

"Here, Tom," said Ranahan, filling a glass, "drink this. You were not long coming from 'The Works,' and it's a smart step. I'm sure you must be through. The sweat is pouring off your face as fast as the rain from your hat. You must have run the whole way. This no lie to call you a fast fellow, this night at all events. Here, I say, drink this, it will keep you from taking a chill."

"What's the toast, Mr. Ranahan?" said he, taking the glass.

"I'll leave it to yourself, Tom; you'll make no mistake I'll warrant. 'Bad luck to the Peolers,' I suppose."

"No; by-and-by for that. But here's a successful result to them that has been watching for you, John Ranahan, for the last seven months; and he tossed it off without a curl on his lip."

"Ay, Tom," said the third, "three good men that no weather ever kept from the black rock when Mr. Ranahan wanted a night's rest in Shiradonock."

"All right, lads," said Ranahan, filling another glass; "here is both your healths, and success to Tom's toast. Indeed I don't see what fear he need now have, for I may say I am clear off. Seven or eight hours more, and I'll be aboard, and bid you all good-by."

"God grant," said Tom, "I hope the rain and storm won't spoil us. I'll fear no one can stir out in such a night; it's beginning to blow, and I doubt it will be impossible to cross the lough."

"Help yourself, man, and talk less," said Ranahan; "help yourself and give us a toast."

"All in good time, sir," replied Moran, filling a glass, and holding it to his lips. "Here, then, to the health of the peolers, lock, stock, and barrel, the feather-bed paddlers, show me the man that would face Shiradonock in that rain. 'Plugh,' he added, putting out his tongue and making an extraordinary noise—that for them, and swallowed the contents of the glass."

"Here, lads, we have another round," said Ranahan, holding the bottle between him and the light; "we may as well make a finish of it and go down to Myles." He filled the glass and handed it to Tom, who tossed it off without a word.

"Have you no toast but the one?" said Moran, holding himself, and looking at Tom until the liquor ran over. "Here's success and gratitude to the rain this night above all nights in the year, that saved us the necessity of a watch, and the drenching of a wet coat upon the black rock. Except for Mr. Ranahan's own sake, I'd say the rain continues just until he is safe across the lake, and far on the road to Killybegs."

"You have left me a bumper for the last," said Ranahan, and I'll drink it every drop. We are all safe, thanks to true good faith amongst ourselves; if we had anything like treachery to fear—oh, Tom! (slapping him upon the back, for he was next him) the Saxon could not unlock the lips or corrupt the hearts of such men as yourself and Mick here. It is beginning to blow, and that is the worst thing I see about it, for the wind is right against us to the creek beyond, two miles at least; there are but three of us, and that lug of a boat is very heavy, and the oars are short—I wish Culreavy was here, and we'd see to make off a second pair to help her through it; but I'll hold my own and have a look out that none of Moran's friends, the peolers, were on the watch—we can't be too particular or cautious; however, I don't think we have anything to fear. We will go down now to the village, we have three or four hours to rest, and we'll wait. Thanks to the rain, we may all sleep sound, and I hope the gale will not rise any higher."

"Here's success to our plans, Tom," said Ranahan rising; "it is not your fault if you fail; but before we leave this, I'll bid the glass to his lips, 'may this be your poison, or choke me, if ever I let the peolers take me inside a goal gate alive, so long as I have the use of my two hands; and if by any accident or treachery they should come upon me suddenly or unawares, and pin me, I swear that the hemp never grew that shall take the place of this black silk handkerchief—never, boys—there does not exist in the police force this moment the individual man, that being arms-length from I could not distance in clear daylight; and if it came to grips, there's not one amongst them that I could not double up like this old hat. Let the Government parade the whole force to-morrow morning, and pick out a man to meet me, I'll try him at any thing or every thing they like; I'll walk him, I'll run him, I'll jump him, I'll wrestle him, I'll box him, I'll swim him, I'll lift a weight or throw a stone or sledge with him—any or all of these I'll try their best man out of 8,000 at, and I'll stake my neck against their pardon, that I'll beat him in everything—bah, they are not the men to take John Ranahan; or, being taken, John Ranahan is not the man that could not foil them in the end. I say I'll try that with them to-morrow if they are fit, and give myself up—that's the chat."

