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SHAWN NA SOGGARTH; OR. THE PRIEST-HUNTER. AN IRISH TALE OF THE PENAL TIMES.

BY M. ARCHDEACON, ESQ., Author of the Legends of Connaught," &c. CHAPTER VIII.

(Continued.)

The alarmed and agitated mother burst away from her brutal assailant, and flinging herself beside the little sufferer, whose heavy eye brightened for a moment at her approach, despite of suffering and sickness, put her lips to the little cheek and kissed away the tears, whispering softly, "God relieve you, a haskya (my treasure) an' look with an eye o' pity on my own darlin.' Don't cry, Bawnyeen machree, your own mother is with you."

"I'm afeared o' that bould man. Don't let him in, an' don't go near him any more-don't mammy, don't," whispered the terrified child, in a voice scarcely audible through terror and illness; and she placed her little wasted hands about her mother's neck, to prevent her moving.

"Don't be afeared, my own little corra machree, (pulse of my heart) he won't come near us," the mother was repeating, when she was in-terrupted by the voice of Shawn, shouting to her to come forth again.

Started by the first cries of the children, he had paused a moment after his sister bad escaped from him; but quaffing once more, though he was scarcely able to raise the bottle to his lips, he called on her, with imprecations, to come forth, for a drunken strumpet.

"You're not com-comin' thin," he roared, as he received no answer to his call: "you wouldn't be so-la-lazy, if 'twas going to meet Fer-Fergus, the rap-rap-par-rapparee you ivor, ye dhrunken sthrum-umpet. But I know all your thricks, an' I'll help Fer-Fergus to the gal-gallows the soon-ooner, for your sake .--Out with you at wanst, an' tell me what I want, ye fag-agot, or by - I'll go in an' sthran-angle yoursel, an' yer screech-echin' brats."

After having quieted the infants with some difficulty, and ascertained that ber vile brother was stretched on the floor utterly insensible, Nancy passed soitly by him to the outer door, where she stood listening for some minutes with intense anxiety, as it was, she thought, nearing the time the priest had appointed for visiting the cabin .-She moved some yards from the door to try to catch the sound of voice or footfall, for it was now completely dark ; but, having detected neither, returned rapidly lest her infants or her intamous brother should be stirring : and in this state of anxious suspense upwards of two barrassing hours were passed by the agitated mother in soothing the sick child, visiting the front door, and ascertaining that Shawn was still wrapped in the slumber of drunkenness. At last when she began to fear, or rather, under the present circumstances, almost to hope that Father Bernard would not come at all that night, she was startled by a tap at the window; and as she approached the door she could distinguish the voice of Johnny M'Cann repeating in a low key:

ther Bernard may come, too, as he promised to ness! not the ordinary lot of humanity. There nued more earnestly on perceving them besitate rizon the sun of hope and happiness has scarcely a moment, "an' a holy man puttin' his feet inside my cabin this night, where wan didn't stand afore, since Tom was alive, the heavens be his

bed ?" "I know you wouldn't, Nancy, if you war to lose yer life over again for it; but is there no danger ov his wakenin'?"

"Not the laist; an' if he was awake this minit, he couldn't harm or hurt an infant."

The party now entered noiselessly and seated themselves hardby the fire, which soon blazed brightly; and Nancy, having once more satisfied herself that Shawn still slept, despite all objections, placed some oat-bread, with milk and butter and a few eggs, before her visitors, who be acting at present, as we are compelled to seemed to vie with each other in doing justice to lead the reader from one chamber of sickness to the humble but wholesome fare.

