

THE COLLEGIANS.

A TALE OF GARRYOWEN.

BY Gerald Griffin.

CHAPTER XXXV.—Continued.

"Come, Hardress," continued Connolly, "although you are not in love with me, yet we may try a canter together. Hark! What is that! What are the dogs doing now?"

"They have left the cover on the hill," cried a gentleman who was galloping past, "and are trying the carcass."

"Poor Dalton," said Mr. Cregan, "that was the man that would have had old Reynard out of cover before now."

"Poor Dalton!" exclaimed Hardress, catching up the word with passionate emphasis, "poor—poor Dalton. Oh, day of my youth!" he added, turning aside on his saddle, and looking out upon the quiet river. "Oh, days—past, happy days! my merry boyhood, and my merry youth! my boat! the broad river, the rough west wind, the broken waves, and the heart at rest! Oh, miserable wretch! What have you now to hope for? My heart will burst before I leave this field!"

"The dogs are chopping," said Connolly; "they have found him. Come! come away!"

"'Tis a false scent," said the old gentleman. "Ware hare!"

"Ware hare!" was echoed by many voices. A singular hurry was observed amongst the crowd upon the brow of the hill, which overlooked the carcass, and presently all descended to the marsh.

"There is something extraordinary going forward," said Cregan; "what makes all the crowd collect upon the marsh?"

A pause ensued, during which Hardress experienced a degree of nervous anxiety, for which he could not account. The hounds continued to chop in concert, as if they had found a strong scent, and yet no fox appeared.

At length a horseman was observed riding up the miry pass before mentioned, and galloping towards them. When he approached, they could observe that his manner was hurried and agitated, and his countenance wore an expression of terror and compassion. He tightened the rein suddenly, as he came upon the group.

"Mr. Warner," he said, addressing the old gentleman already alluded to, "I believe you are a magistrate?"

Mr. Warner bowed.

"Then come this way, sir, if you please. A terrible occasion makes your presence necessary on the other side of the hill."

"No harm, sir, to any of our friends, I hope?" said Mr. Warner, putting spurs to his horse, and galloping away. The answer of the stranger was lost in the tramp of the hoofs as they rode away.

Immediately after, two other horsemen came galloping by. One of them held in his hand, a straw bonnet, beaten out of shape, and dragged in the mud of the carcass. Hardress just caught the word "horrible," as they rode swiftly by.

"What's horrible?" shouted Hardress, rising on his stirrup.

The two gentlemen were already out of hearing. He sunk down again on his seat, and glanced aside at his father and Connolly. "What does he call horrible?" he repeated.

"I did not hear him," said Connolly. "Come upon the carcass, and we shall learn."

They galloped in that direction. The morning was changing fast, and the rain was now descending in much greater abundance. Still there was not a breath of wind to alter its direction, or to give the slightest animation to the general lethargic look of nature. As they arrived on the brow of the hill, they perceived the crowd of horsemen and peasants collected into a dense mass around one of the little channels before described. Several of those in the centre were stooping low, as if to assist a fallen person. The next rank with their heads turned aside over their shoulders, were employed in answering the questions of those behind them. The individuals who stood outside were raised on tiptoe, and endeavored, by stretching their heads over the shoulders of their neighbors, to peep into the centre.

The whipper-in, meanwhile, was flogging the hounds away from the crowd, while the dogs reluctantly obeyed. Mingled with the press were the horsemen, bending over their saddles,

and gazing downward on the centre.

"Bad manners to ye!" Hardress heard the whipper-in exclaim, as he passed, "what a fox ye found for us this morning. How bad ye are, now, for a taste o' Christian's flesh!"

As he approached nearer to the crowd he was enabled to gather farther indications of the nature of the transaction, from the countenance and gestures of the people. Some had their hands elevated in strong fear, many brows were knitted in eager curiosity, some raised in wonder, and some expanded in affright. Urged by an unaccountable impulse, and supported by an energy, he knew not whence derived, Hardress alighted from his horse, threw the reins to a countryman, and penetrated the group with considerable violence. He dragged some by the collars from their places, pushed others aside with his shoulder, struck those who proved refractory with his whip-handle, and in a few moments attained the centre of the ring.

