

FT MEADE
GenColl

THE NUN
OF ST. URSULA

—
HARRY HAZEL

—
1845



CHAPEL OF THE URSULINES—CECILE TAKING THE VEIL.

See Chapter IX.



CHAPEL OF THE BRASILIENS—CECILIE TAKING THE VEIL

See Chapter IX

Jones, Austin

THE

NUN OF ST. URSULA,

OR, THE

Burning of the Convent.

A Romance of Mount Benedict.

~~~~~  
**BY HARRY HAZEL,**

*Author of the 'Burglars, or the Mysteries of the League of Honor,' 'The Belle of Boston,' &c.*

~~~~~

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY F. GLEASON, 1 1-2 TREMONT ROW.

1845.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the Year 1845, by F. Gleason, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

THE

PZ3
J72
Nu

ROMANCE OF MOUNT BENEDICT

OR THE

REVENGE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

A ROMANCE OF MOUNT BENEDICT.

130180
4 of 4

BY HARRY HAZARD

Author of the "Brigades," or the "Histories of the League of Honor," "The
Bells of Boston," &c.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY T. GLEASON, 1-2 TREMONT ROW

1845

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the Year 1845, by T. Gleason, in the Clerk's Office
of the District Court of Massachusetts.

PREFACE.

“‘*A Romance of Mount Benedict!*’ *Pshaw!*” Methinks we hear the hypercritical reader utter this sentence with a sneering emphasis. “What is there relating to Mt. Benedict, of sufficient interest, to form a basis for a romance?” he adds, enquiringly, as though the subject had been exhausted in the ‘*Maria Monk*’ and ‘*Six Months in a Convent*’ narratives, which issued so prolifically from the press some ten years ago.

We are fully aware that it is generally supposed that the numerous works which have been written upon the Ursuline Convent, and the judicial investigations that were caused by its destruction, had made the whole subject familiar to every mind throughout New-England—indeed, that it was worn threadbare—yet, at the same time, let these enquiries be made of those who are most familiar with its details—“Why was the Convent destroyed? Who were the incendiaries? What object had they in view?” and the answers cannot be given, plain and simple as the questions are, without the conflicting testimony of thousands of others, whose evidence may be equally relied upon. And yet, these are the leading questions. How much more enigmatical, then, must be its details.

If, therefore, the history of the Convent, from its institution to its destruction is still as mysterious and impenetrable to the great mass of the people as ever, it is a good theme for the writer of fiction. As our title indicates, we propose to write a “*Romance of Mount Benedict* ;” but if, in the exercise of our imaginative faculties, we should accidentally stumble upon some stubborn truths, those whom they touch most nearly must not put on the coat, however well it may fit them ; for we would not incur the displeasure of the least among mankind—we would be friends with all.

HARRY HAZEL.

Cambridge, November, 1844.

PREFACE

... of *Romances of Mount Benedit*, *Palmer*, *Melville* we bear the hyper-
critical reader utter this sentence with a sneering emphasis: "What is there
left to the Benedict of sufficient interest, to form a basis for a romance?"
and, accordingly, although the subject had been expanded in the *Main*
Blair, and *Six Months in a Convent*, narratives, which issued so profusely
from the press some ten years ago.
We are fully aware that it is generally supposed that the numerous works
which have been written upon the Ursuline Convent, and the judicial invest-
gations that were caused by its destruction, had made the whole subject familiar
to every mind throughout New-England—indeed, that it was worn threadbare—
yet, at the same time, for these enquiries be made of those who are most familiar
with the facts—Why was the Convent destroyed? Who were the incendiaries?
What object had they in view? and the answers cannot be given plain
and simple in the questions are, without the conflicting testimony of thousands
of others, whose evidence may be equally relied upon. And yet, these are the
leading questions. How much more ontigistical, then, must be its details.
It therefore, the history of the Convent, from its institution to its destruction
is still as mysterious and unaccountable to the great mass of the people as ever,
it is a good theme for the writer of fiction. As our title indicates, we propose
to write a *Romance of Mount Benedit*; but it, in the exercise of our imag-
inative faculties, we should occasionally stumble upon some stubborn truths,
those whom they touch most nearly must not put on the coat, however well it
may fit them; for we would not incur the displeasure of the least among man-
kind—we would be friends with all.

HARRY HAZEN

Cambridge, November, 1844

THE NUN OF ST. URSULA.

A Romance of Mount Benedict.

CHAPTER I.

MOUNT BENEDICT BY SUNSET. THE DEJECTED STUDENT. INVECTIVE SOLILOQUY ON NUNNERIES. THE NAUTICAL STRANGER. SURPRISING DEVELOPMENTS. ROMANTIC NARRATIVE. THE YANKEE'S ADVENTURES AMONG THE SUBJECTS OF THE SOLDAN.

It was at the close of a bright and beautiful day in the middle of June; the sun was sinking behind the western hills, and shedding its last glittering gleams upon the tower and cross of Mount Benedict, and fringing with gold the soft snowy masses of vapor which curtained the horizon of the occident. Twilight shades were fast clothing the groves and valleys with a sable garb. One by one, from the clear blue vault above, peered forth the planets and stars with their serene rays, and Night's holy-queen moved in majestic beauty through the skies, and increasing in silvery brightness each moment of her silent course. The robin and swallow had chanted their latest song, and the cuckoo and whippoorwill had begun their evening serenade. Not a leaf moved on the stately elm, nor a zephyr ruffled the waters of the dark Mystic, whose surface reflected with perfect distinctness the starry canopy of heaven. It was an hour for recreation; the daily toil of the laborer was o'er, and instead of the din of labor, the hum of merry voices came forth from the gardens and fields. It was an hour too, for reflection—a fit time to behold Nature's Majesty exchanging her brilliant golden attire of day, for her silvery-gemmed garb of night.

At such a time and on such an evening as we have described, the singular tale we are about to narrate commences by following a solitary individual through a romantic grove of trees, bordering on the extreme north of the town of Cambridge, near the Colleges, and in close contiguity to what is now termed 'Professors' Row.' The individual in question was a young man, apparently of twenty or twenty-one years of age, tall and gracefully formed, with a handsome countenance, though at this time a sad and pensive expression rested upon his features. He pursued his way slowly along the path, swinging a Niagara cane or crook carelessly in his hand, and mut-

tering incoherently at the same time. Presently he emerged from the wood, crossed the road, and stood upon a gentle eminence which commands a view of the town of Charlestown, its adjacent fields, and its commanding hills. He gazed for a few moments at the surrounding scenery, turned his eye toward the heavens and in melancholy but earnest tones thus soliloquised :

‘Would that the absurd theory of astrology were true, and I were one of its learned votaries, I might then foretell my destiny in those twinkling orbs which have no parallel in brightness, save in the eyes of her at whose shrine I could fall down and worship. Oh, Cecile! Cecile! you know not of the adoration which is offered to thee! You know not of the hours of anguish, of the sleepless nights that I have passed, deprecating thy rash resolution to enter the walls of yon Convent! Could not the tears and entreaties of thine only parent; the pure and ardent affection of him to whom you once pledged your love, have restrained thee from immuring thy beautiful self in a living charnel-house? Oh! Cecile! had Jove’s dread thunderbolt but shattered to the earth that unholy temple of mockery, misery and mortality, ere thy light footsteps had crossed its abhorred threshold! Thou wert free, happy and merry! pure and lovely as the brightest living thing of earth! Thy mother loved thee with more than a parent’s tenderness! Thou, too, wert the pride of the village, and thy smiles had an angelic charm that made glad every heart within their magic influence! Could my mind but linger wholly upon those happy hours of childhood, when with me, thy chosen companion, we roamed these groves and vales together, without the painful remembrance of that sad and dismal hour when you left a peaceful and happy home, and bade adieu to a bereaved parent, a disconsolate lover, thy dearest friends, and even this bright world, to become a Recluse! a Nun! then might I be happy, and contentment ever be my lot! May kind Heaven yet interpose and rescue thee from passing beyond thy novitiate in that mystic temple. Let not those who beguiled thee from all that the world holds dear, ever bestow upon thee the blasphemous appellation of ‘Spouse of Jesus Christ!’ Profane monsters! doth not the fear of an offended Deity, whose disciple thou professtest to be, cause thee to tremble? Forbear! withhold thy sacrilegious mockeries from the innocent maiden whom thou hast inveigled into those unsanctified and secret chambers. Cecile! awake! free thyself from the infatuated spells with which thou art bound, and abjure the false dogmas and superstitions of papal power!’

A solemn peal of musical bells from the turret of the Ursuline Convent, vibrated with startling distinctness upon the ear of the young man, and arrested the wild expressions to which he gave utterance. He descended from the eminence into the main road, when he descried an individual astride a fleet steed riding quickly up the ascent. The horseman was attired in a true sailor’s garb—blue jacket, white trowsers, checked shirt, tarpaulin hat and pumps; around his neck he wore a wide black ribbon, with a ring of bone, slipped through the ends in lieu of a knot. The moment he saw the stranger he reined in his steed. His countenance denoted manliness, resolution and perseverance; but could his features at this moment have been closely scanned, a shadow of sadness and doubt might have been seen occasionally disturbing its natural complacency. He did not appear more than twenty-three years of age, and were it not for his nautical habiliments, he would have been accounted of a different rank from a jolly son of old Neptune. As soon as he had checked the prancing and curvetting of his high-mettled horse, he thus accosted the student:

‘Halloo! ship ahoy! I’m out my reck’ning. These land-marks have so changed since I was last in these cruisings, that I am at a loss on which point to steer!’

THE NUN OF ST. URSULA.

‘To what port are you bound?’ asked the other, imitating the nautical address of the stranger.

‘That’s pretty good for a land-shark! By your hull and rigging I should know you was one o’ them college larks, so I can’t be far off the course. Is there a handful of water about here that they used to call Fresh Pond?’

‘Yes!’ answered the student, ‘and it lies about one mile on the road south of this?’

‘Thank ye, my hearty! I see how it is---they have been cutting a new channel through here!’

‘This is, indeed, a thoroughfare somewhat new. You must have been absent from here a long time?’ said the student, inquiringly, and with an emphasis that denoted that his curiosity in regard to the sailor was somewhat excited.

‘Eleven years!’ he replied, dropping his head upon his breast.

‘Eleven years!’ reiterated the student. ‘A long time for one of your years.’

‘True!’ replied the sailor, drawing a bandanna from his jacket pocket, and with it wiping away a tear which moistened his eye. ‘Are you familiar with these cruisings?’

‘Perfectly well! I know every crook and turn, and every house for two miles around.’

‘Then, p’raps you can tell me of a family that reside or once resided in a little cottage, near the Fresh Water Pond by the name of——’ Here the sailor hesitated and wiped away the tears which coursed down his cheeks.

‘By the name of---Melville?’

‘Melville!’ echoed the student, starting at hearing the name mentioned by the tar. ‘I know them intimately! You mean the widow Melville and her daughter——’

‘Cecile!’ interrupted the sailor.

‘The same!’

‘Then Heaven be praised!’ and leaping from his horse he grasped the delicate hand of the stranger. ‘I thank you, my good friend. They are well?’ continued he, earnestly.

‘Mrs. Melville is well,’ replied the student.

‘And Cecile?’

‘She’s not residing with her mother, now.’

‘Not residing with her mother, now? Come---what mean you? Don’t keep me in the fog! Has the old lady become poor and sent the pretty Cecile out to work? Thank Heaven, I have plenty of shot in the locker! They shall be made happy again if poverty is the trouble. Oh, my dear mother and sister——’

‘Your mother and sister!’ exclaimed the student with surprise. ‘What! do I behold John---my old schoolmate, John Melville?’

‘No! not John Melville---but JACK Melville! Give us your flipper my hearty! You have made Jack as happy as ever a jolly tar was in meeting his sweetheart after a voyage of discovery around the world! But avast there! who are you? I never set eyes on your hull afore!’

‘What! not know your old playmate, Fred Gray!’

‘Shiver my timbers! so it is! Give us your small grappling iron, my hearty, once more! Why Fred, my boy, you have grown to be a gentleman, while you see I’m but a rough looking son of old Neptune! Lord bless ye, next to my mother and little Cecile I should have spoken for you! But, speaking of Cecile, what port is she now in? You said she was not at home!’

‘No, Jack; would to Heaven that she were at home! You see that huge brick edifice upon the summit of yonder round hill?’

‘What, that prisonish looking concern, with a caboose upon the top of it, and a jury-mast and a yard rigged aloft?’

‘You mean the cupola and cross, Jack?’

‘Yes, Fred, cabooses or cross-trees, it’s all the same to me!’

‘Well, Jack, she’s there!’

‘Well, ’spose she is there?’ questioned Melville with a suspicious emphasis, and staring at the building. ‘It’s not a calaboose, or a house of correction, or a state-prison is it?’

‘No!’

‘No!’ reiterated Jack, imitating his friend. ‘Come, speak out like a man Fred! Don’t keep me shivering in the wind’s eye! Bear away at once, and no more luffing! What is it?’

‘It’s a—a—’

‘It’s a—a—,’ mocked Jack, impatiently. ‘Well a—a—what?’

‘It’s a Con—CONVENT!’ stammered Frederick Gray.

‘Shiver my timbers, if I didn’t half think so!’ said the seaman, the tears again starting from his eyes. ‘Excuse me, Fred, my pumps are at work again. Lor’ bless me, who’d think that a rough cruiser like me could feel as I do! She isn’t what they call a *Nun* is she?’

‘No, Melville, she is now what they term a Novice, but I learn that they have persuaded her to consent to take the black veil.’

‘And if she does, shiver my timbers if I don’t unveil the whole crew! But how is this? How came she there? What catholic priest has been cruising in our soundings?’ questioned Jack peremptorily.

‘None that I am aware of,’ replied Gray, ‘but she has of late become strangely infatuated with the Nunnery. You must know that it is common for some of our fashionable Protestants to send their daughters to the Convent-school to get an education, as though their own schools were of an inferior character. Your mother was persuaded to send Cecile, and soon after, through the influence of the Abbess, and others connected with the Nunnery, she was prevailed upon to try a life in the cloister. She is now in her novitiate, or probationary state, as it is termed, and if some counter influence is not exerted she will soon take the veil, and thus in this monastery entomb herself forever!’

‘Never!’ said Melville, with earnestness. ‘I will burn the accursed convent to the ground, if milder means prove ineffectual! Come with me! I must fly to my mother. Lend me a hand Fred in this emergency, and you shall never want for a friend while Jack Melville is in a condition to carry a rag of sail!’

‘With all my heart,’ replied Gray. ‘I have more interest in this matter than you are aware of; and never will I relax my earnest efforts until your sister is again under her mother’s protection. But tell me, Melville, as we proceed along, your past history. We supposed you dead, for the barque in which you and your father sailed for France, was reported lost and that all on board perished.’

‘Out of one hundred and fifteen men, women and children on board that ill-fated vessel, strange to relate I was the only person saved.’ Here Melville hesitated, and wiping again the tears from his eyes, resumed the recital of his narrative in language that did not comport with his previous style of addressing his friend, or with the nautical garb which we wore. ‘Although I was but twelve years of age, all the circumstances attending that dreadful disaster are as fresh in my memory as if they had occurred but yesterday, but I cannot now enter into details. After a terrific gale which lasted three days, the barque lost her spars and masts, filled with water and foundered, and not a single individual of that ship’s company, to my knowledge, ever again reached land but myself. My poor father, a few moment’s previous to the barque’s going down, lashed me to a large arm-chair, and

when she sank I went down with her, but again rose to the surface, and found myself floating on the ocean with not an object within my gaze, but a few spars from the deck of the vessel. The storm had now abated, and the sun, which had been obscured for a week, broke through the black clouds with dazzling brilliancy. I soon fell asleep. How long I slept I know not. But when I awoke, I felt myself swinging to and fro in the air, and in the next moment was on the deck of a strange-looking craft, the like of which I had never seen before. I was surrounded, too, by strange looking men, with long beards and pale complexions; some of whom were richly dressed with tunics, decorated with silver and gold, and jewelled turbans with crescent-shaped plumes covered their heads. Girdles were fastened around their waists, from which were suspended scimitars, pistols, &c. Others were dressed in plainer garbs but of the same costume. They gazed upon me for some time in mute astonishment. At length the cords were cut with which I was bound; but my limbs were so benumbed that I could not stand without assistance. One of the men took me in his arms and carried me into the cabin, when I heard the voices of those whom I had just left, saying in loud tones—'Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar!' The apartment into which I was carried was furnished in the most luxurious and gorgeous manner. Two negro slaves were summoned, who, upon entering, bowed and raised their arms in a circular form above their heads. This, I afterwards learned, was the Mohammedan sign of devotion. They led me into an adjoining room, where they, with some difficulty, divested me of my saturated clothes, muttering impatiently during the perplexing process; I was then placed in a warm bath, which seemed impregnated with the most delicious aromas, and had such a soporific influence upon my senses, that I suddenly fell into a state of unconsciousness while immersed in the fragrant waters. When I was again restored to sensibility I found myself lying upon a soft couch. Beside me, upon an ottoman, sat a black-eyed little girl, of not more than eleven years of age, whose exceeding loveliness was wonderful to behold. Her eyes sparkled like diamonds, and her mouth and lips, and carmine-tinged cheek would have made the most stubborn anchorite forswear his vows; her soft and glossy black hair hung in three long braids over her shoulders, and on her brow rested a gold crescent, ornamented with three brilliantly-jewelled stars. She blushed when she met my enraptured gaze, and drawing a veil quickly over her sweet features she started up, and tinkling a small silver bell which she lifted from the table, disappeared from the apartment with a grace that I thought none but fairies and other imaginary beings possessed. The black slaves again appeared bearing upon their arms articles of wearing apparel; they lifted me from the soft couch, and in an incredible short space of time, I was metamorphosed, from a genuine Yankee boy, into an Oriental youth, *a la Turque*. They then motioned me to sit down, but perceiving no chair in the room I declined by shaking my head. One of them immediately sat down, crossing his legs under him like a tailor upon his shop-board, and motioned me to do likewise, which I accordingly did with no little difficulty, my nether limbs being unaccustomed to such a singular posture. As soon as I had gained the required position, the little bell was again rung, the black slaves departed, and the young sylph-like beauty again appeared. She fixed her dazzling eyes upon me for a moment, and a smile of pleasure illumined her lovely face, while her soft transparent cheeks glowed with a deeper crimson than when I first beheld her. She spoke to me in the sweetest tones that I had ever heard from mortal lips, but in a language which I did not understand. She then made signs so expressive that I quickly comprehended that she desired to know if I would partake of food, which I gladly assented to by nodding my head, for I had eaten nothing for sometime—how long I knew not. The slaves were again summoned, bring-

ing me food, such as I had never seen before, on plates of silver and gold; also, two goblets, one filled with delicious wine, the other with cool sherbet. Burning with thirst I seized the goblet nearest to me and applied it to my parched lips, and should have swallowed it all at a draught, had not my fairy-like monitress ran towards me, and with her little delicate hands took it from me ere I had half finished it, at the same time shaking her head by way of caution, and smiling in the most bewitching manner at my intemperance. She then gave me the goblet containing the sherbet, which I was allowed to imbibe more freely of. Having satisfied my thirst I looked around for a knife and fork, or spoon, to eat my food with, but perceiving neither I made signs to her that I wanted them; but she shook her head and finally seated herself beside me, and began to pick up the food with her fingers and placing it in her mouth, and beckoned me to do likewise, a custom altogether new to me, but, nevertheless, a general practice among the subjects of the Soldan, into whose habits I was now being initiated. A flagree fruit basket, containing figs, all of which I should probably have eaten, had not my monitress perceiving my intention, saved me the trouble and perchance a severe illness by eating at least half herself. After my agreeable repast, she motioned me to rise, and placing a turban upon my head and a similar covering upon her own, she took me by the hand, and with quite a consequential air led me to the quarter deck of the vessel and in a dignified manner presented me to the superior officer and his subordinates, who saluted me in the Mohammedan style; I answered by making a Yankee school-boy's bow, at which they all laughed heartily. My monitress then instructed me, and I was soon enabled to perform the sign with as much accuracy and grace as those who had just enjoyed a fit of merriment at my expense. The chief officer took me kindly by the hand, patted me on the head, talking rapidly at the same time, and in so pleasant a manner that I was assured my preservers felt not only a sympathy for my situation but that they were highly pleased with me. My pretty companion led me around the ship, telling me the name of each thing we saw in her own language, which I endeavored to pronounce after her. Days and weeks passed, and I soon acquired sufficient knowledge of the language, to make myself partially understood. I learned that I was on board the Turkish flag ship of war, belonging to the squadron of the Dardanelles, and that Zillah—for this was my pretty companion's name—was a Grecian maiden and the adopted daughter of the Pasha Mehemet Effendi, or Lord Admiral of the fleet, whose ship I was then on board. I was treated with so much affection that ere long I was happy among these people whom Providence had cast me; and gradually my affliction for the loss of my father passed away; yet thoughts of my dear mother and sister made my heart often yearn for home. But I knew that was then an impossibility; my spirit prompted me to bear up against these thoughts, and I resolved to make myself worthy of the esteem of my hospitable preservers. The vessel, after a long passage up the Mediterranean and the Dardanelles, arrived at Constantinople. The Pasha Effendi took me to his magnificent palace with the beautiful Zillah, where for two years I was treated with the utmost kindness and attention, and a learned tutor was employed for the special purpose of instructing me in Oriental literature and in practical sciences, in which I made rapid progress. My mornings were devoted to study, and my afternoons and evenings to pleasure—roaming with Zillah amid the flowery shrubbery of the palace gardens, or listening to her sweet voice while thrumming the tuneful guitar or mandolin.

