# THE COLLEGIANS.

A TALE OF GARRYOWEN.

BY Gerald Griffin.

CHAPTER XLI.—Continued.

"Then you would, I suppose, uncle, have the law put in force in all its rigor — confiscation of property, and impaling the body on a cross-road?"

"Impaling the bodies!" exclaimed Cregan, in a transport of zeal: "I would almost have 'em impaled alive! Why do you laugh? A bull, is it? Adad, and so it is. Then it is time for me to cut and run." So saying, he made his exit with the utmost speed, while his niece leaned aside and laughed.

Hardress heard all this with what might be supposed the sensation of one who finds himself struck by death while witnessing a farce. But he succeeded in concealing his emotions from the observations of his young friend.

The time was now arranged for their customary morning walk, and Anne arranged her bonnet and cloak before the large pier-glass, while she continued from time to time to address herself to Hardress. He had already taken his hat and gloves, and not liking the subjects on which she was speaking, paced up and down the room in gloomy and fretful impatience.

"What a dreadful death hanging must be!" said Anne, as she curled up a wandering tress upon her fingers. "I wonder how any temptation can induce people to run the risk of it."

"Come," said Hardress, "the morning will change if you delay."

"An instant only. If you would but deliver yourself up for a moment to such a day-dream, you may imagine something of the horror of it. Suppose yourself now, Hardress, marching along between two priests, with a hangman after you, and the rope about your neck, and a great crowd of people shouldering each other to obtain one glance at you—and—"

"There's a rain-cloud in the west," said Hardress; "we shall lose the best part of the day."

"I am just ready," returned Anne; "but let me finish my picture. Imagine yourself now at the place of execution; that you feel your elbows tied behind, and that shocking cap put down upon your eyes."

"Yes, yes, it is very pretty," said Hardress, peevishly; "but I wish you would think of what you are about."

"You ascend, and there is a dreadful buzz amongst the people; your heart beats, your brain grows dizzy, you feel the hangman's iron fingers on your neck; the drop seems unfirm beneath your feet."

"You will drive me mad!" roared Hardress, stamping on the floor in a paroxysm of fury. "This is intolerable! I bid you make yourself ready to walk, and instead of doing so, you talk of death and hangmen, halters and ignominy, as if there were not real woe enough on earth, without filling the air around us with imaginary horrors. Forgive me, Anne," he added, observing the air of astonishment and sudden reserve with which she regarded him, as alarming as it was ominous—"forgive me for this ill-tempered language. You know my very being hangs upon you; but I am sick and sad, and full of splenetic thoughts."

"Hardress," said Anne, after a long pause, "I have borne a great deal from you, but—"

"Nay, Anne," said Hardress, taking her hand with much anxiety and submissiveness of look, "do not say more at present. If I could tell you what is passing in my mind, you would pity, and not blame me. You are almost the only thing in this world, in my present state of ill-health, in which my heart is interested, and if you look cold upon me, my life will indeed grow wintry. This will not, I hope, continue under a sunnier sky and more serene air. You must not be angry with me for having a set of irritable nerves.

After an interval of silent reflection, Anne took his arm without reply, and they proceeded on their walk. She did not, however, cease to meditate seriously and deeply on the scene which had just taken place. The morning was fair, and freshened by a gentle wind. The [illegible] sped rapidly along the shores, the sea-gull sailed with wings outspread and motionless upon the breeze; the sea-lark twittered at the water's edge; the murmur of the waves as they broke upon the strand sounded sweet and distant; the green leaves quivered and sparkled against the sunshine; the peasants laughed and jested at their labor in the fields; and all was cheering, tender, and pastoral, around them.