"To be sure you would, Mr. Ranahan," said Moran, "and I'd back you in every thing."

"They have a man named O'Shaughnessy somewhere in the county Roscommon, and I'm told nothing can beat him," chimed in Tom.

"I heard of him," said Ranahan—"Frank O'Shaughnessy, the Clipper, they call him. I never met him, but I believe he is a good man—perhaps they're best."

"I saw him one day in the fair of Elphin," said Moran; "there is no doubt but he's a prime man. I saw him in the barrack-yard, and he took two of the tallest men there, and rested the stable fork upon their shoulders—he's not to say a very tall man himself, and could only just touch it with his chin. Well, he drew back from them, no farther than as it might be the breadth of this cave, and pursuing to the toe ever he laid it to. There was a hundred people upon the barrack wall saw it as well as myself."

"No matter, boys," exclaimed Ranahan; "there never was a man of the name fit to meet me at anything, and I hope I may never see the wretched fellow alongside of Frank O'Shaughnessy, the Clipper, if I don't elp him, I'm not standing here."

"You'll hardly ever meet him, if he doesn't follow you to America," said Moran, "for I reckon you all as one as this minute."

"Come, lads, let us be going down," said Ranahan, and the last drop in the bottle was drained. They then left the cave, and having turned the dangerous corner—how I know not, for Ranahan was a little over-taken in liquor—they extinguished the light, and descended towards the village.

In the meantime, I and my men were silently trading along the dark and narrow road towards the first ridge of hills in the range to the knees through the mountain streams, which crossed it in their passage to the great lake that lay in the plain below.

As we drew near the spot, the rain had almost ceased, and light speeping clouds fitted across the path and then glided away, so we came to the Red River. I could discern where the stone passage was, from the swell and rushing of the water which covered them to the depth of more than a foot, the portion above and below being from four to five feet deep, and rushing with great velocity. I could perceive, by the hopeless way in which some of our men were here looking at each other, that they thought we had come to the end of our tether.

"Well, what now, sir?" said old Treford, in half a whisper to me. "I'm afraid this is a puzzle, after all our hardish."

"I shall not stop here," I replied; "and I am certain there's not a man of the party who will not follow me."

"Not one," "not one," ran from man to man.

Determined to lead the way, I then placed one of my feet firmly upon the first stone. Norris tucked his carbine under his arm, and gave me his hand, and I advanced a step, he taking the place I had just left. Cleland then took his hand and led us to Dunbar, and Treford came next in like manner, and so on, until the men formed a sort of chain, each advancing a step as I moved forward, with the help of a good stout stick which I carried. In this way we continued, all getting over our warts, but completely drenched about our waists.

We were not now more than a hundred yards from the village, and one of the first things I perceived on entering it was the newly plastered window, in the third house I came to. I took up my position at the door, sending men to the rear, and remaining quiet until I considered all the houses in the village were set; to prevent collusion or escape. Old Constable Treford, Constable Norris and Dunbar were with me, and I knocked loudly at the door, no answer, again, again—still no answer; I then shook it rather heavily—another shake.

"Who there?" "What do you want?" said a voice.

"Open the door," I replied.

"What do you want?"

"The serena foot, till I know who you are, and what you want this hour of the night."

"If you don't, I will, and I'll shoot it more violently."

"Stop a bit, have patience, will you, and don't smash the door."

I remained quiet with my ear to the door. I heard some bustling inside, in which I thought the sound of dry straw was very manifest. After waiting a few seconds longer, I shook the door again.

"Come, come," said I, "this will not do, I'm not going to be kept here all night, and if you don't open the door this instant, I'll have it in the middle of the door, where it is? I gave a voice just inside, and at the same time I heard a hand pretending to fumble for the hasp. "I must go and look for a bit of a right-light, and I'm afieard there isn't a bit in the house," said he, and he left the door open.