Thus two years passed pleasantly away when war was renewed against Greece. The Pasha informed me one morning that he had obtained from the Sultan a Midshipman's commission for me, which I gladly accepted, but felt grieved at the thought of parting from Zillah, whom I was allowed

to call my sister, and for whom I felt more than a brother's love. I was ordered on board of the ship, which was in readiness to sail, and acquainted Zillah with my promotion. She ran to the Pasha, and upon her knees before him begged permission to accompany us. But he positively declined taking her upon the dangerous expedition. She wept bitterly at our parting; but I comforted her with assurances that I should soon return. The fleet immediately sailed, and I entered upon my new vocation with so much zeal and alacrity, that I won the confidence of my brother officers, and elicited much commendation from the Pasha. After a cruise of eighteen months, during which time we had several engagements, we were ordered, with nearly the whole naval power of the Ottoman Porte, to Navarino, where we were attacked by the fleets of the Allied Powers of England, Russia and Greece, and where it is well known that our force was nearly destroyed. In this desperate conflict I saved the life of the Pasha, by severing the arm from an officer of a Russian Corvette, who with his men had boarded our ship, while aiming a pistol within a yard of his breast. Subsequently, through a plan of my own, I succeeded in disentangling our ship from the grappling irons of a steam-frigate, which had commenced pouring a bubbling fluid upon our deck, and carried her out of the action, enabling us to escape. These circumstances raised me highly in the estimation of the Turks, and abundantly was I afterwards rewarded.

My heart leaped with joy when we came in sight of the towers and minarets of Constantinople; but great was the consternation of the people on learning the ill tidings of the disastrous battle of Navarino! I hastened to meet my Zillah, who flung her arms around my neck and kissed me o'er and o'er again, in presence of my commander and others of the household. I verily believe that we were the only happy pair in all Constantinople on the arrival of our ship!

Melville and Gray had now reached the little lane which led to the cottage where the former was born. Here they halted.

'Ah! Frederick!' said Melville, with tears in his eyes. 'The sight of this loved spot once more recalls to mind my happy boyhood days. I dare not suddenly reveal myself to my dear mother. Let me be your guest to-night. Claim the hospitality of my mother for a friend of yours who has just returned from sea, and to-morrow morning I will send to the ship for my wardrobe, &c. This rough garb I wear merely when it serves my purpose.'

'With pleasure,' replied Gray. 'Your romantic narrative breaks off at an interesting epoch. It will give me exceeding pleasure to learn the sequel.'

'Not to night, Fred—not to night.'

THE NUN OF ST. URSULA.

CHAPTER II.

THE URSULINE CONVENT. CECILE AND THE ABBESS. ALICE BENTLEY,
A LOVER OF FREEDOM. ARRIVAL OF FREDERICK. DEPARTURE OF
CECILE.

Mount Benedict! What New-Englander has not heard of this picturesque eminence, upon whose summit, eleven years ago, towered the majestic walls of the Monastery dedicated to St. Ursula? Then the pride of the Catholics and the abomination of the Protestants! Behold now the crumbling and blackened ruins of that once noble edifice, suffered to stand as a monument of intolerance, of desecration and disgrace upon the otherwise fair escutcheon of the good old Commonwealth of Massachusetts! It is a commanding eminence, and thousands and tens of thousands of Protestants are obliged to look daily upon this scene of desolation! On another height, not more prominent, and within the same view, towers the stately monument of Bunker Hill! a monument erected to the memory of the gallant and brave who fell in the glorious cause of Liberty! Freeman, as you stand upon the pinnacle of this massive granite tower, turn your eyes toward the setting sun and contemplate the mouldering ruins which rise up and obstruct your gaze as if in mockery of the sacred Temple of Liberty on which you now stand! Americans! how can you assimilate the monstrously incongruous sentiments which involuntarily spring into the mind at the sight of these prominent objects? These I thought to be the boasted scenes of civil and religious freedom! But they deserve no such boasting so long as that desecrated eminence is suffered to stand with its mouldering walls upon its summit, marring the beauty of one of the loveliest landscapes of New England!

The conflagration of the Ursuline Convent, by a band of midnight incendiaries, has become a matter of History, not only in our land but throughout all Christendom; and in our state legislative halls it is annually made a subject of debate, arising out of the multiplicity of petitions yearly presented for a compensation to those who suffered by its destruction. As the principle has been conceded by the state authorities of guaranteeing to the people ample amends for all property destroyed by a lawless assemblage, would it not be expedient and just, would it not be a matter of policy, if not of right, to pay the claimants, and thus end a controversy which has aided the spread of popery in our land, for the last ten years, more than the combined spiritual efforts of all its bishops and priests during the century previous. But, as it is not within the legitimate province of a novelist to discuss matters belonging to our grave legislators, and as our tale commences prior to the deplorable calamity, we forbear commenting further upon it.

The Convent was a large three story brick structure, with a narrow projecting front. The principal entrance was gained by a long flight of half-winding steps, leading to the front door, situated midway between the base and roof of the edifice. A cupola, with a gilt cross perched upon it, relieved the almost square appearance of the structure. Were such a building situated beside a river or streamlet, one would have supposed it a factory, so nearly did its exterior resemble one of those useful establishments. But, situated upon the summit of a high and commanding hill, surrounded by a beautiful garden adorned in a tasteful manner, with labyrinthine walks;

bowers entwined with flowering shrubbery; rare conservatories of plants from every clime; trees bearing choicest fruit; the whole bordered with a high wall, lined with a thick green hedge, extending the entire circumference of its circular base, broken only in front by a gate arched with a trelliced woodbine, gave the imposing edifice a picturesque and fascinating appearance. Such was the Ursuline Convent prior to its destruction in 1834.

Cecile Melville, the heroine of our tale, entered the Female Seminary, attached to the Ursuline Convent, at the age of fifteen, and her arrival there was hailed with secret pleasure by the Abbess of the Nunnery, and Padre Francis, a Canadian monk, who was the spiritual confessor of the establishment, for it was known to them that she was the only daughter of a widow lady, and that Cecile had a fortune, which latter consideration had great weight in their minds. They had several private interviews particularly concerning Cecile, and it was resolved that every discreet means should be employed in order to influence her susceptible mind to regard their religion and institution with favor. In consequence she was treated with the utmost kindness, and every attention was studiously paid her that could render the place attractive and agreeable; the effect of which will hereafter be seen.

One fine summer's evening, one year antecedent to the incidents narrated in our first chapter, the pupils of the Convent Seminary were enjoying their usual walk in the garden, attended by the Abbess, who attached herself particularly to Cecile Melville, and in the course of their winding promenade became separated from the rest of the company. They seated themselves within a little arbor, covered with green shrubbery, when the Abbess commenced a conversation with her pupil, in order to elicit her thoughts respecting a life in the cloister.

'The young ladies seem joyous to night,' remarked the Abbess, as a sound of merriment reached their ears.

'It is such a lovely evening, and in this beautiful place one cannot well feel otherwise,' replied Cecile.

'It gives me joy to hear you say so, my dear. Then you are pleased with our institution?'

'Oh yes,' replied Cecile with animation. 'I advance so rapidly in my studies, and enjoy myself so much in a variety of ways, that I could live here always.'

'Indeed!' said the Abbess. 'It is exceedingly gratifying to hear you say so. I believe our school has no equal in the country, yet some of our scholars frequently speak lightly of it.'

'I am sure I could not find fault with a single thing, unless I should complain to you that too many kindnesses are lavished upon me. I never for a moment regretted that my dear mother sent me here, although many of our friends opposed it. I tell them now that every moment I am here is a moment of happiness.'

'Ah, my dear Cecile, you know nothing of happiness!'

'I do not comprehend you.'

'Ask those kindred spirits who have renounced the world; who have become wedded to our Divine Master; they know of joys which is denied to beings of the world; their measure of happiness is full!'

'Indeed!' replied Cecile. 'You then can tell me of those joys which I do not understand.'

'No, my dear; it is foreign to my vocation to talk of these things to the daughters of Protestant parents; besides it might offend your mother.'

'Oh no! my dear mother would not take offence at anything that could add to my happiness.'

'Then mark me and believe what I utter. There is no real happiness among the living, save with those who have taken the vows of our holy or-

der; they are privileged to commune with the saints, and are under their special protection. Let these things be impressed strongly upon your mind! though I would not influence you against the cold and unspiritual formula of Protestantism.'

'I believe that you would direct me aright; but——'

'Say no more, now, my good child. If ever circumstances justify it I may point out to you the only true path to happiness in this life, and in the life beyond the tomb.'

At this moment a sprightly dark-eyed maiden, of not more than fourteen summers, bounded down the path almost breathless with excitement.

'Oh, Cecile!' exclaimed she. 'I have got such good news for you! He's come! he's come!'

'Who has come, Alice?' enquired Cecile, blushing.

'Who has come?' reiterated Alice. 'Now hear that; just as though you didn't know *who* had come! Why, Frederick Gray, to be sure! Cecile can't surely have but one beau, when that one is so handsome!'

'Miss Bentley!' said the Abbess, sternly, as she left the young Misses; 'when you have completed your errand, you will retire to your room.'

'Yesm;' said she, jeeringly, after the Abbess had left. 'Now that the cross old Lady Superior has gone I'll tell you. Frederick Gray has come with a horse and chaise, to carry you home to make a visit, at your mother's particular request. I wish my mother had sent for me too.'

'Thank you Alice,' said Cecile, mildly.

'Why how dull you seem; I should jump for joy were I in your place.'

'I am glad to go home and see my mother; but I find a great deal of happiness here,' remarked Cecile.

'I hate the Convent, and shall be glad when my term is out. The teachers are so cross to me, I can't bear them.'

'The Abbess is certainly very kind; indeed, they all are.'

'Oh, they're partial; they want to make a Nun of you. I shouldn't wonder if they yet christened you St. Cecilia. It will be a long time before they make a Nun of me. I don't like the looks of their pale faces and serious aspects; besides they all die of consumption.'

'You must not judge by outward appearances. Their joys are within.'

'If they're happy, I'm glad of it; but I do't envy the possession of such happiness. I'd rather be free, and enjoy the bright and beautiful things of Nature—to roam though the shady groves and green fields, and sing and be merry like the birds, than to be mew'd up in a cloister, like a criminal, and *pretend* to be happy.'

Thus spake the lovely and independent-minded Alice Bentley; but her words fell unheeded upon the ears of her sedate yet beautiful companion; for she was contemplating, almost abstractedly, the words that the Abbess had spoken to her. They had now reached the plat of green grass before the Convent door, where Frederick Gray was waiting, impatiently, for his beloved Cecile.

'You are kind, Frederick, to come for me,' said Cecile, as he took her small hand and pressed it within his own. 'Wait but a moment and I shall be in readiness.'

They were soon seated in the vehicle, pursuing their way on the road leading to Old Cambridge.

'How is my mother?' asked Cecile.

'She is well. I saw her but an hour since.'

A long pause now ensued.

'Cecile,' said Frederick, at length; 'do you intend to return to the Convent?'

'I am unable to say. I should be pleased to go back if mother has no objections. It is a good institution, and a delightful place, and I must con-

fess that I almost envy the happiness of the Nuns themselves. Their lives are peaceful and holy; they live but to do good, and are not subject to the dangerous vicissitudes of the ever changeful world.'

These sentiments sank deep into the heart of Frederick. He had, from some trivial cause or other, or perhaps a mere creation of his own fancy, conceived a slight suspicion that Cecile was inclined to become a recluse, and this remark of hers seemed to corroborate what he suspected.

'I trust that you are not serious,' said he. 'What would your friends say if they should hear it reported that Cecile Melville intended to renounce the world and bury herself in a cloister?'

'My friends would certainly advise me to choose a course of life that would best conduce to my happiness and welfare here and hereafter.'

'Most certainly,' replied Frederick. 'But you may be unduly prejudiced by new friends, and I trust you will fully consider the step which you hint at for your dear mother's sake—for the sake of your friends—yes, Cecile, for my sake!'

'Be assured, Frederick,' said she, firmly. 'I shall do nothing precipitately or unadvisedly; but the things which belong to Heaven must not be too lightly passed over.'

'Surely not! but monasteries you know have had a doubtful reputation ever since their first establishment, however free from imputation the Ursuline Convent may be; and to be charitable I am fully persuaded that there does not yet exist any grounds for charges against it.'

'You speak truly. I doubt not that the order in some countries has fallen into disrepute by the abuses of those who should have been its preservers. As regards the Ursuline Nuns they appear more like angels than men, and the Convent seems more like a celestial paradise than a human habitation.'

The chaise had now reached the cottage door of Mrs. Melville, who was waiting to receive her daughter. The mother embraced Cecile affectionately, and thanked Frederick for his kindness in escorting her home.

Cecile had been but a few days under her mother's roof, when she was taken suddenly ill, and for some time her life was despaired of. Two long months elapsed ere she was pronounced convalescent. Meanwhile she received almost daily visits from the Abbess and others attached to the Convent, who were admitted to the invalid's apartment, and expressed so much solicitude in her behalf, that Mrs. Melville as well as Cecile looked upon them as ministering angels. During this period the joys of a monastic life were duly set forth, and before her complete recovery, she was so much infatuated with the idea of becoming as one of her saint-like friends, that she succeeded in gaining her mother's consent, who religiously believed that her daughter's happiness would be enhanced thereby!

Frederick Gray made daily visits to the cottage, but during her illness he did not see his beloved Cecile; neither did he know that it was contemplated he should never behold her again! His morning and evening orisons were offered up to his Maker for her recovery! His prayers were heard—but when it was told him that she was again at the Convent as a Novice, he exclaimed in the agony of his heart—'Would to Heaven she were in her grave, and myself beside her!'

CHAPTER III.

THE BEAUTIFUL NOVICE OF ST. URSULA. RITES OF THE CONVENT. PADRE FRANCIS, THE MONK: INDELICATE INTRUSION. THE CONFSSIONAL. THE FELICITY OF A LIFE IN THE CLOISTER. IMPIETY OF THE MONK.

It was a cold winter's day in the month of February, just after the Convent bell had summoned the Ursulines to their various avocations, when a carriage halted at the Convent gate. A young lady immediately alighted, and proceeded up the snowy pathway, ascended the long flight of steps which led to the front entrance, and rang the door-bell. It was quickly opened by a female attendant, who conducted the closely-hooded and veiled stranger to a large room back of the front parlor, which was used exclusively for the setting room of the Nuns, and for the reception of Novices. At one end of the apartment was an altar with a crucifix, illuminated by six candles, resting upon it. The female removed her veil and hood, and revealed the pale and serene, yet beautiful countenance of Cecile Melville! She prostrated herself before the altar, and continued kneeling until the Abbess made her appearance. Were it possible for a human being to rival the angels in heavenly beauty and loveliness, such a being appeared Cecile Melville while prostrate at the altar! Her face was white as the purest alabaster, and fair as Parian marble. Her deep blue eyes, turned upward, lent a seraphic expression to her countenance. Upon her neck of snowy whiteness her dark tresses rested in profusion, and added grace to the symmetry of her sylph-like figure. Her right hand rested upon the altar, while the fingers of the left were entwined among the curls which reclined upon her bosom.

Such a being was Cecile Melville, when she entered the Ursuline community as a Novice. On that morning she had bidden adieu to her only earthly parent and an assemblage of friends, with the firm determination of ultimately becoming a Nun of the order of St. Ursula.

The Abbess embraced Cecile and kissed her fair cheek. 'Welcome to our community!' said she. 'You are too lovely and angelic to suffer the trials and temptations of a world of wickedness. You are now within a holy temple; a temple under the protection of saints. During your novitiate you will be submissive and penitent, and if we find you, as I doubt not we shall, fitting the vocation of a Nun, you will then be permitted to take the black vows, a religious rank which is attainable to but few. Sweet child, a repose of happiness and communion with the saints in this life, and a certainty of heavenly joys in the world to come, will be thine, if you conform to the duties of a recluse. Follow me.'

The Abbess led her through a narrow hall into a long dark room, and having halted before a large crucifix, with a dim taper standing beside it, she caused Cecile to kneel, saying,

'Know ye that the emblem of salvation before you is constructed of the bones of a holy saint!'

'Of what saint?'

'Question not my child; you will learn all hereafter. Arise! I now in-

vest you with this garb of purity and piety; kiss it; it has been consecrated by one of the holy fathers of the church. This,' continued she, presenting her with a rosary of beads, 'will prevent you from being assailed by the evil spirit, who is ever hovering around the good and the beautiful.'

A small bell was now heard, and Cecile was conducted to the refectory and presented to the sisters, who embraced her and welcomed her arrival. Prayers to the saints and adorations to the Virgin were now performed in latin. All knelt and kissed the floor, Cecile imitating their example. At a signal they seated themselves at the table, upon which a scanty meal was prepared. One of the Nuns repeated in rapid tones—'In nomine domini nostri Jesu Christe,' when all crossed themselves and responded 'Amen.'

When evening came, Cecile was conducted to the sleeping apartment assigned her, which for dimensions and convenience, would have compared well with the narrow space usually allotted to the denizen of a mad-house. On reaching it some words of surprise involuntarily escaped her, when she was lightly reprimanded by her attendant, and advised to kiss the floor, as a penance, and to say her 'Hail Marys,' in Latin, of which the following is an English version:

'Hail, Mary! full of Grace! the Lord is with thee! Blessed art thou among thy sex, and blessed is thy offspring, Jesus! Holy Mary! Mother of God! pray for us, sinners, now and at the hour of death. Amen.'

Cecile was now left alone to contemplate the novel events of the day, to wonder why an apartment, destitute of comforts, should be assigned her, while the young ladies of the school were provided with every requisite convenience, and to seek that repose which her almost exhausted frame required. She, however, did not again murmur, but commending herself to the saints, reclined upon the hard and narrow couch. Sleep did not close her eyelids until after the bell of Angelus rung. Her mind was too active in meditating upon the step she had taken; she could not avoid contrasting the happy home of her mother with the cheerless, desolate home of the recluse; neither could she suppress an occasional thought of him who had awakened love's young dream in her susceptible heart. She now felt lonely, and yet thought she ought to feel happy, as she had sacrificed the pleasures of youth for the path of the saints which led to the Eternal World!