The simple repast was not quite finished when the suffering infant again whined and moaned fretfully, and the poor, fond mother, wrought on by its piteous cries, to the forgetfulness of all else, bore it gently from its place of unrest, and, on bended knees, with faith and hope in her countenance, held it up to the priest for his benediction and intercessory prayers. Father Davy was in the act of offering those up when they were all startled by a terrified shout from Shawn, who, the next instant, staggered forth under the excitement of some terrible vision, with hair on end and eyes starting from their sockets, though evidently without the capability of comprehend-

ing what was passing before them. The priest instructively fell back into the shadow of the chimney, and the infant nestled silent-ly into its mother's bosom, utterly awed by the appearance of the remorse-stricken wretch, who, rolling his eyes about wildly, exclaimed, "Fa-ther Myles, you have no business comin' afther me. 1 didn't lay hands on you; an' if you went angle yoursel, an' yer screech—echin' brats." He staggered towards the open doorway, but, striking his foot against its under frame, fell into the more with an imprecation, the bottle slipping striking his foot against its under haue, ich have, ich bloody hands up. You mane to give me your curse; but what do I care for that, if yer eyes wor off me? Murdher-murdher, he has his broken jaw laid on me, an' I feel his could breath coulder than the snow. Blazes to ye all, will ye let him sthrangle-sthrangle me?' He gasped -stamped fiercely, and, covering his eyes with his bands, sank against the wall, while the spectators shrunk from the energy of his remorseful terrors; his tortured sister sinking with her infant on the floor, as she exclaimed, bitterly,-"Tis my uncle-my uncle, Father Myles, that's hatin' him; he was shot because he was deaf whip they wor takin' hun." In an instant the guilt-haunted wretch again started forward, exclaiming wildly, "What more, more? do ye follow me. I had no hand in ve. an' I'm not afeared o' wan o' ye'-he made an attempt to rush forward, but staggered, and would have fallen on the hearth, had not the priest caught and placed him once more against wall, shaking him heartily at the same time. Aroused to consciousness by the shock Shawn now fixed his eyes for a moment as steadfastly as he could on the party before him, exclaiming, with one of his usual imprecations, "I know you" all now-Johnny M'Cann, Misther Priest, that sthruck me a Sunday, and Fargy Cormick, the rapparee. An' it was ye that was tormintin' me. afther all; but the hangman 'll finger yer windpipes soon an' sudden for it.' Fergus snatched the stick from M'Cann, and raised it to fell the drunken and audacious threatener, while M'Cann with more deadly intentions. took the pistol in exchange. But catching the arm of Fergus, Nancy said, imploringly, " Fargy -Fargy, villain an' all as he is, would you kill my brother ?" Fergus looked at her for a moment, and returned the stick to the hands of Johnny, who also returned to him, though reluctantly, as the baffled tiger retires from his intended prey, the oistol his fingers had been itching to use; and Shawn, after a few minutes silence, burst forth once more into a rhapsody of hideous imprecations and terror-wrung exclamations, that rendered him for the time, almost an object of compassion as of aversion to the three listeners. But we shall drop the curtain on the remainder of the scene, nor seek to harrow further the reader's feelings, by repeating the ravings of guilt, remorse, mortal terror, and despairing defiance.

God pity me that has to call it to him-is so be entirely amid flowers and sunshine, who are you, Miss Ellen, there was light enough, bein' as sons sometimes may be-namely, the murder of ever for a moment gleamed-never can gleamwho seem to have inherited suffering and woe as a creation, as an abiding place.

For them there is no green spot whercon to in the shadow of trees, the song of birds, the blue skies, and the gush of waters. The gloomy angel of their fate permits them no period of repose, but, with ruthless hand, hurries them on without pause or stay, from one scene of suffering to another; and, somewhat resembling this Bernard. gloomy minister of fate, do we feel ourselves to another, though of a different character.

A clouded October evening was nearing its close, and the window of Sir Edmund Lynch's small room in the cottage was partially opened in accordance with the patient's earnest request, as the day had been unnaturally warm for the season.

"I hope my dear father is not injuring himself by admitting the evening air so freely,' said Ellen, softly approaching the bed, when the emaciated sufferer lay apparently in sound slumber at present.

"Throth thin I hope not, too, Miss Ellen, said Katty, as she was busily preparing some safe just at present.³ whey; " and I think he's mindin a bit also, wake "Oh, to be sure, w for him afther seein' the couring bower (deaf give your blessin' to an ould collingh? coach) and hearin' the terrible noise it med, for all the world like the roaring o' a cannon.'

