

Surplice and Sword.

BASED UPON AN ACTUAL OCCURRENCE DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

By JOHN A. FOOTE, In the "ROSARY MAGAZINE."

There was little in the appearance of the Pennsylvania mining villages to indicate that the great Civil war was raging. A visitor in the town of Mount Vernon would not notice the scarcity of men in the streets, and, except for the anxious scanning of the daily papers, or the occasional sight of a wounded soldier home on furlough, one might forget that a state of war existed. Work at the mines was plenty, wages were high, and the village seemed to be experiencing a hum-drum round of prosperity.

Father "Dan" O'Rourke was glad that the town had grown prosperous, for it enabled him to pay the indebtedness of his little parish. It was hard work to raise funds for the church and the modest residence he had bought, when the miners were not working well. But his energy and his sunny disposition had accomplished much among the miners towards improving their temporal, as well as their spiritual, condition. Himself a son of toil, he inherited the strong frame and robust constitution of his ancestors, and when he was not occupied with his pastoral duties, it was no uncommon sight to see him spading up the soil in his little garden or plying the hammer and saw in making some needed repairs about his premises.

Though the smallness of his income sometimes made such exercise necessary, it was valuable to him in another way, for when the rough "hewers of stone" saw the tall, handsome young priest engaged in these menial tasks they talked about it at the mines, and declared that "he hadn't an inch of pride" and was "just like one of ourselves."

Even Sandy McDade, the "boss driver" at the mines, who was called behind his back "the blackest Scotch Presbyterian in the county," said of Father Dan: "He's a grude mon; a canny mon; though I dinna care for Popish priests."

The great war had raged for two years, and conscription was reaching out its inexorable hand summoning the men to the strife. Now Father Dan found a new field of duty—comforting bereaved families, breaking the news of disasters that had come to them on the far off Southern battlefields, and giving spiritual strength to the weak ones ere they departed for the theatre of the mighty conflict. In the midst of his apparently interminable labors he received a sudden and painful surprise—the more forcible because he had never dreamed of such a contingency. This was a notification that he had been drafted for service as a private in the Union army, ordering him to report at Wilkes Barre the following week for medical examination.

The next Sunday, after he had celebrated Mass, he read the official notice to his congregation, and when the murmur of surprise had been subdued, he continued:

"My dear friends, it was supposed by many people, as well as by myself, that the sacred calling of the clergyman would relieve him of the obligation to take arms against his fellow man. But since the government, which it is our duty to obey, has decreed otherwise, I must prepare to sever the ties that have grown so dear to me and enter upon this new duty. Whatever we may think of this decree, let us not place our personal feelings above our patriotism. Our country has much to contend with in these troublesome times, and even if an occasional error is made, all will be remedied in the proper time and under the proper authority. During my absence you will have no resident pastor, as the Bishop has no priest available to send in my place."

"Now I must say good-bye to you, and in saying this let me ask you to remember your religion and your duties toward your neighbor. No matter where I may be you may know that my prayers will always be with you. I am weak in the sight of God, my friends, and I beseech you not to forget me and to pray that, if it is His will, I may be permitted to return to you. So now, once more, good-bye, and may God bless you and protect you."

As they listened to the words of the priest, the men of the congregation were filled with mingled indignation and grief. The women were openly sobbing, and when, with a smile of resignation, he made the sign of the cross over their heads, perhaps for the last time, there was a hoarse murmur of impotent protest.

As the priest turned to go, several men rushed up to the altar railing and commenced to talk excitedly in low tones.

"You mustn't go, Father," said one. "The drafting office has no right to compel you to go. It's a scheme to get money, that's all! We all know that these officers may be bought off. We can raise the money, say the word and we'll have it in an hour."

"Your impulsiveness has carried you away, James," said the priest. "What you suggest would be simply bribery, and I cannot countenance that either directly or indirectly."

The rejection of this plan, which seemed so feasible to the men, left them silent and unresolute, brooding in helpless rage. At last one burly, red-haired miner, who was noted for his explosive language, blurted out: "By crackey! The soldier that takes you with him will have to crawl over me first!"

That was what they all wanted to say, and now that he had found a spokesman, their eyes glistened and their fists clenched as if in anticipa-

tion of the contest. There was a brief silence and then an old woman groaned out: "Orah wirra, wirra, wirra!" and commenced to rock her body to and fro.

"Don't go, Father! Don't go!" wailed the other women, and the church was filled with the sound of their weeping.

