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## FLORENCE O'NEILL, THE ROSE OF ST. GERMAINS, OR, THE SIEGE OF LIMERICK.

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(From the Catholic Mirror.)

### CHAPTER XXIII.—THE DUKE OF TYRCONNELL, AND Sarsfield, Lord Lucan.

It is a soft, summer night, serene and peaceful, all nature is hushed, the moon-beams play on the surface of the waters, and light up the flowery dells and glades around Limerick. Not a sound is heard for a few brief hours, when preparations will be made for the coming strife.

There was much suffering within the city. The foremost to relieve and succor, out of her own store, was the brave woman, Catherine O'Neill, who had in her own heart something of the spirit of her kinsman, Sarsfield.

\* This worthy general, now Lord Lucan, for King James had sent him the patent of an earldom, had, together with Lord Tyrconnell, put the town in a state of defence, and had induced the officers and soldiers to make oath that they would defend the rights of James to the last. But in spite of this oath, there were factions and desponding spirits whose whole thoughts were bent on a treaty with the Dutch King.

On the night in question, Tyrconnell and Sarsfield held a conference with a few of the chief officers, amongst whom were the notorious Colonel Luttrell, Sir Reginald, now Major St. John, and Major Sheldon Sarsfield, who was a man of commanding stature. The expression of his countenance was one of determination; he possessed all the qualities necessary for the onerous position he occupied.

Factional spirits were, however, within the camp, and it required all his influence amongst those whom he commanded, to tame them into submission.

"What is to be done," exclaimed Colonel Luttrell, who was at the head of the despondents, "money has been ordered to be sent from France. But how are we to wait, reduced, as we are, to the greatest extremity. The discontent of the army will increase, and capitulate in spite of us, my lords," he added, addressing the General and the Lord Lieutenant.

This thought had likewise crossed the minds of them to whom he spoke, averse as they were to entertain such an idea.

"Do not let us dream of capitulation whilst we are still in a position to wield a sword," said Sir Reginald. "The men are becoming discouraged, it is true, on account of the extremities to which they are reduced, but they are still faithful. Nay, I believe one-third of William's army would come over to us, as Lord Tyrconnell said months since, could we but give them each a trifle of money and maintain them afterwards."

"But you see, Major St. John, we cannot support the troops we have, much less find money to obtain others," said Luttrell, in a sarcastic tone of voice. "I have maintained all along, and do so still, finding the French King so slow in sending supplies, that I believe the end of it will be capitulation, though I see perfectly well that few are of my opinion."

"Have patience yet twenty days," said Tyrconnell. "We shall know by then if we act in accordance with the king's wish in laying down our arms."

His request was assented to, but the impatient and treacherous Luttrell entered into secret negotiations with the commanding officer of William's troops, enquiring what conditions would be granted in case they submitted.

Sarsfield, ever full of zeal in the service of James, found out the treacherous correspondence that was being carried on.

A few mornings after this conference, he observed a young man, evidently a stranger, loitering about with a letter in his hand, and looking as if in search of some one.

"Whom do you want, friend?" said Sarsfield, observing that he was a stranger, and an Englishman.

"Colonel Luttrell, your honor. The letter is from General Ginckle's quarters," and the man touched his hat as he spoke.

"It is right, friend; tell your master it has fallen into safe hands," exclaimed Sarsfield, taking the letter, and in the greatest agitation, making his way to Tyrconnell.

Thus this letter, intended for Luttrell, fell into the hands of Sarsfield. It was read by the latter and Tyrconnell, and proved to be part of a secret and treacherous correspondence with the enemy. Luttrell was at once tried by a court-martial, and then put into prison.

It often happens that the body, enfeebled with age and infirmity, yields or succumbs, whilst the mind remains, in full vigor, thus it was with Tyrconnell. He and the brave General Sarsfield had had many points of difference, but were now on terms of agreement together. Little did either of them imagine on that night, when the conference was held, in the beginning of the second week of August,

that on the feast of St. Lawrence, the gallant Tyrconnell would receive his death stroke.

