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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 XXVII.

We must now go back to detail the proceedings at the Hall on the day Father Bernard was murdered.

Sir Robert and his confidential groom, Gaven, were sitting with their bottles and glasses before them, though it was but shortly after mid-day. The baronet was in a gloomy mood, for he had, that morning, received a larger number of letters, enclosing accounts than was pleasant, each terminating with the comfortable assurance that, unless forthwith discharged, the furnisher would be compelled, however reluctantly, to take instant steps, &c.

"Well," said the baronet, in a sullen tone, "that last race was a cursedly unfortunate concern where I thought it would bring us out of all our troubles; and it was you, Gaven, you scoundrel, that tempted me to bet the long odds."

"Sure enough it was, Sir Robert, reason why, that I know Black Bill could distance the filly if 'twasn't for that cursed bolt; besides, that little jockey was bribed by the colonel, I'd make my affidavit. But let yer honor take a drop o' this an' be down-hearted; it's the best we got from old Vandurek this many-a-day—if a man got a taste o' it on the lapboard, it ud give him courage to go through the rest o' the business."

"Why the liquor's well enough," exclaimed the baronet, after he had finished the proffered glass, "but still you can't deny that it was you that encouraged me to those last damnable expenses, that have nearly swamped me."

"To be sure I can't, yer honor—here's to yer honor's success another time; but didn't I mane it all for the best? Take another drop o' this, Sir Robert, an' it'll divert your mind from all low thoughts about debt and creditors— isn't it a rare mornin'?" But surely, yer honor, he continued, doubling about adroitly to the former theme, "I was none o' the mains o' your honor losin' the thousand pound in Dublin in wan week; an' then I worked tooth an' nail agin yer givin the diamond ear-rings an' jewels to that d—d little French dancer—hard fortune to her black eyes an' little ancles, an' her bows an' chatterin'. Besides that, yer honor recollects I warned you, day and night, agin holdin' to that little bubble bet with Fireaway Dick from Tipperary, and tould ye, afore witness, 'twas better fer you to have a shot itself with him, nor to be sure to lose yer five hundred; not to talk o'—"

"D—n your recollections, rascal; fill another glass for me, as my own hand shakes since the fall, and let us have no more of your infernal croaking."

"May be I won't thin, yer honor, with all the reins in my heart. Why that's the way to talk like a man—like Sir Robert that was: when yer honor has a couple more glasses down, you'll not care a thraneen for all the rascally tailors and grocers in the kingdom, that ought to be proud o' yer honor's takin' credit from, instead o' throublin' you with their impudent bills: sweet bad luck to them every day they see a parin' stone. Here, yer honor, and may you distance all yer innemies."

"Well I'm certain gettin in spirits," said the vile debauchee, after finishing the second glass.

"An' why wouldn't yer honor, when the sperits is in you?" said the familiar confidant, per-petrating a vulgar pun.

"Get out you rascal, or my whip shall make you know your distance. But how are we to make out the funds for the present, as some of those dogs are, I know, determined to be troublesome?" Bill Ffolliott—let me see—one, two, and two are four—four thousand five hundred, according to his reckoning, within a year. No, he won't go farther just now, as he made a great compliment of the last five hundred. Do you think, Gaven, would Attorney Baker let me have a thousand on this pinch?"

"Why wouldn't he, yer honor, an' be glad to have you ask it, with the green acres for his surety, an' the long interest; besides that it was only yisterday he was makin' inquiries about yer honor's welfare, and how the property was gettin' on, mighty friendly intirely."

"I owe him a thousand already; yet I do think he might lend another, as he has always expressed himself warmly interested for my welfare, since I had the sense, he says, to go to the right side at last; and, after all, his interest is very little higher than Ffolliott's."

"To be sure, yer honor did the sensible thing, what none o' the fools that went afore you (axin' yer honor's pardon) had the gumption to do.— God knows who'd have the property by this hour o' the day, if you didn't face the church instead of the chapel, though, for the matter of that, any wan that ud hang yer honor for bein' too fond o' either, ud be committin' a murder."

