

THE SISTER  
OF CHARITY

MRS. ANNA HANSON DORSEY



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"EARTHLY TIES! DEAR CHILD, HOW VAIN ARE THEY! HOW LITTLE,  
HOW LESS THAN NOTHING WHEN COMPARED WITH THINGS THAT ARE  
ETERNAL!"

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THE  
SISTER OF CHARITY

BY

MRS. ANNA H. DORSEY

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P. J. KENEDY & SONS

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By P. J. KENEDY.



## PREFACE.

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THE following simple tale will require but a short and simple preface. It is written with a view to aid in the good work of supplying the younger portion of the Catholic community with a source of mental recreation, which, while it interests the mind, will also lead it to the conclusion that religion and morality, above all else, constitute the only true and lasting happiness. While we deplore the present vitiated taste for that kind of light literature which, stamped by the approval of fashion, finds its way daily into the boudoirs and parlors of "young America," we can see but one method by which, in the opinion of older and wiser heads than our own, its evil and immoral influences can be effectually checked—which is by confronting it with a strong, healthy current of pleasant reading, designed to instruct and win the heart, while it amuses the fancy. The authoress has touched lightly on a few doctrinal points, and for many of the arguments used therein is indebted to the "Book of the Council

of Trent," "Hornihold on the Sacraments," and a little work, clear, powerful and earnest in its explanations of the truth, called "Fifty Reasons." Some extracts have also been made from one or two anonymous articles published many years ago in the "Catholic Magazine." Placing the little volume under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, she humbly trusts that it may be productive of at least some of the good results which she earnestly hopes for.

THE  
SISTER OF CHARITY.

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CHAPTER I.

“The queenly ship!—brave hearts had striven  
And true ones died with her—  
We saw her mighty cable riven  
Like floating gossamer.  
We saw her proud flag struck that morn—  
A star once o’er the seas;  
Her anchor gone, her deck uptorn,  
And sadder things than these.”

FATHER! father!” exclaimed Blanche Leslie, throwing aside an interesting book, which had, ere the daylight faded, engrossed her attention, and laying her hand somewhat heavily on her father’s shoulder, as he reclined in his luxuriantly cushioned armchair, enjoying his usual afternoon nap—“father!”

“Oh, ay—why—child!—my dear!” exclaimed Mr. Leslie, rubbing his eyes, “what can be the matter?”

“Listen, sir,” almost whispered his daughter,

whose cheeks gradually assumed the hue of a lily's leaf, as she stood a moment longer by his side, with one fair hand grasping his shoulder, while with an involuntary motion the other was quickly pressed on her heart.

"Ay, child," said Mr. Leslie, now thoroughly aroused, and speaking in a grave tone, "this will be a wild night along the coast, I fear. I never heard the surf beat so madly on the beach as now. God have mercy on the hardy mariners who are out on the sea to-night!"

"Father, dear, come with me to the piazza; you are weather-wise, come forth and tell me whether this storm will last or lull," exclaimed the agitated girl.

"Blanche, my love," said Mr. Leslie, pausing and looking with astonishment at the unusual excitement of manner she exhibited, "one would suppose you had either a lover or brother out in the storm to-night. But come, we will go."

"Neither, my father," she replied quickly, "but you forget that ere this our cousin St. Johns is homeward bound; he may even now be on board some gallant ship which before morning may lie a scattered wreck along this very shore."

"Then our good God forbid!" exclaimed Mr. Leslie, ardently. "But, my child, be calm; I have never seen you thus moved before."

"I know, I know, that these tumultuous feel-

ings are not natural to me, dearest father; I fear nothing for myself, but, oh! some strange, sad presentiment assures me that human life is struggling in wild agonies with those waves whose loud thunder we hear; that prayers which can only be heard in heaven mingle with the blast; that ere long the brave, the lion-hearted, the fair and good, will go down to their death beneath the waters of yon furious ocean, within hearing, almost, of our sheltered home."

"Be calm, my sweet child," again said Mr. Leslie, drawing her tenderly to his bosom and smoothing back from her forehead the clustering curls which hung in bright masses about it; "our good God, who never slumbers, and whose power never lessens, will protect the weather-beaten wanderers of the sea to-night. Where is Cora?"

"She stepped out a moment ago to arrange the night-telescope on the piazza. She is infected with the same fears which haunt me; but come, father, let us go to her, and gaze on the terrible scene without," said Blanche, as she raised a rich crimson drapery; then, opening the window which it had concealed, they stepped forth to view the storm.

Mr. Leslie's house, situated on a high elevation on the southeastern coast of North Carolina, was, like the mansions of other wealthy planters, spacious and handsome. Each story

of the side towards the ocean was furnished with a highly ornamented piazza, into which the handsome double windows of the drawing-rooms and chambers opened, like large glass doors, so that one had just to step from the soft carpeted floors of one out on the refreshing marble pavement of the other. Twisted pillars, with richly carved base and capitals, supported the light and elegant pediments of each piazza, while the roof, protected by a low, broad terrace, served Mr. Leslie as a most excellent observatory, where he frequently spent whole nights in the pursuit of his favorite science, and in noting down his astronomical observations as they were made. Oleander and orange trees, with the broad-leafed hydrangus in every variety, the graceful palm and winding cactus, with many other plants which luxuriate in the sea air, were arranged with tasteful elegance along the massive balustrades, between the pillars of the piazzas, and in some places afforded a verdant screen from the evening sun, whose bright light, divided but not diminished by the intervening leaves, fell in characters of almost intelligible beauty along the marble floor. It was a brave sight, those vast billows beyond, bounded in by the very walls of the upper world; sometimes resigned, like slaves, to their captivity, and basking in the changing hues of sunlight, cloud and heaven; anon, weary of such repose, calling forth

the winds from their deep caverns, with ominous and terrific sounds, while, with hoary heads lifted high in wrath, they seemed to defy that power which said, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." Oftentimes during these hours of storm and tempest, when the fair sisters of Elverton Hall had been gazing out in silent awe on the dun, wild ocean, some poor half-foundered bark, with bared poles and strained cordage, has been driven in sight; sometimes poised high on the summit of a mountain billow, and standing for an instant in sharp relief against the gray sky, then plunging into the foaming abyss below; anon rising and falling like a wild phantom with the billows, appearing and disappearing, until with every plunge they have thought her perilous voyage was finished forever. But heretofore, as no fatal accident had ever occurred on that part of the coast, the sublimity of such scenes charmed and awed always, without terrifying them. Sunset and moonlight, a cloudless sky or shadows, white-sailed vessels moving like birds over calm waters, darkness or light, made a never-ending panorama, on which they gazed and never felt satiated—for there was to them a mystic poetry in the sea; its low, mournful murmurs, its tranquil beauty or angry gloom, its hidden treasures, its unseen graves, its legendary tales, its caverns of coral and pearl, whose floors are scattered with golden sands, its

*power*—threw a splendid charm around their minds, which pleased while it thrilled their inmost hearts with vague terror.

As Mr. Leslie and Blanche stepped out on the piazza a scene at once sublime and awful presented itself. Not a star was to be seen; the sky was covered with a heavy storm-cloud, through which, at intervals, like angry flashes from the all-seeing eye, vivid lightnings streamed, and the ocean, goaded to fury by the tempestuous winds, was covered with huge, black looking billows, crested with wreaths of foam, which, glittering with phosphoric light, added new and wilder sublimity to the scene. Just beyond the shore, about half a mile out, lay a hidden reef, extensive and dangerous. Over this the waters dashed, and foamed, and sparkled, like a whirlpool of fire, while the surf, which came roaring in to waste its fury on the shores, looked as if the lightning rode on its snowy foam.

“The wind sets in,” said Mr. Leslie, “but I see no vessel or craft of any kind. God grant that all may be safely moored under the friendly shores of the bay! Blanche, dear, order the lights to be extinguished in every room in the house except our sitting-room; have the shutters in that closed, the curtains closely drawn, and the lamp shaded. Some stranger along the coast might be lured amidst the breakers by a single ray from those windows.”



Blanche soon returned and stood, pale and silent, leaning on her sister's shoulder, while her father again swept the horizon with his glass. "I see nothing," he at last said, "absolutely nothing; the most careful survey detects nothing but clouds and waves, and, on my honor, right glad am I of it, for with such a wind as this, with a lee shore on their bows, and breakers ahead, no ship could expect to outride the storm, unless it might be the doomed craft of Vanderdecken and his phantom crew. Come, my dears, let us in. Your presentiments are false, you see," said Mr. Leslie, cheerfully.

"God grant it!" exclaimed both sisters, ardently, as, passing their arms about each other's waist, they followed their father into the elegant and comfortable sitting room which they had left a few moments before. Blanche, with a calm exterior, but still troubled heart, resumed her book, while Corinne, at her father's request (he was extravagantly fond of music), uncovered her harp, and commenced playing one of his favorite airs. Mingling with the deep-toned diapason of the storm, the music of Corinne's harp, and the still clearer melody of her harmonious voice, was scarcely heard at times, but again it came stealing on the ear in sweet contrast to the elemental tumult without, and reminded the contemplative Blanche of those soft whispers from the angels' land, which our heavenly

Father sometimes sends to cheer us amidst the dark ways of life. Those two, Blanche and Corinne, were twins, and in describing the personal appearance of one we describe both. They were tall and delicately formed, with high, broad foreheads, from which their glossy auburn hair, evenly parted, fell in natural curls over their softly-tinted cheeks. Their eyes were large and brown, with oftentimes that indolently beautiful expression, as they looked forth from the shade of their long, dark eyelashes, which is so peculiar to southern beauty, and which some, unpoetically enough, have called sleepy, but which might more justly be styled dreamy; straight, well formed noses, and lips like the heart blush of a rose, with round, dimpled chins, filled up the faultless contour of their faces. But if they were so entirely alike in their physical beauty—if they resembled each other so critically as regards external advantages—there were certain expressions at times predominant in their countenances which enabled one to distinguish them without difficulty. Blanche saw the world and felt all the dear emotions of life through the most delicately organized sensibility; there seemed to be an acute current of feeling between her nature and the mysteries of the invisible world, which filled her soul with wild visions of beautiful poetry, while it imparted a hue of unspeakable and sublime glory to the visible things

of life. Above all, a solemn and never-forgetful reverence towards the almighty Creator and Cause of all good; the obligations which she, as a creature, owed him; the responsibilities she felt as an immortal being seemed never absent, with their holy influences about her. These elevated feelings gave a tone of native dignity and nobleness to her aspect, and lent an expression of such intellectual superiority to her countenance as demanded involuntary reverence from all. And yet, withal, she was so kind and gentle, so equable in temper and manner, that the absence of that busy gayety which characterized her sister was scarcely to be regretted. Corinne was the sunbeam which shed gladness through the house; it was a rare thing to see a cloud on the fair young creature's brow, or the lustre of her eyes dimmed with an oppressive thought. Creation looked as fair to her as it did to the angels of God when the "morning stars sang together," and all was pronounced by the Master hand perfect. In the gladness and purity of her heart all things basked in the glory of a primordial smile, and her soul reflected back to heaven the light and joy it had given. Sadness comported not with her ideas of gratitude to a beneficent God. Cheerful gratitude, like the glad, sweet incense from a flower, was her daily though unconscious offering. She was grateful for all that made life a blessing to her; the sight

of the ocean gleaming in the red sunset, the song of a mocking bird, the scent of a rare flower or the gilding on a cloud, imparted to her feelings a childlike glee, and the exclamation of "Oh, how beautiful!" or "how glad!" or "how sweet!" or "how happy!" were words more frequently on her lips than any others; then her music, and her low, sweet laugh, kept the house in a perpetual ebb and flow of cheerfulness. And yet of the two Corinne's character was more decided than that of Blanche; her mind, less enthusiastic, was more steadily poised on any point which required nice discrimination, and if her sister's intellectual gifts were more brilliant than her own, because more spiritual, her positive attainments in the branches of polite learning were of a less superficial character, while her wit and somewhat hasty temperament made a nice balance between the two. As for their religion, it was of no particular form of Protestantism. They had as much love for God and good-will to men as was consistent with a certain prejudice, not the less strong that it was vague, against Catholics and their faith. Their father had always been a man of contemplative mind; his penetrating eye had sought among the creeds, with which he was familiar, in vain for that unity of Faith, which, as children of the same eternal Father, all should have acknowledged. A philosopher, standing alone and scanning with keen

eyes, sentient mind and unimpassioned feelings the Christian world around him, he could not comprehend why, like men blindfolded, all seemed groping hither and thither to find the "steep and narrow road" to heaven. He was sure there was some defect, either in the faith or morals of those plausible mystagogues, who, with all the charms of human eloquence and all the erudite arguments of profound learning, could not persuade their flocks that the fold they were in was the safest shelter, or teach them that unity and peace were spiritual safeguards, which would protect them from the buffetings of the storm and tempest. So he held religious communion with none, thinking his own code, which was charity towards men, belief in the Holy Trinity and faith in God through Jesus Christ, was quite as good as those creeds which seemed to sow discord, instead of peace, among the sons of men. The minds of his daughters were imbued with the peculiar tinge of his own; they saw as he did, and could not but acknowledge the justness of his conclusions. And yet, withal, they comprehended not, they understood not, that as belief in the Holy Trinity is necessary to salvation, so was there a trinity in Christian ethics, composed of *Faith, Unity and Charity*, without which all religion is but a shadow, a mockery, a hollow deceit, which has a name but no substance, and lofty pretensions, which, like air-

built castles, have no foundations but human and ideal inventions. Such was the religion of the Leslies—if religion it can be called; perhaps as near the truth as it could be expected to be, being still in the darkness of error.

While Cora has been singing “Auld Robin Gray” for her father, we have given a hasty sketch of the character of the inmates of Elverton Hall. The song is done and Cora is turning away from her harp, when Blanche, acting from the impulse of her saddened feelings, requested her to play a grand and solemn requiem of Mozart’s, which was a peculiar favorite of her own. “If you, dear father, do not think it too sad,” she said, appealing to Mr. Leslie.

“No, dears,” said Mr. Leslie, looking with deep affection at his two lovely daughters; “I have no choice, now that ‘Auld Robin’ is disposed of, and that requiem, though as gloomy as a knight templar’s funeral rites, will accord well with the sounds without. Open your piano and accompany Corinne.”

Soon, rising and swelling above the sounds of the raging storm, was heard the solemn melody; they forgot the tempest-tossed sea, and thought not of shipwreck, or death, as the sublime music of the ancient master, pealing loudly or rippling low, like some sweet fountain, through the lofty and darkened room, reminded those, beneath whose skilful fingers it gushed

forth, of all that was grand, holy, or ennobling; they understood the sentiment, the soul, the idea of the music too well, not to respond effectively to it, as it touched one after one the nicely balanced emotions of their pure young hearts.

"Ah," whispered Mr. Leslie, "how grand!"

But suddenly the lofty melody was hushed by a sound of terrific meaning to each heart present, and ere anyone could speak, and while the sisters sat gazing on their father's pale face, while their hands still rested above the chords which they had so suddenly ceased to touch, the same sound came thundering up from the sea.

"*It is a minute gun,*" said Mr. Leslie, in a grave and sorrowful tone; "your forebodings, my children, were true. I will proceed at once with the overseer and twenty of the strongest men to the beach, where, I trust, we may be of some service."

Mr. Leslie threw his cloak about his shoulders and went forth to accomplish his benevolent purpose, while Blanche and Corinne again stepped forth on the balcony. The storm had abated none of its fury, but the lightning of the clouds above, and the white, phosphorescent glare of the thundering waves below, appeared as if engaged in wild and reckless conflict, and the devoted ship, which was fast driving in on the breakers, with her cargo of human life on board, to perish, added to the terrific interest of

the scene, while the flashes which streamed from her ports when the minute guns were fired revealed the forms not only of the hardy seamen who tried in vain to manage her, but groups of women and children clinging to each other in despair.

“Save them! save them, oh, God! Thou who didst open the waves of the sea that Thy people might pass through; Thou who didst rebuke the stormy waves, and they were stilled; Thou who dost ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm—save, save them, oh, God! that they perish not here before our eyes,” cried Blanche, falling on her knees and lifting her hands high towards heaven. Another minute gun boomed on the air, and the sisters saw a boat, which had just been lowered, crowded with human beings, then all was dark again; but another death-light flashing from her ports showed her among the breakers. It was the last, and all except the howling winds and waves was hushed—forever. The planks on her sides and bottom were soon torn and crushed in by the sharp rocks of the sunken reef, and the gallant hearts that throbbed with life and hope a few short hours before throbbed no more.

Blanche had gazed with outstretched arms towards the ill-fated ship, as if the mere act, responsive of the mighty wish and will within her, could aid them; but when she saw, by the mo-



mentary lightning's glare, the dark hull tossed amidst the luminous breakers and whirled for an instant on the maddened waters, like a feather on the blast, then in a moment disappear, she sprang to her feet, and with a cry of agony fell fainting in her sister's arms.

"Blanche—sister—dear, dear Blanche," exclaimed Corinne, leading her with difficulty in, "lie here; rest your weary head on these soft pillows—there—speak to me now; open your eyes, my sister."

Corinne's affectionate words, if heard, were unheeded. The spirit of Blanche had received a shock from which it was difficult to recover. The events of the past hour monopolized every emotion of feeling and memory to such a degree that there was no room left for new impressions.

"Sister!" again said Corinne, in a tone of alarm.

"Oh, God!" cried Blanche, suddenly raising her eyes heavenward, "their doom was quick and awful! Have mercy, have mercy on their trembling souls! In the clemency of Thy sublime love, remember not their offences against them, but grant that in the hour of judgment each repentant tear and each contrite prayer offered in the hour of their last agony may be registered with their names in Thy book of life!"

Such was the prayer which her noble and sensitive heart prompted Blanche Leslie to utter;

she was scarcely conscious of the import of her words, but it was all that seemed left for her to do; it was the last act of charity she was capable of showing towards those unfortunate beings, and her soul felt for the moment consoled. Cora listened, but the idea of praying for the souls of the dead was at once so new and strange that, although it appealed to all the more tender and womanly emotions of her heart, she could but think that her sister's calmer judgment was perverted by some monstrous and unreasonable thought.

"Let us hope that they have passed away thus suddenly from the storm and tempest of life to the enjoyment of everlasting peace, my sister," said Cora, in a grave, calm tone; "this is all that is left us in their behalf."

"Yes," said Blanche, after a long pause; "true, this is all—and yet, my sister, why should it not be so? Surely our Lord God, so merciful, so beneficent, so tender in his love towards his creatures, may have provided some intermediate and safe shelter for those who, though having loved and served him on earth, were not undefiled enough to enter into that Presence in whose eyes the angels themselves are not without blemish. Oh, it must be so! it must be so!"

"Those who were benighted by the mysticisms of the dark ages held some such doctrine, I believe," said Cora, quietly.

“If so, it was enough to have dispelled their darkness,” said Blanche, fervently; “it is so consoling, so holy.”

“And yet our father, who has taught us all that is essential to our eternal welfare, has never named such a doctrine.”

“True,” said Blanche, as with a troubled expression of countenance she leaned back again and closed her eyes. A sweet, profound slumber soon relieved her wearied body and overtaxed mind from further perplexity.

## CHAPTER II.

“In her fond arms a babe she press’d  
With such a wreathing grasp,  
Billows had dash’d o’er that still breast,  
Yet not undone the clasp.  
The child’s fair tresses brightly hung  
Like shreds of gold around its form,  
Where still their wet, long streamers clung,  
All tangled by the storm.”

