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## THE LAST IRISHMAN.

(Translated from the French of Elie Berthel, by C. M. O'Keefe, for the Boston Pilot.)

### CHAPTER VI.

(Continued.)

Every one in Europe has heard of the prodigious influence which O'Connell, at this time, exercised over Ireland. The devotion exhibited by the Irish people to O'Connell was equivalent to the oppression which they had experienced from England—it was unequalled in the history of the world. Never was a nation so completely in the hand of one man of genius. The moment he breathed a word, hundreds of thousands came flocking round him in large meetings, whose numbers and enthusiasm might have broken the yoke of the stranger, and re-established the rights which, during six centuries, had been swept away. But if such was the ultimate, it certainly was not the immediate object of O'Connell. He expected to find a cure for the wounds of his country in the separation of the legislature, not of the nation—a separation which would ultimately lead, as the Orangemen asserted, to the independence of Ireland. This is what England feared, and she resolved on his ruin; and a wily diplomatist, the Earl of Haddington, was sent over to divide and govern as Viceroy. The veiled agents of the government labored hard to precipitate what they could not avert, and substitute the haste of revolution—which must certainly destroy—for the deliberate speed of pacific agitation, which might ultimately emancipate. All the ardent spirits—the young, pure, and passionate youths of Ireland, destitute of experience, and incapable of serious thought, were charmed by the maddening prospect of war, and intoxicated with the hope of distinction in armed revolution.—They fell into the snare which the merciless craft of England coldly wove and cruelly spread for their ruin. It seemed to these deluded victims of English cunning that O'Connell was wasting that power and energy which might never again reveal itself, and this for the petty purposes and contemptible gains. These young and generous patriots longed to float on the swollen tide of Irish enthusiasm into the harbors of liberty;—and if England refused to yield to either menaces or prayers, the force of arms should compel Britain to act with justice.

At this very period the Irish seemed invited to rise and struggle for liberty by the complicated nature of the relations of England with foreign States. France was about, it was believed, to declare war against England. In France, as in every country in which the calamities of Ireland were rumored, a lively sympathy was felt for the Irish.

Though the government might be hostile, the people of France were friendly to Ireland. The impetuous eloquence of O'Connell had diffused among the Irish a burning sense, and knowledge of their national wrongs—had influenced and organized the masses, and it was believed in foreign countries that they were ready to spring into armed action.

This at least was what Richard O'Byrne, while residing in India, was taught to believe.—He accordingly hastened to free himself from the military engagements which bound him to an Asiatic master, and repair to his native country. On landing, he found Ireland ripe for insurrection, and covered over with a vast network of conspiracy, which seemed to have grown up of itself. This conspiracy, in spite of O'Connell's opposition, deepened and widened every day.—The long service of Richard in the French army, his warm and exuberant eloquence, and the authority of his illustrious descent, insured him a cordial reception wherever he appeared. While other deputies traversed the west and north, he visited the centre and the south, and enrolled a host of recruits. The chiefs were named, their duties prescribed, the rallying points determined, and the members full of ardor. Money and arms were wanting, but much might be supplied by the hatred of race, the love of religion, and the imperishable passion of the Irish for independence.

Having traversed the centre and the south, Richard was now traversing Wicklow, where his ancestors, and particularly the great MacHugh had been once so powerful, where the terrible mountaineers of his clan, in the reign of Elizabeth, had checked, baffled, and overwhelmed with defeat ten times their own number. From its vicinity to the sea, proximity to Dublin, and the ease with which its inhabitants may communicate with the inland counties, there is no part of Ireland so fit to be the focus of insurrection as the county Wicklow. Hence it is that the aristocracy who own the land have been long busy in exterminating the Irish Catholics, and planting it thickly with Protestant colonists.—Yet, in no part of Ireland was the feeling of nationality—in the remnant that survived extermination—stronger than in Wicklow.

It will now be understood why Richard chose a blind man's cabin to his brother's presbytery. He was likely to escape attention in the one, as

he was certain to arouse suspicion in the latter, and perhaps involve and implicate his Reverend brother in the suspicions in question. Besides, the intimacy of the priest with the family of Powerscourt had irritated the French soldier, who, in France had learned to abhor aristocracy as the fountain of general vice and misery.