"Well, of course, Gaven, you're right, tho' sometimes I don't feel as comfortable as I ought about the matter, particularly in bed. Last night I had a fearful dream: I thought the old boy leant over me."

"Murder," exclaimed the confidant, starting in terror, "was he in a blaze?"

"You fool, I meant my—my father," Sir Robert uttered the last word with hurried rapidity, as if eager to get rid of it, "his face nearly touched mine and he said, in a tone that made my teeth chatter and my limbs quake—the terrible words I can never forget—he paused a moment, 'the words were 'apostate—paricide—the grave yards for you—repent in time.'— I thought I felt the chilling breath as if ice was dropping on my heart, and I struggled with the conceit that a mountain was on my breast.— When I did awake, my hair was sticking on end like bristles, the perspiration was thick and cold on me, and the eyes were bursting out of my head. It was a horrid dream." He gazed wildly round, as if expecting to meet the visionary appearance again.

"It was an ugly dhrame intirely, Sir Robert, but yer honor knows they say that dhramas, specially bad wans, goes by the rule o' con-thrary, and it's some good fortune you'll be sure to hear first alther."

"Why the first thing I heard this mornin' was the light of that perverse, wayward girl, and how is that good news? Unless, indeed, it should be that she flitted with that puppy Ffolliott, in which case it might save me all further trouble about her, audacious as the upstart must be to aspire to an alliance with a Lynch, even though a foolish recusant."

"Whew! yer honor has hit the right nail on the head, as sure as the hound checks the fox: an' its wondrous how you can make out things that way, as one might say in the dark. Sartinly it must be with the cornet she's gone, as they had ever an' always a likin towards other, barrin that sometimes they daren't show it; an' faith the cornet's a well-put-together bit o' flesh, an' 'll have the acres an' the money winn the ould cudger goes, so that may be it's not so bad a match for all the want o' blood an' pedigree—but take another glass, yer honor, to drive all the consate about that vagabone dhrame out o' yer head, and put spunk into you for the day."

"Pull away then, Bryan, for I certainly need something to inspirit me, after all my annoyance by night and by day."

"Here then, your honor; and (filling for himself also) here's an empty rack an' manger to him that doesn't wish yer honor as well as Bryan Gaven."

"I certainly do feel greatly improved; and now do you, Bryan, give the fellows that brought those letters, some drink, and then, if they're not off while a filly'd be startin, give them the pump, or set the dogs on them. To-morrow we'll try Baker for the thousand, particularly, as I think that husky, Ally Higgins, is getting the mastery completely over Bill Ffolliott, and that she does not half relish me latterly."

"Like enough, she doesn't, and small blame to her for it, yer honor, since she became jealous of your new colleen."

"How dare you, rascal, insinuate such a thing?" with a half drunken grin, asked his debauched patron, quite gratified, apparently, by the accusation.

"Pooh! Sir Robert, sure every wan in the barony, barrin the ould skinklin himself, knows the value boucin Ally had for yer honor till you picked up with little Rosheen Shu."

"Well, no matter, she looks cold on me now, and we must try Baker this bout, if it was on'y to give Ffolliott breathing time."

"That's right, yer honor, and when we handle the kethers (money) a fig for creditors and dhramas while—"

"They were interrupted by a loud knocking at the hall door; and, the instant after, Arthur Ffolliott entered the room unceremoniously and in a state of high excitement, having been detained, much against his will by professional duties for some time after the priest hunter's communication."

"Ha! Cornet Ffolliott himself, by G—," exclaimed Sir Robert rudely, and without offering the slightest courtesy to his unlooked-for visitor; "and where is the runaway pray?"

"Sir Robert," said Arthur, seating himself, though uninvited, and trying to speak calmly, "you are Miss Lynch's brother, and yet am I perfectly convinced, wherever you have conveyed her to, she has not gone with her own consent."

