

DERRY:

A Tale of the Revolution.

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

CHAPTER I.

"To exchange such a spot as this for the smoke, the din, and publicity of a town—how shall I prevail on them?"

Such was the mental inquiry of Bryan M'Alister, as he slowly wound along through one of the most romantic defiles of the ancient Tyrone. November blasts had stripped the foliage from many a towering tree and luxuriant shrub, tarnishing the emerald hue of Erin's soil, and imparting to that majestic scenery a character as sternly wild as were the spirits of those times. Yet beautiful, surpassingly beautiful, in despite of cloud and storm, the giant hills arose, the valleys crouched beneath their sheltering bulwarks, and the broad lake expanded, or the narrow streamlet rippled on, diversifying, by its liquid splendor, the ever-changeable prospect. Home itself, that centre of all attractions to young Bryan's affectionate heart, could not by its nearness win him to quicken his pace. He suffered the rein to hang loosely on his horse's neck, and gazed around him with the sad forebodings of one who anticipates a long farewell to a spot endeared by every tender recollection of infancy and youth.

The abode toward which he was so leisurely advancing lay buried in deep seclusion, considerably removed from the highway. The approach was a perfect labyrinth, scarcely deserving the name of a road, or even of a path; but Bryan's steed required no guidance to the well-known spot. Emerging from the covert under which an ascent, and then a descent had been pursued, he now came full in view of the simple but substantial cottage that sheltered all his earthly treasures; and his near approach was presently discovered by its delightful inmates. A sturdy house dog was the first to greet him with the warning bark of defiance, instantaneously changed into the yelpings of joy, as he bounded forward to spring against the saddle. Two blooming girls next rushed from the door; and after they had hastened a white-haired retainer of that noble, but no longer affluent house, whose fallen fortunes it was his pride to follow. A bare-headed gossamer seized the bridle with one hand, while the other plucked at his matted locks by way of obeisance; old Shane laid hold on the stirrup; and the impatient sisters seemed disposed to drag their prize from his seat before he could well dismount. Bryan had a kiss, and a smile, and a tear, too, for each, with many a kind word to old Shane, as he hobbled after the youthful trio, to the presence of two more expectants; a smiling mother and a grandaunt, whose feelings were too deep to find vent in many words, as she embraced and blessed the sole representative of her slaughtered line.

But why attempt to describe the most indescribable of all things—an Irish welcome, bestowed on one around whom a cluster of Irish hearts entwined their fondest affections?

Amid the interesting group now assembled, a stranger's eye would have involuntarily rested on the form and features of the venerable parent. Both were strikingly noble, nor had the pressure of near threescore years and ten diminished the sparkling intelligence of the face, or bowed perceptibly the stately figure of the old lady. Highly intellectual, and marked with decision of character, her countenance yet bespoke a meek benevolence which endeared what had otherwise been too commanding to inspire affection; and there were traits of long and patient endurance, sufficient to show that a cross had indeed been borne by her, whose whole deportment told a tale of pious resignation.

She was a daughter of the princely race of O'Neill, brought in childhood, by a chain of providential circumstances, under the influence of truly christian advisers. Thus her mind became early and deeply imbued with doubts and apprehensions as to the soundness of her hereditary religion. Pursuing in secret the inquiry, she has made a tacit renunciation of its errors, convinced by the mere force of reason and such arguments as came within her reach. At an early age she had become attached to Colonel M'Alister, a Protestant of rank and influence, whom she married, much to the chagrin of her own bigoted kindred, and resided with his family until the dreadful massacre of 1641 cut off many of them, and sent most of the survivors broken-hearted to an untimely grave.