A FRAID of disturbing Blanche by moving about or turning over the leaves of a book, Corinne drew a large cushion from a lounge, and, laying it at her feet, threw herself wearily on it, and, half resting on her sister’s knee, determined to keep watch until her father’s return. An hour glided by, and another, and another, which seemed longer than the last, but he came not; and, anticipating something dreadful, she arose softly, without disturbing Blanche, and, wrapping a large cashmere around her, hurried down to the housekeeper’s room to send a messenger to the beach to learn the cause of this delay. As she entered the lobby that led into Mrs. Murray’s room and was cautiously feeling her way through the darkness to the door, her fair hands came in contact with a rough, wet

body, that seemed, like herself, to be groping its way to the same destination. An involuntary scream burst from her lips, while a loud, snorting sound and a terrible crash caused good, quiet Mrs. Murray to start from her chair within, and in some haste open the door to learn the meaning of this nocturnal uproar. A ruddy glare from the fire on her cheerful hearth and well trimmed lamp streamed through the open door on the group without, and revealed one of the negro men lying almost senseless with fright among a heap of pails, pewter basins and dust pans which he had overturned in his fall, while his hands were outstretched and his eyes almost starting from their sockets with a ludicrous expression of terror.

“Why, Mingo!” exclaimed Cora.

“Why, missis! Lor’ a’mighty, missis! beg your pardon for skeering you so, but your hands had sich a cold feel like on my face I thought it—it”——

“Was a ghost,” interrupted Corinne, amused at the logical turn he had given the adventure. “But get up and tell me how my father is, and what detains him so long.”

“Why, you see, missis, he been and had fires made all ’long de beach, and sot all our folks to watching for people dat were wracked in dat ere ship; and, you see, I got tired standing by de fire, and walked down, close to de water; I hadn’t

been dere mor nor a minit when a great sea come bilin' in and knocked me flat o' my back on de sands, and when I scrambled up, missis, I felt something heavy on my feet, and when I looked it was a dead man, what de surf had washed up."

"A dead man!" said Cora, with awe.

"Yes, marm; and I springed up in sich a hurry dat I tumbled smack into de fire behind, and if it hadn't bin dat de surf wet my clothes sich a fashion I should ha' bin burnt clean up, anyhow; I hollered out so loud dat all our folks come running, and got to me just in time to keep de surf from washing de dead man out again."

"But your master, Mingo; did he send no message?"

"Lor', missis! beg your pardon, marm; b'lieve I done gone clean crazy to-night," said Mingo, fumbling in his pocket, and handing Cora a piece of paper. "Mass' told me to give you dis."

Cora opened the paper and read the following note from her father:

"MY DEAR CHILD:

"Do not be uneasy; I am well and safe. Soon after we got on the beach one or two bodies were washed ashore, but the immortal spark had fled forever; thinking, however, that the life of some one of that ill-fated crew might possibly be spared, I ordered fires to be kindled within a

short distance of each other, extending at least a mile along the beach, and stationed men at each to watch for the bodies as they might be thrown on shore, that immediate aid might be given them if life should not be extinct. As yet our labors have been fruitless, but I trust in the mercy of God to rescue at least one of my fellow-creatures from so awful a death. Persuade Blanche to go to rest; but you, my love, whose nerves are stronger than hers, go to Mrs. Murray and request her to have beds, fires, coffee and hot stimulants ready, in case even one of these shipwrecked strangers should be saved. God bless you both, darlings.

“PHILIP LESLIE.”

“Dear, noble-hearted father!” exclaimed Cora. “Oh, that I could share your Samaritan labors! But come, Mrs. Murray, we must be stirring ourselves. Here, Mingo,” she continued, snatching down from a shelf one of Mrs. Murray’s long-necked cordial bottles and, in her impatience, cracking the head off, while that lady was so petrified that she could not remonstrate, and pouring some of the rich, oily beverage into a goblet, handed it to the man. “Drink this, Mingo; it will keep you from seeing ghosts.”

“The nigger!” muttered Mrs. Murray, in deep indignation; “it will make him see double, more

like. My best rose cordial, which ought only to be drank a thimbleful at a time! He'll be drunk, certain, the ugly cretur!"

Mingo smacked his lips and rolled his eyes in an ecstasy as the delicious draught trickled in a rich stream down his throat, and, as he set the glass down, gave vent to his satisfaction as he wiped his sleeve across his capacious mouth by an expressive "Yah!" which so infuriated Mrs. Murray that she seized the tongs, and, in the impotency of her rage, commenced an insane battle with the fire, the noise and flashing sparks of which so alarmed her cat, which had been sleeping quietly on the bright tiled hearth, that she sprang on her mistress' shoulders, uttering the most shocking sounds which it is possible for a cat to utter.

Corinne, almost smothered with laughter, was obliged to remain calm during the storm she had raised, for she saw that the good old lady's dignity was highly offended; so, approaching and smoothing the cat gently on its back, she said: "Down, Trojan! down, sir! don't you see you have frightened your mistress by your ill behavior? My good Mrs. Murray, let Mingo throw you on a fresh log or two; then be kind enough to send father a cold chicken, and some of your own nice bread in this little basket, and a bottle of cordial."

"The overseer came up about an hour ago for



refreshments," said Mrs. Murray, but half mollified.

"Yes; but you know we will send this down particularly to father. Your preparations can tempt his appetite when everything else fails. Shall I send a bottle of the rose?"

"There's none to send, miss," said the house-keeper, rising; "that nigger there has just drank that, that was only fit for his master or a prince."

"Do not blame him, my good Mrs. Murray. I thought I was getting a bottle of spiced brandy for the poor, wet fellow. Cannot you find something else as good?"

"Well, Miss Cora, my peach, you know, has been mightily praised by the quality, and Mr. Leslie likes it," she replied, now quite restored to good humor with Corinne, but still casting dark and threatening glances at Mingo, who stood with the most provoking smile on his broad African lips, as much as to say that he had been treated as a gentleman should be who had passed through such adventures as he had.

"Here, Mingo," said Cora, giving him the basket, which was nicely packed, "tell your master to be sure and take some refreshment—but wait a moment!" she cried, snatching the lamp from the table and running hastily out. She returned in a moment or two with a pillow, one or two shawls, and a large cloak lined with fur, which she consigned to the man's care, saying "they

might be needed," then hurried him off, with many charges to make haste.

"Now, my good Mrs. Murray," said she, "call my maid for me. I will take her up stairs with me to prepare the beds and kindle good fires; and do you, if you please, have everything just as my father requested—hot coffee, spiced drinks and—rose cordial," she said to herself, laughingly, as she tripped up stairs.

Very soon the active and master spirit of Corinne and the nimble hands of Amy had completed every arrangement necessary for the comfort of the strange and homeless guests who were expected. A beautiful home-look pervaded the guest-chambers, and that indescribable air of elegance which can only be imparted by refined taste and woman's hand.

"Now, Amy, we have finished," said Corinne, cheerfully; "do you remain here, while I run to my sister. But, bless us all! I have forgotten the sal-volatile and the flannel. Ah, here are the flannel garments. Just hang them by the fire, Amy, while I look for a flesh brush and my vinaigrette."

The door opened, and Blanche entered with so pale a countenance that Corinne, in alarm, threw down the articles for which she had been seeking, and, running forward, lent her the support of her embracing arm.

"Blanche, dear, are you ill?" cried Cora.

“No, darling, not ill, but soul-weary. Has our father yet come?”

“No; I received a note from him an hour ago. Here, dear, read it,” said Cora, drawing the note from her bosom; “it has kept me so busy that I have not had a moment to spare to come to you. Sit here, Blanche; you are cold, and shiver,” continued Cora, wheeling a large, cushioned arm-chair near the fire.

“I fear I am selfish, my sister,” replied Blanche, kissing her tenderly, as she took the kindly proffered seat and opened her father’s note. “Yes, selfish—worse than selfish!” she exclaimed, after reading its contents. “There sat I, brooding over gloomy fancies and weeping hopelessly over those who have perished, while my brave-hearted father and noble sister have been toiling to rescue from the waves and death those who, through the mercy of God, may float in on the stormy wave to the shore. Dear Cora,” she said, rising with an effort, while her cheeks wore the flush of self-reproval, “let me do something; let me aid you in some way. What shall I do?”

“Thou fragile lily!” said Cora, as, with a tear in her eye, she approached, and, seating herself in the capacious chair by her sister’s side, drew her head to her breast and enclosed her tenderly in her arms, “do this; rest this head on my breast and quiet the throbbings of this frightened heart.

There is naught else for you to do now, thou pale, fragile one, except this; but listen! Go, Amy, and see if my father comes."

"I hear them, surely," said Blanche, in a low, agitated voice. "There! heard you not our father's voice, Cora?"

"True; they ascend the staircase. Stay here, dear Blanche—or perhaps you had better retire to your own room; I will meet them," said Corinne, also slightly agitated.

"I will remain," said Blanche, firmly. "I may be of some use if service is required; but go, Cora, go. Ah!" she whispered, "from the slow and measured sounds of those muffled footsteps; from the low, reverent tones in which they speak, sure am I that they bring hither some rescued soul. Oh, God! grant it in mercy, and if *he* has perished—but be nerved, my heart; they come." As these thoughts glanced rapidly through the mind of Blanche Leslie the door was gently opened, and her father and Corinne, with two men, bore in a form, enveloped in cloaks and shawls, and laid it tenderly on the bed. Another of the men followed immediately, holding a large bundle hugged closely to his broad, stalwart chest, from the folds of which escaped two or three long, bright ringlets of hair; dripping with sea water. This he laid on another bed in the room, towards which Mr. Leslie called Blanche, and, pressing a hasty kiss on her fore-

head, whispered: "It is a child, my love; a young, beautiful child. She breathes, thank God! but must be well rubbed. Do everything that you can do. I have sent for a physician; meanwhile Cora and Amy will attend to the lady. Ah, here is Mrs. Murray; she will assist you. I must leave you now and return to the beach with my men, who shall have shortly a brave holiday for their night's work. We may be so fortunate as to rescue more."

Blanche opened the folds of the heavy garments that enveloped her charge, and beheld a beautiful, fair child, some four summers old, whose rich garments, dripping with the baptism of death, clung in graceful folds to the rounded proportions of her form. Her little, dimpled hands clutched convulsively a portion of her dress, as if nature, and its love of life, had instinctively prompted her to cling to something for preservation. A pink kid slipper adorned one little foot; the other was bare, and in its white and perfect symmetry looked like a fragment from some rare antique marble. Tears gushed from the eyes of Blanche, and again her vivid fancy reverted to the last scenes on board that ill-fated bark. This dear being, she imagined, the angel of some fond household, lay at the perilous moment all unconscious on the breast of a tender mother who, with pallid cheeks and cold, trembling fingers, tried to avert the

horrible reality of danger by performing for the dear one all those little offices of affection and care which its helplessness claimed. One foot had been bared, the dress unloosened. An exclamation from Corinne interrupted this painful train of thought, and, leaving the child in Mrs. Murray's care, she hastened to her. There she saw, for the first time, the person to whom they had been attending. It was a lady, who had probably numbered twenty-five summers, whose pale and finely-chiselled features indicated a high degree of intellectual superiority, as well as physical beauty. A curious and close-fitting black cap surrounded her face, and half shaded the spiritual and noble formation of her fine forehead. Long black eyelashes fell like two brooding shadows on her white cheeks, while the evenly-arched brows above looked as if some fastidious artist had pencilled them as a proper model for the strictest line of beauty. She was clothed in a long, full dress of coarse black serge, fitting high and close around the throat, but it had been loosened and thrown open, that her attendants might with greater facility bathe and rub her chest, and revealed a neck and shoulders of exquisite fairness and delicacy of mould. One white, rounded arm was bared, and the long, tapering fingers clasped a chaplet of black beads, from which depended a bronze crucifix; this was clasped to her heart with a tight grasp, which

could only have been made in the agony of death, while the other remained buried in the folds of her ample serge sleeve, and hung listlessly by her side. Corinne and Amy had been making use of the most vigorous measures to effect her recovery, which nature now successfully assisted, for, after a few slight gasps and spasmodic shudders, she opened her large, soft eyes, and, as her kind nurses lifted her head, a large quantity of sea water was ejected from her mouth; after which she again sank back, exhausted, on the pillows, and, gazing for a moment wildly around her, closed her eyes quickly, and, crushing two heavy tear-drops between the lids, she raised the crucifix and pressed it to her lips, which moved in silent prayer. Those who stood around this pale and solemn-looking being, who had but a short hour ago been cradled in the arms of death, and who may have had strange revelations of the invisible world, were awed, nor cared to intrude on her sacred silence. Blanche glided back to the lovely child, which also began to show more decided symptoms of returning life. Her little hands loosened their death-grasp on her garments and her head moved uneasily from side to side, and as Mrs. Murray, with a vague idea that a more perpendicular position would render her comfortable, raised her in her arms, her chest was also relieved of the quantity of sea water which had oppressed it, and, opening her

eyes, she looked with a wild, frightened glance around, while the word "Mamma," pronounced in a frantic accent, thrilled through the hearts of all present. By this time the family physician had arrived, who pronounced both patients to be in rather a critical state from previous excitement and subsequent exhaustion.

"But they may recover, Doctor?" inquired Corinne.

"Oh, yes; yes, my dear young lady, surely. Warm baths, frictions gently applied, soft, warm clothing, a cup of nice tea, then a composing draught, will restore them entirely. By ten o'clock to-morrow they will be as well as you or I."

"Well, alas, Doctor! well! how keenly will they feel to-morrow the loss of those from whom they have been so cruelly separated—ay, separated forever!" said Corinne, bursting into tears for the first time.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders, took snuff violently, and turned abruptly away to hide a tear. The directions of the physician were minutely attended to, and success crowned the efforts of those kind Samaritans who had thus made the cause of the suffering stranger their own. "Blessed are the merciful," says the divine oracle, "for they shall obtain mercy." Charity and loving kindness towards those we love are worthy of commendation, as the ways of the



world now go, but kindness and charity towards those who know us not, and who are strangers to us, is one of the sublime principles taught by the Prince of Peace, and by the practice of which His children shall be known.

## CHAPTER III.

THE STRANGER—THE RAINBOW—THE  
LETTER.

CORINNE touched her repeater, and it struck five. She approached a window, and, pushing aside the curtain, looked out, hoping to see some promise of a day whose brightness would dispel every vestige of the dreary storm, but there was no beam, no kindling ray streaming through a torn cloud like a torrent of light; no roseate hue, or regal banners floating in the orient, or mists bathed in liquid gold rolling up from the quiet earth. No; all was chill and sad. The dawn was lifting, like a pale, shadowy hand, the clouds which still darkly curtained the sky, and a wan, sickly light quivered with a melancholy and lambent tinge on the seething waters of the still troubled sea. She turned shivering away, and, on approaching the bed of their stranger guest, was surprised to find her awake and in a reclining position, with her pale round cheek resting on her hand, gazing down on her crucifix and chaplet. Tear after tear rolled in torrents over her cheeks, nor did she check or even wipe them off; she seemed un-

conscious that they were falling, even when, on lifting her crucifix to her lips, her hand became wet with them. She suddenly raised her eyes, and, seeing Corinne, inquired hastily, "Did all perish, lady?"

"We hope not, madam," she replied; "at all events you, with your lovely child, have been saved."

"My child! How? Do you not understand——"

But Corinne, in her eagerness to impart peace and joy to a stricken heart, ran, and, gently lifting the sleeping and beautiful child, bore her in her arms to the lady, and, turning the cherub-like face towards her, whispered, "Your child, lady."

"My child! Alas! poor orphan! poor little Irene!" she said, caressing her and softly kissing her flushed cheeks. "Lay her down, lady. Oh, Jesu! Lord! how selfish is even our love for Thee—Thou who canst alone stay and protect us—since all things else that we love and lean on in earth are nothing more substantial than a fleeting cloud, or a flower that perisheth in the evening blast. At sunrise yesterday that fair babe was the idol of fond parents, the heiress of uncounted wealth, and ere another could gladden the earth they are snatched from her forever; their hoarded wealth buried in caverns which shall only be unsealed on the morning of

the resurrection, and she, the lonely angel, thrown on the charity of a cold world." Her emotions interrupted for a moment the eloquent language of her heart. "Oh, Mother of Sorrows, be thou her friend and guide—thou to whom the lonely and grief-stricken flee for pity!" Tears again interrupted her touching words, and she buried her face in the pillow and wept convulsively.

"Be calm, dear lady," said Corinne, weeping; "our heavenly Father, who rescued her from the waves, will also rescue her from the ills of life."

"You are right; you are right! The ways of God, though mysterious, are just and merciful. I thank you for the timely lesson, lady," she replied. She again closed her eyes, and, crossing her hands, with a beautiful expression of resignation, on her breast, was silent.

On the afternoon of the next day, which amply repaid by its brightness the horrible gloom of those preceding it, the strange lady, whose life had been saved by the kind exertions of this noble and generous family, was reclining in a deep-cushioned chair in the western drawing-room of Elverton Hall, and Blanche, on a low ottoman, sat at her feet, with her sweet, spiritual face uplifted to hers, and listening with rapt attention to the words which fell from her lips; while ever and anon she brushed away a tear that overflowed her eyes. The stranger was still clad in

those dark, flowing robes, which now effectually concealed the symmetrical proportions of her figure and threw out in strong relief the whiteness of her small, perfectly-formed hands, and the exquisitely delicate beauty of her intellectual face. A whispering, and a smothered laugh at one of the windows near them, caused Blanche to turn her head in time to see Corinne thrusting in the little Irene, who, reassured by the sweet smiles that greeted her, marched past them, saying in her almost unintelligible jargon, "Ain't me pitty?" Blanche caught her in her arms and kissed her fresh, bright cheeks, and the lady, faintly smiling, laid both hands on her bright head, and pressed her lips for a moment on her pure, blue-veined forehead. Truly she was beautiful! Corinne had manufactured an exquisite little dress for her, and from an old family receptacle had taken the last pair of colored slippers worn by Blanche and herself when of the same age, and which admirably fitted Irene's symmetrical little feet. Mrs. Murray had preserved them with special care, and had they been withdrawn from the place where she had hidden them for seventeen years under different circumstances she would have thought it little less than sacrilege. Her long, silken hair fell in bright, curling masses over her shoulders, and Corinne had twined a wreath of roses over her sunny brow, which contrasted well with its

rare purity. The round, dimpled shoulders and perfect arms were freely exposed by looping up each sleeve with a half-blown rose.

“Is she not beautiful?” whispered Corinne.

“Beautiful, indeed!” replied Blanche.

“Come, Peri-bird, come,” cried Corinne, catching her in her arms; “let us run out and have a romp on those nice, soft cushions; only see, you bird, how the flowers shake their leaves down in play; and the birds live there. Come, let us peep at them.”

“The child is a relative of yours, madam?” inquired Blanche.

“She is not. During the sickness and fatigues incident to a long voyage her amiable parents showed me much friendly attention. I cannot yet talk with sufficient composure of anything connected with that ill-fated ship to be more particular now. In a day or two I will enter more into detail. I had no relatives on board.”

“Thank God,” said Blanche, fervently, “that for you, at least, no ties have been broken!”

“Earthly ties! dear child, how vain are they! how little, how less than nothing when compared with things which are eternal!” replied the lady, pressing Blanche’s hand, and looking towards heaven. “Some years ago, when I took the vows of my order, I fondly thought that, except the suffering and sorrowing, the bruised in spirit

and the sin-weary, earth could contain naught to win me. I thought life itself valueless, when compared with my sacred duties and their everlasting consequences; but in that awful moment, when death seemed inevitable, how I clung to life! Oh, how instantaneously, how vividly—nay, how almost miraculously—was every action, every idle thought and vain desire, pictured to my mind's eye! Things deemed of little moment—words heedlessly spoken, privileges unappreciated and hours of wasted time—how they rose in judgment against my soul! How it shrunk! how it lamented! how cold seemed the devotion, how shallow the repentance which had filled it in the hours of life, which seemed fled forever! How little had it done; how little had it loved the supreme and merciful Lord! I was unprepared for yon pure abode, and have been spared for repentance.”