"There must be no violence, my friends," said Father Dan, deeply affected by the scene. "I am perfectly willing to go. Please do not cause me needless pain by attempting to resist the law."

"Let me go in your place," said the red-haired miner.

"You have a wife and children dependent on you, Tim," the priest answered, "and anyhow I am determined not to evade the command."

"Never mind me, Tim," said the miner's wife, "I'll let you go." "No, no!" said Father Dan. "There must be no more of such talk. 'Tis touching me deeply to see such devotion, but my duty is plain to me. I hope to see you all again before I leave next Wednesday, and now good-bye, again."

Gathering the folds of his cassock about him, he strode away to the vestry holding his head high, with a strange twitching of his flannel lips. And when he thought the altar-boys were not looking, he wiped his eyes and gave a suspicious cough that the sexton thought sounded like a sob. But when the priest turned around again he was smiling, and the sexton felt that he must have been mistaken.

Father Dan's house was thronged with excited visitors during the next few days. All kinds of possible and impossible plans were suggested to him and fully a dozen men offered to act as a substitute for him.

"Sure we'll be drafted soon, ourselves, anyhow," they would urge with unselfish plausibility, but Father Dan thanked them and continued his preparations for departure.

Father O'Rourke was the first clergyman who had been drafted, and not alone the Catholic priests, but clergymen of all denominations were deeply interested in the case. The Bishop made a strong protest to the local authorities, then finding that they could not, or would not, interfere in the matter he appealed to the secretary of war for a ruling. Everywhere in church circles the sentiment was strongly expressed that it was wrong to deprive the people of their spiritual advisors in times so fraught with trials of spirit that required the consolations of religion. But the machinery of a government, even in peaceful times, is slow, and when Wednesday came Father Dan said his final farewells and departed for Wilkes Barre.

Six of his parishioners who had also been drafted, accompanied him and the party was in charge of a recruiting sergeant. Upon their arrival the men were taken to the recruiting station and placed in a small room, not overly clean and poorly ventilated. About two dozen men were there, of different types, some of them fairly respectable in appearance—others looking like the dregs of humanity. The air was noisome and oppressive, with a blended stench of cheap rum, stale tobacco and human uncleanness, and several of the poor wretches were suffering from the effects of debauches which they had indulged in, with the hope of disqualifying themselves in the physical test.

The men scrutinized the priest closely when he entered, and some of them recognizing his clerical dress, lifted their hats to him. A pale, nervous looking man, half delirious with drink, was indulging in a flow of horrible profanity, that the guards could not induce him to suppress. One of them nudged him and whispered "See the priest!" and the fellow, after a glance at Father Dan, stopped suddenly in the middle of a fresh outburst, confusedly touched his hat and slunk back into the crowd.

Presently the surgeon entered, a fat, blue-eyed man, with red hair, coarse features and the manners of a prize fighter. He walked over to the table in the center of the room and ran his finger over a list which the sergeant had given him.

"O'Rourke, O'Rourke—Ah! here it is—Daniel O'Rourke, come forward!" The priest obeyed, and stood in front of the table. The surgeon, seeing what he, perhaps, construed as a look of defiance in the priest's face,

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frowned sullenly and leaned back in his chair.

"Take off your clothes," he growled.

Father "Dan" hesitated for an instant, and the color rushed into his cheeks while he answered:

"Doctor, can't you excuse me from this test? You know I'm a priest, and I can furnish plenty of other proof of my good physical condition."

"None of your cursed impertinence!" shouted the surgeon, his thick neck swelling with anger. "Take off your clothes—all of them—or I'll have you locked up for insubordination. Priests are not a bit better than any other men, in here, and the quicker they understand it the better for themselves."

There was an uneasy murmur of disapproval from the recruits, and even in Father Dan's eyes came a look that boded ill for the examiner. But it was only for an instant, for then the priest quietly removed his garments and submitted to the programme of wholly unnecessary tests which the surgeons required of him.

It was charged against this man that he made it a practice to provoke recruits, into bribing him for their release. Father Dan, knowing the cause of the coarse jests and taunts to which he was compelled to listen, bore them with comparative composure.

Of course his examination proved satisfactory, and he was given an order for a uniform. Here a difficulty arose. He was a man of unusual stature, and though he was given the largest suit obtainable, it was much too small for him. The ludicrous appearance he made, with his trousers much too short and his sleeves several inches from his wrist, made him the butt of many secret sneers and gibes. But he had friends in the company—true warm hearted friends—and vied to the person who would insult Father "Dan" in their hearing.

