

OWEN ROE O'NEIL

OR THE BLOW OF THE HAND

M. A. Munnig.

These were the principal items in the graces. The Lord Deputy promised full satisfaction of the Catholic demands, and MONEY SUBSIDIES WERE VOTED TO THE "BLESSSED MARTYR"

But the English monarch broke faith with his Irish subjects, but he pocketed the money. Prosecution against "Mass-priests" was renewed, and all "Mass-houses" were shut up. Agents from the Irish Parliament crossed over to London to present remonstrances to the King, but Charles by this time had his hands full in his endeavor to subjugate his Crown

Rory O'More never galsaid constitutional methods, but when he found that betrayal followed betrayal, and that broken promises trod upon the heels of broken promises, he burnt his boats, and entered into a conspiracy with Sir Phelim O'Neill, Colonel Hugh McMahon, and Colonel Plunkett. Owen Roe at this time had obtained leave of absence from duty with the Spanish army in Flanders, and was residing in Brussels; so was projecting arrangements for his descent upon Ulster.

It was on the night of the 22nd of October, 1611, that Rory O'More and his compatriots made their final arrangements. The first blow would be struck on the following day. Just as in poor Robert Emmet's fatal movement, the idea was to strike at the heart of English rule in Ireland, and seize Dublin Castle, where arms, ammunition and accoutrements for ten thousand men were stored. Many Irish regiments had just been disbanded, trained soldiers who wanted employment, in whose hands the musket and the halbert were old friends.

The daring attempt had every chance of success. Not the faintest suspicion of the treason that was brewing lived in the minds of the Lords Justices, Borlase and Parsons—Borlase the most sordid of adventurers, and Parsons, the cast-iron, unrelenting Puritan.

The gates of the Castle were old and rusty, and a few sentinels kept guard. There was no regular garrison within the walls, and a sudden assault would have placed every musket and every barrel of powder there in the hands of the rebels.

Satisfied that all was in fair trim for the morrow's wild dash, Rory O'More left his comrades. Then many a tankard was emptied to the success of the morrow's work.

Who flowed freely, so freely that IT LOST IRELAND HER FREEDOM AND COST M'MAHON HIS HEAD.

Coming home that night, this brave but indiscreet man, his tongue foolishly unlocked, boasted of the deeds that were to be done to one, Owen O'Connell, a henchman to Sir John Clotworthy, a stern old Ulster Puritan, who had agreed to run "Black Tom," Earl of Westworth, to earth.

This O'Connell was no mean servant. He carried a sword upon his thigh, and often fought his master's fights, or crossed a blade in a bout with one who aspersed the honour of his Puritan master. To Borlase went tales O'Connell and told his tale. At first the story was laughed at as the cologne of a drunken street fighter, a paid bully. By and by, impressed by his repeated story, Borlase increased the Castle guards, seized the gates, and supplied arms to the Protestant citizens. When McMahon, the people's foe, who afterwards paid so dearly for a wagging tongue, was brought before the Lords Justices, he boldly avowed his participation in the plot, and snatched his fingers in their faces. "You cannot repress the rebellion," he boasted, "to-night watch fires are lit on the hills of Ulster, and to-morrow Sir Phelim's men will be marching south."

It was as he said. The fires were blazing that night, and the next morning Sir Phelim, turbulent but valorous, led his brave but ill-disciplined men to burn and to plunder in revenge for all the burdens that had been placed upon them, for the sorrows that had come to them, a payment in part to the English soldiers of the hate that was in their hearts.

The loss of the arms, the stores in Dublin Castle, was the gravest blow to the Irish.

THEY COULD NOT PROCURE WAR MATERIAL.

In any of the four provinces, so hurried messengers were sent to Owen Roe, begging him to plant the Irish cause with Richelieu, or the Court of Rome, and send money and arms; Owen sent back his trusty friends, his nephews, envoys that crept in the night, from county to county, and through them he told his friends to be of good cheer, that aid would come in good time, and he himself would be on the ship that bore the arms and the

ordnance to the Donegal coast.

In the meantime Sir Phelim, like a doughty knight, marched on Dundalk, which made no resistance, and, moving southward, laid siege to the town of Drogheda. This was a grave error of judgment, and could not have been committed by an experienced commander. Phelim, unfortunately, had to make up in boldness what he lacked in skill. His untrained Irish army, unacquainted with none of the necessary material to carry on a protracted siege, could only starve out the garrison. Yet the news of the investment of Drogheda sickened the souls of the Lords Justices in Dublin. A reinforcement of five hundred picked men was sent out to the relief of the town, but NATIVE MESSENGERS BROUGHT THE WORD TO SIR PHELM.