“But the mercies and merits of Christ,” suggested Blanche.

“Are all which under any circumstances can save the soul,” replied the lady, quickly; “but the soul must first correspond purely and sincerely with those graces which they afford us. Works are nothing, dear, if not animated by the spirit of the love of God; they are like painted flowers—fair, but without that sweet odor which alone can penetrate the abode which is sanctified by His holy presence.”

“You spoke, Madam, of vows, and an order; may I inquire the meaning of your words?” inquired Blanche.

“Is it possible,” remarked the lady, “that I am the first SISTER OF CHARITY you have ever seen?”

“Sister of Charity! can it be possible?” said Blanche, looking reverently at her. “Little did I ever expect to entertain or serve one of those angels of the earth, revered alike by saint and sinner! We have heard of the heroic acts of these sisters during seasons of famine, pestilence and war, and wondered how delicate women could brave those dangers from which hardy men have shrunk. Oh, how I venerate you!” said Blanche, enthusiastically kissing her hand.

“You may venerate without sin the spirit of our holy order, dear,” said the sister, quietly; “but I, the most unworthy, deserve not your praise. Are you a Catholic, my child?”

“According to the literal meaning of the word, my religion is Catholic. Our father, with perhaps a singular fancy, has never attached himself to any particular creed. He found fault with the systems of all, as being too subject to change and dissension, I believe. He pronounces them all imperfect, and cannot reconcile their glaring inconsistencies with the immutable character of that Great Being from whom they all profess to have derived their various peculiar



creeds. He has taught us to love God supremely, and exercise charity and good-will towards all men—and in fact to cherish all those Christian virtues which he daily practices. So, you see, our creed is as pure as it is simple,” replied Blanche.

“And right so far as it goes, dear,” answered the sister; “but did your excellent father never speak of the Catholic religion as being exempt from the errors of which he so justly complains?”

“I have heard him say, once, that from its antiquity it was entitled to our respect, and that as a system it was perhaps more perfect in its integral parts than any other; but that it had also fallen into many superstitious errors,” said Blanche.

“You have, of course, read the holy Scriptures,” observed the sister.

“Oh, yes,” replied Blanche, earnestly; “through and through, particularly the New Testament.”

“You must have remarked, then, certain passages wherein our Lord refers particularly to the Church,” continued the sister.

“Of course,” replied Blanche.

“You cannot believe that when our Saviour says in plain and express terms, ‘Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,’ He

referred to a thing which did not exist, or would have given as a rule to His disciples this sentence: 'And if he will not hear them, tell the Church; and if he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican,'—if the Church of which he spoke had been a mere figure of speech?"

"Undoubtedly not."

"And has it never struck you that there exists somewhere, among some of the numerous creeds who profess Christ, a one true Church, which, endowed with the splendid gift of the Holy Ghost 'until the end of time,' has endured through all past ages?"

"It seems probable, indeed," said Blanche.

"This admitted, you must believe that such a Church could be founded only by the God-Man himself."

"Such thoughts have sometimes perplexed me," said Blanche, earnestly, "and my soul has frequently experienced the insufficiency of the simple creed I have been taught, to impart the consolations it needed. Oh! it has yearned for something more definite, more visible, and more nearly approaching God—a something more resembling its own eternity!"

"Believe me, dear, this Church exists; it is the 'fold of which Christ is the Shepherd;' 'the body of which He is the Head;' the 'Spouse of the bridegroom;' the 'habitation and rest of God

forever,' and 'the pillar and ground of Truth,' which will never change or fail."

"I believe it," said Blanche, gravely; "and now, since you have opened this new train of thought in my mind, it occurs to me that the mission of Christ would have been incomplete without it."

"True. Infinite Wisdom, which had already accomplished so much in the perfect plan of our salvation, founded a Church on the same eternal basis, that His children should wander no more, tossed hither and thither on the current of wild opinion, but have a fold—a second heavenly Eden—so guarded by the flaming sword of the Holy Ghost that the wily spirits of hell cannot, dare not, enter therein. Safely sheltered in this holy sanctuary, the soul can comprehend the meaning of Faith, and understand the mystical union between God and man. In vain may 'the rains descend, the floods come, and the winds blow and beat on it;' it will fall not, for its foundation is the Rock of Ages."

"It is strange," said Blanche, musingly, "and perhaps true."

"We will renew this conversation some other time," said the Sister of Charity, rising and tenderly encircling the waist of Blanche with her arm. "Come with me to the eastern piazza; I would look on yon bright though terrible ocean, whose rest is as deceitful as the momentary calm

of a maniac's mind. But I have with strange discourtesy neglected to tell you my name, and you, with rare delicacy, have forborne to ask it. Call me hereafter Sister Therese."

As they wandered slowly around the spacious piazza nothing could exceed the splendid beauty of the scene beyond. Like a triumphant monarch surrounded by a golden-bannered host, the sun was slowly disappearing behind the purple cloud-hills of the west, and the trees of the forest, gleaming in the amber light, whispered like a grand monochord a mellow accompaniment to the song of the mocking-birds in their shade. Dreamy looking shadows, tinged with rose hue and gold, floated lazily along the eastern horizon, and diffused their borrowed light in a broad gleaming shower of beauty on the sparkling waves of the unquiet ocean below. One large mass of clouds lying towards the southeast betokened a storm in that quarter, and while perchance wind and wave were spending their wild fury in that far-distant spot, the splendid glories of the closing day threw a halo around its gloom. Far along the horizon's line the motion of the rolling billows could be distinctly defined, as with graceful sweep they rose and fell, looking, as the sun-rays gleamed on their white crests, like distant snow-capped Alps. Like a swan on the waves, rising and falling with a graceful motion, a vessel now floated beneath the shadow

of the distant storm-cloud, and was almost hidden beneath its mists.

“What a contrast,” said Blanche, in a low voice; “while all around is rejoicing in the smiles of yon heaven, that solitary spot is filled with gloom! So in life; men rejoice as the golden hues of prosperity glitter around them, and heed but little the one heart that may be bursting with anguish in their midst.”

“So in life,” exclaimed Sister Therese, lifting her radiant face upwards; “all that turns earthward is filled with shadows, while the soul within its bonds of clay basks in the light of peace. Stars nestle behind yon storm-cloud, dear child, and who can tell the gorgeous visions that are reflected from above on its inner folds? Oft-times, when adversity and bereavement threaten to engulf us in darkness and night, the soul’s un-sleeping eye turns heavenward with faith and hope to its Almighty Father, and beholds the angel bow of promise. But see!”

As she spoke, and while both gazed on the distant storm-cloud, it became slightly agitated, heaved to and fro for an instant, and finally separating in the midst, revealed a splendid rainbow glancing upward, like a circlet of gems, from the bosom of the ocean, where it lay, half hidden, a vision of beauty, among the clouds. The vessel, emerging from the shadow, caught the gleaming light on her white sails, and, float-

ing gracefully, like a bright-winged spirit, on the billow, was soon hovering on the horizon's verge and ere long lost in the dim distance.

"So let me glide away from the shadows of life to the spirit-land," exclaimed Blanche; "let them encompass and hide me from all but Thee, Oh, God! and let every link be severed save those which unite my soul to heaven!"

Sister Therese gazed for a moment on the fair, Madonna-like face of Blanche with undisguised admiration; then, drawing her gently to her bosom, kissed her glowing cheek, and, turning to Cora's harp, which stood uncovered near them, swept her fingers, with a master's touch, over the golden strings, and after playing a sweet, tranquilizing prelude, sang, with a voice of startling depth and sweetness, the following hymn:

"Fading, still fading, the last beam is shining,  
 Ave Maria, day is declining;  
 Safety and innocence fly with the light,  
 Temptation and danger walk forth with the night.  
 Let us sleep on thy breast while the night taper burns,  
 And wake in thy arms when the morning returns.  
 Ave Maria audi nos.

"Ave Maria! oh, hear when we call,  
 Mother of Him who is Saviour of all;  
 Feeble and fearing, we trust in thy might,  
 In doubting and darkness thy love be our light,  
 From the fall of the shade till the matin shall chime,  
 Shield us from danger and save us from crime.  
 Ave Maria audi nos."

Corinne, startled by the solemn and thrilling melody, ceased playing with the child, and, lifting her in her arms, approached noiselessly, and leaned, half-hidden by the branches of an oleander tree, against one of the twisted pillars. Another listener, Mr. Leslie, joined the group, unperceived by the rapt musician. Making a sign of silence by placing his finger on his lip, he enjoyed, with intense satisfaction, the peculiarly sweet performance, and seemed to have forgotten an open and closely-written letter which he held in his hand. The hymn finished, her fingers lingered for a moment among the chords, touching at intervals a few sweet notes; then, with a deep sigh, Sister Therese left the harp and glided through an open door into the house, all unconscious of the pleasure she had afforded by her melodious and masterly execution.

“Blanche,” said Mr. Leslie.

“Sir,” replied Blanche, starting from the spot where she had remained standing in deep reverery.

“Here is a letter, my love, from Edgar St. Johns, which informs me that he arrived with a friend in New York last week.”

“Thank God!” interrupted Blanche, almost unconscious of what she said.

“And,” continued Mr. Leslie, “they will be here to-morrow, at the latest. But I have that to tell you which will astonish you no little. In

his wanderings through Europe Edgar became so fascinated with the imposing pretensions of the Catholic religion that he has renounced Protestantism, and is now a firm and ardent believer in the faith of Rome."

A gleam of satisfaction lit up the beautiful features of Blanche, but she remained silent; while Corinne, indifferent, though somewhat surprised at his conversion, inquired who her cousin's travelling companion might be.

"More wonderful still," said Mr. Leslie, laughing, "the friend of whom he speaks is a Catholic ecclesiastic, who a few years ago resigned title, honors and wealth for the tonsure and the breviary. Every temptation that powerful friends and wealth could suggest was presented to induce him to forego his vocation, but he persevered, and if there was a regret on his part it was that the sacrifice was not greater. Such instances of voluntary poverty for the love of God form some of the noblest traits in the religion of Rome. Would to God she were as pure in all else as in her practical lessons of Christian abnegation," said Mr. Leslie, musingly. "Our guest is a Catholic, I believe."

"An angel," replied Blanche, enthusiastically.

"Better still," said Mr. Leslie, laughingly; "but let us in, my dears, for here are letters for both of you from Edgar, which will require a



light to read. Give me your drowsy-looking pet, Cora."

Blanche received the letter addressed to her with a blush and smile, and ran hastily in to peruse its contents in the quiet sanctuary of her own room. Cora quietly seated herself, and, breaking the broad seal, proceeded to read hers aloud to her father by the light of a lamp which a servant had just deposited on the table. The child Irene nestled her head close to Mr. Leslie's breast, and, throwing her little white arms with a sweet abandon of childish innocence about his neck, closed her eyes, and, after starting once or twice, and murmuring, "My mamma," fell into a deep, quiet slumber.

## CHAPTER IV.

“Turn thou away from life’s pageants, turn,  
If its deep story thy heart would learn.  
Ever too bright is that outward show,  
Dazzling the eyes till they see not woe;  
But lift the proud mantle that hides from thy view  
The things thou shouldst gaze on, the sad, the true;  
Nor fear to survey what its folds conceal—  
So must thy spirit be taught to feel.”

**R**EADER, wrap the seer mantle of fancy about thee and look back with us some thirty years into the shadowy depths of the past. It is from the past that we learn some of our best lessons; therefore fear not, thou wilt see nothing that can harm thee, but much which will in the sequel teach thee to say from the innermost depths of thy heart, “Thy will, oh, God, be done!”

In a luxuriously furnished chamber, belonging to a princely mansion in the metropolis of the United States, lay a child on a low couch, surrounded by all the appliances which wealth can command for the comfort of the rich. His round, symmetrical limbs were embedded in the finest linen, while pillows of down encased in

rose-colored satin, over which were drawn covers of the most exquisitely wrought India muslin, supported his head. The short, brown, silken curls were thrown back from his broad, white forehead, and lay in glossy disorder on the pillow. His eyes were closed, and the evenly arched brows above the blue-veined lids, with their long, sweeping lashes below, revealed an excellence of rare beauty in one so young. A fever spot, as bright as the inner heart of a fresh rose, burned on each cheek, while ever and anon the rich red lips, flushed and inflamed by disease, were drawn back with an expression of mute agony from his clenched teeth, which looked like two rows of glistening pearls. The boy's hands, round and dimpled, wandered mechanically over the heavy satin quilt, which he had unconsciously thrown aside, as if in search of some missing plaything. The draperies, which hung in tent-like form from a massive ring in the ceiling, were drawn back with a heavy cord of crimson and gold, for the purpose of admitting air from a window beyond to the suffering child. Through this a broad, mellow ray of light streamed in and lingered about his unconscious form, and imparted to it such an ethereal grace that one might have been pardoned for mistaking him for an angel who had wandered away from the spirit-land to slumber a while on earth. A grave-looking gentleman in black sat by the

bedside, noting by a large gold repeater the various changes in his pulse. On the other side knelt the mother, wrapped in a long, loose robe of white, with her hair half braided and half floating in careless waves about her shoulders, watching every breath and every shade of expression which denoted the slightest change in her child. At times, dipping her hand into a small silver vessel containing some iced aromatic liquid, she wildly yet tenderly bathed the forehead, hands and feet of the boy; then, when naught else could suggest itself to her bleeding heart, she would lift her streaming eyes and clasped hands to heaven, and pray with an unchastened spirit that he might be spared. In a more distant part of the room, and almost concealed by the shadow, a stern looking man, handsome and somewhat past the prime of life, softly walked to and fro. No tears dimmed his eyes, but the veins in his forehead were swollen like cords, and the pressure of his teeth on his white lips caused the blood to start more than once. Occasionally he glanced towards the bed, but, quickly withdrawing his eyes again, bowed his head on his breast and commenced his slow, gentle walk. There was silence and calm within that room, but it was not the silence of souls reverently waiting with sad resignation for the mandate of God, or the calm of that trusting faith which teaches, in memory of Gethsemane, "Not

my will, but thine, be done." No; the pent-up feelings, controlled through regard to the little sufferer, the stern endurance, which betokened a proud spirit rather than a meek one, gave unmistakable evidence that grace armed not for the conflict, and if the hopes which, despite all, still buoyed up each heart should fail, there were no sweet consolations for them on which to lean while the storm passed by. This gentleman was Judge Herbert, of North Carolina, then Speaker of the House of Representatives, the husband of the lady who knelt in such feverish agony by the side of their only child.

"How is it with him now, Doctor?" whispered Mrs. Herbert.

"Madam," he replied, in a quick, shrill voice, "it is—ah—the case is just now on a turn—a crisis, and a few moments may——"

"What, Doctor?" asked Mrs. Herbert, in a low whisper.

"In a few moments either life or death may ensue," he answered quietly.

"Oh, God! My child, my darling—it cannot, it must not be! I cannot, will not part with thee, my beautiful!" she exclaimed, pressing her forehead on the little palm she held.

"Quiet, madam, quiet is absolutely necessary," said the doctor, still regarding with steady eyes the countenance of the child, whose face gradually became more wan and his features

more sharp and pinched, while a purple tinge, like the shadow of death, gathered around his eyes and lips, which had yielded up their bright, glowing hue to one mortally white. A short, quick struggle convulsed his body, and scarcely had the doctor muttered, almost inaudibly, "Gone, by Jove!" when all was still.

The door opened, and the clergyman of the most fashionable church in the metropolis entered, when, seeing the state of things, he beckoned to the physician, and, after ascertaining—very prudently, for he had a large family of his own—that the disease which had prostrated the child was not contagious, hastened towards Mrs. Herbert, who wildly and frantically upbraided heaven, and in passionate language called on her darling to awake from the slumber of death. Judge Herbert held her in his arms, and she lay panting on his breast, like a wounded bird, gasping out words which her anguish made madness. He shed no tear, but the wound, though hidden, pierced not less deeply.

"My dearest madam," said the clergyman, after a long pause, "we should in all cases of this kind bow submissive to the will of God."

"Oh, talk not thus to me!" she cried; "I ask but for his life—his dear life—and God, whom I have been always taught to love because he is merciful, refused my prayer; in whom, then, shall I trust? Oh, my child! my child!"

“In Him who once raised the dead,” said the clergyman, impressively.

She looked at him a moment in silence; then, as if inspired by a sudden thought, flung herself on her knees, and, while her eyes glowed with strange fire, stretched forth her arms and exclaimed: “Thou, oh, thou Jesus of Nazareth! who didst raise the dead, restore unto me my child! Thou didst recall Lazarus to life after he had been four days dead; Thou didst from afar heal the ruler’s daughter; Thou didst raise the son of the widow of Nain; Thou hast spoken and the eyes of the blind were opened; Thou didst command and the lame were healed, and Thou, Thou thyself didst die and by thy own power rise again from the dead—by these, oh! by these, Thou merciful one! raise my firstborn, my only child, from the sleep of death! Thou dost not need him among the tens of thousands who live in thy presence; but I—I—oh! had I only him again, no grief, no sorrow would be too bitter to bear!”

“My dear madam, allow me to beseech you to be calm.”

“Your grief has made you mad,” I suppose you would say,” she exclaimed; “well, so let it be—anything, so my child had but lived. Oh, my darling! my beautiful!” she cried, leaning over the pale form of the boy and kissing every lovely feature of his face.

The physician, who had continued to hold, from some mechanical impulse, the child's wrist beneath the pressure of his fingers, suddenly started up, and, tearing open the fine cambric slip that covered his chest, pressed his hand about the region of the heart, while with the other he made a mute though eloquent gesture of silence. "One—two—three—the child is not dead!" he said.

"But sleepeth," interrupted the clergyman.

"Pshaw!" muttered the physician. "Four—five—six—seven—huzza! Nature's at work, and she will assert her own now!" he exclaimed, triumphantly, as, drawing a lancet from his vest pocket, he with the quickness of thought opened a vein in the fair, rounded arm, from which the blood at first oozed slowly and darkly, then, flowing more freely, ran in a bright red stream over the costly coverings of the bed. The pallid cheeks were again tinged with life, and, as he heavily raised the lids of his large, sleepy-looking eyes, he stretched forth the arm that was free and lisp'd, "Mother!"

"Silence all!" exclaimed the physician in a positive tone, while he turned his head to hide the tear that twinkled in his own deep-set eyes; "the child will live."

The child indeed lived. This was all for which Mrs. Herbert had prayed; the desire of her soul was accomplished, and she was at once bravely



nerved for all the patient watchings, the fatigue and sleepless nights, which would be attendant on his convalescence. Her heart comprehended at once her duties, and, watching the physician's eye and the movements of the boy, she was in an instant ready to go or do at the bidding of either. But while she, buoyed up by hope, seemed inspired with new life and was again calm and almost happy, her husband yielded to an excess of joy that which he sternly refused to grief—tears, its legitimate tribute—and was quite unmanned. His frame trembled like a reed in the blast and his chest heaved like a troubled wave, until finally, leaning on the clergyman's shoulder, he left the room in a state of uncontrolled emotion. That mother's wild, unholy prayer was answered. Evelyn Herbert lived.

