



# CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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AILEY MOORE;

A TALE OF THE TIMES.

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

Well, the Rev. Joram Salmer and the lady described in our last, came thundering down the road towards the well of St. Senanus.

Many a time before, in the pleasant summer and autumn days, the clergyman and his wife had passed by, during the rites by which humble faith sought to propitiate its Maker, and now, as in former times, the crowd divided to permit the rich vehicle to flit by. Except in the averted head and the reported sarcasm, the people knew little of the incumbent's feelings, with regard to their patron or practices, and they apprehended on this day no variation from the conduct which they had witnessed for a couple of years. They were, therefore, not a little astonished when the carriage drew up at St. Senanus' gate. There was instantaneously a rush—in its way, a kind of request for explanation. The peasants looked at the parson's family, and at one another—around the country, and in at the well. Their demeanor expressed, as clear as any language, 'What is the meaning of this?'

In the midst of their doubt and conjectures, the Rev. Joram Salmer descended from his carriage, his wife followed, and they both entered the hallowed ground.

Never had been witnessed such confusion in that part of the country. The wall was instantly black with people, or rather grey and white with them. Inside the boundaries all devotion came to a stand-still. The children, who felt there was something wrong, interpreted the affair as dangerous to themselves, and began to cry; young girls shrunk into the corners; old women gathered round the sacred fountain; and the young men of the parish, who were always on the look-out for a little exciting variety, thronged the gate and round the little hill.

Eddy was struggling manfully in the hands of his gran'. She held his head and covered his mouth, until he begged himself free; but he had no sooner been trusted, than the eternal strophe—

'Tally hi ho, fat pork!'

interrupted by another suffocation, smote the ear, and awakened the humor of the villagers.

The rev. gentleman ascended the steps towards the stone cross, manifesting all the way many internal workings of pity and contempt; his wife followed, held by his hand, and one or two steps behind him; they looked like a pair who held the fate of nations, and ascended the tribunal to deliver judgment. It was obvious that Mr. Salmer came to make an oration, and Mrs. Salmer, as became her, to hear and sanction the same.

Having settled his feet and his wife to the satisfaction of both parties, or the three parties—that is, his wife and his two feet—he commenced by assuring them (not the parties, but the people) of his ardent and anxious love for them, which was answered by a universal 'gan dhoublh'; which meant that his love was unquestionable. To be sure, 'twas said in a way which was not entirely demonstrative, but at all events they said 'gan dhoublh—go devin'—indeed that's true. He proceeded to announce that their new landlord would soon come amongst them, and his arrival should be hailed by them with joy. He came to make his tenantry happy, and to diffuse among them the light of true religion (here there was some confusion.) The late master of the property had not lived as a man of God (great murmurs, and a sod flying by Mr. Salmer's head.) He hoped there was no man here (a voice, 'To eat pork on Friday—Eddy, tally high ho, fat po—') Happy would it be for them if, abandoning the Pagan distinction between meats, which Paul declared should attain in the latter days, they would fling off the yoke—a voice, 'Of the parsons'—the yoke of superstition, and obtain the freedom—(same voice, 'From tithes')—of the Gospel.—The country was suffering deeply (voices, 'From the tithes?') No; the tithes were the law of England; but the country was suffering deeply from the reign of falsehood, the worship of stocks and stones (and now Mr. Salmer waxed into a warmth quite prophetic) woman-worship—the new-fangled doctrines of the Roman apostacy.

Here there was an ominous hush, succeeded by a more ominous yet indescribable kind of noise. The parties behind were closing in, and those before were flushing and breathing strongly. At the words, 'woman-worship,' there was a perfect heave forward of the whole mass, a woman's voice crying 'Naove whaire banathie!—Blessed and Holy Virgin!' The speaker was evidently drawing to a crisis. Several sods, some turf, a few black potatoes had been flung, but an absolute hurricane of missiles, none of a dangerous description, however, were flying round him, immediately after the favorite expression of 'Roman apostacy' had been uttered.