Latterly his every thought had been given to the approaching contest, and how to make it a decisive one in favor of the late king, together with earnest endeavors to calm turbulent and factious spirits, to a certain degree, aided by Sarsfield who was deservedly beloved. He had succeeded, but the strain on the duke's mind had been too great for his failing strength and advancing years.

On the morning of the Feast of St. Lawrence he heard Mass. On his return home he fell back in his chair, seized with a fit of apoplexy; he recovered his senses and his speech, but only to languish for two days, when he expired in the midst of the calamities he had been striving to overcome.

### CHAPTER XXIV.—THE BESIEGED CITY.

Immediately after his death, the troops of the Dutch King proceeded to within five miles of the city. The negotiations with Luttrell made them deem unnecessary to bring their cannon, but the French officer entrusted with the command by Sarsfield, ordering troops into the town on the Clare side, Ginckle prepared for a formal siege, and waited for his artillery.

Five days of suspense for the inhabitants of the besieged city, and then the troops of the usurper William put themselves before the place.

Days of sorrow for Limerick, though ended by a treaty advantageous and honorable, had its terms been kept by the English.

Alas, for the horrors and calamities of war, when famine and carnage walk hand-in-hand through the land, laying desolate and ravaging its fairest spots. When rapine and sacrilege, and wholesale murder are perpetrated, and made just in the eyes of those who commit them, because it is the time of war.

There was a brave woman in Limerick, whose youth, and strength, and health had all passed away, for even middle age was on the wane. In the midst of the horrors, when terror-stricken women pressed their little ones to their bosoms, and the young and the tender wailed for bread, she was in the midst of them. Bombarding had commenced, shells were falling thick and fast, churches and houses became a wreck to the fury of the assailants, and many a till then flourishing homestead, was laid in ruins. In one of these doomed houses was Catherine O'Neill, speaking words of comfort to a knot of helpless women and still more helpless babes. Thick and fast came the dropping shells, and in this house the cousin of Sarsfield met her death with some half-dozen of her female friends, and their helpless children clustered around her.

At last a breach is made where stands the old Abbey of St. Dominick, and even then the garrison, better prepared than they supposed the army of William, were on the point of abandoning the undertaking, when by the scandalous neglect, to give it no harsher name, of Clifford, one of James' English officers, William's troops were allowed to make a bridge of boats, and thus to pass their horses and dragoons across the Shannon, and so cut between the Irish horse commanded by Sheldon and St. John, and the town itself.

Sarsfield bit his lips in almost uncontrollable anger, for having foreseen this danger, he had given Clifford fifteen hundred dragoons to oppose any such attempt, he having the camp within two miles of him, and the town within three.

"Ruined, undone by folly and treachery combined," exclaimed Sarsfield, when this wretched tidings was brought to him. "Instead of giving opposition, or even noticing what was being done, has he positively suffered our enemy to make a bridge under his very eyes."

Sheldon and St. John were alike dismayed; the first they knew of the attempt was that William's troops had actually passed, and that Clifford was retreating towards them.

Furious at this scandalous neglect, and foreseeing the consequences which were certain to result from it, all they could do was to stop the besieging army at a pass, till they could gain the mountains with their horse dragoons, and so make way to Six Mile Cross.

Literally fighting their way through the troops of the usurper, the little party of men under St. John and Sheldon at last accomplished their object, but not being able to remain, were ordered back toward Clare. And now the great body of horse and dragoons have passed over their bridge of boats, and present themselves before Thomond Gate.

Leading, as it were, a forlorn hope, one brave officer, Colonel Lacy, with a small body of 700 men, disputed their approach bravely. Like lions, did he and his little party fight, but the odds are against them, the valiant Lacy is overpowered, not by bravery or courage, but by the mere force of superior numbers, and a constant supply of fresh men on the part of his assailants. Again he and his little band of stout Milesian hearts rally, and repossess themselves of the ground from which they had been driven, but the odds are still against them, and unable to resist they make towards the gate.

Alas, alas, for that brave little band that day

cut to pieces at Thomond Gate, the craven-hearted mayor of the town, fearing the English would enter, dared to shut it against his own people, and the greater part of that devoted little party were butchered in cold blood.

