad-breasted Boyne filled the still air between the two great armies, whose prowess was next day to determine the fate of the kingdom, and mingled sadly with that confluence of petty sounds, which, like the solemn murmurings of a mighty tide, over arches the myriad gatherings of living men.

A sultry summer's night wrapt the wide landscape in darkness. The tents of William's splendidly appointed army spread like a canvas city over the undulating ground, and the dusky fires, at intervals glared strong and red upon military forms and ammunition waggons; while from across the river, far away, came the softened sounds of shouting, and the sullen roll of drums, with the rumble of provision cars, and the faint clear call of the trumpet, incessantly filling the air with the exciting evidences of the presence and preparation of the hostile army.

It was now about the hour of twelve, when, as Story tells us, William of Nassau, his sword

arm in a sling (for he had but that morning' while reconnoitering, received a wound which had well nigh proved his last) mounted upon his war steed, accompanied by his staff, among whom we recognize, among the dashing horsemen, our old friend Percy Neville, rode forth in person, through the camp.

The guard, bearing torches, rode with them, and thus under the lurid illumination, growing dusky on tossing plumes, and flashing upon burnished cuirasses, did the martial cavalcade tramp onward—its progress marked by the ruddy glare that crimsoned the air above them, and by the stern huzzas of excited welcome that greeted the soldier king wherever he appeared.

There was an officer, a captain in one of King William's regiment of dragoons, with plumed hat, and buff coat, standing by as William of Nassau, accompanied by his staff, thus moved onward through the camp upon the memorable night to which our tale has brought us.

This cavalry officer stood listlessly leaning against a provision wagon, and smoked on in contemptuous indifference, while a tattered, scared, and travel-soiled man, of mean aspect and small and unsightly figure, stood near him, with hat in hand, and earnestly urged his disregarded suit. In the lank, ungainly form, and sinister face of the officer, and in the crouching mien, and cadaverous, villainous aspect of his humble suitor, no person who had seen them once could have failed to recognize Miles Garrett and his now cast off dependant, Garvey.

CHAPTER XLIII.—GARVEY'S QUARTERS.

'As soon as they missed your honor,' said Garvey, they took me up to General Lauzun's tent—me that knew as much about it, God knows, as the babe unborn, and it was just the loss of a shilling I wasn't shot; they said I was your secretary, and must produce the correspondence; and as you very well know, sir, I had none to show, not that I would have shown it, even if I had—God forbid—do such thing, of course.'

'Of course,' echoed Garvey, sneeringly. 'Of course,' reiterated Garvey, in a tone of deprecatory humility; but in this case, you know, noble captain, it was out of my power. What had I to declare?—what could I tell? I knew none of your secrets; and you'll bear me witness, Mr. Garrett, I never tried to learn them.'

'Yes, you did try,' said Garrett, who had removed his pipe for a moment, and now for the first time deigned a look, though no very auspicious one, upon his petitioner.—'Yes, you did try, and you told all you could; but I found you out, and saw through you, when you thought I trusted you, you shallow miscreant; but no matter.'

'I never wronged you, Mr. Garrett; by this cross, I never did you one hap'orth of harm, sir,' urged Garvey, advancing nearer, and cowering still lower in his urgency.—'never, sir—never—never, your honor, by every saint in heaven; may I never live till morrow,' Mr. Garrett, if I did.'

Garrett knew as well as Garvey did himself, that the wretched, short-sighted tool of Satan, that cowered, and cringed, and cursed before him, lied in every word he said; but he made no other answer than, with a faint and ugly smile, to puff a thin stream of tobacco smoke into the air, and watch it as it curled up into the dark.

'Well,' said he, after a second or two,—'they did not shoot you; and what did they, pray?'

'They tossed me in a blanket, noble captain, for a full hour; whimpered the wretched man; I'm bruised from head to heel, as' so sore, I scarce can stand, or walk, or life.'

Garrett took his pipe from his mouth, and laughed outright, and the miserable, servile creature before him essayed to join in the caecination.

