

DERRY.

A Tale of the Revolution.

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.
CHAPTER XI—Continued.

Bryan had beheld the whole scene with feelings unusually excited; for, as the venerable forms of Basil and Shane had receded from his view until they became lost in the promiscuous company around them, every wound recently inflicted on his affectionate heart bled anew under the sense of irreparable loss, rendering him more keenly alive to the sufferings of others. Besides, the objects most dear to him, his mother, Letitia and Ellen, were committed to a peaceful grave, over which it was his privilege daily to watch; and their spirits, he knew, were yet more safely housed in the mansion of the blessed, under the guardian hand of Him who loved them, and who gave Himself for them; whereas this agonized husband and father was left to the most dreadful miseries, as to what mortal suffering might yet await those in whom his own life seemed to be wrapped up. "And I know not," thought Bryan, "whether he be a partaker in that precious faith which seems to support the soul of his expiring wife." With such thoughts in his mind, he gradually approached the stranger; and, having rested for a while on the wall beside him, addressed him in a voice of respectful commiseration.

"You are not alone in your sufferings; alas, that the only consolation which we can offer should be a fellowship in wretchedness!" The stranger shook his head in token of bitter assent, but neither spoke nor looked up. Encouraged by this slight proof of attention to his words, Bryan proceeded: "I know that He whose power to save is as infinite as the compassion which calls that power into action, is likewise touched with a feeling of all our infirmities—has in all points been tempted like as we are."

"Yet without sin," interrupted the other, and then, raising his beautiful eyes to heaven, he ejaculated, "Oh, merciful High Priest! subdue those sinful passions, and teach my soul to say, 'It is the Lord.'"

There was a simple, sublime fervor in the tone of this short appeal, that bespoke the agony of spirit under which the sufferer struggled for resignation; it carried reproach to many a heart which had failed under similar trial to seek to the same source for comfort and submission. To Bryan the words were fraught with solid satisfaction; and confirmed him in a purpose already formed in his benevolent mind. Pressing still nearer to the object of his compassion, he continued in a low voice the expression of his Christian sympathy; then said: "There is evident danger in your continuing to occupy a station from which it is yet hardly possible to urge your removal. Whenever your feelings will permit you to relinquish for a short space this post of melancholy watching, leave it to me—I will not neglect for a moment the sacred charge—and give my aged grandmother the support of your aid to her bereaved home, where your presence will fill one of its many vacancies with a fellow-sufferer, partaking alike in our abounding affliction, and in the consolation that, through Divine grace, sometimes such ones abound."

The stranger turned upon him his heavy and swollen eyes with an expression of deep thankfulness, saying: "It is a brotherly offer, and with a brother's frankness I will accept it."

"Where have you been, Magrath?" asked Bryan, as his faithful follower mounted the wall near him.

"I have been putting my hand to the work yonder, your honor," he replied, pointing to the place where the gutters had stood, which, with respectful adherence to the letter and spirit of their declaration, the Derry men had taken down as soon as the crowd moved off from below.

"And did your governor really purpose to execute those miserable captives?" asked the stranger, whose name was Morrison.

"Every neck of them, sir, we would have stretched," answered Magrath, sternly, "and themselves never denied the justice of it."

"That acknowledgment was what saved them," added Bryan; "together with the evident fact, that the average foreigners cared not how much of native blood might flow, but would rather rejoice in proportion to the horrors perpetrated under their iniquitous domination."

"They are encouraged by the priests," said Morrison.

"Look yonder!" exclaimed Magrath, unconscious of the agonizing interest that the scene in which he pointed must excite in the breast of his hearer. A French officer, who appeared to have received some order to investigate the condition of those who remained below the walls, had approached the place where Morrison's wife lay seemingly in a quiet sleep. Attended

by three or four soldiers, he reached the spot, and, stooping with his foot to the helpless creature before him, he demanded in broken English why she did not follow the rest of the captives on their march.

She raised her hollow eyes, and articulated some words faintly to be understood. The Frenchman with his shattered sword raised four or five feet from him, at the same time ordering her to rise; while Morrison, grasping the top of the wall, seemed in the act to throw himself over as the nearest way to succor her, when an Irish sergeant, approaching, in a tone of suppressed rage exclaimed, "Let the woman die in peace!"

The officer commanded him to retire, but he stood his ground, seemingly prepared to resist, in food as well as by words the wanton inhumanity of the companion towards one so evidently suffering the pangs of dissolution; while the soldiers, peering forward, seemed anxious for some command to remove him by force.

This was presently given; and at the same moment the sergeant, placing himself beside the wretched creature, drew his dagger; but several of the company, coming up, among whom was an officer, the Frenchman moved back, calling on his men to disperse the multitude, and causing him to be free.

"What's the matter?" asked the Irish officer, "how come you to mutiny, sir?"

"It is my duty to defend a dying countryman from those who thirst for Irish blood!" said the sergeant, in his native tongue.

"Is she dying?"

The Frenchman assented that she was as well able to walk off as the rest of the party; but that she preferred lying there, in the hope of being taken into the town.

"No fear of that," answered the other. "The sleeping female knows better than to let any hungry mouths into their den; besides," he added, stooping to look at her pallid face, "she is nearly at the point of death."

The Frenchman made no reply to this, but in a more silent tone repeated the order to send Connellan to mutiny.

"You committed no mutiny, and I'll not be dishonored by you," said the sergeant, directing a look of defiance at the foreign soldier.

"You're right, my lad!" exclaimed the officer, "and Connellan will say the same."

The Frenchman vehemently protested that all the cries of all his countrymen were on the side that for a commissioned officer to show his sword upon a superior was death before any court-martial.

"Never mind," replied the other, with provoking coolness: "We're not particular here, you know. Monsieur de Rosen has dispensed with all the troublesome laws of honor, good faith, and humanity; and we need not stick at a trifle in the article of war."