Despair seized upon the general officers, the enemy was between them and the horse, which would perish for want of provender. How could they hold out without horse or dragoons, or if they raise the siege; where are their means of feeding the fort?

"Propose a treaty," said Monsieur de Usson and other French officers, but the Irish officers are mindful of their oath. Until the bishop and divines of Limerick remind them, that blocked up as they were on every side, and thus unable to hear from the king should his answer even come, it was impossible for them to keep to the letter of their oath.

Sarsfield beheld the forts taken and their condition desperate, yet he had the courage to insist on, and the dexterity to obtain articles not only for the security of the people of Limerick, but also for the whole of Ireland. Consulting the honor and advantage of his royal master James, in getting leave for his men to go, and even ships to transport them into France, should they still desire to follow his fortunes and adhere to his service, which with those who had gone previously, clinging to the fortunes of the ex-king brought, from first to last nearly 30,000 men into the Kingdom of France, 12,000 men chose *à eux* rather to undergo exile from their native land, than submit to the government of the Dutch usurper. Nowhere, indeed, had the ill-fated James more staunch supporters than his Irish subjects.

But vainly can we attempt to describe the embittered feelings of the Earl of Lucan and his faithful followers, when, a very few days later, the dawn of the early morning showed them a French fleet on the coast, comprising eighteen ships of the line, with 30,000 arms, and also stores of provisions and ammunition.

Assistance so near, and yet they had been compelled to yield. The feeling in the mind of Lucan and the more intrepid and earnest of his followers was, that but for impatient and factious men like Luttrell, the kindly aid of the magnificent Louis would not have proved ineffectual.

### CHAPTER XXV.—THE MINIATURE.

Ghastly sights met the eyes of Lord Lucan after the capitulation. The remains of his heroic cousin, lying amongst the dead, filled his heart with poignant grief; and he stood some time, lost in his melancholy thoughts, beside her remains and those of the little ones who had fallen by her side, when the voice of his faithful servant Dennis aroused him.

The poor honest-hearted fellow could scarcely speak for emotion. At last, after two or three inarticulate efforts, he managed to say:

"Arrah, thin, General dear, the murtherous Saxons have done black work, bad cess to them for that same; but I come to tell ye there's one English officer, Major St. John, just after dying, as I may say, and he begs to see ye, General; he is mortal bad, and has had two ugly wounds. He keeps saying, 'Fetch me the General, and I tell you his spirit can't go in peace till he sees you.'"

"Come with me, Dennis, and show me where he is; I will go to him at once."

Dennis led the way to the hospital, in which extra beds were being hastily improvised. All around lay the wounded and the dying, their white faces looking ghastly, as though already the life had departed.

On a low settle bed lay Sir Reginald, grievously wounded in the right arm and left shoulder. He was rambling incoherently when Sarsfield approached his couch. A surgeon, assisted by a Sister of Charity, was binding up his wounds.

He was talking of his early English home, of the happy scenes of childhood, forever gone—

"Yet who for power would not mourn,  
That he no more must know;  
His fair red castle on the hill,  
And the pleasant lands below."

These beautiful lines, of one of our English bards, might well answer for such as Sir Reginald St. John.

But as Lord Lucan listens he discovers that the incoherent wanderings of St. John are not the mere ramblings of delusion, for words like these fell from his lips:

"Yes, it was all my fault; I took Benson to the Grange, I induced her uncle to go to London. But for my sin and folly in that matter, my Florence, my betrothed one, would never have been seen at the hateful Mary's court."

"Aye, a light breaks upon me, then," thought Lord Lucan; "you have done mischief. Major, now I can account for that which has perplexed me—the reason of your sad, dejected countenance and constant fits of abstraction. It was through you, then, my kinswoman, Florence, has got about that thrice accursed court."

The good General, however, kept down all expression of what he really felt, and bending his ear low so as to catch the words which fell in broken sentences, and taking the cold hand

of St. John within his own, he lent an attentive ear to what he thought the last injunctions of a dying friend.

"Will you give my Florence this—and this?" he murmured, giving Sarsfield a small miniature of himself, set with diamonds, together with an unsealed letter.