On a sudden, as they approached an angle in the road, the attention of our loiterers was caught by sounds of boisterous mirth and rustic harmony. In a few seconds on reaching the turn, they beheld the persons from whom the noise (for we dare not call it music) proceeded. A number of young peasants, dressed out in mumming masquerade with their coats off, their waistcoats turned the wrong side outward, their hats, shoulders and knees decorated with gay ribbons, (borrowed for the occasion from their fair friends); their faces streaked with paint of various colors, and their waists encircled with shawls and sashes, procured, most probably, from the same tender quarter. Many of them held in their hands, long poles, with handkerchiefs fluttering at the top, and forming a double file on either side of half-a-dozen persons, who composed the band, and whose attire was no less gaudy than that of their companions. One held a piccolo, another a fiddle, another a bagpipe. A fourth made a dildorn serve for a tambourine, and a fifth was beating with a pair of spindles on the bottom of an inverted tin can, while he imitated, with much drollery, the important strut and swagger of the military kettle-drum. Behind, and on each side, were a number of boys and girls, who, by their shrill clamor, made the discord that prevailed among the musicians somewhat less intolerable. Every face was bright with health and gaiety, and not a few were handsome.

They came to a halt, and formed a semi-circle across the road, as Anne and Hardress came in sight. The musicians struck up a jig, and one of the young men, dragging out of the crowd, with both hands, a bashful and unwilling country girl, began to time the music with a rapid movement of heel and toe, which had a rough grace of its own harmonized well with the rough-hewn exterior of the peasant.

It is the custom at dances of this kind for the gentleman to find a partner for his fair antagonist, after he has finished his own jig, and that partner, if he be a person of superior rank, is expected to show his sense of the honor done him by dropping something handsome as he is going, into the piper's hand. Neither is it in the power of a stranger to decline the happiness that is offered to him, for the people have a superstition, that such a churlishness (to say nothing of its utter want of politeness) is ominious of evil to the lady, betokening the loss of her lover at some future day- Hardress was compelled, though much against his will, to comply with the established usuage, the bashful fair one insisting with a great deal of good humor on her claim, and appealing to Miss Chute for her influence with a supplicating tone and eye.

While he was dancing, Anne passed the May-day mummers (for so were the merry-makers termed), and strolled on alone. On a sudden the music ceased, and she heard a clamor commence, which had the sound of strife. Turning hastily round, she beheld a strange hurry amongst the crowd, and Hardress in the midst, griping one of the mummers by the throat, and then flinging him back with extreme violence against the dry-stone wall on the roadside. The man rose again, and looking after Hardress, tossed his hand above his head and shook it in a menacing way.

Hardress hurried away from the group, many of whom remained gazing after him in astonishment, while others gathered around the injured man, and seemed to inquire the cause of this singular and unprovoked assault. The same inquiry was made by Anne, who was astonished at the appearance of terror, rage, and agitation, that were mingled in the demeanor of Hardress. He made some confused and unsatisfactory answer, talked of the fellow's insolence, and his own warm temper, and hurried toward the Castle by a shorter way than that which they had taken on leaving it.

The wedding-feast was appointed for the evening of the following day, and it was determined that the ceremony should take place early in the morning after the entertainment. The articles had been already signed by Anne, with a pale cheek and a trembling, though not reluctant hand. These circumstances made it impossible for her to think of altering her intentions, nor did she, with consciousness, even admit the idea to fasten on her mind. Still, however, her anxiety became every hour more trying and oppressive, and when she retired to rest upon this evening, she could not avoid murmuring in the words of the plebian elector of Coriloanus: "If 'twere to give again — but 'tis no matter."

CHAPTER XLII.

HOW MR. WARNER WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO FIND A MAN THAT COULD AND WOULD SPEAK ENGLISH.

About sunset, on the evening of the following day, while Castle Chute, and its vicinity were merry as wedding times could make them, Mr. Warner, the magistrate, was quietly enjoying a bowl of punch with a friend at his own table. That table was spread at the distance of about eight miles from the Castle, and that friend was Captain Gibson. Another individual, Mr. Houlahan, the clerk, was seated at a distant corner of the table, imbibing his fluid in silence; but as he was seldom spoken to, and never ventured to mingle in the conversation himself, he could scarcely be considered as one of the company.

"Come, captain," said Mr. Warner, filling his glass, and passing the bowl to the gallant officer, "I will give you the bride."

"I shall drink it with all my heart," returned the captain. "The bride," he added, raising the glass to his lips, and honoring the toast with a draught of proportionable profundity.

"And, talking of the bride," continued Mr. Warner, "though I rejoice at it on my own account, as it gives me the pleasure of your society, yet it puzzles me to know, captain, why you are not at the wedding to-night."

"For the best of all reasons," returned Mr. Gibson, "because I wasn't asked."