"1 thought,' observed Ellen with a faint noiselessly.'

be you, too, Miss Ellen,' continued the crone, with some asperity, " hke the rest o' them, think I'm grown an ould dotard that fancies I see things that never was in the world." "The farthest from it in the world, dear Katty,' exclaimed her mistress, eagerly : "I know you to be as sensible and as clear-sighted as any one in the world-of your age. But when mind and body are exhausted with watching and sorrow, the youngest of us may fancy things that never occurred. O, I don't mean to say you were dreaming. Indeed I don't; but why did you not call me to view the strange sight, as you living ? "And sure enough so I would,' said the soothed old woman, " barrin that you wor asleep whin the masther began to moan about midnight, last night. So I wint my lone and gev him a dhrink ; and he went into a throublesome sleep agin ; and mysel goes over to the chair at the windy, to sit awhile and thry would be grow asier, " Well, a you, I haard a noise at wanst as if somethin' was thing tairin' like mad up to the cottage. Well. I couldn't take my eyes ov id, though my hair coastya bower as plain as I see you now, Miss Ellen,-God be good to us, an' purtect us from danger from the livin' an' the dead-aumen a fervor. "There it was, a big black coach, with his cousin that he should be absent for an hour or four headless horses, all as black as a coal. an' the dhriver all in black an' without a head too, an' the long black feathers up out ov id, noddin' about. But id didn't stop a second, but went | ed by Fergus to inform him that the boys had round the cottage like a thunderboult. "Then for so brief a view, you have been enabled to examine it very accurately, and even when you might naturally be too much frightened to look so sharply at it.? "As for that, Miss Ellen, a hegur, if I was to get the world, and twinty worlds for id. I couldn't take my eyes ov the thing, though my his companion journeyed along, only breaking the flesh was creepin', and the big could dhrons fallin' like rain from me, and I could feel the flure observations, till they reached the place of meetshakin' undher me.' "But surely, Katty, there was hardly light enough for you to see everything you describe so accurately at a glance."

dhrunk asleep for the last two hours, that if all familiar only with joy and gladness, and to whom how that the moonlight was a'most as bright as the a father by his son. It was thenceforth, of the clargy in the three counties was here, he sorrow and suffering are as things of another far-could neither know nor meddle with them. So off sphere, with which they can have no sympa-your reverence can rest yoursel' a while, an' Fa-thy. This is, however, alas for human happi-and persave, undher the funeral cloth, the form sights and noises; and unquestionably when ov a great coffin retchin' from one ind o' the Frank reached it, on the night we are now treatcome to see little Bawnyeen afore this time. Do are others doomed to toil for ever, amid the coach to th' other. God forbid it should mane ing of, though sounds there were none, it was you think I'd be desavin' ye, Fargy," she conti- thorns and brambles, above whose over-cast ho- anything about the poor masther.'

"Amen 1' fervently responded her mistress.

" Be thu husth (hold your tongue) Miss Ellen darlin', 1sn't that a noise ?' exclaimed the terribirthright and to whom the house of mourning fied old woman; and, flinging herself on her would appear to have been assigned even from knees, she began to pour forth rapid but uncon- by to his satisfaction. nected prayers and exaculations. Her fears were, however, greatly disproportioned to their cause rest. They have no breathing space to rejoice at present, as the sounds that had alarmed her yogues ' placed in hollowed turf sods in crevices were but those of the withered leaves in front of of the unplaistered walls, and which shot no the cottage, displaced by light and cautious footsteps approaching the window, and, on Ellen's the light the assemblage either could command moving to the door, the whispered tones of or would venture to use. Frank claimed admission for himself and Father

> Instantly they were admitted, and, after a cordial pressure of hands with the delighted girl, the priest was proceeding to soothe her father, when Katty, recovering from her terror, rather and flickering light, the assemblage closed toge-screamed than said, as she fidgetted from off her ther in silence, except, it might be, that there knees, "An' is id yoursel', afther all, Father Bernard a hagur, and not the coastya bower? And you're not kilt still-blessed be the Vergin -alther returnin' from foreign parts, an' all the rummagin' o' the throopers an' cursed Shawnthe divle lay a heavy hand on him, soon and suddent, aumen a wirra-axin' yer reverence's pardon for cursin'."