Three months passed away. During the day the same monotonous routine of duty, and at night her slumbers were disturbed by disagreeable visions; and although she deemed it a grievous sin to cherish thoughts of disappointment and regret, yet she clung with tenacity to the hope of still experiencing the felicity which had been promised, and her feelings revolted at the idea of again returning to the world.

One morning when she awoke from her dreamy slumbers she was startled at beholding, in a devotional attitude beside her couch, the figure of Padre Francis, who was mumbling over a Latin prayer, with his eyes turned upon the gloomy walls of the chamber. Her first impulse was to tell the bold intruder to leave the room, but perceiving him still zealous in his devotions she quieted the alarming apprehensions which flitted through her brain. At length the monk turned his eyes slowly towards her, with a lascivious expression gleaming from them, which caused her to shrink with horror, and to hide her features beneath the covering of her couch.

'Fear not, sister Cecilia!' said the wily monk. 'The saints protect you; You did not appear at the ringing of the Angelus, and I was sent to awaken you with a prayer to the Blessed Virgin.'

'Is it not a strict law of the Convent that no person shall enter another's apartment without giving three raps upon the door and wait until a response be given?' demanded Cecile in a stern voice.

‘That is the rule, sister,’ replied Padre Francis, softly. ‘But the Lady Abbess and your humble confessor are exempt from this rule.’

‘I pray you leave me. I am ill.’

‘Pray to the saints, dear sister, and acknowledge your heartfelt gratitude to them that you are no longer among the wicked of the world. I came to hear your confession, and assist in preparing your mind for the vows of the Black Veil!’

‘Not here! not here!’ said Cecile, earnestly. ‘I cannot consent that my sleeping apartment should be devoted to such a purpose! Leave me! I implore you! I will prepare myself and meet you at the confessional.’

‘I conform to thy wishes,’ said the monk as he left the apartment.

In half an hour Cecile was kneeling at the feet of Padre Francis, who was seated in the confessional, arrayed in the robes of his office.

‘Peace be with thee, dear sister! I commend thy punctuality. Of such as thee are the Sisters of St. Ursula. Speak thy sins!’

‘I have sinned daily and hourly. My thoughts are not constantly of a holy nature. I have dared to think of home, of my dear mother, and of others whom I love. I have even dared to wish myself among them!’

‘A natural sin,’ replied the confessor. ‘But with the power vested in me from Heaven, whose vicegerent I am, I absolve thee from this wickedness. Sin no more! Keep your thoughts upon the heavenly boon offered to the righteous! and when visions of the world mingle with your pious thoughts, think only of its dangers and temptations—its vexations and privations—the trials, to be endured, ever attendant upon mankind, and especially upon females! If unmarried, they are beset with a thousand snares to undermine their virtue, and thus rendering them unfit for a happy state hereafter. If wedded, a woman is at best but a slave to her husband and offspring; and even when surrounded with the comforts which render life supportable, she makes herself miserable by suspecting the infidelity of her husband, or believing him to be jealous of her. Therefore, set not thy affections on worldly things—not even on thy parents or kindred. Pray only that they may be redeemed—that they may behold thee among the favored of the heavenly paradise. Survey the tranquil felicity of a life of seclusion under the beneficent influence of the saints, who will be thy watchful guardians beneath this consecrated roof. I recommend to thee to receive the black vows immediately on the expiration of thy novitiate. Then will the glorious intercession of the saints and of all deceased Nuns continually be made before the Heavenly Throne. The felicity, unmingled with a single regret, which you will enjoy as a Nun of the Black Veil, reflect seriously upon; the harmony and sisterly affection which reigns among those who have been invested with the privilege, are far, far above all the unity and love of the world; even the love of a mother for her offspring, surpasses not the devotedness of a Nun for her sister!’

‘May Heaven give me strength and impress my mind with the truth of what you have uttered!’

‘Amen!’ responded Padre Francis. ‘The blessed privileges of the cloister are inestimable; the glorious honor, too, of becoming a ‘Spouse of Jesus Christ,’ instead of sinful man, should inspire thee with joy and gladness, and cause thee to pray for the happy hour when thy novitiate shall cease.’

In this impious manner did the dissembling monk picture forth to the susceptible heart of the truly pious novice, the felicitous and tranquil life of a recluse. He did not mar the flattering picture by recounting the miseries of many of those who had already renounced the world, and who were at that moment lingering, with that certain destroyer consumption, at the portal of the Eternal World. He did not tell her of the suicidal and abominable sacrifice she would have to make at the shrine of a monstrous and

intolerable superstition. Neither did he recount to her that Nuns seldom enjoyed the blessings of piety, religion, or happiness; that, instead of experiencing the contentment and joys which this life affords to the moral and virtuous, disappointment and despair, the torture of desires which they are compelled either to conceal or subdue, will be their portion, and at the same time unfitting their minds for the rites and ceremonies of the religious vocation which, by its vows, they are bound to practice almost unceasingly. Nor did the monk state the reasons which induced him to use all his arts of persuasion, and even extraneous means, to persuade the lovely Cecile to become a Nun of the Order of St. Ursula!

ARRIVAL AT THE COTTAGE. STRANGE METAMORPHOSE. INTERESTING DISCOVERY.

Since we left Frederick Gray and John Melville at the cottage door after their accidental encounter and strange interview, we have, in the two last chapters, introduced several of our dramatic persons, and narrated incidents which occurred during the year anterior to that event. This retrospection we deemed essential to the intelligible development of our story. We have now a clear field before us, and hope that we shall not again be compelled to retrograde for the purpose of bringing up lagging characters or straggling events.

A distant bell was tolling the hour of nine, when Gray raised the old brass knocker and gave three taps on the door of the vine-covered cottage of Mrs. Melville, and as those well-remembered sounds once more vibrated upon the sailor's ear, they caused a thrilling sensation through his frame, and his heart beat with double rapidity and distinctness. A servant came to the door, and Gray, followed slowly by his rugged-looking friend, were conducted to the parlor, where Mrs. Melville was seated alone. 'Good evening, Mrs. Melville,' said Gray. 'Excuse me for calling at so late an hour.'

'You are welcome, Frederick,' at all hours, replied the lady, as she approached him, and extended her hand; at the same time casting a curious glance towards the downcast looking sailor, who had not yet raised his eyes from the floor.

Gray now introduced Jack as a particular friend of his who had just arrived from a long cruise at sea.

'Your friend is also welcome,' said Mrs. Melville. Jack's heart was too full to speak. He longed to declare his name and throw himself into his mother's arms, but he feared the effects of so sudden an exposure, and without making an audible sound he simply bowed his head, and scaped his right foot upon the floor, allowing his tapers to follow the same direction, after the true nautical style of obedience. They were now requested to be seated, when Gray asked permission of Mrs. Melville to allow his friend to remain for a few days under her roof. The request seemed singular to her, as the name of Frederick was not far distant, and they must have passed it, though she, on their way to her cottage. But notwithstanding, she felt that she could refuse nothing that Frederick Gray might ask, and readily assented to his proposal.

Some refreshments were now prepared for her new guest, of which he slightly partook, and Frederick, after promising Jack that he would rejoin him in the morning, took his leave.

Early the following day two large non-bound trunks and several boxes were landed at the cottage, with the information that they belonged to the sailor stranger who had arrived there on the evening previous. Mrs. Melville appointed her guest with their arrival, who immediately, without asking permission of his hospitable hostess, conveyed them into the house.

CHAPTER IV.

ARRIVAL AT THE COTTAGE. STRANGE METAMORPHOSE. INTERESTING
DENOUEMENT.

Since we left Frederick Gray and John Melville at the cottage door after their accidental encounter and strange interview, we have, in the two last chapters, introduced several of our *dramatis personæ*, and narrated incidents which occurred during the year anterior to that event. This retrocession we deemed essential to the intelligible development of our story. We have now a clear field before us, and hope that we shall not again be compelled to retrograde for the purpose of bringing up lagging characters or straggling events.

A distant bell was tolling the hour of nine, when Gray raised the old brass knocker and gave three raps on the door of the vine-covered cottage of Mrs. Melville, and as those well-remembered sounds once more vibrated upon the sailor's ear, they caused a thrilling sensation through his frame, and his heart beat with double rapidity and distinctness. A servant came to the door, and Gray, followed slowly by his rugged-looking friend, were conducted to the parlor, where Mrs. Melville was seated alone.

'Good evening, Mrs. Melville,' said Gray. 'Excuse me for calling at so late an hour.'

'You are welcome, Frederick, at all hours,' replied the lady, as she approached him, and extended her hand; at the same time casting a curious glance towards the downcast looking sailor, who had not yet raised his eyes from the floor.

Gray now introduced Jack as a particular friend of his who had just arrived from a long cruise at sea.

'Your friend is also welcome,' said Mrs. Melville.

Jack's heart was too full to speak. He longed to declare his name and throw himself into his mother's arms, but he feared the effects of so sudden an exposure, and without making an audible sound he simply bowed his head, and scraped his right foot upon the floor, allowing his tarpaulin to follow the same direction, after the true nautical style of obeisance. They were now requested to be seated, when Gray asked permission of Mrs. Melville to allow his friend to remain for a few days under her roof. The request seemed singular to her, as the home of Frederick was not far distant and they must have passed it, thought she, on their way to her cottage. But, notwithstanding, she felt that she could refuse nothing that Frederick Gray might ask, and readily assented to his proposal.

Some refreshments were now prepared for her new guest, of which he slightly partook, and Frederick, after promising Jack that he would rejoin him in the morning, took his leave.

Early the following day, two large iron-bound trunks and several boxes were landed at the cottage, with the information that they belonged to the sailor stranger who had arrived there on the evening previous. Mrs. Melville acquainted her guest with their arrival, who immediately, without asking permission of his hospitable hostess, conveyed them into the house.

One of them he opened, and taking therefrom a cachemire shawl, of exceeding richness, he presented it to Mrs. Melville, at the same time informing her that he had brought it from Stamboul.

‘I never beheld anything so beautiful,’ said the lady, ‘but I cannot accept it.’

‘You must not refuse, madam. It’s nothing compared to the presents I have selected from various parts of the world for my friends,’ replied the sailor.

‘You have been a great traveller for one so young?’ said she, inquiringly.

‘I have, indeed.’

‘Do your parents reside in this section of the country?’

‘My father was lost at sea; but my dear mother I am happy to know is alive and in the enjoyment of good health.’

‘Lost at sea did you say? The coincidence is indeed a singular one!’ remarked Mrs. Melville, as the tears started into her eyes. ‘My husband was also lost at sea! The vessel in which he sailed was never heard from after leaving port!’

‘Then with you, madam, I can sympathise. I learned from my friend Gray that you lost a son also?’

‘Yes!’ replied she, sobbingly. ‘He shared the fate of his father! My poor boy! He was but twelve years of age!’

‘How know you but that your son yet lives?’

‘Eleven long years have now elapsed and no tidings of the ill-fated vessel have yet come to hand. I lived in hope for many years, and then strove to draw a veil over the past. But all in vain. Their departure, their last words, the parting kiss, still are impressed upon my memory as strongly as if of yesterday’s occurrence.’

‘But, madam, it is not improbable that your son still lives!’

‘Teach me not to hope. Oh! would that he might be alive; that I might gaze upon him once more; whether in prosperity or in adversity, the knowledge of his being among the living would be happiness indeed. I would fly to the Indies, or to the wilds of Tartary, but to see my darling boy once again.’

‘You need not go so far. Your son I have good reason to believe yet lives!’

‘Sir stranger! What mean you? Say you that my poor boy lives? Do not bid me hope without you have full knowledge of what you intimate!’

‘God forbid that I should excite one desire in your heart that cannot be fully realized. You would not know him, perhaps, should you now see him. Eleven years must have made a material alteration in his personal appearance. He left you a boy—he must now have attained man’s stature.’

‘Yes! but there is one thing by which I should recognize him at a glance, however greatly his features and figure might have changed. He had a scar upon the upper part of his high forehead; besides, he had glossy black hair, which curled naturally around his head.’

‘Did he wear any memento about him which you might now describe?’

‘Yes! yes!’ said she, gazing at the stranger with an expression of eagerness. ‘On the day of his departure his little sister, Cecile——’. Here the afflicted mother hesitated, and burying her face in her handkerchief, wept in sorrow as the image of her lost Cecile flitted across her mind, while the manly stranger turned toward the window to conceal similiar emotions.—

‘Yes!’ continued she, after a short elapse; ‘his little sister placed a chain, braided from her own raven tresses, around his neck, and bade him, as he loved her, to wear it constantly for her sake. Attached to the chain was a silver crucifix, studded with pearls, which had been given to her, and which she had herself worn until she bestowed the precious memento upon her brother.’

The stranger loosened his nautical jacket, and taking a chain and crucifix from his neck, and handed it to Mrs. Melville.

'Heaven be praised! It is the same!' exclaimed she, wildly. 'My son! my son! Where is he? How came you by this? I pray you speak out! Keep me not in an agony of suspense! Lead me to him! I intreat of thee!'

The sailor with the quickness of thought threw off his rough-looking habiliments, displaying to her view a strange costume emblazoned with jewels, and a gold crescent inlaid with diamonds hanging upon his left breast. He then tore from his head a brown wig of long-knotted hair, and throwing aside the black curls which partially concealed his ample forehead, the well-remembered scar was revealed to her astonished gaze.

'My son! my son!' screamed Mrs. Melville and fell, faintly, into his arms!

* * * * *
I learned from my friend
Gave that you lost a son also?
'Tis not applied she, sobbingly. 'He shared the fate of his father! My
poor boy! He was but twelve years of age!
'How know you but that your son yet lives?
'Seven long years have now elapsed and no tidings of the ill-fated ves-
sel have yet come to hand. I lived in hope for many years and then strove
to draw a veil over the past: that all in vain. Their departure their last
words: the parting kiss still are impressed upon my memory as an agony, as
if of yesterday's occurrence.
'But, madam, it is not improbable that your son still lives.
'Teach me not to hope. (Oh! would that he might be alive; that I might
gaze upon him once more; whether in prosperity or adversity, the knowl-
edge of his being among the living would be happiness indeed. I would
fly to the Indies or to the wilds of Tartary, but to see my darling boy once
again.
'You need not go so far. Your son I have good reason to believe yet
lives?
'Sir stranger! What mean you? Say you that my poor boy lives? Do
not bid me hope without you have full knowledge of what you intimate!
'God forbid that I should excite one desire in your heart that cannot be
fully realized. You would not know him, perhaps, should you now see him
thirteen years must have made a material alteration in his person ap-
pearance. He has now a boy—be must now have attained man's estate.
'Yes! but there is one thing which I should recognize him at a glance,
however greatly his features and figure might have changed. He had a
scar upon the upper part of his high forehead; besides, he had glossy black
hair, which curled naturally around his head.
'Did he wear any ornaments about him which you might now describe?
'Yes! yes!' said she, fixing at the stranger with an expression of eager-
ness. 'On the day of his departure his little sister, Genevieve, there she
alighted, another hearse, and burying her face in her handkerchief, wept
in sorrow as the fringe of her hat Genevieve lifted across her mind, while the
nearly stranger turned toward the window to conceal squalid emotions—
'Yes! continued she, after a short pause; his little sister placed a chain,
braided from her own tresses, around his neck, and bade him, as he
loved her, to wear it constantly for her sake. Attached to the chain was a
silver crucifix, studded with pearls, which had been given to her, and which
she had herself worn until she bestowed the precious ornaments upon her
brother.'

CHAPTER V.

MELVILLE'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. VISIT TO THE PALACE OF THE SULTAN. MAHMOUD'S GENEROSITY. A HERO AND A MUSSULMAUN.—ZILLAH, THE BRIDE OF MELVILLE. DEPARTURE FROM CONSTANTINOPLE. THE CAPTURE. ALGIERS. ZILLAH A SLAVE! THE PURSUIT. ARRIVAL IN BOSTON.

After the first ebullition of excited feeling had subsided, and Mrs. Melville was restored from the effects of so unexpected a surprise, Frederick Gray walked into the apartment, and was somewhat startled at beholding the graceful and noble officer, who greeted him warmly upon his entrance, arrayed in a rich and elegant Oriental costume.

'My dear friend, I am glad you have come to share our joy,' said Melville grasping the hand of Gray.

'I am happy to participate with you in your happiness,' he replied.—'May you always be thus. The metamorphose of your person from a Yankee sailor to an officer of the Sublime Porte, reminds me of your past eleven years' history, a part of which you have already favored me with.'

'Ah!' said Melville, sighing. 'Would to Heaven that I could blot out from my memory many incidents contained in the sequel, I should then have less cause for regret.'

'My son,' said Mrs. Melville, 'however painful your history may be I would learn it all, even from the beginning.'

At this request, Melville repeated that portion of his history he had related to Gray on their first interview. We accordingly resume the narrative where it was broken off.

"On the morning subsequent to our arrival in the capitol of the proud Osmanlis, the Pasha was summoned to appear before Sultan Mahmoud. Zillah and myself were commanded to accompany him. The Pasha ordered his *yaraba*, or Turkish coach, in which we were conveyed to the landing place on the Bosphorus; from thence we embarked on board a magnificent *caïque*, or barge, propelled by six oarsmen, whose exertions caused the graceful boat to glide over the waters with the swiftness of the wind. In an incredible short space of time, we were under the terraced gardens of Beglierbey, the summer palace of the mighty Mahmoud, and after passing through a line of the Sultan's guards, we ascended into the halls of this most gorgeous specimen of Eastern architecture. Presently we were ushered into the presence of the monarch, who was reclining upon a pile of soft pillows, smoking his magnificent amber-mouthed *chibouk*. Beside him stood half a dozen white slaves ready to obey his commands, and near the huge bowl of his pipe stood two black *chiboukjhes*, who from time to time threw into the pipe a silver-ladle full of the richly scented weed. The Pasha approached him, and after the *selam alekim*, or Moslem salutation, I was presented to his Mighty Highness.'

'Mashallah!' exclaimed the Sultan. 'Is this the youth who saved thy life, Pasha?'

The Pasha crossed his hands and bowed reverently.

‘And who performed such feats of valor at Navarino?’

‘The same!’ replied Mehemet Effendi.

‘Shekiur Allah!’ ejaculated Mahmoud. ‘Why he’s but a child! and he looks like a Christian! But he has the heart of a man, and the soul of a true Mussulmaun! He shall have promotion! Here, Seraskier!’ turning to an elderly Turk, ‘cause a Captain’s commission to be executed for the young Frank! Thus does the Sultan reward bravery!’

The Pasha, in my behalf, acknowledged the high honor he had conferred upon me, and in language, too eulogistic and hyperbolical for me to repeat, recounted all I had performed during the cruise.

‘Inshàllah! He shall have gold too!’ exclaimed the Sultan.

‘Your Highness has done me too much honor already,’ said I, modestly.

‘*Bosh! bosh!*’ (nothing) replied he. ‘You have done us greater service than all the officers of the fleet combined.’

A bag of gold was now brought in by the Seraskier, who laid it at my feet. The Sultan then presented me with this badge of honor, which I now wear upon my left breast. He then turned his eyes towards Zillah, who stood beside her father, with her features, excepting her sparkling black eyes, concealed beneath the folds of a diamond bordered *yashmac*, or veil. As if he had penetrated the hearts of Zillah and myself, and divined our most ardent wishes, he immediately asked me if any other gift from his royal hands would be acceptable to me, at the same time alternately glancing his eyes from her to me.

‘Your Imperial Highness,’ said I, ‘would confer honor and happiness upon me by granting permission that Zillah shall become my bride!’

‘You have our consent, valorous Frank, and I judge from the complacency of our faithful Mehemet Effendi, that his heart approves the union. Do I not speak aright, noble Pasha?’

‘Allah knows that the Mighty Sultan Mahmoud ever speaks wisdom and truth!’ replied the Pasha. ‘But the valorous Frank was born in a Christian land. Let the youth but pronounce the Mussulmaun’s creed, and my daughter is his!’

Zillah’s eyes were turned imploringly upon me; but my early religious impressions caused me to hesitate.

‘I require a little time to reflect upon the condition,’ said I.

