## THE RIVALS. By Gerald Griffin. CHAPTER XVII.

As he rode homeward in the dark, within a few miles of his own residence, he was hailed by a figure on the road side, which, on nearer approach, he distinguished to be that of a young woman. She waved her hand anxiously several times, and seemed impatient for his approach.

"Is that you, docthor?" she said, as he came nearer, "Hurry in, hurry in, an' the heavens bless you! You never will overtake him alive." "Whom, woman?"

"Didn't James tell you, sir? A man of Mis-ther Lacy's, that was servin' a process in the mountains, an' a poor man that was in the place had the misfortune of killing him."

"A man of Lacy's?" exclaimed Riordan,

" bring me into the house immediately. I am no doctor, my good woman, so lose no time in sending for one, if you think it necessary."

He dismounted, and led his horse along a narrow bridle road, following the steps of the wo-man, who trudged along with the tail of her gown turned up over her shoulders, giving him at the same time an account of the accident which had taken place.

"He was a very foolish man," said she, "It was only this morning he took up two boys o' the Hares for night-walkin', an' nothin' could do him afther, but to go into the mountain to serve a process upon one Naughtin, a-first cousin of their own. 'M sure what could he expect?—
They gathered about him, and one o' 'em knocked him down, and another made him go upon his knees, and ate the process, an' swally it, an' take a dhrink o' wather afther, to wash it down; an', afther that, he got a blow of a stone, from somebody or another, that destroyed his head, an' indeed I'm afeerd he never 'll do. Ah, sir, 'tis a frightful thing to see a man in that state when he isn't aizy in his mind! I wished he had

the priest, poor creature, for he's one o' them that turned, an' I declare I feel for him."

They reached the cottage, which was crowded with the country people. The wounded man was lying in an inner room, which, likewise, was thronged as full as it could hold. Looking over the shoulders of the crowd, Francis could just discern the bed on which the unfortunate wretch was laid, and around which a number of faces compassion, but by far the greater number evincing either simple curiosity or a grim satisfaction. The light of a small candle, the end of which was crushed against the wall for the want of a better candlestick, threw a dead and perplexing light upon the group.

"Is the doctor come?" said the wounded man, in a tone of deep suffering, "is there no compassionate soul here that would get me a docthor, to see am I to die or to live?

"He's sent for," said an old woman, "he'll be

here immediately." "The Lord forgive you!" said another, " many's the time you made work for the docthors yourself, before now, an' the surgeons, an' the

undertakers too." "The Lord forgive you!" said the third, " the second year isn't gone by since you swore away the life of my poor husband for nothing, and left me this way in rags, an' my children fatherless,

an' apprenticed in their youth to beggary !" "Oh, let the Lord forgive you, if he can!" exclaimed a fourth. "I had two brothers, as strong and handsome as were ever seen at fair Croppy-hole, this year, and another is in the wilds of New South Wales; and it is you I have to thank for that, and for my misery.'

The wounded man regarded each of his accusers, as they came forward and retired, with a smile of grim and calm defiance, nor did he appear in the slightest degree affected by the charges which they launched against him in his agony.

"I had but one," screamed a withered creature on the right of Francis-"I had but one alone—an' that villain came across him an' desthroyed me! He left me childless-may the where they dared not bite, but bloody as my moment ere he left his home. Lord remember it to him in his own time?"

Again a grim smile of defiance crossed the this imprecation had fallen harmless on his sleening conscience.

" Shame ! shame !" said Francis, " if any thing could move you to forgiveness, it ought to be the condition of the poor man who is suffering before you."

"Don't speak to me, sir," exclaimed the woman, "I know you well, masther Francis, I know you are our friend, but I know, likewise, what I had, an' how I lost it. I can't forgive him for my child's desthruction!—I tell you it is an ease to me to see his blood, an' a joy to my heart to hear him groanin' with the anguish. An' see, if there isn't another come to ask for blood of her come to see you in your trouble," she added, turning her face towards the bed.