He stood his ground, and Mrs. Salmer looked out of her large eyes quite resigned, only she appeared to have attained some color.

He was proceeding with even more energy, and exciting the crowd to a frightful degree of anger. In a short time he became quite inaudible from the growling, and almost invisible from the pelting, but still the great arms swung, and the big lips moved, and the little dark eyes seemed running after one another, inside in his head.

Mrs. Salmer now felt a little nervous, and she clung to him.

There was a rush; and shrieks, cries, and curses filled the little home where sanctity had so long rested. Mr. Salmer's hour appeared to have come.

The old man who was mentioned as having been seated on the first step of the ascent, had never stirred till now. He stood up majestically, and opening his old arms in front of the crowd, he waved them back. 'Don't touch him, boys—don't touch him—don't hurt the name of the ould spot where your grandfathers knelt down to pray. Mr. Salmer,' said he, turning to the parson, 'you're a stranger a'most, in this place, but mind me, not near such a stranger as you think. Take the advice of grey hair, and go home wid your lady. Open the way there!'

Salmer looked, but 'twas not thankfully. His eyes seemed to inquire: but he answered, that he was engaged in the work of God, and would die a martyr.

'Much better for you, Mr. Salmer, to die a bishop—deed it is. Ha, ha, ha, sir; the sweat of that crowd put bread and butter on your table to-day, while they wur out lumpers or India' male themselves; and they gev you this for nothin'. Now don't be unreasonab'—id may satisfy your mind to abuse 'em; but you ought to be content wid riding in a carriage out of their earnin's.'

'I'm bound to save their immortal souls!'

'Oh, as for that, don't be foolish. If you wish to save souls—you say you kem' from England—that wants souls to be saved very much. Thy your hand wid the colliers, that don't know the name of God; thy your hand wid the factories, that don't know the manin' o' virtue; thy your hand wid the country-people, and tache 'em the Christian law o' marriage; or thy your hand wid the pious and benedict clergymen of your own cloth, that's comin' over to the ould church, as fast as hops. Now 'charity begins at home,' you know, Mr. Salmer; I show'd you your ground; but you'll get a bigger name from disturbin' the pace of Kilmacarra.'

'Joram, my dear, leave this wretched place,' said Mrs. Salmer.

'Never,' said Mr. Salmer; 'I'll not be put down by an agent of the priests.'

'Take your wife's advice,' said many voices.

'Go home now, you've got enough.'

'Tally high ho, fat pork—tally high ho, on Friday,' roared Eddy.

'The priests—,' said Mr. Salmer.

'Go home,' roared the crowd.

'The priests, I say—'

'Hould your tongue,' roared the crowd.

'I must and shall—'

There was no resisting them any longer. They closed on the unfortunate gentleman. His shoulders and feet were seized; he was raised from the ground—borne out—followed by his wife, who was respectfully led after him. No one can say what the people, thus goaded, might have done, but a man appeared whose presence was a rule among his friends and foes.

Gerald Moore presented himself.

A moment was sufficient to dash through the gathering. He stood by the side of Mr. Salmer.

'What, what,' said Moore, 'will you disgrace yourselves? What, seize upon a single and unarmed man?'

'He has been abusing our religion?'

'Well, one was enough to be a fool; you should not forget charity, because he dishonored it. Let go this gentleman!'

'Young man,' said Salmer, 'you have used expressions—'

'Mr. Salmer, I think you had better go home. Here's your carriage. You see it hasn't been disturbed. So, sir, that is much better. Mrs. Salmer, will you enter, if you please. Now, rev. sir, I pray you not to disturb yourself; drive on, coachman. Farewell!'

And the carriage drove off, amid the hisses, laughter, and groans of the multitude, for such it had now become.

'Your name is Gerald Moore, sir,' said the soldier, who had never presented himself during the row, but who had not withdrawn his eyes from Gerald since his arrival.

'Yes, my friend, that is my name.'

'You are a good man, sir.'

'Would that I were; I wish to be an honest man.'

'Have you an enemy—a great, deadly foe?'