Teach us, oh, Lord of love, to say, "Thy will be done," when our best-beloved and brightest are gathered home to Thee, and our hearths are made desolate; when health and gladness flee forever; when honors fade and reproach withers the heart; when Mammon withdraws his horn of plenty, and want, with all its train of sad perplexities, wearies the body and mind; when friends fail, and sorrow seems ever gathering on the blast—strengthen us, oh, Spirit of love and fortitude! by the holy consolations of that faith with which Thou dost abide forever; brood in the likeness of a dove over our troubled souls,

and sweetly teach us, with Thy still, small voice, to say, "Thy will be done, Thy will be done."

\* \* \* \* \*

At the time our narrative opens some twelve or fourteen years had elapsed since Judge Herbert had retired from public life to settle with his family quietly down on his splendid plantation at the Oaklands, in North Carolina. He left the political arena open to his son, then a fine young man of twenty-one or twenty-two years of age, who was not slow in improving all the advantages by which he was surrounded. Basking in the fame of his father's political integrity, making use of his long and matured experience, his clear and unembarrassed judgment, and having advantage of his brilliant reputation as a lawyer, making him his example in public and oracle in private, it is not strange that, with transcendent talents of his own, and a proud, equable, well-poised intellect, he should rank first among the noble-hearted sons of Carolina. His eloquence possessed a magic power; it thrilled the hearts of the young with an electrical sympathy, while men, his seniors, who had distinguished themselves by a long career of usefulness and by the most ennobling traits of mind and heart which do honor to human nature, pronounced him unequalled in all the sinuosities of law, the rules of logic and rhetoric. His manners were bland and

gentlemanly, and his prevailing characteristics benevolence and generosity, which lent a gentleness of expression to the manly beauty of his face, and which, joined to a frank demeanor and graceful carriage, made friends for him daily. Like that hidden power which, it is said, transmutes all metals into gold, so did he, in his way through life, transmute the crude masses and dross of mankind by his kind, considerate disposition and impulsive generosity, into firm allies and faithful friends; in fact, such was his immense popularity that at the age of twenty-five he was elected, with scarce a dissenting vote, a member of Congress by his district in North Carolina. Mrs. Herbert still lived, and her heart had not learned to idolize less the child for whose life she had once so wildly prayed, and when she saw how others prized that which she so entirely loved, and appreciated properly the being who was in her eyes faultless, she would say, proudly, "He deserves it all, and more;" but, even while quaffing deep from the golden chalice of her heart's pride, she was more than once startled by seeing a serpent coiled beneath the sparkling foam, which she feared might one day or other "sting her unto death," and yet she worshipped on, nor ever dreamed of the claims of high heaven on her self-neglected soul.

The Oaklands was situated about two miles from Elverton Hall, and a broad, well-beaten

road, shaded by ancient oak trees, whose stalwart arms, interlaced overhead, gave evidence that the intercourse between the two families was both friendly and frequent; indeed, it was whispered among the gossips of the neighborhood that at some future day a bride would be brought from Elverton Hall by the heir of Oaklands.

## CHAPTER V.

A THRILLING INCIDENT—CONFIDENCE IN  
GOD REWARDED.

IT had been a proud day at the Oaklands—but, before we proceed farther, we will tell the cause, hoping that our readers will pardon the long digression. A tedious and difficult case had been pending in the criminal court of E——, which, being based altogether on circumstantial evidence, could not easily be decided. Lawyers grew faint in their efforts to serve the unhappy being, who, although accused on strong evidence of being a parricide, asserted throughout, in the most positive terms, his innocence. The judges became enigmatical in their charges to the jury, while the twelve, on whose decision hung the prisoner's fate, never agreed, because some seven or eight among their number, weary of restraint and fasting, were anxious "*faire d'une pierre deux coups*"—that is, get out of the predicament, by disposing of their turtle soup and the prisoner at the same

time, while the remaining four, generally fresh to the business and therefore very unsophisticated in the manner of agreeing on a verdict in criminal cases, chose rather to starve than hang a man contrary to their candid impressions of his innocence.

Things had progressed in this way through four long, tedious terms of the court, and at every trial the same result—the jury could not agree—until at last the duty of empanelling a jury to sit on the case became a difficult task. About this time the fame of Evelyn Herbert was approaching its zenith, and the poor prisoner, in his solitary cell, hearing accidentally of this new light, which was shedding such wonderful lustre over the dull schools of jurisprudence, was advised by his spiritual director, who visited him daily, to employ him as counsel at the approaching trial. The man was a Catholic, and if this did not tend to make his cause more popular, and if it identified, with all the narrow spirit of Protestantism, the crime of which he was accused with his religion, it imparted patience to his wounded mind and afforded, through the holy sacraments, consolation and tranquillity to his inmost soul, and taught him to look on the narrow cell in which he had been imprisoned for weary years as a place of penance, where, in hourly acts of contrition and resignation, his soul might become, through the merits of Christ,

purified from the dross of its earthly existence. Except for the reproach which a felon's doom would bring on the faith he professed, he shrunk not, so well had his mind been chastened by affliction, from an ignominious death; for the hope of being thereby raised from dishonor to honor, from dust to immortality and rest, plucked the sting from the shaft of death and imparted a sublime sentiment of calm and resigned patience to his whole interior being. Although disposing himself, with childlike simplicity and strong faith, to the mercy and protection of a just God, he disdained not those means of human relief which lay in his power, but wished to use them only so far as consistent with his holy will; beyond this he feared or cared naught, for, if released, he was assured it would be alone through the Almighty Providence, in which he trusted; if condemned, he would receive it as a temporal punishment due to the forgotten and unconfessed sins of his life, and offer his last pangs up, in conjunction with the sufferings of Christ, as satisfaction for the same. Many, not discerning the spirit which consoled him, wondered at his calm demeanor, and, as in ancient days, the sinless Lamb of God was persecuted even unto death by his enemies, they did not now spare his humble follower, but derided him as a hypocrite and a hardened sinner. But he knew in whose footsteps he walked as he passed

along the steep and narrow way, and although burning tears fell into the bitter chalice which was offered him, he refused it not, but, drinking it to the dregs, angels of peace ministered to him. \* \* \*

With difficulty, procuring leave, he wrote a few lines to Herbert, stating his case in simple and touching language, and requesting as early an interview as possible. It was granted as soon as asked, and as Herbert listened to the history of his griefs all the nobler chords of his generous heart were touched. It was his prerogative to defend a fellow-being when accused of crime, and by the transcendent powers of his eloquence, aided by right and justice, rescue them from the hard and merciless fangs of the law when oppressed; and, acting on a magnanimous impulse, he entered without hesitation on the difficulties of the case. As yet the unfortunate man had met with no generosity, and less justice; he and his painfully difficult case had been made a public annual show of for months together, and afforded delightful *morceau* for the newspapers throughout the country, then—he was forgotten. But now the Almighty hand, which had chastised, because it loved him, sent him a friend when least expected—a powerful friend, in his sore need. Herbert allowed no time to intervene between this interview and his duty. Before the midnight hour had chimed he made him-



self thoroughly acquainted with the case, examined every record which had any bearing on it, and at an early hour the next day had consulted with those lawyers who had at different times been the prisoner's counsel, and ere night had, with unwearied diligence, sought out and conversed with every individual who had witnessed the suspicious conduct of the man, and gathered from them on their oath all they knew. When he summed up all, he found to his great grief that it amounted to but little in favor of his client. Every circumstance tended to condemn, and yet, withal, *nothing could be proved*, except that the father of Stevens had been found murdered; that he was the last person seen with him, as they walked at sunset towards a lonely part of the outskirts of the town; that the son's knife had been found buried to the hilt in the old man's heart; that his watch was found on his son's person, and the son's handkerchief wrapped over a gash in the father's hand. Many of his distinguished friends advised him to withdraw at once from the case, but there was an impetuous current in his temperament, which gained new force from opposition, particularly when principles of justice, humanity, or chivalry, animated the wellsprings of his manly heart, and he determined to brave defeat rather than give up the interests of his unfortunate client, who he conscientiously believed to be innocent. The day before the trial

vehicles of every description might be seen wending their way into the city of E——. The brilliant reputation of Herbert, the generosity of his present act, and the singularity of the case, had been much and widely talked of, and drew together a crowd to witness the trial the like of which had never before been seen in the quiet city. That night Herbert had retired to his room, almost hopeless of gaining more positive evidence, and, wrapping his dressing gown around him, threw himself listlessly into his study-chair, when his servant entered and handed him a coarse, soiled-looking note. He took it, almost mechanically, from the man, and inquired if the person who brought it waited, and on being answered in the negative laid it carelessly on the table, muttering, "To-morrow morning will do for such a stupid-looking affair," and was ere many minutes elapsed completely immersed in his studies. The clock from an adjoining church tolled the hour of two ere he seemed to remember that a few hours' sleep would be necessary to prepare him for the fatigues and excitement of the coming day. He started up, and, closing hastily the heavy book which lay before him, proceeded to look for a piece of paper to light the night-taper, which always burned in his room at night while he slept. But, strange to tell, not a scrap of waste paper presented itself to view; not even a piece of an old

letter or newspaper. Making some impatient ejaculation, he was in the act of tearing a blank leaf from one of his books, when his eye fell accidentally on the coarse-looking note which he had received a few hours ago. "It cannot be of much importance," he said; and, breaking the seal under the momentary impulse, he read, with dilated eyes and glowing cheeks, the following strange words:

*"Fear not. Success will attend your efforts to-morrow. Justice no longer sleeps. A witness will be forthcoming who will reveal all. The writer of this trusts to your honor to say nothing of this; it would do no good, and might do much harm. Expect me to-morrow until the last moment. If I come not, you may know that I am dead. One Who Knows."*

Herbert at first experienced a dizzy sensation of joy, but on more sober reflection the whole affair wore too much the appearance of romance to be real. He felt sure that some wag had been exercising his practical wit at his expense; so, twisting the note into a lamp-lighter, he deliberately lit his taper with it and threw the blazing fragments on the hearth, where they were soon consumed; and, humming a light air, he opened a closet, and—shall we proceed?—poured out a strong potation, into which he dropped a small quantity of black-looking liquid and drained the

goblet to the dregs. He then threw himself on his couch, and in a few moments was lost in profound slumber. Could it be that this favored child of Fame and Fortune offered this libation nightly on the shrine of his gifted mind, drowning all its splendid visions and beautiful perceptions of the ideal—its high, stirring hopes of future glory and renown—its ambitious projects—in a long, dark, dreamless lethargy? Alas, yes! he struggled not against it; he yielded not to the silent promptings of the “still, small voice;” he wrestled not with the demon, but drew him nearer, like a dear companion, to his bosom; and in the delirious moments which followed his secret potations he blasphemed against high heaven and defied its God. Oh! could it be that this being, so perfectly formed in the image and likeness of his Maker; so richly endowed with all the most costly intellectual gifts; so talented and so idolized by all who knew him, for “to know him was to love”—should thus yield the advantage to that subtle foe, which, if not resisted, would finally ruin him, body and soul? It was too true, and what was still more deplorable those imprecations against the Deity were but the momentary flashes from calmer and more unimpassioned hours, when, drinking deep from the vile philosophy of Voltaire and his contemporaries, his mind became gradually impressed by their monstrous and fallacious subtleties, and settled

down from the dignity of its high estate to a level with the "brutes that perish." We would have withheld the sad relation of such startling truths—truths more sad when placed in dark contrast to his proudly-gifted mind—only it is well in our view of life to learn the stern lessons taught by examples such as this. Reared with the highest-toned views of honor, justice and integrity, and taught to regard all those principles which bound him in his social relations to the world as sacred, Herbert began gradually to fancy that religion, which was generally spoken of to him in a secondary degree, was in the abstract but a plausible system founded on legends, whose influence was well enough calculated to keep the crude and ignorant masses of society in a state of social order. This was but the beginning of those atheistical notions which sprang up in the fair garden of his neglected soul, and which in secret were brooded over by his visionary mind until they ripened, and were, like the poison-tree of the desert, withering unto death, one by one, the incomparable virtues of his nature. We weep oftentimes without ceasing for our loved and lost, "who have passed on before us, from life's gloomy passion and pain;" we have burning tears for the dead, even when we hope their souls rest in peace; but do we not too often forget those among us who, though living, are spiritually dead? and often, with dazzled eyes,

gaze heedlessly on them as, like brilliant meteors, they glance athwart our sight and rush,

“Hurl’d headlong, flaming, from th’ ethereal sky  
With hideous ruin,”

to the deep shades of eternal and unutterable woe. For these should we lament and pray unceasingly, while life lends hope, that they may at last, like one of old, see the angel of God standing in their way, and acknowledge Him whom they defied.

Among the crowd that thronged the court-house on the day of the trial were the two families from Elverton Hall and the Oaklands, who, through the influence of Judge Herbert, had secured seats in a comfortable and sheltered part of the gallery, from whence they could see everything that was passing below without being themselves exposed to the rude gaze of strangers’ eyes. Herbert himself knew nothing of this arrangement. As nothing would be elicited throughout the trial which could possibly offend a modest ear, permission had been granted by the presiding judges for the admission of ladies into the court-room, where, as in all other public places in our country, they were readily accommodated with the most agreeable seats.

Many persons, jealous of the rising fame of Herbert, and with hearts full of envy, went with a smile of anticipated triumph at his defeat; some

with a vacant kind of curiosity, others for the pleasure of hearing eloquent speeches, while a few, who had heavy wagers on the event, were probably the most anxious among the crowd. Finally everything was arranged with the usual formula in such cases. The judges had taken their seats, the gentlemen of the bar, the prosecuting attorney, the prisoner's counsel, the jurors, the witnesses, and, last of all, the prisoner himself, looking extremely pale but resigned, were duly possessed of their respective places. The prosecuting attorney for the state was a man of extraordinary intellect. The chief characteristics of his mind were of a keen and analyzing nature, which lent to all of his arguments a force and power which it was scarcely possible to resist. The examination of witnesses concluded, he rose to speak. His eagle eyes rolled and flashed from one countenance to another, and as his deep-toned voice delivered word after word of calm, deliberate opinion, and summed up fact after fact, circumstance after circumstance, in crimination of the prisoner, linking the whole together in one grand chain of argumentative eloquence of the highest order, it seemed impossible for the most sanguine to entertain a hope that the poor wretch at the bar could meet with any other than the extremest sentence of the law. The supposed murder was depicted in graphic language, and when he wound up by de-

scribing the horror of that feeble, white-haired old man when he found that the hand of his only child was giving him his death-blow, the deep abhorrence of the people could no longer be controlled, and the excitement became so intense that one loud, indignant groan attested their feelings, while not a few whispers of the diabolical lynch-law were circulated. The prisoner at the bar grew very white and faint, and, raising his hands high over his head, exclaimed, in a loud voice, "Thou, oh, God! who seest all things, and knowest the secrets of all hearts, knowest that I did not this awful deed. In thy justice and mercy do I trust!" then fell fainting back on some kind breast, which sprang forward under a momentary impulse to save him from falling.

When order was restored Herbert arose with a calm and unruffled demeanor, like one conscious of possessing power at will. The burning spirit within kindled new light in his large, dark eyes, and added a deeper tinge to the healthful glow of his cheeks. But this was all; there was no tremulousness of voice or manner. But why attempt to describe it? We might as well try to chain the lightning fires of heaven in spellbound characters as to make the vain effort to transfer to paper the burning eloquence of his words, the volume of learned argument he used, and the impressive graces of his manner. Nothing recorded in the annals of criminal jurisprudence



ever gave rise to a speech so thrillingly eloquent and grand throughout. As if some wandering seraph had touched his lips with immortal fire, he uttered language which seemed to change the very natures of those who a few short moments ago thirsted for blood. They felt like murderers themselves, and shrunk from the lightning glance of his eyes when they happened to fall on them. He appealed to Nature and her unchanging laws to know if anything short of delirium or madness could lift a parricidal hand against an aged parent's life, then was for a moment silent, while not a sound except deep-drawn inspirations could be heard; and, having heard the oracle's reply, told it in words—pungent, unanswerable and impressive—which made those who heard them tremble. The current was changing; it was mingling with the impetuous torrent of his sublime eloquence, in favor of the prisoner; the judges had been seen to brush more than one tear from their cheeks, while the jurors, many of them, bowed their heads on their breasts to hide their emotion, and others, forgetting all else in the world beside their own feelings and the man on whose words they hung, did not even check the tears that flowed over their uplifted faces. Perceiving the favorable impression he had made he seized the crisis, and, adding the unlimited testimonials of good character which the man had borne from his youth up, threw them into

the scale, and was about seating himself when every ear was startled by the cry of "A witness! a witness!"

The crowd, swaying to and fro for a minute, slowly opened, and two men were seen supporting between them an old man, so worn and emaciated, so trembling and ill, that many whose imaginations had been wrought up to fever heat thought that the murdered man had risen from his grave to come and give testimony of the guilt of his son. But stranger and wilder grew the scene when the prisoner, on beholding him, stretched out his hands, and with starting eyes and pallid cheeks exclaimed, "My father! my father!"

"Not your father, young man, but—his murderer!" said the old man, shuddering.

There was an instantaneous hush, and in the expectation of new marvels every whisper died away as Herbert again rose to address the judges, and although *he* disbelieved the sacred allusions he made, *they were true*, and, unbeliever as he was, he knew and measured well their probable effects. "Heaven, your honors," said he, "overrules all. When the judgments of men grow dark, when their perceptions of things become dim and they would in their moral blindness pronounce hard judgments on the innocent as well as guilty, the great Lawgiver who rules creatures deigns to interpose his unerring hand

and withdraw the mist. Stand forth, witness, and in God's name let us hear the truth!"

After draining a glass of wine which Herbert ordered for him he stated that he was the brother of the murdered man. For several years they had not spoken in consequence of their father's will, which, for causes therein specified, had left him penniless. He was determined on revenge, and had watched day after day, year after year, for an opportunity to accomplish his object—but in vain. Hearing accidentally that the elder Stevens and his son were staying with a distant relative of their own in town, he determined to dog their steps hourly, if possible, until the moment to which he had so long looked forward should arrive; he found, however, that he should again be baffled, as they, rather unexpectedly to him, determined to return home a week earlier than they at first intended. The evening arrived for their departure, and as they were to walk to a certain ferry to meet their wagon on the other side, he, under the covert shades of twilight, followed them closely. He heard his brother say, "Here, Willie, take my watch and put it on; I am going to hunt about here among the trees for a staff, and might break or lose it; and lend me your knife, boy; mine is in my other coat pocket." In trying to open the large blade of the knife, which was new, and the spring, of course, very strong, his finger and thumb slipped,

and it closed with great force over the fingers of his left hand, which grasped the handle. His son released his hand and bound up the wound with his own pocket-handkerchief. "I will sit here and rest awhile, Willie," he said; "I cannot bear a cut like this as I used to do. Do you go on slowly. I am afraid the wagon might come before we get there, and, not seeing one of us, go away again. Open your knife for me and lay it here; my fingers feel better, and I will get me a staff and soon overtake you." "The boy there," continued the hoary sinner, "gathered some dried leaves together and made his father a more comfortable seat, and hurried on. Need I tell how like a cat—how stealthily I crept behind my brother—how I snatched the knife and plunged it with true aim into his heart—how he uttered one low cry and breathed no more? No; I cared not for these; my revenge was complete. His son wore his father's watch; here was the son's handkerchief about the father's hand and his knife in his heart. *He* would be suspected; no one knew that *I* was his brother; I had changed my name in another country years ago; *he* would be *hung* and *I* regain my patrimony. It turned out as I expected; the boy there has been on the eve of hanging for long months. At first I did not care; but remorse—oh, can the everlasting sting of hell equal its pangs!" exclaimed the man. "I wanted to clear the boy,

but was afraid—a coward—afraid to die, as it was thought he would die; but, murderer as I was, I thanked God every time a trial resulted in no verdict. I am dying, sirs; I have nothing to fear from your judgments, else maybe I would not now be here. I have cheated you and the gibbet, at any rate. There is a will, boy, leaving you twice as much as the paltry sum for which I murdered your father. Do not be afraid of it; it was honestly earned in a distant land. I—but water—water—I burn—give me but a drop—there, my tongue is cooler now. The will, I say, you will find with Father ——. But there!—there!—that streaming heart! those long, white hairs—oh, horror; hor——”. *He fell back dead.*

It was in vain. All the judges on earth might have been there, with all the allies of the law, to proclaim order and silence; they might just as well have tried to hush the thunder, or bind the ocean tides, as to still that excited multitude. Cheers, exultant cries, yells of triumph, joined in one tremendous chorus, and while one party seized Herbert and lifted him from the floor to their shoulders, another crowded about the bewildered Willie Stevens, and, elevating him to the same lofty position, carried them in a triumphant procession from the court-house.