"I'll stand this no longer, Treford," said I, and putting my shoulder to the door, I sent it with my whole force into the middle of the house.

"Come, light a candle," said I, "be quick."

"The serena inch candle in the house," he said.

Constable Treford, a knowing old Scotchman, came to his relief on that point. I only heard him puffing away like a bellows at a coal in the tongs. When the candle was lit, the house presented rather a disappointing appearance. A very tall man, with a sharp nose, and a pair of eyes, as blue as the middle of the floor. Three or four children, from six to ten years old, lay peeping from under an old quilt, to the left of the fireplace. To the right, upon an old bed tick stuffed with straw, lay a very old woman, who appeared to be ill, as her moans were incessant. There also appeared to be but one small room besides the kitchen in which we stood, and we searched both minutely, to no purpose.

"What is your name?" said I to the man.

"Myles Terran, your honour."

"Is there no other room in your house, for it looks much longer outside than it does within?"

"The not a one then, your honour."

"What is that oats doing there in the corner, at the old woman's head?" I continued.

"We mean to thrash it to-morrow or after, your honour, and we're keeping it near the fire to harden the grain."

"In that case," said I, "it can do it no harm to pull it down to-night."

We then took down the oats, and although Ranahan was not, as I confess I expected, standing up in the corner, all hope was not extinguished. There also appeared to be another room. I lost no time in asking further questions, but burst in, followed by Treford and Dunbar. One bed was in the far corner, which was occupied by two persons, one of whom I knew; and at the recess of the room, a woman, as she had mounted into my face, burning my forehead and temples like fire. It was Clara—the Christian name was Tom—the Tom to whom I listened so lately in the cave. There was another bed in the room, with a boarded wagon-roof, and in this lay an apparently very young man, with pale face. She had mounted into my face, burning my forehead and temples like fire. It was Clara—the Christian name was Tom—the Tom to whom I listened so lately in the cave. There was another bed in the room, with a boarded wagon-roof, and in this lay an apparently very young man, with pale face. She had mounted into my face, burning my forehead and temples like fire. It was Clara—the Christian name was Tom—the Tom to whom I listened so lately in the cave. There was another bed in the room, with a boarded wagon-roof, and in this lay an apparently very young man, with pale face.

"What is your name?" said I pushing aside the hair, and at the same time rubbing the back of my hand across her chin.

"My name is Mary," she replied, "if I half asleep; but I soon wakened her, and made her sit up to the bed."

"You forgot to shave yesterday, Mary," said I.

"No, nor to day either," was the reply.

"Are you in the habit, Mary," I continued, "of wearing this black coat and trousers?"

"I pulled them from under the bad-trowsers; and these Wellington boots to match? For if you are, you may as well put them on now. Come, Ranahan, the game is over—get up and dress yourself."

"I know not if actual disappointments and regrets did not take place of every other feeling at the moment. As to exultation or triumph, there was actually none. I knew he must be hanged, and I detested the position in which an imperative duty placed me regarding him; bound up, too, in connection with a mercenary ruffian, in whose villainy there was nothing bold, generous, or brave, and in whose hands I was the more tools to cheat out his iniquity. He had treacherously sold his friend's blood for one hundred pounds, and I had been the procurer.—To be concluded next week.

The Civil War in the States.

THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

HEAD QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, December 13, 11 P. M.

The fog began to disappear early in the morning, affording an unobstructed view of our own and the rebel positions. It being evident that the first ridge of hills in the range of the city, which the enemy had their guns posted behind, could not be carried except by a charge of infantry. General Sumner assigned that duty to General Fremont's division, which was supported by General Howard.