At the same time, the crowd separated with the family."

out, so as to allow the entrance of a stranger who presented an appearance somewhat superior to the people by whom she was surrounded. She was dressed in deep mourning stuff, with a widow's cap on her head, and a cloth scapulary, of the order of the Blessed Virgin, around her neck. Although her countenance bore the traces of recent affliction, yet there was an habitual calmness in her eyes, and around her mouth, which gave an appearance of serenity and even sweetness to the figure.

She walked to the bed-side of the patient, and after pausing for a few moments in the attitude of one who endeavors to outweary rather than wrestle with a deep and agitating passion, she said to the bystanders in her native tongue:

"This man, who lies here, once professed the same faith and knelt at the same altar that we do ourselves. He deserted his creed, and to those who asked him wherefore he had done so, he replied, that he had discovered many errors in our doctrine, and that the worship which he offered up in his present creed was of a purer and loftier nature than he had ever used in ours. I appeal to you, my friends and neighbors, whe ther the course of his apparent life since the day of his change, has been such as to justify the supposition of an improvement in his principles? Ah, say not that I judge him, when I answer-

No! The blood of our fair, our young, our virtuous, and our noble-hearted, give back the judgment, and not I. This morning, he made me feel for myself as I had often felt for others who had fallen into his power—he robbed me of my two children, and I tremble for their blood, for innocence is not a safe-guard in the grasp of Lacy. Yet let this deserter of our faith behold the influence of that doctrine which he has cast from him and reviled. Behold!" she continued, untying the strings of her widow's cap and un-covering a head of hair half silvered over by the touch of age; "I make my head bare, in the presence of Him who is to judge us both, but do not tremble, for I come to give you, not the mother's and the widow's curse, but the mother's pardon in your dying hour. I forgive you for my lonely hearth, for the fearful days that I have passed, for the heart-aches and the pangs I feel this moment. Go to your Maker, if he call upon you, and tell Him that Mary Hare has washed the blood of her children from your had coassined by returning to the become of the hands, and oh! may He deal lightly with you, for the stains that many a broken heart heside has faith he had forsaken. Otherwise, the plainest the stains that many a broken heart beside has left there! I know not how these guiltless men may thrive, the times have taught me to expect proaching destiny, and the most cogent arguments the worst, but let their fate be what it may, I adduced in support of the doctrines of that ancient say, again, their mother pardons you, their mo- Church, which, in the words of a rural bard:-

Without waiting any reply, the woman at these words glided out of the room, leaving the company impressed with a strange and solemn feeling, such as the novelty of such a scene was calculated to excite. It was difficult to observe whether it produced any effect upon the wounded man, for his countenance scarcely changed, and his position remained unaltered, but he did not receive it in the same spirit which he had evinced amid the execrations which preceded it.

ther gives you her forgiveness and her prayers."

"I heard a voice, while ago," said the sick man, "that I would wish to hear again. If there be a gentleman in this room who will receive a dying man's last wishes, I will thank him to draw near me."

With some difficulty Francis succeeded in getting the apartment cleared, and after closing the door, and throwing in the bolt, he took a or market place. One of them is lying in the chair near the bed. The sick man turned on back, as if his suspicions had been fully justi-

> "You seem to know me?" said Francis. "I do," replied the other, faintly, "and I think it a sign of grace from Heaven that you have come to me at this moment, for that woman's shanachus was troubling my mind, and I before I die. I wouldn't have minded to the last the barking of those cabin curs that snarled hands have been, there's something of the gentleman about my heart, and the forbearance of

> court from that which I intended." "You may make some reparation," said Francis, "by revealing all you know of them to me, and doing what you can to further the ends of

justice before you go." The patient smiled at this, as at a very simple speech. "They call you bright," he said, "but I think you ought to know more of human nature than to think that any persuasions of your's could induce me to say more than this;" he pointed with his finger to the wound. "I hope," he added, after a pause, "I hope my cousins will take care that I have a decent funeral. My own at his hands. The mother of the Hares is father's covered a mile o' the road. I am not so well liked in the counthry, but may be when I'm different members of his household, who were list of parochial grievances appeared at the right dead they'd forget that for me, in compliment to absent on business. At length, a horseman rode hand side of the clerk, prepared with law and

"Were you not rash," said Riordan, "to ven- acquainted with the impatient disposition of his ture, unguarded, into the mountains?"