So Rory O'More stole out from the lines in the night time with as gallant a band of clansmen as ever followed a chieftain, and at Julianstown met these valiant English horsemen, and scattered them with battle-axe and horsemen as they lay upon the ground, or pierced their breast-plates with the long, heavy pike; maimed the horses, and cut the throats of the horsemen as they lay upon the ground, and returned to their lines before Drogheda, after leaving every man of the Lords Justices' relief force stiff and stark upon the hillsides.

Yet this useless siege had to be abandoned. So back to the north marched Sir Phelim and his mountain men.

Then were let loose the unbridled passions of Sir Charles Coote, the commander of two English forces. Butcheries took place every day. The poor peasantry were driven like flocks of sheep onto some mountain side, and the thick heath and the bracken were set on fire, and every man, woman and child who did not perish in the flames had their brains knocked out with the butts of muskets, or were ridden down by the English horsemen. The Catholic gentry were accused of treasons and plots, their estates confiscated, and they themselves were deemed lucky if they escaped hanging. They were driven into the arms of the rebels. They could bear their position no longer. Thus it was that a convocation of the Catholic hierarchy, noblemen and gentry of the Pale, was summoned to meet at Kilkenny, and decide upon measures to protect their lives and property.

In Connaught, Clanricarde held the King's men cheaply; in Munster, Mountgarret flew the rebel flag—for rebel it was, despite cheap logic and loyal proclamations, and in the city of Limerick Dominick Fanning, the worthy Mayor, seized the city and captured the fort after an eight weeks' siege.

Ormonde, the great Marquis, sneaked out of the country, and his wife and children followed by ship from Waterford.

Then the Scotch Monroes landed at Carrickfergus, and prepared to do battle with Sir Phelim. The Northern Commander was in sore straits and could scarcely hold Tyrone. He had committed the fatal error of proclaiming himself "The O'Neill," and many of his clansmen left him in dire anger at his ambitious intrusion. Unfortunately, there was no common scheme of action between the provincial commanders; they were running different courses; as the old chronicles have it, "Connaught despaired when brave Clanricarde died, and the heart and hope of Ireland seemed dead.

A tragic helplessness was once again nothing down on the land, when, one bright July morning, in the year of grace 1612, a few ships, light of draught and with fleet sails, moved over the waters of Lough Swilly, the inlet that reaches the heart of wild Donegal.

The horsemen had seen them at noon coming up from the far-away world, had seen them grow and move like white sea-birds over the waters. On, on they came. The shadows of evening fell, and the white summer moon made the canvas look silver-woven. Then the wind died away, and the sails were furled.

Bye-and-bye a boat puts off from the largest ship, and a man steps on to the beach. A thin, wiry man, hard as flint, with a hard face, tanned by many a campaign. His midnight glistens the rich, bright hair that falls upon his shoulders, and sparkles the cut steel sword-hilt and dented canes. The people come down timidly to meet this stranger, for THEY ARE SUSPICIOUS OF ALL STRANGERS IN THESE DAYS OF TREACHERY AND SLAUGHTER.

Who has come ashore uncovers, and

kneels down on the beach, praying a while. He is renewing an oath sworn years ago.

Then, with head uncovered, he meets the poor herdsmen, and speaks to them.

On, God be praised! Let the shout arise and the war cry be raised. Let the pipes moan no more death laments, but let them scream their war-cries. Let messengers swift of foot, and with swelling hearts, bear the news from Lough Swilly, to Kinsale, from the Carlew Mountains to Carrickfergus—Owen Roe has come back, their own Owen Roe, their chief, their captain, and their friend.

God be praised! bear swift word to Sir Phelim, whose heart is well nigh broken with despair, to Rory O'More of Kildare, to the men of Munster, and the men of Clanricarde. Tell them to pluck up heart of grace; gather the pikes and sharpen the swords; for Owen Roe O'Neill, the Eagle of the North, has come home to his Ulster hills. God be thanked.

VII—THE MAKING OF THE MEN. But never once she bent the neck, Nor paction made at price of freedom;

But heroes fell, and o'er their wreath Rushed heroes to succeed them, And fight the sacred fight anew, To end her bitter bondage swearing, Till blood bespatter her hills like dew, Oh, martyred Erin!

Owen Roe had his work cut out for him. The failure to surprise Dublin Castle, the want of arms and ammunition, which would never be felt if McMahon had been born dumb, greyously handicapped the Irish forces. Many had now to depend on the long, straight pike, home-made often times, crude in the setting of the head to the shaft, but sharp and deadly. Against musketry fire at close quarters the old Irish weapon is commonly supposed to have been entirely ineffective. But it must be remembered that these old muskets were not deadly beyond seventy yards, that it took minutes to load and fire them. So it came about that in many a bloody skirmish the pikes and the short-knives and the sharp swords of the Irish clansmen did bloodier work than the smooth-bore muskets of the English soldiery.