"You may be sure, then, that there was some mistake in that, for the Chutes have always kept an open house."

"I am sure of it. Well, what do you say if I give you the bridegroom in return for your bride?"

"I don't know. I had rather drink the lady."

"Oh! so should I, for that matter; but we have drunk her."

"There's something mystical in that haughty young man that I cannot like. His conduct, on many occasions, lately, has given me anything but a favorable indication of his character. I have sometimes been tempted to think—but no, no," he added, suddenly interrupting himself, "I should not indulge in those surmises, which, after all, many be the suggestions of prejudice and rash judgment. Come, sir, I will drink the bridegroom; and allow me to add a sentiment. The bridegroom, and may he show himself worthy of his fortune."

As he said these words, the parlor door was opened, and a servant appeared, to say that a stranger wished to speak with Mr. Warner on judicial business.

"Pooh," said the magistrate; "some broken head of sixpenny summons. Let him come to-morrow morning."

"He says his business is very pressing, sir; an' 'twill be more your own loss than his if you let him go."

What! is that the ground he goes on? Then I suppose we must hear him. Captain, I know all these examinations are amusing to you. Shall I have him in here?"

"You could not do me a greater pleasure," said the officer; "these people are the only actors on earth."

The stranger was accordingly shown up. His story seemed to be almost told by his appearance, for one his eyes was blackened and puffed out, so as nearly to disfigure the entire countenance. There was in his tread and action an appearance of gloomy determination, which had something in it impressive, and even chilling. The magistrate perceived at a glance that the affair was of a more serious nature than he had at first suspected.

"Well, my good man," he said in a gentle tone, "what is your business with me."

"I'm not a good man," said the stranger, "as my business wid you will show. Aren't you de crowner dat sot upon Eily O'Connor?"

"I am."

"Did you find the murthers, yet?"

"They are not in custody, but we have strong information."

"Well, if you have, maybe, you don't want any more?" said the man contemptuously, and seeming about to depart.

"No, no, the more we obtain, the stronger our case will be, of course."

"Den listen to me," said the stranger, "and I'm make it strong enough for you."

"This instant," returned Mr. Warner. "Mr. Houlahan, will you prepare your writing materials, and take down this examination in the regular form?"

"Do," said the stranger. "Give me de book, an' swear me; put every sentence in your book, for every word I have to say is goold to you, an' to de counsellors. An' write down first dat Eily was surely murdered, for I did it. I Danny Mann, was de one dat done de deed."

"Mann!" exclaimed the magistrate; "what! our fugitive prisoner?"

"I was your prisoner, till I was set at liberty by one dat had reason for doing it. I'm now come to deliver myself up, and to tell de whole truth, for I'm tired of my life."

The magistrate paused for a moment, in strong amzement.

"I think it my duty," said he, "to warn you on one point. If you have been a principal in the murder, your confession will not entitle you to mercy as an approver while it will be used as evidence against yourself, voluntarily tendered as it is."

"I don't want mercy," returned the stranger; "if I did, it isn't in coorts I'd look for it. If I valued my life, it was in my own hands already, an' 'tisn't here you'd find me now. It was not the fear of death, nor the hope of pardon that brought me hether, but because I was decaved and disappointed in one dat I tought more of dan of my own life, a hundred times. Do you see dat mark" he added, stepping out into the light, and raising one shoulder so as to bring the defect in his spine more strikingly into view. "All my days dat was my curse. Didn't dey give me a nickname for it, an' usen't some laugh, and more start and shiver, when I'd come in sight of 'em? In place of being, as I ought to be, fighting at the fair, drinking at the wake, an' dancing at de jig-house, dre's de figure I cut all my days! If anybody vexed me, an' I'd even strike him, he wouldn't return the blow, for who'd take notice o' the little lord? If I sat down by a girl, you'd think by her looks dat she wasn't sure of her life until she got away. An' who have I to tank for dat? Mr. Hardress Cregan. 'Twas he that done it to me, an' I a little boy. But if he did, he showed some feeling after—he cried so bitter, an' he cared so much for me, that my heart warmed to him for my very loss itself. I never get him as much as a cross word or look for what he done, nor never spoke of it until dis minute. I loved him from dat very time twice more dan ever, but what's the use o' talking? He's not de same man now. He met me yesterday upon the road, an' what did he do? He struck me first, but dat I'd bear aisy; he called me out o' my name, an' dat I didn't mind; but I'll tell you what druv me wild, he caught me by de troat, an' he flung me back again' de wall, just de same way as when he ga'e me my hurt, an' made me a cripple for life. From dat moment a change come in me towards him. He doesn't feel for me, an' I won't feel for him; he had his revenge, an' I'll have mine. Write down,' he added, wiping the damp from his brow, and trembling with passion, "write down, Danny Mann for de murderer of Eily, an' write down Hardress Cregan for his adviser."