‘Allah be with you,’ said the Sultan. ‘In ten days decide. Meanwhile examine well the creed of all True Believers!’

We now took leave of the Turkish Sultan, and in a few moments our brightly gilded caique, dazzling in the sunbeams, was darting over the blue waters of the Bosphorus like a meteor blazing athwart the blue expanse above. On arriving at the pier, from whence we had embarked, we found the Pasha’s *yaraba* in waiting for us, attended by his slaves; and as we passed through the streets of the great Oriental city, the air was rent with acclamations, which I supposed was in honor of the favorite Pasha of the Sultan, but afterwards learned with astonishment that these demonstrations of approbation were conferred upon his intended son-in-law; whose deeds I must confess were bruited among the Constantinopolitans marvellously exaggerated. Thus was I made a favorite of the Sultan and a hero of the populace on the same day; and if, in addition to these, I could have had an unconditional promise of becoming the loved lord of the beautiful Zillah, my happiness would have been complete. But the idea of embracing Islamism, although I was quite ignorant of its principles or precepts, was in some degree revolting to my feelings. Acting, however, upon the mandate of the Sultan, I commenced the task of making myself conversant with the creed of the ‘True Believer,’ and although some points of their religion seemed rather incongruous and fancifully extravagant, yet the moral precepts it inculcated, and the conscientious zeal and good faith of its vo-

taries, made a favorable impression upon my mind. Besides, I had but a vague perception of the Christian's creed; my early religious impressions having become indistinct and partially effaced from my memory. Zillah was my constant companion, and from her I learned my first lessons. It was not strange then, that at the expiration of the 'ten days,' I was a believer in Islamism; and in the mosque of the Sultan I repeated all that is requisite to become a Mussulmaun, viz:

'*La illah, illa Mohammed Resoul Allah!*—There is but one God and Mahomet is the Prophet of God!

Great was the joy manifested on the occasion in the Pasha's palace, and, indeed, the event was a matter of congratulation throughout the city. Zillah became my affianced, but not until I had returned from a successful cruise against Greek pirates, did she become my bride! The joyous event was celebrated with all the pomp and splendor incident to the wedding of a Prince. One year afterwards the command of a frigate was given me, and I was ordered to the Mediterranean. Zillah accompanied me. We had been but a few weeks at sea, when we were attacked by a fleet of Algerine piratical vessels and captured. We were taken to Algiers and by command of the Dey, were heavily ironed and confined in separate cells in the castle. From one of the guards of the prison I learned to my inexpressible horror that my beloved Zillah had been sold at the slave mart to a Spanish captain! After a few weeks imprisonment I was summoned to appear before the Dey, when it was announced to me that I had been ransomed by the Turkish government, and that a vessel was then in the harbor ready to take me to Constantinople. Before we left, however, I ascertained that Zillah had been purchased by Don Cervanti Carrero, a merchant of Lisbon, whose vessel had sailed for that port, and I proposed to the Turkish commander to go in pursuit of her. But his orders were peremptory and of course he was inexorable, and I reluctantly went on board the ship.—We had a quick passage and on our arrival in the harbor of Constantinople, my father-in-law, the Pasha, came alongside in his caique, to welcome our return. He had not heard of the fate of Zillah, and great was his sorrow when I informed him. He anticipated my wishes by requesting me to go in pursuit of her: accordingly he fitted out a fast sailing ship, gave me a crew of picked men, besides a large sum of money and a quantity of other valuables; and in less than a week we took our departure for Spain. On arriving at Lisbon, I made enquiries respecting Don Manuel Carrero, and learned to my regret that he had, six weeks previously, sailed for Havre. Thither we followed him, and at this port learned that his vessel had cleared for Liverpool, and from thence he was to proceed to the United States, but to what port it was impossible to ascertain. I sailed for New York but no Spanish vessel had recently arrived there, neither could I find his ship reported in any of the Shipping Lists of the principal ports. I at length resolved to sail for Boston, and there await until a reasonable time should elapse for Don Carrero's arrival. I dropped anchor in Boston harbor yesterday afternoon, arrived here last evening, and made myself known to my dear mother this morning. Thus ends my past history. Now, I have two great objects to accomplish—to rescue my sister Cecile from a living grave—and to free my beloved Zillah from Spanish slavery! These things accomplished I shall return to my adopted country, where wealth and distinction await me."

'Your narrative is quite romantic as well as interesting,' said Frederick Gray.

'Wait for the sequel, my friend. The events in embryo I have a foreboding will be startling indeed!'

'What mean you, my son?' ejaculated Mrs. Melville, apprehensively.

'Fear not, my dear mother,' resumed Melville. 'Cecile must be res-

tored to you—to be a comfort to you in your declining years, and be herself happy.’

‘But I am assured by the Abbess of the Convent that she is now perfectly happy, and that she looks forward with pleasure to the day appointed for her receiving the black vows.’

‘Her assurances are false, mother!’ exclaimed Melville. ‘There never yet existed a *happy* Nun! Yet there may have been those, who, after enduring severe disappointments, perhaps reduced to extreme wretchedness, that have found a refuge in the cloister comparatively happy! But for Cecile, whose life has been calm as an unclouded sky, to be immured in a dungeon—not allowed to gaze upon the green fields, the bright heavens, and all of nature’s glorious works—not even permitted to see the loved faces of her friends—it is preposterous! No, mother! Cecile is *not* happy! She is under some strange infatuation! The spell shall be broken! And may I be the humble instrument, in the hands of God, to accomplish it!’

‘You speak the words of truth, Melville,’ said Gray. ‘I will second you, and I here promise to devote my undivided efforts in behalf of Cecile, until our object be attained, or her rescue is past hope!’

‘Thank you, Frederick. I shall need your assistance.’

‘Do not, I intreat of you,’ said Mrs. Melville, ‘do any wrong!’

‘Fear not, mother. Come to my room Fred—I must throw off my eastern costume and resume the garb in which you saw me yesterday. We can there talk over matters. Mother, you must excuse us—we shall be with you again in a short time. Have no idle apprehensions with regard to our business—all will yet be well.’

‘I have assurances that you will do no wrong; and I doubt not your good judgment will lend you discretion,’ said Mrs. Melville.

Melville and Gray went into an adjoining room and held a consultation of some two hours in length. The substance of which formed a daring conspiracy to free Cecile from the Nunnery, which our future pages will fully disclose.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CREDULOUS IRISHMAN AND THE INCREDULOUS SCOTCHMAN. MIRACULOUS PERFORMANCES OF THE SAINTS. TIMELY INTRUSION OF THE SAILOR. A 'DRAP OF THE CRAYTHUR.' THE SECRET SPRING AND THE SUBTERRANEAN PASSAGE.

Connected with the Convent was an extensive and beautiful garden, which was under the supervision of an eccentric Scotchman, who had just arrived 'fra the Land o' Cakes,' and 'bald John Barleycorn.' He was appointed to this important post, more on account of his being a most excellent gardener, than for his skepticism in the infallibility of the Pope, or in the pardoning powder of Padre Francis. Mr. Archy McDougal—for this was his name—soon gained an intimacy with Mr. Phelim O'Toole, who styled himself 'Porter of Mount Benedict.' Phelim was a truly devotional churchman, and 'barrin' the takin' a drap o' the crathur now and thin,' his habits were good; and never did the most zealous revivalist work harder than did Phelim, to make a convert of his companion Archy. Many were the hours they spent together under the shade of an elm-tree at the foot of the terraced garden, and many were the wonderful stories and mighty miracles of St. Patrick and other saints that Phelim related to Archy. There was nothing too marvellous or miraculous for Phelim; he religiously believed all he had ever heard, and in the benevolence of his heart he determined that Archy should have all the benefit resulting from them. But he 'cast his pearls before swine.' The Scotchman was obstinate. He would not believe and be converted by the Irishman's endeavors, who, unlike many of his spiritual Padres, acted from the sincerity of his heart.

One pleasant evening, after the toils of the day were concluded, Archy and Phelim were seated in their favorite spot conversing upon matters touching the Ursuline community, the substance of which we shall endeavor to give in their own dialects.

'You wadna be sayin', said the Scotchman, 'that the gracefu' bonnie lassie, wi' the dark blue e'e an' the braw curls, is to tak' the black veil?'

'Why not, Misthur McDougal, why not?' replied Phelim. 'Shure's she's a beautiful crathur to make a Nun out of—now isn't she? Och, by the powers, Saint Pathrick himself, who was a divil ov a saint among the gals, niver seed the likes ov her. Good luck to Father Francis and the ould lady for their 'cess in makin' sich an iligant addition to the Sisthurs of the Convent!'

'Alake! waefu' day,' replied Archy, 'that she sees that beautiful crop o' braw curly hair shaven fra' her crown!'

'Shure! Misthur McDougal, you wouldn't have the pretty crathur be afther descendin' into purgatory?'

'An' wi' she na suffer 'mang the lean waefu' lookin' saunts o' the black veil, muckle the same as in purgatory?' ejaculated the Scotchman with animation. 'Don't ye ken she'll not e'en get her parritch, an ha' naethin' but the ould lady's apple peelins to prie. She better gang awa to her minnie, who amaist cries her e'es out for her pretty bairn's sake.'

‘Powers of Heaven!’ exclaimed Phelim; ‘defind me from hearing sich heresies in the garden of the saints, Misthur McDougal. Out wid ye, ye Scotch blackguard! If ye be not keerful what ye be afther spakin’ in yer outlandish blarney, you’ll shure be sarved as Saint Pathrick sarved the blacksmith, and bad ’cess to the likes ov ye, ye wicked clodhopper as ye are!’

‘Canna tell me how that was, Mister O’Toole?’ asked Archy, entirely disregarding the ungentlemanly epithets which the Irishman so lavishly bestowed upon him.

‘Jist listen a bit an’ I’ll be afther tellin’ ye all about it, Misthur McDougal. Ye see as how Saint Pathrick, who could handle a shillalela better than any ither saint in the calendar—och! he was the boy for that, shure—sent his ould white horse to Doody, the blacksmith, to have him shod. Now Doody was an awful wicked crathur; he would sware an oath as big the bible enny day. While Doody was druving the nails into the ould horse’s foot, who should be crapin’ along by the blacksmith’s door but Saint Pathrick himself, who heard Doody sayin’ some wicked blarney to the horse. ‘Och! ye blackguard!’ says the Saint to himself. ‘I’ve cotched ye in yer wicked way, ye ould sinner. Ye’d be afther contaminating my innocent baste, would ye, ye spalpeen? I’ll fix yer flint for ye directly?’ So the Saint crapt sliely up to Doody’s window, in sich a manner that Doody didn’t git a glimpse ov him, but the ould horse did. So Saint Pathrick tips the horse a bit ov a wink, which the animal understood jist as well as his mather. The horse pricked up his ears, and every time the blacksmith swore he made a loud noise that frightened poor Doody almost out ov his siven sines; but it only made Doody sware louder than iver. And afther he had druv all but the last nail in his hinder foot, he cursed Saint Pathrick, whin the horse guv him sich a kick, that sint Doody with his hammer, nails and all, right thro’ the shop, and they have niver since bin heard of, and if ye don’t believe me ye can go an’ see the hole which Doody broke thro’ the wall to this very day.’

‘O haith!’ exclaimed the incredulous Scotchman. ‘Saint Patrick must ha’ been a menseless loun himsel’ to treat a poor smithy so vera unkind; but it’s a’ a humboog!’

‘Och! ye Scotch bogtrotter! I tell ye it’s throe ivery word of it. It’s throe as the thruth ov Saint Pathricks druving all the sarpints, snakes and toads, and other sich kind o’ bastes, out ov swate Ireland, and not one ov the same iver dare step a foot within its bordhers to this day,’ replied Phelim.

‘Canna believe your big stories, mon. There’s nae raison in any one o’ them.’

‘Then I’ll be afther tellin’ ye anither that ye’ll shurely believe,’ resumed Phelim. ‘It’s more thruer than aither ov the others. Spakin’ of Saint Pathrick for no other saint could do the likes ov him, I’ll tell you what St. Dennis did who was fourteenth cousin to Saint Pathrick’s half sister on his mither’s side, and he wur a broth ov a boy for handlin’ a shillela too, that same Saint I was spakin’ aboot. One day whin he wur walkin’ by the side ov the river, some heretic soldiers capthured Saint Dennis and cut his head off, and it rolled into the wather, and this saint being a good swimmer—for he could bate Saint Pathrick swimmin’ ony day—jumped in afther it, and cotchin’ his own head atween his teeth, he swum across the river, and whin he reached the other side, he stuck his head upon his shoulders, and it frozed on, for it wur an awful cold day one night in the middle of June! The soldiers wur so stonished at beholdin’ the sight that they niver harmed a saint afther that.’

‘Mar conscience, Mister O’Toole. I wadna tell sic unco stories for a’ the world.’

‘Thruth, Misther McDougal, ivery word—there’s nothing unpossible for saints to do. There was Saint Vincent—he was a divil ov a boy for doing up the miraculous—he performed a miracle that you’ll be surprised to hear, for it’s as jist as throe as the throust one I iver told. This saint was in the habit of doing so many miraculous things that the Church forbid him doing ony more miracles without consint. So one day whin he was walking by the Dublin cathedral, he saw a hod-carrier, mortar, bricks and all, fallin’ from one ov the high towers. Wishing to save the poor man’s life, and not having the Church’s consint to save him, he tould him to hold on a bit while he could run to the bishop to git a dispinsation. So Saint Dennis took to his heels and run—there was none ov the likes of Saint Dennis for running—and left the hod-carrier, mortar, bricks and all, suspinded atween heaven an airth : and it wur indeed a beautiful sight to see the man sittin’ astraddle the air, with nothing at all a’tall to stand upon. Presently Saint Dennis cums runnin’ back, and he lowered down the hod carrier, mortar, bricks and all, jist as aisy as if they had been made of feathers!’

‘Oh, mar conscience, Misther O’Toole, you’re one blellum,’ said Archy, indignantly. ‘And wad ye think me sic a fool as to believe yer miracles; ye mak deevils out o’ the saunts,’stead o’ guid honest Christians.’

‘Bad luck to ye and all heretical unbelievers, say I, Misthur McDougal. You’ll wake up one o’ these hot mornings, and be afther finding yourself roastin’ in purgatory, if ye doesn’t reform and believe in the saints and the holy miracles which they performed.’

‘Na, mon,’ replied the Scotchman. ‘Yer miracloous stories are a’ like the miracle o’ the Spanish image, who always turned his head and nodded when the priest said a guid thing; but ance upon a time it wouldna move at a’, and the priest was unco mad and scolded. Then a voice was heard beneath the image, sayin’—‘The string has broken an’ it’s nae fault o’ mine!’—An’ the people looked into the box on which the image was put, an’ behold a little bairn was found, who pu’d the string, when the priest spake loud, an’ turned the image’s head. This is the way ye do yer miracles, Mr. O’Toole.’

‘By all the saints an’ St. Pathrick into the bargain, Misthur McDougal, yer’e a lost man. The ould sarpint will have ye for belaveing not the thruth and tellin’ me yer vile slander. Och! ye blackguard, ye desarves drownin’ and hangin’ to, ye do yer Scotch blackguard.’

‘Dinna ca’ me blackguard mair, Mr. O’Toole,’ said McDougal, angrily.

‘An wur it but blackguard that I said? Ye’re not only that, but ye’re the divil’s own son, ye are, ye clodhopper.’

This was more than Caledonian flesh and blood could brook. Up jumped the insulted Scotchman, and gave the Irishman a blow aside of the head.

‘Och! by the powers!’ exclaimed Phelim, as he jumped up and threw off his coat. ‘That’s yer game is it? I’ll pitch into ye, ye blackguard, like a streak ov litenin’ into a sand-bank——’

At this juncture a sailor leaped over the fence, and thrust himself between the belligerents.

‘Avast there, Sawney!’ exclaimed the sailor, who was none other than our old friend Jack Melville, on a voyage of discovery. ‘Before you stave in each other’s dead-lights, let’s know what it’s all about?’

‘Och, it’s aboot nothing at all, Mr. Jack Tar, an’ barrin’ the crack which that Scotch blackguard guv me on the sponce I could forgive him,’ replied Phelim.

‘Ah, my hearties!’ said Jack; ‘give each other your grappling irons, and don’t be running afoul of each other like a pair of Dutch galliots!’

‘He spake unco words aboot me, but I e’en forgi’ the mon,’ said Archy, his belligerent spirit being somewhat quelled.

‘Well, Archy, let’s be aafter makin’ friends,’ said Phelim. ‘Give us yer hand, Misthur McDougal.’

‘There’s my han’, Mr. O’Toole. Now dinna tell me no mair saunt humboogs. They’re warst than tales aboot ghaists.’

‘Misthur Jack Tar,’ said the Irishman, turning to Melville, ‘who gave ye permission to enther these beautiful grounds?’

‘Beg pardon,’ said Jack. ‘It’s such a finely built and well-rigged establishment, I thought I’d put in and enquire the captain’s name.’

‘By my soul, that’s phoony. An’ it’s the capthin’s name ye’d be aafter enquiring aboot? Misthur McDougal, d’ye hear that?’ said O’Toole, laughing heartily. ‘The capthin! och! the capthin’s a famale to be shure, Misthur Jack Tar.’

‘He spakes true, sailor mon,’ said the Scotchman.

‘An’ let me be aafter tellin ye, that she’s no common famale woman,’ resumed O’Toole. ‘It’s a saint she is!’

‘Yes, mon, she’s a saunt!’

‘A saint?’ responded the sailor. ‘She isn’t the sweetheart of St. Patrick is she?’

‘No, ye blackguard! It’s Saint Ursula; as pretty a piece of flesh and blood as ony in Christendom—that she is,’ said Phelim, emphatically.

‘Not so braw as the young leddie who’s gang to be a Noon!’ interposed McDougal.

‘Shut up yer fly-catcher, ye Scotch tale-bearer,’ said Phelim, indignantly. ‘Wur ye not tould to keep the saycrets ov the saints?’

‘The braw leddie is nae saint. She hain’t been cropped o’ the beautiful clusters o’ hair that hang aboot her snaw-white neck!’

‘The ould Abbess will soon do that job, let me tell ye. On St. Bartholomew’s eve her head’ll be as bald as yer ould grandmither’s, Mr. McDougal.’

‘St. Bartholomew’s eve?’ reiterated the sailor. ‘What day of the month is that?’

‘Ye must be a haythen not to know the days ov the saints,’ answered Phelim. ‘Why it’s the twenty-fourth of August to be shure, this very month.’

‘Thank you. Just give me a drop of cold water, to mix with this Irish whiskey,’ said Jack, producing a bottle from his jacket pocket, ‘and I’ll be off like a cutter in a gale of wind.’

‘And was it Irish whiskay that you said?’ ejaculated O’Toole. ‘Niver let it be said that Phelim O’Toole iver refused hospitality to a stranger.—I’ll be aafter fitching ye the swatest drap ov wather, barrin’ the whiskay, that ye iver put into yer paratee baskit.’

Off went Phelim and soon returned with a jug of water, and a tin-cup.

‘Now sit down, my hearties,’ said Jack as he filled the cup with the contents of the bottle, and handed it to Mr. O’Toole.

‘Thank yer honor,’ said the Irishman, sipping the ardent. ‘Och! and faith! it’s the raal crathur to be shure. Ye’re a jontleman, ye are, every inch ov ye, and yer mither and grandmither before ye! Ah, Misthur McDougal,’ continued Phelim, as he swallowed the last drop, ‘that’s the craythur that’ll put the sperit into ye—take a drap ov that same and ye’ll belave in all the saints directly.’

‘There’s naethin’ like the Irish whiskey, except the beautiful Scotch article fra’ the Heelands,’ answered McDougal, taking a pull from the cup, which Jack filled to the brim.

The tin cup passed between the two foreigners several times, the effect of which was soon apparent through their increased volubility. Meanwhile Jack was gazing around the establishment with considerable interest.

‘A fine country seat,’ he remarked.

