



Under the Hoke

AND OTHER TALES.

BY

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AUTHOR OF "PRIEST AND NUN," "ALMOST A PRIEST," "ALMOST A NUN," ETC.

"The Eternal Protest of the Church of Christ against the Church of Rome."

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"Be ye not unequally yoked together."

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"Woe unto you, for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

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"While they promise them liberty, they are themselves the servants of corruption."

Under the Yoke.

CHAPTER I.

THE INTERRUPTED WEDDING.

“FURTHERMORE, my children, in entering into the holy estate of matrimony, you solemnly promise, as becomes good Christians, to train up whatever offspring shall be given you in all the tenets and rites of the Holy Catholic Church.”

The full tones of the Very Reverend Father Garren, slightly tinged with Irish brogue, rolled through the cathedral. The fair cheek of the kneeling bride flushed a deeper crimson through the drooping folds of her vail, as she replied: “I do;” but the voice of the

groom, Brian Waring, was decided as that of the officiating priest, as he made answer: "No, that I *do not* promise."

The bride's rejoicing aunt gave a little scream, the four bridesmaids and the four groomsmen rustled amazement; there was an audible stir and catch of breath among all the fashionable witnesses of the fashionable wedding. Beautiful Clare Bently, the bride, drew a little from Brian's side, and turned her head. The priest spoke promptly:

"My son, do I understand you? Do you refuse the pledge to train your children in the Catholic faith of God?"

"Proceed with the ceremony, father, and let that pass. You are asking a promise which you have no right to ask; which I can not give."

"Then I proceed no further!" cried the priest; "I have a *right* to ask this question. The Church regulates the conditions of marriage, and I *INSIST* upon this promise."

Brian Waring sprung from his knees with much greater alacrity than he had bent upon them. He had shrugged his shoulders as he assumed that lowly position for the first time since juvenile games of marbles, or the far-off early days, when some good nurse may have taught him the legitimate orison.

"Reverend sir," said Brian, giving his hand to the bride and lifting her to her feet, "I came here to be married to this lady. It becomes you to receive our vows to be true and tender to each other. But to go beyond this, and to demand how I may exercise a new relationship to other unknown beings, is to pass the limits my self-respect assigns you. I have promised you before these witnesses to treat this lady with all faithfulness and courtesy; I beg you conclude this ceremony and receive your fee."

The last words were, in a whisper, but the priest was not to be moved by a hundred dollar bill.

"The Church must conserve the interests of her unborn children. She is their mother by nature and by grace. Unless you promise to train your children as Catholics, this ceremony shall never be concluded."

The bride and her four most intimate friends were blushing fearfully; the decorous groomsmen stroked their mustaches and smoothed their glossy locks to the destruction of their new gloves, as they endeavored to conceal their smiles, while Mrs. James Bently entered into an excited calculation of the cost of the trousseau and the amount expended on the magnificent dresses of the bride and her at-

tendants, and here was an interrupted wedding! Brian turned his back upon the angry priest.

"Beloved Clare," he said, "we are in point of fact married, having made our promises to each other before these witnesses. But as no voice has duly pronounced us man and wife we will return to your uncle's, where your Cousin Ben will speedily bring some one to complete the ceremony."

Ben, groomsman No. 2, hearing himself thus mentioned, stepped forward.

Clare looked up earnestly: "Brian! I can be married by no one but a Catholic priest."

"By any one you like, Clare, be it even a Jewish Rabbi, or a Mohammedan Mufti!"

Father Garren plucked Mr. Waring's sleeve, crying hoarsely: "Marriage celebrated under other auspices than those of the Holy Catholic Church is no marriage; it is a farce and a sacrilege; it is a shameless adultery, and its offspring are illegitimate."

Brian's face flushed hotly, and he exclaimed wrathfully: "Silence, sir! I am the child of what you are pleased to call heretical parents."

"Daughter Clare Bently," said Father Garren, "I forbid you ever to marry this rash and wicked heretic."

By this time Clare Bently had endured as much as was possible. She gave a hysterical cry, and threw herself into the arms of her uncle, and was at once taken out to the carriage, accompanied by her aunt and bridesmaids. Brian stood with the first groomsman, Alban Rowe. The Very Reverend Father, the assisting priests, the choir boys, and the acolytes trooped away; the boys whispering in high glee, as they crowded through the door on the epistle side of the altar. Mr. James Bently and his son, Ben, came back for a hurried conference with the dismayed groom; and then invited the guests to the wedding breakfast on the following day, before which time the marriage, for which it was manifestly impossible to make an exact appointment, would have been celebrated in the presence of the attendants and the immediate family of the bride.

"Mr. Bently," said Brian Waring, as the gentlemen stood near their carriages on the sidewalk, "You know that it was no lack of affection or deference to Clare that has caused this action on my part. But I could not retain my self-respect or my manhood, if I sold my future liberty to a priest, by making vows concerning a relationship the desires and feelings of which I can not now imagine."

"If Father Leroy," replied Mr. James Bently, "had not fallen ill, and had officiated as we expected, all would have gone right. This Father Garren is new to this country, and disposed to be domineering. For my part, I would have my niece married by any person legally qualified to perform the ceremony; but women, you know, are different, and with Clare it must be priest or nobody. Clare is very much devoted to her religion—" For the first time in his life Brian winced at a reference to Clare's religion. Mr. Bently continued: "My wife and Clare would never consent to anything but the solemnization of this marriage here in the cathedral. We must see Father Leroy. I will send and make an appointment for us, at his house, at three, and we will have this affair talked over. I will drive round for you. I want to see Clare; take care of her for me, until then."

Mr. Waring stepped into the carriage which was to have carried himself and his *wife* to a home, and lonely, angry, and disappointed, drove off to the St. Nicholas. Even among the well-bred functionaries of this hotel, from the proprietor to the youngest waiter, there was a start and look of amazement when the joyous bridegroom, who had gone off that morning, came home in this fashion, and

went to his room with a moody face. And well might Brian Waring be moody; the curse of his life had now first spoken in audible words—an iron that should fester and corrode until his heart ceased to beat had but now entered into that heart; he had felt the thorns with the blossoms of his marriage crown. All this he did not apprehend; he believed the present storm one that would speedily pass away. A great problem of independence or of servility was presented to him, and he sat down to consider it. Our friend was an extreme type of that Americanism that revolts at domination and interference, and has only one terror—that of being under bondage to—priestcraft. Of a high imperious temper, he was filled with indignation at the assumption and overbearing of the priest; and his national pride resented the dictation of the Milesian autocrat.

We can not make out Brian better than he was, and we grieve to say that a *hatred* of Father Garren in particular, and of priests in general, took possession of his soul. Besides indulging this reprehensible feeling, Brian, pacing up and down his room in fierce excitement, exhibited another of the idiosyncrasies of the unconverted soul, and swore vehemently; and having begun by calling the

very Rev. Father after the humblest of quadrupeds, concluded by consigning him to the constant society of a being improper to mention before ears polite. At this stage of his history Brian Waring was certainly not a Christian gentleman. A man of education, fashion, and fortune; a man of business probity and prudence, he called himself too *liberal* to be chained to a creed, and considered it the part of a man of mind to hold himself superior to piety.

While Brian Waring was fuming and raging in his hotel, and the family of James Bently were in confusion, Father Garren divested himself of the festive paraphernalia, wherein he had prepared to celebrate a wedding in high life, and went in hot haste to Father Leroy, feeling while he went certain severe twinges in the lower region of the heart—that lying nighest the pocket—occasioned by a vacuum that should have been filled by the marriage fee. Arriving at No. 19—Sixteenth Street, the irate *father* tramped noisily up stairs, and burst into the luxurious bed-chamber of the invalid priest. Lying wearily back in an easy chair, his pale, thin face touched with a ruddy hue, by the fire blazing before him, Father Leroy was finding, perchance, treasure-trove of miters, robes and

scarlet hats in the glowing coals. The charge of a vast congregation in a great city, and the painful efforts to hold his own in a mighty throng of struggling priests, each fiercely battling for pre-eminence, had written deep care-lines on the sick man's cheek and brow, and bleached the thin locks hanging about his well-made head. In the years of toil and contest since he had entered priestly orders, Father Leroy had learned the wisdom of the serpent. Indeed so thoroughly had he studied his part in life, that he was the same hero to himself in private that he appeared in public. His calm was never outwardly broken; the fixedness of his purpose never relaxed—to sum up all in a breath, we have only to say that Father Leroy's housekeeper and scullion venerated him as entirely as did any member of his flock. He never descended from his pinnacle even at home.

"Back from the wedding so soon?" he asked, as Father Garren dashed into the room; then looking up at the flushed face and blazing eyes of his guest, he demanded, "What has happened?"

"Nothing but that I have stopped the ceremony, and refused to marry a daughter of the Church to a vile, heretical, obstinate infidel."

"Stopped the ceremony! interrupted *Clare*

Bently's wedding!" cried Father Leroy, aghast.

"I have that," said Priest Garren, vauntingly. "I find the base deceiver has not become a Catholic Christian; he has not confessed, nor taken the sacrament, and would not promise to train up his children in the Holy Church."

"All these were matters which you should not have inquired into. We were to let them pass."

"You must be far gone in heresy to talk of letting such monstrous enormities pass. The fellow must submit to the Church, or give up his bride—that's fixed."

"I promise you he will not do either."

"He must; for I have forbidden her to marry him. If he won't yield, we'll find the girl some good Catholic husband, and tie the knot."

"That might do in Ireland, or France, but not in this country. A pretty muddle you've made of this wedding, and I wish I had gone myself. Sit down here, and let me explain matters to you. Brian Waring is a great catch, and not to be lightly yielded up by any family. This girl Clare is a portionless orphan, and her aunt and uncle are delighted at the prospect of such a match for her. James Bently is rich, but his family is abso-

lutely innumerable. It really seems to me as if it is like that of our famous German count, who had seventy-five daughters christened Elizabeth and seventy-five sons christened John. I truly think I have baptized more Bentlys than all other children in the congregation together."

At this view Father Garren relaxed a little from his angry gravity, and smiled.

"Under these circumstances," said the Rev. Leroy, "Bently can not give his niece property, and is glad to have her well provided for by marriage with a rich man. Mrs. Bently's girls are some of them growing up; and their mother is naturally anxious to get the lovely niece off her hands. You may rest assured that Bently will never lose Brian Waring, and if we won't marry them somebody else will."

"Do you tell me that a member of the Holy Church sets so little value on her marriage law?"

"I can easily tell you what sort of a member James Bently is. He comes to church, pays us money, sends his children to our schools, and that is the best we can do with him. He would hoot at the idea of confession, and as a consequence he hasn't taken sacrament since he was twenty; but as long

as he is counted a Catholic, and don't help the other side, we have to rest contented."

Father Garren's lower jaw had fallen, and his eyes were nearly starting out of his head with horror at this revelation of concession; the consternation of young Hamlet at the appearance of the paternal specter was not worth a consideration in comparison with the agonizing terror of the Celtic priest.

"Such monstrous wickedness is your own fault!" he cried, passionately. "I'd put the screws down on him until he was reduced to obedience!"

"It couldn't be done with a rich American. The *authority* game serves very well with women and the ignorant—we can keep them down. But the sons of aspiring Americans, Catholic or not, are educated in secular schools and the learned institutions of the land, else they would not be capable of holding their own, or advancing to preferment—they imbibe thus liberal notions, and we have to wink at this and be content with their dying on good terms with the Church. Still he that is not against us is for us. We get the money, the wives, the children of these men. If we had been hard on Bently he would have left us. Now we have his family, and the women are quite devout. This Brian Waring

dotes on Clare; and if you had not made such a coil this morning our course was plain. Clare would have brought him to church, and coaxed his money for us; she would have gradually set him against other creeds. As a politician his influence would have been for us; he would have helped make us respectable and influential—Clare would have brought the babies for baptism, and quietly have trained them Catholics. How do you know but that we might have gotten one day even a Catholic president or general? Now you have roused his antagonism and suspicion, and may have spoiled our game——"

"If you please, sir—a note from Mr. Bently."

The chambermaid stood at the door with a letter. It was Mr. Bently's request for an interview at three o'clock. Father Leroy feebly traced a few lines in response, and sending down his note, said: "I'll banish you from that confab, Garren; you'll have to count out of this business."

"I believe," said Garren, "that I shall report at once to the bishop."

"The bishop understands the necessity of this policy as well as I do."

"The archbishop, the cardinal, the pope," gasped Father Garren; "some one must look into matters."

"Good sir, this is our only course until we obtain the balance of power. When we get *that*; when cautious men, such as I, have drilled and prepared the masses, and laid the plans and stored the arms, and gained the day, then we may lie down in dust, and men like you may hold America purely and severely Catholic above our bones."

Clare Bently, weeping and nearly fainting, had been carried to her home and to the room where the bevy of gay girls, under Mrs. Bently's supervision, had arrayed the bride. While these same girls ran, one for sal-volatile, and another for cologne, and cried now this and now that, defacing meanwhile their dainty cheeks with tears, Mrs. Bently showed commendable carefulness for the dresses and decorations that had cost her a pretty sum of money.

"My darling girls," she entreated, "pray do not ruin your clothes, for to-morrow we shall need them for the wedding. Violetta! Clare can wait for that bay-water on her head until I remove her veil; it is common smelling stuff any way; I don't see why she likes it. Of all things, Rose, don't give her any wine until I get her wrapper on. I shall go distracted if you give away so, Clare—and the breakfast all ready, and the whole town

talking. Agnes! ring for my maid, please, and lay these things away properly."

"I thought, I thought," sobbed Clare, "that Brian loved me—and now he don't, or he would not have spoiled our wedding."

"For mercy sake don't lay it to Brian," cried Mrs. Bently, fearful that Clare might arouse a quarrel with her excited lover, and break up the match entirely. "It is all the fault of that new priest. Father Leroy would have made no trouble."

"For my part I like to see a man independent," observed Violetta, taking the bridegroom's part; "and such questions were ridiculous."

"It was not Mr. Waring's fault," said Agnes; "he looked terribly cut up."

"Well, come girls," cried Mrs. Bently, "let us be comfortable. Get yourselves dressed, and we will have refreshments. Make Clare as pretty as you can, and do, child, quit crying your face up. Brian will be here to see you before long. I heard the gentlemen come in some time ago. Be good, now do, and make the girl enchanting in my boudoir, while I run down and hear what Mr. Bently says."

Father Garren would have been amazed at hearing these young maidens condemning him unsparingly; while they yet declared

that "Catholic ceremonies and cathedrals were the only fitting forms and places for marriage; and that Father Leroy was a saint and an angel."

Clare having announced that "her heart was broken, and she wished she was dead," refused to eat when urged to do so; but her Cousin Agnes having assured her "that she hadn't a particle of color, and looked like a fright," she yielded so far as to take some wine, some cream toast, and a few spoons of gelatine, and much to her chagrin was comforted thereby. She also stole looks in the cheval glass to see that her dress and coiffure were becoming. Just at this moment the voice of Brian Waring being heard in the hall, the bridesmaids fled hastily to the library, and Clare, resolved to be inconsolable, fixed her eyes on a picture of Santa Clara, and made believe not to hear her lover's knock and entrance.

"My Clare is not angry?" said Brian, softly bending beside her. Although Clare had only the moment before fully made up her mind to a freezing little address, she now forgot all about it, and cried out, "You don't love me, Brian; I know you don't."

"O, upon my soul, I do! Don't I think

you the most beautiful and bewitching little woman that ever existed?"

Brian's eyes avouched him so in earnest in this flattery, that Clare relented still further, but said, with an injured air, "But you stopped our wedding, and have made me—talked of—by everybody, by doing so this morning."

"I did not stop the wedding, my dear girl, it was that ridiculous Irish priest; didn't you hear me tell him to go on?"

"But why did you let me say 'Yes,' and you say 'No?'" cried poor Clare, her face flaming.

"I had no idea of his asking his stupid questions, and you might have said 'No,' too, for he was going beyond his business. Surely, Clare, you would not have me sell away my liberty to that priest, and bind my future life, as head of a household, to his commands."

"I thought you were a good Catholic," said Clare.

"My dearest love, you know I never professed to be anything. Just put this matter out of your head, and you and I will be happy together. I shall see Leroy this afternoon with your uncle, and to-morrow we shall be properly married. As for the talk, Clare, that is nothing; not an honorable man in the city but will feel that I was right, and you

and I together can face all the gossip that ever was uttered."

Suddenly Clare recalled Father Garren's last angry words, and tears rushing to her eyes, she said: "But you heard what he told me, Brian; he forbade me to marry you."

"What if he did?" said Brian, astonished; "I say that you are to marry me, and isn't my word more to you?"

"But you are not a priest," faltered Clare. For the first time the demon of jealousy, a demon that never afterward wholly slumbered, awoke in Brian Waring's soul.

"And will you, Clare, give me up for the word of a stray priest!" he exclaimed, drawing back from her.

At this moment Mrs. Bently, ever opportunely on hand, entered, saying: "Give you up, Mr. Faint-hearted, who intends to give you up? Surely you are not as foolish and excited as this poor little girl. Mr. Bently is ready for you to go to Father Leroy's. Bid Clare good-by, and tell her not to fret herself sick; to-morrow morning will set all right, and our wedding will not be interrupted."

"Mr. Bently," said Brian, as they entered the carriage, "if your priest refuses his consent, will that prevent our marriage?"

"Certainly not," said Mr. Bently.

"I am afraid Clare would think she should not marry me against the priest's will."

"Clare is a baby, and will do as she is told," said the uncle, impatiently.

"Then she is likely to do as her priest bids her."

"I mean that she would do as I tell her—as you tell her," replied Mr. Bently, hastily.

Father Leroy, according to his word, had banished his rude confrere Garren, and was prepared to receive his callers with the greatest suavity. His evident illness awoke their sympathy; his genial demeanor conquered their vexation.

"Father Leroy," said Mr. Bently, who was heartily annoyed by the occurrences of the day; "the occasion of our call is exceedingly unpleasant."

"I regret what happened this morning as fully as you can; and wish that I had been present, at whatever sacrifice of my own health, that your nuptials might have been uninterrupted."

This was said to Brian, and nearly disarmed his ill-humor. Still his suspicions had been excited, and he asked rather stiffly: "Yourself and Mr. Garren being priests in the same Church, what difference should there have been in the ceremony?"

"Father Garren asked you a question which he has been accustomed to ask in his own country, where both the contracting parties are Catholics," replied Priest Leroy, smoothly. "But I trust, my dear sir, you are not an opposer of our faith."

"I am an opposer of no faith, neither am I a believer in any. Religion seems natural to the aged and to women; indeed it is quite pretty and attractive in the latter, and I leave it to them. I supposed this was fully understood."

"Yes, I so understood it. But you have attended at our service respectfully—"

"I went to please Clare, and do not begrudge an hour or so, spent on Sunday in making her happier. I should never in the least thwart her religious inclinations. I like your creed as well as any; indeed, it seems to suit the women, who are your most devout worshipers, uncommonly well."

"It is common," said Mr. Leroy, cautiously, "in a marriage where only the bride is a Catholic, to stipulate that *at least* the daughters shall be educated in the mother's faith."

"Sir," replied Brian, with decision, "I shall give no pledges to a minister of your denomination that would not be demanded by the minister of any other creed. If you have"

advice to tender in the exercise of your office, it will be heard with due respect."

"My dear young friend," said Father Leroy, politely waiving away the disputed point, and gracefully assuming the paternal, "however lightly you may esteem the matter of *religion*, it must ever appear to me a subject of the first importance. In committing to you the keeping of a beloved daughter of our Church, we should desire to feel assured that you would in nowise interfere with her highest interests, or prejudice the safety of her soul."

"Her uncle and guardian, at least," said Brian, glancing toward Mr. Bently, "is willing to trust Clare's future happiness and welfare to my love and honor."

"We all know Mr. Waring to be a man of distinguished justice and charity," began the priest, when Mr. Bently interrupted:

"The fact is, father, your friend, Father Garren, made a great mistake this morning, and one which we can not easily overlook. My niece must be married to-morrow morning, and we wish some one secured to perform the ceremony. Could you not officiate? You could be taken comfortably to the cathedral in your carriage, and have some one or two to assist you. Very likely going out would not be an injury to you."

"Benefit or injury, I shall most certainly make the attempt for the sake of my sincere friendship to you both," replied Mr. Leroy.

The final arrangements for the wedding having been concluded, Brian Waring took his way back to the hotel, and found his friend, Allan Rowe, comfortably ensconced in his sitting-room.

"Well, Brian the strong, have you overcome the priests? Having promised myself to see you safely through this weighty business of getting married, I am naturally anxious to know how affairs are progressing."

"Sit still—sit still; I'll ring for our supper to be brought up here. Glad to see you, Allan. I'm just about the bluest bridegroom on record. Yes, I've settled the priests; but my lookout is rather dubious, after all. I wish Clare were not a Catholic!"

"Then she would be perfection, which is not to be looked for in this world," said Allan, gallantly.

Brian rested his elbow on the mantle, and stood glowering at the fire.

"Why didn't you just throw the priests overboard, and get married by some other ecclesiastic? Would not the bride agree?" asked Allan.

"Knowing her preferences, I was not such

a boor as to ask her to yield them. I dare say she would."

Brian spoke pettishly, feeling convinced, all the while, that there was a settled persistency in his Clare for her religion, with which it would not be well for him to come in conflict.

Allan Rowe was an older and more thoughtful man than his friend. He sat watching Brian's moody face, now thrown out in strong lights by the darting flames, now cast into deep gloom as those flames cowered away in the heart of the fire. At last Allan spoke, the silence having lasted while the servant lit the gas, and spread out the supper on a table drawn before the fire:

"I'm greatly afraid, my dear fellow, that you are going under a double yoke; not the yoke matrimonial alone, but the yoke of Rome."

"You are wrong there. I'm not such a dastard as to submit to any shaven crown and chin that ever saw sunlight. If they undertake to set a yoke on me they'll find their mistake. They'll rouse a spirit as if all the gallant knights of story were resolved into one man, and that man Brian Waring." Brian spoke jestingly, while he was in earnest, and made some poor attempt at a laugh.

"But," persisted Allan, "it is not a cheer-

ful prospect this maintaining your position in married life, by strife."

"Mind you, the quarrel would never be between my wife and me, but between me and the priest."

"And if your wife loves you and loves her priest—"

"Stay there! that is a word I won't listen to," shouted Brian, angrily.

"I mean *as* a priest—if her heart holds with you, and her conscience with him, her prospect is not a very bright one—nor is yours. I talked of this matter long ago with you. I say, Brian, I wish we could convert your Clare."

"Convert her to what! to *nothing*," cried Brian, bitterly. "She supposes she has something; I profess nothing—not a very attractive exchange. I know no better way now than to go it blind, and to fight the battle as long as it stirs up. I love Clare, and I mean to have her; and having her I want to be first in my house, and not only first but alone in her heart." Having thus spoken, Brian threw off his gloom, seated himself at the table and invited Allan to turn his attention to the supper.

He had expressed his true feelings; so exacting and so self-asserting was Brian that he

would have felt jealous if he believed that Clare held God or eternal happiness higher than his love. He set her first in his heart, he said; but in point of fact he set himself first, as he was not willing that she should have a hope or an interest that reached beyond him.