Both the gentleman started, and gazed on one another.

"Ye start!" cried the deformed, with a sneer. "An' ye look at one another as if ye tought it a wonder a gentleman should do the like—but dere's de difference. A gentleman will have a bloody longing, an' he'll hide it for fear of shame. Shame is de portion of de poor man, an' he'll ease his longing when he can, for he has notten to lose. A gentleman will buy de blood of his inimy for goold, but he'll keep his own clane gloves and slender fingers out of it. A poor man does his own work wid his own hands, an' is satisfied to damn his own soul only. All the difference I see is this, that a gentleman—besides his being a murderer—is a decaver an' a coward."

"If you really mean," said the magistrate, "to impeach Mr. Hardress Cregan with this crime, you do not strengthen your testimony by evincing so much vindicative feeling. His character stands high, and we know that the highest have often had their steps beset by serpents, who have no other motive for the sting they give, than private malice, or revenge, such as you avow."

The wily taunt succeeded. The stranger turned on the magistrate a scowl of indescribable contempt.

"If I could not afford to avow it," he said, "I had wit enough to hide it. I know your laws of old. It isn't for noting that we see de fathers of families, de pride an' de strength of our villages, de young an' de old, de guilty, an' de innocent, snatched away from dere own cabins, an' sharped off for transporation, an' de gallows. It isn't for noting our brothers, our cousins, an' our friends, are hanged before our doores, from year to year. Dey taich us something of de law, we tank 'em. If I was trusting to my own confessions, I knew enough to say little of what brought me here. A counsellor would tell you, mister magistrate, dat I'll be believed the sooner in a coort for daling as I have done. But I have oder witnesses. Eily O'Connor was Hardress Cregan's wife. You start at dat, too. Dere's the certificate of her marriage. I took it out of her bosom, after I—"

He suddenly paused, placed both hands upon his eyes, and shuddered with so much violence, that the floor trembled beneath him. The listeners maintained their attitude of deep and motionless attention.

"Yes," he at length continued, letting his hands descend, and showing a horrid smile upon his lip, "de poor cratur kep her hand in her bosom, an' dat paper, to de last gasp, as if she tought it was to rob her of dat I wanted. Little she mattered her life in the comparison. De priest dat married 'em died de moment after; a black sign for Eily, an' a blacker sign, perhaps, for de weddin' dey're goin' to have to-morrow morning." Dat's a good witness. Write down dat in your book; an' den write down, Phil Naughten and his wife, for havin' Eily in their house, an'—but let 'em tell their own story. When you have dem wrote, put down Lowry Looby after, an' den Myles Murphy, an' after, Mihil O'Connor, de father; and, last of all, if you want a real witness, I'll tell you how you'll make it certain. Be de first, yourself, to lay a hand on Hardress; tell him you heerd of his doin's, an' look into his face while you are speakin', an' if dat doesn't tell de whole story, come back an' call me liar."

"It is clear!" said Mr. Warner, starting from his seat.

"It is clear!" said Mr. Warner, starting from his seat. "Captain I need make no effcuse to you for stirring. Mr. Houlahan, remain, and see this man confined. What Horan! bring the horses to the door this instant. Captain, you will, perhaps, accompany me, as the service may possibly be dangerous or difficult on such an occasion. We will first ride to your quarters (though that will cost some time), and then proceed to arrest this gentle bridegroom. Horan, quick with the horses. I thought there was something in him not so orthodox. I am sorry for it; 'tis a shocking business: a mournful transaction."