‘Ye may well say that, and Padre Francis, he’s as fine a jontleman as ye’d

meet with ony day. An' it would do yer heart good to see all the beautiful crathurs with the black veils, an' the white veils, an' the no veils at all. As for the ould woman, the mither ov all the dare crathurs, she's a cross customer an' no misthake.'

'Ah mon,' responded the Scotchman, 'you spake truth then. You'll not ha' to be absolved from that sin, if ye ha' got the wit to keep it fra' the ould woman.'

'Ah! that's a swate drap,' said O'Toole, after helping himself again from Jack's bottle. 'There's no misthakin' that whiskay ony how—it puts me in mind of ould Ireland. Och! troth that's the counthree for whiskay an' paratees, isn't it Misthur McDougal?'

'Ireland cooms next to Scotland, Mr. O'Toole.'

'Och! ye bogtrotter—it's the finest counthree in Christendom. Jist listen while I sing to ye about it:

“Go to swate Ireland there you will see
Ten thousand big paddies a chasin' a flee;
They'll cotch em, an'——”

Ah, who'd belave that I could forgit that swate song, the same that I have sung a thousand times at bits ov sprees in the ould counthree. I'll be afther takin' anither drap ov that whiskay jist by the way of refrishing my memory, Misthur Jack Tar.

'Pull away, my hearties,' said Jack. 'I've got the mate to it in my star-board pocket!'

'Blessins 'pon yer honor whoever ye are,' said O'Toole, a little excited from the effects of the whiskey. 'If I had Father Francis' power I'd pardon all the sins that ye iver had on yer jinerous head, I would.'

'Where's all yer messmates?' enquired Jack.

'All my missmates did ye say? Meeself and Misthur McDougal sure kapes this beautiful place fray from all inthruders. And a nice aisy time we have ov it, barrin' whin the ould woman's aboot.'

'Then you keep watch night and day?'

'Kape watch did ye say? Och! don't we have to kape the beautiful craythurs from running away? Shure, that same we have to do. I slapes all night at this gate, and Misthur McDougal slapes at the ither 'un. We shouldn't be slapy at all iv the ould un' sint us a drap ov whiskay now and thin; should we Misthur McDougal.'

'Ye spakes truth, mon.'

'Well, my hearties, I must bear away,' said Jack. 'Open your main hatch. I can't leap that high wall again.'

'The likes ov ye are iver welcome to the hospitality ov Phelim O'Toole,' said the Irishman, the whiskey getting the better of his discretion; 'an iv ye would coom in at any time, push that saycret spring on the ootside, and ye'll find yerself a free passage directly.'

'Thank you,' said Jack. 'Is that the door of your cabin in the bank yonder?'

'Ah! that's a saycret! We call it the ice-house; but if ye'll niver tell ony body, I'll tell ye all about it. 'Tis thrue that we kape the ice in it, but inside there's anither door which opens with a spring like that same in the gate. Thin there's a big hole which leads to the chapel of the nunnery, where the saints are.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed the sailor. 'It's a subterranean passage is it?'

'Och! that's the very word—subbertheranean it is. And there's the kay that let's in the holy fathers of the church, and not anither sowl iver gits

in while Phelim O'Toole kapes the kay round his neck, will they Misthur McDougal ?'

'You speaks the truth mon!'

'Well, good night, my hearties. I'll make this port again some day,' said Jack, as the gate closed behind him.

'Guid e'en to you,' responded the Scotchman. 'May ye ha' guid luck and niver want for whiskey.'

'Good night, Misthur!' halloed the Irishman. 'When you coom agin don't forgit to bring along the craythur wid ye !'

'Oh never fear me,' answered Jack, as he hurried away from the garden, highly gratified with his interview with the porter and gardener. In a few moments he had reached a public house, situated on the Neck, where he had left his friend, Frederick Gray, awaiting his return from a tour of observation on Mount Benedict.

CHAPTER VII.

ENCOUNTERING A COCKNEY. A PRECIOUS VILLAIN. A SUBTERRANEAN INTERVIEW. CURIOUS PROFESSION, AND A NEW MODE OF GETTING A LIVING. PLOT TO BURN THE CONVENT.

‘What success, Jack,’ asked Gray, as he encountered his friend.

‘All that I could have desired. I filled the Irish porter and Scotch gardener with whiskey, and afterwards pumped them as dry as a smoked herring. In other words, Fred, I have learned more concerning the Convent, within the last hour, than all its neighborhood ever knew.’

‘What news of Cecile?’

‘Alas! the poor girl has consented to take the black veil on St. Bartholomew’s eve. The time is near at hand. We must take advantage of the commotion of the incensed protestants, who are already ripe for wreaking their vengeance upon this accursed establishment, and only require a leader to march them on. My crew shall be dispersed among the populace tomorrow with instructions to add fuel to the flame that is already kindled.— I must visit the ship to-night, and prepare for future events.’

Melville and his friend pursued their way towards Boston, and during the walk the former related all the particulars of his interview with his new acquaintances at the Convent

‘A seaman’s garb,’ said Melville, as he concluded, ‘is the best disguise in the world to sail under.’

‘Why so?’ enquired Gray.

‘Simply because there is more frankness, more generosity, in fact more honesty among sailors, than among any other class of men I have ever encountered. Sailors are ever ready to lend a helping hand in cases of distress, and regard not their purse or their personal safety to do a noble action. They are careless of their property and often reckless of themselves amid scenes of danger. A parsimonious sailor would be as great an anomaly as a prodigal Jew.’

‘Your remarks undoubtedly contain much truth,’ replied Gray. ‘I have read and heard of the ennobling qualities of seafaring men, but it has never been my fortune to have many acquaintances among them.’

They had now reached Warren Bridge, when a remark made by one of two suspicious looking individuals, who were walking behind them, reached their ears.

‘I shouldn’t be surprised if they made a bonfire on Mount Benedict yet. D’ye hear what those coveys in the cellar said?’ remarked one of the doubtful strangers.

‘Vell, I’m blowed if hi didn’t!’ said the other in true Cockney idiom. ‘Vot a field for our perfession. Ve could make summat ’andsome out ov it Besides, vot’s the use ov Convents? They does’nt do nobody no good henny vay, and they hisn’t henny good to the vomans vot lives in ’em.’

‘But we should be in danger of the hemp if they nabbed us.’

‘Let Slippery Joe halone for that. Vosn’t I born a prig? Vosn’t I heducationised hin Newgate? and didn’t I hemigrate to this country to practise hour perfession?’ interrogated the cockney.

‘Then there’s to be so many fingers in the pie!’

‘But they hisn’t sich fingers as hours. They goes hinto it for the public velfare; ve on our hindividual ’ooks. Ve shall ’ave hall the waluwables; they vill ’ave hall the ’onor. Besides ve hisn’t going to burn hup the Nuns! ve vill first vake ’em up, and then hinform ’em vot ve goes to do next—a gentle’int for ’em to ewacuate the premises.’

‘Well, what next?’

‘Vell, vot next?’ echoed Slippery Joe. ‘Vy, ’asun’t you got vit enough to know vot next? Von’t the vomans vant to hescape ven the Convents on fire, I von’t to know? An’ then cant ve lift all the waluawable gold and silver crosses, beads, vatches, and hother hornaments o’ walue? Ov course ve can. You would’nt stan’ by an’ make no heffort to prewent sich little harticles from burnin’ would ye?’

‘Of course not,’ replied his comrade.

‘Vell, then, say the vord, and ve’ll go snacks. Vot say?’

‘I’ll join you.’

‘Nuv ced, shake.’

When these worthies had reached the Boston end of the bridge, they separated; the cockney continuing his way directly in the rear of our hero and his companion, while the other disappeared through a small alley way which led to the wharf. Soon as Melville discovered that but one was behind him, he turned suddenly around and confronting the scheming Londoner, accosted him thus:

‘Ah! my land-shark, how are ye? There’s a trifling conspiracy on foot, I hear. The Convent’s to be burned!’

‘Yer don’t say so! Vell, I’m blow’d if this hain’t the first hintimation I’ve ’ad ov it. I halvays gits the news hafter hevery body helse,’ replied Mr. Slippery Joe.

‘Come, avast there!’ said Jack. ‘None of yer yarns now. Didn’t we hear the whole of the particulars from you and your messmate while cruising acr oss the bridge just now?’

‘Ho, ye did, did ye?’ ejaculated the cockney with surprise.

‘To be sure we did. All about your “going snacks,” “individual ’ooks,” the “crosses, beads, vatches, and hother hornaments o’ walue,”’ mimicked Jack.

‘Vell, now, that halters the case. Iv you heard vot you say, vy it’s no huse harguing the pint. You vont tell none o’ the vatchmen, and hother hossifers, vill ye?’

‘If you’ll let us into the whole business be assured we shall keep mum,’ promised Jack.

‘Vithout von vord o’ peaching? ’Onor bright, now?’

‘Honor bright!’ reiterated Jack. ‘D’ye ’ever know an ‘old salt’ to break his word?’

‘Vell, I doesn’t know has I hever did, now I thinks ov it,’ replied Slippery Joe. ‘Come vith me vhere hall vill be safe, an’ I’ll hinform you hall ov the particulars.’

The cockney led Melville and his friend into a small dingy looking cellar, some rods from the bridge, and although quite a respectable looking woman and a well clad child occupied the subterranean apartment, yet it was quite destitute of articles of comfort or convenience. Soon as they entered, the female took her child and opened a small sliding door, which led to another room, entered it, and slid the door back to its place.

‘Ah, my dear Vilhemina,’ said Slippery Joe, as she was retiring. ‘You vill yet make von verry nice ’elpmate. You begins to take a ’int vithout a kick. That voman,’ continued he, turning to his visitors, ‘his my darling vife; she’s verry hobedient and verry huseful hin conducting my ’ouse’old affairs.’

‘Is this your mansion?’ enquired Jack.

‘I should think it vos vwhile I lives in it; an a wery convenient ’ouse it his. This his my kitchen, parlor and sitting room; that door vwhere you saw the voman ewacua’e, his the chamber, cellar and garret. Ve lives ’ere hin the ’eight ov ’appiness hand ’armony. Oh, crackey! vunder vot my Billingsgate friends vould say iv they could honly look down here and see my helwated condition. Oh! Hamerica is the country vwhere gentlemen of hour perfession gits a livin’.

‘Pray, what profession do you practice?’ asked Jack.

‘Vot’s that to do vith the Conwent haffair?’

‘Oh, nothing, I only enquired out of mere curiosity.’

‘Vell, you must be wery curious. If you’ll never diwulge I’ll tell you.’

‘Never, I assure you.’

‘I’m a general vitness.’

‘A what?’

‘A vitness! I hattend court and takes the hoath; then I gives hin my hevidence haccording to vot my client vishes me to swear to. Ven a robbery hor a murder his committed, vy I knows hall about it, and tells hevery body. Ov course I his summoned, tells a good story, vich I draws pay for.’

‘You must be an old scoundrel!’ remarked Jack. ‘But that can’t be all your business?’

‘Ov course not,’ resumed the cockney. ‘That’s honly von branch. I makes a good ’eal of tin out ov fires. You see I’s a Hingine man. Ven I ’ears the halarm ov fire, I puts hon my badge, and runs to ’elp put it hout, hand to save waluable property from the helement. Then ven I cums hin contact vith any small harticles o’ walue I puts them in my pocket, and forgits to render han haccount to the sufferers.’

‘Do you find your business profitable just now?’

‘Vell it his dull just now—there ’asn’t bin a murder hor a ’ighvay robbery vor three veeks. An’ has for conflagrations, they his dull too; besides the Hinginenen says I his a Himpostor, and they kicks me hout. Now iv this plan to destroy the Conwent by a mob honly succeeds, vy I can make a nice vat job out ov it, and ve could kick the Hingemen hout.’

‘Well, what is the plan?’ enquired Jack.

‘Vy, ’avn’t you ’eard ov the great hagitation got up ’bout the Nun vot run away hand made a hexposition?’

‘No. This is new to me.’

‘I vont to know? Vell, it’s a vact, and there ’as been a secret meeting in Charlestown, and ’ave passed resolves to burn the Conwent on the night ov the twenty-vourth ov Haugust.’

‘The very night!’ exclaimed Melville to Gray. ‘We are much obliged to you for the information.’

‘Vell, then, in behalf ov the Wigilance Committee, I inwite you and your friend to hassist in the destruction ov this ’orrid Conwent.’

‘Thank you,’ replied Melville. ‘We shall assuredly be there.’

‘Inwite hall you can henlist in the business too.’

‘We shall do so. Come, Gray, let’s be moving. Good night, said Melville.’

‘Good hevining, gentlemen,’ answered Slippery Joe. ‘Pleasant dreams to you and a good many ov ’em.’

The cellar door closed, and Melville and Gray were once-more in the street, pursuing their way towards the eastern part of the city.

‘Well, Gray, we’ve had quite an adventure; and a precious villain we’ve had for a companion,’ remarked Melville.

‘True,’ replied Gray; ‘and it appears that our plans are somewhat superseded by a gang of desperate villains.’

‘Then there is greater necessity for our being there—to save property and perhaps life from the rapacity of these incendiaries. I must impart further

instructions to my crew to thwart those who would burn the Convent solely for the sake of pillaging it. Our motives are higher and nobler. I would save my sister from irretrievable ruin and disgrace, and prevent others from being caught in the same snare.'

The two friends soon reached the end of India Wharf, where a small barge lie in waiting for them. They immediately put off for the ship which was lying at anchor about a mile down the harbor. When they arrived on board, Melville summoned the first mate to the cabin, to whom he gave the most minute instructions concerning the business in hand for the night or the twenty fourth. On enquiring how the crew were disposed towards the adventure, the mate replied:—'They are impatient for the arrival of the hour, and I am certain that no lack of courage or zeal will be wanting on their part.'

A luxurious banquet was now spread before them, and Frederick Gray, for the first time in his life, supped after the manner of the Orientals.

CHAPTER VIII.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY. MEDITATION OF CECILE. DOUBTS AND APPREHENSIONS. CONVENT MIRRORS. INSULTING LANGUAGE OF PADRE FRANCIS. THE STUPEFYING DRAUGHT. RICH BANQUET. CECILE PREPARED FOR 'TAKING THE VEIL.'

St. Bartholomew's day—the twenty-fourth of August—had at length arrived—a day made notorious to the civilized world, not only for the sanguinary massacre of thousands of Protestants by the Catholics of the Old World, at a remote period, but for the destruction of the Ursuline Convent on Mount Benedict, within our own time. The morning was clear and bland, and gave promise of a goodly day. Mt. Benedict never looked more lovely than on the day of its desecration. The inmates of the Convent held early mass, and on this religious holiday, they made

'Prayer all their business, all their pleasure praise.'

Cecile Melville, soon as the morning service was concluded, retired to her narrow apartment, to meditate upon that important step which would interdict forever all intercourse with her loved friends and the world. She prostrated herself upon the floor and invoked the saints to free her heart from vain regrets, and to lead her safely through the solemn and impressive ceremony of 'taking the veil.' It must be here confessed that her mind was disturbed by some perplexing apprehensions; she had observed in the manners and actions of Padre Francis and the Abbess, certain things which did not seem precisely consistent with a religious life; and she wished in her heart that her novitiate might be protracted, in order that her mind might become divested of certain indefinable sensations which marred its serenity and piety. Her thoughts now turned back upon her early life, and they seemed but days of innocence and happiness; not a dark nor unholy hour intervened to dim their brightness. She wondered that she had been made to believe that her past life had been sinful, and that her days of righteousness were those only she had passed as a Novice in the Convent. The images of her dear mother and Frederick Gray flitted before her imagination. Gladly would she have had another interview with them before renouncing the world; but it was now late; she had gone too far; and in a few brief hours she was to become as one dead to the world! She had a presentiment that some great calamity was on the eve of taking place, and in that calamity her eternal happiness was involved.

The use of mirrors in Convents is generally prohibited, and during her novitiate Cecile had not seen her own lovely countenance, for it was a rule among the Sisters of St. Ursula that they should never behold their own persons. A pail of pure pellucid water had that morning been placed in her apartment. She took a cup and was about to dip it into the clear element, when her hand was arrested by observing a perfect reflection of her pearly white arm. The thought that she might also see her face in the water was at that moment a temptation not easily to be resisted. Bending over the placid surface she beheld with a mingling of pleasure and grief her own sweetly beautiful and expressive features. The idea that she possessed any remarkable personal charms had never, until this moment, occurred to her! Her complexion contained not a tinge of color, but was white and clear as alabaster. Her eyes sparkled from the crystal mirror like sapphires; and their long dark lashes were distinctly shadowed forth; her hair hung in profuse

tresses over her finely chiselled swan-like neck, and seemed to her more glossy and beautiful than ever! A bitter pang shot coldly through her heart at the sudden thought that ere twelve hours should pass away, those rich silken clusters would be severed from her head! With both hands she wildly threw them back from her brow so as to prevent their reflection. She was startled at the contrast! Still beautiful and angelic, yet the natural ornament of the head was wanting to perfect her transcendant loveliness.

‘Can it be true,’ soliloquised she in low soft tones, ‘that these graceful ringlets are to be shaven from my brow? Yes! it is one of the sacred rites. Beauty is not tolerated in the Holy Catholic Church—it is incompatible with the views of the Ursulines. But why?’ continued she, thoughtfully. ‘Does the Holy Bible teach that God’s gifts are not to be endured? Certainly not, but on the contrary it enjoins upon our sex to cultivate the crowning charm of woman. Then why should a custom be adopted contrary to the express command of Holy Writ? Alas! it is not for me in this state of doubt and perplexity to inquire. I have given my word that I shall be prepared this night. Would that it might be recalled! Oh, Heaven support me—guide me aright, and let no unholy thoughts take possession of my soul.’

‘Amen!’ responded Padre Francis, who at this moment unceremoniously entered Cecile’s apartment, interrupting her supplications.

Cecile recovered soon as possible from her kneeling posture, but not in time to prevent the Padre from the suspicion that she had been surveying her fair features in the mirror of water.

‘Dear Sister,’ resumed the officious monk, ‘I know that it is hard to turn away from carnal fascinations. I wonder not that your exceeding beauty tempts thee to behold it—it would tempt any saint in the calendar—and I frankly confess myself influenced by your marvellous loveliness—even I your spiritual guide and confessor.’

‘I comprehend not the import of your words?’ said she, astonished at the remarks of the monk.

‘Be seated, and I will clearly explain,’ he replied, as he drew a chair towards her and seated himself beside her. ‘Many beautiful maidens have become Nuns of our order, but among them all I never saw or heard of one that rivals thee in loveliness.’

‘You now speak of things inconsistent with thy calling, and of an earthly, not of a Celestial nature,’ remarked the Novice.

‘Nay, beautiful one, when I talk of thee I talk of heavenly beings! Have you not consented to become a “Bride of Heaven,” this very night? Thy joys henceforth will be celestial not terrestrial! Thy wondrous charms which lie more than half concealed beneath those clusters of hair will become exposed to view—a halo of glory will encircle thy brow—and thy countenance will be radiant with love and beauty!’

‘You talk more like a lover than a holy father of the church,’ said Cecile.

‘You now comprehend me. Priest as I am, I do love thee’ said he taking her hand.

‘Impious man, leave me.’

‘Deign but let me taste the fragrance of those sweet lips, and you will make your adorer happy,’ said the monk, a lecherous leer gleaming from his small, piercing eye.

Cecile started to her feet, and looking the priest in the face with an expression which almost caused the amorous priest to quail before her, exclaimed,

‘Begone! or the Convent shall be alarmed.’

‘Your voice would not be heard in this sequestered part of the building. Come, listen to me and treat me fairly. I promise to be thy faithful protector.’

‘Shame on thee, thou sacrilegious monster,’ exclaimed Cecile.

‘Spare your denunciations, sister Cecile,’ said the Priest coolly, as he arose to leave her. You now, beauteous maiden, belong to the Ursuline Convent. To-night, your vows will be heard; to-night you will be invested with the black veil.’

