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THE LAST IRISHMAN. (Translated from the French of Elie Berthet, by C. M. O'Keefe, for the Boston Pilot.) CHAPTER XVI. (Continued.)

This conversation took place in a low tone, and was unheard by the majority of the mountaineers. Besides they had resumed their funeral movement, and could not attend in the general agitation to the strange dialogue with an unknown woman. They regarded Lady Ellen as some distant relative of Richard's, and manifested no surprise at his attention to her. The young lovers proceeded side by side in silence. Col. O'Byrne was pensive.

"Lady Ellen," said he at last, "the sentiments of affection with which you regard me, in spite of your rank, birth, and family prejudices, fill me with gratitude. But if I were to yield to the selfish impulses of my heart, I should impose sufferings upon you, to which it would be baseless to subject you. Listen to me: Three days ago my heart was filled with hope; I looked on myself as one of the foremost citizens of regenerated Ireland. The title of saviour of my country was so brilliant as to make me worthy, I thought, of Lady Ellen. Julia's request was perfectly acceptable, and I yielded to an irresistible passion. At present, circumstances are entirely changed—now I am a wretched rebel, the associate of a handful of outlaws, conquered and calumniated—a species of wild beast for whose head a reward is offered. Any one may kill me with the expectation of being recompensed for his pains. I am not certain that I can reach the sea coast or obtain a passage to the French coast. It will be necessary for me to vegetate obscurely in a foreign country, destitute of the hope of ever seeing the friends whom I leave behind me in Ireland. Such is the most favorable view of my prospects; for, should I be captured, you know the ignominious death which awaits men like me. You shudder, Lady Ellen. Well, then, do you think I ought to call out from the bottom of the dreadful abyss in which I am buried. You are my betrothed. No one shall possess you but myself. You must share the miseries of my exile, and you shall only extricate yourself when I die from this community of pain and suffering. No, no; Lady Ellen, I shall not abuse a precipitate engagement to such an extravagant degree. The last words which my sister uttered must not be woven into a chain to bind you as a slave. Forget me. Let me accomplish my melancholy destiny alone. I restore your vows, and cancel your promises."

Lady Ellen viraciously withdrew her arm, and removed from O'Byrne in an angry manner. "Leave me!" said she; "I now perceive that you do not love me. Fool that I was!—You never loved me!"

"I, Lady Ellen?" replied Richard. "Ah! if you could see what is passing in my heart."

"No, no," exclaimed the young lady, who with difficulty prevented her voice from rising to a scream; "if you loved me you would divine what I am, and what I am at. I fancied in my foolish pride that my love would compensate you for the injustice of my ancestors—the crimes of my relatives—the ruin of your patriotic hopes—the tragical death of your sister—your exile, proscription, and poverty. I had accepted the title of betrothed with all its exigencies, all its duties, and all its sacrifices, and I was ready. But what is the use of confessing the extravagances to which my infatuation led me—what is its use—since you do not love me?"

"Lady Ellen, God is my witness—"

"I attach no faith to your words," said Lady Ellen, with a bewildered air. "Well, then, since you repel me, I submit to my destiny. I have received two letters this morning, Richard—one from the man who is the cause of our misfortunes, and the other from my father. Sir George informs me that he is in the neighborhood, and expects to see me to-day. My father, on his side, promises to see me, and presses me to consent to a marriage for which I have, at all times, manifested an invincible repugnance. This marriage, he asserts, can alone repair the breach which the ruin of Powerscourt house has inflicted on our fortunes. I must listen to the voice of ambition, and submit to the conventionalism of life. I shall comply with my father's wishes. I shall marry Sir George, though I may expire with shame and horror on the day of my nuptials!"

"Do not say so, Lady Ellen," interrupted Richard, with violence. Do not tell me that the infamous assassin shall become—Are you aware, Lady Ellen," he asked, in a deep, guttural voice, "that I am capable of killing you?" "Kill me then—kill me, Richard! Death is preferable to the fate which is before me."

