SLAIN BY THE DOONE'S.

CHAPTER IV.

Master Pring was not much of a man to talk. But for power of thought he was considered equal to any pair of other men, and superior, of course, to all womankind. Moreover, he had seen a good deal of fighting, not among outlaws, but fine soldiers well skilled in the proper style of it. So that it was impossible for him to think very highly of the Doones. Gentlemen they might be, he said, and therefore by nature well qualified to fight. But where could they have learned any discipline, any tactics, any knowledge of formation, or even any skill of sword or firearms? "Tush, there was his own son, Bob, now serving under Capt. Purvis, as fine a young trooper as ever drew sword, and perhaps on his way at this very moment, under orders from the Lord Lieutenant, to rid the country of that pestilent race. Ah, ah! We soon shall see!"

And, in truth, we did see him, even sooner than his own dear mother had expected, and long before his father wanted him, though he loved him so much in his absence. For I heard a deep voice in the kitchen one night (before I was prepared for such things, by making a backway out of my bedroom), and, thinking it best to know the worst, went out to ask what was doing there.

A young man was sitting upon the table, accounting too little of our house, yet showing no great readiness to boast, only to let us know who he was. He had a fine head of curly hair, and spoke with a firm conviction that there was much inside it. "Father, you have possessed small opportunity of seeing how we do things now. Mother is not to be blamed for thinking that we are in front of what used to be. What do we care how the country lies? We have heard all this stuff up at Oare. If there are bogs, we shall timber them.. If there are rocks we shall blow them up. If there are caves we shall fire down them. The moment we get our guns into position——"

"Hush, Bob, hush! Here is your master's daughter. Not the interlopers you put up with, but your real master, on whose property you were born. Is that the position for your guns?"

Being thus rebuked by his father, who was a very faithful-minded man, Robert Pring shuffled his long boots down and made me a low salutation. But, having paid little attention to the things other people were full of, I left the young man to convince his parents, and he soon was successful with his mother.

Two, or it might have been three, days after this a great noise arose in the morning. I was dusting my father's books, which lay open just as he had left them. There was "Barker's Delight" and "Isaac Walton," and the "Secrets of Angling, by J. D.," and some notes of his own about making of flies; also fishhooks made of Spanish steel, and long hairs pulled from the tail of a gray horse, with spindles and bits of quill for plaiting them. So proud and so pleased had he been with these trifles, after the clamor and clash of life, that tears came into my eyes once more as I thought of his tranquil and amiable ways.

"'Tis a wrong thing altogether to my mind!" cried Deborah Pring, running in to me. "They Doones was established afore we come, and why not let them bide upon their own land? They treated poor master amiss, beyond denial; and never will I forgive them for it. All the same, he was catching what belonged to them, meaning for the best, no doubt, because he was so righteous. And having such courage, he killed one, or perhaps two; though I never could have thought so much of that old knife. But ever since that they have been good, Miss Sillie, never even coming anigh us; and I don't believe half of the tales about them.

All this was new to me; for if anybody had cried shame and death upon that wicked horde it was Deborah Pring, who was talking to me thus! I looked at her with wonder, suspecting, for the moment, that the venerable councilor—who was clever enough to make a cow forget her calf—might have paid her a visit while I was away. But very soon the reason of the change appeared.

"Who hath taken command of the attack?" she asked, as if no one would believe the answer; "not Capt. Purvis, as ought to have been, nor even Capt. Dallas, of Devon, but Spy Stickles, by royal warrant—the man that hath been up to Oare so long! And my son Robert, who hath come down to help to train them, and understandeth canon guns——"

"Capt. Purvis? I seem to know that name very well. I have often heard it from my father. And your son under him! Why, Deborah, what are you hiding from me?"

Now, good Mrs. Pring was beginning to forget, or rather had never borne properly in mind, that I was the head of the household now, and entitled to know everything, and to be asked about it. But people who desire to have this done should insist upon it at the outset, which I had not been in proper state to do. So that she made quite a grievance of it, when I would not be treated as a helpless child. However, I soon put a stop to that, and discovered to my surprise much more than could be imagined.