'The man breathes not whom I have injured willingly.'

'There is, nevertheless, an individual, perhaps two or three, who seem the power, and who plot your ruin.'

'Truly, 'tis an enterprise hardly worth their wisdom.'

'And the ruin of your family?'

Gerald started.

'The ruin of your father, and of the lady whom I heard the poor peasant girls call 'our own Ailey Moore!''

The veteran looked at her through his tears, for Ailey at the moment was approaching.

CHAPTER III.—SHOWING HOW MURDERERS ARE MADE IN IRELAND.

The landlords of Ireland are a curious race. They reap what they do not sow, and banquet sumptuously on their fellows' toil, but are so insensible to their happy fortune, that, far from endeavoring to preserve it, their labor is to accelerate its ruin. The geese that lay the golden eggs are destroyed by the dozen; and although every day's experience proves that no hidden treasure is to be obtained by the sacrifice, still they kill on.

It is a singular state of things, too familiar to be anomalous, that the great, great grandson of some fellow who was able to chant a hymn or to handle a drum stick, can make a whole barony sweat out their lives to drag him along in his carriage, or starve themselves to feed his greyhounds; and will smite, scourge, and curse them, unless they pull him along at a pace of which human nature is not capable, or minister to him on a scale to which no exertion is adequate.

For our own parts, we are far from disputing the title which pimp, or parasite, or plunderer, may have won from the gratification or aid which he gave to royalty a century, or two, or three ago;—nay, we are quite ready to admit, that he can transmit his privileges, with the meritorious qualities which acquired them; but we may be allowed to wonder that he will thrust his claims forward for public scrutiny, and insist upon their predominance over the ways of heaven and the capacity of the earth. 'Let well enough alone,' ought to be, with this class, a *præceptum præcipuum*—for really the community which makes legislators may take it into their heads that two hundred years have paid sufficiently for the music of some piper, or the diplomacy of some cheat—particularly when the work was done, not for, but against those who pay for it.

We have been thus dreaming, while our eyes are fixed upon a sad but deeply interesting scene to which the story of 'Ailey Moore,' at this period leads us.

We beg the reader to believe that we play not the nurse to his imagination, nor do we essay merely to adorn a tale, while we indite the dark history of human ruin and wrong. Far, far from it. Here we speak only of that of which we are cognizant, from a thousand sources to which the trader in busy romance can never have access. We have laid our hand upon the heart of misery and felt its burning throbs. We have watched the scalding tear of guilt and wretchedness, until it wore furrows in the cheek of youth, and dried up the life of premature old age. We have seen the conflict of passion and penitence, on the wet straw and hard floor to which legalized ferocity and robbery had condemned the last and first days of harmless innocence; and while we mingled our tears with the unhappy and doomed children of dependence, we blessed the providence of Him whose law so frequently shields tyranny from vengeance.

Far away in the mountain, about twenty miles from Kilmacarra, is an old castle, one of those strongholds of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which stand like the milestones on time's journey, marking the distance he has travelled. It is not all a ruin. The basement apartment, or whatever it may be called, is still protected from the element by the massive floor on which, in times of yore, the rude chieftain rioted in conscious strength, on feudal offering or rich rapine. The gateway crowns a ditch still deep and often filled with water, and is built up with loose stone and mortar, unless one narrow entrance-hole.—Above the string course, window after window, or rather aperture after aperture, look down the eyesocket of a monster skeleton upon the rude rocks below.

To this ruin, to which the peasant would hardly venture a hurried glance as he passed by on an evening, some men, one by one, and at considerable intervals, had for some time been directing their way.

It was in the twilight, nearly night. The sheep started, paused, and flew; the oxen lowed and the wild birds rose from their resting-places by the rocks, and screamed as the echo of footsteps disturbed their repose. A sharp, strong wind hissed through the herbage, poor even in summer's richness, and heavy, dark clouds hid the first glances of a young moon. A strong heart and head would feel solemn on such an evening; and in the midst of such a scene

An athletic man, rather comfortably clad, paused and listened for a moment—looked towards the castle, and they slowly surveyed the country round. After a few seconds, he started. Some one approached. He cleared the small hedge at a bound, and was immediately hidden by a way-side projecting rock.