Brian Waring entering his married life, was also to enter into conflict with a bigoted woman, an exacting creed, an interfering priest. This conflict was to begin so quietly, to advance so slowly, that it should imperceptibly drive him back from the positions he had assumed and lead him into the greatest difficulties. In these beginnings *pride* would be Brian's reason for contest, and also for him who fights and toils rather from pride than from an honest, hearty sense of what is right. Allan Rowe, not a Christian, but with higher views than Brian, and a deeper knowledge of both Romanism and Waring himself than Waring possessed, saw this wearisome contest from afar, and trembled for his friend. But why prognosticate evil just before a wedding? What other than happiness can be expected for lovely Clare and Brian who married her for love's sake alone?

Again the bridesmaids dress the bride, and Mrs. Bently gives a sigh of relief as she sees that dress and veil, wreaths and jewels

have suffered no detriment in the scene of yesterday; and now the maidens, Violetta, Agnes, Rose, and Alice are arrayed; the carriages wait; Ben Bently vows "that if Father Leroy goes to making any blunders or running into any needless questions, he will don the surplice and marry the couple himself."

As for Clare she brings into the ruddy winter morning a beauty like the fairest day of spring; there lightens in the violet eyes no gleam of the fire that flashed yesterday at Brian, "but *you* are not a priest." The delicate folds of that costly veil have shaded away any lines in her dimpled young face that may mean hard obstinacy; the pearls that Brian has brought, as bridal gifts, are but poor types of such precious beauty and grace. All brides are fair, and Clare is fairest of all.

Father Leroy, gaunt, tall, and wan in his robes, looks a little like a specter at a feast as he marries this couple. The father is undeniably feeble, and he astutely makes the most of his feebleness, and impresses Brian with a great sense of his goodness and friendship in coming painfully from his sick-bed to bless the groom and bride.

So, now, they are married at last, and all good fortune go after them; and blessings

many and rich, like the troops of guests who, all in best array, again follow them to the wedding breakfast.

Quoth Father Garren to Father Leroy: "When I marry a couple, I make them both confess and take the sacrament, and prove themselves good Catholics, before I will make them man and wife."

"So do I, among the poor people, or those who will do it," replied Father Leroy.

"And the very least they should yield is daughters to the mother."

"That is good, too, and my plan when you can secure that much. Where you can not, my policy is to yield all at first, looking to gain all by and by."

So we see that Father Leroy had two terms of membership for his holy, indivisible, inflexible and unalterable Church: one to suit the ignorant and submissive, another to please the educated and independent, and by both the Church was to be the most effectually and efficiently served. From the marriage feast to the home where their new life begins, go the happy pair, and there anon we shall see them.

CHAPTER II.

A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF.

THE storms that had seemed to lower over Brian Waring's marriage passed away, and their portent was forgotten. Sunshine brightened over the new household. Rome's yoke rests lightly on the rich and restive as long as they yield outward acquiescence to her forms. Clare and Brian went to church of Sundays; kept the church feasts with state, and fasted on Good Friday, a royal fast on green turtle, oysters, lobsters, and terrapins, wines, fruits and cream, and all the vegetables in season (the fact about Brian being that he did not know when he was fasting or feasting, or when the holy days came); but he ordered whatever Clare requested, and neither Catholic priests nor Catholic servants were scandalized. When the "joyous fast" of Lent came, Clara gave up balls and theaters, did a little more praying and church going, when

Brian was at his business, and instead of the balls and opera had innumerable church shows, concerts, and festivals to pass away the time.

Brian had forgotten his own apprehensions and Allan Rowe's warnings, and began to think there was nothing annoying in being married to a Catholic. Indeed Brian was seeing the sunny side of Rome just now, and affairs went this way:

"What's in order for to-day, Clare?"

"O, don't you know it's Candlemas-day, and we are all going to see the holy candles blessed. You are too busy to go, Brian dear, but you can give me an offering; that will do for your presence."

And to Clare, so enchanting in a morning dress from Paris, and with little yellow wavelets all over her head like glints of sunshine, Brian willingly gave a gold piece to be taken to church.

Then again: "Say we stay at home from church to-day, Clare," says Brian.

"O yes, we might, Brian dear, but don't you know it is Palm Sunday, and it will be so splendid in church. There will be the blessing and distribution of palms, and a procession, and mass; and really, Brian, Palm Sunday anthems at the cathedral are as good as an opera."

Of course after that Brian relinquishes the idea of staying at home, and goes to church and gives an "offering" for the privilege.

Very likely when Brian understood that for the ceremony of "blessing the candles" no less than thirty-three articles, as incense-boat, sprinkling-brush, books, tables, altar-vails, ornaments, linen-cloths, etc., have to be prepared, he felt the necessity of making therefor a liberal offering, and on Palm Sunday he *may* have considered the anthems as worth the price of several opera tickets.

The pursuit of the world, the flesh, and the devil in theaters, balls, and card parties, the worship of mother Rome on high days and holy days came to an end, at least for a time, and we are brought to a grand occasion, when Aunt Bently, seated in state in Clare's chamber, held on her knee a soft, red-faced squealing bundle of humanity, carefully done up in an embroidered blanket. Rose and Violetta, kneeling before this new comer, admired it as they did their favorite image of the holy mother and child.

"Clare," said Aunt Bently, turning to the young mother who lay under a blue silk quilt, with a ravishing lace cap on her pretty head, "this child could not have been born at a better time; we can now have her christened

on Holy Saturday, a most fortunate occasion; none better, except the Easter or Pentecostal Sabbath."

"O, the little love! we'll have her baptized on next Saturday!" cried Violetta.

"And mother and Miss Lucy are to be god-mothers, and Mr. Chapin godfather," said Rose.

Here Brian came in. "Brian," says Mrs. Bently, "we must have little Cora baptized next Saturday; it is a most suitable occasion—Holy Saturday."

"But you'll kill her, taking her out so soon," cries Brian. "Who ever heard of such a thing. She is not two weeks old!"

"But it is always done. It won't hurt her at all; ask nurse."

Nurse, being a Catholic, responded that it was quite in order, and would be sure to do no harm.

"Well," said Brian, laughing, "do as you like, so she isn't hurt; and mind I shall expect splendid presents from the sponsors."

Brian regarded the whole affair of the christening as a joke—no harm for a girl, and all right if the mother wanted to have it so.

"You'll go to church, too, Brian?" said Mrs. Bently.

"Surely. I want to see that the thing is done properly, and that the daughter is not dropped on the floor."

They were ready to start for church on Saturday. Clare, proud of her first-born, lay watching the preparations with glistening eyes.

"Wrap the mite up warmly," ordered Brian.

"There now, she has no space to breathe, and you'll have her smothered!" he cried again.

"She's all right, sir," laughed the nurse; "how fearsome these fathers do be!"

"Brian," said Clare.

Brian immediately hastened to her side.

"You'll give Father Leroy a liberal fee for christening our baby, won't you? It is always expected, dear."

A liberal fee! certainly he would. It is a great thing to be going to church to see *our baby* christened; to claim property in such a lovely bundle, done up in an embroidered cloak lined with quilted satin, and with cambric robes trailing over the bearer's arms and falling to the floor. It is a great thing to have long hope become glad possession; fear exchanged for joyful certainty; a great thing to see *our baby* strong and handsome, and our Clare so fresh and smiling.

The benefit of Brian's beatific state was experienced by Father Leroy, and he shook out the baptismal fee before Father Garren, and said cheerfully: "Here's for christening our heretic's first baby; duly received into the Holy Church with reliable sponsors—wisdom and waiting win the day."

The complacency with which Brian Waring regarded his wife's religion extended to his little daughter. He was proud to have her baby feet patter up the cathedral aisles with his heavier tread; he laughed when the sharp little thing learned the angelus from the nurse, recommended by Father Leroy; he considered it a good joke when she had a rosary, and wore a gold cross in her corals. "Religion was all well enough for a girl; it would not go any farther than her mother's had, and that was never enough to hurt her." Thus said Brian.

Allan Rowe shook his head.

"I have heard of girls who were called 'devout' from infancy, and thus became easy prey to the priests, and were led to be nuns."

"Such a perversion I never would permit," said Brian. "I have no faith in nuns. I do not believe them all bad—there may be flowers among weeds. But I believe monastic life and vows a perversion of natural and so-

cial laws, a flagrant violation of justice and liberty. The tendency of these institutions is to vice and impurity; and, you may rely upon it, that child of mine shall have nothing to do with them."

"I hope you will hold to this opinion, and maintain your position," said Allan; "but I'm afraid, if you do, it will only be through trouble and division."

"Let there be trouble and division," said Brian; "I hold firm to this point."

"A house divided against itself can not stand," quoth Allan Rowe.

"The division would be between me and the priests, not between me and Clare—we are united, and will ever be so; of course, her husband's word and wish are more to her than a priest's."

Before baby Cora had been very long pattering to church and lisping her *aves*, baby second made its appearance at the home of the Warings. This injudicious infant was guilty of greatly disappointing her parents upon her first arrival. The father and mother had fully set their hearts upon a son; yet, in the face of these earnest wishes, the child had the incredible audacity to be girl No. 2. To look upon the fair, round, smiling innocent, one could hardly believe her capable of such

perversity, and, indeed, to hold malice was quite impossible. The stretching out of her little dimpled fist was more potent than the golden scepter of Ahasuerus; he may have won obedience from all but Vashti; the infant Belle conquered every heart.

There now followed more sponsors, and more baptism. Lest any one should consider him too deeply aggravated by the sex of the new comer, Brian resolved not only to attend the ceremony at the church, but to double his fee. Like an exemplary Catholic, Clare had her babies make their appearance in season for a suitable christening-day. Belle was taken to church on the pentecostal Sabbath. What was Brian's chagrin to find Father Garren on hand to perform the ceremony. He had never forgiven this father's interference on his marriage, and now felt very much like ordering baby and sponsors home again until such time as Father Leroy could officiate. He controlled himself, however, and took secret satisfaction that the Ritual required the priest to wash his hands before proceeding to the rite. When the reverend Celt covered the babe with the extremity of his stole, and remarked, complacently, "*Ingrederet in Templum Dei*," Brian chafed inwardly, and vowed that the child should come no more under

the power of Priest Garren, and should not go further in the holy Romish Church than she had at that instant. When the business was over he made Ben Bently deliver the fee, and horrified Aunt Bently by declaring the baptism a "mummery." In these days of his darkness, Brian would have called any religious service a "mummery," and see no difference between them.

The education of little Belle proceeded like that of Cora. She soon knew her rosary from her corals, and a crucifix from a toy; knelt on a *prie Dieu* when she clambered over other furniture, and caused her nurse to smile with delight when she dipped her wee finger into the holy water, and made the sign of the cross.

Father Leroy's strength was not always to sit still. Hitherto, every thing had gone as he desired in the household of Brian Waring. Clare was permitted to manage her family, choose her servants, regulate her giving, and instruct her children exactly as she pleased. Her nurses were Catholics; she kept the holy days; she chose her books, and pictures, and nicknacks; you could tell that hers was a Romanist home the instant you went in it. The priest came often, and was always made welcome. One would have supposed that

this state of things would have highly gratified Father Leroy; but, as is usual in his creed, the much only made him demand the more. It was time for him to make a move. One obstacle lay in the way of his complete satisfaction: that was—Allan Rowe.

Clare went, as became her, to confession. The usual formulas having been gone over:

"My daughter," says the holy father, "is the intercourse between your husband and Mr. Rowe as close as ever?"

"Yes, father; perhaps they are even more intimate."

"Do you know of any business entanglements, any pecuniary obligations, that may cement their union?"

"No, father."

"Then why this intimacy?"

These questions would appear impertinent and presuming, did we not know that in the confessional the priest sits as God, and has a *right* to supervise all things. He continued:

"You must be aware, daughter, that the constant society of an infidel like Mr. Rowe drives your husband farther and farther from the true Church."

"I know it, father," replied Clare, "and I wish he had made choice of some other friend."

But Brian is very faithful to his friendships, and he and Allan Rowe were schoolmates."

"This interloper may do you all much damage."

"That is true, father. I have never liked Mr. Rowe, and I do not think he likes me."

"A man of his stamp could scarcely be expected to appreciate the lofty character or the womanly graces of a carefully-nurtured daughter of the Church," said the flattering priest.

"But what can I do to lessen his influence over Brian," asked Clare, eagerly.

"A woman can work her will, and the will of her Church in many ways," returned Priest Leroy. "Without descending to any thing unlady-like, you could make it apparent to Mr. Rowe that he was not fully welcome at your house; and, as a gentleman, he would cease to come. I would suggest that these trifles of manner be light as air, and nothing of which he could complain, or which your husband could condemn."

"Yes, yes, father," said Clare, impatiently, "but Brian?"

"What is this proverb about continual dropping wearing away a stone?" asked the priest, smiling. "Mr. Rowe must have failings, and it would be well to call attention to them in a

careless way. Little *gaucheries* may now and then be commented upon; and, need I tell you after years in society, that we can most sharply blame when we *seem* to praise; we can *regret* a fault until it becomes odious; and we can keep before other's eyes the error we would appear to hide. Further, my daughter, you are fully aware that whatever serves, even remotely, our Church, is right."

"You may rely on me to do what I can," said Clare. "I have no doubt that Mr. Rowe does use his influence with my husband against our Church. But then, Brian likes him better than anybody."

"Surely not better than his wife," suggested the wily priest.

"You know I mean better than any other acquaintance," replied Clare, testily.

"Just so, my dear daughter. Surely the best friend, counselor, and confidant any man can have, is a pious, well-instructed wife."

Yes, surely, the first friend of the heretic husband must be the Romish wife; but the wife's chief "friend, confidant, and counselor" should be, not her husband, but—her priest.

Having received from the holy Leroy so much valuable spiritual instruction, Madam Clare went home and proceeded to put his suggestions into action. It did seem hard

and strange that, at the dictation of this stranger, she should try to rob her husband of his best loved friend; to deprive him of the satisfaction of his favorite society. Clare never stopped to think whether it were hard or not; the priest had commanded, it was hers to obey. She initiated her maneuvers against Allan Rowe, and—Allan Rowe saw them.

He also traced them to their source—and next, he knew why they were commanded. Knowing this, he resolved not to be wounded, not to be angered by any thing that might occur. He would be more truly Brian's friend than before. When his visits at the house seemed more and more unwelcome to Clare, Brian went less often to the house, and more frequently to the office. All Clare's little flings did not shake Brian's faith in his brother-like friend, for he knew Allan to be far nobler than many whom Clare approved.

Urged on by the priest to work against Allan, Clare sometimes spoke over-hastily. Brian's eyes were opened, and he was pained. "I am sorry, Clare, that you do not like Allan," he said. "Or rather that you are not allowed to like him. Allan is courteous, true, and wise; the very man you would like, and trust in as a brother, if you were not stirred up against him. My dear Clare, be as relig-

ious as you choose, but do not allow any interference in our domestic affairs, or any meddling by a third party in my business."

"I don't know what you mean, Brian," pouted Clare.

Then she told all this to the priest. It is so encouraging and convenient to have a stranger to whom you can unfold all family differences and confidences. How glad Brian would have felt had he known all his Clare confessed to her priest! But then Brian did not know; in fact, the priest said that he must not.

While affairs were in this state, and Brian little guessed what toils were being wound about his family by the priests; nor how great was the hostility to his cherished friend, he and Allan bought a small island, covered with cedar trees. The trees were to be felled, and great would be the value of the lumber. The joint owners concluded that they must go and visit their possession, and give orders about the wood-cutting on the spot. Brian thought best not to delay the trip; but when he was gone he was uneasy, and in a hurry to get home—they settled their business as quickly as possible and came back.

Returning thus at the edge of evening, and forcing Allan to come to the house with

him, as Brian opened the door with his latch-key, he was met by Aunt Bently, with a face that had ever been the harbinger of good news. She shook hands, and said a few words in a low tone, no less indeed than that Brian had a son, twelve hours old. After this astounding news, Brian dashed up stairs, three steps at a time, moderated his pace a little in the hall, calmed down ostensibly at the bedroom door, and was admitted by the doctor, the nurse, and the aunt. When, at last, the nurse resolutely extinguished the small son under a blanket; when the aunt said serenely, "that will do, Brian;" when the doctor remarked, despotically, that his patient must be kept quiet, Brian remembered that he had left that forlorn old bachelor, Allan Rowe, standing by the hall register, and hurried to find him.

"Congratulate me, my good fellow! Here is your namesake at last; and he promises to be a beauty, if his small countenance is at present snarled up, and as red as scarlet. Come into the library, Allan."

They entered the library, and Brian rattled on of the long-desired son; but Allan was uneasy. He paced about, took down and put up books, was miserable, and, as tea came in for the travelers, blurted out: "Brian, you're

kind. I'm fond of the boy, proud of him for your sake already; but as for the name, that must not be, if he is to be baptized into the Romish Church. I can't be responsible for a —Jesuit."

Brian looked thunder-struck. "Why, Rowe, I shall not have this boy baptized there. I will have my son enter his life fettered by no vows, under no men's dominion but mine. Let him reach his man's estate, and choose as pleases him. I have no hearty choosing of these 'religions' for myself, and I hand over my heir to no sponsor whatever."

"Your wife will not assent to this," said Allan.

"Clare will surely not object to my views for this boy, when she has done as she chose with two girls. I tell you, boys and girls need different training, and *my* boy is not going over to the priest."

Of course we do not subscribe all Brian Waring's views. These were his days of great soul-darkness, and according to the ignorance of his heart he spoke.

Upon the subject of the baptism of his son, Brian's mind was fully made up, and not wishing to disturb his wife, he unfolded his views to Mrs. Bently.

"Clare will never consent to have her child unbaptized," said Aunt Bently, stiffly.

"And I shall never consent to have him baptized," retorted Brian. "I have yielded my preference about my daughters, feeling that their mother knew best for girls; but I know best for my boy."

"But, Brian, it is so heathenish," said Aunt Bently, condescending to argue where she could not command.

"Not any more heathenish than I was myself," said Brian; "and it is not so much the rite I object to, as to *Romish* baptism. Your Church claims so much authority. She so dominates over soul and body. She demands sponsors to take what must naturally be the parent's place, the spiritual nurture of the child."

"So do other churches have sponsors," said Mrs. Bently.

"Not sponsors who will work against the parent, and teach disobedience as a virtue. There's enough said, aunt; that baby shall not be christened like the others."

Brian's ideas were not very definite; his arguments were not very logical, but he had unalterably made his decision. As early as possible, he resolved to talk with Clare. So entering her room one morning, when she was feeling quite well, he dismissed the nurse and sat down by his wife's side.

"How is young Allan to-day?" he questioned.

"There! is *that* what you are going to name him?" cried Clare, with a good deal of vexation in her tones; "it is such an ugly name."

"I think not, and after the best of friends. You recollect I always said I wanted my first son named for Allan. Don't be selfish, my dear Clare, you know you named the other two."

Clare meditated. She could yield about the name, but not about the christening. "Well then, Allan, he shall be baptized," she said, quickly.

"Not *baptized*," said Brian. "I mentioned that to Aunt Bently. Did she tell you? I don't object to a form, but in your Church it means too much. It hands the child soul and body to the priests. They teach that child to despise and disobey the heretic parent; they interfere with its education and the books it reads; they call the child to the confessional, a spot where my boy must never kneel. If our son is baptized your Jesuits will claim him, Clare, and deny him the rights and privileges of a free man."

"But, Brian," said Clare, "do you want your son to grow up a *heathen*?"

Brian's face softened suddenly; he stroked the short silken hair on the head of the sleeping baby, tenderly, as he answered, "No, Clare. If there is any high good in religion I want him to reach it. I would claim for him the best of all things. We will not have him a heathen, Clare. I have an old Bible up stairs which they tell me my mother used to read before I was born. I have never studied it much, but it is marked by her hand, and she believed it. We will teach this little man to read, and give him this. That will suit us both; I believe in my mother's book, your Church accepts the Bible—"

"But not for the laity. That plan would never do, Brian; it would only work mischief. The priests are the natural custodians and expounders of the Bible."

"There, now, that is just it; and proves what I say of their arrogant and impertinent domination. The Bible is not free to me, a layman; it *is* free to Priest Leroy, or that confounded Garren. Clare, you know I have better brains than either of them. The Bible must be kept from this boy, his mind and soul must be fettered and trained by a priest, while our boy heirs a good brain, and the culture of generations, and the priests may have come up from the very dregs of society.

For this child I hope much; with the advantages we can afford him he may aspire to the highest honors. I mean to give him the most liberal and extensive education that money or teachers can render possible, and I will *not* bind him in his infancy to the feet of any meddling priest. So hear me, heaven!"

"For shame to get so excited," said Clare, turning away her face.

"It *is* a shame—excuse it—and let us be as united in the training of this little Allan as we have been in everything." Brian bent over and kissed his wife. Clare gave no sign. Her husband could not see the clear, cold deliberation which shone under the dropped lids of those blue eyes. He could not know how firmly for any contest with him that fair-faced wife planted herself on the mandates and commendations of her priest. Clare said no more, and Brian supposed he had gained his cause. Straightforward himself, he did not know the meaning of Romish silence.

Not many mornings after this Brian was in the case of Job, when he called unto his servant and he "gave him no answer." It was a gray dawn, long before Mr. Waring's usual hour for rising, but restless and troubled Brian could not sleep. He concluded to go to the library and while away the time before

breakfast with a book. As he reached the foot of the stairs, he was astounded by meeting several people coming in at the front door. These were the missing servant, the nurse-maid with the infant boy, and Rose and Violetta Bently. One glance told Brian the whole story of the early excursion, and his wrath rose. He opened the library door and motioned them all in before him.

"What does this mean?" he demanded.

"Sure, there's no harm in giving a healthy babe a sup of morning air," said the nurse.

"No prevarication!" shouted Brian.

"Violetta, you have been at the cathedral, having *my son* baptized?"

"What if we have?" said Violetta, defiantly; "his mother has as much right as you to dictate about him. You wanted to deny him Christian privileges."

Brian felt as if stabbed to the heart. His wife had then arranged this underhand, deceitful deed. Then another suspicion crossed his mind: "And by what name was he baptized?"

"Sure, then, by a good holy Catholic name," said the nurse, insolently, relying on the favor of the priest and her mistress.

Brian turned quickly, took the babe from her arms, and, as he was by this time not un-

skilled in handling an infant, deposited it safely among the cushions of an arm-chair. "Thomas and Margaret," he said, "consider yourselves dismissed from my service, and leave my house instantly. I will order the house-maid to pack all your possessions that are here, and send them after you. You can come to my office at eleven o'clock for your wages. Go! this moment!"

"And sure, will ye not give us a character," said Margaret, angrily.

"You can get your recommendations where you have got them many other times, from your priest," said Brian, and he dismissed them from the dwelling, not even allowing them to take time to go out at the area door. Then he turned to Violetta. "Tell me, by what name was this child christened?"

"Joseph"—faltered Violetta, her pert anger frightened away. "Joseph, after the saint, the husband of our blessed Lady."

"Saints and Ladies!" shouted Brian, quite beside himself with rage. "And am I thus deceived in my own house, by my servants, my cousins, my wife even—abused, and disobeyed, and deceived!"

"Indeed, Cousin Brian," said Rose Bently, bursting into tears and taking his hand; "the name is not Clare's fault. She could not let

the babe be unbaptized, for fear it should die and so be lost. She said she had rather die than have her son denied the privileges of his little sisters. We all felt so, Brian. As Christians we *must* feel so. But the name, Clare said, was surely to be Allan, and nothing else—Allan Rowe Waring, and we gave it so; did we not, Violetta?"