Marshall and stately looked, a half-mailed warrior of that period, with his corset and helmet, thigh-plates and leather tunic. A brave defender of the Pale he looked in all seeming. Yet these Irish knives stuck in the belt of a poor hair-taigled kern would oft-times find the chink in the armour, the slit in the throat-piece.

OWEN HONOURED HIS FEARLESS ULSTERMEN.

for their valor, their innate love of the Old Country, their reckless liking for fighting as long as it was a Paleman who was to be cloven from chin to chine; He honored them; truly estimated their rough-hewn courageousness; but his soldier's instinct, training and experience revolted at the want of discipline, the total absence of order and regulation in the Ulster Army. Accordingly, he set to work to alter the entire character of his available forces. They were decimated by defeats, despondency and disease. He had da handful to commence with, a few hundreds, but he knew full well that when the news spread that he had come among them—he whose name spelled victory in the Netherlands—recruits and veterans who were resting on their arms in sullen sececy would flock to his standard.

The word was whispered, the word was spoken, the word was shouted, but Owen Roe had come at last. In companies, in troops, in tens came men from Tyrconnel. They had an old score against the English, and Owen Roe had them welcome in his courtly way, and taught them how to handle pike and musket. The wayward camp ways of Sir Phelim became a thing of the past. Order, iron-bound discipline, took the place of hot-headed but valiant endeavor; and the General told his lieutenants to their boards, that IF RAPINE OR LAWLESSNESS USURPED THE FUNCTIONS OF HONORABLE WAR,

he would rather be seen fighting by the side of the Lord Deputy than having a way through English swordsmen. This report did its work, and at sunrise in the autumn mornings the willing clansmen would be found drilling, carrying pike, charging pike, leading musket, and firing volleys. Owen had brought supplies of arms and powder and ball with him, and had sent on in advance a full cargo of brass cylinders and bronze field-pieces, all of which arrived in due season at the port of Wexford, and were distributed among the Southern forces.

Knowing the character of his followers, O'Neill split up his army into sections. His army was composed of territorial regiments in the truest sense of the word. Captains, beloved and trusted, were placed in command, and rigid camp regulations were enforced.

This condition of things chafed at first, but what began as an experiment, tried under ill-humor, became a second life with the Ulstermen after a time. Individual excursions from the encampment, independent parties of a score or two pike-men, drifting off in search of loot or revenge, became a thing unknown, a remembrance. Owen Roe did not, however, pull them up with a jerk, he stiffened the reins by degrees, and the men who afterwards won Bonburg were

SNAFFLED BEFORE THEY FELT THE DRAG OF THE IRON REIN

Owen Roe, with his profound judgment, did no more than to prune and train his wild horses. He allowed them to retain their special qualities, and to develop the methods that made them dangerous fighting men. A body of pikemen, rough mountain men, when assailed by cavalry, broke and fled. Every man for himself; but when loosely scattered they turned, each one selecting his man, and it ended in a prayer for the departed souls of the brave horsemen who, flushed with pride, thundered along to ride down these mere Irish.

Owen's strict ways were made known to Sir Phelim and his men before ever he landed at Lough Swilly. For Daniel O'Connell, a right chivalrous and brave man, was despatched by Owen to prepare for his coming. To Kilkenny went O'Connell, in his cavalier way, and acquainted the permanent staff of the great Kilkenny Convention and their masters that Owen Roe O'Neill, his master, in making war, and theirs in honesty, was following quick upon his message. From thence he went to Ulster and astonished Sir Phelim O'Neill not a little by telling him to his teeth that HE WOULD CROP HIM OF HIS SPURS

If he dared any longer to assume the title and parade the rank of the O'Neill, as long as Owen breathed God's air.

Sir Phelim listened and learned, and began to realize what order meant. Now came the time when General Leslie landed in Ireland; a man of war, skilled in the tricks of manoeuvre and battle. Owen addressed him a fearless letter asking him why he came to make war in Ireland, when his master, Charles I, was so sore pressed in England. It was a letter full of earnestness and deft reasoning, and showed that Owen was as clever at persuasion as he was in the blow and parry with a heavy Toledo blade. Anyhow, Leslie cleared away to Scotland soon after.

To be Continued.

HERO IN A SOUTANE.

Story told of a Spanish Priest in Paris.

Among the curates who some thirty years ago were attached to the Church of St. Paul and Louis in Paris was a Spanish priest whose unusual height, splendid head of black hair and grave countenance somewhat swartly in hue, invariably attracted attention. From his general bearing and style of carriage one could readily guess that he had formerly carried a sword; hence it was no surprise to learn that Father Capella, as a brave cavalry officer, had distinguished himself on many a field before entering the priesthood.