Through many calamities and bitter reverses of fortune, she had been brought to such a thorough self-acquaintance as laid her low at the foot of the Redeemer's cross, and rendered her a meet guide for the children of her only son, who with their widowed mother, dwelt in this secluded nook of their native Donegal, subsisting on the wreck of a fortune once most abundant. Letitia and Helen, the latter of whom was scarcely past the age of childhood, furnished sufficient employment for those whom they fondly designated

their two mothers; but Shane distinguished the younger widow as "the mistress," and the elder as "the lady of M'Alister," by which title she was generally known and spoken of throughout the narrow circle of their rustic acquaintance. Shane O'Connogher was a genuine Irishman from the western province, bred to arms from his infancy, and most devotedly attached to the master, whose steps he had faithfully followed. The same partial affection that led him, as a young lad, to separate from the British communion, and to embrace nominally the faith of his benefactor, inspired him with unspasmodic horror and detestation of all belonging to that party by whom the cruel murder was perpetrated. Shane was, in truth, a devotee to his political creed; and in universal, indiscriminate hatred of all who differed from him, he could not be outdone by any partisans of any cause whatsoever. His ardent fidelity was so appreciated by all the wrecks of M'Alister's house, that it secured to him immunities and privileges, approaching rather to the station of a friend than that of a domestic.

Shane had never relinquished the use of his vernacular tongue; loquacious at most times, his eloquence never flowed so freely or so rapidly, as when his thoughts found vent in his native Irish; and his frequent soliloquies in that language proved a source of so much vexation to the children, by exciting their curiosity, that they gladly became his pupils, and acquired some little knowledge of a tongue too generally as much despised among the higher classes, as it is beloved and cherished by their more humble compatriots.

Of all created beings the Lady of M'Alister possessed the largest portion of Shane's reverential regard; but he failed not to protest against her views and proceedings on some occasions; particularly in what related to her son and grandson, neither of whom she would allow to follow the profession of her husband. The former had suffered so much from the perils and privations to which his helpless infancy was exposed, that he never acquired strength of constitution; he had lived in retirement, and died of lingering decline soon after the birth of Ellen. Shane admitted that he was not formed for military life; but could by no means pardon the wrong done to the Protestant cause, by restraining Bryan from following what was certainly the early bent of his inclinations—for Bryan was truly Irish, after Shane's own fancy; manly in person, robust in constitution, warm in his affections, and buoyant in spirits as the bubble that danced upon the water. His laughing eye was sunshine to the old man's heart; and Shane had observation sufficient to discern the deep, firm energy of character which had as yet been but partially called forth; a steadiness of purpose and unflinching resolution, joined to great personal courage. The sweetness of a placid temper, rendered yet more even by the subduing influences of Divine grace, restrained the exhibition of these more vigorous traits; but Shane delighted to trace them, and loudly bewailed the successful appeals which had won on the youth's affectionate heart to concur in the wishes of his "two mothers," and to become the apprenticed assistant of a respectable merchant in Derry.

"Alone!" sighed or rather groaned the old man, when he heard that the indentures were made out, "Isn't it a big shame to plant the last of the M'Alisters behind a counter, out of the way of all the honour and glory in life?"

"Be easy, Shane dear; those things are not confined to any profession. A faithful discharge of duty is the right road to them everywhere."

"Murder! Master Bryan avoureen; is it yourself that has the face to say so? You'd get 'em as a soldier, or maybe as a sailor; but masha! who ever heard of the honour and glory of a 'Prentice Boy?' and he turned away in high disdain. As a 'prentice boy, however, the last of the M'Alisters was well satisfied to commence his modest career. The seed of Divine truth had not been vainly scattered by pious hands during his early days; it had taken deep root, it had visibly sprung up, and gave promise of a plentiful harvest. Those very traits in Bryan's character which rendered him the delight of his companions, were to himself a source of watchful solicitude; and he bowed in secret thankfulness to the wisdom which marked out for him a path where such fiery qualities stood in less apparent peril of being fanned into a flame. He had acquired that great lesson—the root of all humility—self-knowledge; and his acquaintance with the doctrines of the gospel was not merely theoretical; it was experimental, it was practical, and wrought in him a growing conformity to the Author and Finisher of his faith. He felt that much, very much, was yet wanting to purify the silver; and he patiently awaited the operation of whatsoever furnace it might please the Great Refiner to prepare for the trial of that precious metal.