Pat Moran, one of Father Dan's former parishioners, was one of these, and when the regiment was ordered to Harrisburg he insisted on giving his long overcoat to the priest.

"Take it," he said, "and put it around y'er waist under y'er own overcoat, so that the spalpeens won't be laughin' at y'er short trousers when we march down to the railroad station."

"But you will need it yourself," said the priest, "the weather is chilly these evenings."

"Me need it," rejoined Pat, with a hearty tone of contempt at the insinuation. "Me that's wurked up to me knees in water with the drip from the roof uv the mines turnin' to ice on me whiskers, and sorra the overcoat did I have. Take it yer reverence an' say no more, because if ye don't I'll have to serve out me enlistment in the guard house for fightin' the basthorns that'll laugh at yer legs."

There were weeks of tiresome drilling at Harrisburg and Father Dan found a great deal of work to be done among the soldiers. Before long he was the best known man in the regiment, and his good influence upon the men was noticed, and spoken of, by his colonel.

"I fear that we shall not have you with us long," said this officer one day. "Your Bishop and all of the clergymen of your neighborhood have sent a strong protest to President Lincoln, and it is very probable that you will receive your discharge before long."

A few days after this conversation took place he received the appointment of company clerk, but he had scarcely entered upon the duties of his new position when the regiment received the orders they had awaited so anxiously during weeks of dreary suspense. The division to which Father Dan's regiment was attached was ordered to reinforce General Rosecrans' army in Tennessee. The journey to the front was uneventful, and when they reached Knoxville and trooped out of the train to stretch their cramped limbs and get a breath of fresh air after their journey, they learned of the surrender by the Confederates of Cumberland Gap, which had occurred only the day before.

Knoxville was in a stir of unusual military activity. Mounted orderlies galloped here and there with wild haste, baggage and supply wagons lumbered through the streets and impeded traffic, and the jangling spurs of the cavalrymen striking their tone to the din that formed a part of the symphony of war. It was evident that some important movement was about to take place. In the afternoon a large cloud of dust appeared to the west of the city moving southward, and upon inquiring the cause the recruits learned that the army had begun the advance on Chattanooga, the gateway to the beautiful plains of Alabama and Georgia.

In the evening a scout brought the news that the Confederates under General Bragg, had evacuated the town and fallen back to Lafayette, on the south road from Chattanooga, fronting the east slope of Lookout Mountain.

This movement the Federal forces construed as a retreat, but the real object of the maneuver was to form a junction with the reinforcements that were expected daily. Longstreet's corps was on its way from Virginia, and with these combined forces the Confederates expected to fall upon the Union army when it emerged from the mountain gorges.

Acting under the delusion, that Bragg's army was in actual retreat, General Rosecrans ordered a portion of "Furke's" corps of Burnside's army to move down from Knoxville, while several regiments of infantry were sent to reinforce General Thomas' corps, which was then moving towards McMinn's Cove. To this latter division Father Dan's regiment was assigned, and a hot and tire-some march under a blazing sun, with dust ankle deep, was their first taste of real campaigning.

But while the Confederates were preparing to attack in force and outflank General Thomas' army, that general discovered his mistake and retreated to the mountain pass, thus rescuing the Federal center from its perilous and much exposed position.

Meanwhile the Confederates changed their plans, and on the 15th of September their combined armies forded the Chickamauga and moved toward Lee and Gordon's mills, where they supposed the Federal troops would be found. Crossing the river north of the mills they hoped to cut off the Federal retreat, but while they prepared for this movement their right wing, under General Walker, was attacked by General Thomas' corps, with a scathing artillery fire. The Confederates held their ground with great gallantry and for a while the battle raged with uncertain success on either side.

Father Dan's regiment was held in reserve on a knoll behind the artillery, at the right of the battle lines. Shortly after the action commenced a messenger handed Father Dan a long yellow envelope. The priest read the message it contained, and then placed it in his blouse. A cloud of smoke obscured the battlefield and after a little while the men on the knoll could see nothing of the scene of strife. The suspense was terrible and as the horrible din of the battle increased they grew nervous with expectation. Still the expected order to advance did not come and the Colonel realized that a horrible blunder or accident had taken place.

Then there came a sudden rift in the cloud of smoke and to their horror they saw advancing toward them four regiments of Confederate infantry. Apparently their retreat was cut off for Cheatham's brigade was engaging the main body of their troops to their left. Some one had blundered and they were to pay the penalty.