"Only hear him, Gaven—where are you going to, rascal?" exclaimed the baronet, perceiving that personage skulking towards the door remotest from Arthur. "But your attempting to put the saddle on my back, while we are all sure you were yourself the instigator of her flight, won't save you from the consequences of inducing to an elopement a daughter of the Lynches, however perverse and unworthy of her high descent."

"Sir Robert, this is but trilling with my anxiety. If I were acquainted with the manner of Miss Lynch's flight, or her destination, would I have quarrelled with my father this morning, or would I be here now? No, Sir Robert, the public voice names you as her remover."

"And if that was the truth, who should have a better right to guide and convey her when I pleased?"

"No one, if the removal was with her own consent, and that you stood on the terms a brother and such a sister should."

"Listen to this, Gaven—"

"I don't see what that person can have to do with our conversation—and Arthur glanced angrily at the confused groom, who looked as if he would have exchanged places at that moment with any unfortunately situated poor devil short of a condemned felon."

"To be sure I haven't, Master Arthur—will yer honor, Sir Robert, think of what I was sayin' agin another day?" stammered Gaven, edging still more towards the door.

"Stay where you are, sirrah; surely I'm master in my own house and know what I am doing, though this fellow's assurance does stagger, and he knows to be the party most concerned in the wilful mix's flight."

"Sir Robert recollect that, though you may admit low society to your intimacy, you are now talking to one who has the honor of bearing his Majesty's commission and who, as such, must be entitled to the courtesy of a gentleman."

"A straw for your commission. I only know you as the upstart, Ffolliott; rejoined the debauchee, the liquor and the excitement now completely overmastering any self-control he might otherwise have possessed; "and, if Ellen Lynch has eloped with such a fellow, her name is, henceforth, forever a stranger to the Lynches, at the same time that you shall be taught to repent your presumption."

"Unnatural and degraded apostate, whose name is a bye word for scorn and contempt," exclaimed Arthur, furiously, all command of himself giving way before those insulting words, "not even your evident state of filthy intoxication shall shield you from giving satisfaction, and speedily, for your insolence."

"Satisfaction to such a dunghill bird as you! Gaven, tell my rascals to put this fellow under the pump."

"Coward and renegade! you presume, thro' intoxication and knowledge of my regard for your sister, to use words, you dare not use in your sober senses, or at another time."

"Coward—my sister—coward!" the baronet roared, like some furious beast, stamping at the same fiercely with his jamaged foot—"my sword, Gaven—my sword, ruffian, from the mantel-piece."

"O murder, yer honor, don't you know your leg is too sore to stand upon, and Masther Arthur is—"

"My sword, bound, and not a word. My leg is firm enough still to enable me to let out his puddle blood;—now at your heart, dunghill.— He made a fierce lunge, but Arthur's sword was out, too; and it was well practised in "the noble science of defence." The thrust was parried and returned."

Utterly terrified by the clang and the flashing of the steel, Bryan roared with all his might, "murder, murder, will no wan stop them?"

Alarmed by the cries and the clashing of the swords, the other domestics rushed to the room; but none of them dared to interfere. There had been, however, but a few more passes interchanged, and no blood spilled, when the rapid clattering of a horse's hoofs was heard approaching the house; and, a moment after, Mr. Gordon burst into the room, exclaiming vehemently, "Desist, madmen—I command you in the name of the God whose servant I am."

"Gordon," interrupted Sir Robert, violently, "you are determined, I see, to interfere in my affairs, though you might be much better employed in staying at home and minding the petitions."

"Speak not irreverently, ill-mannered and heartless man, to the bereaved father, that but quitted the chamber of death to prevent bloodshed, when he saw Arthur riding hither."

"Good God, sir, is dear Maria then—"

Arthur paused and dropped the point of his sword.

"Yes, Arthur, the kindest, the gentlest and the purest spirit that graced this earth has flown and left me desolate indeed. O God, merciful even in Thy chastening, breathe into my spirit that submission to Thy will, and patience which, as a Christian pastor, I should feel, but which, as a father, God forgive me, I cannot—cannot yet—" he bent his head in anguish and placed his hand across his brow for a moment.