Richard O'Byrne told his blind companion all we have mentioned; he named the foremost chiefs of the insurrection, and calculated its chances of success—success which to him seemed certain. The old man listened with attention.

"I had your hopes in '98," said he at length, "but you know how it all ended. The brother Shears had the same hopes, but their heads are black and withered in the vault of Saint Michan's."

"In the time of the Shears the condition of Ireland was very different from what it is in the present day. Nor did they understand the condition of Ireland such as it then was. They wished—"

"Don't let me dishearten you, my lord," said Daly. "It's full time that something was done, and sure if any one is ever to do it, it's somebody like yourself that will do it. Don't let me dishearten you. I'll give you all the little assistance that's in my power. I'm well acquainted with this county. I'll give you the name of every man that's likely to be of any use to you, and I'll strive to win over recruits. In a few days we'll have the fair in the village—there will be thousands in it—flocking in from all quarters from the country. Most of them, I know, are tired of waiting for the 'repeal,' and desirous of coming to blows with the enemy. They will certainly inscribe their names and enter the plot. That's certain."

Thus they went on. The great part of the night was spent in conversations of this nature. About two in the morning Richard O'Byrne observed, "There is one man in this county whom I'm desirous of meeting alone."

"Who is he, my lord?"

Richard O'Byrne hesitated.

"Sir George—"

"Sir George," exclaimed the old man, whose usual impassibility seemed agitated by an internal tempest. "Then your honor knows. Oh, I had my suspicions and fears."

"I am not speaking of fears or suspicions. I want to know nothing whatever of your suspicions or fears."

He placed his hand upon his forehead, and vanquished by his agony of mind, tears streamed down his face. Respect and sympathy were painted in the old man's countenance.

"Your honor will not suppose I could have intended—"

"Do not mention it," cried O'Byrne, raising his manly countenance, from which every trace of emotion had already disappeared.

"Pardon my violence. But you have not answered my question."

"The man your honor inquires for comes very often to angle in the lake. When he comes he is usually attended by a boy, who carries his rod and prepares the flies. You might easily find him alone when he is fishing."

"Very good. Well, now go to bed, Daly. You know I have some letters to write."

"May God your honor," said Daly, "and give you good luck in all your undertakings."

The old man moved away, and was soon stretched asleep beside Jack Gunn, while Richard retired to his own room, where he passed the entire night in silence and solitude, answering letters which he had received, and burning them so soon as they were answered. By the dim light of the flickering lamp he might be seen in that dismal chamber, now hastily writing with rapid hand, and now musing motionless over his projects.

### CHAPTER VII.

'Twas morning—a brilliant tender morning of early summer, tipped with roses and radiant with crystals. Revealed by the young blushing day, valleys, plains and mountains bathed in light—a great landscape—which the magic hand of nature had mantled with beauty, and historic recollection austere venerable—were dawning and spreading before the eye. Shrubs, trees, foliage, fronds, flowers, buds, and blossoms—shedding fragrance on the atmosphere and all over sparkling with radiant drops seemed to be geined with diamonds. The rich yellow clusters of the bosky furze, the pied petals of the opening daisy—the golden bells of the butter cup, and the snowy blossoms of the scented hawthorn were sparkling with glittering crystals. The newly risen sun, mantled with purple, and majesty and splendor, had risen a few feet above the horizon, and already the little red-breast perched on a tiny twig, and sheltered by verdure, essayed its artless strains in its praise. From the thick and scented sward of the deeply mantled meadow, in which the clover flower blushed, and the wild bee had concealed its nectar, the corn-crake or rail—with untiring perseverance—was sending up its monotonous perpetuity of note. Occasionally too, the

vernal voice of the cuckoo—deep hid in mysterious recesses—made itself heard in the depths of the woodland, while the mellow thrush of Glenasmole added its thickly warbled music to the wild choir of spontaneous minstrelsy.