Here he paused, and gazed in motionless horror upon the picture which the crowd had previously concealed.

A small space was kept clear in the centre. Opposite to Hardress stood Mr. Warner, the magistrate and coroner of the county, with a small note-book in his hand, in which he made some entries with a pencil. On his right stood the person who had summoned him to the spot. At the feet of Hardress was a small pool, in which the waters now appeared disturbed and thick with mud, while the rain, descending straight, gave to its surface the semblance of ebullition. On the bank at the other side, which was covered with sea-pink and a species of short moss peculiar to the soil, an object lay on which the eyes of all were bent with a fearful and gloomy expression. It was for the most part concealed beneath a large blue mantle, which was drenched in wet and mire, and lay so heavy on the thing beneath as to reveal the lineaments of a human form. A pair of small feet, in Spanish-leather shoes, appearing from below the end of the garment, showed that the body was that of a female; and a mass of long, fair, hair, which escaped from beneath the capacious hood, demonstrated that this death, whether the effect of accident or malice, had found the victim untimely in her youth.

The cloak, the feet, the hair, all were familiar objects to the eye of Hardress. On very slight occasions, he had often found it absolutely impossible to maintain his self-possession in the presence of others. Now, when the full solution of all his anxieties was exposed before him; now, when he looked upon the shattered corpse of Eily, of his chosen and once beloved wife, murdered in her youth, almost in her girlhood, by his connivance, it astonished him to find that all emotion came upon the instant to a dead pause within his breast. Others might have told him that his face was rigid, sallow, and bloodless as that of the corpse on which he gazed. But he himself felt nothing of this. Not a sentence that was spoken was lost upon his ear. He did not even tremble, and a slight anxiety for his personal safety was the only sentiment of which he was perceptibly conscious. It seemed as if the great passion, like an engine embarrassed in its action had been suddenly struck motionless, even while the impelling principle remained in active force.

"Has the horse and car arrived?" asked Mr. Warner, while he closed his note-book. "Can any one see it coming? We shall all be drenched to the skin before we get away."

"Can we not go to the nearest inn, and proceed with the inquest," said a gentleman in the crowd, "while some one stays behind to see the body brought after?"

"No, sir," said Mr. Warner, with some emphasis, "the inquest must be held super visum corporis, or it is worth nothing."

"Warner" whispered Connolly to Cregan, with a smile, "is afraid of losing his four-guinea fee. He will not let the body out of his sight."

"You know the proverb," returned Cregan, "a bird in the hand etc. What a fine fat fox he has caught this morning!"

At this moment the hounds once more opened in a chopping concert; and Hardress, starting from his

posture of rigid calmness, extended his arms, and burst at once into a passion of wild fear.

"The hounds! the hounds!" he exclaimed. "Mr. Warner, do you hear them? Keep off the dogs! They will tear her if ye let them pass! Good sir, will you suffer the dogs to tear her? I had rather be torn myself than look upon such a sight. Ye may stare as ye will, but I tell you all a truth, gentleman. A truth, I say—upon my life, a truth."

"There is no fear," said Warner, fixing a keen eye upon him.

"Aye, but there is, sir, by your leave," cried Hardress. "Do you hear them now? Do you hear that yell for blood? I tell you I hate that horrid cry. It is enough to make the heart of a Christian burst. Who put the hounds upon that horrid scent—that false scent? I am going mad, I think. I say, sir, do you hear that yelling now? Will you tell me now there is no fear? Stand close! Stand close, and hide me—here I mean. Stand close!"

"I think there is none whatever," said the coroner, probing him.

"And I tell you," cried Hardress, grasping his whip and abandoning himself to an almost delirious excess of rage, "I tell you there is. If this ground should open before me, and I should hear the hounds of Satan yelling upward from the deep, it could not freeze me with a greater fear! But sir, you can pursue what course you please," continued Hardress, bowing and forcing a smile; "you are here in office, sir. You are at liberty to contradict, as you please, sir; but I have a remedy. You know me, sir, and I know you. I am a gentleman. Expect to hear farther from me on this subject."

So saying, and forcing his way through the crowd, with as much violence as he used in entering, he vaulted into his saddle, and galloped as if he were on a stepphase, in the direction of Castle Chute.