'It was very funny—very funny,' he said, 'but they kept it up too long—if it was not for that, I'd have laughed myself, indeed I would;—but they kept it up cruelly long, and let me strike the ground every time; I'm aching from head to foot. It was at seven o'clock they turning me out of the camp, without a protection, so I dared not go towards Dublin, for you know all the passes are guarded, and I could not get thro' Drogheda to come here, for the king's—that is, King James's—soldiers have it, too; and there is not a creature in the country, and I had not a penny in my pocket, nor a morsel of food, and only for a drink of milk I got last night, I think I'd have died before morning, and a little girl ferried me over two miles below Drogheda; and I had such a round to come, keeping out of the way of the soldiers, for I was as much afraid of one side as the other, until I knew I was near where I could see you, sir, God bless you; so I was hiding in bushes and ditches the whole day long—and running this way and that—and as God is my judge, this day, I eat nothing but a handful of cold potatoes I got out of a pig trough, early this morning; I'm half dead, Mr. Garrett—I'm starving, sir.'

'I suppose you'd like to quarter here with me?' said Garrett, with a pleasant twinkle in his eye.

'If you don't let me, sir, I'm afraid I'll starve. I'll never live through the night without food,' returned Garvey, imploringly; 'since seven o'clock yesterday morning, I declare to God, I never eat a bit but half a dozen cold potatoes, not the size of walnuts. Oh, Mr. Garrett, Mr. Garrett,' and the wretched man sat down and crawled almost to his feet, in the desperate endeavor to catch the imperturbable captain's eye, now fixed upon the ground, 'sure you won't refuse me, sir? you would not turn me off; you would not have me starve.'

Garrett again took his pipe from his mouth, and spitting upon the ground, asked with a tranquil leer—

'And why should not I?'

'Because I served you, sir, in all your plans, Mr. Garrett; oh, sir, you mustn't forget, you won't forget,' replied the familiar, with agonised entreaty in every look, and tone, and gesture.—'Oh! Mr. Garrett, think, think of it—think of it all; remember Sir Hugh's business—remember Lady Willoughby: did I not help you every way; did I stop at anything?—and am not I ready for whatever you please again?—sure if I was only your dog that served you through thick and thin, Mr. Garrett, you would not refuse me a morsel of food, when I'm famishing with hunger.'

'And yet I have shot more than one dog in my time, for turning on his master; what do you say to that?' retorted Garrett, calmly.

'Why, Mr. Garrett, you don't mean—you can't mean—what is it—what is it at all?' cried the trembling villain.

'I'm not going to shoot you, you blockhead; but you had better let go my coat, or I'll hack your fingers off with my rapier; there, that's better,' said Garrett, roughly; 'you want, it seems, something to eat, and a place to lie in: that's reasonable enough, after all; you shall have them. Here, Corporal Ford, turn out four of your men,' he continued, addressing that officer; 'and now, Mr. Garvey, is it right to tell you, he resumed, after a considerable pause, and interrupting his address at every half dozen words to pursue his smoking, 'it's right you should understand that provisions are unusually dear—(here came a long whiff) and hungry mouths, on the contrary, unusually plenty—(here another puff); so that, you see, his majesty's officers must all, in their several capacities, exercise the strictest economy—(another whiff)—and as it happens that you will probably eat as much as another man—(here came a long, thin stream of smoke, which seemed, as it were, attenuated and extended by the length and subtlety of the calculation); and as unfortunately there is no conceivable useful purpose to which we can turn you here—(another stream, if possible thinner and longer); why it seems to me advisable, for the better service of his majesty, to quarter you for this night, upon the enemy—do you comprehend? So, here Corporal Ford, take this little Tory gentleman down to the river's bank, and—and the water is not yet too high to ford it—put him into the stream, and make him cross.—If he durns, send a ball or two after him, and I'll be bound—wherever he goes—he'll not return.'

In vain the affrighted wretch pleaded in an agony of terror—implored in the name of all the saints of Heaven, and for the sake of God Himself, to be turned out in any direction but the one which the inexorable captain had selected. He was hurried down to the river's brink, pouring forth prayers, imprecations, and entreaties at every step—shoved at last, actually weeping, into the stream—and then, under muzzles of the soldier's carbines, forced, willy nilly, to wade onward towards the hostile bank—often turning, often hesitating, now emerging nearly half way—and now nearly chin deep in the waters of the Boyne. At last, he hid himself, cowering among the sedges at the opposite shore—while every moment the rising tide forced him to shift his position, and gradually rendering his retreat impossible—while at the same time his teeth began to chatter, and his limbs grow numb, as he squatted in the chill waters.