“You was in fun, old fellow, you was, I know,” cried a man whose face was half hidden under a

red handkerchief to the state attorney; "so come, we'll give you a hoist, and them 'ere owls, too, if they'd like to ride."

A roar of laughter followed the rude jest, in which the dignitaries alluded to were good-natured enough to join; which so pleased the facetious mob that, had they not escaped from a side door very quickly, they would have been without doubt treated to the promised ride. The body of the murderer was found crushed and literally trampled out of all resemblance to humanity. It was taken possession of by the mob and buried amidst their jeers and execrations beneath the gibbet. The whole city seemed frantic with delight, and determined on a holiday in honor of Herbert and the remarkable event in which he had borne so conspicuous a part. A civic feast was prepared, at which more than three hundred ladies of beauty and standing were present with their fathers, brothers and friends, who, after an eloquent speech of thanks from Herbert for the great honors which had been proffered him, gave him, through the most beautiful of their number, a laurel crown, which Judge C——ch placed on his head, saying, "Sir, you deserve it!" Tears gushed to his eyes, and, turning to hide his emotion, he found himself clasped in his father's arms, while his mother, with Blanche, Corinne, and Mr. Leslie, surrounded him. The whole

party, with a large company of friends, returned with them the next morning to the Oaklands, to spend a day in festivity and social pleasure. And a proud day it was.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE ATHEIST—SISTER THERESE—THE  
RETURN.

**A**MONG the first to leave the social party at the Oaklands that night were Mr. Leslie and his fair daughters. Mrs. Herbert and her son, who had entered the drawing-room for the first time since dinner, just as they were making their adieus, followed them to the door, where they all stood, reciprocating kind regrets and mutual invitations, with all those little agreeable nothings—words, of course, which are deemed so essential in society.

“Shall we walk or drive home to-night, ladies?” inquired Mr. Leslie.

“It would be little short of high treason to her majesty the moon to drive,” said Corinne, gayly, “when she dispenses her charms so graciously. Only look!”

“Beautiful, quiet, delightful, it will be, a walk beneath those shady oaks with the moonbeams stealing through,” said Herbert, laughing; “will Miss Leslie allow me to be her escort?”

“Miss Leslie could scarcely refuse so small a



favor to the hero of the day; but, remember, she will exact poetic effusions, and perhaps a pastoral ditty about the moonlight, stars, and rural shades," replied Corinne, in the same gay manner.

"I suppose *my* knight," said Blanche, taking her father's arm, "will charm me with a few dreams of the olden time on our homeward way; for, with its ancient trees with their gnarled trunks and fantastic branches meeting overhead, the moonlight stealing through at intervals, throwing long shadows across the way, and the dim perspective, it reminds one of some castellated ruin or deserted abbey."

"One would fancy, my dear madam," said Mr. Leslie to Mrs. Herbert, "from the conversation of these madcaps of ours, that we were all going to fairy-land. But, good-night, again; we have already detained you too long from your guests."

Their adieus being finally made, the gay party passed on. The carriage was sent home by a more circuitous route, and Mr. Leslie and Blanche, leading the way, were soon lost sight of by Herbert and Corinne, who lingered time after time to admire the witchery of the scene and beguile the distance of all weariness by pleasant and mirthful words, such only as can spring from the most peaceful and joyous founts of the heart.

"A boon! a boon, fair ladye!" exclaimed Her-

bert, after endeavoring in vain to turn aside some remarks, half ironical, half complimentary, which she had been making on his late brilliant effort with its attendant adventures; "I am overwhelmed, annihilated. Do, for sweet pity's sake, let us change the conversation from my unworthy self to something better."

"Grace is granted, sir," replied Corinne; "but what other topic is now left in this world of ours to talk on? Mr. Herbert and his splendid reputation absorb all else."

"What other? A thousand; your cousin and my old friend, St. Johns, who, your father tells me, has turned papist; the storm, the wreck; the strange lady and child, your guests—all are fruitful themes," he answered, half petulantly.

"We are expecting our cousin daily. He has become a Catholic; whether that name is synonymous with the word papist I leave it to your ingenuity to determine," answered Corinne, gravely.

"Satisfactory, indeed!" replied Herbert. "Can you tell me nothing interesting? Can you weave no little romance concerning the lady and child who became your guests in so remarkable a manner?"

"Nothing, absolutely nothing," said Corinne, "except that both are extremely beautiful, and the lady belongs to a religious order and is called a Sister of Charity."

“Another papist,” muttered Herbert.

“An order,” continued Corinne, without noticing his remark beyond a momentary glance of surprise, “whose spirit incites its members to the most heroic acts which it is possible to conceive. Could I believe as Catholics do, such a life would be my irrevocable choice.”

“Impossible!” exclaimed he.

“And why?” inquired Cora.

“Because,” he replied, vehemently, “the creed which they profess is vile and idolatrous; its ingenuity as a system renders it more vile; they are its slaves, and, bound as they are to uphold its pretensions, they assume the garb of humility and the acts of heroic saints.”

“Happy would it be, then, for the social good of mankind,” said Cora, “did the laws of all religious systems teach such charity towards men, and impose such practices of Christian virtue on their followers. Of their particular creed, of which you singularly enough speak so bitterly, I know but little; but if it is calculated thus to elevate its votaries to a position but ‘little lower than the angels,’ I will know something more positive concerning it than I do now, ere long. The very circumstance of my cousin’s becoming a Catholic—a man whose mind was not apt to be influenced by anything except the sublimest principles of right, has caused me to think oftener than once——”

“That the papists are right?” interrupted Herbert.

“At least not far from it,” said Cora, readily. “Mr. Herbert, I never yet heard a person, a system or theory calumniated without feeling the keenest wish to examine, myself, into the minutæ of the case, with all its comparative merits and demerits. Whether this proceeds from a whim or a generous impulse I am not quite impartial enough to say; however, it will not of consequence make me a papist, as you so elegantly call Catholics, to learn their own meaning of the faith they profess.”

“You will find it, no doubt, like all others—fallacious. I wish you joy of your task,” said Herbert, bitterly. “But why,” continued he more gently, “why disturb the heretofore tranquil repose of your mind to find a religion for a heart already as pure as the fabled angels of which we read? Could we be sure of the existence of a God, did we know that a Christ really had died for the salvation of mankind, could we believe the pleasing legends connected therewith, no care, no pains, no torture, would be too great for the attainment of such an object.”

“Do I hear you aright?” said Corinne, pausing and looking into his face, inexpressibly shocked. “Evelyn Herbert, are you an atheist?”

“A philosopher, if it please you better, Miss Leslie. But we have forgotten the object of

our walk, which was, if you remember, to enjoy the poetry of this quiet scene. How beautiful this lower world; how calmly it seems to slumber in the arms of bright-eyed night! Oh, if one might live forever in such an Eden, if utter annihilation did not come at last, what might not the mind accomplish, what enjoy? What pinnacles might it not attain, how boldly might it penetrate the mysteries of nature and grasp the very stars! But pardon me; such themes as these suit not the present scene, or such gentle hearing as your own, Miss Leslie."

"I think not, indeed," replied Corinne, in a cold, grave tone; "I think not. And how one could dare, in the face of yonder creation of heavenly light and wonder, in hearing of the low, sweet music of nature, with a consciousness of mind—that mystery, with all its prescient instincts ever tending upwards—with every heart-pulse beating in obedience to the breath which God gives, with sentient perceptions and the consciousness of soul throughout, to deny the Master-hand which governs all, is a sad, sad mystery to me. Surely you jest, Mr. Herbert."

"Miss Leslie thinks me, then, in error?"

"As an atheist? in mad error," replied Cora.

"I *have* been in error on one point truly," said he. "Observing always that your father never fettered himself by the doctrines of any creed, or impressed the necessity of any peculiar tenets on

yourselves, I really imagined, regarding him as a man of calm, rational sense, that he placed as little faith as myself in such futile chimeras."

"Sir, my father believes not less in the revelations of God because he has attached himself to no particular creed. He has been searching for one which corresponded with his standard of perfection, which possessed all those qualities which he deems essential to a church founded by God. He seeks for a unity of doctrines, a religion without those perplexities which distract the soul—in short, something different from those with which we are familiar, which, forever differing and disputing about their contradictory creeds, leaves one in great doubt whether any among them are acknowledged of God. I make this explanation in justice to my father," said Corinne, proudly.

"Your father is right; though I much fear that his search will be as fruitless as the search of philosophers for that fabled stone, which, it is said, will, among other miracles, transmute the basest metals into gold. The very discord which pervades Christendom, the wide difference in their various theories, their disagreements on doctrinal points, is a tangible proof in favor of my argument; for if there is a God, the truth which emanates from him must be consistent and eternal. They all claim Him as the origin of their numerous sectaries, and yet nothing can surpass

the inconsistencies they practice, or the everlasting changeableness of those principles which, they declare, proceed from Him. Believe me, it is all visionary—based on nothing more positive than mere hypothesis.”

“No! no!” said Corinne, earnestly; “your deductions are false; I pronounce them so without hesitation. As well might you attempt to convince me that the sun has set forever, because his light, hidden from us, illumines another hemisphere, or that the breath of life does not pervade my being because I see only its operations and effects and not itself, as to attempt to convince me that there is not a God; that I have no immortality in my nature, or that religion is a fable. Oh, Herbert! as you value my friendship, never again shock my ears by a repetition of such falsehoods—such wicked philosophy!”

“Beautiful enthusiast!” he said; “you alone of all the world might win me from it, might teach me to believe in all that you adore, and lead me, gently on, step by step, from my long-cherished opinions.”

“As how could this miracle be wrought?” said Corinne, coldly withdrawing the hand which he had taken within his own.

“By listening,” he whispered, “to the tale of love so long withheld and fondly dreamed over; that I would tell you, by becoming *my bride*.”

“This is strange wooing,” said Corinne, loftily.

“Methinks Mr. Herbert might have anticipated an unfavorable answer, after so candid an avowal of his atheistical opinions. I would not dare, sir, entrust my happiness with one who, like a bark unmoored from the haven of God’s love, has no beacon-light, no guide, or steadfast principles to direct it among those strong undercurrents and whirlpools which draw it at last into a stormy vortex of irremediable ruin.”

“I am answered,” he said, proudly.

“Yes,” said Corinne, with a faltering voice; “and I feel sincerely grateful that you, in an unguarded moment, made a revelation of that which has perhaps saved me from a life of unutterable misery.”

“You mean to say,” replied Herbert, more gently, “that were it not for the philosophy I profess you would perhaps turn a more favorable eye on my pretensions to your hand.”

“Your vanity,” said Corinne, again speaking coldly and composedly, “can interpret my meaning in that light, if it pleases you. Let this subject hereafter be an interdicted one between us.”

“A certain old legend tells us of a fair maiden, who, being exposed in her infancy in a desert, was nurtured by doves. One would have thought that such gentle ministrations would have softened the instinctively savage nature of a barbarian; but that maiden grew, and, as her peerless beauty ripened, ambition, pride, and a



passion for conquest ripened with it, and she who was nurtured by the white-winged messengers of peace excelled all the warriors of her time by her wonderful triumphs and successes in war. That was a proud, high spirit, which proved such a traitor to, and dared soar above all the gentler feelings of her sex," said Herbert, pointedly.

"I will not affect to misunderstand your classical allusion. It is true that I, like Semiramis, have been nurtured by all the gentlest, truest, most holy ministrations, but, unlike her, I will not play traitor to them. Corinne Leslie will ever remain true to herself," said Cora.

During the foregoing conversation Corinne had discovered several times, as Herbert bowed his face near her own, that his breath was deeply tainted with the juice of the vine, and the fear, added to the pang of discovering his atheistical principles, that he resorted habitually to exciting stimulants, caused her to assume an air of cold *hauteur* to hide the troubled emotions of her heart, which heretofore, believing him to be the incarnation of all that was excellent in human nature, had perhaps bestowed more of its regard on him than she was herself aware of, and caused her sometimes to hope that the prognostics of the world concerning them would be eventually realized.

During the excitement of that convivial day at the Oaklands, Evelyn Herbert had, contrary to

his usual custom, indulged freely his thirst for wine, and reconciled himself to the act by wishing to believe that a duty to his guests required it. Those who witnessed his deep potations found a ready excuse for him in the excitement of the scene around him and the fancied necessity he was under of drinking the enthusiastic toasts in his honor which were proposed by his father and his own most valued friends; and it was only when they discovered from his maudlin looks and incoherent language that he was overcome by his frequent potations that they desisted from their well-meant flatteries and cruel kindness. Judge Herbert, with a painful misgiving at his heart, made the motion for retiring from the table, and, apologizing to his guests, took his son's arm and led him himself to his own chamber, where, assisted by his confidential servant, he applied the usual restoratives, and, placing him near an open window, through which a strong draught of cool air swept, bathed with his own hands the young man's head, face and chest with ice water. In a short time he was partially recovered from his momentary intoxication, and advised by his father to walk some distance in the open air ere he rejoined his friends in the drawing room. He did so, and had just returned when he offered his services to Corinne. But partially restored to his usual equilibrium, and still suffering some mental derangement in

consequence of his imprudence, he betrayed the three hitherto closely-guarded secrets of his life—his love for Corinne, his atheistical principles, and fondness for wine; and in such a way were they developed, and so unexpectedly, that she had scarcely recovered from the indignant shock her feelings had sustained when they reached Elverton Hall.

“Will Miss Leslie allow the repentance of a lifetime to atone for the faults of to-day?” asked Herbert, by this time fully conscious of his folly, and keenly mortified at all which had occurred. “Is there no act of virtue, daring or morality in the future by which I might in your estimation cancel the past and recover the esteem of one whose good opinion I prize beyond that of all the world?”

“You have my friendship and my prayers,” said Cora, in a low voice.

“Will you not bid me hope,” he persisted, “that at some future day I may worthily win your more tender regards?”

“Mr. Herbert,” she replied, firmly, “we are to meet hereafter as friends only. Let me beg of you, under pain of my displeasure, never to renew this conversation again. I forgive you all which has passed to-night that is strange; your secrets are safe with me. But be warned in time. You stand on the brink of a deep abyss; ruin here and ruin hereafter threaten you. Repent; spurn

all that is unworthy of a soul like yours; let it, obeying its instincts, soar upward and reclaim that faith in God to which it is an alien; drag it not lower down; wrap it not in vain, darkening illusions—and oh! may I, dare I, by our childish days, by your mother's love and your gray-haired father's pride, and by those claims which society has on you, beseech you to taste not, touch not the 'wine when it is red;' it brings at last misery, crime and death in its ghastly train."

"Lovely moralist!" said Herbert, sadly, as he gazed on the matchless beauty of her young and innocent face, which, turned slightly upward, was bathed in a fair stream of moonlight; "you might win a fallen angel to repentance! Let me but win your hand, then teach, guide, mould me as you will!"

"No more, sir! no more! When principles of high duty actuate me, no power on earth can alter or change my position," said Cora, as she entered the house. "We will, if you please, join my father and sister, who are sitting at yonder open window, wondering, no doubt, at our long absence."

But he did not enter with her, and, bowing his head profoundly on his breast, left her without uttering another word and walked with a rapid step homeward. A few of his mother's guests, who were to remain all night, lingered still in the drawing-room, carrying on a drowsy conversa-

tion, which he, agitated as he was, cared not to interrupt. Meeting one of the servants as he was going to his own apartment, he bade her say to her mistress that he was extremely unwell and had retired. Alone, he soon began to brood over the mortifying incidents of the day and evening. He opened his books and tried to feel interested in his favorite authors, but in vain; he then snatched up his pen and commenced the first page of a chapter on political economy, but it was of no avail; the demon still tugged at his heart-strings, until, half maddened, he flew again to the Lethean draught, and in copious potations stilled the voice of busy memory.

After her guests had retired Mrs. Herbert, with a mother's fond and anxious love, went to his room, determined to enter softly, without disturbing his slumbers, and see if perchance there was a fever-glow on his cheeks, or an expression of pain on his forehead. But how did she find this idol of her heart, whose midnight sleep she had come to watch? His wearied frame resting quietly, while the still face, tired with expressions of busy thought, wore a look of calm repose? No! none of these; but, standing with the aspect of a madman, she beheld her son, declaiming with flushed features and wild gestures on the laws of his vile philosophy. This was the third time she had found him thus. Each time she had hoped was the last, but now—she

sunk into a chair, and with a passionate burst of tears exclaimed, "My son! my son!" Making a violent effort to be sober, for his mother's tones of agony thrilled through every vein of his heart, he came towards her, and, bending on one knee by her side, drew her hands away from her face, to kiss her cheek, but in making the attempt his head fell heavily on her bosom, and had she not with a quick effort thrown her arms about him he would have fallen to the floor. "Evelyn, my child, arise," said his mother; "arise, and be your noble self again. Oh, my son! my son!" she cried, while floods of burning, bitter tears fell from her eyes on his head and face, "let me hear you recall the words which you have spoken—speak to me, I command you!"

"Yes," he muttered at intervals, "all right but the last. Zeno and Epicurus were men of sense, but Lucretius and Voltaire were the master spirits of their age. Plato was a dreaming fool; I tell you, mother, he was; and Hesiod, star-gazer and ploughman, like our friend Mr. Leslie; and the fishermen with their teacher—pshaw! Come, mother, let us walk among the stars to-night; come, let us go. We'll go up—ha—ha—on a rainbow, and I will carry you along the milky way. Ha! mother, will it not be brave?" He attempted to rise, but again fell, almost dragging his mother with him to the floor. She laid his head gently down and softly locked the door;

then, getting pillows from the sofa and bed, laid them tenderly beneath his shoulders and head, and sat beside him to watch until the day-dawn came. She remembered that it was on this night twenty-eight years ago that he lay—an angel—about leaving earth and its many sorrows and cares for the everlasting and safe repose of the spirit-land, and remembered how her unholy prayers had recalled him back to life, and their memory now came, like an adder's sting, piercing her soul. "Oh, that he had died! oh! that I had not lived to see this day! My son! my son!" were the exclamations which resounded at intervals with startling distinctness through that silent room. And well they might, for how could she gaze on the manly form, the finely chiselled face of her only child, and think of the heroic heart and splendid mind, all wrapped in bestial and disgusting lethargy, without feeling and expressing the keenest anguish? Angels might have folded their wings and wept with her over the splendid wreck.

Corinne's slumbers that night were neither deep nor quiet, and the next morning her father and sister, with their guest, observed a subdued expression in her usually mirthful face and manner, which, while it added a greater charm to her beauty, they could in no wise account for. Even the little Irene was tended and caressed without the usual gay smile and cheerful manner.

“You are not well, Cora,” said Blanche, anxiously.

“Perfectly well, dear sister,” she replied, “but a little dull from passing a sleepless night.”