"Yes, it was not our fault," sobbed Violetta.

"Whose fault was it, then?" demanded Brian.

"I will tell you how it was," said Violetta.

"We expected Father Leroy at the church, but the hour was too early for his health, and there was Father Garren. We gave him the name you had chosen, and he said he would not christen a Catholic Christian by the name of a heretical infidel. We said we had no other name to offer, and by all means to christen him according to his parents' wish. We thought he meant to do so, and then, to our surprise, he called him Joseph —— instead." Violetta caught her breath, as if there was another name she dared not speak.

"What beside Joseph—tell me what other name?" cried Brian, now thoroughly aroused, and in the fiercest passion of his life.

"Garren—Joseph Garren," faltered Rose.

Garren! it was a gratuitous insult. The wicked priest knew how that hated name

would gall the father's soul. Garren! Brian, at that moment, felt carried out of himself in an ecstasy of fury. Fortunately he was one of those men whom intense passion binds as with chains of adamant. He stood voiceless, motionless, white as a corpse. He knew after that moment in what state of mind—in what furious insanity—men do deeds of horror; murder women and babes, and send themselves unbidden before God's bar. In that terrible instant Brian felt as if he could have killed those two foolish, weeping girls, and even that beloved babe lying among the chair cushions. The fierceness of his rage kept him quiet; the tide of passion presently ebbed away and left him weak and broken.

"That is *not* his name," he said. "I had rather kill him with my own hand than curse him with the name of Garren. Whoever calls my boy any thing else than Allan Rowe, is forever forbidden my house. That baptism is null and void; and never let that foul name be uttered in my hearing."

The child began to wail. Brian lifted him up, trembling. "Rose, take the boy, and hand him to Clare's nurse without a word. Violetta, I wish you would go home and send your mother here. I must see her."

Brian, left alone, dropped into the chair

where his child had lain, and entered thus upon the bitterest hour of his life. He realized the toils by which he was surrounded, and the vast advantage of his unscrupulous adversary. As if in a panorama, the future spread out before him, scene after scene of contest, and yet he dreamed not of half the woeful burden of the coming years. His foes were those of his own household. Snares beset his children's ways; his wife was not free to be loving and loyal; her conscience was in the keeping of her husband's enemy. Heavy, cruelly heavy, upon Brian's neck was the yoke of Rome!

Aunt Bently, informed by Violetta of the recent trouble, and the unfortunate conclusion of the secret baptism, came to Brian with fear and trembling.

"I can not talk to Clare," said Brian; "it would excite us both too greatly. I remember what is due to her health. But I wish to be explicit with you, and you can tell her my resolution, my unalterable purpose."

"Brian, when we believe that baptism is absolutely necessary to your boy's salvation, you can not blame us for obtaining that security at any risk. I feel grieved and angry about the name; it was a presumption, an unwarrantable interference, of which Father

Leroy would not be guilty. But, after all, what is in a name?"

"There's a deal in it to me," said Brian. "My son's name is Allan Rowe, and that only shall he be called, baptism or not. If a servant calls him Joseph Garren, or either of those names, that servant shall be discharged; if a relative so calls him, that relative shall be forbidden my house; if my little girls are taught so to name him, I will take them away to a school where they will learn to obey their father; if my wife calls the child by the name chosen of that infamous priest, then my child must be put out to nurse until he can have his right name and no other. Next, that baby is to have a Protestant nurse, hired by myself; again, he shall never be taken inside a Romish church. His mother is at liberty to teach him what she can, and I shall give him *my* mother's Bible. Lastly, I myself will never again enter a Romish church. I shall see Father Leroy very soon, and let him know what to expect."

Brian gained the day about the name; the boy was called Allan. He *thought* he gained, too, in the matter of a nurse. A girl came with excellent recommendations, and asserted that she was a Methodist, "and did not want her religion interfered with."

"It shall not be interfered with," said Brian; "I had as lief you were a Hindoo, so you are not a Romanist."

"La, I *couldn't* be a Papist, sir," said the girl, warmly.

"I can never make any more offerings to your Church, Clare," said Brian; "but I will give you such an allowance as we both shall consider fair, and your giving shall be out of that."

This did not suit very well, but was the best that could be done. Father Leroy saw that he had missed his mark, and hereafter it must be a hand-to-hand conflict in the household of the Warings. Brian went no more to church; people talked; the boy-baby's training and church-going had to be secret.

"Our Cora is seven years old, Clare; the children need more regular teaching," said Brian.

"The Sisters' school is near by; we can send them there."

"I prefer a governess in the house," said Brian.

"Oh, well, I'll try and secure one," replied Clare, coldly.

"I have heard of one—a lady, highly educated, kind, every way unexceptionable—a cousin of Allan's."

"But she's a heretic," cried Clare.

"So am I," said Brian, grimly.

"I don't believe I'll like her; is she pretty?" pouted Clare.

Brian smiled; this little assumption of jealousy was so evidently a pretense on the part of the lovely Clare.

"Her beauty has been done away by small-pox," he replied; "but she is accomplished, and no fright. As nothing but her creed can be urged against her, I prefer to try her, and I'm sure you will be pleased. You can bid her say nothing about religion to the little girls, if you choose; but young Allan can not even learn his letters from a nun."

Clare smiled a sarcastic smile, as she looked into the fire. She thought how useless were Brian's efforts to keep his boy away from the Papists, and she knew there were so many ways to free herself of the governess after she came, and one of Clare's stamp was found. "Hire her, if you choose," said Clare. With Father Leroy's help she could outwit her husband; let him bring the Protestant governess; she would not stay long.

Brian relied a good deal on the pleasant *Methodist* nurse, who loved the baby, and was so fond of giving him fresh air. Brian went out to walk with his little girls one day,

when they passed the cathedral, and Cora begged leave to run in for her prayer-book, which she had left there. Brian went to the door, and let Cora and Belle go to their pew. It was Saturday, and the priests were busy in the confessionals, which are ranged along the sides of the church. A young woman, who was kneeling in one, rose and turned away. Father Garren issued from the door at the same moment. Brian felt a pity and disgust for the person who must pour out her secret heart to that man. She came near the pillar behind which he stood. It was the worthy *Methodist* nurse-maid. Another of Priest Leroy's machinations; and this was why Clare tolerated her! She was a Methodist with a vengeance—a Methodist in whom there was no guile.

CHAPTER III.

FOES IN THE HOUSEHOLD.

AFTER the ignominious departure of Father Leroy's *METHODIST*, Brian got one recommended by the governess, Miss Vail. It was a singular fact that a genuine Methodist was not nearly so popular in Brian's household as a bogus one. The new girl was subject to numberless petty persecutions. Her mistress, for the most part, loftily ignored her, gave her no commendations, but found fault freely, directing her remarks *at* rather than *to* her. The servants, one and all, snubbed and derided the new comer; and, though Miss Vail's sympathy, high wages, and a pretty nurseling, retained her for some months, she finally declared her annoyances "more than flesh and blood could bear," and so gave warning.

After numerous trials Brian found it was impossible to keep Protestant servants in his

house; the opposition to them, from the mistress down to the scullion, was so persistent that they would not stay. His main reliance was now on Miss Vail, whose unvarying kindness and patience had in a measure won the hearts of the children, in spite of the open instructions of the priest and covert insinuations of their mother.

Knowing that his wife had been a party to the deception practiced by little Allan's nurse, and witnessing her unvarying opposition to the governess whom he had chosen, Brian began to feel that his Clare was in league with his enemy to subvert his plans, and destroy his influence in his own household. In vain the husband besought his wife to be united with him in word and act, and to permit no intruder into their domestic councils.

"I can not unite in your views, for they are wrong and heretical," said Clare.

"At least judge me yourself, and do not lay all our most private affairs before your priest, and be guided by his verdict."

"That is only fair, when on your part you take that Mr. Rowe into all your confidence."

"You are mistaken, Clare; I may consult him about business, but family difficulties I keep to myself. I permit no third parties to intrude there."

"I'd try and please you where I could, Brian; but in the religious life of myself and my children I must be guided by those that know."

"Why don't you direct your course by the Bible? I am willing to refer to that as a Divine guide, and I know we shall not find opposition, domestic contention, priestly interference there inculcated."

"The Bible is not for the laity. I know nothing about the Bible. I do know what my Church demands, and I shall try and do it."

But though Clare thought fit to be thus outwardly defiant, she was frequently very unhappy, and poured forth her complaints to Father Leroy:

"Brian and I are getting so divided—our married happiness is gone."

"You must try and bring your husband over to our views—you must argue with him."

"I can't argue," snapped Clare. "How often have you told me the duty of the Catholic Christian was not to *argue*, but to obey?"

"It is true," said the priest, "that this part belongs to the clergy, but unfortunately your husband will not hold intercourse with any of us. You must endeavor to convince him, though argument is outside of your sphere. I

will put words into your mouth. What is better than all, you must try and persuade—allure, by means of the added domestic happiness that would be possible if you were both children of the Church."

Clare took the first occasion to follow these directions. "Your opposition, Brian, is not to me, or to my Church, or priest, but to religion. You think it unmanly to be religious. Now if you would drop that idea and be devout, you would be happier. If you can not do that on your own account, why not let the rest of us pursue our way in peace without all the time trying to interfere? and then, Brian, having never experienced it, you can not know what rest and comfort are to be found in leaving all to your spiritual directors, and trusting every thing to them."

"I want no *man* for my director; nor can I trust myself to the guidance of any human being. When people talk of being guided by God's Spirit, seeking counsel from Heaven, and trusting to Christ, then there seems to me something high enough and strong enough for resting and trusting, and I feel desirous of knowing more of it; but this talk of the priests is so different. You say I will be spiritually *safe* if I am baptized, receive absolution, and the sacrament; you admit at

the same time that these rites are only efficacious when they are accompanied by the *intention* of the priest.* If the intention does not accompany the baptism it is null and void; the same of other rites. Now how am I to be assured of the intentions of that rascally Garren? Ten to one he would have no true intentions in the matter, and I should be as much at sea as ever. I can not trust to any such nonsense, my dear Clare."

"I will not hear you call my priest a rascal and my religion nonsense," said Clare, rising in anger.

Day by day was breaking some of the love ties between this husband and wife, and driving those far asunder who should have been forever near together.

When little Allan was just entering into the mysteries of his primer, Miss Vail gave Brian notice that she would seek another situation. This young lady had never been treated with even ordinary courtesy by Mrs. Waring. The coolest of nods on meeting was the only notice bestowed upon her; set apart from the family, the children carefully enticed away from her as soon as daily lessons were over, Miss Vail had still endured

*Frs. J. Garcia; Gavin, *et al.*

and persevered, hoping that she might make friends, and be allowed to do a good work. When Father Garren had told Clare that she must take some decided stand, and Clare had said to her, "Miss Vail, as long as my husband insists on retaining you as our governess, it is in your power to stay. As far as I am concerned, I should take it as a favor if you gave up this situation and found another;" then Miss Vail could not stay longer, and said as much to Brian. She did not tell him what his wife had said to her; she simply notified him of her early departure.

"She is a most excellent governess," said Brian to Clare. "And if you had given her a little more kindness and sympathy, I dare say she would have remained with us."

Clare replied: "She was none of my choosing."

"I should think her goodness and loveliness would have insured your friendship to her."

Miss Vail's religion had put her beyond the pale of Mrs. Waring's humanities, and she cruelly retorted, "I don't think she cared much for my sympathy, so she had yours."

Brian looked at his wife in astonishment; how the influence of the confessional was changing her from the impulsive, loving Clare of other days. The joyous, affectionate Clare

of his courtship was now sharp, hard, unrelenting. Oh for freedom from the cruel yoke of Rome!

Gradually and evidently being sundered in heart from his wife, Brian, with wistful, trembling tenderness, looked upon his children, feeling that they, too, would be divided from his love, and secretly taught to consider him rather as a misguided tyrant than a loving parent.

These fears received, perhaps, their first confirmation in the words of Cora, who seated one day, on his knee, inquired, "Pa, what makes you be a heretic?"

"Who says I am?" asked Brian.

"Father Garren," replied the child, not noticing her mother's signs for silence. "He says you are a heretic, and that I must not let you mislead me with your notions." Brian, being silent with grief and indignation, Cora mused a moment and continued, "Father Leroy says I must pray for your conversion."

"When did Father Garren tell you this?" asked Brian.

"One day at confession," replied the child.

Brian put her from his knee, led her to the door, and quietly shutting her from the room returned to his wife and demanded, "Clare, do you send this child to the confessional?"

"She is eight years old,"* said Clare.

"Can you, a *mother*, send that innocent baby to be drilled and questioned by a gross, coarse man like Priest Garren? Is not the very thought revolting? Do you not feel that any intercourse with such a person is contamination? That pure and tender spirit should intrust its confidence only to a loving parent; it should be nurtured and guarded from every suggestion of sin; and you send her to that arrogant, bloated, tyrannical priest, whom every decent person ought to loathe." There was no limit to Brian's dislike to Father Garren.

"You use too strong expressions about Mr. Garren," replied Clare. "He is not half as bad as you imagine him. He is not an attractive man; he is not a person whom one naturally trusts and likes; viewed *as* a man one does not admire him; but in the exercise of his priestly office he is not to be regarded merely as a man; in the confessional he is lifted by the Church to a higher sphere, sitting in the place of God. The Church has judged him worthy to receive confessions and pronounce absolution; it is not my business to question his fitness."

*"From the age of seven children shall attend confession four times per year."

"Absolution!" cried Brian; "receive absolution from a man whose soul is doubtless burdened with nine times as many sins as his penitent has committed!"

"The sins of the priest do not interfere with his absolution; in the name of God he can forgive others, when he is not forgiven himself,"* said Clare.

"And would *you* confess to Father Garren?" asked Brian.

"Yes; if I must," replied Clare, rather reluctantly. "Father Leroy is getting old and feeble, and is frequently unable to attend in the confessional."

"I have never interfered with the manner of your education of our daughters, doubtless through mistaken courtesy; but now I must and do forbid any confessing to Father Garren. If Mr. Leroy can not be confessor, some other priest, who I *hope* is a decent man, must be found, not one whom I am sure is a bad man. I speak once for all, Clare. I had rather send my children from home to a place where they will be safe from priests, than put their souls in jeopardy from that man's influence. You must be aware that the *law*

*Council of Trent, Fourteenth Session, Chapter VI. Those are officially cursed who deny this doctrine. Fourteenth Session, Ninth and Tenth Canons.

gives me control of my children, if your Church does not."

"I'm sure I'm sorry I married a heretic," blazed Clare, in the haste of passion.

"And I wish to heaven I'd never married a Catholic!" cried Bryan, angry as his wife.

Now this was a shocking state of affairs, and it is but justice to this unhappy pair to say that they repented of these words as soon as they were spoken; there was love between them yet, though it had been sorely bruised and weakened by a meddling Church and interfering priests—yes, Brian and Clare repented and apologized.

If all the confessions of this family had been made in humility and love, "one to another," their lives had been both better and happier.

Though Brian had made proclamation that visits from priests were forbidden, he could not but be aware that Father Leroy came and went at his own pleasure. The priest timed his visits when Brian would be absent about his business, and the master of the family knew no better way than to pretend ignorance of what he could not prevent.

It happened one day that Brian met Father Leroy in the hall. The priest was on his way to the door, and Mr. Waring intended to pass

him with a haughty nod, but, with the utmost amiability, the priest touched his arm, saying, "My son, your estrangement deeply distresses me, and I have your welfare much at heart. Why do you pass me by? How have I offended you?"

"Your Church," retorted Brian, "is the cause of all the troubles of my life. It interrupts the harmony of my household, frustrates my plans, divides me from the confidence of my wife, and estranges me from my children. Your brother priest, Mr. Garren, is my enemy, has deceived and insulted me, and takes every means in his power to injure me."

"Perhaps Mr. Garren has a zeal without knowledge; it is the fault of his head rather than of his heart. He is far from being the foe you suppose. I fear you are opposing yourself to the highest interests of your family. Let me beg you, my dear son, to accord to them the liberty of obeying their consciences, being sure that they will then yield you all due love and respect."

"To obey the dictates of conscience means to obey the man who assumes the place of conscience-keeper to them. Let me tell you, Mr. Leroy, that the ministers of no other Church would interfere between me and my family as priests have done."

"All other ministers would not be servants of the only true Church, outside of which salvation is *absolutely impossible*,* and, therefore, they lack zeal and wisdom," replied Father Leroy.

"Other ministers," returned Brian, with heat, "have learned from their Bibles that those are 'false teachers' who 'creep into houses and lead captive silly women,' and who make discord between husbands and wives, who should be one in love and purpose. I must request again, sir, that your visits be discontinued."

"My son," said Father Leroy, "I shall ever, by labor and prayer, strive to promote your happiness."

In pursuance of this gracious promise, Father Leroy, in a few days, called again, and solemnly charged Clare to "use every endeavor to counteract the pernicious influence of her husband over his children. Not to scruple to set his heresies before them in their true light, and to show them that their first obedience was due to the ministers of their Church."†

Our sympathies have naturally turned to Brian, but was not this poor Clare a woman

*Summary of Pope Pius IV.

†*Catholic World*, April, 1870, *Brownson's Quarterly*, et al.

to be deeply pitied? She loved her husband and her children; she was of a nature that, left free to its own bright course, would have made home loving and happy. She was forced to believe that her husband was her enemy, and her children's enemy; tenderness toward him was tenderness toward heresy—opposition toward him was a heroism, a virtue sure of its reward. While her soul longed wearily for peace, she was forced to war; while nature forced her to her husband as her friend and counselor, her Church forbade her the sympathies of an obstinate heretic, and sent her to a priest with her fears and troubles, her loneliness and her cravings for kindness. One great hope supported her in this dark and thorny way; the salvation of her children would be secured, and her husband, by virtue of her long defiance, would be driven at last into the true Church, when she might love and trust him as she pleased.

This conflict was wearing Clare out; it was making her gloomy and petulant, her beauty was fading, her health declining, she grew weary of her life, and often vaguely wished life were ended, while yet she dreaded to die.

As for the unhappy Brian, jealousy consumed his heart; his children's affection was

weaned from him; the boy he idolized would be perverted and dragged away from the shining path his father had marked out for him; Clare, whom he had loved so devotedly, had withdrawn her heart from him, had given her deepest confidence to his enemies, had put her very love for him into the hands of his foe.

The dissensions to which popish interference gave rise in the household of the Warings, were not unknown to their relatives. Violetta and Alice, the whilom bridesmaids, now married, took sides with the priests, and declared that Brian was cruel, wicked, and shameful; and if they were Clare they would not yield to him, oh no, not for one moment. Madam Bently one while shrugged her shoulders over the whole affair; again, was a partisan of her niece, and said she did very right; and presently, terrified at the idea of a family scandal, besought Clare to pay no heed to the venerable mischief-makers in orders, but to effect a complete reconciliation with her husband, lest matters should go from bad to worse, and the public should begin to gossip; why it might even get into the newspapers!

Mr. Bently had never been afflicted by any internecine war, originated by priests; his

whole soul now and ever had been given to stocks, per cents., and mortgages; in these lay *his* love and honor, and with these the holy fathers did not meddle, save to claim a share of the profits. Young Ben Bently was, however, in a different case; he had married a very pretty girl, and was furiously jealous of a gaunt, fierce-eyed priest, who haunted his house to such an extent that he had become, in absolute truth, the family skeleton.

"Oh," said Ben to Brian, "it is a confounded shame about these priests; heretic fellows have a deal better time of it; there's no holy father, no better than he should be, hanging round their wives, having the run of the house from the garret to the cellar, and laying down laws to all the family, from the wife to the little blackey that runs the cook's errands. I wish there was a law requiring the priests to marry, rather than forbidding it."

"So do I," said Brian; "for that would cut at the roots of some of the vilest errors of the popish system. Their own authors admit that the celibacy of the clergy is the bulwark of the confessional, and that, if priests married, the tribunal of penance would be abolished."*

*Abbe Martinet, *Religion in Soc.*, p. 210. Also see *Genie du Chretien*, liv., first chapter, 8th.

"Yes," cried Ben, scowling blackly, "there's the rub! Confession—that is the cruelest part of it. The very time when I feel most urged to give my whole confidence to my wife, to treat her, in very truth, as my other self, comes to me the horrible knowledge that the words love utters to her are, in very deed, being whispered into the ear of the priest. I shouldn't be at all surprised if, some day, I committed the sacrilege of kicking that priest out of doors. My home would be a paradise, and my wife as fair as Eve unfallen, if I hadn't him to contend with. Truth is," concluded Ben, ruefully, "it seems to me that old story of the garden is a parable of a home with a jolly young couple in it, and the old serpent tricked off in gown and book, that slips in and gets the wife's ear. If you were to step into *my* house, at any time of day, I reckon you'd find him there prating."

Brian felt like advising Ben to go over to Protestantism, and take his young wife with him; but he recalled the long and hopeless strife in his own home, and was silent.

For some years Cora and Belle Waring had been day-pupils at the school of the Sisters of St. Sacrament, but now the time of their first communion approached, and, that nothing might be lacking to their thorough in-

struction, their mother, at the command of Father Garren, had them remain two months at the convent, to be prepared by the nuns for the great occasion. He who instituted upon earth the family type of His eternal Church, ordained the Christian parent as the first and best religious instructor of the child; but Rome, subverting every divine law, and thwarting every heaven-implanted impulse of our nature, boldly denies the God-given right of the parent, and intrudes a stranger as the guide and first friend of son and daughter.

The two girls gone, great loneliness settled over this family. Clare was worn and feeble, and had lost her relish for society and amusement. Brian was wrapped in a stern regret. Young Allan, having spent the hours required with the tutor whom his father had engaged to come daily to instruct him, found his mother melancholy, his father, when not absorbed in business, despairing; his sisters were gone, the moral atmosphere of his home was chilling—on every side was antagonism or contradiction. Did his father give him a book, he suddenly lost it; what the priest gave him, his father loftily condemned. The child's vexed spirit found a welcome rest in the honest, genial soul of Allan Rowe, who, for his little namesake, became a child again; but

companionship so dear was forbidden by priest and mother.

And now young Allan was taken to a new resort. There was a Brotherhood school not far from his home, and here, under order of secrecy, he was frequently taken by Priest Garren. *Here* the lonesome boy found friends, flatterers, playmates, games, amusing books—a thousand things to charm the eye and beguile the heart. Here, then, he was happy; here deceit was inculcated in the fair guise of virtue; here, by example, by precept, by self-interest, he became obedient to the priest; here the priests and brothers blessed him in mellow tones; and when he went thence to his home, a smile of comfort crept over his mother's face, she called him to her arms, and welcomed him as if he had come to her from the celestial gate.

We may wonder why Brian, knowing the dangers that beset his idolized boy, did not place him in a good school, distant from the evil influences of his home. But the boy was young and tender—the father's heart trembled at the idea of parting with him. He knew nothing of the secret visits at the Brotherhood house; the mother wept at every hint of his absence, and Brian's heart was filled with a great compassion for the wife he

had loved so fondly, but who, withdrawing herself from his love, seemed fading like a flower uprooted from the soil.

The girls had made their first communion, and had come home. Nurtured in the very bosom of Romanism, Belle, by virtue of some subtle law of inheritance, developed daily the characteristics of her father. Though to her he had breathed no word of his sorrow, she *felt* that he was lonely, disappointed, heart-chilled in his dearest loves; and constantly her sympathy for him increased. Slowly she was learning, from observation, the secret cause of the desolation of her home, and was comparing that home with others she had seen, with the ideal home even, depicted in books devoted to her own religion, in which books, sometimes, the irrepressible voice of nature spoke.