And before I could say even half of what I thought a great noise arose in the hollow of the hills, and came along the valleys, like the blowing of a wind that had picked up the roaring of mankind upon its way. Perhaps greater noise had never risen upon the moor; and the cattle, and the quiet sheep, and even the wild deer came bounding from unsheltered places into any offering of branches, or of other haven from the turbulence of men. And then a gray fog rolled down the valley, and Deborah said it was cannon smoke, following the river course; but to me it seemed only the usual thickness of the air when the clouds hang low. Thomas Pring was gone, as behooved an ancient warrior, to see how his successors did things, and the boy Dick Hutchings had begged leave to sit in a tree and watch the smoke. Deborah and I were left alone, and a long and anxious day we had.

At last the wood-pigeons had stopped their cooing, which they kept up for hours, when the weather matched the light, and there was not a tree that could tell its own shadow, and we were contented with the gentle sounds that come through a forest when it falls asleep, and Deborah Pring, who had taken a motherly tendency toward me now, as if to make up for my father, was sitting in the porch with my hands in her lap, and telling me how to behave henceforth, as if the whole world depended upon that, when we heard a swishing sound as of branches thrust aside, and then a low moan that went straight to my heart, as I thought of my father when he took the blow of death.

"My son, my Bob, my eldest boy!" cried Mistress Pring, jumping up and falling into my arms, like a pillow full of wire, for she insisted upon her figure still. But before I could do anything to help her——

"Hit her on the back, ma'am; hit her hard upon the back. That is what always brings mother round," was shouted, as I might say, into my ear by the young man whom she was lamenting.

"Shut thy trap, Braggadose. To whom art thou speaking? Pretty much thou hast learnt of war to come and give lessons to thy father! Mistress Sylvia, it is for thee to speak. Nothing would satisfy this young sprignal but to bring his beaten Captain here, for the sake of mother's management. I told un that you would never take him in, for his father has taken in you pretty well! Capt. Purvis of the Somerset, I know not what—for the regiments now be all upside down. Raggiments is the proper name for them. Very like he be dead by this time, and better die out of doors than in. Take un away, Bob. No hospital here!"

"Thomas Pring, who are you," I said, for the sound of another low groan came through me, "to give orders to your master's daughter? If you bring not the poor wounded gentleman in, you shall never come through this door yourself."

"Ha, old Hunks, I told thee so!"

The young man who spoke raised his hat to me, and I saw that he had a scarlet plume, such as Marwood de Wichehalse gloried in. "In with thee, and stretch him that he may die straight. I am off to Southmolton for Cutcliff Lane, who can make a furze-faggot bloom again. My filly can make a land-yard in a mile to Tom Faggus and his Winnie. But mind one thing, all of you; it was none of us that shot the Captain, but his own good men. Farewell, Mistress Sylvia!" With these words he made me a very low bow and set off for his horse at the corner of the woods—as reckless a gallant as ever broke hearts, and those of his own kin foremost; yet himself so kind and loving.

CHAPTER. V.

Capt. Purvis, now brought to the Warren in this sad condition, had not been shot by his own men, as the dashing Marwood de Wichehalse said; neither was it true to say that he had been shot by anyone. What happened to him was simply this: While behaving with the utmost gallantry and encouraging the militia of Somerset, whose uniforms were faced with yellow, he received in his chest a terrific blow from the bottom of a bottle. This had been discharged from a culverin on the opposite side of the valley by the brave but impetuous sons of Devon, who wore the red facings, and had taken umbrage at a pure mistake on the part of their excellent friends and neighbors, the loyal band of Somerset. Either brigade had three culverins, and never having seen such things before, as was natural with good farmers' sons, the felt it a compliment to themselves to be intrusted with such danger, and resolved to make the most of it. However, when they tried to make them go, with the help of a good many horses, upon places that had no roads for war, and even no sort of roads at all, the difficulty was beyond them. But a clever blacksmith near Malmesford, who had better, as it proved, have stuck to the plow, persuaded them that he knew all about it, and would bring their guns to bear, if they let him have his way. So they took the long tubes from their carriages and lashed the rollers of barked oak under them, and with stout ropes and great power of swearing, dragged them into the proper place to overwhelm the Doones.