"Aye," said the other, quickly, "there's the point. I have been sacrificed. Lacy took home the police as soon as I had lodged the Hares in gaol, and would not lend a man on any account. He knew that they were bent on my destruction, for so my murderer told me, and he was glad of it, for he was done with me, and he wished to be quit of the reward he promised me. And so he sent me, like Uriah, to the battle, and so I fell.

Ah, Owen, cousin Owen. I wonder if your death-had will be like mise to Bid Owen are referred to the man, "I saw him down myself," replied the man, "I saw him in the hands of bitter enemies." Ah, Owen, cousin Owen. I wonder if your death-bed will be like mine! Bid Owen pray for me, when you shall see him."

"And Lacy, then, betrayed you?" "And seeks your life, too: look to it, I tell you. This doctor will never see me live. The Hares are innocent. Have you a pencil, here?"

"Then take my declaration, while I am able to speak it."

He revealed the entire of an atrocious conspiracy formed upon the lives of the men in question, which Francis copied carefully, and treasured up against the examination on the follow-

ing morning.

"If this be not my death-wound, as I fear it is," said the sick man, "I will make an effort to be upon the spot myself. But if it should be otherwise, remember what I have told you, look to yourself! I heard you take my part against that vengeful hag, and even though you had not, I owe something to Lacy, and you are so far lucky, that I save your life to punish him. Ah, I am very weak. You saved the Hares once, do not neglect them now. I hope my cousins will not grudge a little expense upon my funeral, I could wish that Dick were there, but I suppose he is too great a man to think of it. If Bill could take it in hand, I'm sure it would be tasty, but where's the use o' talking?"

Doctor Jervas now arrived, to make an examination and Francis departed, promising to call again in the morning, on his way to the sessions-house; and leaving Tobin to the mercy of the country people, some of whom exerted them-selves to draw from him some intimation of the probable fate of the Hares, while others exhorted hints were thrown out, with respect to his ap-

> For fifteen hundred years, As plainly doth appear, Continued quite free from molestation, Till woful heresy And infidelity

Prevailed for to raise discorpolation. But the medical attendant cut short the controversy, and turned all the polemics out of the room, leaving the renegade to his own reflections. and entrusting the task of his conversion to the less boisterous, but more persuasive, reasoner

## within his bosom. CHAPTER XVIII.

The fate of the brothers had excited a strong interest throughout the district. Accordingly, at an early hour on the following morning, a considerable number of the country people had col-lected around the neighboring court of petty sessions. Davy was there, and had the satisfaction, while they awaited the arrival of the magistrates, of overwhelming Aaron Shepherd with a him a ghastly and wandering eye, and then sunk host of arguments partly original, partly deduced from the Profession of Faith made by Pope Pius the Fourth, the Fifty Reasons of the Duke of Brunswick for embracing the Catholic Faith, and various other sources.

Francis Riordan left his home, on this morning, with feelings of no common pain. Uncertain what the issue might be of his publicly aplonged to ease my soul of one offence at least pearing in defence of those suspected persons, with the recollection of his own imputed trespasses still hanging out against him, he paused a

"It may be," he said, "that this vindictive being may make his menace good against my nale face of the sufferer, and showed that even | that widowed wretch struck through it. I should | life-but what of that? I was taught in childnot like to meet the Hares before a different | hood to place my country foremost amongst my affections; and I hope a few months' rest and quiet happiness have not unfitted me for practising the lesson."