Bryan had now been settled two years with his master; and his steady application to business had won many kind approvals, with frequent permission to visit cottagers in the glen. To

them his approach was ever as the returning spring after the clouds of winter; so cheerily, so enthusiastically, was he greeted in that retired nook. The object of his present excursion, however, was one of more serious import than any that had preceded it; and he lost no time in making known to the wondering little circle that surrounded the evening fire, his wish to accomplish their removal to the town of Derry.

His grandmother shook her head, and his mother declared it to be impossible.

"Nay, but let us hear his reasons," said Letitia, "for Bryan is not apt to counsel foolishly."

"They must be powerful reasons, my child, that would tempt me from this quiet retreat, to place you amid the turbulent scenes of a city, a seaport, and a garrison town."

"Dear mother," said the youth, "the dangers that you would encounter are trifling, compared with those from which you must flee. A storm is even now gathering around; and its first thunders are already rolling in deep menaces of unequivocal import. Every nook in these valleys will be explored in quest of plunder and revenge. Think you that a family so marked as ours for sufferings in the cause of truth, will escape the deadliest visitations of their hatred."

"Our family lies buried in obscurity; its name over-looked, and its history forgotten."

"Never trust to that, mother. Many a hand would yet be raised to point out the poor remains of M'Alister; and many a blade would thirst to quench its brightness in their heretic blood."

"Don't speak so, brother," said his younger sister, imploringly. "I speak as I feel, my poor Ellen; and even were it otherwise, the struggling foragers would doubtless discover your abode. What defence would be found for such a helpless household of females?"

"The defence of the Most High, young man, is as potent in the glens of Tyrone, as behind the fortresses of Derry," said the old lady.

Bryan smiled as he bent towards her, and replied, "Must I read back to my dear grandmother the lessons, by means of which she coaxed the hereditary weapon from my hand, and nailed me to an ignoble occupation, because I should not tempt the Lord, nor hazard the last hope of an expiring line?" He then more fully declared the alarming indications that had of late been given, of some hostile design on the part of those who held the great mass of the people in spiritual bondage—the Romish priesthood, whose language had assumed a character of open defiance too general and too daring to be overlooked.

"Shane was telling us strange things about it," remarked Letitia, "but my grandmother checked him."

"I did so, my child, because his misjudging zeal is apt to lead him into error; while his prejudices operate to the disadvantage of every one connected with the hostile party."

At Bryan's earnest request Shane was now summoned; and he, delighted to find the restraint taken off, gave full vent to a large collection of anecdotes and inferences, bearing on the subject under debate; of which, if some provoked a smile by their extravagant improbability, others were calculated to excite serious alarm. He concluded by advising Bryan to make a short tour through the neighboring valleys, and to judge from the result of his own inquiries.

His suggestion was adopted; and it was ascertained beyond dispute that preparations of a most threatening description were on foot, among the more fierce and lawless of the peasantry. Language was uttered from the altar and the pulpit, that could admit of but one interpretation; and instances were not wanting where the priest had added to his harangues the encouragement of his personal assistance in collecting, marshalling and exercising his flock, as for military service. In corroboration of all this, a letter followed Bryan from Derry, with further intelligence of a similar purport, collected from other quarters; and the friendly head of his establishment urged an immediate removal of the family to Derry; preferring the use of a small house in a retired part of the town, where, if obscurity were their object, they might remain almost out of the busy world as in their present retreat. These concurrent circumstances satisfied the Lady M'Alister that to reject such an interposition would be indeed presumptuous; and, as her decisions gave law to the whole household, immediate preparations were engaged in for a hasty removal, which was accomplished without much difficulty.