Here they mounted their guns upon cider barrels, with allowance of roll for recoil, and charged them to the very best of their knowledge, and pointed them as nearly as they could guess at the dwellings of the outlaws in the glen; three cannons on the north were of Somerset, and three on the south were of Devonshire, but these latter had no balls of metal, only anything round they could pick up. Col. Stickles was in command by virtue of his royal warrant, and his plan was to make his chief assault in company with some chosen men, including his host, young Farmer Ridd, at the head of the valley where the chief entrance was, while the trainbands pounded away on either side. And perhaps this would have succeeded well, except for a little mistake in firing, for which the enemy alone could be blamed with justice. For while Capt. Purvis was behind the line rallying a few men who showed fear, and not expecting any combat yet, because Devonshire was not ready, an elderly gentleman of great authority appeared among the bombardiers. On his breast he wore a badge of office, and in his hat a noble plume of the sea eagle, and he handed his horse to a man in red clothes.

"Just in time," he shouted, "and the Lord be thankful for that! By order of His Majesty I take supreme command. Ha, and high time, too, for it! You idiots, where are you pointing your guns? What allowance have you made for windage? Why, at that elevation you'll shoot yourselves. Up with your muzzles, you yellow jackanapes! Down on your bellies! Hand me the linstock! By the Lord, you don't even know how to touch them off!"

The soldiers were abashed at his rebukes and glad to lie down on their breasts for fear of the powder on their yellow facings. And thus they were shaken by three great roars and wrapped in a cloud of streaky smoke. When this had cleared off and they stood up, lo! the houses of the Doones were the same as before, but a great shriek arose on the opposite bank, and two good horses lay on the ground; and the red men were stamping about and some crossing their arms and some running for their lives, and the bravest of them stooping over one another. Then, as Capt. Purvis rushed up in great wrath, shouting, "What the devil do you mean by this?" another great roar arose from across the valley, and he was lying flat and two other fine fellows were rolling in a furze bush without knowledge of it. But of the General and his horse there was no longer any token.

This was the matter that lay so heavily on the breast of Capt. Purvis, sadly crushed as it was already by the spiteful stroke bitterly intended for him. His own men had meant no harm whatever unless to the proper enemy, although they appear to have been deluded by a subtle device of the councilor, for which, on the other hand, none may blame him. But those red-faced men, without any enquiry, turned the muzzles of their guns upon Somerset, and the injustice rankled for a generation between two equally honest counties. Happily, they did not fight it out, through scarcity of ammunition as well as their mutual desire to go home and attend to their harvest business.

But Anthony Purvis, now our guest and patient, became very difficult to manage; not only because of his three broken ribs, but the lowness of the heart inside them. Dr. Cutcliffe Lane, a most cheerful man from that cheerful town of Southmolton, was able (with the help of providence), to make the bones grow again, without much anger, into their own embraces. It is useless, however, for the body to pretend that it is doing wonders on its own account, and rejoicing and holiday making, when the thing that sits inside it, and holds the whip, keeps down upon the slouch and is out of sorts. And truly this was the case just now with the soul of Capt. Purvis. Deborah Pring did her very best, and was in and out of his room every minute, and very often, it seemed to me, to run him down when he deserved it not, on purpose that I might be started to run him up. But nothing of that sort told at all, according to her intention. I kept myself very much to myself, feeling that my nature was too kind, and asking, at some little question of behavior, what sort of returns my father had obtained for supposing other people as good as himself.

Moreover, it seemed an impossible thing that such a brave warrior, and a rich man, too—for his father, Sir Geoffrey, was in full possession now of all the great property that belonged by right to us—that an officer who should have been in command of this fine expedition, if he had his dues, could be either the worse or the better of his wound, according to his glimpses of a simple maid like me. It was useless for Deborah Pring, or even Dr. Cutcliffe Lane himself to go on as they did about love at first sight, and the rising of the heart when the ribs were broken, and a quantity of other stuff too foolish to repeat. "I am neither a plaster nor a poultice," I replied to myself, for I would not be too cross to them—and, beyond a little peep at him every afternoon, I kept out of sight of Capt. Purvis.