"If you are a gentleman," said Mr. Warner, "you are as ill-tempered a gentleman as ever I met, or something a great deal worse."

"Take care what you say, sir," said Mr. Cregan, riding rapidly up, after a vain effort to arrest his son's flight, and after picking up from a straggler, not three yards from the scene of action, the exaggerated report that Hardress and the coroner had given each other the lie. "Take care what you say, sir," he said. "Remember, if you please, that the gentleman, ill-tempered or otherwise, is my son."

"Mr. Cregan," exclaimed the magistrate, at length growing somewhat warm, "if he were the son of the Lord Lieutenant, I will not be interrupted in my duty. There are many gentlemen here present; they have witnessed the whole occurrence, and if they tell you that I have done or said anything unbecoming a gentleman, I am ready to give you, or your son either, the satisfaction of a gentleman."

With this pacificatory and Christian-like speech, the exemplary Irish peace-preserver turned upon his heel, and went to meet the carman, who was not within a few paces of the crowd.

While the pitying and astonished multitude were conveying the shattered remains of Eily O'Connor to the nearest inn, her miserable husband was flying with the speed of fear in the direction of Castle Chute. He alighted at the Norman archway, by which Kyrle Daly had entered on the day of his rejection, and throwing the reins to Falvey, rushed without speaking up the stone staircase. That talkative domestic still retained a lingering preference for the discarded lover, and saw him with a grief supplanted by this wild and passionate young gentleman. He remained for a moment holding the rein in his hand, and looking back with a gaze of clam astonishment at the flying figure of the rider. He then compressed his lips—moved to a little distance from the horse—and began to contemplate the wet and reeking flanks and trembling limbs of the beautiful animal. The creature presented a spectacle calculated to excite the compassion of a practised attendant upon horses. His eyes were wide and full of fire—his nostrils expanded, and red as blood. His shining coat was wet from ear to flank, and corded by numberless veins they were now swollen to utmost by the accelerated circulation. As he panted and snorted in

his excitement, he scattered the flecks of foam over the dress of the attendant.

"Oh! murder, murder!" exclaimed the latter, after uttering that peculiar sound of pity which is used by the vulgar in Ireland, and in some continental nations. "Well, there's a man that knows how to use a horse! Look at that crutch! Well, he ought to be ashamed of himself, so he ought—any gentleman to use a poor dumb crutch that way. As if the hunt wasn't hard enough upon her, without bringin' her up in a gallop to the very doore!"

"An' as if my trouble wasn't enough besides," grumbled the groom, as he took the rein out of Falvey's hand. "He ought to stick to his boating! That's what he ought, an' to lave horses for those that knows how to use 'em."

"Who rode that horse?" asked old Dan Dawley, the steward as he came along sulky and bent by age to the half-door.

"The young masher we're gettin'," returned Falvey.

"Umph!" muttered Dawley, as he passed into the house, "that's the image of the thraatment he'll give all that he gets into his power."

"It's throe for you," said Falvey. Dawley paused, and looked back over his shoulder. "It's throe for me!" he repeated gruffly. "It's you that say that, an' you were the first to praise him when he came into the family."

"It stood to raison I should," said Falvey. "I liked him better than Master Kyrle himself, for bein' an off-hand gentleman, an' sissy spoken to. But sure a Turk itself couldn't stand the way he's goin' on of late days!"

Dawley turned away with a harsh grunt; the groom led out the heated steed upon the lawn, and Falvey returned to make the cuttyer redigent in the kitchen.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOW HARDRESS MADE A CONFIDENT.

Hardress Cregan, in the meantime, had proceeded to the antique chamber, mentioned in a former chapter, which led to the drawing-room in the more modern part of the mansion. He flung himself into a chair which stood near the centre of the apartment, and remained motionless for some moments, with hands clasped and eyes fixed upon the floor.

There were voices and laughter in the drawing-room, and he could hear the accents of Anne Chute resisting the entreaties of Mrs. Cregan and her mother, while they endeavored to prevail on her to sing some favorite melody.

"Anne," said Mrs. Chute, "don't let you aunt suppose that you can be disobliging. What objection is there to your singing that song?"

"One, I am sure, which aunt Cregan won't blame me for, mamma. Hardress cannot endure to hear it."