"On my faith as a soldier and a gentleman, I promise to do as you request," replied Sarsfield, much moved.

"That letter I wrote lest I should fall in battle," he resumed. "It begs her to forgive the folly which my loyalty to William led me to commit; for, but for me, she had never been at the court of Mary. It begs her to think with tenderness of my memory, when she looks upon that likeness, if I die; and if I live, it releases her from the engagement she has made to one whom the Prince of Orange has made an outlaw and a beggar. Tell me, once more, my lord, will you undertake to—promise, that in some way my Florence shall—surely have these tokens of—of our betrothal, and—"

But St. John had lost all power to proceed. The cold fingers which had tightly grasped Sarsfield's hand relaxed their hold, a pallor like that of death overspread his face, and his head fell heavily on the pillow.

"Is there any hope, think you?" said Lord Lucan, addressing the surgeon.

"Very little, my lord; the gentleman has been badly wounded. I would be sorry to give an opinion at present, but it is a very bad case; it is more than probable it will prove a fatal one."

Lord Lucan carefully placed the letter and miniature in his breast pocket, resolving to carry them with him to France, as amongst the ladies at the exiled court there might probably be one who could undertake, through her friends, to transmit the packet safely to Florence. He then visited the beds of other officers, as well as of the men who had received severe wounds at the hands of the enemy, and ended the painful duties of a very melancholy day, assembling those under his command, exhorting them to peaceable and quiet living, and inquiring into the number of the men who intended to become exiles rather than submit to the usurper's yoke.

### CHAPTER XXVI.—THE SHADOW OF THE GRAVE.

It is a lovely evening in Autumn, that season of the year in which the bright green foliage of Summer gives place to those varied tints which constitute the chief charm of woodland scenery.

The queen and her court are at Kensington, the king's favorite palace, he being daily expected in England; and as the baronet's health had not improved sufficiently to allow of his return to Morville, the proximity of his house to the palace gave Florence the opportunity of frequently visiting him.

On one of these visits he surprised her by handing to her a small packet. It had reached the baronet's hands through a private channel, and from their renowned kinsman, Sarsfield, Lord Lucan.

Florence grew red and white by turns, as with cold and trembling fingers, she untied the silken ribbon that fastened the packet.

The first letter she opened was from Lord Lucan. It ran as follows:

MY DEAR FLORENCE:  
In compliance with the request of a brave officer, who has been fighting under my command, I transmit to you the enclosed. I also beg, at the same time, to acquaint you with the death of your aunt, the amiable and beloved Catherine O'Neill. She was killed by a shell falling on her house whilst the town was bombarded, at a moment in which she was actively engaged in comforting and helping those who had blocked around her.

I am glad to tell you that the writer of the enclosed letter, written by him several weeks since, is pronounced out of danger. As soon as he recovers sufficiently to travel, he will accompany me to St. Germain.

I must not forget to add that all cousin Catherine's wealth is bequeathed to yourself.

I hope, my dear Florence, that the day is not far distant when I shall have the pleasure of assisting at your nuptials with one who was the best and bravest of my late officers.

I remain, dear Florence,  
Your affectionate Cousin,  
LUCAN.

Well did Florence remember that good aunt of her's, and tears fell to that memory long before she had reached the end of her letter.

Then Florence unfolded a sheet of paper containing a few hastily written lines, of the purport of which the reader is already aware. Within them was wrapped the miniature, a welcome *souvenir* indeed.

She sat still a long while pondering over the contents of that last letter, and angry with herself, after all, that any thought should distract her from sorrow at the sudden and violent death of her aunt.

Of course Sir Reginald had been long since forgiven; had he not perilled his life in fighting for the cause of King James? She had riches enough for both, notwithstanding his confiscated estates; but the trouble now would be to escape from her present thralldom. She had no hope of being able to do so even had she been this moment free. Could she leave that aged man, whose days were fast drawing to a close, and who was clinging to her as a father to a beloved child.

"I will leave them with you, uncle dear," she said, kneeling by his bedside, and placing the letters and miniature in his hand; "you will take care of them for me. It is hard to part with them, but I dare not have them at the palace under my care. Is it not hard to bear this restraint? What right has the queen to keep me there against my will?"