But these things made it very hard for me to be quite sure how to conduct myself, without father and mother to help me, and with Mistress Pring, who had always been such a landmark, becoming no more than a vane for the wind to blow upon as it listed; or, perhaps, as she listed to go with it. And remembering how she used to speak of the people who had ousted us, I told her that I could not make it out. Things were in this condition, and Capt. Purvis, as it seemed to me, quite fit to go and make war again upon some of his Majesty's subjects, when a thing, altogether out of reason, or even of civilization, happened; and people who live in lawful parts will accuse me of caring too little for the truth. But even before that came about, something less unreasonable—but still unexpected—befell me. To wit: I received through Mistress Pring an offer of marriage, immediate and pressing, from Capt. Anthony Purvis! He must have been sadly confused by that blow on his heart to think mine so tender, or that this was the way to deal with it, though later explanations proved that Deborah, if she had been just, would have taken the whole reproach upon herself. The Captain could scarcely have seen me, I believe, more than half a dozen times to speak of; and generally he had shut his eyes, gentle as they were and beautiful, not only to make me feel less afraid, but to fill me with pity for his weakness. Having no knowledge of mankind yet, I was touched to the brink of tears at first, until when the tray came out of his room soon after one of these pitiful moments it was plain to the youngest comprehension that the sick man had left very little upon a shoulder of Exmoor mutton and nothing in a bowl of thick union sauce.

For that I would be the last to blame him, and, being his hostess, I was glad to find it so. But Deborah played a most double-minded part; leading him to believe that now she was father and mother in one to me, while to me she went on as if I was most headstrong and certain to go against anything she said, though for her part she never said anything. Nevertheless he made a great mistake, as men always do, about our ways, and having some sense of what is right I said: "Let me hear no more of Capt. Purvis."

This forced him to leave us; which he might have done, for aught I could see to the contrary, a full week before he departed. He behaved very well when he said good-by—for I could not deny him that occasion—and perhaps, if he had not assured me so much of his everlasting gratitude I should have felt surer of deserving it. Perhaps I was a little disappointed also, had he expressed no anxiety at leaving our cottage so much at the mercy of turbulent and triumphant outlaws. But it was not for me to speak of that; and when I knew the reason of his silence it resounded tenfold to his credit. Nothing, however, vexed me so much as what Deborah Pring said afterward—that he could not help feeling in the sadness of his heart that I had behaved in that manner to him just because his father was in possession of our rightful home and property. I was not so small as that; and if he did suppose it there must have been some fault on my part, for his nature was good to everybody, and perhaps all the better for not descending through too many high generations.

There is nothing more strange than the way things work in the mind of a woman, when left alone, to doubt about her own behavior. With men it can scarcely be so cruel because they can always convince themselves that they did their best; and if it fail they can throw the fault upon Providence or bad luck, or something outside their own power. But we seem always to be denied this happy style of thinking, and cannot put aside what comes into our hearts more quickly and has less stir of outward things to lead it away and to brighten it. So that I fell into sad, low spirits; and the glory of the year began to wane, and the forest grew more and more lonesome

(To Be Continued.)

THE LATEST FROM PITCAIRN.

A Woman Visitor Says the Island is a Paradise and Reports All Well There.

When the British ship Comliebank sailed from Portland, Ore., last winter, bound for England, Capt. Smith carried with him a large quantity of clothing, books, hardware, etc., for the lonely Pitcairn Islanders. These were collected by Dr. R. B. Knight, of Portland, from merchants and others who take an interest in the inhabitants of Pitcairn. The Comliebank reached England a short time ago, and Capt. Smith has written Dr. Knight an account of the passage, enclosing a letter from Mrs. Smith, who accompanied her husband on the voyage, describing the visit to the island. Mrs. Smith writes:

"In true jack tar fashion I climbed down the side of the Comliebank and landed without mishap in the islanders' boat, which leaked like a basket. There were ten men in the boat, and I enjoyed the row of two miles to the island. When we neared the shore the surf was very rough, washing on the rocks, and it looked to me a rather dangerous undertaking to try to take so frail a craft as their boat into waters so furious. But nothing happened to me worse than a little wetting, which I scarcely noticed at the time, and entirely forgot when one of the natives picked me up in his arms and carried me onto the beach, the boat not being close enough to allow me to step out of it on dry land.