Perched on a rugged shelf of rock, beetling over a lake, stood an humble dwelling such as alone a scoundrel aristocracy suffers industriously to inhabit in Ireland. This cottage was a straw thatched edifice walled with fragments of granite cemented with mud. Internally it consisted of two apartments—one of which served as a kitchen while the other was a bed-chamber. When the doors were closed in the inclement days of winter a dim twilight struggled into the floor through two small windows of greenish glass. This was seldom necessary, for the doors were generally broad open. There was an air of cleanliness about this cabin which, in spite of its poverty, spoke in favor of its inmates. The furniture was scanty and of the homeliest kind; it consisted of an old oaken chest, a cleanly-scoured dresser—both family reliquaries. The shelves of the dresser exhibited a few noggins, three or four tin porringers, half a dozen of trenchers, or wooden plates, a couple of beechen dishes, and a dozen of horn spoons in tasteful arrangement. A family bed on strong wooden stands, bottomed with ropes made of bog-fir, over which was placed a straw mat and a tick filled with oaten chaff, covered by scanty but clean-looking bed-clothes, stood in the inner room. A shake-down straw lightly covered, for the use of the juvenile members of the family, was trundled up in the chimney corner. A metal pot and skillet, an oaken chair, a few stools and creepies, or small stools for the use of the children, constituted the remainder of the furniture of this mountain abode.

Tom Kavanagh, with Biddy O'Toole, his wife, a bed-ridden mother, and six healthy children, (the eldest of whom, Paudeen, was twelve years of age, the youngest only a few months old,) was the possessor of this rustic cot. Tom held a small farm, consisting of a few acres of unproductive mountain land, from Lord Powerscourt, at a rent so exorbitant that he was only able to live by the utmost industry and economy. Tom had no lease, and consequently held that "improvements," if he made any, tempted the landlord to pounce on the farm and raise the rent, in virtue of the improvements, or cast the improver and his family upon the wide world, and let the improved farm to the highest bidder. This heinous fraud is practised every day by the black-leg aristocracy, and hence improvement languishes in almost every part of the country.

On the morning in question, Tom was getting ready to carry manure to the plot of potatoes he had planted a few weeks previously; the little shifty, or mountain pony, was already harnessed with a pair of *barbogs*, or wicker creels, fixed on a straw pack saddle, in which manner it was usually carried over the craggy rocks and steep hills. But Tom, before he commenced his day's work, should indulge in a *shaugh* of the pipe; so having lighted the *dudeen*, he seated himself on the green sward before the door of his cottage, and puffed volumes of blue smoke tranquilly into the air. This indulgence borrowed, no doubt, an additional zest from his contemplation of the objects now spread before his eyes. His wife, Biddy, was busily engaged in arranging domestic matters, while the elder were running to and fro in obedience to maternal orders, and the younger culling daisies and butter-cups, or blowing thistle-down, or feathers into the air for amusement.—The harnessed pony was grazing along the low fence that bound the cabbage garden in rear of the cabin; the sow and the slip, or store pig, were grovelling in the cess-pool; the goat and a pair of kids were browsing or frisking in the green sward; a flock of geese was cackling close by, sometimes mingling with the ducks, and both raising a confused and clamorous uproar, such as of old frightened the Gauls from the Capitol, while the cackling of a couple of hens with clutches of chickens tended to augment the confused babel of sounds.

"Hilloah there, Paudeen," cried Tom, as he removed the *dudeen* from his moist lips, and ejected a curling column of smoke, "come here, *avourneen*."

Paudeen, in an instant, was before his parent in his usual dress, namely—a pair of his father's knee-breeches held up by a piece of cord which stretched across one shoulder. But cap, coat, shoe or hose he had none.

"Paudeen," said the father, speaking solemnly yet affectionately, to his son, "I mean to make a man of you!—Don't you know Mr. Daly, the paper?"

"Yes."

"Well, his dog is dead."

"I knows—the wagabone, M'Donough, shot him; but maybe the boys didn't give him a malvouderin for it."

"How do ye know?"

"Because some of the gorsoons was saying it."

"Well, Paudeen, run down there to the strame

and wash yer face."

When Paudeen had returned with a streamy rosy visage, his parental monitor continued,—

"Go to yer mother and bid her give the coat that's in the chest, and fetch it to me."

"Is it the grand coat?"

"Yes, the very same."

