



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. XI. MONTREAL, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1860. No. 6.

SHAWN NA SOGGARTH; OR, THE PRIEST-HUNTER. AN IRISH TALE OF THE PENAL TIMES. BY M. ARCHDEACON, ESQ., Author of the Legends of Connaught, &c. CHAPTER XV.

Aaron Andrews and his daughter were seated in the neat and orderly parlor of his cottage, which almost immediately adjoined the foundry. Before Bessy was a large and apparently long used account book, in which, and from which, she was occasionally making entries and transcripts.

"Weel, Bess, my girl," said her father, as he indulged in a smoke, while she was arranging the accounts, "ye'll just see that half a day be stapped fra' Bob Murdock; he cam' not till work the day, till shortly afore the dinner bell."

"Ah, but father, recollect it was the christening of his child that detained him," she observed, as she marked the full amount for the man.

"Then, Bessy, woman, 'twill be quite enough to allow half wages till Owen Carthy, as he has been gainin' hame early and comin' late, the week."

"Surely, sir, there should be considerable allowance made for poor Owen, with a decaying wife and sickly family—I know, dear father, how little you would yourself be fit to attend business, if your poor Bessy was ailing"—and she flung one hand fondly on his shoulder, while, with the other, she filled up the amount as before.

"Weel, Bess, I see ye'r determined to contradict and ha' yer ain way. But surely ye ha'nt any thing to say for that ne'er do weel, Jamie Naughten, that wasted the Sabbath, as usual, in carousin' and fightin', till he got his croon cracked, and couldn't gang till work on Monday, till long after mid-day. Spak' for him noo—can ye?"

"Indeed, dear father, I have a great deal to say for poor Jamie, who, though a little wild and thoughtless, is both well-hearted and attached. Why, when you were unwell last summer, there was no man in the concern so regular, or so anxious for your recovery; and when the fire broke out after, he was the most active among hundreds, in extinguishing it."

"Weel, weel, Bess, woman, I see it's folly to be arguin' wi' ye. So ha' yer ain way, and gin yer mind'd 'improverish yersel', by encouragin' others till idleness, there's nae use in gain-sayin' ye, partiklerly, as afore a month, ye'll ha' another to guide ye—a man o' sense and substance, though he wears neither a red coat nor a blue—no that Serjeant-major Heavieside is much amiss, for he's a moral man, wi some money saved; but I don't fancy the military, and I hope the worthy Mr. McNab, who will be on his way fra' Belfast, next week, may be as easy till your hand, my girl, as yer auld father.—Pass on till the weighty accounts—"

"Here, father, is our old friend, Ned Cormick," said Bessy, paling and reddening in rapid alternation, at her father's allusion, "and luckily, in the nick of time, as I fear, looking over the next complicated accounts, would increase a slight ache I feel at present."

"Yis, my bloomin' rosebud, here I am," said the old tutor and clerk, entering, "and proud to be able to serve his vourneens any way. O, barrin' for the ould boy's bein' here (in a whisper) I'd repate three or four verses I put, last night, to the poem about my rosebud, that ud make Dan Heraghty, the spalpeen, crazy, if he only heard them."

"Weel, Bessy, don't stoop any more, my lassie, but set a chair for our nibor, and he'll finish the accounts. But first, let's hae a toothful fra the cupboard, as the evenin's close—that is, gin Ned ha' nae objection;" and Aaron relaxed his features into a slight grin.

"Very well, Mither Andrews; never without your joke an' your soup. But why wouldn't you have them, sir, an' more comfort to your heart with them? My little rosebud knows I haven't a taste or objection to a saulogue (drink) any time, as drinkin', Mither Andrews, in my opinion, is always a mighty wholesome diversion; an' I hope I'm too much of a christianian I mane, not to take a cogue (drink) with an enemy. Yis, Mither Andrews, even with Dan Heraghty—no, I would not with him, the ignoramus, that doesn't know that the gods themselves like a drop, as the poet ses in Latin, 'Dii latantur'—that's it. I'm beginnin' to forget my Latin for want of practice. 'Dii latantur'—but I ax your pardon, Mither Andrews, I forgot that you don't like Latin quotations, though they're the touchstone o' thure larin', that shows a scholar from an ass."