O'Byrne placed his hand upon his forehead. "Ellen," said he at last, "did I deceive myself—are you not really attached to the advantages of birth and fortune, which are usually dearer than life to persons of your age and sex? I imagined—Strange doubts perplex my mind—

—yes, I must confess it. I did not dare to expect such constancy, such self-sacrifice from you. But at present; now that I have unveiled all the horrors of my future destiny, if you are still resolved—"

"Richard, I am resolved!"

At this moment some dreadful panic seemed to convulse the crowd. Richard looked round on all sides, but could discern no cause for this commotion.

"Keep close to me," said he, in a low tone, to Lady Ellen. "Happen what will, do not leave me."

CHAPTER XVII.

The Irish Catholic does not possess land, he does not even possess a grave. He finds it difficult to get into a farm, but impossible to get into a tomb. The land in Ireland is the property of the Irish aristocracy, who regard it as an outrage on their rights and religion to allow a Catholic to be buried in their ill-gotten grounds. It was only by perforating the floor of the mouldering and roofless churches, or digging the earth in the shadow of the ivy-clad walls of abandoned monasteries, that the Irish Catholic could discover an aperture to conceal his bones. Should the aristocracy of Ireland, like those of France, ever be called to account for their misdeeds, they will have to answer not only for cruelties perpetrated on the living, but sacrilegious outrages offered to the unresisting dead. The choking cemetery in which the parishioners of Father O'Byrne buried their relatives, was crowded with graves. The cloisters, vaults, and courts were swarming in every corner with osseous remains, ghastly pyramids of grinning skulls, and mountains of bones, while the earth, such as it was, consisted of the mouldered flesh which time had decomposed into clay, and with which fragments of coffins, more enduring than their inmates, were promiscuously blended.

Such was the horrible place in which the corpse of the beautiful Julia O'Byrne was to be deposited. At the base of a ruined tomb, covered with carvings, which had been raised over one of her princely ancestors, a grave was dug for Julia O'Byrne. The ceremony of depositing a corpse in the earth is usually, in Ireland, attended with a renewal of shrieks and clamors.—But on the present occasion the mourners were hushed into comparative silence. Murmurs of regret were substituted for piercing ululations.—The attention of the people was divided between the grave, which was at their feet, and the mountains over their heads, on which objects were appearing that riveted their gaze. Many, meantime, skulked from the church-yard, oppressed by fear, to conceal themselves in the village, where they were in no less danger. But the majority of the people did not dream of flying; grouped and clustered around the head-stones, they gave their prayers to the deceased, when Angus was reading near the yawning aperture, and Lady Ellen in an attitude of sorrow, and concealed with her mantle, was standing at a few paces from the priest. Old Daly was sitting on a tomb-stone shedding silent tears for his lovely benefactress. The young schoolmaster, with his head bare and his thin cheek wasted with sorrow, was kneeling on the earth and gazing at the grave as if he hoped ere long to share that melancholy bed with its beautiful inmate.

O'Byrne, with the instinct of prudence, which never quits the man formed for action, felt anxious to know what had become of Jack Gunn.—Richard discerned him at last holding his master's horse outside the circle of the cemetery, while Gunn himself was seated on horseback. They exchanged signals, but reproaching himself with this necessary distraction, Richard, the next moment, seemed once more piously absorbed in the funeral ceremony.

As soon as the prayers were ended, the coffin was lowered down into the grave, and the spademen were preparing to shovel in the clay. As the earth and stones fell in a huddle upon the hollow coffin, and rang harshly through the cemetery, the mourning crowd became perfectly silent, suddenly the crashing music of a kettle-drum and the revolting notes of "Rule Britannia" came swelling up from the depths of the defiles, and a company of dragoons, in scarlet uniforms, and a party of rural police in bottle-green, were clearly seen defiling through a hollow way, and evidently making for the cemetery.

The people, under the blind impulse of fear, scampered off in a huddle of headlong confusion, like a flock of sheep, screaming, "We are lost, we are lost." Some jumped in terror over the tombs, and were, in the horrible confusion, cast down, trodden, leaped upon, and almost crushed to death, and compelled to utter heart-rending shrieks; and, in a few moments only a few persons were to be seen in the empty cemetery, while a disorderly stream of affrighted people, wild with terror, might be seen rushing headlong down the declivity, and precipitating themselves in the direction opposite to that which the sol-

diers were approaching, and this without well knowing where they were flying. But measures were taken with prompt alacrity by the dragoons to intercept or baffle this evasive movement.—The horsemen in scarlet uniforms came wheeling round the hill on which the cemetery was situated, their naked swords and burnished helmets flashing as they advanced, while the "peelers," led by a dragoon officer on horseback, resolutely climbed the hill to invade the cemetery.