Quietly the girl was ranging herself on her father's side; was nourishing for him a profound filial devotion; was dreaming of the days to come, when her affection and care could be a balm to his pained and wounded soul.

As yet this sympathy and tenderness were voiceless; but the girl was laying up in her heart memories which, one day, should appeal to her with a power beyond all speech.

Though seldom permitting himself to leave his endangered home for any length of time, Brian was now compelled to be absent for some weeks.

No sooner was he gone, than Clare, ordered by Father Garren, dismissed young Allan's daily tutor and sent him each morning to the Brotherhood school, permitting him only to return at night. We mention the order of Father Garren. He was now inquisitor-in-chief over Clare's household, for Father Leroy was dead. Cora Waring's first communion marked the last living appearance of Priest Leroy in the cathedral. There was no one, now, to suggest, even through motives of policy, patience, prudence, or prayer. War—war to the death—war, cruel and open, was all Father Garren's cry.

It was Allan Rowe who first discovered the attendance of his namesake at the Brotherhood school; and his discovery he immediately made known to his friend Brian. This hastened the father's return. A new tutor was engaged. It was useless to storm or upbraid.

"Clare," said Brian to his wife, "if this tutor is dismissed by other than myself, or if our son is sent any more to the Brotherhood, I shall feel it my duty to put him away at a

boarding-school, and not permit him to return for five years."

Clare was sullenly silent.

"How unhappy father looks," cried Belle, as she watched him passing down the street. "He is not so old as Mr. Rowe, or a good many others that we are acquainted with, and see how his face is lined and his hair made gray. Oh, mother, what is the matter with our home? It seems as if never a ray of sunlight entered it."

Clare turned a pained, amazed look on her child; her heart acknowledged the force of her words, and, burying her face in the sofa cushions, she sobbed passionately.

Cora lifted her eyes from her music copying, and a troubled look swept over her usually impassive face. Cora, from very infancy, had been called *devout*. Carefully instructed in her religion, scrupulously obeying its dictates, reticent of speech, and with a strange calm of temperament, perhaps, after all, the dominant feelings of this girl's nature were those impulses of a lady, which demanded the most exact delicacy and deference in all treatment of others to herself; in all her own conduct in life, the most rigid adherence to forms of etiquette; and the most lofty contempt of avarice, meanness, or malice.

Quiet in speech, dainty in attire, and minutely polite, Cora seemed the very genius of order in her home; while from her more impulsive younger sister flashed swift intelligence, and speech going home to the heart; while intuitions of sympathy gave, at times, a strange grace to her looks and manner. It was a family that might have been wonderfully happy, but for the galling yoke of Rome.

Young Allan was now nine years old, and the fact of his pupilage at the Brotherhood house had greatly excited his father's fears. Considering how he could guard the heart and life of this cherished boy, Brian's better impulses awoke. He called his son, one evening, to the library, and, drawing him fondly to his side, said:

"Allan, my mother died when I was but an infant. I never knew her love and care. I have left of her but two remembrances: they are equally dear to me. One is for myself; the other I give to you, my only son, charging you to keep it sacred for my sake and for hers, who has been, I trust, these many years in heaven."

Brian took from the table an ancient silver case, and, opening it, showed a miniature on ivory, the semblance of a lovely face, that, long ago laid down in the dust, awaited yet

the first resurrection of the dead. It seemed strange to the boy that those girlish features, the smiling mouth, the tender blue eyes, and straying rings of golden hair, could represent his father's mother. He looked from the fair countenance that had never grown pinched or weary, to the care-seamed face that now belonged to Brian Waring.

"My mother, and God's saint," said Brian, with new emotion in his voice. "Here, Allan, beloved boy, is the Book she loved the most; the guide and ornament of her life—my mother's Bible. My command to you, Allan, is to keep it as your most sacred treasure; yield it to none; read it; model your life by it, and I believe in my soul you can never go wrong. It teaches no false morality; it is pure and perfect; and I do not doubt, Allan, that it is the very voice of God."

Oh, why had not this trouble-tossed man adopted this Bible for the guide of his own life!

Allan took the book with interest and pleasure; his sympathies were moved. From the dimmed covers seemed to smile at him the face of the treasured miniature. He had learned to say little of any of his father's gifts, advice, or confidence, and now, convey-

ing the new treasure to his room, he locked it up safely, and, as time passed on, devoted many hours to reading it, with all the zest of romance. It was more enchanting than any thing at the Brotherhood school, and like that had the sweetness of bread eaten in secret.

We pass over a year.

Brian, returning home one evening, heard his children singing. Cora was at the piano, and the sweet boyish tones of Allan joined with the clear notes she lifted in praise of *Mary*:

"Then list to me, then list to me!
Oh, mother, purest, best!
And be to me, and be to me,
The harbinger of rest!"

There had been these several months unusual quiet in this distracted home. The words of his children's song awoke in Brian his fears for his son. They rung in his ear at the tea table, and when, afterward, the family had adjourned to the parlor, the echoes would not die away. He laid down the evening paper, and called his boy.

"Allan, come here, my child! I have not asked you this for some time—what have you done with my mother's Bible?"

With the words a thunderbolt had fallen. Cora turned from her globe of gold fish. The Bible! he had mentioned "the root of all sedition and heresy," as being in child Allan's keeping.

Belle's look was simple curiosity.

Clare, however, turned pale, and her breath came in swift catches. Allan drew near his father slowly.

"Answer me, child! Have you grown tired of it? Is it a dull book to you? Have you neglected to read it? Speak up, man—what have you done with my mother's Bible?"

Still no answer. The boy's eyes are downcast; his cheek is pallid; he half stretches out his hand to his mother, and Brian perceives that there is something wrong. He cries out:

"Answer me, Allan! Good heavens! have I been such a monster in my family that they are afraid of me? Am I such a savage no one dares tell me the truth?"

No; he has been neither a monster nor a savage, and now Belle's look changes swiftly to intense sympathy, and her father catches it with a strange glad bound of his heart amid its pain. What! one to feel with him and for him at last?

"Answer me, my son; are you afraid, say?"

"No, father—that is—I'm so sorry—but, but, I could not help it, indeed; and—it is not my fault—I—I."

"Speak English, sir! Give me an honest sentence, an answer plain and true, even if it flings my book back in my face."

"It can not, father," says Allan, literally, "for it is gone. There, mother! he told me never to tell, but you see I must tell, since my father asks me so plainly. I must, father; it is gone! It is burned! Father Garren took it from me; I told him it was yours—and hers, you know"—he looks at Belle, and lo! the fair face of the miniature is hers! and he goes on, "I told him, but he took it and burnt it up."

The child is not fashioned of the stuff martyrs are made of; he cries and quivers, but the lightning of his father's wrath passes beyond him to that cruel priest. None of those now present saw his transport on the day when Allan was baptized. They shuddered now at the white fury of his face when again his enemy has crossed his way, has stabbed and robbed him in the dark.

It was gone, the sacred book, chosen palladium of his boy; best legacy of the beloved dead. In that tremendous passion he might have cursed, in awful words, the priest,

the wife, the child, his hapless fate, when suddenly before his blazing eyes, into the distant shadows of the room, grew the girl face he had known only on the ivory miniature—the face of the young wife and mother early lost, that had been the holiest dream of his life—grew out of the darkness before him as in living beauty, pleaded with tender eyes until her passion-tossed son, man as he was, melted into a rain of tears, and Brian Waring hastened from the room.

There was no Christ to meet him in the library with potent consolation. Brian had never bowed his neck to the yoke which is light; but the heavenly compassion is infinite, and, moved by some divine affection, went after the unhappy man the child in whose face the lineaments of the fair young grandmother and the distracted father were strangely blended. She came up beside him, struck the heaped up papers on the library table with her little clenched fist and cried, "It was cruel, and I *haté* that man!"

"Oh! my child," said Brian, feeling a gleam of hope, "if only always you would love and pity me!"

Wretchedly unhappy—grieved, oh! so heartily for her husband, tremblingly and vaguely angry at her oppressive priest, and awfully

apprehensive of the future, poor Clare went to her room, and wept all night.

Brian must work rather than weep. Quietly, in the midnight, he aroused his boy, and the two went out into the starlight to the home of Allan Rowe. An hour later, and at the railroad the father parted with his son.

"Good-by, my poor boy. Don't think I am angry with you or blame you. I am taking this means to make you good and happy. Give all your confidence to this true friend, who has never failed me."

Then he went homeward, and young Allan was an exile from his home, placed under the wise and loving care of Allan Rowe.

Here are these two playing against each other—Brian and the priest.

"Mate!" cries Brian, when he sends away his son.

"Checkmate!" cries the priest, for now he has robbed Brian of both his girls.

"The only way to get back that boy is to banish those girls; and I command you to do it," says Father Garren to Clare. "And, until he reveals the boy's hiding-place, you must conceal the girls."

So one day while the father was busy in his office, the priest took the daughters somewhere, and days passed and they came

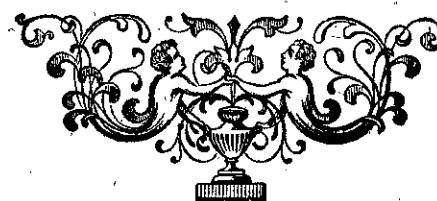
not again; while in the desolate house the father and mother faced each other, a pale anguish written over either countenance.

"Tell me what you have done with my girls!" said Brian.

"Give me back my boy!" answered Clare.

"Let us take them all back and be rid of the priest!" said Brian, in miserable entreaty.

"Flinch from your duty and you are lost!" said the priest to Clare.



CHAPTER IV.

THE YOKE OF CHRIST AND THE YOKE OF ROME.

A GIFT neglected shall be withdrawn. That mother's Bible had lain, these many years unopened in Brian's desk; but now that its sacred pages had been given to the fire, how doubly precious it became!

Far away on the Island of Cedars, the boy Allan lived with a tutor and Allan Rowe, in a queer, easy, safe, bachelor establishment, set up there by Rowe for his own accommodation. Here the pupil of the Jesuits, the cowed serf of the priests, learned that he had a mind and soul of his own. His nature expanded, he was free from spiritual bondage, and his father's high, ardent disposition began to be developed in him. The days passed gloriously; he studied, he roamed about; he enjoyed the sports of the woods; he was taught to form opinions; to argue them; to

be a reasonable being. The higher element of faith, of reliance on an infallible God and His infallible Word, was, thus far, left out of his education; but over the night of gloom rose the clear dawn of day.

Allan Rowe frequently left his young charge and the tutor and returned to the city. We do not stop here to explain the dealings of God with Allan Rowe, by what path he led him, by what discipline he instructed him: enough that He who went abroad at the sixth and the ninth hour to bring laborers into his vineyard, saw Allan Rowe standing idle, spoke to him with the voice of mastery, called him, and Allan obeyed and followed Him.

Andrew, being found of Jesus, went first for his own brother Simon. Allan Rowe, having no brother in the flesh, went after the man who was the brother of his heart, and preached Christ unto him. He knew whereof he affirmed, and testified that which he believed; and Brian Waring, tossed with doubts and fears, robbed of domestic happiness, disappointed in his dearest hopes, seeking rest on earth and finding none, listened assenting to the good news of grace to sinners, and took upon him the yoke that is easy and the burden that is light. In him was worked the Spirit's miracle of transformation; he was

the same; and yet how different! He had suffered, and now by that suffering came to him humility and sympathy; the bitterness of his soul was gone; anger gave place to a profound compassion. In his desolated home there was but one to receive the benefit of this divine tenderness, of these sanctified hopes; but how greatly was that one in need of consolation!

Clare was, indeed, bereaved. Her health was gone; her children were gone; she had been driven by her spiritual advisers to rebuff and trample on her husband's love until she believed that, too, was gone; happiness was lost; hope had perished. No words can tell how this poor Clare longed for peace, for affection, for the society of her son and daughters, for all the sweet amenities of domestic life: yet these longings she concealed in her heart. This unhappy slave of priestly bondage, with more than Spartan resolution, hid in her bosom the gnawing grief that hourly destroyed her; she would die and give no sign.

But now came this change in Brian; his eyes were opened; he saw the ceaseless and perfect love which God had ordained between husband and wife; he appreciated, for the first time, his wife's spiritual anxieties; he

realized her darkness, her danger, her blind craving for soul-safety; he could now comprehend her anxieties for what she deemed the religious training and spiritual safety of her children; she believed in her false gods; indeed none other had ever been presented to her. Brian had hitherto given no evidence of religious feeling; but the priest had addressed himself to the eternal want of the soul, and to him her awakened conscience had woefully turned for instruction and satisfaction. It might be now too late to retrieve the past; but Brian must do now what was evidently a duty, and had suddenly become pleasure.

Mr. Rowe being now in the city, young Allan, through him, sent frequent letters to his father full of loving messages to mother and sisters, and animated details of boy-sports and discoveries. Brian carefully erased the address and took the letters to the lonely mother.

"I hope, dear, that our daughters are as happy."

Clare made no reply, though she grasped Allan's letters as a hungry man grasps food. Once this silence would have angered Brian, but now his new sympathy perceived that this withholding of confidence was painful to

her, but that she was forced to it by a power she did not dare to resist. His only emotion now was tender pity, and he redoubled his efforts to comfort her. Again she heard the loving compliments of the days of old; he brought her gifts once more—books, flowers, or trifles of dress or ornament—that would please her taste. He had plenty of time now to spend with Clare, to walk with her, to ride with her; he broke down the barriers of reserve that had slowly risen between their hearts, and resumed the merry or earnest converse of days gone by. Though the children were gone, Brian would not let the home be gloomy; he would not suffer his wife to go pining and heart-broken to her grave, leaving to his future only a long regret. Clare noted the happy change—as it continued days and weeks, she brightened visibly; her words were freer; her eyes shone with something of the old love-light; she no longer held herself angrily aloof. In her hours of musing the faded ideal of wedded love, which once she had cherished, was retouched to beauty, which persuaded her to strive after a reality as fair. For the first time in her life Clare began to wonder if that religion was of God which put discord between those whom He had indissolubly joined together. But had

not Father Garren told her that religion came to set at variance kindred hearts, and that the *Church* proclaimed in Scripture, "he that loveth father or mother, son or daughter, more than me, is not worthy of me?" No wonder that Clare did not desire to read the Bible; the fragments of it doled out and explained by Rome, had made it seem, indeed, a bitter book.

It was evening, and Clare sat by the open window of the drawing-room. Brian came in, brought a shawl, folded it carefully about her, placed a cushion under her feet, and then fondly stroked the soft golden hair, still her chief beauty.

"Brian," said Clare, suddenly, "how different you are lately. What has made the change?"

Another man might have been suspected of changing his manner to gain an end in view, but not the sturdy, outspoken Brian Waring. The time of speech had come; there, as the twilight deepened, Brian told his wife in simple, earnest words, how old things had passed away and all had become new.

This self-abnegation, this casting away of works of righteousness that we have done, this reliance on Jesus, this nearness and direct

application to Christ a Living Head, was, to Clare, a revelation. She had never before imagined that there was any such experience possible, but the calm, assured words of her husband fixed it in her mind as an absolute fact. She envied the experience, and had a new respect for him. He seemed to be very much nearer God, and, therefore, more godly than Priest Garren, and it would be so much more encouraging to find in her husband a spiritual adviser and friend, than in the priest who was personally so repugnant to her.

The keen eye of the family inquisitor, Priest Garren, soon detected Clare's softened feelings toward Brian: divided, he might conquer these two; united, they would defy his power. Arrogant domination was this man's natural element. He sent his servant one day to Clare, desiring her to call upon him at his house, as he had important business. Clare did not wish to—did not dare refuse.

"I tell you, Mrs. Waring," said Priest Garren in his most imperious tones, "This matter about your boy must be settled. He is the property of the Catholic Church, and he must be delivered from the keeping of infidels. It is your duty to find where he is, and how he is to be got; and I command you to do it."

"But, father, I can not," remonstrated Clare.

"There is no can not about it; you are weak and traitorous; you are becoming tinctured with this accursed heresy; you are in danger of eternal destruction which ever awaits apostates."

"You misjudge me, father," faltered Clare; "I am entirely faithful to the Church."

"Your *obedience* will prove that," quoth the priest. "I have marked out your plan; it is yours to pursue it. You will leave that man and retire to a convent to pray for yourself and your children, lest you be delivered over to the devil. If you thus separate yourself from him, he will appeal for a divorce, and you can obtain alimony and very likely the custody of your children. At all events we could procure an order that the boy be produced in court; and once we knew where he was, we could be pretty sure of seizing him. What is this obstinate heretic to you in comparison with the everlasting salvation of your children, or your and their eternal perdition?"

But Father Garren had overshot his mark. If there was one thing above others which Clare Waring held sacred it was her marriage bond. Divorce! The priest had overrated his authority; this heart which he had crushed and wounded, and ruthlessly trampled upon so long, turned on him in a fury:

"Divorce, father! Brian would never seek for that, nor would I. Does not our Church call marriage a sacrament? Does it allow a civil marriage? If the court can not make a marriage, can it abrogate one? If we must appeal to His Holiness, my husband will not recognize his jurisdiction, nor will American law. I tell you I stand before God and men as Brian Waring's wife, and such I remain until death divides us. Dare you, a minister of the Church, lightly esteem the sacrament of matrimony, and lay it at the mercy of a court of justice?"

This was one of the few times, in his life, when Father Garren was forced to condescend to flattery and entreaty.

"Daughter Clare," he said, smoothly, "you are, indeed, a most faithful and well-instructed child of the Church. I was but proving you, as the Lord proved our first parents in Eden. You are truly the wife of Brian Waring, and on you God has laid a care for his soul and the duty of his conversion. You have waited long, but you must have faith that your works will be rewarded. Does not the venerable Abbe Martinet call these heretics our *separated brethren*? Are we not to expect their return to the bosom of the Holy Church,

drawn hither by the persuasive power of Mary, true mother of mankind?"

Clare had favored her priest with glances of that blue lightning which she had sometimes flashed upon Brian, but these guileful words calmed her rage, and she turned again a submissive ear to his instructions.

"I ask a sacrifice of you, my daughter, but only for a little time. Retire, as I told you, to the convent, to pray for the conversion of your husband and the reunion of your family. I shall unite my prayers with yours, while, immediately upon your arrival at the convent, the Sisters will commence a Novena of thirty days to the Blessed Virgin to intercede for the accomplishment of your desire."

Clare mused; here lay duty in obedience—joy also in seeing those two dear girls—some hope for Brian and family reunion. She spoke one thought aloud:

"I could then be with my daughters."

"Clare Waring," spoke the harsh voice of the priest, "a sacrifice is worth nothing unless it is *perfect*. Hold back from the Church no part of the price. You will not be at St. Sacrament with your daughters, but at St. Bridgets."

Cora and Belle Waring had been sent about among several convents, but, as their father

apparently made no effort to find them, they had at last been settled at St. Sacrament on the footing of pupils. Father Garren's plan for Clare was to divide her from her home and restrain her affections; far be it from the priestly-despot to put the weary-hearted mother where domestic ties would grow stronger in the sunshine of her children's smiles.

While Clare's heart had inwardly renewed some of its tenderness to Brian, she had felt it her duty to give no outward sign of concession. To him she seemed hard as Job's wife who would not be entreated—no, not even for the children's sake. It was, therefore, with more anguish than surprise, that he found himself apparently deserted. When he returned home, one day, his wife was absent. The servants professed to know nothing about her, though one maid, compassionating his anxiety, said that she had heard "something about her mistress going to make a retreat for the good of her soul."

Among the letters dropped in the box at Brian's office was found, next morning, one from Clare—merely this:

"Do not seek for me. Duty calls me away. I go to pray for your conversion and my son's safety."

No kind form of address—even no signa-

ture; just the well-known writing—traced once on such loving letters. Its short, cold lines cut Brian to the heart.

This letter had been ordered and examined by Father Garren. It was three days before the heart-sick husband found a brief note in his dressing-case, slipped there at some blest moment by his unhappy wife:

"My Brian, I do not want to leave you—I will come again. Oh, Brian! my love, my love."

Father Garren would have anathematized Clare if he had known of that note; but, to Brian, it came like a voice from heaven.

The priest's aim was to force Brian to sue for a divorce on the ground of desertion, but he had mistaken his man. This was something Brian would not do; he had the strength of patience. Brian used every effort, quietly, to discover his wife's whereabouts. The Bentlys, evidently, did not know of this new move. Aunt Bently said she was scandalized; but that a Retreat or a Novena might be Clare's motive, and neither of these would last over thirty days for the most devout *secular*.

But, alas! the month passed, and Brian was yet in his deserted home, robbed of all his dear ones. He dared not bring back his boy;

he could not find his wife or girls. He finally dismissed all the servants, brought in two or three Protestant domestics, and in his lonely house lived on through dreary days, yet comforted through the darkness by the strong consolation the Spirit brings the children of the heavenly kingdom.

Meanwhile what, in the Convent of St. Bridget, were the feelings and occupations of the truant wife?

During her interview with her priest, Clare had come to a determination—this seclusion in the convent was to be the last effort she would make to Romanize her family. These many years she had struggled and suffered, and laid her best affections a sacrifice on the altar of her faith. A secret anger had grown up within her, against the saints who would not come to her aid, even toward the Virgin Mary, whom the Church styles "the sole extirpator of all heresies," and yet who had, in spite of his wife's prayers, suffered Brian Waring to go on for years with every drop of his blood a determined and a distinct heresy against the Papal Church.

Clare yearned for the love of the days gone by, and for the happiness of her ideal home, with a longing grown in these last few months stronger than her Romish zeal.

Clare now made up her mind to keep this Novena with the utmost devotion; if the desire of her heart was given her, well and good, peace would thus be achieved. If Brian still maintained his position, yet patiently welcomed her home after absence, then the children should be brought home, and there would be friendship and fair play in spite of Father Garren; for these last few weeks of loving kindness had done more to destroy Clare's fanaticism than had been accomplished in all the former years. It was not that Brian had, in the least, yielded his convictions of duty, nor his maintenance of his rights, but he mingled sympathy and affection with steady adherence to an honest purpose, and this union of gentleness and sincerity made fair contrast to the arrogance and double-dealing of the Irish priest.

Clare could not, without a great final struggle for success, relinquish the chief object of her life since her acquaintance with Brian Waring. One more effort was to be made, and as was natural to a Romanist, she turned with strong crying to the Virgin.

Romanism is not God-worship, but Mary-worship. Says the Abbe Martinet: "Admirable instinct of the Christian family! Shepherds and their flocks seek an asylum in the

Immaculate Heart whose ineffable purity is never tarnished; they are not satisfied with pressing round their Mother, but they throw themselves into her bosom."

So Clare, calling the Sisters of St. Bridget to the rescue, flew to Mother Mary and began her Novena.

"Be instant in prayer to the Mater Admirabilis, daughter," said Priest Garren; "her prayers are ten times more acceptable to God than ours."*

Then came to Clare her husband's words, that "Now in Christ, God himself loved Brian Waring, and had said, in Scripture, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you: ask, and ye shall receive, for the Father himself loveth you.'" Most blest assurance!

Was it the first germ of a higher knowledge, springing in her soul, that made Clare ask:

"And father, that is as high as we can go, to the Mother of God?"