Richard Lacy expected the arrival of this important morning with very different sensations. After returning on the previous evening, from one of his daily excursions, he was seen pacing up and down before the hall-door of his house, as if in axious expectation of some messenger. The rain began to descend, and he was compelled, after having endured the shower for many

into the yard, and hurried up the stairs, like one evidence.

master. Lacy, while his lips quivered with eagerness, made an effort to appear tranquil and indifferent while he asked the question:

HRONICLE.

"Well, Switzer, where is Tobin?" "Dead, sir," answered the policeman, closing his lips hard.

"Those murderous dogs!" said Lacy, "thus do we lose our most valuable friends, day after day, amongst them. We must be at the Court to-morrow, and see those rushians done for. Get down and eat. Poor Tobin! I will speak with fares are innocent. Have you a pencil, here?" you, before I go to bed, again. At present, I "I have," said Francis, taking out a pocket am not easy in my mind, I have much to think

> The man bowed, and left the room without speaking. Lacy remained pacing up and down rapidly for some moments, unwilling to acknow-ledge, even to his own mind, the secret satisfaction he felt at being rid of so dangerous and insecure a counsellor as Tobin.

"Let him rest in peace!" he said at length aloud, "and let me think of him no more. ] have the Hares to deal with. The shadow of Riordan has been upon them hitherto and hid them from the search of my revenge. Alive or dead, their fate will touch him sorely, and I have now the means to make it certain."

Having completed all his arrangements for the approaching morn, he flung himself upon his bed, and took such rest as usually haunts the pillows of the impassioned and the guilty.

The interior of the petty sessions house, at an early hour on the following morning, was occupied by nearly the same actors as those who appeared upon the scene in the second chapter of our tale. On a bench at one end of a deal table, sat Mr. Dormer and his friend Mr. Leonard, nothing altered in appearance or condition by the lapse of the intervening months. The be put in execution. Accordingly, he took care door was still closed, and a clerk sat at the end to be upon his guard, and lay hid within the ruin of the table, busy in preparing his books and too far apart to hear the conversation which was passing between the two Magistrates.

asked after the condition of your other stock, circumstance, however, had occasioned the re-your horses and your kine, will you tell me how mainder of the party to take alarm, and they did you find your neophytes? Has the murrain of

Popery got amongst them once again ?" "I don't know how it is," replied his friend, with an embarrassed smile, "there is less gratitude, or less sincerity, amongst them than I believed."

"I know it well," returned Mr. Leonard, "the priest has coaxed them all back again, has he not?"

" And people so convinced, so thoroughly convinced, as they appeared to be !" "Convinced of what?"

"Why the errors of their creed. They saw, as plainly as I could desire, the excessive folly of many of their ecclesiastical ceremonies, and the profaneness of their subordinate articles of faith."

"Aye, but you know that was in the spring, and it is autumn now." "Well, why should a man's eyes be more open

before summer than after?"

"Because notatoes were thirty shillings a barrel in spring, whereas now they may be had for five."

Some other magistrates, dropping in at this moment, cut short the dialogue, and the conversation became more general.

"Well, Dickson, said Mr. Leonard, " so you won't allow me to make that little road to the village?"

"I cannot consent to it, sir," returned the gentleman so addressed, with a grave look, "I think the road is not wanted, and besides, Mr. Leonard, I thought you knew my principles, and wonder you should ask me."

"Well, Mr. Evans, you're a whig. May I count on your voice?"

"Oh, certainly, Leonard, you may. But then," and Mr. Evans lowered his voice a little as he concluded, "I must have yours in another matter of the kind that I shall speak to you about another time."

"You may count upon it Evans; provided you fling no job upon my hands." "Job! oh, fie! fie!"

The crowd were now admitted, and several cases were dispatched, while they awaited the arrival of Lacy, as the accuser of the Hares .-Some processes were issued, to recover for a smith the price of a new spade; for a weaver the worth of a piece of bandle linen; or for a village carpenter, the cost of some repairs in inminutes in encreasing anxiety, to continue his struments of husbandry. Then came the dire vigil in the parlour. He rang the bell many times, and enquired for man, with a long paper in his hand, containing a

—t' impeach a broken hedge,
And pigs unring'd at vis franc pledge:
Tell who did play at games unlawful,
And who filled pots of ale but half full.