"Courage men!" shouted the Colonel, "Courage! I have sent for reinforcements!" Closer and closer came the mass of gray in ominous silence. Unmindful of the volleys that the little band poured into them they steadily advanced until they were but a few dozen rods distant. Then they paused for an instant, and the men on the knoll could hear, distinctly, the command: "Fire!" With the word the air seemed to be filled with molten flame, while the slaughter was dreadful. The brave Colonel, urging the men to close up their ranks and stand firmly together, was shot through the head and fell lifeless. A second volley came, and nearly all of the officers who exposed themselves were picked off. It was not in human nature to stand such carnage, and when the long crescent of men in gray began to advance at a double quick, with fixed bayonets, the pitiable remains of the regiment bereft of officers and wholly in confusion, broke and fled to the rear.

During the action Father Dan never lost his presence of mind. He had often wondered how he would feel under fire, but after the firing commenced he seemed to have entirely forgotten his personal peril. When the captain of his company was shot down and the lieutenants wounded, it was Father Dan who stepped to the front and commanded the company. When the regiment faltered and began to retreat in confusion, he managed to keep the men of his company together and to conduct their retreat in good order.

"Come on men!" he shouted, "Follow me! There's a stone wall up here on our left and we can hold it until we are relieved. Don't go to the rear; the enemy may be there!"

Already the first of the fleeing fugitives had learned that their retreat was stopped by a portion of Cheatham's brigade, and they stood, a surging mob, without leaders, fearfully conscious of their terrible predicament. They had already determined to make the last stand where they were, when Father Dan appeared.

"Come on, men!" he thundered above the din of the musketry, "To the stone wall; there's a chance there! Form your companies and close up ranks! Double quick march!"

Those who heard his voice obeyed and formed in rank. The others followed through the contagious instinct or impulse that seems to possess disorganized bodies of men. There was a faint cheer that grew in volume as the column approached their refuge; and when the Confederates reached the top of the knoll, with a disdainful disregard of danger from what they considered a vanquished foe, they were thrown into confusion by a sharp volley from the stone wall that inflicted severe damage.

The Confederates returned the fire but found that they could not hurt the men behind their stone bulwark. Again they charged, but the men under Father Dan fought like demons, and the Confederates were beaten back at each new attempt. At last they massed for the final effort and, with the impact of a cannon ball, they hurled themselves over the wall at the courageous men in blue. Hand to hand they fought, and then, seeing that resistance was useless, the defenders began their second retreat.

Again they stopped, for the sound of a bugle told them that there were troops in their rear. A few minutes later their fear was turned to joy, for the troops in their rear were not the enemy but the column that had been sent to their relief, and had been intercepted by Cheatham's men. After a sharp struggle they had pierced Cheatham's centre, and now

they proceeded to occupy the position that the little force had defended so gallantly.

But where was Father Dan? One of the men had seen him fall in the last charge at the stone wall, where he remained after the rest of the regiment had been pressed back, dealing deadly blows with his clubbed musket. There was little time to think of him, and the enemy now occupied the ground where he had fallen. Presently the attack was renewed and the battle raged until nightfall.

The next day the bloody action of Chickamauga was continued. That night the broken Union army retreated to Chattanooga, and in the report that was sent to the Northern papers, the name of Daniel O'Rourke was included among the missing.

Father Dan was the hero of the hour. The men grieved at his loss more than they did for any of the other good and true men that had fallen. Accustomed though they were to the trials of war, some of them could not keep back the tears when they learned that he had fallen.

Pat Moran repeated again and again the story of the envelope which the priest received at the moment of the battle: "When he got it," said Pat, "he read it and turned to me. 'Pat,' sez he, 'do you know what I have here?'"

"No," yer reverence," says—"for I always gave him his title, you know."

"Well," says he, with a strange bit of a smile, "it's a discharge from the service signed by the President."

"You'll be glad to get back," says I.

"I will," says he, puttin' the paper in his jacket. "But Pat," says he, "I've been with the boys so far, an' I'm not goin' to turn back now. I could surrender meself as a non-combatant, but I'd rather be shot a thousand times than lave ye all in this tight place. But if it's God's will that I live through this battle, I'll go back with no shame on meself or the regiment."

"He saved our lives," said Sergeant Price, lightning his pipe from the glowing embers of the camp fire.

"He did all of that an' more," said Pat, solemnly. "He saved our honor, too."