Feeling at last that his strength was failing him, the wretched, terror-stricken creature, through very fear of the imminent death which threatened him, should he endeavour to maintain his precarious and miserable position, summoned up resolution, and splashing softly through the long grass and reeds, emerged at once upon the dry and solid sward. Creeping from bush to bush and shivering so that his very joints ached, the exhausted wretch endeavored by stamping his feet, chafing his limbs, and blowing upon his numbed fingers, to recover some of the vital warmth which seemed fast expiring within his chilled and travel-worn frame. Spite of all the caution, however, with which these comfortless proceedings were conducted, his movements were not long unobserved. An

unlucky sentinel, after dodging about in vigilant suspicion, with his piece cocked, at last descried the object which had alarmed him.

'Hola, who goes there?' was the stern challenge which arrested unfortunate Garvey, in his dreary *pas seul*.

He essayed to answer, but terror deprived him of utterance.

'Stand,' cried the soldier, making his way leisurely up to him—'stand, friend, or I'll blow your head off—stand, I say.'

As Garvey made no attempt to move, the hand of the musketeer was soon clutched firmly in the little man's cravat; and shaking him—perhaps a little more roughly than was strictly necessary, the soldier hauled him along with him, at every dozen steps propounding some new question, backed by an oath or two, and followed by a few additional chucks by the throat.

'Never an answer for me, is not there?' said he; 'well, I'm bringing you to a place where they'll find a tongue for you, if you were as dumb as a red herring.'

With this cheering assurance, Garvey was passively conducted by his captor to a roofless hovel, which answered for a guardroom, where two or three soldiers were sleeping, stretched on the ground, and some were smoking and chatting together; and having been catechized there again, with no better success, he was placed under a further escort, and conducted, as a suspected spy, to the tent of the officer in command of the division, who, unhappily for the wretched Garvey, turned out to be the notorious Lord Galmoy.

Passing the sentinel who kept guard outside the tent ropes, the little party found themselves in the presence of that cold-blooded and cruel nobleman. He had but just dismounted, and his military hat and gloves had not yet been removed. He sat beside a rude table, on which a pair of candles were burning, some reports and writing materials, along with his pistols, lay beside him; and a piece of tarpaulin stretched along a pole, fenced off a portion of the area for his lordship's bed-chamber. Beside him stood a stiff military attendant, who was receiving orders touching his lordship's personal equipment for the morrow; and his cuirass, together with his military saddle, and emblazoned saddle-cloth, lay upon a form close by.

As the party entered, his lordship looked up, and the light fell full upon his cadaverous face and hooked nose, and his bristling masses of light moustache; while his small, indolent eye coldly scanned them; and he said, in a drawing, careless tone, so slow and quiet, that but for its impassive coldness, it might have bespoken the very gentlest purposes:—

'A prisoner, so—what of him, corporal?'

'Crossed the river—so, so; and then crept up among the bushes—so!' resumed Lord Galmoy, as soon as he heard the statement through; 'and, as you say the very man, Miles Garrett's secretary, who was, yesterday morning turned out of the camp, a suspected traitor, there; and now, your prisoner—so, so. Have you any information of importance to give us?' he continued, lazily turning his eyes upon Garvey; 'if you have, say so, and it may possibly save you.'

'Ah, my lord general—noble, generous sir,' cried Garvey, whom the frenzy of actual despair had now at length restored to speech; 'I'm no spy, as God is my witness—I'm no traitor; don't, for God's sake, don't have me blanketed again, noble general. I'm as honest as the king himself, ask any one that knows me. If they toss me again, it will be the death of me—I'm just dead as it is.'

'I'm not thinking of any such thing, my good fellow,' said his lordship, tranquilly.

'Lord bless you, sir, my lord Galmoy, your noble honor; the Lord and all the saints of Heaven reward and prosper you.'

'Hold your tongue, fellow, if you can,' said his lordship, in the same even tone, and staring upon him with the same unmoved but singularly repulsive countenance—'hold your tongue and listen to me.'

'That I will, my Lord—noble general—'

'See, my good gentleman,' interrupted Lord Galmoy, in the same quiet way, 'if you won't hold your tongue, I'll make you do so. How long is it since you left the prince's camp?'

'Well, I should some twenty minutes or half an hour—perhaps more,' said Garvey, whose thoughts, just then, were none of the clearest.

'Is the prince still living?' pursued his lordship.

'I do suppose he is,' replied Garvey, more and more perplexed; 'but I know not that his life is in question.'

'Come, come,' said the officer, while, for the first time an imperious and measured emphasis slightly marked his calm address, and something indescribably intimidating overcast his features, though their tranquillity remained undisturbed, 'your simplicity is a little overacted—you really must manage to know something; take my advice, and remember something; I ask you sim-