"Surely," replied the priest. "In the plan of regeneration the woman occupies the first rank. She did not come forth from the God man, but he was born of her. It was not

*Challoner's C. C. Ins., p. 231.

from the new Adam that Mary beatissima learned her destiny; she conferred on him his name, and commended him for thirty years. She offered him as the victim of propitiation on the altar of the Most High, and how could her presence at the crucifixion be explained if her place there had not been designated for the accomplishment of the great mystery?"

"Then I may address my prayers to her with entire confidence?"

"Certainly. Rest assured that you will be heard and answered."

Vigils, fasts, and prayers were now the order of the day. Night after night in the dim candle-light of the chapel the slender form of Clare might be seen, she keeping, on her knees, the *consecrated hours* in memory of Gethsemane; while Nocturnes, Vespers, Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext and None, and Complins, found our devotee praying still. Then into the chapel, with its taper-lit gloom, came the Sisters of the order, with the Litany of the children of Mary.

"Mother of God the Son, protect thy children. Daughter of God the Father, govern thy children. Spouse of the Holy Ghost, sanctify

*Abbe Martinet, *Religion in Soc.*, pp. 255-258.

thy children. Mother of strength; Mother full of zeal; Mother ever calm; Mother most faithful; Mother most meek, assist thy children."

Then the organ pealed, and one voice, far off in the choir, wailed: "O, Mother, hear us!" And again the Sisters pleaded:

"By thy immaculate conception; by thy heart pierced with a sword of grief, O, Mother, hear us!" And so long ago, on Carmel, some called on Baal unhelping and unheeding.

Day after day lapsed and no miracle of assistance came. Instead, Father Garren learned what he did not tell Clare, that Brian had made, among the heretics, public profession of his faith in Jesus.

There were some hours each day when Clare lay down in her own room to refresh her exhausted frame. These hours were insupportable, and to relieve their tedium, she besought Father Garren to bring her some devotional books.

The holy father possessed a magnificent library of some thirty or forty volumes, as "The Three Kings of Cologne," "Purgatory," "The Lenten Manual," etc. As he looked them over to find pabulum for the famished mind of his daughter Clare, he came to a small vol-

ume of extracts from the Roman Missal, "Defects Occurring in the Mass." He put that with the others intended for Clare. As it happened, this was the first book selected by her for reading, for it had never been suggested to her that any defects could be in that "Most Holy Sacrament."

The statement of an ex-Catholic is as follows:

"What first revolted me, and forever drove me from Romanism, was a study of 'Defects Occurring in the Mass.'"

This was something like Clare Waring's experience. Her eyes were opened. She read: "If rose or any distilled water is used in the bread, it is doubtful if it is a sacrament!" Doubtful, the eucharist—object of implicit faith!

"If the wine be putrid, or made of unripe grapes, no sacrament is made." But mark it, ye honest souls! "If suitable matter can not be had, to *avoid a scandal*, the priest must proceed." A sacrament and no sacrament—a holy farce!

"If the intention of the priest fails, there is no sacrament; to take a false sacrament is damnable idolatry." But to this damnation are the faithful liable through lack of intention of the priest, or *to avoid scandal*!

Furthermore, "If poison fall into or on the true blood and body, they are not safe to use and too holy to be thrown away. They must be burned." "If a spider, fly, or bug, fall into or on the blood or body, these intruders must be swallowed with the rest."

The remaining *errors* are too disgusting to enumerate, and they disgusted Clare. The doctrine of the Real Presence in the Mass stood before her in its bare deformity. She began to sift her faith, and found more chaff than wheat. She lived her Novena through, but she was suspicious of her religion, and angry with unheeding virgin, saints, and angels.

But, leaving Clare, we must turn our thoughts for a time to Cora and Belle, pupils at St. Sacrament.

Their mother had been in the habit of visiting them once in three weeks. She retired to St. Bridget's a few days before her usual time for a visit, and as the Novena dragged its slow length along, they were left for some time without hearing from or seeing any one of their family.

Brooding in silence over her memories, Belle's heart turned pitifully, lovingly to her father. Such yearnings did not disturb the placid Cora, but she also found *casus belli*,

and she found it in Father Garren, who was constant in his visits. While this priest's appearance was repulsive to a dainty taste, his manners were even more repugnant. Avarice and insolence were this man's prevailing traits. He was a type of the worst, and not the best of the Romish priesthood. As a reasoner he was an equal of him who, in Rome's mighty reminiscence of Babel—the recent Ecumenical Council—argued that the Pope was infallible, *because* St. Peter was crucified with his head downward, "which shows," said he, "that the Church stands on its head!!"* He might have proved that the Church stands on its head by the inverted views she takes of every thing.

In matters of science our priest was of the order of Cardinal Cullen, who, in 1869, admonished his flock that a belief in the rotary motion of the earth was an infernal heresy, and opposition to the utterances of the infallible papacy.†

A violent, ultra Montanist, a dogged believer in every tradition, miracle, and doctrinal deliverance of the Papal Church, he had reached his present position of one of the

*Pio Nono and his Counselors, *Harp. Mag.*, Dec., 1870, p. 28.

†Cardinal Cullen's Pastoral Letter for 1869. Dublin.

priests of the Cathedral, having great authority over the crowds of poor foreigners who worshiped there, sullenly accepted in his ministrations, by the more refined, who cherished the memory of Father Leroy.

Only two incidents of the girls' life in the convent we will give. The first, a trifle "light as air," which, nevertheless, angered the beautiful and haughty Cora. Cora and Belle had been called into the parlor to see their priest, and seated themselves together on a fauteuil near the window. The priest, sitting near by, took the long curtain-cord, with its pendant tassel, and as he talked kept swinging it into Cora's face, laughing each time that it struck her cheek or neck. She repressed her vexation for some time, then said sharply:

"Don't do that, father!"

He persisted in his elegant recreation, and Cora remarked stiffly:

"Your manner is inconsistent with the reverence of your profession."

He gave a loud laugh, and swung the tassel fairly in her face. Burning with rage, Cora sprung up to leave the room, when, stooping forward, the priest grasped her dress. Cora turned, in a fury, and promptly hammered the reverend *gentleman's* fat hand with her little fist. He released her, and Cora swept from

the parlor, followed by Belle, who, as this scene was perfectly consistent with her idea of her priest's puerile character, was laughing.

Only a few days after, the priest called on the girls again. Cora did not wish to see him, but Belle, eager for news from home, urged her to do so. There were now a nun and two German pupils in the drawing-room. It was the age of gold and silver money, and as Cora sat down, some coins rattled in her pocket.

"Daughter Cora!" Cora turned; Father Garren was holding out his hand to her pocket.

Vexed, Cora took out a quarter of a dollar and dropped it into his outstretched hand; then turned away, ashamed to see him keep it.

"Cora!" She looked about. The hand was held forth again. Flushing, she laid a half dollar in it.

Again that "Cora," and still the begging hand.

"For shame, father!" cried the girl, passionately.

"Think how much credit you can gain in heaven!" said the priest.

"I have given enough. I don't wish to give you all my money."

"Daughter, can you refuse the *Church*?"

Still the persistent hand; and Cora reluctantly relinquished a gold dollar. "That will end it," she thought.

But no! the fat hand was instantly extended again.

"Do you want *all*?" cried Cora, looking into his eyes for a trace of shame.

"Remember the poor, Cora!"

"*Remember the priest, you mean,*" said Cora, for once stirred out of her calm.

Father Garren did not seem discomposed, neither did he abate his demand. Cora handed him a five-dollar gold piece, saying coldly:

"*That is all.*"

During recreation hour Cora and Belle, arm in arm, walked to a distant part of the convent garden. Said Cora, in a low tone:

"I'm sick of this place; I want to go home."

"So do I," said Belle. "We are much happier there, and we are old enough to go into society. I do not see why mother has not been here this long while. Father Garren says all are well, *but there's no telling* any thing by his words; they may mean half a dozen things. Let us go home."

"It would be useless to try unless some one came for us. Father Garren would say we were sent here, we are not of age, and must stay until we are taken out."

"Then," said Belle, boldly, "let us send for father to come after us."

"How can we do it?" asked Cora, with animation.

"Have you any money?" asked Belle.

"No; *he* got it all," said Cora, grieved for her priest's shameless greed.

"I have a three-dollar piece. Little Nell Jay's black nurse comes for her Friday afternoons, and you know I often dress up the child and take her to the sacristy. I will have ready a note for Mr. Rowe, and slip it and the gold in the girl's hand. She will think it a love letter, pity my forlornity, and deliver it as directed. Then father will come for us. Now, Cora, don't vex yourself any more. The holy father is neither a saint nor an angel, and I never thought he was. Let us be happy. I will send the note; and, any way, we are not badly off. They are kind to us here; we are quite favorites."

Belle went dancing off to pet little Nell Jay. Cora took "A Visit to the Holy Sacrament" from her pocket, and sat down to read.

The garden was fair—a bower of flowers and greenery—but it was no paradise to Cora. Her Dagon had fallen and was broken. Her priest, God on earth, to whom in the confessional she had bent the knee, was—beneath

contempt even. Had she not been taught of her priest, "he rules all conditions by the elevation of his character, and embraces them all in the circles of charity?"* And that "Christianity has elevated the priest to the incomprehensible dignity of the *coadjutor of God* in the redemption of the world?"† Had she not seen this very man create Christ on the altar? Had she not learned that that "hand had received power by holy unction to consecrate and dispense the body of the Son of the Virgin?"‡ And now she had fairly loathed that fat hand when it impudently swung tassels into her face, and greedily begged without shame. It was a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous, and she could not endure it.

Poor Cora; she thought nothing of going home, forgot Belle's plans, dropped her book, and lying down on the seat began to cry.

"What is the matter with my little sister?" asked a nun who was passing by.

"Everybody is so wicked," sobbed Cora.

"Catholics are not wicked," said the nun.

"Yes, indeed, sister; a good many of them."

"Oh, no, Sister Cora," said the smiling nun,

*Abbe Martinet, *Religion in Soc.*, p. 215.

†*Ibid.*, p. 209.

‡*Ibid.*, p. 210.

"you are mistaken; a Catholic is regenerated in his baptism, and so can not sin; the Church says so. For my part I never commit sins, nor am I wicked."

"What does it mean by venial sins, mortal sins, sins against the Holy Ghost, and all that is in the Catechism?" asked Cora, astutely.

"O—why—ah, that must be to instruct us, or to fill up the Catechism, or to give us something to teach these idle children, or for some reason. My little sister knows she must accept all truths whether they agree or not; the agreement is not our business; and now my little sister will wipe her eyes and come to the refectory."

While writing her French exercise in the school-room, Belle wrote her note and sealed it unobserved. She did not know that Allan Rowe was now much on the Island of Cedars, and she had no doubt that the missive would reach him at the Astor House. Nor was she to be disappointed. Allan Rowe was now in the city. When Belle playfully conducted wee Nell Jay to her waiting nurse, and slyly slipped a note and money into the black maiden's hand, that maiden scented a love entanglement, and became sympathetic. Besides, if the lady would give three dollars postage, the gentleman would surely give as

much more. The sable messenger, with admirable secrecy, executed her mission, and Mr. Rowe was called from the supper-table to speak with some one in the hall.

"I have a note," said the girl, "from a young missey, with black eyes, who wears shining gold braids piled up like a crown."

Allan Rowe recognized this description of Belle Waring and tore open the note. Only this:

"DEAR MR. ROWE—We are so tired of St. Sacrament we want to go home. Can not you get father to come for us?"

"BELLE."

"What are you waiting for?" asked Allan of the girl.

Then recollecting that he had given her nothing he slipped an ample reward into her ready hand, saying:

"Keep quiet, my good girl!"

"What an old lover young missey has," thought the girl, going home. "I hope there'll be more letters."

Next day Brian Waring and his friend Rowe went to St. Sacrament, demanded to see his daughters, and announced that they must go home, which the girls were only too ready to do. On Saturday, therefore, they were safely established at their father's house, and Ben

Bently and his wife were sent for to keep them company.

On Saturday Clare Waring's Novena had ended, but the Sabbath was the fifteenth of August, the great festival of the "Assumption of the Holy Virgin," "the greatest of all the yearly festivals in honor of the Blessed Virgin," "when the Heavens were opened and the Son of God himself descended to receive the pure and stainless spirit of His forever Virgin Mother," as says the author of "Catholic Festivals and Devotions." It would have been very improper for Clare to leave the convent on that high day; she must consecrate it as a holy after-thought to the Novena; and she did it, hoping against hope, believing against belief, tossed to and fro between old prejudices and new doubts.

On Monday morning Clare summoned her priest:

"Father Garren, I am now going home."

"Had you not better wait until your husband wants you enough to come for you?"

"No; I went without his knowledge, I shall return without his invitation. I have tried to save his soul, father, but I feel that, in this desertion, I have done him a great wrong. I shall now return, and try to be a good wife to one who has always been faithful to me."

"Suppose he will not receive you, daughter?"

"He will," said Clare, quietly.

"If he does not will you leave him?" asked the priest, furious because Cora and Belle had gone home, a fact which he had concealed from Clare.

"Do you ask a wife to separate from her husband?" demanded Clare, indignantly.

"I want to see a daughter of the Church properly treated, and not ill-used by a heretic."

"Father Garren, I am going home."

"Will you rest it here?" cried the priest; "there is my black boy on the steps; will you tell him to go to Mr. Waring's office and bid him bring a carriage for you, and not go till he does bring it?"

"Very good," said Clare, with firm faith in her Brian; "you *stay here*, father, and *I'll go* and give the message in just that form."

The priest winced at this lack of confidence, and Clare went out. She gave the order to the boy, bidding him hurry with his errand, and returned to the parlor.

Father Garren then told Clare that "he wished to call her attention to two texts; one was that 'Catholic Christians must not be unequally yoked with unbelievers;' the other was that 'the Catholic Christian must come

out from the world and be separate;' and he was in doubt whether both these texts did not mean that Clare should not be married to Brian."

"That question belongs to other days," said Clare; "I can not discuss it now. Holy Church has blessed my union with Brian; my marriage is an irrevocable sacrament; I can not annul it."

She presently excused herself, left the room and returned in a little time in her carriage-dress.

"What now?" cried Father Garren.

"I must be ready for Brian," said Clare.

She took her position by one of the windows looking into the street. The priest promptly posted himself at the other. The shutters were closed, of course, but in them there was a peep-hole where all true Catholics could view heretics passing by.

The priest now tried to stir anger against Brian in Clare's heart—now to encourage all her Romish views. Clare, too excited to speak, stood tapping the window seat with nervous fingers. Presently there came the rattle of wheels—the Waring carriage drew up before the door! The priest gnawed his thick lip. But worse, the carriage door opened, and Brian Waring stepped upon the pavement.

Clare eagerly unbolted the shutter, knocked on the pane, and Brian, lifting his hat, gave her a courteous greeting. Clare ran into the hall and pulled the bell for the portress. The Mother Superior and the priest followed her to make the best of defeat, by shaking hands with and blessing their departing daughter. They knew that their case was hopeless when they saw the loving meeting of husband and wife.

"Brian," said Clare, as they drove off, "I left you to try and save your soul."

"Dear Clare, your effort was needless; Christ has saved me."

"I hoped, dear Brian, that my prayers would draw you to enter our Church."

"My wife, I have already united with the Church on earth, and trust one day to join the Church in heaven."

Clare was silent for a time.

"I shall never leave you again, Brian. Let us be united, and love each other."

"With all my heart," said Brian.

"Stop a moment! Tell the coachman to drive to St. Sacrament for our daughters," cried Clare, laying down her last weapon.

"They are at home anxiously waiting for you. They sent for me, and I went for them on Saturday."

How Clare's face lit up! There would be a home and a family once again. Then the shadow—where would young Allan be?

"How soon can you and the girls be ready for a journey?" asked Brian. "We must go to get our boy. You are all pale and feeble; I will take you away, until November, to one of the most delightful places."

Delightful! Any place would be delightful to that heart-starved mother, where she could be with her boy—with all her children. Who doubts that the Island of Cedars was to this reunited family like Eden—like Paradise restored?

Brian carefully refrained from any religious controversy with his wife, but he established his household in the fear of the Lord. He said grace at table and no one interrupted; indeed all looked pleased. He began family worship, in fear and trembling, giving his wife and daughters liberty to withdraw if they chose. But they seemed willing to stay; indeed Belle went with her father with all her heart, from sheer love to him. Cora thought it respectful to attend, and was ready to do her share in maintaining peace. There was a church on the mainland which could be reached by the row boat in a few moments. Thither, on Sabbath, went Allan Rowe when

he was their guest, went also Brian, Belle, and young Allan; there also, in the departing glory of Indian summer-days, Clare and Cora ventured once or twice. But while Brian was wisely silent on disputed points, light came to Clare through her children. Cora detailed her vexations and doubts at the convent, and, in hours of confidence, Clare whispered her own doubts. The boy Allan used the new liberty of free speech; so also did Belle.

"I am a Catholic, but I wish father would move, so that we need not meet Father Garren," said Cora.

You may be sure Brian was willing to change his residence; and so, after these many years, there came peace to the troubled home; the oil of healing had been poured on the waters of strife. Young Allan and Belle avowed themselves Protestants; Cora and her mother were nominal Roman Catholics, but of the liberal party in action, so plots and counterplots that had only worked woe were laid aside. With returning content health came back to Clare; when her heart was light the roses bloomed on her cheek once more. By a bitter experience she had learned not to permit priests to meddle with her family affairs.

While Brian was sustained only by pride and prejudice, the strife was hopeless and endless. When he had faith to maintain, when he had learned alike Christian courage and Christian sympathy, he conquered through Him that had loved him.

But how bitter, during these many years, had been his bondage! What torture had been his in place of happiness! How cruel had been the yoke of Rome, of which he should bear the scars forever! Only as a Christian could Brian maintain his position against the priests, and hold his own in the unhappy domestic strife. Had he been a Christian in the beginning of his career, he would never have entered into marriage relations with one whose wishes and whose beliefs were so diverse from his own.

Making a Proselyte.

CHAPTER I.

COMPASSING SEA AND LAND TO MAKE ONE PROSELYTE.

HUMAN sympathy, and love, and joy born out of sorrow, have crystallized about the name of Nain these many centuries. Since Christ walked in Palestine, the words, "The only son of his mother, and she a widow," have found quick access to the heart. Herbert Vail was a widow's only son, center of her affections and object of all her hopes. Widowed before most women are wives, Mrs. Vail had found her life described by Job's parable of the tree: "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof

will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant;" the fair promise of her own life cut off by death, in her only son she should yet have a home and family. His household should yet be the rejoicing of her declining years, his family should fill with gladness her lonely heart. All these dreams seemed now on the eve of realization; Herbert was in his senior year in college, and was engaged to be married to the very girl whom, of all others, his mother would have chosen for the partner of his life. Unwilling to be separated from her idol, Mrs. Vail had moved to the village of ———, where her son was to pursue his collegiate course, that his home might yet be with her. She saw him well liked by his teachers, admired in society, popular among his classmates, dutiful to herself, and beloved by Edna North, and her heart had sung for joy. Beautiful in person, and refined in manners, sensitive, moral, with artistic tastes, and gentle disposition—it was not to be expected that mother or lover should be first to discern that there were in Herbert's character more elements of weakness than of strength.

We take up this young man's history on an

April afternoon, when nature, with busy hands, was weaving over earth her broidery of green and bloom. The last class had left the lecture-room; forth from the gray-walled college had poured the young men, destined in the coming years to make or mar the fate of multitudes; Herbert Vail and his prospective brother-in-law, John North, stood at the gate of Herbert's home, ready to set out on their "constitutional" or afternoon walk. Up or down, which way should they go? An apparently trifling question: up, lay the busy street, the market, the stores, the post-office, the crowds of pretty girls in best array, given to smiling, dropping handkerchiefs, and other small flirtations with the students—among them never Edna, the true, nor that other fair girl, who had come into undisputed possession of John North's heart—Hester Adams. Down, from Mrs. Vail's, the street grew quiet and deserted, the old-fashioned houses, standing in shady gardens full of box and myrtle, and close-cut evergreens, with ancient forest trees bowering the gateway, lined the road for half a mile, when it lapsed into the green, peaceful country, like a stream that has found the sea. Up or down? "We will go down," said John; "we went up yesterday."

Down, keeping step as those accustomed

to walk together—though Herbert would full soon accommodate himself to another pace—and presently they came to a lot, inclosed by a rough fence, and apparently deserted. A few stunted evergreens were slowly dying where they had been planted; here three years before had been laid the corner-stone of a Romish Church; during these three years the spade, the trowel and the mason's line and plummet had here been idle; weeds had grown and withered over the corner-stone; weeds had found a poor roothold in the dust that had drifted upon the blocks of limestone brought thither for the foundations of the coming church; the mounds of earth thrown up by the shovel, when the work begun, were worn and beaten down by wind and rain, lying like unkept graves. Herbert rested his elbow upon the fence and paused to look; his eyes were now unconsciously resting on a spot indissolubly connected with all his future life.

"The work moves slowly," said Herbert.

"I don't know as I regret it," said sturdy John, standing erect, his arms folded behind him; "to my rugged heretical mind, it looks like the building of the house of Dagon, and I can not bid it God speed; it would only be another outwork cast up against the kingdom

of our Lord, against his beleagured Church."

"O, I don't know about that, John," said Herbert, lightly; "that is being a little too hard. The same religion doesn't suit all varieties of the human mind; I dare say there is good in this. I believe in good in everything. I don't object to Romanism for those who truly believe in it."

"Did you ever hear of believing *a lie*?" said John.

"Ah! there you are again. You are a regular conglomerate of Knox, Luther, Calvin, and all those other crusty heroes of an earlier day, born too late to fit, John. The world has grown amiable, intelligent, cultivated, and has no work for you stern iconoclasts. For my part this abandoned work makes me sad. My sympathies are aroused for the man whose toil has thus far come to naught; who must wait so long for the fulfillment of his hopes; whose heart must so often have grown sick with discouragements."

"Thanks! Sympathy is ever grateful to the sad. Not the less grateful from a stranger."

Thus speaking, the parish priest, whose church building was under discussion, gently pushed himself between the two friends. He bowed courteously to both, and turning to Herbert continued: "Thank you again for

your sympathy; it is something new; we Catholics are here strangers in a strange land; ours is not a popular religion, but it is well even to bear unpopularity for the truth's sake."

John made a motion to proceed on his way, and Herbert turned from the railing on which he had leaned. With another courteous bow and wave of his hand, the priest held his central position and walked on betw the young men.

"Now," thought John North, "for a dispute on creeds," but nothing of the kind came. The priest began to speak of their college course, of the various institutions of learning in America, of Heidelberg, and the ancient fame of the Sorbonne, of the Papal College at Rome. He spoke of Latin as the common tongue of the learned, a tongue which might be made to surmount the curse of Babel and draw all men near together; then of music, whose witching tones could subdue enmities, cheer the sad, moderate or inspire passion, and make strangers friends; then of immortal art, where great souls bequeathed their greatest thoughts to kindred spirits through all the ages.