"I hae sartially nae relish for yer haithenish gods or quotations, at the same that I doubt na, auld nibor, that ye could bring monee a proof that a drop o' comfort's gude for the body."

Bessy, having now produced from the dark, polished cupboard a plethoric bottle more than half full of French brandy, that had never run the risk of being adulterated in a British store, nor submitted to the degradation of paying duty, placed itself, with some glasses, soft sugar, and a capacious jug of cold water, (her father's favorite mixture with the brandy) before the willing pair, and smiling, as the contrast between them in attire and person struck her, (Ned still wore the motley garb described in a former chapter) walked forth into the balmy evening, leaving the bottle as a substitute for her own society for a while.

Time holds his equal course. Yet how variously is his speed calculated according to the circumstance and feelings of the calculator.—How unequal seems his flight to the impatient lover, who thinks the briefest day will never close to bring the hour of meeting, and the doomed felon who fancies that hours are condensed into minutes—to the possessor of thousands on his unlooked for death-bed, who would willingly—how willingly barter those thousands for a few prolonged days, even days of suffering, and the expectant heir that steals along, with stealthy pace and noiseless foot, to ascertain how long the invalid may still survive—to the blood-stained soldier, elate with victory and burning for the assault, and the outambled patriot who awaits, with sublime resolve, to meet the shock he cannot hope to withstand, and find his grave in the soil he was unable to defend—to the ambitious and successful speculator, watching eagerly to see his name gazetted in the peerage list, and him of broken fortune and ruined hopes, who dreads that each succeeding day will see his name announced in the catalogue of ruin. And yet old time alters not his pace to hasten human happiness, or retard human suffering.

The reader will imagine some months to have passed from the period of the events described in the last chapter, to the evening we now introduce him to. Stern winter had given way to the season of blossom and hope; and the beautiful though capricious spring had, in her turn, yielded to the ripe and joyous summer. In that interval, the state of the country generally, and of the district we are treating of in particular, became much worse. Outrages naturally followed the expulsion of the ill-fated peasantry, and persecution, of course, raged more fiercely. The dragoons scoured the neighborhood; some of the peasantry were shot! others hanged, after the mockery of a trial, and a few transported, so that the district, apparently awed by those terrible examples, became so completely subdued and peaceable in appearance, that the elder Ffoliot ventured to return to his brother's, to enjoy, as far as conscience would permit, the fruits of his treble dyed and most heartless treachery.

The present position and circumstances of other prominent characters of our tale we must also briefly advert to. Time—even the progress of some months had naturally ameliorated somewhat of the poignancy of Ellen's suffering, though she still received occasional annoyance from her debased and besotted brother, who was daily sinking more and more in the mire of debauchery, sometimes spending consecutive days abed in a state of constant intoxication, when he was not on the turf, or at the gaming table, while she and Frank had met but rarely and at long intervals, after the period of her visit to the rectory.

Father Bernard remained still in his parish, continuing to perform his sacred functions by night, or in the remote glen, or by the solitary shore, unceasingly risking loss of life or expatriation, and frequently shifting his place of concealment. His nephew had returned to Clare Galway soon after the interment of Sir Edmund, at which period also Frank had returned to the Continent.

The notorious Shawn continued also to pursue his unhallowed vocation, though of late, success and consequent profits were becoming but very scanty. He had not disturbed the quiet of his poor sister, nor polluted Ballintubber with his presence for some months previous to the evening we are treating of.

It was the twilight of a delicious June day;—the sun had gone down beneath a canopy of glorious hued clouds which, after having ushered him to his rest, disparded and broke into cloudlets of all beautiful tints that, in their turn, separating far and wide, disappeared gradually, like travellers seeking their repose for the night.—The air, impregnated with the odors of flowers from her own garden, as well as those borne from hedge and field, was just sufficient to ruse the leaves in the small plantation, on the skirts of which Bessy stood, and slightly curl the stream that flowed at her feet, reflecting, where not shadowed by the trees, the purple tinge that now overspread the western heavens, while the rich and unmingled swell of minstrelsy, that had hymned the sun's departure, had now subsided into the occasional delicate strain of an old bird, better suited to the tender beauty of the hour.