After spending some years as a curate at St. Paul and Louis, where he was universally esteemed, Father Capella was appointed pastor of a little parish in the environs of the French capital. His parishioners, almost all market gardeners, speedily learned to venerate and love him. His kindness and his soldierly frankness soon overcame not only all prejudices, but all antipathies. Once his acquaintance was formed, it was impossible to withhold from him the tribute of profound esteem.

Falling seriously ill, Father Capella was visited by almost all his flock, even the least practical Catholics made it a point to call at the presbytery and inquire as to his condition. On the eve of his death, after the last sacraments had been administered, and while he was offering to God the sufferings of his agony, which was imminent, a man hastily entered and said to him,

Father, Mr. X, whom you know well, is very ill. It is even said that he is going to die. We are at a loss what to do, for he refuses to receive any priest. The parish priest of M— went to see him, but Mr. X turned his back on him and would not say a word.

What a pity! So fine a fellow, too, replied Father Capella. Ah, if I were not myself dying I would go, and perhaps would get a better reception! "Ah, you, Father! The man loves and esteems you too much to treat you like that, but, alas—"

exclaimed: "My God, I beseech Thee grant me still a little strength!" After a moment of recollection he suddenly addressed those who surrounded him. "Dress me!" he said to them. Not one stirred. Listening to the dying man's voice, which had recovered the tones of command, they thought him delirious, and so remained passive.

"Dress me, I say!" he repeated, with an accent of authority that there was no resisting.

Exclamations of astonishment were heard on all sides, but the moribund whose resolve of life seemed to have taken refuge in his indomitable will, he cut his trembling arms and legs, already numbed with the death-chill, so that his orders might be obeyed.

"And now," said the priest, "carry me quickly to the sick man."

"Good heavens! he will die on the way!" was the despairing cry of the bystanders. Paying no attention to their remarks, Father Capella ordered his ostlers to be brought to him. When his sick call bag was found he said briefly: "Now take me, and hurry!"

With indescribable emotion, several of the men carried him to the house of Mr. X, his body limp as a cloth in the wind. The soul alone lived and reigned, permitting neither cry nor plaint nor even a sigh throughout the painful passage. At last they seated him by the sick man's bedside.

"My friend," said Father Capella, in an agitated tone, "we are both going to appear before God. A few hours more and all will be over with us. Are you not willing that we should make the voyage together? Here I am, come to give you succor in this last hour."

An inarticulate cry escaped the sick man, and unable to utter a word he seized his pastor's hand and reverently raised it to his lips. "My friend," continued the priest, "the time is short. Trust yourself to me and don't refuse to make your confession."

Subdued and quite overcome by such heroic faith, Mr. X burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Oh, yes, yes, I'll willingly confess to you, who are so good to me!" A heavenly smile passed over the pastor's lips. He waved the bystanders aside. The two dying men converged in whispers for some minutes; and then, with a supreme effort the priest raised his hand above the head of the penitent and pronounced the words of absolution.

Calling next for the holy oils, he said to one of the neighbors: "Take my arm and guide my hand." The man did so, and the sacred unctions were applied. The dying act accomplished, Father Capella bent over him whom he had just absolved and murmured with a sigh of relief, "Au revoir, my friend! And let us pray for each other. Now, Lord," he added, in a firmer tone, "Thou wilt let Thy servant depart in peace!"

A few hours later he was dead.

SOME RELIGIOUS STATISTICS.

The Independent, a leading non-sectarian Protestant weekly, annually compiles statistics of the various religious denominations of the United States. From the statistics of 1900, published in the last issue of the Independent, we derive some very interesting information.

The five most numerous Protestant churches in the United States (exclusive of the Lutheran, which is a semi-foreign church), count about 8,300,000 church members, or a little less than the total Catholic membership, according to the Independent's figures. This is also excluding the colored population.

Two Methodists, excluding colored Methodists, are 3,000,000, the Baptists excluding colored Baptists, are 2,700,000, the Presbyterians, excluding colored Presbyterians, are 1,500,000; the Episcopalians are 710,000; the Congregationalists are 620,000; in all, 5,500,000.

The Catholics of over fifteen years of age, are about 8,000,000, according to the Independent's estimate. North of the Mason and Dixon's line, the Catholic church membership undoubtedly outnumbers all of the leading Protestant denominations above listed combined, and also the Lutherans, who there are certain religious followings, which have an impress on the public mind, largely due to the noise made by them, or for them, or because of their intellectual force. Among those we may mention the Unitarians, who number throughout the country about 71,000, and who have gained in the past ten years about 4,000 members; the Universalists, who number a little more than 48,000, and who have actually lost in the last ten years, the Friends or Quakers, who number 92,000, and the Salvation Army, with a membership of about 40,000.

The Independent's tables inform us that there are about 212,000 Jews in the United States, and about 350,000 Mormons. It appears, however, that the Mormons have doubled in number since 1800.

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