"But Hardress is not here now, my dear."

"Ah! ah! aunt. Is that your principle? Would you teach me to take advantage of his absence, then, to foster a little will of my own?"

"Go-go you giddy girl," said Mrs. Chute. "Have you the impudence to make your aunt blush?"

"My dear Anne," said Mrs. Cregan, "if you never make a more disobedient use of your husband's absence than that of singing a little song which you love, and which you can't sing in his presence, you will be the best wife in Ireland."

"Very well, aunt, very well. You ought to know the standard of a good wife. You have had some experience, or my uncle (I should say) had had some experience of what a good wife ought to be. Whether his knowledge in that way has been negatively or positively acquired, is more than I'll venture to say."

Hardress heard her run a tender prelude along the keys of her instrument, before she sung the following words:—

My Mary of the curling hair, The laughing teeth and bashful air, Our bridal morn is dawning fair, With blushes in the skies. Shule! Shule! Shule, agr! Shule ascur, agus shule, aroon.

Come! Come! Come my darling! Come softly and come, my love! My love! my pearl! My own dear girl! My mountain maid, arise!

Wake, linnet of the osier grove! Wake, trembling, stainless, virgin dove! Wake, nestling of a parent's love, Let Moran see thine eyes.

I am no stranger, proud and gay, To win thee from thy home away, And find thee, for a distant day, A theme for wasting sighs. Shule! Shule! etc.

But we were known from infancy; Thy father's heart was home to me, No selfish love was mine for thee, Unholy and unwise. Shule! Shule! etc.

But soon my love shall be my bride, And happy by our own fireside, My veins shall feel the rosy tide, That lingering Hope denies. Shule! Shule! etc.

My Mary of the curling hair, The laughing teeth and bashful air, Our bridal morn is dawning fair, With blushes in the skies. Shule! Shule! Shule, agr! Shule ascur, agus shule, aroon!

My love! my pearl! My own dear girl! My mountain maid, arise!

After the song was ended, Hardress heard the drawing-room door open and shut, and the stately and measured pace of his mother along the little lobby, and on the short flight of stairs which led to the apartment in which he sat. She appeared at the narrow stone doorway, and used a gesture of surprise when she beheld him.

"What! Hardress!" she exclaimed, "already returned! Have you had good sport to-day?"

"Sport!" echoed Hardress, with a burst of low, involuntary laughter, and without unclasping his wreathed hands, or raising his eyes from the earth: "yes, mother, very good sport. Sport, I think, that may bring my neck in danger one day."

"Have you been hurt, then, child?" said Mrs. Cregan, compassionately bending over her son.

Hardress raised himself in his seat, and fixed his eye upon her's for a few moments, in gloomy silence.

"I have," he said. "The hurt that I feared so long, I have got at length. I am glad you have come. I wished to speak with you."

"Stay a moment, Hardress. Let me close those doors. Servants are so inquisitive and apt to pry."

"Aye, now," said Hardress, "now and from this time forth, we must avoid those watchful eyes and ears. What shall I do, mother? Advise me, comfort me! Oh, I am utterly abandoned now! I have no friend, no comforter, but you! That terrible hope, that looked more like a fear, that kept my senses on the rack from morn to morn, is fled, at last, for ever. I am forsaken now."

"My dear Hardress," said his mother, much distressed, "when will you cease to afflict yourself and me with those fancies. Forsaken, do you say? Do your friends deserve this from you? You ask me to advise you, and my advice is this. Lay aside those thoughts, and value, as you ought to do, the happiness of your condition. Who, with a love like Anne, with a friend like your amiable college companion, Daly, and with a mother at least devoted in intention, would deliver himself up as you do to fantastic dreams of desolation and despair? If, as you seem to hint, you have a cause for suffering in your memory, remember, Hardress, that you are not left on earth for nothing. All men have something to be pardoned, and all time here is capable of being improved in the pursuit of mercy."