Never! cried she with a voice that pierced through the thick wall of the building. ‘Gracious Heavens! to what unholy place have I been enticed? Is this a life devoted to God? Is this your ancient and boasted religion? or are you a demon sent especially from the infernal regions thus to impose upon the credulity of our sex!’

‘Nay, sweet angel, you will love me better, after the rites in the chapel are performed,’ said the monk.

‘Those rites shall never be performed, unless they be enforced upon me by wicked monsters like thyself,’ answered Cecile.

‘Fear not, my beauteous angel. I’ll leave you to consider upon the choice you have made. You will not break your promise; of that be assured.’—The brutish priest now left the resolute maiden in a state of wonder and amazement.

‘I’ll not remain in this Convent another hour,’ said she as she left her apartment and hastened to the Abbess in the refectory.

‘What is the matter, my dear child?’ asked the Abbess as Cecile entered the room crying.

‘I come to take leave of you, and to ask permission to be absolved from my promises. I have been grossly insulted by the Priest.’

‘Indeed! Padre Francis is always making trouble. But, my dear, the power to grant what you ask lies not with me. Tarry with us, and you shall dine at our table; by that time the Reverend Bishop will be here; and you shall have all the satisfaction you desire.’

‘Thank you, *ma mere*,’ replied Cecile as she took a seat at the further corner of the room, and hid her face in her hands.

In a few minutes the dinner was prepared. In the meanwhile, Padre Francis and Sister Magdalene were holding a private interview in an adjoining room, and the following is the substance of their privacy.

‘The ceremony of investing her with the black veil must be done to-night. She refuses and wishes to leave us. It will be a severe loss to the establishment. She will dine here to-day, sister Ursula,’ said the Monk in an insinuating manner. ‘The opportunity ought not to be lost. You can assist me.’

‘True, I comprehend you,’ answered sister Ursula. ‘You wish me to administer the——’

‘Yes! the stupefying draught! here is a small phial. It contains the precise quantity. Convey it into her drink at the table in the Refectory, where she will be allowed to dine to-day. There will be no further difficulty.’

‘I’ll do it,’ said the emaciated and haggard looking Nun. She left the unholy priest to his own reflections, and entered the refectory where the Abbess, and Assistants, including Cecile, had just seated themselves at the table. The table was filled with a supply of luxuries that an epicure would not have cavilled at, and, compared with the food sent to the Nuns of the Black Veil, would have been considered sumptuous.

‘Where is Padre Francis, sister Ursula,’ inquired the Lady Superior.

‘He is at his devotions in an adjoining room. He will be here presently.’

The door at length opened, and the wily Priest entered with a reverend and sanctimonious look, seated himself at the table, and after crossing himself, repeated hurriedly, ‘In nomine domini nostri Jesu Christe.’ He then dissected a Turkey and a pair of canvass backs with a grace and skill that any hotel keeper would have envied. He did the honors of the table in a

easy and genteel manner. No one would have marvelled at his sleek, fat visage, had they but witnessed the justice he committed upon the poultry. Upon a side-table were cups of delicious Mocha just drawn from a pure silver urn, and served by Sister Agnes. The Abbess was first served with the coffee, and then a cup, with an ingredient besides sugar and cream clandestinely thrown into it by the amiable sister Agnes, was passed to Cecile. As she drank, Padre Francis turned up the lids from his small, twinkling eyes, and when the cup was emptied, he instinctively drew a long breath, something between a sigh and a groan.

‘I fear I have eaten too heartily,’ said the Priest, to account for the audible sigh which involuntarily escaped him.

‘Be helped to some of these delicious oysters,’ said the Abbess. ‘They are scalloped.’

‘Ah! indeed, I had forgotten you had provided such a delicacy. Well, I can’t refuse an invitation so politely urged. A very small quantity, if you please.’

Enough was served for an ordinary hungry man’s dinner, but Father Francis never declined to take a ‘small piece’ or a ‘little more.’ The Oysters soon disappeared, followed by a nice plate of plumb-pudding, a piece of pie, and a ‘small quantity’ of nuts and raisins.

‘A very good dinner!’ said the Holy Padre as he arose from the table and wiped his greasy lips with a napkin. He left the refectory and proceeded directly to his apartment where he unlocked a closet and took out a case of cut glass bottles well filled with the best of old Jamaica, Holland Gin and Scotch and Irish Whiskey. He took a glass or two of the Cognac, and lighted his *hooka* and puffed himself into a comfortable siesta, where we shall for the present leave him, and look after our other characters.

To return to poor Cecile. She had drank the stupifying drug, and already its deleterious properties were at work upon her debilitated system. And ere half an hour had elapsed, she had so far sunk into a state of unconsciousness that she was not cognizant of anything that was passing around her. She was laid upon a couch where she remained until sunset, when she was removed to the wardrobe, and there arrayed in the gayest and most costly garments she possessed, preparatory to the ceremony of taking the Veil.— During all this time she had not uttered a single word, and was moved to and fro more like a piece of mechanism than an intelligent being.

CHAPTER IX.

NIGHT OF THE CONFLAGRATION. THE TURKISH BARGE. MELVILLE AND GRAY VISIT THE SUBTERRANEAN ARCH. THE MONK SET TO COOL. A NEW DISGUISE. CHAPEL OF THE URSULINES. ENTRANCE OF CECILE.— COMMENCEMENT OF THE RITES OF INVESTING THE BLACK VEIL. THE VOWS. SUDDEN ILLUMINATION. TERROR OF THE NUNS.

The evening of the memorable twenty-fourth of August had arrived. It was a bright and beautiful night. The magnificent constellation of our northern hemisphere, studded the blue expanse of heaven with unsurpassed brilliancy. The narrow crescent which for a time dimmed the lustre of the twinkling orbs of night, had sunk behind the western hills. All was quiet and peaceful. But a gentle breeze from the northwest rippled the waters of the Mystic and Charles, and waved the boughs and leaves of the stately elms and sycamores which lined the road leading towards Mt. Benedict.

At the hour of nine o'clock two individuals were seen to issue stealthily from the convent garden, by the gate with the secret spring. They directed their footsteps towards a neighboring hill some hundred yards distant, and on reaching its summit they halted. It would have required more than ordinary scrutiny to have recognized in these individuals the persons of John Melville and Frederick Gray, so strangely were they disguised; but they would have been easily detected while conversing, by those familiar with the tones of their voices.

'Everything seems to be favorable for our bold adventure,' said Melville, as they seated themselves upon the eminence which commanded a view of the Mystic River.

'Yes,' replied his companion; 'and your friend, McDougal and O'Toole have enough of "*the craythur*," as they called it, within their hides, to warrant their being perfectly quiet and docile for the remainder of the night.

'Was'nt that a capital expedient? Thus far it has worked admirably. I have got the Irishman's key, which I found made fast around his neck.— Now that we have secured our ingress and egress to the Convent Chapel, *ad libitum*,—via the "subterranean arch,"—if we can be sure to be in season to secure the monk, and for a time, borrow his habiliments, one of us might be present at a portion of the ceremony, which Mr. O'Toole said would commence precisely at eleven o'clock.'

'That would be rich indeed; but I fear such an adventure would be attended with too much danger.'

'Pooh! I should not fear an army of Nuns, backed by a Bishop, and a score of Priests,' answered Melville.

'The gangs from Charlestown and Cambridge I trust will not arrive too soon to disarrange our plans,' said Gray.

'They will light the signal upon this hill precisely at twelve. Meanwhile, we can station our men around the Convent grounds, to be ready at a moment's warning. Hark! I hear the sound of a boat gliding through the water. That's my barge. None but caiquejhes of the Bosphorus can keep perfect time with their oars. I could distinguish my men rowing amnog

hundred boat crews. They are nearing the shore. Let us go down and meet them.'

With hasty steps they descended to the river, where some twenty-five men, disguised with black dominos, and wearing red caps and white jackets, were seated in a barge with their arms resting across their oars. Melville immediately took from his pocket a small silver tube, which he placed to his mouth, and a shrill whistle was heard by the disguised oarsmen.

'Ay, ay, Captain Pasma! We await further orders!' answered a man who sat in the stern of the barge. 'Shall we land or proceed?'

'Proceed on until you come within range of the large brick edifice I pointed out to you. There land and disperse your men among the shrubbery at the foot of the garden, and there lie concealed until you hear again my signal.'

'Ay, ay, sir.'

The barge and her crew proceeded on, while Melville and Gray retraced their steps hastily towards the Convent. They had passed the front gate, when the sharp tones of the Ursuline Bell broke upon their ears with a solemn peal. They pursued their way across the 'Cominunion Garden,' so called, and halted at the entrance of the subterranean passage. Melville took from his neck a small steel chain, to which was suspended a key of a peculiar construction—it being in the form of a cross with medallion figures on each side, representing the crucifixion. With this key he unlocked the door, and they found themselves amid huge cakes of ice, piled one upon another. A dim lamp, suspended from the centre, aided by the reflection of its icy walls, lighted the frigid apartment. Following the instructions which the Irish porter had unwittingly imparted, they soon found the 'secret spring,' which, upon touching, a huge stone revolved slowly from the wall, leaving an aperture two by three feet in dimensions. Crawling through this they stood in the subterranean passage. It had a rough stone floor, walled entirely of brick and arched with the same material. It was dimly lighted with small tapers, placed two rods or more distant from each other. Melville taking the lead, they groped their way along until they came to a narrow spiral staircase, when they heard the sound of footsteps slowly descending. Ensnconcing themselves quickly behind an angle of the arch beyond the stairs, a figure closely muffled in cowl and cassock, moved slowly down the steps, mumbling *aves* and *pater-nosters* by the way. When he reached the last step, he halted for a moment, and looking cautiously about him, discovered to the view of the intruders who had hidden behind the stairs, the fat, sleek-looking countenance and aldermanic figure of Padre Francis, of whom Melville had had a very tolerable description from the communicative 'Misthur O'Toole' at their second interview. He proceeded slowly along the passage—Melville and Gray skulking noiselessly in his rear—and as he arrived at its terminus and beheld the ponderous stone swung back, he started back with affright and amazement. At this moment he was suddenly seized—as he supposed by *el demonio*—and ere he could mutter half of an *ave* his mouth was muzzled, and his arms and nether limbs rendered useless by strong cords. In this condition he was conveyed by dint of great effort on the part of his tormentors through the hole into the ice-house, where he was divested of his sacerdotal vestments, and 'set to cool' off the perspiration which suddenly started from his body on being seized and treated so sacrilegiously by hands heated in Gehenna.

'Now, Fred,' whispered Melville, as they re-entered the passage, 'as we have got the affrighted gentleman's robes, one of us may as well make a good use of them.'

'They will become you, Melville, much better than they will me,' answered Gray. 'Besides, you are somewhat nearer the height of the monk.'

‘But I lack materially in breadth.’

‘And I still more.’

‘Very well, Fred. If you will have it so assist me in putting them on.— I dare say I shall look like a half-starved six-footer, or the ‘Living Skeleton’ in an Alderman’s gown. What a heavy, clumsy affair this cassock is.— There my friend,’ continued Melville, after he was fully arrayed in the Padre’s outward apparel. ‘How do I look? Do I resemble even the shadow of the man cooling off in the ice-house?’

‘Oh! it fits you marvellously well. You’ll do admirably; but you must keep your face closely concealed beneath the hood, for it would need a shade or two more of vermilion to approach near the complexion of the features of the monk.’

‘It must be near the time. Let us see,’ said Melville as he took out his watch and held it by one of the dim tapers. ‘Two minutes of eleven. We have no time to loose.’

‘True. How shall we manage?’

‘You secrete yourself again beyond the stairs, and when you hear my signal, run to the entrance of this passage, and repeat it. My men will come to you. Conduct them directly through this arch into the chapel above.’

The bell of the convent again tolled, and the tread of many footsteps, as if persons assembling above, was distinctly heard. Melville mounted the spiral stairs and imitating the slow and cautious tread of the monk, he ascended to the top. No door was visible but the same peculiar spring which he found below was quickly discovered. This he touched, and slowly a pannel opened, which, when closed he found to be a beautiful painting which swung from the frame, and had no more the appearance of an entrance than any of the framed pictures which hung around the walls of the apartment. He was now within the chapel of the Ursulines, and he beheld the assembled throng of Nuns habited in the costume peculiar to their order. As he entered, the choir accompanied by the organ was chanting forth the “*Cantate Domino*,” while all knelt down, which circumstance enabled him to conceal himself unperceived, behind the heavy drapery of a window near the secret opening.

The chapel was constructed after the rules of no distinct order of architecture, but seemed a commingling of several of the most modern styles. However, its high arched ceilings and dome of glass, its pannelled walls and windows of stained glass, gave it a beautiful and imposing appearance. Around the walls were hung rich paintings by the old masters, representing the saints, and historical pieces of a variety of religious subjects. In the centre of the chapel, stood a lofty pedestal bearing a beautiful representation of the patron saint of the Ursulines, set in a heavy black frame of carved wood. The whole was surrounded by a wooden cross with a representation of the crucifixion sculptured upon it. From the centre of the dome was suspended, a heavy silken banner ornamented with golden cord, and tassels and fringe of bullion, and upon its folds on one side was embroidered a representation of our saviour, and upon the other side the cross, with the letters I. H. S. above it, all of which was of the most artistical and elaborate workmanship.

The Nuns were nearly all assembled. The Choir continued chanting, as the Abbess, followed by a train of attendants, entered by the principal door, and with an air of dignity and stateliness, marched up to the altar, crossed herself, and knelt before it. At the same time her attendants and the whole congregation (with the exception of our friend of the cowl and cassock,) prostrated themselves, and kissed the floor. This act of devotion being performed, all was silent for a few moments, when the Abbess resumed her march, and halted before the Picture of the Patroness Saint, where the

'Rosary' was performed, consisting of *ten* 'Ave Marias' and *one* 'Pater Noster'—thereby honoring the Virgin Mary with ten times more reverence than was allowed to the Supreme Being,—concluding with the following 'Hail Mary,' of which we give an English version :

'Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life our sweetness, and our hope, to Thee do we supplicate, poor daughters of Eve; to Thee do we send up our sighs, whilst weeping and lamenting in this valley of tears. Turn then, O most gracious advocate, Thine eyes of mercy towards us; show us Jesus, the blessed fruit of Thy womb, O clement, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary.'

During the performance of the 'Rosary' and other preparatory rites, the Novice, whom, it will be recollected, we left in the Wardrobe with several of the sisterhood, was tastefully arrayed in a beautiful white satin dress, with jewels in her ears, and rings upon her fingers. Her brow was encircled with a diadem of pearls, while her rich, raven tresses strayed in luxurious profusion over her alabaster neck, and shoulders. Indeed, she looked as if dressed, rather for the bride of some gay gallant of the world, than for a 'Bride of the Church.' She had partially recovered from the powerful soporific draught which had been administered to her, yet she was still unconscious of what was passing around her. With due credit to the sisters we would say that on this occasion she was treated with kindness and affection, and every means within their power was devised to restore to her mind the light of reason. But all without effect. Not a single word fell from her lips, nor a sigh escaped from her heart—not a tear dimmed her eye, nor a single emotion was apparent in her placid countenance. She seemed more like a marble statue, suddenly transmuted into a living creature, than like a being born with the breath of life, and nurtured upon the earth! Being incapable of walking, her arms were placed around the necks of two of the sisters, who, in this manner were enabled to convey her to the chapel. The Choir was brilliantly illuminated, which shew off the magnificent apparel of Cecile to great advantage, and contrasted strangely with the sombre habiliments of the Nuns. She was led directly to the Choir, where, with some difficulty, her attendants succeeded in getting her into a kneeling posture; soon as this was accomplished, she looked upward, and it seemed as if, suddenly, a ray of light had burst upon her, and with clasped hands she fixed her gaze upon the altar as though an inward prayer was being offered from her heart to the Throne of Heaven! There was something melancholy, yet lovely and interesting in her appearance at the moment. Her large, expressive eyes, shaded by long, dark lashes; her complexion, untinged by a single rose-like hue; and her sweet lips, whiter than her cheeks, gave to her countenance a peculiarly beautiful, but indescribable expression. Her figure, slender and fragile as the reed, indicated clearly the effect of the rigorous penances which she had been taught to practice during the last few weeks of her Novitiate!—She now turned those lustrous orbs, and gazed upon the scene prepared for her, and they contrasted wildly with the dim vision of the shadowy and spectre-like forms that were moving around her, chanting, in sepulchral tones, exclamations of Praise!

'Ave Marias' and 'Pater Nosters' were now repeated, and a solemn, dirge-like hymn was sung by the whole assemblage. Suddenly, the room was darkened—the altar, which a moment before, blazed with lights, was invisible. Meanwhile, Vespers and Chants were continued. At length the light of a dim taper broke through the utter darkness—and in a moment afterward, some half dozen more were lighted, which reflected a wavering and uncertain light upon the sallow faces of the Nuns.

Cecile was still kneeling at the altar—but how changed—the beautiful and gay attire was gone, and instead, a dark, gloomy robe enshrouded her angelic form. The ornaments in her ears,—the rings upon her taper fingers,—the diadem of pearls which encircled her brow—all, all had disappeared during the moments of darkness.

Who can describe the feelings of Melville—*alias* Padre Francis—upon witnessing this peculiar and imposing ceremony ; The prayers were solemn and impressive ; the chanting of the choristers, accompanied by the deep-toned organ, reverberated along the high-arched walls and fell mournfully-pleasing, upon his ear. But the desecrating of these services, as viewed by him, by performing monkish and unmeaning rites upon this poor girl whom he supposed to be his sister, aroused him to a sense of the business which brought him in a clandestine manner to this place.

The solemn ceremony was performed with the exception of repeating the 'Vows,' after the Abbess, which read as follows :

'O, Holy mother, permit a worm of the dust to consecrate myself forever to thee, in presence of all the Saints and Martyrs and Nuns assembled ; and to renounce the temptations and wickedness of the world forever ; by taking upon myself the most holy vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, which, with thy grace and assistance I will fulfil.'

This the Abbess read, and enquired of Cecile if she were ready to take them. But her enquiry was unheeded. Not a word escaped the poor girl's lips. Taking it for granted that silence in this case, as well as in others, was paramount to an assent, she motioned to one of the sisters to repeat them for her ; and as it was customary to shear a lock from the head at the close of each simple sentence, Cecile's hair was prepared for the sacrifice.]

The fatal scissors were in the hands of the Abbess—a cluster of beautiful curls was read! when suddenly ; as if by enchantment, a broad glare of light gleamed through the windows, and fell upon the dark figures there assembled ! The Convent Bell pealed forth its sonorous sounds in rapid succession ! The Abbess dropped her scissors, and began repeating her 'Aves.' The Nuns, struck with amazement and fear, performed several feats altogether foreign to their vocation ! All was confusion, tumult and dread !

* * * * *

CHAPTER X.

CECILE RESCUED. THE INCENDIARIES. MELVILLE ENCOUNTERS SLIPPERY JOE. THE LATTER LOSES HIS BOOTY. THE CONFLAGRATION. A FEMALE IN PERIL. THE DARING RESCUE. SURPRISING COINCIDENCE.

The Nuns, wild with affright, had now disappeared from the Chapel, leaving Cecile, apparently undisturbed, kneeling before the altar. Melville instantly opened the mysterious pannel and gave a shrill whistle. He then approached the half-unconscious maiden.

‘Cecile,’ said he, mildly, ‘I come to take you from this wretched place and restore you to your dear mother.’

The timid maiden turned her eyes upward and gave the stranger a look of confidence. ‘Who will take me to my dear mother?’ asked she.

‘A friend, be assured. Fear not. This edifice will soon be a smouldering heap of ruins. Come.’

Saying this, Melville took the slender girl in his arms and bore her across the chapel, when he met Gray, who had just entered, followed by a dozen men. To his friend’s arms he quickly assigned her.

‘Here, Frederick, take the poor girl to the carriage, and let two of my men accompany you as an escort. There await my coming. I am for the present needed here. Be expeditious. I will rejoin you shortly.’