Arthur was so completely overcome by the intelligence and his regret for having been the occasion of giving an additional moment's vacillancy to the parent's bleeding heart, that even his anxiety respecting Ellen's removal was, for the instant, merged in his sympathy for the bereaved father, as he truly termed himself.

Even the drunken excitement of the baronet was overmastered by the energy of the rector's suffering that, sheathing his sword without requiring a second command, he seated himself in a somewhat respectful silence.

"My dear sir," said Arthur, taking the rector's hand, "consolation I have none to offer you; my sympathy, I need not tell you, is yours, and O, how deeply!"

"I'm sure of it, my dear boy. I know the departed angel's regard for you, and it cost my lacerated heart an additional pang when I saw you riding so furiously in this direction, lest I should be too late to prevent bloodguiltiness."

"Then, sir," said Arthur, "I have to express my deep regret that any act of mine should have added to your pain at such a moment."

"I am glad, Arthur, to hear you, through any motive, regret your late rash and God-forbidden proceedings; and, now, hot-headed boys, as one cordial drop in the bereft father's bitter cup, promise that this feud terminates here and now, particularly as I have reason to know that neither of you is cognizant of the manner or direction of Miss Lynch's removal, which, I can well guess, has been the cause of his blood-thirsty altercation."

"Sir Robert sullenly refused to give any such pledge, while Arthur, considerably influenced by Mr. Gordon's words, said, "I pledge myself distinctly, sir, that I shall not further seek to renew this broil, especially as I know your words are not lightly spoken."

"Then, Arthur, let us proceed to our different destinations without further delay. To you, Sir Robert, I would say," added the rector, solemnly, "your course has been hitherto an evil one; and do not depend on your youth for lengthened years to repent and reform. Alas for human happiness! the young and blooming are cut off as rapidly as the aged and wasted. Be warned then, at once, by a father's sufferings, and call to mind all the agony you have caused your parent's. May God in His mercy touch your heart.—Amen."

The rector and Arthur now departed without any farewell salutation from the owner of the Hall, who remained sitting in gloomy silence.— When they had reached the mainroad from the Hall-Avenue, Arthur proposed to accompany Mr. Gordon to the rectory.

"No, Arthur," said the rector, "leave us to the luxury of our selfish sorrow for this day, and give you not up your inquiries, though I am convinced her brother has neither cognizance of the manner of Miss Lynch's removal nor of her destination. When I shall have seen my—my beloved child in the clay (he gasped as if the words were choking him) I will myself join you in the search, in regard to the dead as well as the living. May you be successful."

He shook Arthur's hand with a mournful smile; and they turned their horses' heads in different directions.

Arthur was riding on slowly and sadly. He was deeply affected by Maria's death, though he had clearly perceived, for some time past, that the period of her dissolution could not be far distant, and he had made no progress towards the discovery of Ellen's destination, or through what agency she had been removed. He was pondering on those unpleasant thoughts when the pedlar made his appearance, round a near turn of the road, and chanting one of his usual dog-grel announcements.

"Wares to sell: I've wares to answer The mourner sad or merry dancer. I've wares for men—for ladies too, Of colors all, black, green and blue. I've breeches short and waistcoats long; I've finest lace and canvas strong. I've watches, breast-pins, knives and gloves; I've jewels, too, a lady loves. I've kerchiefs, ribbons, caps and rings; I've scents and other precious things. Too long to name—but come and try, I'm sure your honor can't be buy."

He stopped and turned towards Arthur. But the latter was riding gloomily on, exclaiming without even having looked at him, "Begone, sirrah, I'm in no humor for your bargains now."

"So I guessed, your honor," continued the persevering pedlar:

"For sulk and gloom we're sure to discover When a lady flies from her own true lover."

"Ha!" said Arthur, drawing up his horse, and looking intently at the rhymer, "so you know of the removal of Miss Lynch."