Not one—two men advanced together: one a little before the other. He was a heavily-formed muscular figure, with body-coat tightly fitting, a smart hat lightly worn, knee-breeches, elastic tread, and bold bearing. His companion was hardly middle-sized, looked very like a fellow, as the country people say, that had 'life thrown after him,' he had so little of it. He shuffled on by an effort.

'Come on—what the devil is the matter wid you?' said the leader.

'I assure you, sir, I'm doing my best,' was the reply.

'Sha ashore, 'sir,' mighty manly the mountain air makes one—don't it, avic?'

Here he stopped just opposite the hiding place of the man of whom we first made mention. He turned towards the rock—looked curiously at it—took a pistol from his pocket; and immediately the short, sharp click was heard, that put it on full cock.

'Stay a minit,' said the fellow, as he presented the pistol, but with a voice so changed that no human being could recognise its natural sounds; 'stay a minit, till I kill a bokogh that's hiding behind the rock there. I'll be bound he's a robber, the vagabone; one of these night-walkers that's destroying the country.'

'Stay,' roared the intended victim, in a voice of thunder, and alighting at the armed man's side by a fleet bound, he stretched his hand to seize him. But he at once drew back, looked in the face of the aggressor, and the two men burst into a fit of laughter.

'Well, Shaun, Shaun,' cried our first acquaintance, 'you are the d—! How did you make that voice you had? Faith, I near had you by the throat an' choked you.'

'Mighty strong man you'd be, after my purty bullit tuk its recreation in your scatter-brain. You're mighty 'cute, ain't you, to go hide before a mau's eyes. Oh, you'll soon be fit for a Peeler, or a justice o' pace.'

'You're a gentleman wid you, I see.'

'Yes; this is a friend of ours, a mighty brave courageous young man. He'll rise in the world, I'm thinking.'

'The young man shuddered.

'This is Mr. James Boran. As for your name,' he added, smiling, 'you have so many of 'em that there's no use in telling one.'

'Daddy Boran's son!'

'Yes, faith.'

'The young priest?'

'Oh, yis, or the young parson, maybe; Mr. James is no way exact.'

'Oh,' interposed Mr. James Boran, for, in truth, it was the same accomplished gentleman.

'Oh, come along, now. If you do your duty we may save your sowl, by keeping you from Parson Salmer, and we'll make a man of you, and that'll be doing much—won't it, avic?—' answered Shaun, with his own sarcastic emphasis.

Mr. James Boran bit his lip, and blushed in the darkness. He then followed the singular being, who will be recognised as the beggarman of the morning.

The three men now silently proceeded to the castle—Shaun-a-therk wrapped in his own thoughts, Boran wishing himself or his friends a thousand miles away, and the third seemingly sufficiently engaged by anticipation to be indifferent to conversation.

They came to a turn in the road which led into a borheen, rough, irregular, and rutty.—Down this they turned, and in a short time they had come to the entrance of the ruin.

Here Shaun a dherk paused. He turned full towards Boran, and looked into his face with that striking concentration of eye, which made his glance so like fascination. He then laid his hand on the young man's shoulder; at which the other, of course, trembled from head to foot.

'Pshaw,' said Shaun, 'what are you afeard of? We're come to the spot where you'll do the only good action of your life, bar'n the lavin' of college. Don't start, avic.'

He then looked around as if musing, still, however, keeping his hand on Boran's shoulder.—At length, again looking him full in the face, he said:

'James Boran—a bad man ought to have an iron heart, a heart like the castle rock there; the child will play about it, and 'twill dash out the brain of a bodhagh, and look all just the same. Now, James Boran, you are a bad man and a coward, and that is a very poor commendation.'

Here Shaun turned to the third party, and told him to pass on.

'You are in my power, Boran,' he said, 'and in more ways than one, you know; your life is on your conduct this evening.'