> "Hush, my poor old woman,' said the priest, placing his hand on her head; "you will awaken neighboring the coast, was great, and illicit disyour master. Besides, you know we are not too

"Oh, to be sure, why should I be let spake at as he is. His sleep is more nathrel and his eyes all? And of course, Father Bernard, an' me looked livelier nor they did this many a day not seein' you this seven years, you, no more nor afore, though I was greatly afeared last night another, wouldn't think id worth your while to measured pull, according to his inclination or

With a smile, Father Bernard figured the symbol of salvation over her head and passed produced by its excitement; and an uninstructsmile, "as the term 'deaf coach' would seem what of apparent grumbling, but with as much posed those he looked upon, quaffing their liquor to imply, that it was supposed in general to move real gratification as she could allow herself to in all but solemn silence, to be a band of Irishon, while Katty continued to mutter with someexhibit.

Ellen saw with delight, that, though her father welcomed the presence of the priest with high gratification in look and expression, he was not overpowered by it as she feared would be the case. Protracted, as well as deeply interesting to themselves, notwithstanding the priest's frequent entreaties to the invalid not to overtask his weakness by talking too much, was their converse; and the almost smouldering hopes of the poor girl for his ultimate recovery, stirred up by her father's unwonted liveliness of eye and tonknow I have less fear of the dead than of the gue, burned brighter than they had for many a day past. Those hopes she communicated to Katty in a playful tone, that sounded to the old woman's ear like a dear, but half-forgotten strain ought to be, our masthers? not to talk that he of rich music, as she passed from the room with Frank, that the priest might confess and shrive the powdher an' shot we want so bad, besides. the invalid. "Didn't I say afore, this evenin', that he was gettin' betther, Miss Ellen? only what signifies haskya, I opened the shutters to thry what kind an ould colliagh's talk ! An' as dhrames always ov a night it was; and if I did, lo and behould goes by their conthraries, so, with the help o' the Vergin and all the saints, will the coastya rushin' in the air, an' I saw some bugeous black bower too. Faix may be, instead ov a funeral, it's a weddin' we'd have in the family out here; an' God pull to, an' every pull a perch." 'The was stickin' up ov an ind with the fear, till id old woman glanced with a comical expression of kem in front ov the windy, an' thin I seen the archness in her rhoumed eye, at Ellen, who blushed like a May morning at the allusion. As she was speaking, a low whistle was given in the rear of the cottage, and while Katty was Huerna ;" she crossed herself twice with great once exerting her lungs in scream, Frank, telling two, left the cottage. He found the giver of the signal to be, as he had judged, one of his seamen, who told him that he had been dispatchmet at the haunted barn, and that they were now waiting his arrival. The night was still clouded and almost breathless; darkness and stillness was above and around, save that, ever and anon, a low mysterious breeze came sighing through the decayed foliage like the moaning of a spirit, as Frank and silence of the scene and hour by a few whispered The haunted barn derived its name from its having been, some years previously, the scene of the perpetration of one of those fearfully unna-

sights and noises; and unquestionably when

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The barn was considerably detached to the rear of some scattered cottages, in a hollow in front of which one of two scouts, located there, questioned Frank's closely in Irish and apparent-

A small portion of the thatch alone remained over the building ; and beneath this a few faudvisible beam through roof or interstice, gave all

On Frank's entrance there was a movement; and Fergus darted forward from the interior to meet him. But there was neither shout nor acclamation; and, though dark, fierce countenances looked still darker and fiercer, in the dim were a few low remarks, as he was led to the upper part of the barn.

"Now let us have a dhrop, afore we go to bisness," said Thummaush beg, (little Thomas) a low sized, swarthy rapparee.

A large sized noggin was filled with brandy from a keg placed in one of the upper corners of the barn; for the facility of obtaining sanuggled brandy, by the inhabitants of the wild district tillation unknown, at that period.

This, Frank having first tested its contents, went from hand to hand round the whole assembly, having been replenished some half dozen times in its course, as each man took a lusty or capacity, when the vessel reached him. There was no uproar, however, nor burst of merriment eil beholder of the scene, would never have supmen-much less of Irish rapparees.