In the midst of the disorder, Richard and Angus remained calm and self-possessed; Richard seized the hand of Lady Ellen and drew her to his side: then, addressing the grave-diggers, who seemed strongly inclined to pitch away their spades and take to their heels.

"Have courage—work away," he exclaimed, "will you leave the body of Julia O'Byrne unburied? Grave-diggers should have no fear of undertakers. Come, my hearties, work away."

In spite of this exhortation, one of the grave-diggers dropped his spade and fled for his life; the other became so paralysed that he was unable to work.

"Give me the spade," cried O'Byrne; "Angus, take the other spade; though we perish here—poor Julia shall be buried like a Christian."

He proceeded without haste or precipitation to fill in the clay. Angus, with a tremulous hand, attempted to imitate him, ever and anon exclaiming, "Richard, Richard, here they are! Richard, for God's sake, fly. I beg of you in the name of God!—let me finish the grave—I'll bury Julia—trust in my love for her—save your life, while there is yet time!"

"Colonel O'Byrne," exclaimed Jack Gunn, coming forward with the two horses, "the enemy is going to sound a charge—the Sassenachs are numerous, and I should rather fall alive into the claws of a Bengal tiger than the hands of their Orange thief-takers."

"Oh, Richard, Richard," exclaimed Lady Ellen, "do you want to fall alive into their murderous hands—are you mad? For God's sake, fly! Here they are—fly, fly!"

The earnest supplications of his anxious friends, wild with terror, seemed to fall upon deaf ears. He continued his pious labors with tranquillity.—Fortunately the English were retarded by the steep and slippery ground they had to pass over, so that the two brothers had time to complete the grave. Seizing a wooden cross which was leaning against a pillar, the elder brother forced it down into the clay at the head of the grave.—"Now, poor Julia," he cried, looking up to heaven, "my work is accomplished."

There was no one in the cemetery at this moment, save the two brothers, Lady Ellen, Jack Gunn, the old blind man, and the young schoolmaster. Still seated on the tombstone, and apparently wrapped in mental prayer, the old man seemed to await the event with the calm patience of a martyr. As to the poor schoolmaster, prostrate before Julia's grave, on which his eyes were fixed immovably, he seemed abandoned by memory, feeling, and reflection.

Ultimately, yielding to the repeated expostulations of his friends, Richard was moving mechanically towards the house, when a loud, insolent shout was heard in the church-yard. "Forward, my lads," cried an English officer, addressing his soldiers, "hunt the traitors to hell—drive those Popish dogs to the devil. Arrest the men, and, if they resist, blow their brains out."

These words made our friends shudder; but it was not the atrocity of the expressions—it was the well-known, hideous voice of the speaker which had this remarkable effect—it was the voice of Sir George which made their flesh creep, and their hearts thrill with an irresistible sensation of dislike. The next moment he made his appearance, sword in hand, shining in the brilliant uniform of a lieutenant of dragoons. He seemed to experience a sentiment of regret, on seeing the church-yard nearly empty. "Arrest those people," he said, indicating with his sword the pious group which still lingered near Julia's grave. He advanced to examine the cluster, who remained tranquil, where so many had yielded to fear. Richard, by this time in the saddle, placed himself before him, pistol in hand. "Welcome, Sir George," he exclaimed with gloomy irony; "welcome to the grave of her whom you covered with shame and murdered with sorrow. Divine Providence led you hither. Take your pistol, Sir: bad as you are I do not intend to assassinate you."

The tramping of the horses prevented Sir George from distinctly hearing these words. As he hesitated, Richard exclaimed—"Do you not know me? I am Richard O'Byrne who struck you the other day beside the lake of Glendalough."