'I'm ready. I have not followed you here twenty miles for nothing.'

'Bouldly sed, Mr. James—bouldly sed. You did not, sure enough, follow me for nothing.—Murder! if I gave you up for the mean, low robbery I caught you in, or for the forgery, or exposed your dirty talk with the Parson, or come here—the run done on the widow's only child. Ah, Mr. Boran, you have many a face, but only one bad' bad heart; from the mother that bore you to the poor girl that trusted you, you made nothing of them all, only for your stomach and your dirty ways. No, 'twasn't for nothing you followed me. You followed me for your neck, for your name, for your vanity and vengeance—and,' he softly added, 'for my pistol. Ha, ha—faith 'tis true enough, 'twasn't for nothing you followed me.'

'And are all our promises forgotten, Shaun? half muttered the writhing victim. 'Are these the—'

'Och, see how he does thravel,' ejaculated Shaun.

'Why, you omadhavn, I'll make you rich enough to save you from selling your soul to the d—; and as for the other affair—'

'You said—'

'I said you should try your fortune, and if she liked you, you should have my arm.'

'If she liked me?'

'Who, d'ye think I'd blacken the light of an angel's heart, and bury her fur ever agen her will, Boran?'

Boran looked vacantly on the interrogator.

'Confound the dog,' burst forth Shaun.—'What does he think—but stay, agra,' he calmly said, subduing his whole voice and manner in an instant, and speaking in the bitter, leering manner so usual to him; 'come along—do your business—a good and honest one, though you're engaged in it. Come along.'

They now entered what might be called a cavern. The room was spacious, furnished with a blazing turf fire and one table, at which an intelligent young peasant was sitting reading some letters. Several others, ten or twelve, sat on fern, straw, or large unheaven stones, here and there in the apartment.

All the persons present were young, athletic, interesting-looking men. They seemed in silent expectation of the arrival which had just taken place. They all rose to welcome Shaun a Dherk and his companion.

'Fine night, boys,' said Shaun, after he had shaken hands with those next the door. 'Glad to see ye all to time. That's the way.'

'An' yourself,' answered two or three, 'that never missed a minute or a man.'

'Who, throth, I begged my way like a sojurer, and although carrying so many mouths wid one,' he said, pointing to his arms in his bosom, 'isn't favorable to the begging trade, I got on purty well. I had a long talk wid the new landlord of Kilmacarra, ye must know.'

'Arrah,' cried the listeners.

'Yis, faith, and I did considerable toward pacifying the country with Justice Hangall; and not to be exposing the saycrets of the state, I must end my speech by making known to ye Mr. James Boran, a man very anxious to join ye, particularly if the business is dangerous.'

'Welcome,' answered all.

'I have to say that the young master of Kilmacarra will make empty houses and broken hearts, boys,' added Shaun. 'He has a great notion entirely of saving the souls of the tenants by Parson Salmer's rule. Lases will be wrote according to a mau's Bible reading and desait, and accordin' as he's piabile in selling the souls av his children.'

'O further!' echoed the hearers.

'Yis, faith, and he'll have substantial men on the land, and make the farms fine and big, be my sowl, and he'll throw down all the cabins and give every mother's soul a pound note that throws down the house himself and goes.'

'Where?' demanded the conclave.

'Oh, to a mighty good place—to heaven, if they starve with patience, to be sure; to the poorhouse, if they like, or to cook landlords, or to the d—!'

'A sad day for Kilmacarra,' said all.

'And a sad day for the man that makes it so,' said Shaun, while his broad brow bent and his eye flashed the fire of his bitter feeling.

'But the business of the night,' said the young man at the table; and he rose up as if even additional life had just then entered his frame.

'He was a fine young man, too, some one or two and twenty years he had seen. His eye and hair were light; but his arm was powerful, and his chest spread before him like a shield.'

'Yes,' answered Shaun, 'the business of the night—dark, black, cursed, ought to be the end of the man that killed the sows' and bodies of the craythurs God put in his power.' He may as well say his death prayer that won't strike