"It is truly a beautiful evening," said Bessy, shaping her thoughts into words audible though not loud, "and yet it makes me somewhat sad. It reminds me of the last evening Frank and I met"—she spoke of an evening subsequent to their chance meeting at Ned Cormick's—"different as are the seasons. Poor Frank, if it was now, I think I would not tease him so, as father's words a while ago startled me a good deal; God send he may have spoken at random, without having anything serious in his mind, tho' I fear he's not likely to speak without meaning something. Poor Frank! little he imagines, struggling with the waves, that I'm thinking of him at this moment. I wish he were returned, whatever be to come."

"And here he is, Bessy, my darling, true to his colors, and as ready as ever to stand between you and all annoyance," said the object of her soliloquy, starting forward from the shadow of a tree, and flinging his arms around her.

"Frank Lynch, who could have dreamt of seeing you here this evening, you sea-monster? When did you return, and why do you frighten one so?" said Bessy, starting from him, her face suffused with blushes, but partially distinguishable in the dimness of twilight.

"Why, some people, to be sure, might be astonished by my presence here now, though I have been in the neighborhood these three days. But there's one of my acquaintance, at all events," continued Frank, laughing, "that is not ill pleased at my return."

"O, most probably some one that don't know you well."

"Well, dear Bessy, she's at least a most intimate friend of yours."

"Out upon you, cockoomb; I suppose she took a fancy to your sailor's jacket and saucy face; if she did, she has a taste very different from mine."

"So I should have deemed till this evening, knowing your predilection for scarlet, not blue; but some people change their opinions with great ease; or, as they say, truth lies in a well: some people often confess the truth to themselves."

"You are, so far, beyond redemption, Frank, that words would be wasted on you, and father is waiting for me. Will you venture in, Frank, to renew your last argument?" she continued archly, in allusion to the last evening of their meeting, when Frank had paid a visit to the cottage, and in the course of which a warm altercation had arisen between himself and her father.

"No, dear Bessy, nor shall you move so quickly after so long a separation." He placed his head on her shoulder with gentle violence, and seating themselves on the green sward, whatever were the arguments he used, (and we do not pretend that we could detail them if we pleased, but we never, at any time, had a fancy for playing the spy on such a scene) they parted not till considerably after the long summer twilight had melted into night, and the stars had scattered themselves silently and stealthily, like invading hosts, over the tender blue vault above them.

During this prolonged and, at least to the parties themselves, interesting interview, many circumstances heretofore unintelligible and many apparent causes of doubts and jealousies were satisfactorily cleared up. Bessy told him of the occasional visits of the fat serjeant major, who, she admitted, was half a favorite with her father, though, to herself, she said, his addresses were but a source of laughter and merriment—a source, however, which Frank told her warily he would prefer her abstaining from in future.—Another suitor was, however, she said, much more to be apprehended, namely, the son of an old friend of her father in Belfast, with whom he held frequent correspondence, and who was speedily expected to the cottage in the character of a wooer, and one whom her father much affected.

"Then, by the heavens above us," exclaimed Frank, vehemently, and starting to his feet, "it would be better for him to remain in his own province; for, though he may have your father's sanction, if he persecutes you with his addresses, his journey shall be repented of during his life."

"But my father may compel me to receive his addresses."

"No, Bessy, no father can—shall compel you to act contrary to your inclination and affections."

"A dutiful doctrine, truly, nibor," said the stern voice of Aaron Andrews, as he issued forth from the plantation. "I thought I ordered you afore till keep clear o' those premises. However, I may soon prove that you at least, my blue jacket—my recusant, or relapsed papist, may be—must act contrary till yer inclinations, by havin' ye made show yer back speedily. As for you, ye forward, gadding hussy, in instantly till yer domestic concerns. I suppose yer head ache's cured noo."

stayed by the word "Frank" uttered by Bessy as she flew, like a frightened bird, towards the cottage, and without speaking, he moved along the stream in the opposite direction.