The lad was soon seen issuing from the cabin hastily, bearing a parcel, carefully folded in a copy of the *Nation* newspaper. Tom took the parcel, opened it out cautiously, and produced a treadbare blue body-coat, well studded with large brass buttons.

"Here, put on this coat, and remember it is your grand-daddy's coat which he wore at Vinegar Hill."

When Paudeen put on this coat, it touched the ground at his heels, and the sleeves were a world too long; but when these sleeves were tucked up, and the coat carefully buttoned on the breast, Paudeen seemed absolutely vain of his fine appearance.

"Do you hear me Paudeen?" said Tom again; "go now straight to Mr. Daly's—but for your life don't say you want to go to sarvice to him—only ask him has he any little message that you can do for him. Now, mind, maybe he'll ax you to fetch a pitcher of water from the well, or wash and boil the potatoes, or the likes—whatever he tells you do, do it willingly. Now, mind—"

"Yes, daddy."

"Well, if he offers you a penny, or a four-penny bit, don't be unmannerly and foolish, but take it, an' fetch it home to me. And above all, an' before all, learn to speak Irish, an' learn the songs an' stories he has off by heart; and in time to come you'll be a great Irish scholar, for that's what I want. It will make a man of you all the dear long days of yer life—an' now, since you're goin to shift for yerself, don't forget to say your prayers morning and night, an' Mr. Daly will like you the better; for he is the height of a good Catholic—"

"Look, look, daddy;—the peelers is comin'!"—roared Paudeen.

Tom started to his feet hysterically, and looking in the direction pointed out by the lad, saw a posse of police constables fully armed and accoutered approach. "Oh, murder!—what are they coming after—who must they be lookin' for?—or maybe it's Mahony or Flinn, for they were at the show!"

After a short pause, putting his hand over his eyes, to shade them from the sun, asked—"Who is that jontleman along with them, Paudeen?"

"That's Mr. Jameson, the bailiff, and he's talking to the peelers."

"Mille murder! where can they be going at all, at all?"

He was not kept long in suspense. Instead of proceeding to the right hand or left at the cross roads, the party marched directly to Tom's cabin. At a few paces distant, the peelers grounded arms, while the bailiffs walked up to Kavanagh. Though his heart beat in terror, poor Kavanagh put a bold front on the matter, and advanced a few paces to meet them. "Good mornin', Mr. Jameson,—hope you're well, sir."

"Oh, very well, Mr. Kavanagh," was the reply.

"I hope Mr. M'Donough is better, sir—its the terrible thrashing he got be all accounts?"

"Hem—he's not dead," said the bailiff, dryly.

Mrs. Kavanagh, who stood in the cabin door, with the infant in her arms, to watch the progress of events, now curtisied to the ground, and addressed the bailiff. "I hope your well, sir—How is Mrs. Jameson, sir, an' the childher, sir?"

"Well, well, I thank you, Mrs. Kavanagh."

"I hope she liked the fresh eggs an' the chickens, sir?"

"Thank—thank you—they were excellent; she bid me thank you. But Kavanagh, I'm come on business. I have little time to spare. His Lordship is indignant at the threatment his servant met at the hands of a rebelly crew of Papist squatters he is fostering on his estate.—The bailiff then pulled out a paper. "I'm come to demand the rent due to my lord—seventeen pounds three shillings and one penny three farthings; that's the exact amount—pay it down on the nail while I fill the receipt."

"Oh, murder! dear Mr. Jameson, shure the gale day isn't come yet; shure the crop is in the ground, an' it will pay for itself: an' surely you won't be so cruel as to insist—"

"Silence, sir! I have my duty to do, though my heart bleeds for your trouble; but if I don't do it, another will."

"Shurely, yer honor, I don't want to cheat any body; but there is the shifty, an' when I put a few *barbogs* of manure on the potatoes, I'll let him out to grass, an' get him in a little better condition agin the fair of Wicklow, an' the sow will have the *boneens*, an' the slip will be in condition for the fair, an' I'll sell all of them, an' give you the price of them to the very farthin'. Biddy will be sellin' the fowl agin that time, an'—"

"I have no time, Mr. Kavanagh—I am sorry I can't listen to you; examples must be made of some for the benefit of others. Jakes, take an inventory of the goods."