The cause of the sudden affright of the Nuns was the blazing bonfire upon the neighboring hill, which was the signal for the victors to assemble before the Convent. The bell, to add to the consternation of the Nuns, was rung by Melville, who accidentally came in contact with the rope, near the place where he had stood concealed. A motley crew of men, disguised in a variety of fantastic and demoniac shapes, now approached the Convent door, many of whom bore flaming torches in their hands which rendered their appearance still more hideous and infernal. The leader of the frightful crew now approached with a bold air the principal door of the edifice, and with a club gave several distinct blows. The Nuns had now assembled in the parlor, and the Abbess hoisted one of the windows, and with a trembling voice, demanded:

‘Why this untimely intrusion?’

‘Madam! I have no time to parley. I give you and all who dwell within these walls five minutes safely to depart.’

The several doors were thrown open and the terrified inmates hurried forth in the wildest confusion. Some were screaming aloud—some were repeating ‘Aves’ and ‘Pater Nosters’—others were incoherently crying help! murder! fire! &c.

A gang of pillagers now rushed into the Convent, and commenced ransacking the apartments; while Melville had summoned all his men, *via* the subterranean passage, and dispersed them throughout the building, to prevent the commission of any sacrilege—himself and two others remaining in

the chapel. Soon he perceived two individuals, whom he recognized as the coveys he had encountered on the bridge, enter stealthily by the principal door. He quickly withdrew, with his men, behind the altar, to watch their movements.

‘Vell, I’m blow’d,’ said one of the thieves, ‘if this hisn’t a church. I should know hit vos a church ’ad I seen it in London, haltho’ I never seed the hin-side o’ one before in my life. Now, iv we could honly find some silver wases vot they christens the babies hin, hor some jewels vot belongs to the saints, vy ve might make hour heternal fortin.’

‘Let’s first break open that small door with the image a top of it,’ said the companion of the cockney.

This was no sooner said than done.

‘Oh my hies!’ exclaimed Slippery Joe. ‘Vot a mine o’ vealth! See the waluables! Let’s valk hinto ’em vithout any mercy vhatsoever. Vy ve shall be has vealthy as Hali Baby, who vent into the cave ov the ’ighvaymen, or Sinbad the Sailor, who vent hinter the Walley o’ Diamonds! Oh, my hies, vot a beautiful lamp! Vot a nice pair o’ gold tumblers to drink whiskey toddy out ov! Oh crackey! ’ere’s a bright gold sun to melt hup hinter old gold for the market. Vot’s that I vonder? Ho, that must be a hidol from Hegypt vot the Nuns vorships. Vell, I feels rich as I vant to be! Now let’s ewacuuate the premises ’fore the vicked ’uns sets fire to ’em!’

‘Yes, we must be off in a twinkling.’

‘Oh, vot’s this? ’Ere’s hanother key-’ole.’

‘Smash ’em in—don’t let’s wait for trifles.’

‘Vell I vont—there she goes, smash!’

‘Well what do you discover? Is there any thing very valuable?’

‘Oh! my hies! vy, it’s a baby!’

‘A what?’

‘A very beautiful large vax baby—vot the Nuns ’ad to play vith I ’spose. I must ’ave it to carry ’ome vith me. Vot a nice dressed little thing ’tis to be sure. Oh, von’t my little daughter Vilhemina be hawful pleased vith such a waluable and beautiful present from her dear papa.’

‘Come let’s be going—we have got enough.’

‘Vell, I’m off like a mason from a ’ot gridiron.’

‘Hold, villains!’ exclaimed Melville, rushing between them and the door, his men following.

‘Vy, you don’t say so?’

‘Leave not this spot until I bid you!’

‘I vont to know—you can’t be a hearneest? Vy, hisn’t you one o’ the Convent Burners?’ enquired the cockney, somewhat alarmed at the formidable force which was presented to intercept him!

‘Sacriligious robbers deliver up your plunder—quickly! Remember—you are in my power!’ said Melville, sternly.

‘Vell now, if you his really in hearneest, vy I spose ve must give up hall hour waluable vealth?’

‘Instantly!’

‘Vell, then, there they his. Pr’aps they’re honly vashed hafter hall,’ said Slippery Joe to his companion by way of consolation. ‘I spose ve can take our leave now?’

‘Yes—begone.’

A loud shout from without, and a sudden illumination of the chapel, indicated that the incendiaries had now commenced their work of destruction, which prevented the cockney and his companion from following up their profession’ in the other apartments, and they departed with empty pockets. Melville ordered his men to gather the most valuabe articles, that could be

removed with safety, and convey them to the subterranean passage. This order was promptly obeyed, and ere the fire had got well underweigh, more than half of the wealth in the Convent was removed to the place designated, and was thus saved from the conflagration, and the hands of the pillagers, through the extreme vigilance of Melville and his men.

The flames had now reached the chapel, and Melville ordering his men to retire to the barge, rushed among the motley gathering in front, who were exulting, in every possible manner, over the burning pile.

At this moment a shrill scream was heard above the din of unearthly shouts—again and again it was heard! Melville looked up and beheld a female standing in the cupola, which the fire had not yet reached. A wild cry of horror escaped him! He made his way through the throng—ascended the long flight of steps with a bound, and entered the burning edifice!—The fire was now beginning to wind its serpentine folds around the cupola, where yet stood the helpless girl uttering piercing shrieks, and lamentable cries, which contrasted mournfully with the exulting shouts that rent the air a moment before! The voices of the incendiaries were hushed in silence—a thrill of horror darted through every heart and suspended their fearful orgies as they gazed—a conscience-stricken crew—upon the dreadful sacrifice which they had no power to avert!

Melville had reached the perilous pinnacle! The female fainted in his arms, and he bore her through the smoke and fire which encumbered his terrible path! The floors crackled beneath his feet—yet he bore her intrepidly on. Flames of hot smoke at times almost suffocated him—fire-brands fell around him and threatened destruction. With joy he reached the chapel—but great was his dismay when he saw a portion of the floor fall with a crash but a few feet before him! To retreat was almost instant death—to press forward seemed impossible—but this was the only alternative! He receded a few paces, and with a step and a bound he cleared the flaming breach, and thus, almost miraculously reached the entrance of the subterranean cavern in safety!

Meanwhile the crowd without were gazing upon each other appalled and terror-stricken! They had witnessed Melville as he caught the fainting girl in his arms! but at the next moment a sheet of flame hid them from their view! All supposed them lost! Indeed there appeared no hope! When, suddenly from the rear of the building he came forward bearing his lovely burden joyfully along!

'They're saved! They're saved!' was the simultaneous shout of the whole multitude.

The awful spell which bound them in silence was now broken, and cries of exultation and merriment again rent the air! They deemed Melville's efforts in saving the poor girl almost a miracle; and it has ever been a mystery, with the great mass, how he escaped out of the rear of the building, which was at the time a complete mass of flame!

Startle not reader at what we are about to divulge, for we shall endeavor yet to explain all to your perfect satisfaction. Melville conveyed his beloved *wife*--for she was indeed the lost ZILLAH--into the carriage where Frederick Gray and the beauteous Cecile, were awaiting his coming. Still carrying his partially revived wife in his arms, he ordered the coachman to drive with all possible speed to his mother's cottage, where we shall in due time again meet them.

Thousand and tens of thousands of spectators had now assembled around Mount Benedict, to behold the work of destruction! It was an imposing and thrilling spectacle to behold the vast edifice encompassed in flame! but it was hideous and frightful to look upon the fantastically disguised and de-

mon-like crew of incendiaries dancing and yelling around it! Fire-engines and their companies came to the mount, but the infuriated mob drove them off! The conflagration illumined the country for many miles around, and even at a distance presented a scene of grandeur and sublimity! The first streaks of morn were visible ere the flames had died away and the multitude dispersed from the scene of desolation! Old Sol arose in unclouded splendor, and its earliest beams glimmered brightly upon a heap of smouldering ruins!

CHAPTER X.

MEDITATIONS OF A MOTHER. A SUDDEN SCENES. ARRIVAL OF THE CARRIAGE. MORE WONDERS. THE LOVELY GREEK. JOY AND PAIN.

Mrs. Melville was seated at the window of the cottage, meditating upon the singular events of her son's long absence. The joy she felt on finding him still among the living of the earth was only marred by the knowledge of his having signed the religion of his fathers, and embraced Mahometanism; a system of religion founded by that Prince of impostors, Mahomet, and propagated throughout a portion of the globe by the scimitar of Arabia; the Yezidan of Turkey, and the well-tempered blade of Damascus; a system of theology on which the Jew and Christian alike are taught to view with the utmost abhorrence. Yet from the conversation she had had with her son, she was rejoiced to know that the same God which the Christian worships was also the Allah of the devotional Moslem; and notwithstanding that they regarded Mahomet as the Prophet of God, yet they denied not that Christ was also the Prophet of the Christian, deriving his power from the same Great Source; that the Turk, whom he had ever been taught to look upon as something less than a semi-barbarian, is indeed, a being of humanity, of morality, of piety, and who is as little likely to violate his conscience as the Christian; a man, too, of benevolence and kindness, and whose partiality is provincial with those who have observed and scrutinized his character. Thus did the fond mother reason within herself; thus did she strive to repress and conciliate those unhappy emotions which smothered her mind upon learning the startling intelligence that one of her own offspring—an only son—was not only an official subject of a great Oriental Monarchy, but a conscientious Mohammedan!

Hester now turned to Cecile, and a deep sigh of anguish arose from her heart. The singular family which attended her children was a matter of wonder, as well as of the deepest regret, to her; she had deprecated the hour when she gave assent to the importunities of professed spiritual guides, and Cecile's own wishes, that her beloved daughter should be torn from her white lying! She reproached herself for doing wrong, and she would have given words could she have recalled the fatal promise! But the die was cast! Cecile's stern decision to pass beyond her native land, had been borne to her, and on that night made sacred to the Catholics by the massacre of thousands of their religious opponents, she was to take the vows which would place her apart from the living, and yet not with the dead! There was something in the thought that caused her soul to shudder! She wrung her hands in anguish, and falling upon her knees offered up a fervent and heartfelt prayer to the Almighty—asking for the Divine interposition to save her from being deprived of a beloved child! and again to restore her to her bosom!

The Amice had scarcely been uttered when the apartment became sud-

CHAPTER X.

MEDITATIONS OF A MOTHER. A SUDDEN SURPRISE. ARRIVAL OF THE CARRIAGE. MORE WONDERS. THE LOVELY GRECIAN. JOY AND HAPPINESS.

Mrs. Melville was seated at the window of the cottage, meditating upon the singular events of her son's long absence. The joy she felt on finding him still among the living of the earth, was only marred by the knowledge of his having abjured the religion of his fathers, and embraced Islamism;—a system of religion founded by that Prince of impostors, Mahomet, and propagated throughout a portion of the globe by the scimitar of Arabia; the yataghan of Turkey, and the well-tempered blade of Damascus; a system of theology on which the Jew and Christian alike are taught to view with the utmost abhorrence. Yet, from the conversation she had had with her son, she was rejoiced to know that the same God which the Christian worships was also the 'Allah' of the devotional Moslem; and, notwithstanding they regarded Mahomet, as the Prophet of God, yet they denied not that Christ was also the Prophet of the Christian, deriving his power from the same Great Source; that the Turk, whom he had ever been taught to look upon as something less than a semi-barbarian, is indeed, a being of honesty, of morality, of piety, and who is as little likely to violate his conscience as the Christian; a man, too, of benevolence and kindness, and whose hospitality is proverbial with those who have observed and scrutinized his character. Thus did the fond mother reason within herself; thus did she strive to repress and conciliate those unhappy emotions which embittered her mind upon learning the startling intelligence that one of her own offspring—an only son—was not only an official subject of a great Oriental Monarchy, but a conscientious Musselmaun!

Her thoughts now turned to Cecile, and a deep sigh of anguish arose from her heart. The singular fatality which attended her children was a matter of wonder, as well as of the deepest regret! oft she had deprecated the hour when she gave assent to the importunities of professed spiritual guides, and Cecile's own wishes, that her beloved daughter should be torn from her while living! She reproached herself for doing wrong, and she would have given worlds could she have recalled the fatal promise! But the die was cast! Cecile's stern decision to pass beyond her novitiate, had been borne to her, and on that night made sacred to the Catholics by the massacre of thousands of their religious opponents, she was to take the vows which would place her apart from the living, and yet not with the dead! There was something in the thought that caused her soul to shudder! She wrung her hands in anguish, and falling upon her knees offered up a fervent and heartfelt prayer to the Almighty,—asking for the Divine interposition to save her from being bereaved of a beloved child! and again to restore her to her bosom!

The 'Amen' had scarcely been uttered when the apartment became sud-

denly illuminated; the air rung with shouts and strange noises; the bells, for miles around, pealed loudly and rapidly! heavy wheels rumbled as they moved along the ground; and the quick heavy tread of thousands vibrated upon her ear! There was a confusion and a murmur without of strange import! She ran to the door and, behold! a blaze of light from beyond an intervening hill, burst upon her vision! She despatched a servant to learn the cause. He soon returned, almost breathless with agitation and excitement, ejaculating,

‘The Convent’s burning! The Convent’s burning!’

‘Oh Cecile! Cecile!’ exclaimed the agonized mother, and fainted upon the threshold of the door.

Presently the trampling of steeds was heard, and in a moment more a carriage, drawn by a pair of fleet horses, came rolling furiously up the avenue, and stopped before the cottage door. Two gentlemen sprang from the vehicle in an instant, and assisted two females to alight, with whom they entered the cottage. Mrs. Melville, by the prompt exertions of her servant, had nearly revived. Lights were brought, and in a moment Cecile was in her mother’s arms.

‘Heaven be praised! You have escaped the dreadful calamity,’ were the first words of Mrs. Melville.

‘Oh! my dear mother, I have been rescued from a worse death than being consumed with the Convent!’ exclaimed Cecile.

‘What mean you, my child?’

‘I have escaped the dreadful snare, in which both body and soul were placed in fearful jeopardy! I have been shamefully insulted by one who styles himself a servant of God—a vicegerent of the kingdom of Heaven! I have passed through trials and privations! and in the last hours of my novitiate, a stupifying drug was clandestinely administered to me, which deprived me of the light of reason! Oh! mother, thank this stranger, for he it was who rescued me from the accursed walls, which, thank Heaven, have been visited this night with a signal vengeance! And Frederick, oh! Frederick! dear Frederick! forgive me for my past folly! I have been deceived! blinded by the spells of superstitious men and women!’

‘Forgive thee, Cecile? Indeed I do,’ answered Gray; ‘although I have been deeply afflicted on thy account, yet I would suffer years of torment and wretchedness for this happy hour. May God forgive me my sins! and teach me still to love thee as I have for years past.’ Gray extended his arms, and Cecile rushed into them, overwhelmed with joy, her long, confused ringlets straying wildly over his breast.

‘Oh! Frederick,’ said she, ‘I am now happy! I have been miserable! I am thine forever! Speak to the stranger, who stands looking upon the Grecian; thank him, I have not words to express my gratitude.’

‘Friend Jack,’ said Gray, ‘participate with me in my joy!’

‘How’s this, Gray,’ you seem to take more interest in this young lady than I was advised of!’

‘True, Jack. Her mother’s consent I had before she contemplated entering the Convent; her own I now have; and I only await yours.’

‘Melville instantly threw off his sailor disguise, and stood before them in the same costume in which he had once before appeared in the presence of his mother.

‘My husband! my husband!’ screamed Zillah, her dark eyes flashing with sudden joy, as she rushed into his arms.

‘Yes, dearest Zillah! I am thy husband. Thank heaven, I have found thee at last! By what strange event came you in a nunnery?’

‘I cannot tell thee now, my husband. Hereafter, you shall know all.’

'My dear mother, I present to you another daughter! My dear wife my beloved Zillah!'

Mrs. Melville embraced Zillah warmly.

In the meanwhile, Cecile was gazing with astonishment at the metamorphose and singular behaviour of the stranger.

'Sister Cecile, come to your brother's arms.'

The maiden hesitated.

'I am thy brother! John Melville!'

'Am I not dreaming? Are these things actual? Yes! I see! You are my brother who was lost and is found,' and she threw herself into his arms!

'Oh joy! unexpected joy that this night hath brought forth!'

'Cecile! embrace your sister! your brother's wife!'

The two lovely creatures entwined their arms around each other's neck, and kissed each other with all the fervor of a first affection. It was a beautiful group to contemplate! From extreme anguish, all had been made happy; all had attained their greatest earthly desires. Singular, too, were the occurrences which led to such a combination of surprises.

It was at a late hour when this happy family retired to rest. Before retiring, however, Zillah promised, on the following morning to relate, since her capture by the Algerine pirates, her wonderful adventures.

CHAPTER XI.

ZILLAH'S NARRATIVE.

“After the vessel was captured, I was borne in the arms of an athletic Arab from the cabin of my husband’s ship to a six oared galley, in which I was conveyed to Algiers, although the distance to that port was many leagues. Knowing that the ship was taken without a blow being struck, I supposed, of course, that my husband was safe, although, like myself, a prisoner of war! I was taken immediately to the Dey’s palace, who, questioning me regarding the other prisoners, ascertained that I was a native of Greece; and, although I endeavored to explain my connection with the Turks, he would not listen to me; and, instead of being treated as a prisoner of war, he sent me directly to the slave market to be sold to the highest bidder. I was purchased by a wealthy Algerine for a thousand piastres; but before I was removed, a Spanish gentleman, passing through the slave market enquired of the slave merchant regarding me. He seemed to take a deep interest in my fate, and looked upon me with an eye of pity and tenderness. On ascertaining that I had been sold to an Algerine, he waited until my owner came, and having accosted him, made proposals for purchasing me, but his price was so exorbitant, (charging five thousand piastres) that the Spaniard gave up in despair. I begged to be delivered into his hands, but the Algerine gave a deaf ear to my entreaties, he determining to make me add at least four thousand piastres to his heap of gold. At length the Spaniard left me, and in the course of an hour returned. He spake to me in low tones, and, understanding that I was to be removed to my master’s house that evening, he resolved to make an attempt with his crew to rescue me—a stratagem which I freely assented to, and determined to assist in executing. The hour arrived. It was dark. And my avaricious master came to take me to his harem, bringing with him a couple of Negroes as a safeguard for my person. We had proceeded but a few rods when I saw a dozen men standing near a coffee-house, whom I knew to be the Spaniards. I immediately told my master that I had left in the market a *bocksha*, or bundle, of rich apparel, and which also contained my jewels. This was sufficient bait for his avarice, and preferring rather to trust me with the slaves than my supposed jewels, he himself hobbled back to the market for the treasure.

In the meanwhile, my negro guard, not suspecting the intrigue, were carelessly looking around upon whatever attracted their attention. The moment I saw their eyes removed from me, I ran towards the Spaniards

with all the fleetness my limbs possessed,—the negroes in full chase; but I had got several rods in advance of them. The Captain and one of his officers hurried me through the coffee-house, while his men cut off the pursuit at the door.

We quickly arrived at the pier, and hurrying into the boat, we were soon gliding toward the ship. Another boat, containing the crew soon followed, and as all were now on board, the Captain ordered the anchor to be weighed, and the sails unfurled, and we were soon leaving the port of Algiers under a heavy press of canvas.

When morning dawned, it was nearly calm, and we moved slowly over the billows. A vessel astern hove in sight! The Captain, on looking through his glass, discovered it to be an Algerine Cutter, in full chase; and to give speed to the vessel they had two boats out, well manned, and in two hours would have overhauled us, had not the wind suddenly sprung up and blew so fresh that the Cutter took in her boats, and hoisted all her canvas. But the ship was now gaining upon the chase, and before nightfall she was lost to us. Captain Carrero resolved to put into Lisbon, notwithstanding the officers of the Cutter probably knew whither he was bound. This he accomplished, and without tarrying, sailed for Havre, at which port we soon arrived. Afterward, we visited Liverpool and then set sail for America.