John North walked on in silence. A smooth sophistry, or the graceful ornaments of con-

versation, had never for him the charm of bold facts or honest truth. Herbert enjoyed the priest's easy flow of language, and surface ideas, and briskly responded. Was it worth noting that, as they walked, Herbert kept even pace with his new companion, while John strode on, as turf men would say, a neck ahead? Still on, until they reached the huge black walnut tree, that spread its arms, where the stone pavement, broken and roughened by the feet that tramped it through many years, the pavement with interstices, grass-grown, and edges fringed with chickweed and dandelions, terminated. Here they turned and came as they had gone, until they reached the desolate lot, with the small building at one end, with the priest's house, the confessional and chapel, all under one roof. Now the priest must leave them. "It is a poor place," he said; "but, after all, here you will find one or two rare old parchments, a bas-relief from the Eternal City, and a good painting, with a hearty welcome. Come and see me; it is a pity to ostracize me, because I am a priest."

"Thank you heartily, sir," said John, bowing.

"I shall be sure and come, father," said Herbert.

"You would not really go, would you?" asked John, as they went out of ear shot.

"Yes, certainly. He seems a companionable man, and has seen the world. As he says, it is cruel to ostracize him on account of his religion. John, my boy, you are a bigot."

"I hope not," said John, looking puzzled and pained; "but it has always seemed to me that to court antichrist is to deny the Lord who has bought me with a price. I do not wish to ignore the man as a *man*, but I can not fellowship him as a priest. I believe heartily, Herbert, but I am not crafty, and am unused to controversy; suppose I genially put myself in this man's way, and he catches me with guile, and I turn Romanist. No, no; safe side is best side; the risk is too great to run for the mere sake of being called benevolent and unprejudiced."

"A Romanist!" cried Herbert. "I thought, sober John, that you had more confidence in yourself. At our age, and schooled as we have been in the very bosom of orthodoxy, we are not fit subjects for proselyting, and that good fellow wouldn't try."

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed," said John, solemnly. "Look at Archbishop Manning's case, a minister, who had gained some fame from his successful attacks

of Romanism, becomes Rome's convert, abandons his Church and his *wife*, and enters the priesthood."

"Likely," said the incorrigible Herbert, "his wife was not as pretty as a couple of dear girls, who are to take tea with my mother, and are now standing with her on yonder veranda, waiting for us. Away with your dull cares, my John, and we will have supper, and music, and all that man could ask for elevated happiness."

John was no cynic; he was a whole hearted young fellow, and the sight of his Hester, and his only sister ready to welcome him to social pleasures, put to flight his new-come cares and queries. During the evening Herbert narrated the incidents of the afternoon walk, and managed, as he usually did, to throw a glamour of romance over his subject. "He was probably standing by the gate, mourning over his forlorn possessions, like Marius weeping over the ruins of Carthage: for my part, I'm glad I said out my sympathies, which brought him a ray of consolation."

Going home alone, after leaving Hester at her father's door, John did not feel as serenely at ease as Herbert. He could not think he had been hard, he was sure he had uttered honest convictions, yet he wished Father Jes-

Jessamine had not been quite so near, and he did not like Herbert plume himself upon having done a good action. This is a queer world, and right does not always bring immediate reward, either outwardly or to internal consciousness.

It was not many days before Herbert had knocked at the priest's door, and been ushered into the study. "Welcome!" cried Father Jessamine, grasping both his hands; "other young men have promised visits, then shunned me like a pariah."

"Perhaps, father, they think you do not care for their society," suggested Herbert.

"Indeed I do, and I show it. We Catholics do not shun you; it is your people that shun us, my young brother. You are to us as separated brethren, the self-exiled members of our great family, over whom our souls yearn in tenderness. When I walk the streets the little Protestant children slip away from me, as if I were grim death himself."

There was no truth in the assertion, but Herbert pitied him, as he uttered it, receiving it as true.

"Your mother is a widow, Mr. Vail?"

Herbert bowed.

"The tie between you is then particularly tender. I doubt not that you appreciate it

Our Church holds such relationships as particularly sacred; and types by them the sacred union between the Church and her members. A living, loving mother is a great blessing; but you young men demand unlimited happiness; I think I have met you some evenings with a young lady on your arm?"

He spoke so kindly, with more friendship than curiosity in his tones, that Herbert responded: "Yes, Miss North, my promised wife."

The priest bent his head, acknowledging the confidence, and passed cautiously to another theme. "Young men, left fatherless, awake my profound interest; they have often a severe struggle to complete their education, and enter upon public life."

"That is true," said Herbert; "but while I have ever missed my father's advice and guidance, his early prudence left me means amply to equip myself for the battle of life."

A swift gleam of satisfaction crossed Father Jessamine's face at these words, and as Herbert fixed his attention on some curiosities, or relics, in a small cabinet, the priest scanned him intently, apparently studying his character as revealed in his face and manner.

"Am I wrong in supposing you a member of some Church?" said the priest, presently.

"I have never united myself with any Church. My mother is a member, but as yet I have waited."

"Very likely most of your classmates are in your position. Now in our college, at Rome, every student was a devoted son of the Church. Is it not a characteristic of young America to affect contempt for that which is highest? My young brother, what can be more lofty than religion? It is the affair of eternity."

When Herbert rose to go, Father Jessamine took his hand, and briefly referring to the earlier part of his conversation said: "Do not think I undervalue those sources of happiness which I relinquished at the call of duty; may you be happy in your love. If it were not trespassing on your charity, I would say, come again, come often."

"With your permission, I *will* come often," said Herbert.

They were near the door; suddenly Father Jessamine dropped the *acquaintance* and assumed the *priest*. He extended his hands, drew himself up with dignity, and in an impressive voice pronounced the benediction, signing the cross in the air, as he spoke: "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, may the blessing of the Sacred Hearts of

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, of all the holy confessors, martyrs and apostles follow you, my son!"

His arms fell, his head drooped; one moment he had seemed lifted up in an ecstasy of fervor, the next, the inspiration gone, he bowed as one abased.

"I have not seen your picture, father" said Herbert, on the door-step.

"We will leave that until another day. I am superstitious about it, perhaps, and think it must be viewed only in a certain frame of mind."

We intend no intricate plot, and have no weighty secrets to unfold, and explain at once what were Father Jessamine's plans and thoughts as he watched his guest going up the street. The priest had studied men so long that he readily recognized one likely to fall a victim to his wiles; he believed in his own Church; he hated heretics as cordially as did Antonelli when he sought to have them officially cursed in full council, and, like all men, Father Jessamine loved to feel and use his own power.

Here was an American, a young man of some means, a young man of winning appearance, with a genius for society which would make him abundantly useful as a servant of Rome; moreover, he was the nursling, the

pupil of that very form of the hated faith which stands in the forefront of the battle with the Papacy. Oh triumph new and sweet, for Father Jessamine to carry captive this soul out of the very stronghold of heresy. True, that to effect his purpose the priest must trample on two trusting, loving hearts; but what to Father Jessamine were the hearts of women and heretics?

Herbert Vail went home entirely fascinated by his new friend. How noble seemed the devotion of the priest, who had relinquished everything at the "call of duty." When the priest ostentatiously set his pursuit of religion beside other men's shamefacedness, it seemed much more impressive than John North's plain sincerity, that used no contrast to heighten an effect.

While Herbert was visiting the priest, Edna was busy in her garden; John had prepared a broad bed under the front windows, and she was now setting out her favorite plants in the dark mold; scissors, trowel, twine and various other implements of the horticulturist lay on the gravel walk beside her; a garden hat was tied snugly under her chin, and from under its broad brim she looked up brightly at her mother watching her from the window. That mother thought those smiling

eyes, and the moist brown curls clinging to the flushed cheeks, the fairest sight on earth. For many years a sufferer from disease of the heart, and daily looking for death, Mrs. North had come to regard him rather as a tender angel than a grim destroyer: if she cherished any wish for earth it was to witness her daughter's marriage and comfortable establishment in her new home. That home would be very near, for Edna was to go to Herbert's dwelling which stood but a stone's throw distant. Seeing that pleasant cottage, whether she worked in the garden or sewed at her window, who shall wonder that it filled most of her thoughts. The girl was a loving creature, petted from childhood without being spoiled, the darling of many hearts, sheltered thus far from all sorrow. Her father came up the path as she set out her flowers, and stopped, like the mother, to watch the only daughter; seeing Mr. North one knew where John had gotten his plain, unquailing puritanism. He was a strong contrast to Edna, who seemed all softness; life had as yet dealt so tenderly with her that she had not been tried; trial should develop the strong heroic soul, capable of enduring anything rather than yield a principle. As Edna set out her flowers she set bright fancies with them; next spring

she would plant them over yonder in Herbert's garden, but that would be only an added joy. She could see her parents every day, and they would not be lonely, for the day that took her to Mrs. Vail's home would bring Hester Adams to be a daughter to Mrs. North. We do not know of anything so charming as the plans of these young people: in June, John and Herbert would graduate; in October was to come the double wedding. They were all weaving the most charming fancies and the brightest hues into the web of the future, and now among their busy fingers stole the ruthless hand of Father Jessamine, marring what they wrought.

The home-life of these four young people we leave to be imagined; the collegiate studies of the young men, the domestic duties and pleasures of the girls; the visits, the walks, the rides; each day that brought some new delight, why retrace it? We have rather to deal with those arts which in an earlier age might have been deemed witchcraft, which seduced Herbert from the other three, and left Edna to walk alone, in a path where "there was na room for twa."

CHAPTER II.

WHEN HE IS MADE.

NOT a week after his first visit, Herbert called on Father Jessamine the second time. The priest asked no questions now, he had learned all that was needful; but like one wandering in the blest realms of romance he described the Old World Church and Convent; lent the beauty of fable to the better truths of ancient monasteries, and told of acts of charity or chivalry or self-devotion, many of them pure imaginations, sanctioned by Holy Church, and others holding portions of truth. Herbert listened delighted, until his whole soul was wrapt in a desire to see these scenes, to make part of them. The reverend father marked the kindling eye and glowing cheek. "Come, you have not seen my picture," he said, and led the way to his little chapel. The sunset poured through a window falling full upon a curtain hanging against the opposite wall. The priest pulled a cord; the

fold of damask swept back and revealed the picture of a rarely beautiful woman, standing on a serpent which crouched submissive under her small feet, her head crowned with roses and surrounded with light, a sheaf of lilies lying against the whiteness of her breast, her hands spread in benediction. "Our Mother of Divine Grace." Herbert had not time to utter an exclamation of admiration, when Father Jessamine prostrated himself before the picture in adoration, and extending his hands cried passionately, "Mia Madre! Mia Madre!"

Such a rapture of devotion from a man, astounded Herbert. He drew back respectfully, while the priest apparently prayed some time. Rising from his knees, and drawing the curtain to its place, the father said, "My brother, do you wonder? Mine is the emotion natural to the human heart; especially natural to the Catholic heart. It is the filial voice of nature crying to the Mother of the world. This voice even you Protestants have acknowledged.* What more natural than this love of Mary, when we consider the ineffable nature of the sacraments? In the eucharist we receive the body of our Lord. It is transmuted in our

*Martinet, Rel. in Soc., p. 261.

veins, it flows through every fiber of our body, we become parts of Him, and the voice of His blood throbbing in our arteries cries out to His Mother and our Mother, O Madre Carissima!"*

Very good reasoning, very logical and conclusive, if only the premises had not been wrong. It was as if the father had said since two times four make ten, four times four must make twenty. John North would have cut directly to the point that the priest based his argument on the fallacy of transubstantiation; but Herbert was profoundly impressed by the emotion he had witnessed, and the reasoning he had heard. He loved beauty, moreover, and the fair image of the Divine Mother stood before him even in his dreams.

Herbert was too accustomed to attention to his studies, and had too much pride in his position in his class, to neglect any of his duties now at the end of his college course. We must grant at once that the hours he began to spend with Father Jessamine were taken from those which he had formerly given to John and Edna. John noticed something of this withdrawal, but was too proud to question. To Edna, Herbert had said, "I must not

**Ibid*, p. 260, and *La Madre di Dio*, par Padre Ventura.

be selfish, and take you too much from your mother."

Father Jessamine well knew how to hasten slowly; on every one of Herbert's visits he made an advance, and built up the foundations of his faith in the young man's heart, much more steadily than the foundations of the Church in the desolate lot.

"Protestants say we do not like them to see our books," remarked the priest to Herbert. "They are mistaken. Now here are some I would like well for you to read, but if I lend them to you, your friends will cry out, 'Proselyting! proselyting!' Of course nothing can be farther from my intentions. I merely wish to gratify your intelligent curiosity which desires to know everything. You may read the books when you like, drop in any time, but read them here, lest my friendship for you be misconstrued."

Ah, Father Jessamine, who more plausible than you! By what easy steps you led this Herbert from thinking Romanism well enough for some uncultured minds, to believe it as good as anything, and then the most devout of religions, the salt of the earth, the strength of the country, the most honest and most benevolent of creeds, the very ark of God's covenant on earth. Even to this, un-

known to all his friends, had Herbert come, when on commencement day he stood forth to deliver his oration. In that oration he first developed his declining from his mother's faith. He introduced an apparently impromptu encomium of Catholic institutions of learning, public charities, private liberality, and general sincerity. Edna had thus far listened to him with wrapt attention, her heart going with his every word, but here was an utterance to which she could not subscribe; she had believed this young man's heart pure gold, but now she heard the ring of false metal. "Shame on him!" muttered John in Hester's ear; "he is saying that to please the priest. I've feared that influence this some while."

"Those are opinions I never taught my boy," thought Mrs. Vail; and the venerable President shook his gray head. It was but a trifling incident, but it left its shadow on the day.

Herbert was no longer satisfied with reading the books he found on Father Jessamine's table. He had received the smooth explanations of "The Catholic Christian Instructed," and "The Catholic Festivals and Devotions." "Blake on the Bible" seemed no longer coarse, illogical, and full of low slang. The

infatuated youth spent long evenings with the priest, when Mrs. Vail thought him with Edna; and midnight hours, when he was supposed to be sleeping, found him in Father Jessamine's study. No sooner did the acute priest commend a book as a fair exponent of his creed, than Herbert had it purchased on his behalf; though he had studied history, he now accepted the garbled Romish "Lives of the Popes," and the outrageous falsehoods concerning the remedial penalties of the *glorious Inquisition*. He had come to feel, not only that Romanism was good for everybody, but that it was the very best thing for him. Here began a fearful mental struggle. Until now he had drifted on insensibly; beguiled by sophistries, enchanted by new fields of inquiry, witched by a pretense of truth, fantastic as fiction, but now he was tossed among the breakers. Father Jessamine said, in one form or another, choose, *choose*, CHOOSE! Poisoned sensibilities said choose! The arch tempter of mankind, seeing a soul almost in his grasp, cried choose! All the springs of thought were demoralized. "Lead us not into temptation;" but Herbert had gone recklessly into temptation, and now that he was tried he should not come forth as gold. Yet if he followed his new inclinations, if he yielded to

the zeal of the proselyte, and went over openly to Romanism, what would be the result? He knew his mother too well to believe that she could be a pervert from her faith; and how could he face her anguish, how could he rend her tender heart? Could he meet the indignation of his friends; the loss of honest John North's brotherly companionship, the arguments of pastor and professors? Could he face this storm of reproach, of sorrow, of scorn, of logic, of entreaty, that should follow the knowledge of his defection? But there was a question of deeper interest still. What would Edna say and do? Would she pin her faith to his, would she come with him? It was certain to his mind that Mr. North would never consent to his daughter's marriage with a Romanist, but if Edna would come over to Herbert's views, if, without that even, she would hold to her engagement, and be his wife in spite of his change of faith, then, with her by his side, Herbert would be brave to face all the rest, he could stand against all the world.

"If she loves you," said the cunning priest, "she will believe with you. The man is the head of the woman; he is to do her thinking. If she is your wife she should believe as you do."

Herbert could not let the matter rest. He resolved, very cautiously, to sound Edna's views. They were together one fine evening on the moonlit veranda. Herbert, seated at Edna's feet, leaned against a vine-draped pillar; the girl was in a low chair; her dress flowed about her in billows of white, a little band of pearls clasped her throat, the silver light lent a pale luster to her drooping curls, her face was half lifted toward the sky, and Herbert thought it was the face of an angel. Could he give up this girl? "Edna," he said, softly, "do you not think a married pair should belong to one Church?"

"Yes, surely," said Edna, looking down.

"And if I should change my Church, would you, dear Edna, change for my sake?" His voice was most entreating.

"I have often asked you to unite with the Church, and you have promised that you would, Herbert. I thought all your preferences were with my Church, yours, your mother's. Yet if you leaned some other way, if it were a matter of conscience with you, and was not against my conscience, I would change"—

He grasped her hand in sudden joy, too glad to speak, when like a cold whirl of water flung up from a polar sea, her words went on,

"—that is, if you joined any orthodox, any truly Christian Church."

"And what do you call orthodox?" faltered Herbert.

"One that holds the same vital doctrines as our own; one that does not embrace an error."

It was too late to hesitate. He must go on if he extorted his death warrant from those fair lips.

"The Catholic, for instance, Edna?"

Alas! this warm loving girl had come suddenly down to the chill tomb of her hope and affection, and its cold breath rushed up against her; her brother's half-uttered warnings returned to her. It was life's first opportunity to be true to her ancestry, and cruel as was the task, all the blood of the Puritans made hearty answer—"No!"

They said no more for some time; then a painful, constrained conversation on matters foreign to their thoughts was concluded by a sad, half-angry parting. Edna wondered if Herbert were indeed unworthy, false to himself and to her; yet at the same moment loved him well, and was resolved to be true to him, as far as might be, without being untrue to her God. As for Herbert, he recalled the words of Father Jessamine, "if she loves you, she will think as you do; will change her

faith for yours," and Edna had said, No; unqualified, ungentle No! He could not resolve to give her up; life looked a barren thing without her, but his love had lost its fullness of satisfaction. Each day brought nearer the bridal month, and in its coming brightness cast before, John and his Hester pursued a shining way, and Herbert, vexed with doubts, chilled by fears, simulating happiness, wondered at the happy faces and jubilant tones of those other two—we might say of the three; for Edna could not bring herself to think evil of her lover; he was not neglecting her, and she would not grieve her friends by seeming to be sad.

"I am wretched, tossed by a million cares," said Herbert to Father Jessamine.

"My son, it is the pleading of the Church in your soul, the love of the Virgin Mother, striving for her chosen child. Decide, decide for the true, the only Church, and all will be yours. Victory will bless you; once take your true position and all will go well. Edna will yield."

Yet even now Father Jessamine did not wish his convert publicly to abjure his heresies; the renunciation must first be secret.

It was done. Herbert Vail had privately forsaken his parent's faith, had knelt in con-

fession to Father Jessamine, and had been received into the Romish Church. And yet the priest was not satisfied. The new-born faith was doubtless weak, and could not resist the loving and sorrowful entreaties of friends, the clear arguments of the learned, or a mother's anguish. Moreover, Herbert was resolved to marry Edna, and Father Jessamine felt he could not hope to find in her a convert. The priest enjoined secrecy, and Herbert was only too glad to obey; and now every effort was made by the reverend counselor to get Herbert to visit Rome. The glory and beauty of the Eternal City were set forth until Herbert's imagination was fired. There he was told he would receive fatherly welcome from Pope Pius; and would be accorded friendship and instruction by the holy cardinals, "the most wise, virtuous and august body upon earth—" quoth the priest—making a heavy draft on his fancy. So craftily did the father work, and so great was his influence over Herbert, that the priest's plan became at once his own overmastering desire, and to visit Rome was his dream by night and by day.

Meanwhile this mental distress was having a marked influence upon Herbert's health; his eyes were restless and unnaturally bright; a strange nervousness took possession of him;

his face was haggard, his flesh wasted. The careful eye of his mother noted the change, and a fear that had long slept awoke. His father had died of consumption; her son might be heir to the same disease. She confided her fears to the physician and he admitted that there was cause for her anxiety. Every one knows how easily a rumor or a supposition flies about. From Father Jessamine started the idea that Herbert Vail's health was precarious and that safety lay in foreign travel, and a stay in a warmer climate. The mother caught at the suggestion. Edna, distracted by fears of her lover's illness, urged him to seize the remedy proposed; the doctor said it was well. Mr. North himself suggested that the marriage should be deferred, until Herbert by travel had re-established his health.

"Perhaps it must be," said Herbert to Edna, cut to the heart at leaving her really frightened at his ill-health, and yet wildly delighted at the prospect of a year in Rome. "I could not ask you to leave your feeble mother for so long a time, nor could I take you among strangers to wait upon an invalid. John and Hester can carry out their plans, but we must wait for more auspicious days. I know they will come, Edna. I will write often, and return home quite myself once more."

"I will go with you if you need me, my son. Yes, I had better go, I am sure," said Mrs. Vail.

But nothing was farther from Father Jessamine's plans, or indeed from Herbert's. "By no means, mother. If I get sick I can send for you; but I am much more likely to get well, thrown on my own resources, with no one to nurse me or worry about me." Even the doctor took this view.

There was a sad parting at home, a last confession to Father Jessamine, and with his pocket full of letters to priests and cardinals, Herbert Vail set out for Rome.



CHAPTER III.

DIVIDED.

AT New York Herbert took the steamship Arago, for Havre. On board he found two Romish priests among the passengers, and with them he made common cause. Yet despite their companionship, and the assiduity with which they fostered his new-born Romanism, he had many hours for foreboding and remorseful thoughts.

Often in the starlit nights, leaning over the ship's side and watching the white foam curling from her track, he seemed to catch glimpses of that white robe and fairer face on which he had gazed one memorable evening, and up from the rush of the waters came Edna's sorrowful, but unwavering *No!* Although Father Jessamine and these two other priests had approved his course, to himself Herbert could not yet justify the deception he had undoubtedly practiced, and conscience at times accused him of monstrous ingratitude to the

mother who had lived only for his welfare.

Landed at Havre Herbert was in no frame of mind to linger among the sunny plains or storied scenery of "fair France." His heart burned to reach the City of the Popes where alone he could hope for comfort, and a settlement of all his anxieties. In his reception at Rome our friend was not disappointed; by that subtle Romish system of secret intelligence of which the fine meshes cross and interlace over every part of the world, news of his coming had been given, and he was at once successfully drawn into the society of Papists. Herbert's pride was flattered; he was an honored guest. While privately regarded as an easy dupe, he was openly applauded as a sincere and independent thinker; an honest seeker after truth. His thoughts dwelt less tenderly on home; on Edna; on his mother; his letters became less frequent and effusive. It was a great thing to Herbert to ride with a bishop; to call on an archbishop; to dine with a cardinal; to be received by Pope Pius the Ninth, even then supposed to be infallible, though not officially declared so.

But while Herbert was going toward Rome, and being there embraced and feasted as a returned prodigal, the October sun had risen on the bridal day of John North and his

Hester. The absence of Herbert caused the only cloud of this bright morning. But Herbert had already written of improved health, and Edna, who was this day to have been a bride, bravely put aside her own disappointment and took the position of bridesmaid to her friend Hester.

It was indeed an auspicious occasion when these two who had perfect trust each in the other; whose views harmonized; whose principles were the same, joined hands before the altar of God. When Mrs. North had embraced her new daughter, she drew the lovely first bridesmaid to her bosom and whispered, "I can claim you a little while yet, my darling, and then your turn will come."

Mrs. Vail also seized the first opportunity to speak in Edna's ear. "I trust soon to have the happiness your mother now experiences of gaining a daughter."

With these expectations, which were indeed almost assurance, what wonder that Edna was nearly as happy as the rest.

The bridal tour had been made; Mrs. Vail coming to stay with Mrs. North so that Edna might be free to accompany the young couple. John brought his wife to his father's house and the home seemed happier than ever.