"Go on," said Hardress, setting his teeth, and fixing a wild stare upon his parent, "you but remind me of my curses. With a love like Anne! One whisper in your ear. I love her not. While I was mad I did; and in my senses, now, I am deadly suffering for that frantic treason. She was the cause of all my sorrow, my first and heaviest curse. With such a friend, why, how you laugh at me! You know how black and weak a part I have played to him, and yet you will remind me that he was my friend. That's kindly done, mother. Listen!" he continued, laying a firm grasp upon his mother's arm. "Before my eyes, wherever I turn me, and whether it be dark or light I see one, painting the hideous portrait of a fiend. Day after day he comes, and adds a deeper and a blacker tint to the resemblance. Mean fear, and selfish pride, the coarser half of blood, worthless inconsistency, black falsehood, and red-handed murder, those are the colors that he blends and stamps upon my soul. I am stained in every part. The proud coward that loved and was silent, when already committed by his conduct and master of the conquest that he feared to claim. The hypocrite that volunteered a friendship, to which he proved false almost without a trial. The night brawler, the drunkard, the faithless lover, and the perjured husband!

Where—who has ever run a course so swift and full of sin as mine? You speak of Heaven and mercy! Do you think I could so long have endured my agonies without remembering that? No; but a cry was at its gates before me, and I never felt that my prayer was heard. What this cry was, I have this morning learned. Mother," he added, turning quickly around with great rapidity of voice and action, "I am a murderer!"

Mrs. Cregan never heard the words. The look and gesture, coupled with the foregoing speech, had preformed her, and she fell back, in a death-like faint into the chair.

When she recovered, she found Hardress kneeling by her side, pale, anxious and terrified, no longer supported by that horrid energy which he had shown before the revelation of his secret, but motionless and helpless—desolate as an exploded mine. For the first time, the mother looked upon her child with a shudder in which remorse was mingled deeply with abhorrence. She waved her hand two or three times, as if to signify that he should retire from her sight. It was so that Hardress understood and obeyed the gesture. He took his place behind the chair of his parent, awaiting with gaping lip and absent eye, the renewal of her speech. The unhappy mother, meanwhile, leaned forward in her seat, covering her face with her hands, and maintained for several minutes that silent communication with herself which was usual with her when she had received any sudden shock. A long pause succeeded.

"Are you still in the room?" she said at length, as a slight movement of the guilty youth struck upon her hearing.

Hardress started, as a school-boy might at the voice of his preceptor, and was about to come forward, but the extended arm of his parent arrested his steps.

"Remain where you are," she said; "it will be a long time now before I shall desire to look upon my son."

Hardress fell back, stepping noiselessly on tip-toe, and letting his head hang dejectedly upon his breast.

(To be continued.)

OF INTEREST TO MOTHERS.

A Safeguard for Children Cutting Teeth in Hot Weather.

The time when children are cutting teeth is always an anxious one for mothers and when this occurs during the hot weather solicitude often deepens into alarm. So many ills that often result fatally are liable to ensue that every mother will be interested in a medical discovery that robs this period of many dangers. Mrs. R. Ferguson, of 105 Mansfield street, Montreal, Que., gives her experience for the benefit of other mothers. She says: "My baby has always been small and delicate, and suffered so much last summer with his teeth that I did not think he would live. The medicine the doctor ordered for him did not do him much good. Then he was attacked with dysentery and a very hot skin and cough. I sent for Baby's Own Tablets, and they did him a wonderful amount of good, and he is now getting on splendidly."

Baby's Own Tablets are sold by all dealers in medicine or will be sent post paid, at twenty-five cents a box, by the Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Brockville, Ont.

THE WIDOW'S LAMENT.

The country minister has to sympathize with all his parishioners in their sorrows, and has to enter into their affairs as a friend. A widow called upon a clergyman the other day. She seemingly desired to relieve her mind of something which oppressed her, but experienced some difficulty in coming to the subject. The reverend gentleman listened to her rambling remarks for some time, and then, hoping to hurry matters, exclaimed:—

"My good woman, you see I can be of no service to you till you tell me what it is that troubles you?"

"Well, sir, said the woman, summing sufficient courage, "I'm thinkin' of getting married again."

"Oh," exclaimed the minister, "that is it! Let me see; that is very frequent, too, surely. How many husbands have you had?"

"Well, sir," replied the widow, in a tone more of bitterness than of sorrow, "this is the fourth. I'm sure there never was a woman so completely tormented with such a set of dyin' men as I've been, sir."