We had been at sea but ten days when a violent gale of wind sprung up, and although the sails were closely reefed at the time, yet its fury carried away all her canvas and spars.

It was now night, and the tornado was increasing in violence. We were driving before the wind with fearful velocity, when a mountain billow rolled over the stern of the ship, sweeping the decks of masts, spars and every moveable thing in its course. The Captain had, a moment before, gone upon deck, and shared the dreadful fate of more than half the crew.

Morning at length dawned—the gale had subsided, and the ocean was placid as a sea of glass, and we had hopes of being soon fallen in with and taken from the mastless vessel—but our hopes vanished, when the dreadful word was passed along that a fearful breach was discovered, and that we were slowly sinking! The pumps were manned and every exertion was made to keep the hull afloat. But all in vain—it was beyond human effort. The water gained rapidly in the hold, and we gave ourselves up as lost—there was not a boat, nor plank, nor spar—all had been swept from the decks by the waves that swept over us. I sank upon my knees and cried ‘Allah! Father! save us!’ My prayer was heard—the joyous shout, ‘a sail! a sail!’ burst from the crew; but she was bearing away from us. Signals were now made, and the men with almost superhuman strength raised a heavy gun from the lower deck and discharged it. The report was heard—and great was our joy when in a few moments we beheld the distant vessel change her course and bear down directly for us, aided by a gentle breeze which had now sprung up. She lowered her boats—they came alongside, and we were all taken from the sinking ship and thus were saved from an ocean grave. The vessel proved to be an American merchantman, homeward bound; and in eight days after we had been taken from the wreck the ship arrived safely in Boston harbor. In accordance with the captain’s wishes, I narrated to him my short but eventful history. He sympathised deeply with my afflictions, and when I told him that my husband was a native of America, he seemed greatly surprised, and bade me be comforted, for he would use every means in his power to restore me to him. He first proposed to take me to his residence in the country some thirty miles distant; but afterwards told me that as he had a daughter at the Mount Benedict Seminary in Charlestown, he would take me there and place me under

the protection of the principal of the Institution. Accordingly, on the day after our arrival, he took me in a carriage to the Seminary—presented me to the Abbess, who readily promised to do all in her power for my comfort, seemed greatly pleased, and thanked the gentleman for placing me under her care. After introducing me to his daughter and recommending me to her confidence, he took his departure.

When evening came I was invited to the chapel, where religious services were to be performed. All of the worshippers, on entering, knelt down and crossed themselves, but instead of making a sign that I was unaccustomed to, I fell upon my knees, and performed the Moslem sign of reverence! All eyes were turned upon me with astonishment, and I observed the Priest and Abbess looked angrily! I immediately retired to the further part of the chapel, near the door, where I remained a silent and inactive spectator of their singular ceremonies. I noticed that all present were habited in long plain black gowns, unbecoming hoods, and veils, either black or white, hanging over their shoulders; and I wondered that I did not perceive among them any of the young and more becomingly attired ladies, that I had met on our arrival in the morning.

Soon as the services were concluded, the Abbess approached me with a reproving look, and accused me of committing an inexcusable offence in the presence of the holy saints!

I answered that I intended no wrong, and begged she would pardon me if I had displeased her. This did not satisfy her, and she commenced catechising me:—

‘You are a native of Greece?’ she enquired.

I answered in the affirmative.

‘Your countrywomen are neither infidels nor heathens?’

‘I believe that the creed of the Greek Church is not essentially dissimilar to that of the Catholic Church,’ I answered.

‘Then I suppose you are member of the Greek Church?’

‘No.’

‘No?’ echoed the Abbess with surprise and indignation. ‘You must then be a horrid Jewess or an infidel?’

‘Neither!’

‘What then do you profess?’ demanded she, impatiently.

‘La illah, illa Mohammed Resoul Allah!’ said I.

She started back as if in doubt. ‘What is the English of that?’ she enquired.

‘There is but one God, and Mahomet is the Prophet of God!’

She was thunderstruck! Anger, amazement and horror were depicted upon her countenance! The other women screamed and ran from me as if I had been a fiendess, sent expressly from the infernal regions to torture them.

‘May the saints defend us from this female monster!’ dipping her hands in a font of water, crossing herself, and throwing some of it insultingly into my face!’ A Mahomedan uttering heresy in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin. Come not near me—stir not—profane not a single thing by your touch! You shall be taken care of!’ said she, and left the chapel in a paroxysm of rage.

I was now left completely alone to contemplate upon the singular treatment I had received from the Abbess. I could hardly persuade myself to believe that it was on account of my religion—yet I could divine no other cause. In the course of an hour a rough Irishman, who styled himself the porter, appeared in the chapel. He told me to follow him. I obeyed, and my conductor led me up several flights of stairs into a narrow dark apart-

ment, situated in the upper part of the building. Here I was ordered to remain, and on no account to pass the threshold of the door; and in three weeks, I was given to understand, my protector, the captain, would call, and that I should then be released.

I enquired of my keeper the cause of my being imprisoned. He replied by saying that it was to prevent my contaminating the Sisters of St. Ursula, and the consecrated apartments of the Convent.

* * * * *

My three weeks imprisonment expired yesterday; during which time I have been made to subsist upon black unpalatable bread, and a nauseous liquid which the Irish porter brought to me each morning. My prison had no windows, and a flickering taper light only was allowed me. Thus have I passed the last twenty-one days—the most wretched of my existence—and I prayed to Allah to deliver me from this worse than Algerine punishment!

Last night I retired to my rude couch, and for the first time, since I had been imprisoned, fell into a sweet sleep; for in that sleep, my dear husband, I dreamed of thee and of thy safety; of our happy home in the East; of our loved friends and merry companions. But my pleasant reverie was soon disturbed by loud noises from without—the shouts of men, the rattling of vehicles and the ringing of bells! I now heard the crackling of flames, and my room was partially filled with smoke. My feeble light had expired and I was in utter darkness! The horrid thought that I was to be burnt alive almost overwhelmed me. That my hostess had determined to sacrifice me by a dreadful death, I did not doubt! I threw over me a few articles of wearing apparel, and found my way out of my narrow apartment, and endeavored to find the stairs, by which I could descend into the hall below. Groping about in the dark, I accidentally came in contact with a flight of steps, leading still upward, which I quickly ascended and came to a scuttle door, made of panes of glass, which was probably fastened upon the outside. I descended and having obtained a piece of board, again mounted the steps, broke through the door, and found myself in the cupola of the edifice! The sudden blaze of light at first almost blinded me! I looked beneath, and beheld a vast assemblage of riotous looking men, shouting and hallooing like madmen! I also saw that the rear of the building was enveloped in flames and that I must soon inevitably perish! I could not divest myself of the idea, that the sacrifice of the building, was solely on account of the alleged contamination of it by me, and that it was determined I should perish with it; and that the demoniacal-looking crew had thronged together to witness the awful sacrifice of one of their temples containing a devotee of Islamism! I screamed aloud to attract the attention of the multitude, and, perchance, to excite sympathy in one Christian breast. But alas! my cries were either not heard, or they stubbornly determined to heed me not. All hope fled from me! I stretched forth my hand and prayed to Allah! Father! to receive my soul and bear it to our heavenly paradise! I was now almost suffocated with hot smoke, and I could feel the scorching flames that threatened in a moment to encompass me and take away the vital spark! My brain whirled! my senses were bewildered! and I fainted!

* * * * *

During my first moments of consciousness, I felt myself being borne in the arms of a strong man through a crowd of men who were exulting and shouting most vociferously. I was then placed in a carriage, and heard the

sound of kind voices, but I was not aware, until I was brought here, that it was my dear husband who saved me."

* * * * *

During Zillah's recital of her wonderful adventures—her almost miraculous escape a second time from the jaws of destruction—her auditors were so deeply affected, that she could not continue her narrative without making many pauses.

'Wonderful!' exclaimed Frederick Gray. 'Your sufferings compared with hers, Melville, sink into insignificance.'

'True! and I pray to Allah that our severest trials have passed,' replied Melville.

'May kind Heaven, hereafter, lead me in the path of duty, and forever guard me from Papal influence, is the heartfelt prayer of Cecile.'

'My children! may Heaven bless you all! May your future days be days of happiness, and your eternal life be the life which God has promised to all who obey his commands!' added Mrs. Melville.

'Amen!' responded the happy group.

One month had passed since the night of the execution of the Governor and the excitement regarding it had been daily increasing. The Catholics were incensed beyond measure and a majority of the Protestants were among in their denunciations of the royal. Ecclesiastical and judicial visitations were held—but they resulted in the punishment or injury of none.

Among the many who were supposed to be concerned in the Governor's destruction not a shadow of suspicion ever rested upon John Melville or Frederick Gray, or upon the crew of the Turkish ship that lay at anchor in Boston harbor. In fact their leader had taken such wise precautions throughout all his proceedings, that detection would have been quite impossible.

The monk whom it will be recollected was left in the ice-house, was released during the confusion by order of Melville. But some of the men, accidentally discovering him before he could make his escape, took him to the pump where they completely drenched him—then because they led him to the fire where he might have an opportunity of drying and warming himself. He, however, quietly disappeared and has never been seen since in the community; not is it known to what portion of the globe he fled to.

The first Fort—Fisher—O'Toole—and the quondam friend, Mistris, in the Montreal, were found dead, lying at the foot of the garden on the night of the confusion. In the morning, when they awoke in consciousness, they were astonished at finding their quarters empty. A man came first and ordered to make a copy.

'Oh! ye ignorant, open your eyelids, and behold the devil's own work while ye were asleep. A pretty watchman ye are to stand so sound that ye could not see at the walls tumbling about your head. Wake up, I say, and he gave the Scotchman a slight kick with his foot which would kill him.'

'That confession,' exclaimed McDougal, rubbing his eyes, 'is any well my dear! Why didn't ye keep a good lookout? I left to have room to do the watching, and didn't I have ye here too? You speak the truth, mon.'

Fisher was soon after this disowned from the church, but he is still as firm

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

One month had passed since the night of the destruction of the Convent, and the excitement regarding it had been daily increasing. The Catholics were incensed beyond measure, and a majority of the Protestants were strong in their denunciations of the rioters. Ecclesiastical and judicial investigations were held—but they resulted in the punishment or injury of none.

Among the many who were supposed to be concerned in the Convent's destruction, not a shadow of suspicion ever rested upon John Melville or Frederick Gray, or upon the crew of the Turkish ship then lying at anchor in Boston harbor. In fact, their leader had taken such wise precautions throughout all his proceedings, that detection would have been quite impossible.

The monk, whom it will be recollected was left in the ice-house, was released during the conflagration by order of Melville. But some of the mob, accidentally discovering him before he could make his escape, took him to the pump where they completely drenched him;—from thence, they led him to the fire where he might have an opportunity of drying and warming himself. He, however, quickly disappeared, and has never been seen since, in this community; nor is it known to what portion of the globe he fled to.

The Irish Porter—Phelim O'Toole—and his quondam friend, Misthur Archy McDougal, were found beastly intoxicated at the foot of the garden, on the night of the conflagration. In the morning, when they awoke to consciousness, they were astonished at finding their 'occupation gone.'—Phelim awoke first, and endeavored to wake Archy.

'Och! ye bogtrotter! open your daylight, and behold the divil's own work, while ye were asleep. A pretty watchman ye are to sleep so sound that ye could not hear the walls tumbling about your head. Wake up, I say,' and he gave the Scotchman a slight kick with his foot which aroused him.

'Mar counscience!' exclaimed McDougal, rubbing his eyes.

'Ye may well say that! Why did'nt ye kape a good lookout.'

'I left ye here, mon, to do the watching.'

'And did'nt I lave ye here, too?'

'You spakes the truth, mon.'

Phelim was soon after this discarded from the church, but he is still as firm

a believer in the saints and miracles, and in the infallibility of the Pope as ever; and his friend Archy still remains an inflexible Scotch dissenter. On one point, however, they have always agreed, and that is, in the efficacy of a 'little drap of the craythur now and thin.'

The cockney, who figures occasionally in our romance, practised his peculiar 'profession,' for a year or two after the burning of the nunnery, with considerable success. But his 'Billingsgate education' didn't save him—he was arrested and tried on three indictments—arson, burglary and perjury—and was sentenced to the Charlestown State Prison for twenty years, where he is fed and clothed at the public expense, at the same time receiving constant instruction in the useful art of stone-cutting.

A new order of Nuns, called the 'Sisters of Charity,' has been established, we learn, since the breaking up of the Ursulines. We know of no objection to these 'Sisters,' for, instead of immuring themselves within walls of brick and mortar, they go about doing poor people some service.

It has been proposed, by some of the more zealous Catholics of New-England, to found another monastery for the Ursuline order of Nuns, in this vicinity. But we trust that a project, so repugnant to the feelings of the great mass—the descendants of the Pilgrim fathers, who fled from the intolerance of Papal usurpation—will be forever abandoned. Go on and multiply your churches—but have no secret auxiliaries—and both Protestants and Catholics may yet worship the same God in the same community without jealous rivalry—without wrangling—without rioting!

The claims of the Catholics against our state for reparation of the losses they incurred by the destruction of the Charlestown Nunnery, seems to us, in all sober earnestness, to be founded in justice. And yet, these claims are refused by a few men, who, either do not understand the principles on which they are grounded, or bigotry and selfishness must be the predominant qualities of their minds.

A few words more and our story is complete.

In a neighboring state, one fine September's morning, a marriage ceremony was performed—Frederick Gray and Cecile Melville, were united in the holy bands of matrimony! The only witnesses to the joyous event were John Melville and his Grecian bride, and Mrs. Melville. On the evening of the following day, a splendid fête was given on board of the Turkish ship, lying in the harbor, and a gay concourse of the friends of the bride and bridegroom assembled to partake in the festivities, and to offer their congratulations. A magnificent and luxurious banquet was spread in the large cabin of the ship, which was richly and gaily decorated for the occasion. Great was the surprise of the guests, on being summoned to the feast, to behold every thing prepared after the mode of the Orientals; even cushions were placed around instead of chairs; the servants were uniformly apparelled in a neat Turkish costume, consisting of tunic, full trousers, and tasseled féz; and all seemed so oddly magnificent and sumptuous, that they were decidedly at a loss how to begin. However, Melville and his beautiful Zillah, set the example, and seated themselves upon the cushions, which the guests tolerably well imitated. It was, indeed, an amusing scene, and its oddity added no little hilarity and zest to the entertainment. After their feast, they were summoned to the deck of the ship, where a band of Turkish musicians were stationed playing Oriental airs. The dancing now commenced, and joy and merriment reigned supreme. It was at a late hour

when the guests bade adieu to their friends, and expressed their delight at the agreeable surprises, and general enjoyment, which the novel entertainment had afforded them. We venture here gravely to assert that this was the only instance of an Oriental fête ever known to have been given in New England.

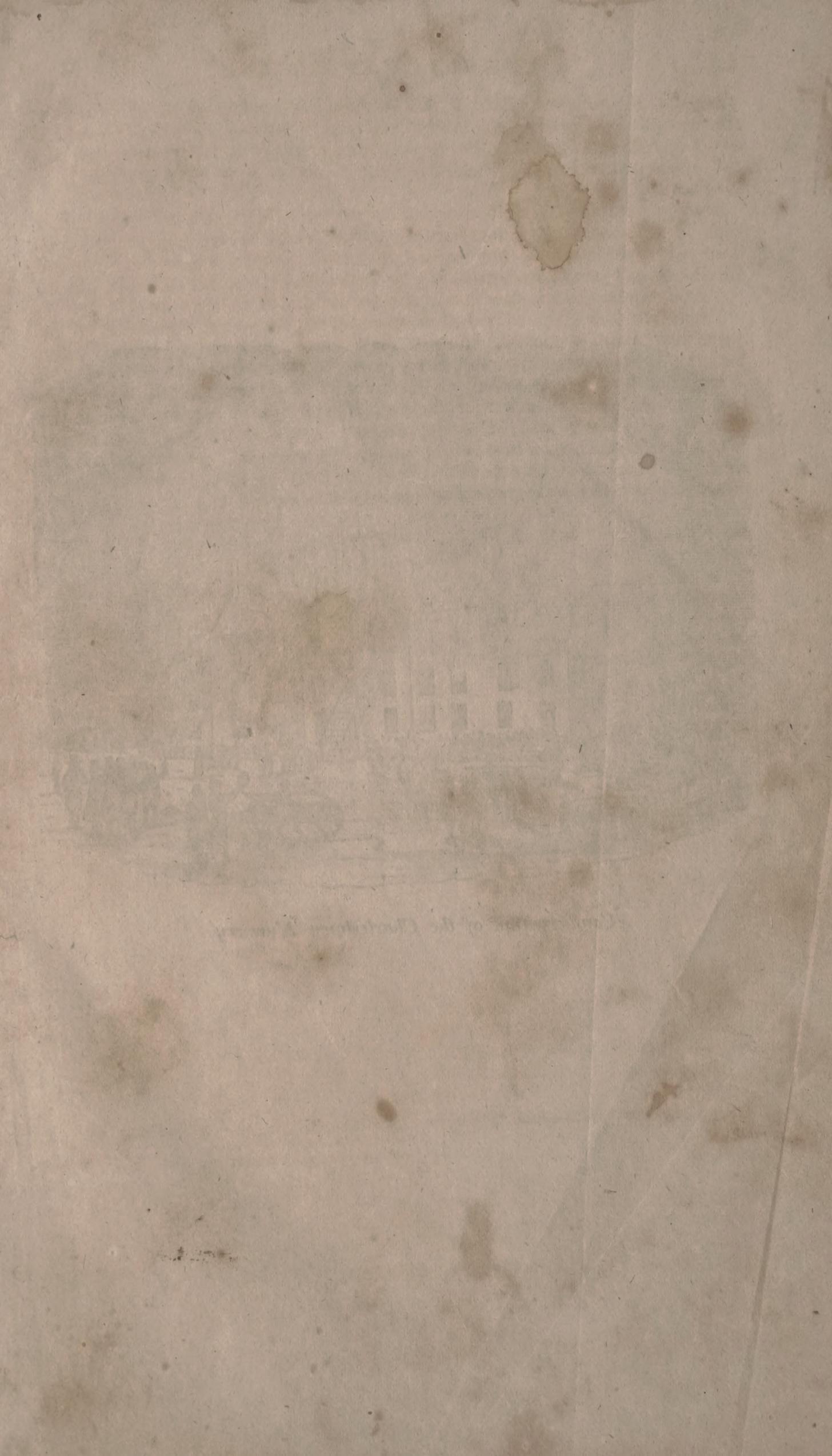
On the next day the ship weighed anchor and put to sea, with the happy group who assembled so surprisingly at the cottage on the night of the conflagration. In due time they arrived at Constantinople, where Melville and Zillah were received with great joy by Pasha Mehemet Effendi, and, indeed public demonstrations were made congratulatory of their return.

Frederick Gray, his wife and mother, after two years' residence in the great city of the Osmanlis, returned, via France and England, to the United States. Melville commissioned Gray to seek out the American captain, who rescued Zillah from the wreck of the Spanish ship, and present to him, in his name, a diamond broach, and a magnificent *chibouk*, for the interest he manifested in her behalf. Gray's family are now residing with his mother at the beautiful cottage, and are greatly esteemed and beloved by a large circle of valuable acquaintances. They are now in anticipation of a visit from their eastern relatives during the next summer.

THE END.

ERRATA.

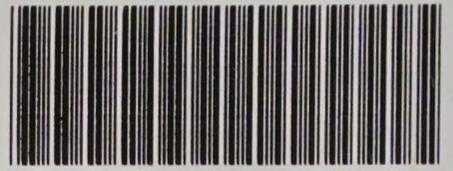
- Page 39—25th line from the bottom—read *Hinginemen* instead of *Hingemen*.
 Page 48—9th “ “ read *visions* instead of *vision*.
 Page 49—6th “ “ read *was raised*, instead of *was read*.





Conflagration of the Charlestown Nunnery.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 002 196 581 9