“The excitement of the last few days has been too much for even your gay spirits. I must confess that I was heartily glad to return to the beloved quiet of home,” replied Blanche.

“I was fearful,” said Mr. Leslie, smiling, “that the difficulty which you seemed to have last night in finding your way home would tire you. What road did you take?”

“We followed you, dear father,” said Cora, slightly confused; “but the night was beautiful and——”

“You were disposed to enjoy it; however, refresh yourself by taking a siesta before dinner, and when I return let me see smiles on your lips and roses on your cheeks again,” said Mr. Leslie, kissing them both affectionately. He then proceeded, as was his usual custom, to visit the old and infirm on his estate, listen to their grievances and supply their wants; after which, mounting his horse, he generally rode around the plantation, cheering by his presence and kind manner those who worked or tilled the soil for him. He always ended the morning by spending an hour in overlooking the erection of a small gothic structure, which he intended to use as a summer study-room. It was nearly completed,



and the workmen only waited the arrival of the stained glass for the windows, which was daily expected, to give the finishing touches to the exquisitely symmetrical little edifice. The quiet and shaded location which he had chosen was in admirable harmony with its style. A rocky elevation some forty feet high, covered with vines and shrubbery, through which a tiny stream bounded from one projection to another until it fell gushing and bubbling into its natural reservoir below, sheltered it on one side; while the tall, graceful pines, sturdy oaks, and the elegant willow, through which glimpses of the distant ocean might be viewed, almost surrounded it with their exuberant foliage and verdant shade. Devoted to music, Mr. Leslie had procured from the north a sweet-toned organ, for which a light and elegant gallery, elevated some six feet from the floor, had been thrown across the lower extremity of the room. Thither would he sometimes steal away from his beloved ones at home, and spend hours listening with quiet rapture to the sweet, solemn melodies which stole forth beneath his masterly touch. He had exacted a promise from his daughters not to go in the direction of this spot until he granted them permission; nor would he tell them why, and only added new excitement to their curiosity by telling them to anticipate a pleasant surprise. The greatest mystery and secrecy had been hitherto

observed; the workmen, paying more regard to its concealment than the truth, mystified the negroes by telling the most improbable ghost stories concerning the spot, and tales of murders and robberies, until there was not one among their number who would not have made a long circuit to avoid it; added to which they now sometimes heard those tones of solemn music at night floating on the air, as they passed about from one cottage to another on the estate, which fully confirmed them in the idea that the wood was haunted.

When the ladies adjourned that morning to the sitting-room, and were all engaged in some profitable or elegant employment, Blanche exclaimed, "I do wonder when Edgar and his friend will arrive!"

"I have a presentiment," said Cora, "that they will come to-day."

"And I," said Sister Therese, "hope most earnestly that letters will arrive for me from our superior; this luxurious style of living is not at all compatible with the spirit of our order. I long to be about my Master's business again."

"And me wonders when mine mamma will come," said little Irene, who, seated on Corinne's knee, had been watching with deep interest the dressing of a doll which had been purchased for her. Corinne drew her close to her bosom, and, stooping, kissed the child to hide her tears, and

said, "You are my child, darling. I will be your mamma, and always love and take care of you." Irene looked into her face for a moment with an anxious and serious expression of countenance, as if she wished to comprehend all the circumstances which surrounded her; but, being too young to remember distinctly the past, or understand the present, she contented herself with kissing her friend and telling her she "loved her like her own mamma," then turned again with renewed interest to her doll.

"My dear sister, whither would you go? Surely you will not leave us for three months to come," said Blanche.

"Thank you, my child, for your hospitable wishes. I wrote a week ago to our superior at the mother house, informing her of the sad event which has made me an inmate of your house, and requested an answer as early as possible, with an appointment to some mission. My destination, when I left Havre four weeks ago, was Boston; but some other sister has, no doubt, ere this supplied my place in the infirmary to which I was appointed," said Sister Therese.

"Havre! have you been to France?" inquired Corinne.

"Yes, dear. I was sent thither by the order of an eminent physician, who believed that my lungs were diseased; but, after spending the winter in a house belonging to our order in one of

the southern provinces of France, I felt entirely recovered; when, being anxious to return, I was placed under the protection of a merchant and his wife—Catholics—who were returning home to the United States. We had favorable winds and pleasant weather until we reached the capes, then—God’s holy will be done—you know the rest,” said Sister Therese, growing pale.

“And the parents of Irene?” inquired Cora.

“Were strangers to all on board and kept much aloof from the society of the rest of the passengers. I did not even hear their names,” she answered.

“God has sent her to me,” said Corinne, in a low voice; “we will never be separated. With my father’s consent, I will be a mother to her. I already love her with no common affection.”

“Heaven will bless you, my child,” said Sister Therese, looking tenderly at Corinne. “Oh! that I could see you both living members of the Church of Christ, participants and believers in those consolatory doctrines, and holy sacraments, which would be so well appreciated by souls like yours!”

“We intend to inform ourselves more particularly about it when our cousin arrives,” said Cora. No doubt he will be able to give us the best of reasons for embracing the Catholic religion; but, dear sister, you *must* remain, and by

your example also teach us. I am really wicked enough to hope those letters may not come."

"And I. We shall miss your society so much," added Blanche.

"And I yours," replied she; "but I belong not to myself. Neither my hopes, affections, nor wishes should be for an instant governed by earthly considerations. Like a soldier, a Sister of Charity must always be at her post, ready and willing to do the behests of her superiors in all those works of mercy and benevolence which our order demands, in Heaven's name, of its members."

"But could not one be saved without such strict obedience to earthly superiors?" inquired Corinne.

"Of course, my dear," answered Sister Therese; "this obedience to particular authority is not required of all, and all are not called to the same kind or degree of labor in the vineyard of the Lord; some have a vocation to become solitaries of the desert; others to practise the austerities of the Cistercian rule; some for the cloister, and others for works of more apparent and diffused charities in the world; while, at the same time, those seculars, who, in the faithful discharge of their relative duties to Almighty God, themselves, and the poor, practise His divine laws, and overcome temptations by prayer and good works, and in all things evince a spirit of

obedience to His grace, are equally assured of salvation through Jesus Christ. But to those who have a vocation, and place themselves, for the better perfecting their souls in grace, by the subjection of their body and will, under a superior, and an obligation of obedience to certain rules, obedience to superiors becomes obedience to God; thus it constitutes our greatest happiness, for those vows which are voluntary are not difficult to fulfil, and when we reflect that all our acts are done with reference to His holy will, His greater honor and glory, and the salvation of our own souls, then indeed does the yoke become easy and the burden light."

"Your order are not cloistered religious, I believe," said Blanche.

"No, dear; our cell is generally within a plain enclosure; our chapel, the parish church; our cloister, the streets of the city; our limits, obedience; our grate, the fear of God; and our veil, the most scrupulous modesty. In obedience to the rules established by our sainted founder, St. Vincent de Paul,\* we serve Jesus Christ in the persons of the poor and suffering members of society, and labor at our sanctification by endeavoring to imitate him by performing our duties in a spirit of humility, simplicity, and charity, and with that purity of intention which excludes all vanity, human respect, or self-love. He pro-

\*Abelly, Vie de St. Vincent, b. ii. ch. 3.

posed to us also strict obedience, indifference to place or office, and poverty, that we might the better accustom ourselves to a condition which becomes the servants of the poor; patience, in order to suffer cheerfully and for the love of God, all the inconveniences, raillery, slander, and contradictions which we may experience, even in doing a good service to our neighbor.”\*

“Truly, one should be a saint to belong to such an order; but tell me, dear sister, are your vows perpetual?” inquired Corinne.

“No!” answered Sister Therese, smiling; “after a novitiate of five years we make a vow of poverty, charity and obedience, the obligation of which ceases at the expiration of every year, when we renew it if we remain in the community.”

“Ah, I like that,” said Corinne; “one feels more like a human being when one has a small particle of human will left; but do many leave at the expiration of the appointed time?”

“It is a thing of most rare occurrence for a sister to abandon her vocation,” said the sister.

“Better still. But tell me, what remuneration do those of your order receive who minister to the sick and afflicted?” said Cora.

“None, positively,” said Sister Therese; “our rules prohibit us from receiving even a small present from those who demand our charitable

\*Mrs. Seton was foundress of the order in America.

offices. Instead of considering ourselves entitled to remuneration, we are instructed to look on ourselves as debtors to the poor, since our services to them are superabundantly compensated by the rich inheritance which is accumulating for us in heaven, and are well rewarded even in this life by the interior peace and eminent satisfaction which we reap from a faithful discharge of our duties."

"It is sublime," said Corinne. "I can now readily understand how good works and love towards God depend on each other. One cannot exist without the other. One of these days I will be a Sister of Charity myself, perhaps. But' listen! Carriage wheels and horses' feet dashing at a rapid rate up the avenue at this hour! Who can it be?"

She ran to the window, and, looking out, saw a travelling carriage, covered with dust and loaded with trunks, sweeping round the gravelled carriage-way in front of the house, and caught a single glimpse of a face which she at once recognized, though much travel-worn, as her cousin St. Johns. "Oh, it is Edgar! he has come. Come, Blanche, let us run down quick to meet him. Dear, dear cousin, how glad I am; come, Blanche, quick! he will be in before we get down," cried Corinne, seizing Blanche by the hand, who, more timid than her sister, and situated differently towards her cousin, shrunk from



meeting him with so much affectionate frankness.

“I cannot, indeed, my dear Cora,” she said, drawing away her hand; “I will follow you in a moment. You have excited me too much by the suddenness of your news, and, remember, my cousin brings a stranger with him, and one would like to be composed at the first meeting.”

“Nonsense! Thank patience, I am not an affianced, so off I go to meet our cousin as he should be met,” said Corinne, laughing, as she ran from the room. In another moment she was clasped in the arms of her cousin, Edgar St. Johns, who had ascended the steps of the front entrance just as she reached the door.

“God bless you, my sweet cousin,” he said, kissing her forehead again. “Where is Blanche? Ah, Blanche!” he said, approaching her as she stood at a little distance with downcast eyes and flushed cheeks; “my cousin, have you no word of welcome for me?”

“You are welcome home, Edgar, truly welcome,” said she, in a low voice, as he kissed her cheek respectfully.

He then introduced the sisters to his friend, calling him simply Father Borgia, who was welcomed by them after the southern fashion, as if he had been an old and valued acquaintance; after which they all adjourned to the drawing-room.

“Dear old homestead!” exclaimed the young man, gazing fondly around him; “foreign lands have their charms, but none like thine. Where is Uncle Leslie? where is Blanche? Aha! there comes Mrs. Murray; how are you, my good old friend? You see I’ve come back again to tease you for something nice to eat. Come in, Amy—no need of peeping; and Bob—how are you all—all, how are you?” said he, shaking each one of those he had named by the hand.

Mr. Leslie soon came in, followed by Blanche, who had been in search of him, and, after embracing his nephew, in the kindest manner welcomed Father Borgia with all the urbanity of a courteous and polished gentleman. Little Irene came bounding in from her play. Her history was briefly whispered to Edgar, who lifted her tenderly in his arms and kissed her. Father Borgia laid his hand kindly, with a silent benediction, on her head. St. Johns seemed to have forgotten the gravity of a man, and was as wild with joy as a schoolboy at being home once more; the whole house resounded with cheerful conversation and mirth, and between one and two o’clock at noon his uncle’s people, who had heard of his arrival, came thronging up to see him. He had a word, a smile, and a gift for all, with many promises to see and converse with them on the morrow.

At dinner the family were first reminded of the

change in his religious sentiments. Ere Father Borgia and himself took their places at the table they stood for a moment or two in silence, making an act of gratitude to Almighty God for the blessings they were about to receive; after which they distinctly crossed themselves with the sign-manual of faith, and seated themselves with the rest. Sister Therese did not make her appearance in the social circle until evening, when, being solicited to do so by Mr. Leslie and Blanche, she glided in among them silently and seated herself in a shaded corner. St. Johns was busy with Corinne, unpacking his box of presents. To his uncle he brought a splendid telescope, made on a new and improved plan, and a picture, bearing the name of Salvator Rosa, of an astrologer casting the horoscope of his daughter's destiny. The dark, troubled look of the old man, his white, flowing hair and snowy beard, his dark, rich vestments, drooping in rich folds about his shrivelled form, and the piercing light of his keen black eyes, contrasted well with the delicate beauty and faultless symmetry of the young girl who leaned over him. The long tresses of her hair fell like sunbeams on the dark velvet tunic which covered his shoulders, and mingled brightly with his snowy locks as she stooped over him, and with a settled expression of deep repose on her exquisite features watched the mystical movements of his hand. The lights and shades

of the picture were strong and the effect startling and wild, but one which none other than a master's hand could produce.

"Here is something which I thought would suit you, Cora," said her cousin, opening a casket which contained a splendid set of rose-colored cameos, and a smaller one which held two finely-set bracelets of mocho-stones, perfectly transparent and delicately veined with delineations representing mosses, leaves and branches in the substance of the stones. He brought her also one or two small cabinet pictures, and a number of rare curiosities which perfectly enchanted her.

"By my faith!" exclaimed Mr. Leslie, after gazing some time at the picture St. Johns had brought him, "it is an admirable likeness!"

"Of whom, uncle?" he inquired, coloring.

"Of Blanche," he said, calling the attention of all to the face of the astrologer's daughter, which at a second glance at the points of resemblance discovered by Mr. Leslie, certainly did resemble her.

"Within this, dear Blanche," whispered he, handing her an ivory case inlaid with gold, "is the most precious gift I could make my affianced wife. Be not offended at it."

She unclasped the fastenings and saw, lying on the velvet lining, an exquisitely-carved ivory crucifix and a rosary of pearl and gold. He watched her countenance with deep anxiety, and

when he saw a flush gradually mantling her cheeks he feared she was not altogether pleased with his gift; but this dread was quickly dispelled by seeing her raise the crucifix to her lips and press the pierced feet to them, while a tear rolled gently down each cheek and fell like gems among the pearls of the rosary. "Thank you, dear cousin," she said, gently; "your choice of a present has been most judicious. I would not give it in exchange for the most costly jewels which could be offered me." He pressed her hand, and proceeded to uncover one or two rare pictures on sacred subjects which he had selected for her. Old coins, fragments of antique marbles, small and exquisitely-formed vases of porphyry and gold were next displayed, with a few magnificent mosaics, which, delicately shaded and evenly arranged, had to be examined closely to distinguish them from fine paintings. "Here, Cora," said he, drawing a large package from the depths of the box, "here is a roll of silk for our old friend Mrs. Murray; I bought it in Florence for her; and here are gay stuffs, handkerchiefs and beads without number from Paris and Lyons, for Amy and her companions. You and Blanche must distribute them to-morrow."

Blanche removed the lamp-shade which had screened Sister Therese from the observation of all, and approached her for the purpose of showing her the crucifix. A glare of light streamed

suddenly on her face, and St. Johns, whose eyes were at the moment following the movements of Blanche, touched Father Borgia, and, pointing towards her, whispered, "Look, Father!"

"Ah!" he replied, after looking a moment, "that is no apparition, certainly; it is the same sister we saw at Havre, who, in attempting to snatch a lame child from beneath the wheels of a diligence, was herself thrown down and in danger of being crushed to death by the crowd of vehicles which were passing to and fro."

"Had she fainted when you rescued her?"

"No; she retained consciousness and presence of mind throughout, and with one hand grasping the crucifix, and the other arm about the beggar-child, she remained perfectly quiet; a step forwards or backwards—a shriek, or the slightest movement—and she would have been instantly crushed by the confused and frightened horses, which the skill of their drivers could scarcely manage. Do you not remember how very composedly she thanked me, after I had with difficulty extricated her from her perilous position, for saving her life? and how not an emotion seemed to move her features until I placed a few francs into the hand of her protegee, the beggar-child? Her smile was then perfectly radiant. I have never forgotten it. But how she came here is a mystery to me, and I must after Cora to learn her history."

As Father Borgia approached to exchange a few kind words with her, the religieuse arose with dignity, and, kneeling at his feet, claimed his blessing, which he gave in a kind and impressive manner. He soon ascertained that she was the same sister of whom they had just been speaking, and after hearing her little narrative gladdened her inmost heart by telling her that she could come the next day to confession, and probably receive, on the following morning, the most holy Eucharist.

Adjoining the apartment which had been always occupied by St. Johns when at home, and was looked on by common consent as his peculiar property, was a smaller room, long and narrow, with one large window at the upper extremity, in which he kept his books, and where he generally retired to study or paint, an art of which he was remarkably fond. This he fitted up the next day, with his uncle's consent, as an oratory, and placed within it a small portable altar, which he had purchased and brought with him from Rome. It had been duly blessed, and Father Borgia had obtained permission to celebrate the holy mysteries on it whenever circumstances required it. The crucifix and candelabras belonging to it were rich and costly, and when they were arranged on it, with clusters of bright flowers between, the effect was imposing and solemn. A drapery of scarlet cashmere

soon softened the glare of light from the window, and a few fine, large paintings on sacred subjects gave a holy expression to its bare walls and general aspect. Blanche was delighted, and expressed her pleasure at the arrangement with frankness, while Corinne was serious and silent. They with their father, through a feeling of courtesy to their guests, attended the first religious ceremony which was performed in it, and were much impressed by the solemnity of the scene and by the profound devotion with which their cousin and the Sister of Charity received from the hands of Father Borgia the holy Eucharist.

At the request of Sister Therese the little Irene was in a day or two conditionally baptized, as from all that could be gleaned from her her parents were Protestants.

The mild and dignified manners of Father Borgia, his unostentatious piety and deep learning, won in a few days Mr. Leslie's sincere regard; while the consistent and steady character of his nephew's piety—his chastened gayety and deep devotion to the faith he professed, and all of its observances—won for the strange religion, which had been so providentially introduced at Elverton Hall, the respect of all. In amicable discussions many an hour glided pleasantly away, and Mr. Leslie confessed voluntarily that the Catholic religion was not only ancient, but thoroughly consistent with the spirit she professed.



## CHAPTER VII.

FATHER BORGIA—FIRST IMPRESSIONS—HIGH  
CHURCH AND LOW.

I AM surprised," said Mr. Leslie one day to his nephew, "to hear your friend speak our language with such purity of accent. His expressions are always well chosen and his pronunciation correct."

"He is the most perfect linguist I ever knew," replied Edgar, "and speaks six other languages quite as well as he does our own. He tells me that he always had in view one ruling wish, which was to spend his life in the arduous duties of foreign missions, which not only inspired him with greater fervor in his pursuit of learning, but actually accelerated his studies rapidly."

"Did you not say that he was an Italian?"

"Yes, and of high birth. The blood of royalty itself courses through his veins; but this he wishes to forget, and be forgotten by the world. He has permission to travel six or eight months, after which he is to go on a mission beyond the Rocky Mountains, where I have no doubt but

that his holy example and zealous labors will accomplish a vast amount of good."

"Such an apostolical spirit is certainly worthy of a religion which claims an apostolic succession," said Mr. Leslie. "Are such instances common?"

"My dear uncle, they are of constant occurrence. It is a common thing, now as in days of old, for persons of the highest standing, talents and immense wealth to sacrifice *all*, that they may more unreservedly serve Almighty God and imitate the virtues of His Son. He descended from his high estate to set us an example of every Christian perfection; they descend from theirs that they may more worthily and truly imitate Him."

"I shall regret the necessity which will deprive us of Father Borgia's society," said Mr. Leslie, after a long, thoughtful pause. "But, Edgar, you have never yet told us what produced your first favorable impressions of the Catholic religion—a religion so diametrically opposed in every way to those tenets which from your earliest youth you were taught."