Sir George's eyes flashed fire; he drove his sword into the sheath, and drew a pistol from his

\* Undertakers.—Infamous characters in Irish history, who obtained part of the confiscated lands for undertaking to perform certain conditions.

holsters. "Ho! is this you? I am delighted to meet you; for I have lately learned, though you are a rebel, a gentleman may fight you.—You shall not escape me I promise you. I'll give you the death of a glandered horse, you damned highwayman."

The "peelers," who came up at this moment, were puzzled to know what to do. As the combatants were gentlemen, while they themselves were ignorant peasants, they hesitated in embarrassment reluctant to interfere. Whilst they stood undecided, two persons rushed courageously between Richard and the English officer, these were Angus and Lady Ellen. The priest seized his brother's bridle with one hand, while he endeavored with the other to wrench the pistol from his hand. Lady Ellen, on the other side, rushed upon Sir George, the hood of her cloak, in doing so, fell upon her shoulders, and exhibited her beautiful face, resplendent with indignation. "You impious wretch, do you know where you are? she asked Sir George—"Do you know whose tomb you are profaning? It is Julia O'Byrne's—it is the tomb of her you killed."

"Lady Ellen," exclaimed Sir George, gaping with unfeigned astonishment: "What are you doing here?"

"I want to prevent you from perpetrating another crime," said Lady Ellen, with energy; "you shall not moisten the ashes of the sister with the blood of the brother. Leave the church-yard, sir—order those 'peelers' out of this. Let us weep in peace in this place of death and prayer."

"It is impossible," blurted Sir George with a ferocious air. "Were I cowardly enough to forfeit the present opportunity of vengeance, I could not spare a traitor in open rebellion against the laws and the Queen. Leave this, Lady Ellen. My honor and duty compel me to strike down this man, and I will do so even if he were in his brother's arms." So saying he wheeled his horse, and extended his arm in the act of taking aim.

At this very moment Richard extricated himself from the hands of Angus, who begged him with tears and entreaties not to stain the grave with blood, but to escape while he had an opportunity. Having torn himself free from the priest, Richard took aim at his odious adversary; but before either could draw the trigger an unexpected incident prevented the sacrilegious combat.

While the preceding scene was going on the schoolmaster remained leaning against a horizontal tomb-stone, as if he were asleep; he was gradually aroused from his torpor by the cries, struggles, and provocations which rang through the churchyard, and became slowly conscious of what was going forward. He fixed his eye upon Sir George, and his hollow livid cheeks became suddenly mantled with a faint hectic. All on a sudden, with foaming mouth and disordered countenance, he bounded like a maniac at the officer of dragoons; with another bound he was seated on the croup of his horse; he strained Sir George convulsively in his arms as if he wished to squeeze his life out. While, at the same time, he plunged his teeth, with the fury of a maniac, into the flesh of his shoulder. Sir George twisted with agony, unable to recognise the furious demon that clung to him and tore him with the ferocity of a wild beast. Half strangled by the iron clutch which pressed and choked him—he, at the same time, felt a fiery breath, which burned his shoulder, and heard a roar ringing in his ear like that of a panther; but no human speech informed him what was the infernal power which had fallen on him.—Richard was too generous to fire at a man thus powerless; besides, he was afraid of wounding the schoolmaster, whom he recognised, in spite of the furious insanity which glared in his eyes, and foamed in his mouth, and made him at once horrible and piteous. Richard was content to remain on the defensive with his pistol cocked; but no one thought of attacking him. The horrible struggle of the maniac and officer of dragoons absorbed the attention and paralysed the powers of all present. The rapidity with which all this passed rendered it impossible for the quaking policemen to prevent it; before they could hasten to his assistance Sir George had succeeded in plucking a pistol from his holster which he discharged into the head of the maniac, who rolled over from the horse and fell with a heavy fall upon the ground a hideous heap of wounds and blood? Sir George, without even glancing at the corpse, wheeled round his horse with the view of attacking Richard; but the sight which met his eyes filled him with stupefaction. Richard had suddenly raised Lady Ellen, half fainting with terror, from the ground, and placed her before him on the saddle. Holding her against his bosom with one hand, he grasped the pistol in the other; then, directing his well-trained horse by the movement of his limbs, he forced him to the extremity of the yard before any one could think of opposing him.