"And will require, I think," said the captain, "that we should proceed with great delicacy. So amiable a family, and such a shock—"

"With great delicacy, certainly," returned the magistrate, "but likewise with a firmness, becoming our trust. Mr. Houlahan look closely to the prisoner. He left out vigilance at fault on another occasion. Come, captain, here are the horses."

They rode rapidly away; and Mr. Houlahan, slipping out of the room, locked the door on the outside, and went to prepare some suitable dungeon upon the premises for the prisoner.

The unfortunate man remained for several minutes standing on the floor, his hands clasped and elevated before him, his ear inclined as if in the act of listening, and his eye set in stolid, dreamy wonder. The windows opened on a craggy field, and was fortified by several bars of iron. He did not, however, even cast a glance at this formidable impediment. Every faculty of his spirit seemed for the moment to be either absorbed by one engrossing image, or to be suspended altogether by a kind of mental syncope.

"While he remained thus motionless, and while the house was quiet and still around him, he suddenly heard a rough, but not unmelodious voice singing the following verses outside the windows:—

"But for that false and wicked knave,
Who swore my life away,
I leave him to the Judge of Heaven,
And to the judgment day."

"For Gold he made away my life,
(What more could Herod do?)
Nor to his country, nor his God,
Nor to his friend, proved true."

The verses seemed to be sung by one in the act of passing the window, with the last line, the singer had proceeded beyond hearing. The verses, though containing a common ballad sentiment, characteristic of the peculiar notions of honor and faith held among the secret societies of the peasantry, seemed as if directed immediately against the informer himself. At least his conscience so received it.

He might become one day the subject of such a ballad. He, too, had his sense of shame and of honor (as all men have), regulated by the feelings of the class in which he moved. It would tell nothing against him there that he had died by the hangman's hands. Every petty village had its Teil and its Riego, and they made that death no more disgraceful in the peasant's eye. Their names were cherished amongst the noblest recollections of his heart, they were sung to his ancient melodies, and made familiar sounds in the ears of his children. But to be branded as an informer—that character, which, combining, as it does, the vices of bad faith, venality, and meanness, is despised and detested by the Irish peasantry beyond all social sins—that was a prospect which he could not bear so well. And then he turned to Hardress, and thought of his feelings, of his old kindness and affection. He made excuses for his sudden passion, and he thought how those kindnesses would be dwelt upon in the ballad which was to immortalize the guilt and penitence of Hardress and his own treachery.

He started from his reverie, and gazed around him like a forest lion in a trap. He rushed to the door, and gnashed his teeth to find it locked. He drew back to the other side of the room, and dashed himself against it with all his force. But it was a magistrate's door, and it resisted his efforts. He turned to the window, dashed out the frame, and shivered the glass with his foot, and seizing the iron railing with both hands, swung himself from it, and exerted his utmost strength in endeavoring to wrench it from its fastening in the solid masonry; but he might as well have set his shoulder to displace the centre of gravity itself. Baffled, exhausted, and weeping with vexation and remorse, he hung back out of the railing, his face covered with a thick damp, and his limbs torn and bleeding from the fragments of the broken glass.

We shall leave him to suffer under all the agonies of suspense, augmented by the double remorse which he now began to labor, and turn his eyes in the direction of the Castle.

(To be continued.)

## IRISH LONGEVITY

It has become proverbial that the Irish people are, as a rule, long lived. This week we recorded the death of one prominent Irish Catholic at the age of ninety-four. If we look around us we can count an immense number of Irishmen and Irishwomen of the older generation, still living, generally strong and hearty, whose years range anywhere between seventy and one hundred. Eighty is a very ordinary age, and even ninety is not such a great exception amongst those who were born in Ireland and who spent their earlier years in that land. To two, amongst other, causes may we assign this marked longevity. One is the healthy climate and the strong "stock" from which they descend, the other is the moral lives that they lead. It is not an uncommon thing to read of Irish priests living to eighty, ninety, and even longer. It is only recently that Father O'Connell died at the Grey Nunnery, in his ninety-eighth, or ninety-ninth year. And there are others we could name were we to take the time to recall them. However, the fact remains that, as a rule, the Irish are long-lived people, and to their credit be it said that virtue is one of the sources of this blessing—in their case can it well be said that "virtue is its own reward."

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