Just then a servant entered and handed two letters to Sister Therese. They were those which she had been so long expecting, but which had been detained on the road in consequence of the irregularity of the mails in that section of the country. They were filled with the kindest and

most motherly expressions of affection, and breathed throughout a spirit of tender piety, which, while it consoled her, animated her still more with interior strength and courage in her vocation. She was advised to remain a short time longer with her hospitable entertainers, fearing that her strength was not entirely restored; which was a fact, for her system had received a shock which, although it did not affect her general health, had debilitated her vital energies greatly.

The letter contained a request for her to come on to the mother-house at E—— as soon as she felt able to undertake so long a journey, and funds sufficient to defray her travelling expenses and meet any ordinary contingency. As soon as the letters were refolded the affectionate family gathered around her with the kindest expressions and hopes that she would be able to prolong her stay among them some time longer. When they heard that she was allowed to do so, nothing could surpass the warm welcome which, expressed in the language of their sincere hearts, made her almost imagine herself among the friends of her youth.

“And now,” said Corinne. “that this event which has given us all such sincere gratification has been adjusted, you will go on, Edgar, to tell us how it happened that you embraced the religion of Rome. Did I not know the strong under-

current and firmness of principle which flows beneath your love for all that is grand and beautiful, I should undoubtedly accuse you of having been led away by the imposing rites and gorgeous ceremonies of the Catholic religion."

"They have charmed many a wiser head," said his uncle, smiling.

"Who followed them, as did the Eastern princes the radiant light of the new-born star, until they were led with unerring truth to Jesus Christ," replied Edgar.

"We must at least charitably hope so," said Blanche; "but you are keeping us in suspense, still, Edgar, about the subject in question."

"Well," said he, "to begin, my first Catholic impressions were produced by noticing, while travelling, the distinct difference which existed in the prosperity, political influences and social order between those countries and provinces which are exclusively Catholic and exclusively Protestant in their religion. In the first I found the inhabitants, from the nobles down to their peasants, actuated by the same spirit of peace, unity and order, enjoying the same holy consolations, entitled to the same religious privileges, and all acknowledging the same spiritual authority. A benign influence seemed to pervade all classes, while the spirit of the religion they professed reconciled each one to the various duties of his state. Cheerfulness, contentment and modesty

are the characteristics of the lower orders, while those who occupy a more elevated position in society, filled with that charity which is only found on the broad basis of the Catholic religion, regard all their privileges and wants with paternal care."

"Truly," said Corinne, smiling, "you would have one believe that the Catholic religion creates a Utopia wherever it is diffused—but go on."

"The Catholic religion, my dear cousin," he replied, "is the only one which possesses those three divine qualities—faith, unity and charity, which are so essential to a religion which claims the eternal God as its origin, and which alone can bring heaven to earth under its holy influences. All that is holy, all that is benevolent or sublime, are fostered beneath its sacred influences; it alters the lion soul of man to such meek patience and humble love that it forgets its tyrant nature and reposes in peace with the lamb. But to continue: I was obliged oftener than once, while wandering with observant eyes through the Protestant provinces, states and cantons of Europe, to exclaim, 'This religion is for the prince, and not the beggar!' for no penance, no fruits of repentance, no abnegation or love of the cross did it teach. Except to believe in Christ, and the merits of His satisfaction for the salvation of mankind, there seemed nothing else for them to do but fold their hands in peace and enjoy the

world and its sensualities. I saw no voluntary poverty among them, no descending from earthly honors, or selling all their possessions for the good of the poor, and no forsaking all else to follow Christ and imitate the divine humility of His life by becoming the servants of the poor and afflicted, as in Catholic countries. No; there was none of this. There were only two points on which all seemed united—they believed in Christ and the accomplishment of his mission to earth, as they did any other well authenticated historical fact, and were united in one strong bond of supreme hatred towards Catholics; while among them were wild visionary spirits, who, in accordance with the latitude which the rules of their creeds allowed, admitted of no superior authority, who, continually expounding or translating the Holy Scriptures to suit either their ideal perceptions, their sensual wishes or depraved natures, made continual dissension on points of doctrine. Fanaticism, and frequently transcendentalism, I saw abounding as the natural consequences of their loose and unsanctified systems; while the lower orders, generally ignorant and acknowledging none but a civil authority, were morose, jealous and cunning. Their pastors they seemed to consider no better than themselves; *they* explained the Scriptures and preached—so could they; they had their peculiar notions of religion—so had they equal privileges;

their heads, who had seceded from the ancient Church, disagreed obstinately concerning articles of faith—their successors were still doing the same; and, never satisfied with the new religion, or tranquil under its influences, were always lopping off or adding new wonders to their creeds; there was no restraining power, no voluntarily acknowledged spiritual or apostolical authority to guide them—*they* were at liberty to do the same. I tell you, my dear uncle, that as a mere observer of men these things made a powerful impression on me. It is true I saw the splendid old cathedrals in Catholic countries, and witnessed all the gorgeous circumstances peculiar to our ceremonial. I wept before the painted delineations of the death of our Lord, the agonies of martyrs, and the acts of saints, and learned to reverence their virtues and respect the mother of Christ, at least quite as much as some of my countrymen reverence the mother of Washington; and though these things appealed powerfully to my feelings, affected my imagination and charmed my exterior senses, *they* alone could never have effected a material and essential change in my religious principles. But in Protestant churches neither senses nor soul were gratified. They had no exterior signs or symbols of their faith in Christ, with nothing to attract the too often wandering senses to a focus of devotion, beyond a sometimes eloquent ser-

mon or an impressively read liturgy, and discourses or lectures invariably mixed up with misrepresentations and abuse of Catholics. Thus, fine singing, cold prayers and a colder religion failed quite as much to win me. These impressions I repeat as they occur to me, and though not reduced to regular order, you may depend on their truth. While travelling through the Venetian states I felt a slow fever creeping on me; my mind became lethargic and insensible to every emotion, and by the time I had arrived at B—— I was quite unconscious, and, wandering away from my hotel about dusk, was found lying insensible on one of the quays by a member of a charitable confraternity, whose laws obliged all who belonged to it to be ready on the tolling of their bell, at a moment's warning, to leave business, gain or pleasure and give their assistance freely in all emergencies of public or private calamity, in case of sudden death or illness of strangers on the streets, the falling of a house, or accidents either by fire or flood. It is composed entirely of citizens, nobles, laborers and merchants, who, while engaged in their errands of charity, wear a full brown cloak of serge, with a large hood which almost entirely conceals their faces, and thus the peasant and the duke, perchance assisting hand in hand with some good work, give their services secretly to Him who will in a coming day 'reward them openly.'



There are peculiar strokes of the bell for different quarters of the city, and a certain number announcing to the members at once how much assistance is required. Thus they all know as soon as an accident occurs whither to go and how many of their number are required, and are all, noble and ignoble, coadjutors in those blessed works of charity, which in Protestant countries are generally consigned to the heartless minions of authority, or the petty dignitaries of a parish. I was borne by four of their number to the hospital, of which Father Borgia was the chaplain. He was my guardian; he watched, tended and administered day and night to my wants, until I recovered; and all done, not for gain, but for the love of God; for how did they, those brothers, or he, know but that I was some poor outcast, some starving prodigal?

“During the slow hours of convalescence he was my companion and friend, and while he indulged my taste for intellectual conversation, continually directed my soul beyond all to its eternal destiny. His arguments completed that which practical observation had so favorably commenced; I will not repeat them. I leave that task to him, hoping that, by God’s grace, you may all hear them with the same fruits.”

“But the superstitious practises in Catholic countries, about which travellers write so much; you have said nothing about them,” said Cora.

“First let me ask you, my friends, has Protestantism ever given birth to such a society as that which I have just described, or such an order as the Sisters of Charity?” inquired St. Johns.

“Singularly enough, it has not,” said Mr. Leslie.

“Not singular, my dearest uncle. When it separated itself from that ancient Church, with which the spirit of God—and God is charity—dwelleth forever, they became illiberal and contracted in their views and aimless in their objects. It is not difficult to discover by certain signs the acts of a religion whose founder is divine, and one whose origin is merely human, whose leaders, as some one, inelegantly enough but truly says, were vow-breakers and murderers,” said Edgar.

“Charity! charity, Edgar!” exclaimed Mr. Leslie.

“Dear sir, have I wounded the feelings of any?” said he, looking round; “if so, I regret it, but cannot retract what I just said, for the facts which I stated are self-evident. If a surgeon were to separate my arm from my body, it would be no less dead than those religions which, like useless members separated from Christ’s living body, the Church, become lifeless and wither. It is no charity to advocate error at the expense of truth; oh, no! I would not, could not, dare do it. But if I could, how readily would I bring all

the world under the sweet subjection of our holy religion! Could I 'open my arms like seas, and grasp in all the shores,' with what rapture would I lay their people at the foot of the cross and bid them enjoy the rich consolations which there await them. They walk in a valley of shadows, oh! that they could see the light; they thirst in the desert for water, and hunger for bread; oh! that they would return to the kingdom of their Father, to the rich inheritance of the children of God, where the waters of life give perpetual beauty to its shores, and where the food of angels, the delicious bread from heaven, will satisfy the hunger of their souls."

"Such is true charity," whispered Sister Therese to Blanche, who sat gazing, with moistened eyes, on the illuminated countenance of her betrothed.

"My dear cousin," said Corinne, after a short pause, "do Catholics really worship images and pay divine honors to the Virgin Mary?"

"The Council of Trent, if you will admit its authority," he replied, "defines two things as the belief of the Catholic Church on this head: First, That images of Christ and the Blessed Virgin, and of the other saints, are to be exposed and retained particularly in churches. Second, That due honor and respect are to be paid to them.\* This is the whole of the Catholic doctrine on this

\*Sess. xxv. de Invocat. SS., p. 289.

point. We do not believe that any virtue resides in those sculptured marbles, or painted effigies, for which they ought to be honored. The respect we show them by placing them in our churches is referred to their prototypes; we honor them because they have been honored of God, and gone up to live forever in the beatitude of his presence. Thus the glory of His divinity is reflected on them, and from them to us, and from us back again, with our prayers, to its first great source. We know there is no divinity in them, for these images can neither see, hear, nor help us, but we keep them in our churches because such representations are admirably calculated to bring our cold and stagnant feelings in closer communion with the persons whose illustrious examples we love and cherish, and whose virtues we desire to imitate. It is a common thing for Protestants to brand those acts, whose meaning they cannot comprehend, with the epithet of idolatrous or superstitious! What can be more unjust? They regard the misrepresentations made by the enemies of our faith as infallible, and pronounce our own explanations false. Thus they accuse us of worshipping the blessed Mother of our Lord, when we know it would be idolatry to do so; and that we depend more on her for salvation than on Christ, when we ourselves draw the broadest distinction between the character of our petitions; for while we be-

seech God to *have mercy on us*, we simply, in our prayers to the Virgin, say, *Pray for us*. Our veneration and devotion to her and the saints is also veneration and devotion to Almighty God, and refer distinctly to Christ as our only mediator. We honor them as His servants, sanctified not through any merit of their own, but through Jesus Christ, and holy because admitted to the beatitude of heaven, where we believe they pray for us, that Almighty God, who with tender mercy had regarded them, while struggling through the temptations and dangers of life, might also pity us, who are still tearful pilgrims of this lower world. Does it not seem rational?"

"Quite so," they all responded.

"Believe me, then, my dear relations, when I assure you that all those usages and customs of the Church which have been stigmatized as idolatrous and superstitious deserve the compliment with as little justice as this. All are emblems of some beautiful point of faith, or the exterior signs of the soul's firm belief in those imperishable doctrines revealed by Christ, taught and confirmed by the Holy Ghost, in the persons of the apostles and their successors, down to the present era of time. Centuries, ages, have rolled away since Peter and Paul centred this faith at Rome; since Polycarp, the disciple of St. John the Evangelist, died, a martyr to its truths; since St. Athanasius, St. Dionysius, St. Cyprian, St.

Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Dominick, St. Bernard, St. Francis and other illustrious doctors and saints of the Church declared and preached the same holy doctrines which she at this very day proposes for the belief of her children; since the vain heretics of the first and succeeding ages beat like the waves of perdition against her everlasting gates, then perished, exhausted by their own madness, leaving her unshaken and unharmed; and still she stands, immutable as the rock of ages, and oh! how beautiful, how spotless does she appear! Like the eternity from which she sprung, ancient but forever new, and living in the light of a perpetual day, she stands while empires have crumbled and nations have perished around her. The Church triumphant, enriched with the glory of martyrs, confessors, virgins and saints—the suffering elect, detained in purgatory, and the Church militant, are one in the confession of the same faith and by the communion of saints. Descending in splendid order, it proceeds from the throne of the living God, like a ladder of angels, to this lower world, bringing down rich graces to those who ‘follow the Lamb,’ while it affords a bright, safe passage to those who ‘have fought the good fight and finished their course’ through temptation and tribulation, whereby they may ascend rejoicing to the kingdom of their Father.”

Blanche wept, Corinne looked grave and

Mr. Leslie was silent. He was a man of too keen perceptions and too deeply read both in religious and political history to advance any of those hackneyed and untenable arguments, whose very paucity he was well aware was enough to confound the baseless theories they support.

“Edgar,” said he, after a long pause, “I have always regarded the first ages of the ancient faith as pure, and overshadowed by the glory of God; convince me that it is still so, and no consideration could detain me from its fold.”

“My dear uncle,” said St. Johns, rising and taking his uncle’s hand, “it *is* pure—it *is* the same. Changes have taken place in the opinions of men, but not in the ancient faith. Those new inventions of the fifteenth century, which their authors dignified with the name of religions, first diffused abroad that spirit of calumination against the Church which led men to believe that she had become impure, and blackened with error and idolatry. The ages of faith may have passed away, but not that divine spirit which our Lord promised and gave to his Church to direct her in all truth until the consummation of time.”

“But, my dear cousin,” said Corinne, hastily, “if the Spirit of God, as you say, was bestowed, and has always abided with this Church, was not

this enough to have protected her from schism, scandal and heresy?"

"Cora," said St. Johns, "you remind one of the centurion who bade Christ, if he was God, to come down from the cross and save himself; and yet, was he less God because he did not? Because he obeyed not the arrogant and taunting command of a mortal?"

"Certainly not," she replied, smiling at his warmth.

"Well; and in not a less degree have the promises of God to His Church been accomplished. The Holy Ghost has been with her through all ages, and still is; has protected and guided her in all truth, and still does; and preserved her from the beginning in the unity of one faith, while those branches which have separated from her communion bear no fruits but those of discord and division among themselves; or, separated from the spirit which giveth strength unto eternal life, they wither and perish. Believe me, it is men and times which have changed, and not the religion which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in his infinite wisdom and love, established. Assailed by false teachers and mendacious historians, the light of her faith, once shining over the whole earth, has been gradually hidden from those who, separated from her holy communion, reproach and villify her. But, like



the sun, which, when the noxious vapors of earth shadow his glory, remains unchangeably bright, so the Church, serene amid the tempest, firm and immovable, resting in light beneath the brooding wings of the Spirit of God, is still unchanged and unharmed, while her persecutors exclaim with as much reason as might men who are blind, 'Lo! there is no light in heaven or earth; all is dark and dangerous, because we ourselves cannot perceive the glories of day!' The Catholic religion teaches precisely the same faith, the same dogmas, the same morals, which she taught eighteen hundred years ago. Its truth is still attested by the conversion of whole nations and tribes to her fold, by miracles, by the holiness of saints and martyrs, who still go up covered with the glorious spoils of their warfare, from her bosom to the beatification of the celestial vision—is still distinguished by the continual persecution which is waged against her in that spirit which alone can proceed from the very gates of hell; by the never-failing increase of her children, who, alone of all the world, follow the footsteps of their Lord in the steep and narrow way of the cross. I feel like a pilgrim who, after a long exile, has just returned to his father's house to be no more exposed to the precarious vicissitudes of life forever. I look within myself, and can scarcely identify the Catholic St. Johns with the heartless bigot he was a few months ago; so changed do I

feel. I understand the true meaning of FAITH and REPENTANCE, and in the divinely-instituted sacraments of the Church my soul enjoys the most perfect consolation. The beloved disciple declared that if all our Lord preached and performed on earth were written, the volumes would fill the world; how can I then express in a few cold words the beauty, the holiness, the purity, of this 'City of the eternal God?' But I feel it all; my heart is filled to excess with unexpressed eloquence, and all that I can do is to beg you, my best friends, by the eternal hopes you have of salvation, to enter at once within those gates, which the King of glory has opened for those who follow Him in the perfection of his saints."

A party of gay visitors, who had just arrived, entered, and gave at once a decided check to their interesting conversation. The frivolous chit-chat of the world showed by comparison in most unfavorable contrast to it, a contrast which the little circle at Elverton Hall felt individually and strongly. They, however, exerted themselves to entertain their guests, who, not understanding the effort, could not appreciate it, and declared as soon as they were well out of hearing, "That the Leslies had positively been so stupid they gave them the horrors!"

"No wonder," said one, "for report says that Mr. St. Johns, who, you know, is engaged to Blanche, has joined the Catholics, and they say

that Mr. Leslie will not consent to the match until he leaves them and becomes a Protestant again."

"That he will never do," replied another; "for the priest who made him a Catholic followed him to this country to see that he keeps his oaths to him, and not only that, there is a nun at the Hall; and I hear the priest and herself are in high favor with the family; so, depend on it, sea and land will be compassed to make proselytes of the Leslies."

"And I will not be surprised," added another, "if they succeed. You know Mr. Leslie was always an odd kind of a man; indeed, to speak confidentially, our minister told my husband, who, you know, is a vestryman, that he was very visionary on religious subjects."

"Our minister lives in a glass house, now, then," replied the lady, "and cannot throw stones at Mr. Leslie or anybody else. He preaches strange doctrines, and it is said the bishop reprov'd him sharply more than once."

"Pshaw! he is only a Puseyite," said her companion, "and my husband says Pusey is the greatest and best man living; so Mr. Forrester must be right in advocating his doctrines."

"*My* husband says that Dr. Pusey is as bad as a Catholic priest, and what could be worse?" retorted her friend, "and that he has been suspended by the church authorities in England for

preaching Catholic doctrines, which I think is shocking in an Episcopal minister."

The ladies ended by getting into a warm dispute on the subject, which finally eventuated in a cessation of all friendly intercourse between them, proving the truth of the old saying, "Who can be right when the doctors themselves disagree?"

## CHAPTER VIII.

“Do not think that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”

—Matt. v. 17.

THE world has run mad, or I, that’s certain,” said Mrs. Murray to herself one day as she sat in state, whipping up a raspberry float for dinner.

“I hope not, my dear old friend!” exclaimed Corinne, who, with Blanche, had entered the housekeeper’s room, as they very often did, to spend an hour with her; “but tell us why you think the world has gone mad?”

“Because everything is changed at the old Hall ever since them outlandish people have been here. I wish the same wind that blew ’em here would take ’em off again,” she replied, with dignity.

“Our guests!” exclaimed Blanche; “oh, dear Mrs. Murray, such inhospitable wishes from you?”

“Yes,” she said, giving an extra flourish to her egg-whip, “for everything will go wrong while such unearthly doings are going on.”

“You amaze me!” said Cora. “Of what doings are you talking?”