The under-bailiff and his assistants began to make the inventory of the goods and chattels of poor Kavanagh, while the peelers, with fixed bayonets, stood ready to protect the agents of power.

"One ould chist an' contents, a quantity of ould bed-clothes. Item: two pots, a dresser an' noggins, four whole an' eight broken horn spoons, &c. Item: stock, a shifty pony an' creels, a sow in young, a store pig, a goat an' two kids."

When the inventory was finished, Jameson ordered the bailiff to carry away the chattels, eject the tenants, and nail up the door and windows.

Now it was that the scene became truly lamentable. Mrs. Kavanagh was rudely dragged out of doors, shrieking, clinging to the door-post with one hand, and with the other presenting her infant to the assailants, as if appealing to their mercy; but there was no place for tenderness in the hearts of those callous miscreants of aristocratic tyranny and rapacity. The poor bed-ridden cripple was literally dragged out amid a heap of straw, more dead than alive. The children screaming, ran hither and thither, and one little girl clung to the kid, as if she were able to retain it from the grasp of the myrmidons of the law, while Paudeen mounted the pony, and placing a foot in each creel, endeavoured to escape with the jaded animal, but the butt end of a peeler's musket hurled him to the ground, where he lay for some time insensible. The indignation of the neighbors, who were huddled together in a mass, was vented in hisses, groans, and execrations. There was only one man silent in the group, and that was Kavanagh. He stood like a statue, gazing on the ruin of his hopes, with dry eyes and trembling lips, without uttering a word, as if stupified and paralyzed by the crushing calamity which hurled out his children on the highways of the world, to beg or starve, as friendless, homeless, houseless, hatless wanderers. The ruthless work of eviction was rapidly accomplished. The windows and doors of the empty cottage were quickly locked, barred and secured. The peeler procession marched off with its piebald prey—its restive pig and wayward goat, and struggling, gabbling, irregular geese, amid scornful hootings, sarcastic jibes, bitter taunts and derisive laughter, ending in loud, ironical huzzas, that made the welkin ring. The peelers, escorted and cheered by the wretches of the hamlet, marched off, to gratify the spiteful bigotry and devouring avarice of Lord Powerscourt—not, however, until, the bailiff, Jameson, cautioned all present, threatening them with a similar fate, if they should give food or refuge to Kavanagh, or any member of his ill-fated family.

While this was going on, a female figure, mantled and hooded, made her way through the crowd to the side of Tom Kavanagh. As she touched his hand she whispered in his ear, "His Reverence sends you this shilling, and the guinea is contributed by a generous lady, who wishes to remain unknown."

As he gazed into his capacious palm, horny with toil, his eyes sparkled with unspeakable delight—danced in his head.

"Ah! then is all this for myself, Miss Julia?" he asked in astonishment as he darted a glance of keen inquiry at her benevolent face. "May the Lord bless you, Miss O'Byrne, and grant you a long life, as well as the young lady who took pity on poor Kavanagh. May the Lord bless you and her, and your reverend brother, and prolong your days, and make you happy here and hereafter, I pray God. Amen." Tom hurriedly concealed the piece of gold in the manifold recesses of his tattered costume. But he had balanced the shilling on his palm while his reflective mind pondered the momentous question, whether it were better to drown his sorrow and treat his neighbor, with the argentine coin, or bury it in his dress, and reserve it for the use of his children. While considering this serious question, a large hand was placed upon his shoulder.—Kavanagh turned round, and saw Daly standing before him, holding by the hand little Patrick, who had succeeded the dog in the difficult office of guiding the blind man. This sight touched the heart of Kavanagh, "Good luck to you, Mr. Daly; its thankful to you I am for adoptin' my poor desolate boy."

"Silence," said the blind man, "send Patrick about his business; I want to speak to you alone."

Kavanagh administered a flip to his son and heir, who immediately disappeared, astonished at so speedy a termination to his functions as guide. Kavanagh took the blind man's arm, and they proceeded along the valley, while conversing with animation.

Meantime, Julia O'Byrne, having accomplished her mission of charity, was hastening with rapid step from the scene of the eviction, anxious to escape the observation and blessings of the villagers. She quickly attained a point in the road where a cluster of bushes concealed her