"Ye're right to sheer off in time, my sailor jack-anapes," shouted Aaron after him; "and by the God of my fathers, if ever I find ye till threspas again on the cottage grounds, for as high as ye think yer name stands in this neighborhood, I'll send ye on a voyage ye'll no come back from sune, I'll be yer bail."

"Frank turned and paused, but he saw that Bessy had stopped, too; and, curbing his rage, he pursued his way in a mood of mingled wrath and vexation. He had not proceeded far when a man, springing from a hedge, said, in a muttered tone, "the boys is waitin' for ye this hour, Mather Frank, an' I was sint to sarch for ye."

"Ha! I had forgotten the meeting," said Frank, "but is that you, Gorman? I thought you were more inclined for home and labour than for meetings."

"An' that's God's thruth for yer honor, Mather Frank; and sure enough so I was till they didn't lave a house or a home to me or mine;—an' wouldn't I go to hell (axin yer pardon Mather Frank) to have revinge on the villain that left us on the shoughaawn." In fact, Harry had become one of the most daring, energetic and fierce of the rapparees since the expulsion of himself and family.

CHAPTER XVI. The assemblage was not held in the haunted barn on this evening. It was about a lonely and isolated rock on the shore that the violent spirits were congregated; and the subject fiercely agitated, on Frank's entrance, was an immediate attack on Ffoliot's house, as there was a rumor that the older Ffoliot, then resident there, was about to proceed to England early in the next month.

"There's not one among you, my friends, believe me, more anxious to see vengeance done on the old Cromwellian, than I am," said Frank, on being appealed to, on his entrance, as the leader of the projected attack.

"An' raisin' good ye have, Mather Frank, as ye knew but all," said Thummaush beg (the rapparee before alluded to); "as the ould baithen sed no later than yisterday, in my own nearin', that he had his eye on ye, an' knew well ye wor a smuggler, an' ud sind ye speedily over the herrin' brook for it."

A dark, red flash like that of the thunder-cloud, swept across Frank's weather-browned features, as he rejoined, with forced calmness, "I may give him the first voyage. But if I am to have the leading of the attack, as we arranged, Isaac Ffoliot is to be delivered up to me with his timbers undamaged if possible; and I will guarantee to place him where he shall never do further injury; and there shall be harm done to none else in the house, and no bloodshed whatever unless in self-defence."

"Mather Frank's too tumber hearted intirely," said Thummaush, fiercely. "By the 'ternal, of the treacherous ould hell bird had twenty lives, af there was no wan barrin' mesel', I'd tare thim out ov his heart; whin did the bloody villain humsel' show marcy or justice?"

There was a low, fierce burst of applause as Harry observed, "No, Thummaush, you mustn't middle or make with him. The merciless ould villain belongs to me."

"Didn't he rack me as well as he did yersel'?"

"Speak lower and cooler, my lads; these rocks may have ears," said Frank. "Am I not about to give you bitterer and more lasting revenge than the taking of a worthless life, by leaving him to spend his remaining years in a dungeon without friend or messmate, and with fear and remorse eating, like vermin, into his timbers every watch in the twenty-four? You hear my terms," he continued, "and the only terms on which I will either join, or bring any of my lads to join the attack."

"Captain Frank's right," said Fergus, "an' if we can get our revinge without firin' a shot, so much the better; I would advise ye, too, to be cool an' cautious, as there might be traiters among the loudest of oursels"—he fastened his gaze full on Thummaush, whom he had been sternly watching throughout the evening; and his suspicions were strengthened by the starting of the former on hearing the last words, and would have been still further confirmed, did the tender starlight enable him to distinguish the change of countenance that accompanied the start, though the intended betrayer replied boldly and promptly, "Fergus speaks quietly becase the murderin' ould thief didn't murder him."

"Man," exclaimed Fergus, laying his hand fiercely on the shoulder of Thummaush, "who drove me to be what I am, an' persecuted my poor ould father that was a scholar an' peaceable? No wa here knows better than you, Thummaush; an' yer talkin' in that bould, wicked way won't prove—"

"Then," interrupted Frank, "if my conditions be agreed to, our attack will be on next

Thursday night, if his old hull can't be quietly captured before then."