It was a chill Sabbath at the end of Novem-

ber when Mr. North was cozily reading and dozing by the cheery dining-room fire, and Edna, as was her custom, had lulled her mother to her after-dinner nap by the sweet tones of sacred music. Seeing the beloved parent asleep, she took up one of the religious weekly papers which had arrived the preceding evening, and softly drew it from its wrapper.

It was but a little after this that the dining-room door opened hastily and Mr. North was startled by his daughter crying in tones of sharp distress, "Father! father!"

Mr. North sprang up quickly, thinking that the long-expected summons had come for his waiting wife. But different trouble appeared in the white anguish of his child's face. She held a paper in her trembling hand, and as he dropped back in his chair, came and thrust it over his shoulder, pointing with quivering finger to a fatal paragraph. It was a portion of a letter from a well-known correspondent, then visiting in Italy, stating that on a recent Saint's day, one Herbert Vail, of —, graduate of a college of renown, had been publicly received into the Roman Catholic Church; and that priests and high officials were greatly pluming themselves on his perversion.

Mr. North read the account several times

before he could fully comprehend it. Then drawing his daughter to his knee and folding her to his bosom, said, in a choked voice, "Oh, my poor little Edna, does this end all your beautiful dream?"

"Yes, father," said Edna, wearily, "it is gone; gone forever."

"I can not understand it," said Mr. North.

"The next thing, father," said Edna, bitterly, "you will see that he has been made a priest."

An hour after a servant was sent from Mrs. Vail requesting Edna to come to her.

"She has found it out too," sobbed Edna to her father. "You tell them all of it, father, and do not let them speak of it to me. Come for me this evening. I am going to church."

Edna found Mrs. Vail nearly distracted by the sudden news of her son's apostasy.

"My Herbert, my only son, false to his God, false to us all, given over to strong delusion, to believe a lie!"

Edna could say nothing to comfort her, for she had no comfort for herself.

"I have lost him and you too," said the heart-broken mother.

"He has lost me, but you have not. You will have him no more, but you need me more than ever," replied Edna, and hiding her face

in the widow's lap she burst into a passion of weeping.

Edna and her father walked home from church that evening alone; John had remained with his mother, and kind Hester had cried so long over the troubles of her young sister-in law that she was unable to make her appearance in public.

Affliction had developed in the gentle Edna her father's strength. That father marked, with loving pride, how, all traces of her woe resolutely banished, Edna had sat by his side with lifted head, with all apparent attention following the unfolding of the preacher's thought; now as they came home together he felt her lean heavily on his arm and knew well what was the great burden of grief that crushed her faithful heart.

"This is a fierce trial for you, my daughter," he said, fondly; "but let it be some consolation to you to know that you are in a home of which you have ever been the chief delight, and where your lightest wish is as a law. And you have ever about you the loving protection of your father's arm."

A strong, sure refuge, indeed, it seemed to Edna on that doleful night. Her father was in the very prime of his manhood and his activity, a man of iron frame, of powerful mind,

loved and respected by all, strong like an angel and tender as a child.

But sorrows often follow each other in swift succession; only one week elapsed before that strong staff was broken. The feeble wife who had waited long lingered still on the hither side of the river; but out of the busy haunts of men the head of the household had been suddenly called, and borne almost in an instant from vigorous life into the chilly tide of death. Blessed are those found ready. The garment of humanity easily left behind, a redeemed soul went rejoicing up the shining heights to stand in the presence of the King. One Sabbath evening the deserted Edna had been assured of the protection of her father's arm, the next she stood overwhelmed by her double loss, looking into his coffin.

Yet scarcely able to comprehend her bereavement, Edna, with her brother, followed her parent to the grave. Hester had claimed the privilege of remaining by the side of her mother-in-law, who was not able to leave her room.

As the mournful procession left the house Mrs. North rose from her bed to approach the window.

"Oh, don't, mother, you can not bear it," urged Hester. But as Mrs. North persisted in

her intention the young wife hid her face in her hands.

Said Mrs. North, speaking to herself at the window: "Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out."

"Oh, mother, mother," cried Hester, "don't repeat that verse; the connection is too terrible."

"Well, my daughter," said Mrs. North, seating herself by the window, the funeral train having passed out of sight, "bring me my 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and let me read how Christian was welcomed when, after sore conflict, he won home at last."

Hester brought her the book and found the place.

Mrs. North read for some little time, then laying the open volume on her lap, she leaned her head against the window-sash and kept her eyes still fixed on her favorite page.

She was thus seated when her children returned from the burial to her room. They had dreaded to meet her woe; but their dread was in vain. She had for them no look; no inquiry. Sitting there reading the wondrous vision of the life to come she had heard a doubtless most welcome invitation to follow her beloved to the home where she would be,

and had gone after him they knew not how nor when. It must have been a most blessed dying, akin to a translation; and over the mild face of her who had waited long was written the fair story of the peace He giveth to his children.

It was thus that Edna, one short year ago the treasured daughter of two good parents and the betrothed wife of a young man esteemed by all, and apparently worthy of the rich gift of her best affections, was now left bereaved of father, mother and lover almost in a single breath.

While these waves of sorrow were surging over her fair young head, Herbert, at Rome, was wandering farther and farther from the pure teachings of his childhood, and from his duty to his mother and the girl whose heart he had won. The extreme zeal, the ardent fanaticism of a proselyte, have often been the subject of remark. By nature an enthusiast, Herbert was no exception to the general rule, and the change of his creed had made a strange change in the whole man. An entire revolution had been worked within him. He was Herbert Vail but in outward seeming, and hardly a trace of the former Herbert was left in thought, word or act. Once mild, sensitive, impulsive, gracious in demeanor, he was

grown cold, calculating, ambitious, inordinately selfish, and crafty beyond speech; he was now so quickly converted to the most pernicious type of the Jesuit.

He had been gained chiefly by appeals to his imagination and his self-righteousness; he was to be retained by the bribery of place and power, the corruption of his purposes, and the gratification of his hourly growing vanity.

While yet in her first sorrow over the death of her parents, Edna received a letter from Herbert. He had not heard of her great loss; his subject was his own apostasy, or, as he called it, "his return to the one early and only true Church." The letter was not at all such as he should have written; he made many unsupported assertions; declared himself quite satisfied with the course he had taken; trusted that all holders of heresy would eventually return to the true Church, and briefly reminded her of a summer evening when they had talked of possible changes; asked her if she still held to her decision, that it would be neither right nor wise for her to marry a Roman Catholic. He did not urge her to relent, did not touch on the bitterness of a separation. It is true that as he wrote a memory of Edna, with her rare beauty of person and character, almost overcame him, but he had

already had his thoughts turned toward the priesthood, and had been led to look on Edna as an obstacle in the way of his high preferment. In his heart ambition had usurped the throne of love.

With every word she read Edna saw more clearly the shameful change in Herbert; he was no longer the man she had loved and respected. She had now no wish to reverse her former decision; their souls were no more akin. She wrote, telling him the answer of that summer evening could never be retracted. She trusted that it was impossible that she should ever reject the pure faith in which she had been nurtured. The points of difference between herself and Herbert were now so many and so important as to prevent their ever finding harmony or happiness in the marriage relation. She released him from his engagement to her, but urged him to consider the steps he had recently taken; in the light of past instruction and knowledge to review the points in controversy between the Church of Christ and the Church of Rome, and renounce his errors. In conclusion she informed him of the death of her parents.

Herbert's reply came early. It was a vain-glorious proclamation of the strength and beauty of his new belief, and his own security

therein; he paid a tribute to the memory of his departed friends, her parents, and consolingly suggested that he could not banish hope for those whom he had so esteemed, and that praying for the repose of their souls should henceforward form part of his daily occupation. He should at an early date take orders, and as he ministered at the altars of Rome would unceasingly beseech celestial influences on behalf of his heretical friends and relations.

Edna perused the letter slowly; it was the last link; the last messenger between herself and her lover. She read the vapid lines more in sorrow than in anger, and then, with a gentle sigh over the hopes that had perished, dropped the written sheet into the open grate and it curled and perished in the flame. So Edna had offered her love; her bright anticipations; her future home life a holocaust upon the altar of her faith—a sacrifice like Abraham's, bitter to the tender soul, yet richly rewarded by the spiritual good. We do not wish this girl's loss and sorrow to be undervalued; she had given to Herbert Vail her first warm affection; she was not one lightly to change; losing him she lost love out of her life. And her sense of honor and her high regard for truth were such that she could

much more easily have seen him buried, and mourning him all her days have hoped for meeting beyond this life than she could see him a renegade, sold into bondage to the Roman idolatry. Dead, she could have wept, hoped, been thankful for him; the proselyte of Rome, she could cherish for him neither hope nor respect.

When the letter had been devoured by the fiery serpents that writhed and twisted in and out the bed of coal, Edna collected Herbert's other letters, and with many tears fastened them together with one of the white ribbons she had worn on her brother's wedding day; the day when but for Father Jessamine she too should have been a bride. The letters were laid away; such mementos as full many women cherish all their lives, to be turned over with curious, sacrilegious fingers when their own heads are under the daisies. After this our Edna gathered some gifts made her by Herbert; a ring, a chain, a few books, a jewel case, a statuette; she had ever been a girl of such proud soul as would not accept presents of large value from any acquaintance, even from an affianced lover. These tributes from Herbert were not many or costly, but they had been, were yet, very dear, and it caused Edna many tears to shut them in a

sandal-wood box as in a perfumed tomb. Then when the key was turned upon them she carried them over to Mrs. Vail.

"I can not keep Herbert's presents any longer, and some day you will return them for me."

Mrs. Vail could not refuse, nor hold out hopes, for she too had heard from her son that he should shortly be made a priest.



CHAPTER IV.

HIS mother had not allowed her Herbert to go over to Rome without earnest efforts to reclaim him. She had written to him with argument and entreaty, and had persuaded her pastor and different professors of the college faculty to address to him able letters refuting the errors of Rome, and exhibiting her fallacies. To his mother Herbert replied with assurances of his love, desires to have her choose his new faith for herself, and protested his unalterable adherence to the Papal Church. His other assailants he for the most part ignored. His most constant and voluminous correspondence was with Father Jessamine. When Edna had formally dissolved their engagement Herbert thought he saw the way straight before him to the archbishop's throne and the cardinal's scarlet hat. He immediately submitted to clerical tonsure, and, being thus initiated into the ranks of the

clergy, retired to the Jesuit College to rapidly take the remaining steps until he reached the priesthood. In two months he had been porter, lector and exorcist. For one month he was an acolyth; reaching then the grade of sub-deacon, which office he occupied for two months. Two months more beheld him officiating as deacon, when he was finally, to his great delight, invested with the dignities and privileges and perquisites of the priest.

Thus in one year from his arrival at Rome, and in a year and a half from his first acquaintance with the wily Father Jessamine, Herbert Vail, the confident, the liberal, the well instructed, had abandoned Protestantism and become not only a zealous Roman Catholic but a Jesuit priest; his course being only another example of the insufficiency of head knowledge, that has no foundation on a work in the heart. The year which he had designed to spend in Rome had passed, but he was not ready to return home, nor were his new advisers willing to have him do so. He was now twenty-four years of age; his little fortune was in his own hands and for a year longer he remained in the Seven-hilled City, being strengthened in his new belief and making himself very useful as a decoy; associating himself with English-speaking visitors, espe-

cially with young people, attracting them by his fascinating manners and the romance he was pleased to weave about his own history and beguiling many into a tolerance, if not an open preference, for Romanism.

The year of expected absence having concluded, and Herbert Vail having informed his mother that his stay in Italy would be yet protracted, Edna more than ever commiserated that abandoned mother's loneliness. Edna was yet living in her old home with John and Hester, who were devotedly fond of her. Great was John's surprise when Edna told him that she would like for the present to go and live with Mrs. Vail.

"What! leave us, Edna; leave your own home?"

"But she is lonely, and you are not," said Edna.

"We should be lonely without you," said John.

"Oh no, I would be near by, and you are two while she is but one."

"Dear little Edna," said John, remorsefully, "does our foolish happiness together make you lonesome?"

"Not at all. I enjoy seeing it," said Edna, calmly; "and it is not foolish; be just as happy as you can, John. But every one likes to

be where they are needed most, and Mrs. Vail looks so sad, and she loves me more than any one; you know she has been like a mother to me. You and Hester had better let me go, John; it is so near I will be here every day."

"Well, go and visit as long as you like if it will do you any good, but don't talk of moving there."

John was not very well pleased at this step, for he had secretly wished that Edna would forget her former affection for Herbert and make a suitable marriage.

Such change, however, would not be in accordance with Edna's character; she could not build up another happiness from the wrecked fragments of her once beautiful dream.

Her wedding day had dawned and shone from rising to sunsetting and she had not been a bride, but marriage morning should never again beam for her.

Though John had said, "don't talk of moving," by degrees most of Edna's possessions went over from John's to Mrs. Vail's, and Edna lived with the widow, pleasantly boasting that she had two homes, and was equally welcome in both.

They were not unhappy, these two women. The mother, whose hair had been prematurely

streaked with white, and the young girl, whose brown curls fell over her deep mourning garb, had learned to be pleasantly cheerful, and make much of the blessings of their lot. They were the friends and helpers of the poor, and the unnamed deaconesses of their church; a world of work fell to their ready hands and was silently accomplished. Death and loss casting dreary shadows across their threshold had not closed the doors of their hearts nor hindered their gracious hospitalities. It is very much in this world of storm to be peaceful if one can not be glad. I doubt, but perhaps it is better to have an assured calm than the sharp alternations of joy and woe.

Thus blessing and serenely blessed, these two, who had very nearly been mother and daughter, lived their days of busy content for three years, when Herbert Vail returned to his native land. Had Edna heard of his coming she would have made haste to betake herself to her brother's, but the removal would have been bootless. Herbert did not present himself at his early home. He had been appointed to a parish of some importance near Baltimore, and though not a very great journey was needed to bring him to his mother's fireside he contented himself with occasional letters; and still striving to rise in his calling,

gave himself to preaching, writing and proselyting with a zeal worthy of a better cause.

During all these years the church lot where the corner stone had been laid, had remained neglected. The feeble evergreens had died; the mounds of upturned earth had been beaten level with the soil; the grass grew rank and unmown; the weeds throve, and long sprays of brier and berry whipped idly upon the wind. The congregation of Father Jessamine had grown in means and in numbers; every Sabbath they filled the forlorn little chapel and sacristy to overflowing, gathered about doors and windows in crowds, while the late comers were pressed even out of earshot, and sat upon the fences or the piles of stones designed for a never-laid foundation; and sitting thus watched the throng before them and bowed, knelt, crossed themselves, and made responses, taking their cue from those nearer priest and picture. Loud murmurs were now heard because the church was not yet built. Bishop and brother priests would no longer be put off with frivolous excuses; Father Jessamine had received money and must apply it to its purpose. The pressure thus brought to bear on the excellent father had a singular effect. One morning they diligently considered the reverend gentleman's place and he

was gone. If the ministrations of Father Jessamine were a great loss, the cash in hand wherewith he had decamped was a very much greater. He had covered his tracks with the skill of an adept, having shed his habitation as a crab abandons its shell; he had also shuffled off his former name, and thereafter no Romish vigilance was able to discover Father Jessamine or his unlawful possessions.

Such a dereliction occurring at an earlier day might have shaken Herbert's faith, but the young Jesuit had grown wiser than his teachers; to him Father Jessamine did not appear demoralized by a false belief, but as one who had abandoned good tenets.

The congregation at — was much shaken; they were without church, priest or money, and the first person to come to their rescue was Herbert Vail. It certainly seemed singular that Herbert should have been willing to return to his early home, and to the presence of his mother, Edna, and those who had been his friends before his apostasy. His offering to do so showed the indurating power of Jesuitism upon the heart. Herbert in his charge in Maryland had been receiving salary sufficient to his support; his private property had slowly increased rather than diminished in his hands. He was less avaricious than ambitious,

and loved money very much less than honor and position.

He requested to be transferred to the charge of the deserted congregation at — and offered to apply his private means to the building of the church. His offer was promptly accepted; he was sent to —, and took possession of Father Jessamine's late home. He gave his mother no notice of his coming; some third party heard of the project and informed her of it, but she could not believe it possible, until told by one who had seen him, that he had really arrived in town. On the second day after that Mrs. Vail, seated in the open window of her parlor, heard a step on the piazza near her, and looking up saw a portly young person, smooth-shaven, with locks cut squarely about his head, a cocked hat, and a long black gown; a rosary ostentatiously depended from his girdle; he looked like one who had kept royal fasts and had seen to it that there was no niggard portion of eucharistic wine for his sole partaking, and had found lenten abstinence most comfortably filling to his inner man; it was the Reverend Father Herbert Vail.

It was thus that the widowed mother, who had devoted all her love and care to one only son, found that son returned to her after an

absence of over eight years. He entered her presence with a low bow, lightly waved a benediction and took her hand. There was no filial reverence in his aspect; no eager greeting in his cold, unflinching eye. His mother looked at him in anguish. She had never so entirely realized her utter loss of him; her head grew dizzy; a film passed over her vision; her cheek blanched. Herbert quietly turned to the table, poured out a goblet of water from the well-known ice pitcher from which he had so often slaked his boyish thirst, and placidly remarking, "You had better have a drink, mother," held it to her lips.

"Herbert, can it be possible that you have come here to stay?" asked Mrs. Vail.

"Yes, mother. I have come to look after the interests of THE CHURCH in this place; they have been rather neglected, but you will see now how I shall make things move, and I shall build up a fine church here at once. Hitherto heresy has had it all its own way in this town, but now heresy may look to its laurels."

"And where will you live, Herbert?"

"I shall have the house below set in order very speedily. I am there now. I must live on my own grounds to look after the Church

interests. You will be down to see me some day?"

This very lightly, as a matter of politeness rather than of desire.

"Edna North is living with me, Herbert."

"Ah! possible! not married yet? Strange; she was a very pretty girl. There ought to be an order of Sisters for women who do not care to marry; there's one of the ways we have the advantage over you Protestants. Have you read up the books and papers I sent you?"

"No, my son, and you must send no more. My faith is as the sacred ark of God, and no profane hand must be laid upon it."

Herbert looked down, momentarily confused.

Suddenly the door opened, and Edna, who had no idea of the presence of a guest, stood upon the threshold. Mrs. Vail gave a little terrified cry. Herbert rose from his seat, and these two, Edna and Herbert, whose relationship had once been so trusting and so tender, stood facing each other. One moment she confronted him with a look lofty, sweet and questioning, like an accusing angel; while the young traitor stood abashed in her presence like a fallen spirit; then she slowly stepped back and closed the door between them without uttering a word.

For half an hour longer Herbert prolonged his call on his mother, and during this time must have recovered his cold impertinence, for as he rose to go he put his finger on the silver salver with its pitcher and goblets and remarked: "If I am not mistaken this was a bequest to me from my grandmother Vail."

"That is quite true, my son."

"It would look very well on my study table," remarked he.

"I will send it to you, my son."

With that admirable devotion to his own interests which the young priest had assiduously cultivated, the reverend Herbert first provided for himself a substantial and well-appointed house. He had a man-servant and a maid-servant, and, instead of the scriptural ox and ass, a pair of fine bay horses and a fashionable open buggy, in which he drove about town in grand style.

The Romish business was by no means neglected; Herbert's pride was enlisted in presenting a notable opposition to the heretics to whom his early life had been indebted for shelter, support and education. The rising city of Dido did not present a more busy spectacle than the long neglected lot, the property of the Roman Catholic congregation; masons and carpenters pursued their tasks; the walls

rose; carving, gilding, painting, colored glass of rainbow hues must ornament the house of Herbert's new gods. When his own resources were exhausted the work did not stop, for the smooth-tongued, zealous, attractive Jesuit went here and there collecting funds and laying them out judiciously on the advancing work. And thus in the same town lived mother and son, separated even in this present life by such great division as may fitly type that infinite gulf of distance that shall stretch between the true and faithful, and the false and sinning in the world to come.

THE END.

NOTE. For the benefit of those forever wondering if such things can be, I will add to the above narrative that the incidents contained in it, substantially passed under my own observation, and I have in no way endeavored to alter their material outline by any garniture of language or of fancy.

The Lay Sister.*

THE doctor looked at his patient; stood at the foot of the narrow white-covered bed, and looked at him quizzically, as he look at all the patients.

"You might have done better, sir!"

"I could hardly have done worse," said Julius. His left arm was bandaged; he could move neither of his feet; something was the matter with his side; his head felt heavy. He could remember nothing since he had heard a tremendous crash, and had been spun suddenly up toward a great golden harvest moon. The moon may draw the tides, but had never been known to have any peculiar effect on

*This story is true in all its important points. The assertions of the Abbess to Adeline are from the highest Roman Catholic authorities.

Julius—now here he was in a narrow bed, and more than suspected that he was in a hospital.

"I have some advice for you," said the surgeon; "never go in a steamboat that is going to blow up."

"How long must I lie here?" asked Julius, feebly.

"If you are very tranquil, you may be out of this in three weeks. If you fuss and worry—say six."

"There never was such an unlucky dog," groaned the victim of the last explosion.

"My young friend," said the surgeon, gravely, "there is many a stout fellow like yourself lying at the bottom of the river, or blown into fragments that may never be found."

The doctor had gone to another bed, and Julius, who had never been sick in his life, who like Dives had been "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," looked at the bare white walls and floor, the white sameness of the narrow beds, and the wretched sameness of suffering in all the faces lying on the small pillows in those beds which filled both sides of the long ward. There were some attendants in list slippers, common, dull looking men—there was the doctor, watched by weary eyes as he walked down the room like a fate. Farthest off of all

were two women in black, bent forward by a bed in a corner. The women had not only black gowns, but black bonnets with dreary square black veils, and rosaries were at their girdles.

The doctor spoke to them as he passed, and nodded back toward Julius; that victim *felt* in all his ill-used body that they were speaking of him; and when the two women began to come toward the pallet where he lay he whispered to himself, "Bah, nuns; it was bad enough before." He meant to be very sulky and not speak.

They came steadily on, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, exactly alike, until they stood at the bedside; then one showed a square, stolid, friendly German face, but when the fringed lids slowly lifted from the violet eyes of the other Sister, it was as if the gate of paradise had swung slowly open before this foolish young man, who was lying stretched out like a mummy and done up in some sixteen different bandages. It was not the violet eyes alone that made the dismal hospital grow paradisaic; Julius was sure such another nose had never been fashioned, and that not one of all the houries and Madonnas that had ever been painted, had been given such a mouth, such a chin, and such

round, smooth, pink cheeks as were under the frightful black bonnet.

"You are suffering, sir?" said the beauty.

"Horribly," replied Julius, with a groan that drew tears to the violet eyes, and made them still more entrancing.

"I hope religion soothes your pains and sustains your heart," whispered the fair Sister.

"I dare say it might," said our young hypocrite, "but I have never paid any attention to it. I wish I had some one to teach me."

"I will bring you a prayer-book to read," said the elder Sister, delighted with the invalid's docility.

"Perhaps you could teach me a prayer, miss?" pursued Julius, looking at the younger visitor.

"Sister Camilla"—suggested this charming person.

"Sister Camilla, would you teach me a prayer?"

"Certainly. Shall it be one to your patron saint?"

"But, maybe, I haven't any patron saint."

At this suggestion, Mother Mary Beata, who having been born in the Holy Church knew nothing of the devious ways of heretics, looked inexpressibly shocked; but Sister Camilla, being a convert, was equal to the emergency,

and said eagerly, "Oh, but you could choose one."