One day when the Southern prisons belched forth a party of white faces, wasted men, the name of Daniel O'Rourke appeared in the list of those who were to be exchanged.

It was a great day in Mount Vernon when Father Dan returned, for they had long mourned him as dead. The town was gaily decorated, the band played "See the Conquering Hero Comes" and there were speeches by the town authorities in which Father Dan was referred to as "our distinguished and gallant townsman."

In simple words he told them how he was wounded and captured, and of his year in the prison. Then he produced his blood stained discharge and a great ringing cheer went up—a cheer of thanksgiving and praise that he never forgot.

"And," to use the words of the orator of the day in his concluding speech, "having covered himself with glory on the bloody field of Chickamauga, he modestly laid aside the sword and donned the surplice—he withdrew from the battlefield of physical strife and renewed, as a parish priest, his warfare against sin."

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OUR FARMERS' COLUMN.

CARE OF WORK HORSES.—The horse is a favorite with me, and I have given much attention to the study of his needs and wants as expressed in his mute language of silent appeal and grateful appreciation, says a correspondent in a newspaper devoted to agricultural matters. If a farm team of average intelligence were put in my hands with orders to keep them in good condition and get the most possible work out of them for the next five months, I should keep in view the following points daily:

1. Keep the stable clean and free



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from all odors. Give plenty of fresh bedding. Make the stalls wide enough so the horse can lie down with comfort. Knock out all overhead racks and feed in a manger, with an automatic feed grain box. Keep doors and windows open day and night, especially in hot weather. Secure sunlight in the stable somehow. If the stable cannot be made cool and clean in hot weather, feed under a tree at noon.

2. See that the harnesses, especially the collars, fit, and "keep the collars clean." Keep the collars "round and full" by pounding them every morning with a round stick. In the matter of fitting harness and collars the average farmer is a cruel sloth.

Keep the horse's skins clean. Use a spring curry-comb, "against" the hair. To curry with the hair, leaving scurf and dirt undisturbed, is a waste of time. Do at least half the currying at night. See to it that the horse sheds his coat as soon as possible. A little boiled flaxseed daily helps. Clipping is coming into fashion, especially for thick-coated horses.

3. As soon as possible in spring, feed the horse a little grass every day—apples, turnips, potatoes, or anything fresh. Hot weather affects a horse just as it does a man; he wants something to stir his appetite and thin his blood.

PIG-FEEDING EXPERIMENTS.—It is so seldom that we have any pig-feeding experiments carefully carried out in England, says a writer in the "Country Gentleman," that one is more ready to endeavor to assist our good friends on your side of the Atlantic by giving a brief account of our good luck.

So far as they have gone, it appears that the pig food which has given the best results has been a mixture of barley meal, separated milk, and cooked potatoes. For an increase of 100 lb., live weight, the quantities of these foods were respectively 250 lb., 46 gallons and 333 lb. For each 100 lb. increase of dead weight, the quantities were 372 lb., 59 gallons and 174 lb. The potatoes were, of course, cooked. The diets which gave the highest weekly increase per pig in live weight were as follows:

1. Barley, separated milk and potatoes 15.5 Pounds.
2. Maize, separated milk and potatoes 15.1
3. Barley and separated milk 13.5
4. Maize and separated milk 13.0
5. Barley and potatoes 12.8

The maize and barley were both reduced to meal by grinding. The shrinkage in the pigs fed on the various foods varied somewhat, so that the actual gain in dressed weight was larger from a mixture of maize, separated milk and potatoes than from the mixture in which barley was used instead of maize. Then, as to the proportion of first-class bacon carcasses produced, barley beat the maize, and both were beaten when used in conjunction with separated milk or bran. Again, the addition of potatoes to the barley increased the proportion of best class carcasses, while the use of potatoes with maize reduced the proportion.

Another point to be noticed is that some five per cent. more maize than barley is needed to produce 100 lb. live weight, and further, that in the experiments, one gallon of milk saved two pounds of barley, although this does not show its entire value, since barley was rendered of more value. I am inclined to think that a smaller proportion of separated milk to the other foods used would have given better results so far as the milk value is concerned. A point of great interest to your readers will be that maize, when used in conjunction with separated milk, or with beans or bran, proved to be a far more valuable food, both for increase and quality of meat, than we on this side have generally considered it to be. From this a lesson may be learned by all that, for pig-feeding, it is far more profitable to add either separated milk, beans, peas or bran to the maize than to use it alone.

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