The little mansion allotted to the strangers stood in a retired street, on a low site, well sheltered, and of course sufficiently sombre. The narrow casements in their deep recesses, showed the thickness of walls that had braved many a stroke from the hand of time, and contrasted painfully with the airy character of their late abode, whose windows, gaily festooned with flowering shrubs, invited the broad beam of heaven to brighten the apartments. The young girls found their spirits weighed down by irresistible depression, save when their brother's

cheerful smile broke in to dispel the gloom; and the frequency of his visits did indeed almost reconcile them to the change. Their mother was more perplexed by the absence of the many conveniences which formed the pride of her department in the forsaken cottage; while the Lady sat in patient contentment, pursuing her needlework, discoursing with her family, or deeply meditating on the pages of that venerable volume, which, in its black binding with silver clasps, lay evermore within reach of her hand.

To one individual the transition was fraught with unalloyed delight. Old Shane scarcely found the winter days long enough for the pursuit in which he was constantly engaged—the insatiable quest after news. Neither his political animosities, nor his religious bigotry, lacked sympathizing encouragement from kindred spirits within the walls of Derry; while the prospect of hostilities, the critical position of public affairs, and the overpowering anxiety with which three kingdoms watched their progress, imparted an unspeakable interest to the most indifferent actions of James Stuart and William of Nassau. The latter had very recently effected a landing in England, and every rumored accession to his standard or title, wealth, and military prowess, formed matter of rapturous exultation among the zealous partisans who surrounded Shane O'Connogher.

Nor was young Bryan free from enthusiasm of the same cast. The sparkle of his eye, and the glow of his cheek, when bearing such tidings to his family, bespoke it plainly. But the feeling of personal hostility was a stranger to his compassionate bosom, and the life which he counted not dear to him in the cause of that holy faith wherein he stood, would have been as freely sacrificed to win one of its deluded persecutors from the error of his way. The sin, not the sinner, excited his abhorrence; and while against the creed of Rome he avowed the most uncompromising, the most unqualified hostility, his heart yearned over the individuals enthralled beneath her merciless sway. To implant in his young mind this important discrimination had been the indefatigable endeavor of his pious grandmother, and she had amply succeeded, by leading him to the same sacred fountain from whence she drew her own supplies of knowledge and of grace. Herself delivered from the net, she had long been habituated to examine minutely its texture; and regarding it as the mystery of iniquity, the masterpiece of Satanic wisdom, the most subtle and powerful delusion that ever triumphed over reason in the subversion of revealed truth, she marvelled not at the stubborn adherence of its victims to their blinding errors, but sought by every affectionate and persevering effort to recover them out of the snare.

"See 'Graham's History of the Siege of Derry,' a work to which the author is greatly indebted for accurate and minute information."

To be Continued.)

A Convert From Jesuitism.

A distinguished member of the Jesuit order, belonging to the oldest Roman Catholic aristocracy in Germany, Count Paul Honsbroch, brother to a well-known Ultramontane member of the imperial diet, has publicly severed his connection with the Society of Jesus in circumstances which cannot fail to cause considerable sensation in both the political and the religious world. The ex-Jesuit father intends to publish in the next number of the *Preussische Jahrbucher* a full statement of the reasons which have compelled him to renounce the order in which he has for the last thirteen years occupied a somewhat conspicuous position as a militant controversialist. A provincial paper, which claims to quote the introductory passage of Count Honsbroch's statement, gives the following as the two chief points in the results of Jesuit discipline which his experience has driven him to condemn: "It stifles and almost annihilates independence and individuality of character; it militates against and well-nigh kills the legitimate pride of nationality and sense of patriotism." Count Honsbroch does not conceal from himself that in publicly defending his action he will cause grief to many with whom he is connected by the closest ties of friendship and of blood; but he adds: "I have belonged for so many years to the Jesuit order, my name has so often been associated with it in literary warfare, that my secession, unless accompanied by an authentic declaration of the circumstances, would be an insoluble mystery, which could only give rise to false and calumnious interpretations both for myself and for the order. Though I may have to lay bare experiences and feelings of a painfully intimate character, it is a sacrifice which I feel bound to make in the cause of truth."—*English Churchman and St. James Chronicle.*

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