"Will you choose one for me, Sister Camilla?"

"Suppose then that you choose St. Peter Damian? the faithful servant of our Holy Mother Mary, who, let us hope, will bring you soon to a devout worship of the Blessed Virgin."

"Undoubtedly," said Julius the wicked; "and the prayer?"

"Great Saint, whose patronage I have invoked, protect and pray for me. Angel from heaven, guide all my actions! Divine heart of Mary, pray for me."

"Is that all? I can say that already," cried the neophyte.

"You must say it with your heart," replied his monitor, sweetly.

"We will bring you a crucifix and a prayer-book," said Mother Mary Beata.

"Will you wear a scapular of Mount Carmel, if I bring it to you?" asked Sister Camilla.

"Yes. If you bring it, and tell me about it!"

"I will ask Father Munson if you may have it," said Sister Camilla, and turning away with her stolid companion, she faded out of Julius'

sight like a fair dream, when one awaketh.

"I think that poor young man will soon be converted," said Sister Camilla, addressing Mother Mary Beata.

But Mother Mary Beata shrewdly suspected that a less charming instructress would have had a less ready proselyte.

The following day the black-robed Sisters found that Julius had been removed to a private room in the hospital, where the luxuries with which he was surrounded indicated a full purse.

He listened with apparent credulity to the history of the brown scapular, and when Sister Camilla asserted that no one wearing it could die a sudden death or be eventually lost, he requested that it should be fastened about his neck. We grieve to mention that he made a wry face when Mother Mary Beata, instead of Sister Camilla, hung the scrap of flannel in its place.

Now one would suppose that a youth with so many wounds and bruises as Julius could boast of, would be ready to confine all his "spooning" to cordials and jellies; but having been always a devout admirer of women, and convinced in his own mind that Sister Camilla was the fairest of her sex, he pleased himself by learning from her lips all sorts of

nonsense about angels and scapulars; he found her voice music, even when it read the prayer-book; and it interested him immensely to make mistakes in saying his rosary, and having her soft, white fingers set him right with those slippery beads.

Julius was so much less amenable to instruction from Father Munson or the elder Sisters, that the facts of his case were soon patent to all but Sister Camilla. She, silly little soul, had set her heart on winning him as a convert to her own newly chosen creed; and just at present Sister Camilla must be humored. Accompanied first by one nun, and then by another, Sister Camilla visited her pupil. She had told Julius that she was a Lay Sister of the order of Franciscan Sisters; that in two years more she should fully enter the order. She was evidently an enthusiast in a creed which she confessed she had but lately embraced. "But, oh," said this charming little dunce to Julius, "when you have felt the love of the Holy Virgin as I have, and know that from that moment you can never be lost, then you will realize what is true happiness!"

Sister Camilla, sitting near the foot of Julius' bed, with her companion nun silent at her side, would read from De Soles' "Instruction

to a Devout Life," or from "Nouet's Meditations," while Julius, heeding the reader more than the reading, would tell himself that Sister Camilla was just such a little docile, enthusiastic, effervescing creature as priests and superiors love to get hold of to fashion like clay in a potter's hands. "Who is she?" asked Julius of himself. "Has she friends, money? What is she, thus led on to be a sacrifice to their eternal greed?"

Just here, perhaps, Camilla would look up, and say of her reading, "That is very sweet."

"Yes it is sweet, sure enough," Julius would reply; looking squarely at the spring morning face in the black bonnet; and then Sister Camilla would drop her eyes, and read on again.

Four weeks, and Julius was well enough to leave the hospital. At her last visit he had Sister Camilla bring him a pocket prayer-book.

"Write my name in it," he said, "and your wish for me if you have any; and sign your name so I can remember you."

She gave him the book, having written—
"May you become a true son of the Holy Church. Sister Camilla."

Away from the hospital and the city of C—— went Julius, and gathering up the odds

and ends of long neglected business found himself in M——, after some weeks, at No. 31 Vine Street, at Chalmers Bros.' Wholesale Shoe and Leather Store, a very humdrum place to name immediately after Sister Camilla, a spoony youth, scapulars, patron saints, and general romance.*

Being like one restored from the dead, he was taken home to tea by the senior partner; Julius being a young man just come into his property, it was worth while to be courteous to him.

John Chalmers, Senior, could only show a stiff, dreary sort of courtesy; his home was lonely and handsome; a sober-faced house-keeper presided at the tea-table, and then the host and his guest were left to the splendid solitude of the parlors. The evening being cool, there was a fire in the grate. Julius having looked at the fire, and seen nothing but a blaze, began to look at the photograph album. Presently he uttered such an exclamation of glad surprise that Mr. Chalmers looked over his shoulder.

"That is my daughter, my only child," the father spoke with a fond pride.

Despite the difference in dress, Julius had recognized "Sister Camilla."

"She is in the Franciscan Convent of Saint

Margaret, on Bellows Street, in C——," observed Mr. Chalmers, with a lonely sigh.

How angry Julius felt! He could have struck his polite host. Why had he sent that precious girl off to be a nun, when if he had kept her at home Julius could have found her and fallen properly in love with her.

Now she was a nun, and Julius quoted to himself the nonsense about the "bright particular star" as he gazed at that never-to-be-forgotten face. He pushed the book away, and stood near his friend on the hearth-rug.

"I'm surprised, sir, that you, a rich Protestant, should consent to have your only child a nun!"

"A nun!" cried Mr. Chalmers. "My dear sir, there's nothing under heaven I should more heartily deplore. To send her to a convent school is *not* to make her a nun."

"She's a nun, sir—a Sister, Lay Sister, of the Order. I saw her in C——, and recognize the photo at once."

"You're mistaken," said Mr. Chalmers. "I visit her regularly, once in three months, and she tells me that her religion has been in no way tampered with. I shall bring her home next year. A nun! Why, my friend, do you think I am toiling and forecasting night and day to have a horde of priests or a convent for

my heir? My wife is dead, and this one girl is the last spar left me from the shipwreck of my love and home. Where shall my age find solace, or my money heirs but in her household? God bless her! she is what her mother was—my idol; and you think I'd let her be a nun?"

"That convent is deceiving you, most egregiously," said Julius. "They have made the girl a nun behind your back. Saint Margaret's Convent of Franciscan Sisters on Bellows Street, that's the very place, and she's a 'Sister' there."

"I'll prove to you that that can not be," said Mr. Chalmers, rising and getting a paper from a writing case; "here, read for yourself. This is a paper which I had drawn up, and signed by the Mother Superior and the confessor of Saint Margaret's; a solemn promise never to tamper with her faith nor receive her to their Church, but to return her to me in religious views just what she was when I sent her to them. Why, my young friend, to believe that Mother Superior Andrews would *lie* to me is absurd. She is the very model of a lady. Devout, elegant, accomplished, deeply impressed with the responsibility of her position as an educator of youth; holding the most exalted views of filial duty; and when I

have that woman's pledged word, do you ask me to doubt it? I have the priest's word, too, and he's a very pious man. I never saw a better Christian than Father Munson."

"I have, plenty of them," said Julius, sourly, "and I'm more certain than ever Father Munson is the very man; and your daughter, Sister Camilla, brought him to see me."

"Sister Camilla! That settles it; *my* girl's name is Adeline—Addie."

"She may have changed it; they all do, taking Orders!" persisted Julius, eagerly.

"Changed her name! without my consent," cried Mr. Chalmers, angrily; "no, my friend, I'll much sooner believe you mistaken in the face than that *my child* would deceive me, take Orders, and renounce her mother's name."

Julius darted at the album, opened it, "mistaken in a face," he cried ardently; "are there two women in the world who look like that? You might as well tell me that I could forget my mother's face. Why, sir, that Lay Sister came and read to me and instructed me in all manner of popish mummeries for a month, and I—why, I was to that extent infatuated with her," cried Julius, flushing scarlet, "that I made believe accept all the folly for fact, just to have her keep coming!"

Julius was so fiercely in earnest that that

doting parent, John Chalmers, was a little staggered in his lately fixed opinion of his child, the Superior, the holy Father Munson, and the rest of the holy concourse at Saint Margaret's.

"If that could be so, if they have dealt me such a traitor's blow—"

Julius jerked out his prayer-book, and like the ten brothers long ago holding out the coat as their testimony, he displayed the first page, asking—"Is that her handwriting, or not?"

"It *does* look like it," said Mr. Chalmers, turning pale; then dropping back into his chair he cried out, "Wretched fool that I am, I had rather see my girl in her coffin."

"Come, sir," urged Julius, touched; "if that angel of a Sister Camilla belongs to you, get her away from those harpies."

This selfish lad was speaking two words for himself, and one for miserable John Chalmers.

"I'll tell you the facts of the case, and we'll see what can be done. But, my friend, you must keep this to yourself. I wouldn't have it known for a fortune," said the distressed father.

"All right," said Julius.

"You see, the child had no mother to advise and befriend her, and she was growing up uncommonly pretty, and all the young lads

were falling in love with her." Julius sighed. "And she, silly little soul, fancied she was in love with each new aspirant, and there was no end of notes, and valentines, boxes of candy, and bouquets of flowers." Julius groaned. Mr. Chalmers groaned also.

"She was fifteen; some of the girls of her set had turned out poorly; two had even eloped and made miserable matches. I heard of Saint Margaret's as a model school. The young ladies there are highly polished and accomplished, and like the place immensely. They take the best care of the pupils' health. Mother Superior Andrews is a mother to them all. I wanted my girl where she could not see a boy to fall in love with her, until her education was finished, and she had a mind of her own, and was ready to take her place in my home and in society. I got this pledge, this solemn promise to make sure. I visit her four or five times a year; my Addie writes every fortnight. She is perfectly happy, and the Superior loves her like her own child, so she assures me. I felt perfectly easy and contented and hopeful about my child until tonight, and now you tell me—"

Moved beyond his wont, this unhappy parent covered his face with his hands.

"Contented you were, sir?" roared Julius,

furiously at an infatuation which he felt convinced had robbed him of the idol of his soul. "Contented so you could not see the truth. Did you not know that this very pliability that made her fall in love with the lads that sent her notes and sugar plums, made her a ready victim to that crafty old Abbess? You may praise her, sir, but I hate her already!" cried Julius, mixing his pronouns badly. "They have been spending their two years in making this innocent child a Lay Sister, in training her for a nun, and you've been paying a high price for having it done. O, it's a precious game! you pay for the weapons they use against you. You put a premium on the lies they tell you. Your child is rich and yielding, and they have a fine prize in her."

"I can't believe you," said Mr. Chalmers, "but I shall certainly look into it at once. I will set out for C—— to-morrow, and visit my daughter, and question her and the Abbess. If there is a mystery, I'll ferret it out."

"One word, sir. They'll try and deceive you, and I want your solemn promise not to mention my name or hint at any circumstances connected with me. If you do, you cut me off from ever helping you. Just now I am in high favor at Saint Margaret's. I gave the old nun who accompanied Sister Camilla a

douceur that enraptured her with my piety."

"I'll not mention you, depend upon it," said Mr. Chalmers. He slept little that night; his anxiety about his child increased with every hour, and early next morning he was on his way to C——, to satisfy himself of the truth of what he called "Julius' suspicions."

That Julius had fallen in love with his daughter would not have been an element of distress to this parent, had he not asserted that he had seen her in a nun's garb.

Julius was the very match Mr. John Chalmers would have chosen for his soft-hearted and—we might as well be honest—soft-headed Adeline.

Arrived at C——, and at the convent on Bellows Street, Mr. Chalmers, who was well known to the portress, was soon admitted to the parlor, and in a little time his daughter came running to his arms, as fondly delighted as ever to see her doting parent. Addie was closely followed by the Mother Superior, who volubly assured Mr. Chalmers of her pleasure at seeing him so unexpectedly, and followed her welcome by a fluent account of her dear girl's docility, progress in her studies, her rare gift for song, and general goodness and happiness.

In the excitement of his journey Mr. Chal-

mers had been ready to carry his child home at once, but seeing her as lively as ever, in her usual dress, and the words and presence of the plausible and wily Abbess, rebuked his fears and calmed his anxieties. Suddenly he noticed a change in his daughter.

"Where is your hair, Addie?" he asked, sharply.

"It is the fashion to wear it short now, pa," said Adeline, smoothing her golden waves of short hair uneasily, and flushing as she spoke.

"Fashion would not have prevailed," said the Abbess, gently; "at least not without consulting you, but the dear child had several headaches, and our physician advised having that mass of hair shortened. It will soon grow again."

Mr. Chalmers questioned Adeline of her studies, her health, her improvement, her amusements. The Abbess had something agreeable to say about all. But the father wanted the girl to himself a while. He said, stiffly, "Excuse me, madam, but seeing my child so seldom, it would be a gratification to see her by herself a short time."

The hesitation of the Superioress was scarcely perceptible. If she did not humor this man he could take his child away instantly. She

rose, speaking cordially: "Surely, sir—certainly, Mr. Chalmers, with pleasure."

Then stooping to kiss Adeline as she passed her, she said: "I am so glad you have the pleasure of seeing your dear, good papa!" and, kissing, whispered in her ear, "Be cautious! be *very* cautious!"

The Abbess gone, Mr. Chalmers seated himself by his child, and clasped her closely in his arms.

She shrunk uneasily.

"Do you not love your father, Addie?" he asked.

"Yes, surely, dear papa, but—you come at such long intervals that—it seems strange to me." The girl blushed and laughed restlessly.

Mr. Chalmers talked some time to her of home, of her dead mother, of his hopes for the future.

"Tell me, my dear, do they talk to you about their religion as different from ours?"

"O no, papa."

"Never ask you to embrace their faith? never urge it as safer and better?"

"No, father." Adeline's head bent low.

"You remember their written pledge? Do they keep it, one and all, like honest Christians?"

"Yes, dear father." The girl's voice trembled.

"Do you ever put on the nun's dress, my daughter?"

Adeline shivered. "That dress is sacred, papa."

"And they never ask you to wear it—never ask you to be a nun—never try to make a Lay Sister of you?"

Adeline wept violently. "You ask me such strange questions, papa! They are good and—true—and will do right—if you trust them."

"Yes, I dare say, of course. Don't cry. I did not mean to hurt your feelings. And you will be ready to come home, and be my own girl again, and we'll marry you some of these days, my dear?"

"It shall be as you say—as is right, papa," said Adeline, still crying.

Mr. Chalmers' fears were nearly gone. He put his hand under the daintily-molded chin, and lifted the tearful face.

"Tell me once more—look me in the eye and tell me if they try to make a nun of you."

"No, papa," faltered Adeline, now trembling painfully.

"And you will never deceive me, nor leave your parents' religion?"

"I will do as—I ought, as you say—as is right," sobbed Adeline, wildly.

"There, there; I am cruel to persecute you so," said Mr. Chalmers, wiping the tears from the fair babyish cheeks and kissing the weeping violet eyes. Under these caresses Adeline's face cleared up, and was as sunny as a babe's whose cry has ended, and whose swift joy has returned—the woe forgotten as soon as gone.

Leaving his child with many tender words and many anxious cautions, Mr. Chalmers met the Superioress in the hall.

"Will you be in again soon, sir?"

"I return home to-day. I confide my girl to your motherly goodness." He took her hand. "I *trust* her to you." He dropped the cold, quiet hand and was turning away. "Stop one moment! Have you here a Lay Sister—one Sister Camilla?"

The Abbess never flinched; she would not have faltered before the discharge of a battery of guns if the Holy Church had called on her to face them. "There is no such person in our house, sir."

"None? A Lay Sister diligent in works of mercy. I had heard there was!"

"There may be in some other convent in the city. If you desire to find such a Sister,

sir, I shall have pleasure in making inquiries."

"Thank you. Good-day. A moment more. It is needless that I remind you of our solemn agreement about the religious training of my child?"

"Quite needless," said the tranquil Abbess. "My word, sir, is given, and will ever be held sacred."

The reverend Mother bowed a grave, rebuking bow, to the sinner who could suspect the transparent truthfulness of her sacred character.

The father was gone, and the reverend Mother hastened to her protegee, who lay weeping miserably on the sofa.

"What has he discovered? What is wrong, my daughter?"

"He has discovered nothing; but all is wrong. O holy Mother! I have lied to my poor, dear papa this morning again and again, and he always taught me that to lie was so wicked! Oh, he would hate and despise me!"

"But the Church would love and honor you, my dear child. In misleading your father you have sought to please and obey your mother the Holy Church, whose claim over you is first of all. What you call a lie, my child, is not a sin in itself; it can be pure as the songs of the angels in heaven."

"My father taught me that a lie was a sin, and you have made me tell them—oh! so many!" sobbed Adeline.

"Only one thing can be a sin *per se*—that is disobedience to the Church. Other things are sins or virtues, as the Church holds them, as she inculcates or forbids them. You have told your father what is not true: you did it to save your soul and obey the Church, and you have done *right*. Weep no more, child of Mary. Beloved of the Holy Virgin, whom you serve, take courage."

"But he trusts me and I deceived him, and he is my own father, and loves me so; and has no one but me in all the world. Dearest Mother, why may I not be honest with my father?"

"Because he would take you from us, wreck your faith and ruin your soul. Does not the Church say, 'Whoso loveth *father* or mother more than me is not worthy of me?' My dear daughter Camilla, you have to-day won a high place in the Sacred Heart of Mary!"

"Oh, dear Mother! are you sure? are you sure?"

"Listen, my daughter Camilla," said the reverend Mother, seating herself by the weeping girl, and softly smoothing her hair; "the greatest claim, the highest right, must first be

honored—all other claims must yield to this. And this high right over you is not held by your parent, Catholic or Protestant, but by the Holy Church, the mother of us all. This Holy Church, founded in the Virgin by God, before he made the world, and set among men to be his ark of covenant mercy, the door of refuge for souls, claims the entire supervision of the sacrament of marriage. From this she holds the first right not only over husbands and wives in their married estate, but over children; for on the offspring of marriage the Church, which is as perfect and as eternally necessary as God, depends for her perpetuity on earth and her representation in heaven. The Church claims *all* children at their birth; follows them through life; does not relax her grasp at death, nor beyond the grave, but holds the disembodied soul, her tortured enemy, or her exultant and triumphant benefactor forever. Before such a claim as this, Daughter Camilla, how less than nothing is the claim of your unbelieving parent! Your safety and *his* safety depend on the Church, which you must placate. To that mighty power yield and be happy; what good to resist. You would be like a dead leaf resisting the whirlwind!"

The Superioress understood her pupil. In

the overwhelming power of this determined woman Adeline Chalmers was helpless; the exceeding strength of the Abbess absorbed all the girl's power of resistance. Thus it had ever been; desirous of this rich and yielding proselyte, for two years the Abbess had trained her in lying to her fond father; in enthusiastic services of a sensuous creed; had amused her with the occupations of a Lay Sister, and secure in her own power looked buoyantly forward to a year more, when Adeline, being of age, would be free from her father, and, taking the irrevocable vows, be the hapless victim of the Superioress and Father Munson forever.

The Abbess was secure, but here Julius crossed her path.

Julius would not believe a word of the protestations made to Mr. Chalmers. "Give me the picture. I will go to Saint Margaret's and compare it, line by line, with 'Sister Camilla.'"

"There is no Sister Camilla there," said Mr. Chalmers.

"Not for you; there will be for me," replied Julius.

Julius went armed with gifts, and asked for the Abbess. "This is for your poor, reverend Mother;" he slipped a hundred-dollar bill into her hand. "This for the Virgin's image;"

he gave a chain of gold. "Now, reverend Mother, let me see Sister Camilla, and thank her again for her instructions, her scapular and her prayer-book."

Sister Camilla came behind the grate. Julius thanked her. Sister Camilla instructed him in the devout worship of the Queen of Angels. Julius covertly compared Sister Camilla and the photograph of Miss Adeline Chalmers.

Julius returned to M——, and rushed furiously to John Chalmers'. "Your daughter is a Lay Sister—she is Sister Camilla!"

They talked until eleven o'clock. At two in the morning there was a violent ringing of John Chalmers' door-bell. The master of the house thrust his head out from the upper window. "Let me in!" cried Julius, "I have something to tell you!"

Down came John Chalmers in wrapper and slippers.

"I have thought how we can settle this case about Sister Camilla."

Four days after Julius called on the Abbess.

"Reverend Mother, I have a friend—an old man—lying at the hospital. He has been hurt in his heart. I want Sister Camilla. She would impress him as she has me. My

friend is rich—alone; he should be seen to, reverend Mother.”

And as nothing else would do, and Julius urged the Abbess to accompany Sister Camilla, she at last agreed, and the three set out for the hospital, Julius walking first, the two nuns following afar off.

They entered a private room. The “friend” lay on the bed, his face turned to the wall, and covered with a fine kerchief.

“Uncover his face,” whispered Sister Camilla.

“Its expression might alarm you,” replied the deceitful Julius; and then he spoke to his friend, but the sick man did not stir.

“Is he dead or insensible?” asked the Abbess.

“Not dead,” replied the guileful Julius. “Sister Camilla, read some prayers, I beseech you!”

Sister Camilla opened her book, and read, “Hail, Holy Queen! Mother of Mercy, our Life, our Sweetness, and our Hope. To THEE do we cry, poor banished children of Eve!” etc.

While she was speaking the figure on the bed shook and trembled a little.

“He hears you, I *think*,” quoth Julius.

The Abbess read a prayer.

“Sister Camilla, have you a crucifix you could put in his hand?” asked Julius.

Sister Camilla then drew from her pocket a carved wooden crucifix, precious, probably,

because it was so ugly. The doctor and the hospital superintendent had come in and stood as in solemn expectation. Sister Camilla approached the bed, moved the sheet gently, and pressed the crucifix into the hand she had laid bare. Her own hand was grasped as in a vise; the handkerchief slid from the covered face, and her father’s eyes gazed sternly up into the pallid face of the guilty Adeline!

“My child! can this be true?” He leaped from the bed where he had hidden, with only his coat laid aside of his ordinary dress. He faced the thunder-struck Abbess, shouting, “This your honor! This your sacred word! You would have denied it until the last moment of your life, but I have proved it! Off! off, my daughter, with those garments of shame! Child, come back to the father you have deceived!” But poor Adeline had fainted on the disordered bed.

The Abbess shrunk away to find Father Munson, and to tell her story of defeat, and, doubtless, to draw her coils closer about some other victim.

Mr. Chalmers sent for the wife of his friend, the superintendent, through whose help he had executed the plot of the subtle Julius, borrowed clothing for Adeline, and that very

evening started home with his deluded and repenting child. It seemed a wonderful relief to Adeline to be able to tell the truth at last and reveal the whole tale of her defection. Under the clear light of her father's words the past appeared in all its sinful blackness.

Our three friends ask three questions, Julius *loquitur*: "Can a man marry a woman who has thus once been beguiled by a priest? Will she who was false to her father be true to her husband? Will not she, who was urged into giving herself once to Rome, be likely at some future time surreptitiously to dedicate her children to the Moloch of to-day?"

Mr. John Chalmers *indignantly to the public*: "If a man were not safe, holding a written pledge, verbally renewed again and again, as was mine, who of you, having a child in a convent, *is* safe? How do any of you know surely that your convent-schooled daughters are not Lay Sisters?"

Adeline *appealing to everybody*: "When they are so cunning, so wise, so persistent, and take these winning ways, what can you expect of such simple girls as I, but to be proselyted and deceived, and made false to ourselves and everybody else, and turned, whether we will or not, each one into a Lay Sister?"