"The islanders had been watching the boat returning, and, seeing a lady in it, sent a reception committee to bid me welcome. It consisted of one barefooted damsel, with a bunch of flowers, and several small children ranging in years from 2 to 6. They, too, presented flowers, which had been plucked by the wayside as they hastened to welcome me. As soon as the first greetings were over the girl took my arm and assisted me to climb a very steep hill up to the settlement.

"The air was very heavy with the perfume of beautiful flowers and orange blossoms. Cultivated flowers are in great profusion all over the island, and oranges, lemons, limes, cocoanut, guava, and bread fruit trees grow in one great mass, no attempt being made to keep them separate. The island is divided into avenues, which are beautifully clean, no leaves or twigs to be seen on them, which is quite noticeable to a stranger, seeing there is so much foliage.

THE HEAD MAN,

Mr. McCoy, who keeps the lines of government in his own hands, and the islanders look up to him as their adviser and director, has the avenues swept every Friday, the work being done by the children.

"There are only 130 souls on the island at present, two-thirds of these being children. The islanders rise in the morning at 6 o'clock, when the labors of the day commence with the ringing of the church bell, and all hands assemble to ask the Supreme Ruler for a blessing on the labor of the day. They partake of their frugal meals and then labor until noon in building houses or whatever may be to do for the good of the island. Then from labor to refreshment for one hour, when all hands go to school—men, women, and children—until 4 p. m. Then two hours are devoted to cultivating their portion of land. They grow Irish potatoes, sweet ones, pumpkins, beets, beans, arrowroot, onions, lettuce, etc. I also saw pineapples.

"I saw the graves of John Adams and his wife. John has a headstone, his wife none. She departed from all labors of an earthly nature some years ere John was called upon to go aloft, and, according to the dates on the stone, he has now been dead seventy-five years. A new schoolhouse was in course of erection at the time of my visit, and they were at a standstill for nails, so our arrival with the keg of assorted sizes was providential. I dined at the McCoys' house on chicken soup and stewed chicken, nicely cooked, with rice and tomatoes, bread fruit, sweet potatoes, lemonade, and oranges. I forgot to say they cultivate sugar cane, and I saw an old woman boiling a large caldron of syrup and at dinner had some of it.

"My three hours on the island came to an end all too soon. I would have lingered longer, and I left it with regret. The whole population escorted me to the boat. Many of them kissed me farewell and told me to soon return, and if I would only stay they would keep me for a year or until such time as the ship returned. Time being up for me to return, I was again carried into the boat and was safely landed on board my floating home. And so ended a treat never to be forgotten so long as memory lasts. It is a paradise on earth without a doubt, and I envy them their perfect lives of harmony and the peaceful quiet that ever surrounds their isolated dwelling."

A New German Varnish.

A varnish has been patented in Germany for foundry patterns and machinery which, it is claimed, dries as soon as it is put on, gives the pattern a smooth surface, thus insuring an easy slip of the mold, and which prevents the patterns from warping, shrinking or swelling, and it is quite impervious to moisture. The varnish is prepared in the following manner: Thirty pounds of shellac, 10 pounds manilla copal and 10 pounds of Zanzibar copal are placed in a vessel which is heated externally by steam and stirred up during four to six hours. One hundred and fifty parts of the finest potato spirit are added, and the whole is heated for four hours to 870 degrees Centigrade. This liquid is dyed by the addition of orange color, and can then be used for painting the patterns. When used for painting and glazing machinery it consists of 35 pounds of shellac, 5 pounds of Manilla copal, 10 pounds of Zanzibar copal of 150 pounds of spirits.

THE WORLD'S RIVERS.

Some Items About Great and Historic Rivers Which May Interest You.

The Tigris is 1,150 miles long.

The Tiber is only 230 miles long.

The world-famous Orontes is only 240 miles long.

The Zambeze, in South Africa is 1,800 miles in length.

Slow rivers flow at the rate of three to seven miles an hour.

Every ancient city of note was located on or near the sea or a river.

The Hudson River, from its mouth to the lakes, is 400 miles in length.