"There are few things occur hereabouts that I don't know something of, but—" a man appeared at a distance, and the pedlar resumed his rhyning—

"Prime articles for ready money— Aye, that's the motto for Cheap Johnny"—

The man turned off the road into a bye-path; and, after looking cautiously around on all sides, Johnny continued in a whisper, "If you seek the runaway, try the coast near Kilglass."

"How did you get the intelligence?"

"No matter; find Jans Schrooter, who can talk much better Dutch than Dutch to you. I suspect."

"If you're right, you shall be liberally rewarded." Arthur was putting spurs to his horse, when Johnny, laying his hand upon the mane, said, in the same whispered tone, looking round at the same time as cautiously as before, "Purchase something, sir, there might be eyes and ears anywhere about us, and then all would be spoiled. Take this beautiful diamond breast-pin, your honor, about—"

"For beauty of fashion and brilliancy combined, its equal in London, never, where could you find?"

Arthur took the pin, placed it in his shirt and hung down a gold coin, saying, "as I have a time as the vendor's." "To-morrow, you shall be recompensed as you deserve, if your information prove correct."

"Burn my pack, if you don't find it so," whispered Johnny. Then, resuming his pattering cant, he continued as he jogged along in a direction opposite to that Arthur was taking.

"Sold again and took the money. That's the way to thrive, my boy. When next my wares I go to sell, Your honor sure, 'll pay me well. Prime articles of every kind, With Jack M'Caun you'll always find— Wares to sell, fine gloves in pairs. Single shirts, and fancy wares. Come, empty quick, my well-filled pack. And send me joyful travelling back. Come, purchase now, my lads and lasses, Before Cheap Johnny from you passes."

(To be Continued.)

SERVICE FOR THE IRISH BRIGADE, AND FUNERAL SERMON.

BY THE RIGHT REV. MESSRS. MANNING.

St. Patrick's, Saba-Square, on Monday, was densely thronged with a congregation from all parts of London, to assist at a solemn Mass of Requiem, for the repose of the souls of the brave Irishmen who had volunteered to defend the Temporal Dominions of the Holy See, and who fell in the recent desperate encounters with the invading Sardinian army. The church, the interior of which has recently been renovated and beautified, was appropriately decorated to the solemn occasion, being hung with black, a lofty Gothic catafalque being erected in front of the high altar. Both the altar and catafalque were illuminated with large funeral tapers, and, on the latter, military trophies, consisting of armour, banners, and weapons, were displayed in a tasteful manner. The celebrant was the Very Rev. Edward Hearne, D.D., Vicar-General of the Diocese of Westminster; and there were seated, in the seats adjoining the sanctuary, a large number of the Catholic clergy of the metropolis. On the conclusion of the High Mass, in which Mozart's beautiful Requiem was efficiently performed by the united choirs of Warwick-street and St. Patrick's, the Right Rev. the Provost of Westminster ascended the pulpit.

Dr. Manning commenced his discourse by saying, that it would have been more fitting had a Prince of the Church stood there that day to commemorate the holy dead for whom they had just been offering up their petitions. He held, however, in his hand a charge from the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster to come as his representative. The very Rev. Preacher then read a portion of a letter from His Eminence, in which he expressed his "heartfelt participation" in the solemnities they were then engaged in.— "In heart and soul," said the Cardinal, "I am at St. Patrick's, sharing in the indignation of all good Catholics, at the atrocious aggression committed by lawless men on the temporal dominion of the Holy See; sharing in the sympathy which all Catholics feel with their suffering Head; sharing, too, in their admiration for the heroism of his brave and devoted troops." To the Church all her dead are dear; she makes continual mention of them before the Lord; she breaks off her most glorious celebrations to offer up petitions for their eternal rest. But, most of all, those who die on the field of battle are dear to her; those Christian soldiers who pour out their life-blood for their country, and who have none to bid them in the hour of their mortal struggle. Yet, those who die at Alma, or at Inkermann, are not dear to her as these are whom we honor to-day. They have laid down their lives for her cause; they have given her the last and dearest proofs of their devotion."

Dr. Manning said that three short months ago, saw