The Frenchman presently ordered the other to advance upon Connellan; the other as promptly joined in defending him. A desperate struggle took place; pistols were discharged, while Magrath and others shouted from the walls their loud encouragement to the Irish party. It was a short interval of unparalytic horror to the husband, who beheld this sanguinary struggle around and over the death-bed of his beloved partner; and scarcely could Bryan withhold himself from leaping down to certain destruction. But the fray was ended, the Frenchman retreated, leaving one of their number bleeding on the ground, and as the combatants separated, the Irish officer gently raised the lifeless object of their compassion, saying: "She's gone in—she's a better lass passed through her hour."

The fact was evident; and Morrison, having lifted the head upon the wall, exclaimed in a smothered tone: "Even so, and there is mercy in it. Good, good my own to please them!"

CHAPTER XII.

When the little household of Magrath assembled at their evening duty, Morrison formed the principal object of interest; and their united prayers arose for the safe guidance of his distant children, answering them many questions were asked—one from curiosity, and another the fatherly feelings of their aged parent. He represented Kathleen as confined with a severe and dangerous fever beyond her power to attend in the gospel parable either to do or to suffer in that glorious cause, for which he professed his readiness to see even his children offered up as victims on the altar of their faith, rather than that he or they should compromise it.

"I beg," said Rose, "to understand something of this high and holy principle, the faith of which I have, with a trembling awe, occasionally seen displayed beneath this roof, without being able to comprehend the root that produced them. My heart, I think, gets clearer; but the heart that sees more widely every day."

"Say, rather," replied the lady of Magrath, "that grace is given more abundantly to women than to men. The admission of light, any dear young friend, make mention of any displeasing objects that were not before seen; but it

another adds to their number, nor increases their actual deformity."

"I've been thinking on that myself," said Magrath, "when reading to the prisoners today."

"Then you found time even today, my good fellow?" said Bryan.

"Sure, sir, and I couldn't do less. The poor souls expected every one to be hanged, though we told them it was only the officers that we meant to execute; and when the people marched away, and the gallows were taken down, it was myself that couldn't but go and read them a psalm out of Mr. Basil's beautiful book."

"And this was what detained you so long?" asked Rose.

"No, sir; I had other work in hand afterwards; but I didn't like to mention it till prayers were done." Then turning to Mr. Morrison, with the hesitation of real feeling, he inquired whether the name of Connellan had not reached his ears in the morning; to which the other with a heavy sigh answered that it had, under circumstances never to be forgotten.

"Well, sir, that Connellan is an old comrade of mine; and a lad who would be nice about his religion when his flesh-brother is up against the French. I took advantage of this after you left the wall, and—" he hesitated again, and then in a more hurried manner added: "There are graves of my digging in the churchyard that cover some who were the sunshine to our eyes. Five dug another one beside them, and at midnight we'll excise the body of her who's gone to their blessed home. Connellan will bring it to the gate, and five the governors leave. I know 'tis a comfort," he added, turning away to hide the starting tears, "for haven't I found it so myself?"

While Morrison, overcome by this unexpected mercy, vainly strove to express his gratitude, Ross exclaimed: "Magrath, I verily think you were sent here to be a perpetual reproach to my shameful prejudices against the native race."

"You're no prejudice now, Mr. Ross, avow yourself," answered Magrath, with an affectionate smile; "but when they who should sow good seed plant nothing but thistles, what crop can you expect? Only lay the blame on the right-shoulders."

"He speaks most justly," observed Morrison; "and the generous deed that he and Connellan have performed is more characteristic of our countrymen's natural feeling, than are the sanguinary acts which have made their name a terror, and our beautiful island a reproach among the nations. My own life has been an active one, bringing me very frequently into contact with the most intemperate among my countrymen, in their mountain fastnesses and secluded valleys. I have been so situated in those remote districts, that my personal safety depended, so far as man was concerned, on an unobtrusive appeal to the nobler feelings of their nature; and when uninflected by the present instigation of their priests, I have found their animity melt away before the appearance, or let me rather say the reality, of affectionate confidence on the part of one who threw himself on their hospitable faith."

"The way of them when left to themselves," said Magrath, thoughtfully; "but your honor was right in basing the priest's blavery."

"I have good reason to do so, my dear brother," rejoined Morrison, whose every look beamed with grateful gentleness towards Magrath; "and one among several instances I will name. Some years since, I was traveling through a mountainous and unfrequented district in the wildest part of Galway, where scarcely a trace of civilization could be discovered, and where my ignorance of the native language left me in the state of a man cast ashore on some foreign strand. In fact, I had acted very incautiously in negotiating to provide myself with an interpreting guide; but I could not believe that the English tongue would be so universally unintelligible within half a day's journey of places where it was generally understood and used. However, I found my error too late to profit by the discovery; and, committing myself to the Lord, I went on, accepting all whom I met, in the hope of obtaining an answer from some one. I was disappointed; and, to aggravate it, those generally appeared a scowl of displeasure accompanying the muttered Celtic, or the sullen silence in which my address was received."

"I'll engage for you," said Magrath, smiling; "it isn't the English sound that will make a man welcome in Cunnamara."

"I went on," continued Morrison, "until the closing evening, and my own fatigue, together with the jaded pace of my horse, compelled me to make an attack on the hospitality of the next cabin that offered any appearance of comfort. I reached one, situated in the midst of what seemed a respectable little property, well farmed; but the house, though large, was as rudely built, and of as rugged an aspect, as any cabin in the bogs. Here I reined in my horse, and, fastening him to a tree, walked into the kitchen."

"And parlor, and bedroom," interrupted Magrath, who seemed to enjoy the recital greatly.

(To be Continued.)

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