For over 1,200 miles the Nile does not receive a single tributary stream.

The Ganges is 1,570 miles long and drains an area of 750,000 square miles.

The Mississippi and its tributaries drain an area of 2,000,000 square miles.

The River Jordan has its origin in one of the largest springs in the world.

The branches of the Mississippi have an aggregate length of 15,000 miles.

The Irtish, in Siberia, is 2,200 miles in length, and drains 600,000 miles of territory.

The most extensive protective river works in Europe are at the mouth of the Danube.

The Nile, from its delta to the great lakes of Central Africa, is over 4,000 miles in length.

During a single flood of the Yang-tse-Kiany, in China, 6,00,000 persons were drowned.

The Rhine is only 960 miles long, but drains a territory nearly double the area of Texas.

The Thames of England is 220 miles long. The river of the same name in Canada is 160.

The Potomac River is inly 500 miles long, and in its lower course is rather an estuary than a stream.

The Mississippi, at the point where it flows out of Lake Itaska, is 10 feet wide and 18 inches deep.

The Columbia River of Canada is 1,400 miles in length; the stream of the same name in Oregon is 600.

The British Islands are better provided with rivers than any other country of the same size on the globe.

The Euphrates is termed in the East "The Royal River," from the fact that 672 kings have reigned on its banks.

The Seine is 470 miles in length, and during the lower part of its course frequently attains a width of a mile.

The River Dee in Scotland has had more poems written in its honor than any other stream on the British Isle.

Australia has no rivers of any consequence. The interior of this vast continent is almost destitute of water.

The Appalachicola River, in Florida, is only 100 miles long, but it has a name out of all proportion to its length.

All the rivers which flow into the Arctic Ocean are frozen solidly to the bottom during about six months in every year.

The Parana, of Brazil and Argentine, is 2,200 miles in length, and after the Amazon is the largest river in South America.

The Orinoco is only 1,600 miles in length, but is much larger than might be supposed, owing to the heavy rains of the tropics.

The Amazon is 3,944 miles in length, rising within seventy miles of the Pacific Ocean and flowing clear across the continent.

The Amoor, the great stream of China and Siberia, is 1,500 miles in length, but for nearly nine months in the year is ice-bound.

The Hoangho, or Yellow River, of China, is 2,800 miles in length and drains a territory equal to one-third the area of the United States.

The Yang-tse-Kiang River of China is 3,000 miles long, and navigable for good-sized vessels for more than two-thirds of that distance.

The Volga is the great river of Russia, having a length of 2,300 miles and draining nearly one-half the European dominions of the Czar.

The St. Lawrence River is only 775 miles long, but if the lake system be also taken into account its total length will exceed 2,000 miles.

The San Francisco, a river of Brazil, is 1,400 miles in length, and was so called because it was discovered on the feast day of St. Francis.

The Mackenzie, the principal river of the Dominion, is 2,500 miles in length and drains an area equal to one-half of the United States.

The Euphrates is 1,780 miles in length. Most of its lower course is through a sandy desert, and for several hundred miles it has no tributaries.

The ancient historians say that over 1,000 miles of the Lower Nile were protected by artificial embankments and other works of engineering skill.

The River Thames at London is from a quarter to a half mile wide, but bears on its bosom more commerce than any other stream in the world.

The Indus, the second sacred river of India, is 1,700 miles long. Its waters have always been considered almost as holy as those of the Ganges.

River water purifies itself. A few miles below a large city no trace of impure matter can be found in the waters of a river into which its sewers empty.

The word menader comes from the river of the same name, whose course was so devious that it furnished nearly every modern language with a new word.

The floods of the Nile are so regular in their coming that for hundreds of years they have not varied ten days in the date for their arrival at a given point.

A German authority states that from the mouth to the source of the Rhine 725 castles, formerly the homes of warlike chiefs, are to be found overlooking its waters.

Somewhat Encouraging.

No, Clara, I don't know when I shall be earning enough to ask you to share it. The prospect is discouraging. At present I couldn't buy butter to put on our bread.

Do you know, George, that's so funny. I don't really care for butter—not so very much.

Accidents Will Happen.

Waiter, I found an oyster in this oyster soup.

It shall not happen again sir.