"Boys," said Fergue, in a low but energetic tone, after the noggin had completed its circuit, " we all know what we're here for to-night."

"Yis. We want to have revinge o' Sir John and Ffolliot," said Thummaush, between his clenched teeth.

"Open the door, my charming Nancy; "Open the door, my charming Nabey; I'm the boy can suit your fancy With gowns and trinklets, frills and caps That'll stir the hearts of all the chaps."

Opening the door softly, "Hush, hush, Johnny," she said, " wan o' my childhren is very sick : but is there no one with you but yoursel ?"

"There is, Nancy," said Fergus Cormick, moving forth from the gable, followed by ano-ther person closely muffled, "myself an' Father Davy."

On hearing his voice her knees shook beneath her, in consequence of Shawn's late allusion to him. But not perceiving this effect, of course, Fergus continued, " he was looking for his uncle, Father Bernard, that he heard was in this neighborhood. He heard, too, that Shawn na Sogyour brother-was seen about Ballintubber this evenin', an' I brought the priest to your house as bein' the place Shawn will be sure not to come near, while myself an' Johnny strives to make out Father Bernard for him."

"Holy Virgin," she exclaimed, " an' he's in the house this minnit, where he didn't put a foot afore this two long years."

At this announcement, Fergus clapped his hand on a pistol he had concealed in his breast; Johnny tightened his pack, and clutched. with a fierce grasp, the heavily leaded stick he carried while the priest observed "then we must be off at once."

"There's no occasion, yer reverence," she said, earnestly; "the unfortunate reprobate- quered world, whose path through life seems to signifies what an ould colliagh ses. But I tell 'currence in Ireland, wild and wayward as her

CHAPTER IX.

"There it's agin, Miss Ellen; you're still tural crimes which-and tearlessly and exulting-There are some favored beings in this che- thinkin' it's an ould colliagh's story, an' what Iy proclaim it-are of such rare-very rare oc-

"An' to make it more sartin," rejoined Fergus, "I'm goin' to give up the command to Masther Frank for a time, if ye swair loyalty to him."

"Lynch for ever-we'll take the vestments to him," exclaimed a portion of the meeting, in the same low, fierce tone, while a few, with Thummaush, still muttered, "Captain Cormick, an' vingeance on Ffolliot."

"An' who has such a right to hate the Ffolliots, as Masther Frank?" asked Fergus, raising his voice to somewhat a louder pitch, in his excitement; "an' isn't he ov the rale ould stock, and the pure blood of those that wor, an' has the skill, and, maybe, can help us aisily to maybe, a lock of tairin' boys, too, at a pinch"he looked to the sailor.

"Yes, my hearties," said the latter, " choose the captain, if ye want to have yer craft steered through breaker and shoal. He's the boy can splice a rope or point a gun, if he want it; and maybe the boys of The Swallow won't stick to him on land or on sea."

"Lynch, and the ould stock for ever; we'll swair to him," was unanimously responded.

"But, boys," exclaimed Frank, getting an opportunity of being heard now, after two or three ineffectual attempts previously, "with sincerest thanks for your kind intentions, present circumstances will compel me to decline the honor you intended for me, as I may be obliged to spread my canvas any hour.

"No, no, Captain Frank must not leave us till revinge is got for us all," exclaimed Fergus, placing his hand on Frank's shoulder.

"I appeal to Hanlon," said Frank.

"Yes," said the sailor, "the captain must certainly clear out one of those days, or break trust with the owners, what no true seaman would do."

"But, I'll tell you what, boys," resumed Frank, eagerly, "if ye'll pledge yourselves to aid me hereafter, in obtaining vengeance on those who have driven you to outlawry, persecuted our faith, and wrecked my ancient family, I pledge a sailor's word, that I will join you. heart and soul, and risk life and limb to achieve our common object."

"We'll pledge ourselves, soul and body, to work by day and by night, till we have revinge." "Revenge on Ffolliot and the two Shawns,"

* Twisted tow-yarn dipped in melted tallow.