Complaints were made of, and fines inflicted on, the barefooted proprietors of goats and pigs found trespassing upon the highway, notwith-standing all that human eloquence and ingenuity could do on their behalf. Penalties were imposed on publicans, for vending whiskey at illegal times, and sundry other nibblers of justice were reproved for their audacity.

But in the midst of those affairs of lesser interest, a general murmur of dislike, and hatred ill subdued, announced the arrival of some unpo-pular individual. The people in the sessionshouse judged that it was Lacy, and so it was .--The village Sejanus entered pale, and candaverous with anxiety, while his round, full, sparkling eyes, glanced rapidly in all directs, to ascertain what difficulties he might have to encounter in the approaching effort. They alighted with some appearance of dissatisfaction upon the form of Mr. Leonard, but yet the concern of Lacy at his presence was not considerable, for his talent was not sufficient to render him a very formidable opponent.

The Hares, two decent-looking countrymen, with a remarkable family likeness of each other, were then summoned to the end of the table, and Lacy stood up to make his charge against them, and to produce his informations. The accusation which he made was briefly as follows:

These two brothers were, he said, his own lenants. They had been long applying to him for an abatement in their rent, which he had constantly refused. At length, he received an intimation, from a person in his employment, named Tobin, that these two men, in company with several others, meditated an attack upon his house, with the view of compelling him to enter into the terms which they desired. Their rendezvous was at a ruined castle within a few hundred paces of his residence, and he was also made aware of the night on which the project was to until the party should appear. The two prisoners now before the magistrates were the two who first appeared, and they were instantly se-"Well," said Mr. Leonard, "now that I have | cured, and without much eclat. Some unknown not appear at the place of appointment. Tobin was now dead, fallen a victim, doubtless, to his zeal upon this very occasion, but Lacy had still enough of evidence to make his allegations good. He had the policemen who assisted in their apprchension, and he had a threatening notice in the hand-writing of the elder Hare, which was nailed upon his gate, and the purport of which was, that he must either make up his mind to comply with the reasonable demands of his tenants, or else prepare his coffin.

These facts were proved by the policemen and others, and the threatening notice was handed in, and examined by the magistrates. The identity of the handwriting was proved by several wit-

When the Hares were called upon for their defence, a very fat and short-armed little man arose. His dress was rather threadbare; his eyes affectedly subtle; and his mouth had got a habitual twist to one side, from the custom of speaking apart, inside his palm, to counsel and others, in presence of the Court. He affected some smart attitudes, in mimicry of lawyers at the bar, darted his eyes knowingly on both sides, and whispered a moment with the elder Hare. He then stood up, nodded significantly two or three times, and prepared to address the magistrates. "I ask pardon," said Lacy, rising with a smile,

but I think this gentleman is an attorney?" "Yes, I am concerned for the prisoners," replied the legal minnow.

"Then," rejoined Lacy, "it behaves the magistrates to stay a proceeding so much out of course. It is already decided, by many precedents, that a prisoner cannot be heard by attorney on his examination before a magistrate."

The attorney replied, quoted, looked angry, railed and bullied, but Lacy overwhelmed him with precedents, and he was compelled to retire, uttering a storm of censures and menaces.

"Oh, murther," said the younger Hare, "ar'nt we to have the law, either? Well, Mr. O'-Twist, you won't keep our three and ninepence,† Sir, as you can't be of any use to us?"

He was answered by a storm of abuse; the fat lawyer protesting that he had sacrificed three other clients to his anxiety on behalf of this pair of ingrates. And saying this, and brushing his hat furiously round with the cuff of his coat, he clapped it down upon his head, and left the court, looking like a man who had been very il! used.

The elder Hare was then called on by Mr. Leonard, to deliver, in his own manner, an account of the transaction. The man, who was

· Employed on their behalf. † The customary fee of those attornies who pracise at courts. tise at courts.