"Sir George," cried he, turning half round,

"fate itself appears to prevent our fighting,—But at least, I return you blow for blow—you killed my sister, and I carry away your intended."

He spurred his horse, which galloped with ardor, as if unladen, with a double burthen, Jack Gunn, who watched the movements of his master with eager eyes, hastened to rejoin him.—Both passed with impetuosity under the Saxo arch and descended the slope of the hill.

"Don't let him escape, constables," exclaimed Sir George—"fire upon him. That is Richard O'Byrne, the rebel chief—fire upon him.—That is Richard O'Byrne, the rebel chief—fire upon him, I say—he is carrying away Lady Ellen, the daughter of an English peer!"

The constables discharged their firelocks; but the command came too late. Besides, some who were rebels at heart were unwilling to shoot O'Byrne, while those who were loyalists were unwilling to shoot Lady Ellen. The balls which whistled by the ears of the horses, instead of killing the riders, accelerated their flight. For a moment Sir George hoped that Richard and his companion would fall into the hands of the cavalry; but the dragoons were pursuing the peasants in a different direction; and the future heir of Powerscourt House had the vexation to see O'Byrne disappear towards a portion of the mountains where few could safely follow him. When Sir George returned to the "peelers" he found them arresting Daly and Angus—an old blind man and a young priest—"a miserable capture," as the chief of the "peelers," making his report remarked with an apologetic grin.

"Keep that stubborn old rebel," exclaimed Sir George, pointing to Daly with contempt; "but he is a horse that is not worth his head-stall; as to his Reverence, Mr. O'Byrne, give him his liberty at once. The Rev. Mr. O'Byrne laudably exerted himself to put down this abominable rebellion; and besides, it is our orders."

The constables liberated Angus with apparent regret. The priest hastened to the side of the schoolmaster, the moment he was free, to ascertain if he still lived.

"You have not thanked me, Mr. O'Byrne!" said Sir George with an air of scorn. "The officers of the Crown enjoy unlimited power in time of war—I am not bound to see much difference between two brothers, and might legitimately commit you to jail Mr. O'Byrne!"

"Very true," Sir George, replied Angus in a serious tone; but the brother of Julia is at least entitled to justice at your hands."

The heart of the schoolmaster had ceased to throb, and the priest knelt down and prayed over him. The next moment the "Peelers" were marching out of the church-yard, their prisoner, the blind man, as he moved with them, was frequently overheard muttering to himself in a tone of satisfaction:—"He is saved! he is saved!"

As to the unhappy schoolmaster, they resolved to bury him where they found him. A constable, who was appointed to dig the grave, found the earth in one point perfectly soft, and conceived the idea of placing the body in the grave of Miss O'Byrne. Her maniac lover, in his wildest dreams of future felicity, had never formed the hope of this intimate and long-continued union with the object of his affections. (To be continued.)

REV. DR. CAHILL'S THIRD LETTER FROM AMERICA.

TO THE SMALL TENANT FARMERS, THE TRADESMEN, AND LABORING CLASSES OF IRELAND. (From the Dublin Catholic Telegraph.)

Astor House, Broadway, New York. Wednesday, Dec. 14th, 1859.

BELIEVED FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN.—You remember that in my last letter to you, I cited as a proof of the incredible amount of employment for tradesmen and laborers in this city, that the population of New York had within thirty years increased 600,000; while that of Brooklyn had progressed upwards of 230,000. I added to this fact the number of gorgeous houses which I saw on the Fifth Avenue of this city; that is in one avenue out of the eleven or twelve avenues which extend through the city longitudinally. I told you if I made a mistake in calculating the architectural expenses of these palaces, I should correct that mistake in a future letter. Now I have since that time consulted an architect here, who assures me that these houses have each in many instances cost £20,000; £30,000; and in some cases have not been built less than £50,000! Thus I have been under the mark in my former statement; and hence I am additionally strengthened in my observations in reference to the employment of artisans and laborers in New York.

One must live in this country for some time before an accurate idea can be formed of the position, condition, and social life of the laboring classes here. Reading and hearsay can never give the information which the eye and the ear can acquire by daily intercourse with the people.