

Yet, in spite of this brave spirit, the position of Arras was desperate. Seven forts and eight redoubts protected the investing forces, which for the long space of fifteen miles extended their terrible array, nothing could pass through them, neither provisions nor reinforcements; and when the Prince Cardinal made another effort to interrupt their manœuvres, he was again repulsed, after a sanguinary engagement, by Marshal Chatillon. On the 3rd of August, 1640, the city was summoned to surrender, under pain of having all its inhabitants and families subjected to the worst fate that the remorseless rigor of arms could inflict.

O'Neill refused, still trusting that the Prince-Cardinal would be able to make a diversion at least. Sorties continued, and during one of these an incident occurred which, if it were given in one of Charles Lever's stirring romances, would seem improbable. An Irish soldier caused himself to be let down from the ramparts in a basket during the night time, accompanied by a citizen; once landed they stole quietly away to where the French were laying out the mines, thence they returned and were soon after dark in Arras, with two French engineers prisoners!

The three Marshals, however, left them little time for amusement. On the sixth, Chatillon sprung a mine, which in its explosion near St. Nicholas gate, threw down a fragment of the great rampart, leaving a gaping breach through which forty men could pass abreast. The Marshal prepared to give a general assault; O'Neill threw up protective works for his gallant musketeers, but warned the council of war that they should provide for the safety of the citizens. They were sitting in deliberation when news came from the Prince Cardinal that he was advancing, but it now became evident that his advance was of no avail, for the French General, Du Halier, met and defeated his troops. Thrice defeated, there was no hope from that source.

Hence a capitulation was necessary—the capitulation of 1900 soldiers to 34,000! The marvel is that they held out a week, and were not made prisoners at the end of it! For two long and terrible months, against a foe nearly twenty times as numerous, under a deadly storm of artillery, in despite of lessening provisions, Eoghan O'Neill had kept his flag flying over a leagured city and ruinous ramparts! This was a marvel of military skill and courage, the greatness and singularity of which was fully recognized in the terms of the capitulation. There was no such spectacle seen when that flag

was lowered at last, as wrung the hearts of heroic men when the banner of Metz went down, and Bazaine led out his troops.

"Dom. Eugene O'Neill," so ran the articles signed by the three Marshals, and ratified by King Louis, "and all the captains, officers, and soldiers, of both cavalry and infantry, shall withdraw from the city of Arras to-morrow, with all their arms and baggage, drums beating, banners flying, muskets loaded (*balles en bouches*) and matches lighted. They shall be escorted in all safety to the city of Douai. It is allowed that they shall take with them four pieces of cannon—i.e., two sixteen-pounders, two six-pounders, and a mortar besides. For their escort they shall have 200 French horse, and an officer personally responsible for the safety of the said Dom. Eugene O'Neill."

Never was siege more bravely sustained than that of Arras; never did garrison more nobly defend the banner of its cause; never was capitulation more honourable than this, nor admiration more richly merited than when Marshal Meillerie declared on the part of the three Marshals of France that O'Neill had done all that man could do!

With this exploit the career on the continent of Eoghan Rua O'Neill came to its close. Stirring news had come from Ireland, and his thoughts turned towards the land of his birth; the Fatherland of the many gallant men whose achievements had made exile illustrious, but exile it was to them nevertheless. The reckless and ruthless conduct of Sir Feilim O'Neill, whose cause was an English King's rather than his country's, did not attract but repelled his sympathies; so that he declined at first to share in what appeared little worse than a royalist insurrection. But the horizon cleared, and out of chaos rolled the full-orbed cause of country, and then, under its guiding rays, there sped with the swelling breeze from Dunkerque's ancient port, a gallant frigate, which bore Eoghan Rua and his sword to Ireland. So Feilim, contemplating flight from before the troops of Scotch Monro and his ten thousand, the message went from the far north shore of Donegal, that Eoghan had landed at Doe Castle. Feilim, with the other chiefs, and fifteen hundred men hastened past fair Strabane, and Derry's Walls, to escort him and his gathered stores to Charlemont's embattled fort.

Loud blared the triumphal clarion; loud thundered the cannon-roar; and loud over all the land rang the thrilling news that Eoghan Rua had come from far Spain and farther Flan-