"Be the holy," swore Thummaush, "we'll not wait till Thursday, to let the ould villain get off, may be."

There was a buzz of approbation as before, till Frank rejoined, "I can tell you, lads, more about Ffoliot's Grove than you seem to know yourselves. Three officers and a servant have anchored there this evening, and are to remain in the same moorings till Thursday."

After some further remarks and fierce oaths on the part of Thummaush, it was arranged that the party should meet for the attack in their present locality, on Thursday evening speedily after sunset; and the assemblage separated.

It was after frequently pausing to watch, and stealthily crossing and creeping beneath the shadow of hedge and ditch that Thummaush found himself, at about a mile's distance from the place of rendezvous, in company with Shawn na Soggarth, who had been waiting his approach.

"An' is id put off till Thursday? So much the better," said Shawn, after having received the sought information.

"Yis, that visit o' the officers served us well. We'll now have plenty o' time for the throopers, though I swore like a Trojan through thick an' thin (an' nearly got myself thrappled (throttled) for my pains be that powerful villain Fergus) that the fun ud be spoilt, af the attack wasn't to-night."

"An' ye played yer cards well murely, Thummaush, as ye ever more did; an' I'll make Sir John make this night's work worth yer while," said Shawn; "but take care not to get yersel' more suspected, an' yet have an eye like a malthouse rat till Thursday. I must be off to head-quarters, where I know they're waitin' for me."

"But Shawn, what do ye say raily I'm to get?" asked Thummaush, eagerly, as he grasped his vile companion's collar. "Ye know it's a dangerous job I'm on—af ye wor to see the eyes o' Fargy just now on me, ye wouldn't give a thurreen for my life."

"I tould ye ineady," said Shawn, loosening the grasp and moving off rapidly, "that I'd make Sir John pay ye well for yer services. But it's time enough to be thinkin' o' that whin I git my own reward first—an' I can't stay any longer palaverin' with you while they're waiting for me at the castle," he concluded, shaking himself entirely free from the grasp of Thummaush and dashing off without further ceremony, confident that his vile associate had now gone too far to dare attempt retracing his steps, and that, besides, he owed Fergus deadly enmity.

"An' the treatment I deserve sure enough for my information. The dible pity me af there was an eye on me this mornin'," said Thummaush, bitterly, as he gazed a moment after his colleague. "But I might soon be even with Mather Shawn by tellin' the whole matter to Fargy yit—to Fargy! No, by the—af I was to lose my life over again, as well as the reward, but I'll go on with my revinge agin him."

And an eye—and the eye he most hated and feared there had been on him, as Fergus, who utterly distrusted him, had tracked his suspicious movements, till baffled by a thick hedge not far from the meeting place; and the result of that observation he was speedily to experience, tho' he was allowed to deem himself unobserved for this night.

(To be continued.)

LETTER FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF TUAM.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD VISCOUNT PALMERSTON.

St. Jarlath's, Tuam, Feast of St. Joseph Calasauctus, 1860.

MY LORD,—Whatever may be the feelings with which you review the labors of the protracted session now drawing to its close, it is one which cannot be satisfactory to the Catholics of Ireland. I am far from thinking that this conviction will at all affect the sentiments of complacency which the momentary triumph of your foreign and domestic policy is calculated to inspire. The Catholics of Ireland may be grieved and disappointed, that the embarrassments of His Holiness are daily becoming more alarming, through the agency of the British Government, and that the spiritual authority of their hierarchy has been signally disregarded, if not outraged, within its most legitimate sphere through the same hostile influence. These are results which appear to concern your lordship's Government but little, and should they bring any transient uneasiness, it is removed by the consoling reflection that this two-fold triumph has been achieved with the heavy and zealous co-operation of many of the Catholic representatives.—No doubt a defection so humiliating to us will only add to your exultation; but allow me to suggest that triumphs as well as defeats have their extreme points, which are not far asunder,