"No right, my child, but by her power. Moreover, I fancy she is as much attached to you as she can be to any one."

"The queen cares for no one but her husband, uncle. But, hark, there is the sound of carriage wheels; it tells me my time is up. Farewell, my own dear uncle, till to-morrow. I shall come and see you every day whilst I am in Kensington."

On her return she was summoned to attend the queen. After a few common-place remarks respecting the health of her uncle, the queen said:

"Do you remember Count Von Arnheim, a very handsome young officer, high in favor of the king? He holds a very honorable post at the Hague, and accompanied the king to England on his last visit hither."

"Yes, madam, I do remember such a person slightly."

"The king has formed intentions respecting him which we mutually hope will not be displeasing to our *protégé*, Florence O'Neill. The Count has a fine estate near the Hague, and as he is a favorite of the king's, I need not tell you that his interests will be cared for."

Florence sat like a statue, pale and speechless, whilst the queen delivered this tirade. When the queen paused:

"Madam," she said, "I beg the king and yourself to accept my grateful thanks for your kind intentions, but I cannot marry Count Von Arnheim."

"Not marry him, and why? He is handsome, amiable, and wealthy. Surely you are not encouraging any further attachment to the traitor St. John?"

"Spare me, gracious madam," said the girl, rising, and then leaning against a chair for support; "I have no intention to marry; it is impossible for me to wed the Count."

"The king will be displeased that you should reject an alliance which we have thought well of. Still more, should he deem that you persist in your rejection of the Count because you encourage still an attachment for the outlaw St. John. With no friends in England but your uncle, who will not tarry long, it is something worse than foolish to refuse overtures which the king and myself consider it will be for your advantage to accept."

"It is simply impossible, your Majesty, that I can ever marry Count Von Arnheim."

"I see well how it is," replied the queen; "also, that I have pressed the matter too much. The Count is coming here along with the king in a few weeks; you will overcome this reluctance."

"Madam, spare me any overtures on the part of the Count," said Florence; "my mind will remain unaltered; I shall never marry him."

"I see that you are obstinate," was the reply. "Time effects great changes. Before very long you may be as anxious to complete this match as you are now violently opposed. Obstinance is the prevailing characteristic of the dispositions of certain members of my own family. It is that of my own sister, and her positiveness in retaining those mischievous favorites of hers, the Marlboroughs, are a proof of it. She will have to yield, and so will you."

(To be Continued.)

## IRELAND'S VINDICATION.

REV'D. FATHER BURKE'S GREAT LECTURE.

"The History of Ireland, as told in Her Ruins."

(From the N. Y. Irish American.)

(CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST.)

Then came, almost at the very moment of Ireland's conversion and Ireland's abundant monasticism, embodied, as it were, and sustained by that rule of St. Columba which St. Patrick brought into Ireland, having got it from St. Martin of Tours,—then came, at that very time, the ruin and the desolation of almost all the rest of the world. Rome was in flames; and the ancient Pagan civilization of thousands of years was gone. Hordes of barbarians poured, in streams, over the world. The whole of that formerly civilized world seemed to be falling back again into the darkness and chaos of the barbarism of the earliest times; but Ireland, sheltered by the encircling waves, converted and sanctified, kept her national freedom. No invader profaned her virgin soil; no sword was drawn, nor cry of battle or feud resounded through the land; and the consequence was, that Ireland, developing her schools, entering into every field of learning, produced, in almost every monk, a man fitted to teach his fellow-men and enlighten the world (cheers). And the whole world came to their monasteries, from every clime, as I have said before; they filled the land; and for three hundred years, without the shadow of a doubt, history declares that Ireland held the intellectual supremacy of the civilized world (renowned applause). Then were built those groups of seven churches, here and there; then did they fill the land; then, when the morning sun arose, every valley in blessed Ireland resounded to the praises and the matin-song of the monk; then the glorious cloister of Lismore, of Armagh, of Bangor, of Arran arose; and, far out in the Western Ocean, the glorious chorus resounded in praise of God, and the musical genius of the people received