The troops advanced to their work at 10 minutes before 12 o'clock, at a brisk run, the enemy's guns opening on them in the very break fire, when within musket range, at the base of the ridge, our troops were met with a terrible fire from the rebel infantry, who were posted behind a stone wall, and some houses on the right of the line. This check, however, did not prevent our men from reaching a small ravine, but not cut of musket range. At this time another body of troops, notwithstanding large gaps were made in their ranks by the rebel artillery; when our men were forced to retreat, and were driven back to the first line of the rebel defence they "double quacked," and with fixed bayonets endeavored to dislodge the rebels from their hiding places. The concentrated fire of rebel artillery and infantry which our men were forced to face was too much for them, and they were called and brought back. From that time the fire was spiritedly carried on, and never ceased until after dark. Gen. Franklin, who commanded the attack on the left, met with better success. He succeeded, after several days' fighting, in driving the rebels from the ridge, and time the rebels advanced to attack him, but were handily repulsed with terrible slaughter and with a loss of between 400 and 500 prisoners, belonging to Gen. A. P. Hill's division. Gen. Franklin's movement was directed down the river, and his troops are encamped to-night not far from the Massaponox creek.

BY TELEGRAPH.

St. John, Dec. 17th.—The Federal army occupied its position at Fredericksburg on Monday night last, retreating across the Rappahannock River. The movement was conducted with the greatest secrecy, and the safety of the army brought up the rear, shortly after daylight on Tuesday morning. The pontoon bridges were then taken up, and the heavy wind and rain contributed to the success of the movement. The Federal army moved on Saturday last at 6:00 a.m. The Federal General Bayard has died of his wounds—Plymouth, N. H. is deserted, and the Federal army is now at the mouth of the Potomac. The Cabinet at Washington has been reconstituted, and General McClellan recalled to his former position as Commander of the Federal army of the Potomac. Lincoln's Emancipation proclamation as a war measure, 75 to 51.

St. John, Dec. 17, Evening.—Burnside's retrograde movement caused profound sensation in New York. The Herald, World, and Sun charge the failure on the W. Department, under the command of the Hon. Seward, in the management of the Cabinet and expelling of imbeciles and lawyers from the management of the army.—The Herald says that the retrograde movement was a step in advance, but Burnside said the move was a step in retreat. The Tribune, while regretting the disaster, sees cause of satisfaction that the army, after a year's misadventure, and that Burnside, in a safe position, may take measures for next movement. New York Commercial gives report that McClellan has been ordered to the front, and that the Federal army is now at the mouth of the Potomac. The Herald says that the retrograde movement was a step in advance, but Burnside said the move was a step in retreat. The Tribune, while regretting the disaster, sees cause of satisfaction that the army, after a year's misadventure, and that Burnside, in a safe position, may take measures for next movement. New York Commercial gives report that McClellan has been ordered to the front, and that the Federal army is now at the mouth of the Potomac.

St. John, Dec. 18th.—On Tuesday night the Confederates increased their reinforcements on the Potomac, and threw up numerous rifle pits near the river.—The Federal army is said to be in excellent condition, just as enthusiastic as previous to the late engagement.—No important movement is expected on the river without losing a man or a gun in the operation.—The correspondent of the New York Times gives the following description of the strength of the position on the Potomac: "The Confederates have a line of 10 miles, exposed to the fire of sharpshooters stationed behind a heavy stone wall, running along the base of the ridge—to a double row of rifle pits, and a line of heavy batteries, which are in infantry concealed behind—to plunging fire of batteries of a lower range—to double enfilading fire from canon on the left. Sebastopol was not half so strong."—The same correspondent also says that the Confederates acted with their usual wisdom, letting the Federals into Fredericksburg so easily in order to throw them off their guard. It was the worst trap, he adds, ever laid for the Federals. The correspondent says that the Confederates were not only successful in their retreat, but that they were able to cross a bare plain for a third of a mile, exposed to the fire of sharpshooters stationed behind a heavy stone wall, running along the base of the ridge—to a double row of rifle pits, and a line of heavy batteries, which are in infantry concealed behind—to plunging fire of batteries of a lower range—to double enfilading fire from canon on the left. Sebastopol was not half so strong."—The same correspondent also says that the Confederates acted with their usual wisdom, letting the Federals into Fredericksburg so easily in order to throw them off their guard. 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