“Why, you see, Miss Cora, first of all, here comes that pale lady from the wreck; the next night the whole place is put in an uproar by the strangest music on the air—I heard it myself, and I never heard the like before; then here comes the gentleman from furrin parts with Mr. Edgar, and sets up idols under the old roof to be worshipped, with the strangest fixin’s and doings, like as if he was working spells; and as to sleeping! I declare his bed has never been tumbled since here he’s been; and if he lays down at all, it must be on that old armed settee in his room, that has a hard bottom and no cushions; and the other night, miss, when I had the toothache and had to get up to get something for it, I come by his room, and, as sure as you’re born, I heard the sound of a whip and some one saying, ‘Have mercy on me! have mercy on me!’ It must have been after one o’clock; but it give me such a fright that the toothache stopped right naturally of itself, and I got back to bed quick, I tell you.”

“The discipline which we have heard of,” whispered Blanche.

“I suppose so,” she replied, in the same undertone. “But, my dear Mrs. Murray, I am truly sorry you are so prejudiced against our guests, and cannot help thinking that you were mistaken about the music, and other things.”

“No, I was not, Miss Cora; I have not lived to

this age to be scared at nothing. I have been a Baptist now thirty years. The ice was broke in the river for me to be baptized, and although I never was right clear of the sore throat and colds and the like, when my sins were washed away my diseases went with 'em. Since then I have always read my Bible and kept the devil at bay until now; but he's taken up his bodily abode down yonder in the 'Hollow,' where the music comes from, and has high doings, I warrant. Why, miss, the overseer told me to-day that he saw the furrin gentleman go that way twice, and followed him a little way down, then in a minute or so heard the music and a loud voice singing in an unknown tongue! And as to Mr. Edgar, he's kind, to be sure, like old times, but he worships the idols the other sets up; and Bob told me yesterday, after I made with my own hands a chicken fricasee—you know he always liked 'em—the deuce a bit did he eat of it, or any other meat, but dined off an Irish potato and an egg, the very same that the other eat; and here comes your father to-day and says, says he, 'Mrs. Murray, we will have no meat hereafter on the tables on Fridays; nothing need be prepared but fish and vegetables,' ” said the old lady, whipping her eggs most energetically.

“Cousin Edgar has become a Catholic, you know, Mrs. Murray, and our friends are also Catholics. Their religious customs and habits

are entirely different from our own; for instance, they fast a great deal and never eat meat on Fridays," replied Cora.

"And why, pray?" said the housekeeper, looking as wise as Solon. "Are not all days alike, except the blessed Sabbath? and ain't everything the Lord made fit to eat at any time? I'm thinking, I am, that they're kin to the Jews."

"They abstain from meat and other luxuries on Fridays in commemoration of the Passion of our Lord, therefore they cannot be Jews," said Cora, smiling; "and as to the Sabbath, which even you revere, my good friend, it is not the day which God commanded the Jews to keep holy, and which, occurring on Saturday, they still revere as they did in the days of Moses."

"Well, then, our Saviour changed the day, and if He made the change it is just as well," said Mrs. Murray.

"No, he did not," said Blanche; "the Catholic Christians of the first ages of Christianity did it, that the resurrection of Christ might be honored through all ages, especially on that day, and for other important reasons."

"I don't believe a word of it!" exclaimed Mrs. Murray, "begging your pardon, miss; but if everybody nowadays is to believe everything the idolaters say, one had better be dead. There's no wonder people that has no religion runs after strange gods; but the religion of our Lord—he



was a Baptist, you know—is good enough for a poor sinner like me. This float is ready; here, Amy, get the cream and take it up.”

She was sorely puzzled, and as she walked the stiff folds of her dress rustled with portentous sounds, and the high crown of her linen cap seemed towering up to the very ceiling, while her large, round spectacles, slipping down to the tip of her nose, revealed the indignant expression of her eyes.

“I hope you will live fifty years longer,” said Blanche, kindly, “Catholics notwithstanding.”

“So do I, from my heart,” said Cora, “and become one in the bargain; but no,” she exclaimed, seeing the old lady bridle up and turn red, “not, at least, until you think their way is the right one.”

“Which will be never!” she said, indignantly.

“Well, let us always hope for the best,” persisted Cora; “and now kiss your children, you best of old friends, and let us go, for I hear the dinner-bell.”

Mrs. Murray was soothed, and praying that the Lord would preserve them from idolatry, kissed them with all the pride and affection of a tender mother.

When the dessert was removed and the servants had withdrawn Cora gave an amusing description of Mrs. Murray’s panic (omitting, of course, her nocturnal adventure), at which they

were all much diverted. "And now, my dear father," she said, "everybody says the place is haunted by a musical spirit, which amuses itself every evening in the old Hollow, with playing wild, unearthly strains, and singing in an unknown tongue."

"I have heard it myself," said Mr. Leslie, exchanging a meaning look with Father Borgia.

"Then it can be accounted for rationally," said Cora, with decision; "for I know you too well to believe you would ever practise on the fears of the credulous for the sake of enjoying a practical joke."

"You are right, my love; I would not. The mystery shall be solved to your entire satisfaction to-morrow morning, if you can wait so long," said Mr. Leslie.

"Certainly," said Cora. "That little insinuation of yours has put me on my dignity, and I promise you I'll wait a year if you say so, merely to prove that Mother Eve's daughters have been slandered."

"No, until to-morrow will answer," he replied; "meanwhile, if you are not all engaged, we will take a ride on horseback this delightful evening as far, Blanche, as your favorite 'Pine Forest.'"

"Delightful!" said Blanche; "but do you and Cora go on horseback, and Sister Therese, little Irene and myself will have the barouche and take

a drive on the beach. Father Borgia can have your horse, Edgar; you know it is so gentle!"

Sister Therese thanked her gratefully for her kind arrangement, but declined, saying that she had promised to spend an hour with Amy's mother, who had been bedridden for two or three years.

"And I," said Father Borgia, "will accompany you on foot as far as the beach, where, with the lofty, bright heavens above me, like the dome of some mighty cathedral, and the waves rolling their thunders like music at my feet, I will remain, saying my office until your return. There I shall more devoutly feel my own nothingness and the unbounded power of God."

From some unaccountable cause Edgar declined going also, and Blanche, half affronted, entered the barouche with no other companion than Irene and the man who drove them. They did not return until sunset, and found Father Borgia sauntering slowly homeward, with his open breviary in his hand, saying aloud some of the sublime passages from the collection of Psalms which formed a part of the canonical office. Blanche tried to prevail on him to ride home, but he excused himself by telling her pleasantly that his task was not yet finished, and, waving his hand, they drove on and left him to his devotions and holy meditations. After tea they all adjourned to the eastern piazza. The

evening was perfectly delicious; a soft, balmy air came floating up from the ocean, and the moon, like a great pearl on the brow of night, shed a silvery mist over the waters and earth. No sounds except the distant murmur of the waves, the loud whisperings of the wind among the trees and flowers, and the occasional song of some startled bird which brooded over her young, were heard. The picturesque lights and shadows caused by the flood of radiance which descended so softly from heaven to earth inspired each heart with the most profound and tranquil admiration; and after conversing a short time on those light and elegant topics, poetry and science, which the witchery of the scene seemed to invoke, they gradually fell into a more serious train of thought, and remained for a short time silent.

“I think,” at last said Mr. Leslie, “it is worthy of remark that, while Catholicity is enriched with innumerable institutions of charity, which in their different degrees suit the wants and soothe the sufferings of all, Protestantism, in contracting its charities to one or two purposes only, is almost barren. Both profess the same divine origin, and yet but one follows, distinctly and generously, the literal precepts of the gospel.”

“God is charity,” replied Father Borgia; “thus it is one of the distinctive marks of his Church.

Separate it from religion, and religion exists no longer; cherish not its salutary practices, and what a scene of misery and crime will the world exhibit; and need I say to whom, above all others, the want-stricken, the poor, the friendless, the hungry, the naked and oppressed are indebted? No; the illustrious examples of charity afforded to every age, and increasing in breadth and splendor with the lapse of time, by the Catholic Church, make the fact too apparent. He whose birth was announced by the angel envoys of God with songs of rejoicing to the lowly Chaldean shepherds, to the most humble of Judea's sons, as they rested wearily beside their sleeping flocks, and messages of peace to earth and goodwill towards man, preached unto all the doctrines which include those two divine precepts of 'loving God supremely,' and 'our neighbor as ourselves.' Stimulated by this sacred morality, the faithful sons and daughters of the Church go forth courageously to the constant and practical performance of those good works and heroic actions by which alone they can imitate Him whom they follow up Calvary's narrow steep, while at the same time it teaches them patience, meekness, long-suffering, humility, and forbearance, in the various relations which they hold with God and their fellow-men. Himself Charity, therefore does the religion which our Divine Teacher in infinite wisdom and mercy es-

tablished, possess it in a pre-eminent degree, and diffuse its spirit, not only theoretically, but in the fullest and most practical sense of the word, throughout those portions of the world which profess that unity of belief which alone acknowledges one faith, one Lord, and one baptism. To enumerate the splendid examples of charity which cast such a halo over the whole history of the Church; to describe its soul-purifying flow through hoary centuries and long ages, from the various orders established by the holy saints of old, gradually down to the widow who gives a mite, her all, would furnish a theme of inexhaustible interest."

"While I admit, my dear sir," said Mr. Leslie, "that Catholicity is pre-eminent in practices of charity; and this is no great concession, because its most violent adversaries publicly give their testimony to that effect; I cannot help thinking that too much stress is laid on the *works*, which makes it appear that you think the satisfaction made by Christ for our sins is in somewise incomplete or imperfect—your penitential works, for instance, which are, I believe, often practised beneath the guise of charity, with great austerities and humiliations."

"I repeat again," said Father Borgia, "that God is Charity! Whosoever loveth Him will practise all those holy precepts which his law enjoins. We are commanded to feed the hungry,

clothe the naked, visit the sick and those who are in prison, and taught by the divine oracle that by so doing we minister to Christ himself, who tells us that a cup of cold water—surely the cheapest of all charities—given in His name to one of his beloved servants, will be remembered by Him when He comes with his Father in the clouds of heaven to judge the world. And though we believe that no creature whatsoever can make condign satisfaction either for the guilt of sin or the eternal pain due to it, this satisfaction being due to Christ our Saviour only, yet penitent sinners redeemed by Christ may, as members of Christ, in some measure satisfy by fasting, alms-deeds, and other works of piety, for the *temporal* pain which by the order of divine justice sometimes remains due after the guilt of sin and its eternal penalties are remitted. These penitential works are, notwithstanding, satisfactory no otherwise than as joined to that satisfaction which Jesus made on the cross, in virtue of which all good works find a grateful acceptance in the sight of God. Should one of your children offend you by some outrage against duty, would you not think it passing strange if, after you had freely pardoned them, they did not endeavor by more perfect acts of obedience, gratitude and love, to obliterate entirely from your remembrance the least shadow of their fault? Your love and forgiveness was

perfectly satisfactory to them, and yet the fruits of their repentance, shown by acts of humility and contrition, would be due to you."

"I must confess that all this sounds rational, and seems consistent with the practices of the first ages of Christianity. But, perhaps," continued Mr. Leslie, pleasantly, "in my nonconformity to the doctrines of certain creeds, I am too readily disposed to yield assent to that, which from its venerable age demands my respect."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Father Borgia, "that your error has not been greater, that your mind, heretofore acknowledging or yielding assent to that only to which all Christendom consents is divine, is more fully prepared to receive the truth as it is in Christ Jesus."

"Father," said Corinne, who had listened with deep interest to the conversation, "like all other Protestants—or heretics——"

"Leaving papists out of the question," said St. Johns, laughing; "one epithet you must own is quite as respectable as the other, Cora."

"Or heretics," she continued, giving her cousin a smart rap with her fan—"I have been taught to regard the Bible as the true rule."

"A rule which has been multiplied with a vengeance," again interrupted her cousin.

Father Borgia and Mr. Leslie smiled, but Cora very gravely went on—

"And looking on it in this light, shall feel



more reconciled to the pretensions of the Catholic Church to a divine origin, if you can furnish me with proofs from Scripture on which they may be founded."

"Assuredly," said Father Borgia, with alacrity; "for it is from the Holy Scriptures that we draw the most undeniable proofs of the divine origin of the Church. The holy men of Israel sung of it in their inspired canticles, and to the prophets of old it was pre-figured in their ecstatic visions as an 'eternal kingdom,' an 'enduring empire.' But whether written under the mysterious spirit of the old law, which prophesied in types, figures and shadows of the 'Lamb of God,' and of that 'covenant of God to man,' which through him 'shall stand for all generations,'\* or recorded under the benign influence of the new revelation of Jesus Christ as a Saviour to the world—they all breathe the same unity of meaning, and give testimony and full confirmation of the divine origin of the Church. The prophet Isaiah declares that 'God shall be her everlasting light,'† and that 'whosoever shall gather against her shall fall, and the nation that will not serve her shall perish,'‡ and that 'God's covenant with her is confirmed by a solemn oath never to be altered, like that of Noah.'§ Daniel thus foretells her indivisibility: In the days of those kingdoms the

\*Jeremiah xxxiii. 20, 21.

‡Isaiah ix. 12, 15, 17.

†Isaiah ix. 18, 19.

§Isaiah liv. 9.

God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom will not be delivered to another people; and it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever,\* while Isaiah again in more expressive terms, refers to the Church as a flock, and the Messiah as its shepherd, in these remarkable words: 'he shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather together the lambs with his arms, and take them up in his bosom.'† As if these were not sufficiently explicit, the archangel Gabriel, the legate of the Most High God, all radiant with the splendors of heaven, and embalming the air with its sweet odors, when he descended to earth announced to the blessed maid of Nazareth that 'the Lord God would give unto the son she was to bear the throne of David his father, and he would reign in the house of Jacob his father, and of his kingdom there should be no end.‡ Following him came the angels who announced the birth of this illustrious king of the royal line of David—the son of God, and bade the shepherds go to Bethlehem and worship the 'new-born babe,' where they found the princes of the East offering their regal gifts and acknowledging him with exceeding joy as the 'Ruler of Israel' foretold by the prophet. After these we behold another; one who comes from the desert with solemn aspect,

\*Daniel ii. 44.

†Isaiah xl. 11.

‡Luke i. 32, 33.

and whose garments, dripping with the dews of heaven, are girt about with a leathern girdle, declaring aloud that this *kingdom* so long foretold was at hand, the King whereof would 'baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire.' Thus spoke he—the Baptist—the last of that solemn prophet train—the august precursor of Christ—of Him who came to establish the kingdom for 'which he was born'—who, while they stood together in the rippling waves of Jordan's flood, and while he administered the sacred rite to Jesus, and saw the baptismal waters streaming over his sacred form, 'beheld the heavens open and the Holy Ghost descending as a dove, and a voice from on high declaring, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Was not this glorious confirmation of his divine right to the title of a kingdom which was to endure forever? Did it not stamp with splendid certainty that he was the Messiah so long expected—the victim who was foretold to be slain for the sins of many, the heavenly Shepherd who had come to gather together his lambs in the safe shelter of one fold? How tender! how sublime was this coming together of the old period and the new era! how solemn the passing away of types and shadows! how glorious the accomplishment of that which they prefigured!"

"But," said Mr. Leslie, "is it not somewhat hypothetical, whether or not these prophecies

apply to the Church of Rome? That is, I believe, the argument you wish to prove; and how are we to determine that they do not refer to universal Christendom?"

"My dear sir," replied Father Borgia, "it is plain to perceive that those numberless prophecies in the Old Testament, some of which I have just quoted, can refer to none other than Christ and His Church, the fruition of which, gathered by his disciples and apostles, who planted the seeds in every nation, acknowledge but one source, but one life, and one Lord! Throughout the gospels our divine Saviour constantly speaks of his Church as 'the kingdom of heaven' and the 'kingdom of God;' thus, when speaking of its rapid progress, he says, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed;' and when predicting the vocation of the gentiles and exclusion of the Jews, he says, 'The kingdom of heaven is like to a king who made a marriage-feast for his son.' Thus the constant repetition of the assertion, both in the Old and New Testament, that the Church of Christ is a kingdom, can leave no doubt of its literal signification, or, rather, truth. You, sir, who are so well versed in the pages of ancient and modern history—who know all the principal events of the past and present ages—tell me, I pray you, does any earthly kingdom exist now which flourished eighteen—sixteen centuries ago? Does any

empire stand now, like an emblem of Eternity, which ruled then? Where, I ask, are the dynasties, the principalities, the powers of the first ages of the world? Methinks I hear a solemn voice echoing up from the buried past—where? This kingdom must, then, be spiritual. Where, then, are those who ‘stood up against her,’ with new and vain doctrines and blasphemous words, in the first and middle centuries of the Christian era? where their system? where their creeds? where their doctrines? *Perished.* Which of those sects, which now exist in opposition to her truth, existed even five centuries ago? *None;* therefore none of these can be the kingdom referred to. That it exists would be vain to doubt; but by what marks shall it be known? It must be *separate, entire and distinct;* it must be in the first place visible; it must acknowledge but one Lord, and obey only the authority of those appointed by him—for a kingdom divided in service against itself cannot stand—and avoid all those causes which would convert its peace into anarchy, and each one strive, as with one spirit, to promote its greater honor and more exalted glory. Where, then, is this visible kingdom of the Son of God—the everlasting Prince of Peace? What Church is there governed by his exclusive laws, and bound together by that *unity* which is the only preservative of Faith? What system or creed is there which yields im-

plicit obedience to those orders appointed, with vice-regal authority, by himself for the better government of his kingdom, and deem too perfect to be altered the code of laws which he in his wisdom established? Behold her as she stands, founded on a rock, as she has stood through all ages, unchanged in faith, beautiful in her purity, and rich with sanctity—the CATHOLIC CHURCH of ROME! If this kingdom exists, it exists alone in her, and if you admit that Christ established a Church on earth, you must also admit that within its folds is the kingdom of Christ.”

## CHAPTER IX.

## A PROLONGED CONTROVERSY—CONVERSIONS.

THERE was for a length of time a silence which none of the company seemed inclined to break. The truths urged by Father Borgia had sunk deep into all hearts.

At length Mr. Leslie spoke:

“Oh, Christendom!” he exclaimed, “how has thy seamless robe been torn! how is it possible to reconcile all those strange religious paradoxes, which claim the God of Wisdom as their author, with the truth? Admitting, however, that this ‘Kingdom’ and ‘Church,’ of which we have been speaking, are synonymous terms, and that the Catholic Church is one and yet the other, how are we to know that she has not fallen into error, and by her abominations forfeited the protection of God?”

“Because,” said Father Borgia, quickly, “*God cannot lie*. He is truth, and the truth alone emanates from him. His wisdom and justice are infinite, and the system of order by which

he governs all is, like himself, immutable and eternal; therefore he will not own those who subject themselves to the illusions of human inventions; therefore will he not recognize those folds as his who reject the law of his revealed word and the authority of his Church; therefore he cannot acknowledge those creeds as true which, professing, all of them, contradictory doctrines, war with each other in spirit, and, through their disunion and bitterness, against him; who have removed the ancient landmarks, and hewn out for themselves strange ways; who, while they preach the most inconsistent absurdities, and own no authority in matters of faith, are forever subject to the fantasies of their own imaginations and tossed hither and thither by every wind of doctrine! All which proceeds from God is of necessity holy and consistent throughout; therefore His church, to which he promised in the persons of his apostles and their successors, the Holy Spirit to enlighten them and protect her forever, must be holy and eternal. When Christ said to the prince of apostles, 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her,' he conveyed the most perfect idea of strength which one could possibly imagine, and a literal signification which all generations have been compelled to acknowledge. His promise was not vain. Built on a rock, how can she fail, and pro-



tected by the holy Spirit of the Eternal, how can errors or abominations creep into her fold? Thus did our divine Saviour promise strength, life, and durability to his spiritual kingdom, when he constituted Peter the visible pastor and vicarious sovereign thereof; and when, with tender solicitude, he intrusted to his care the 'sheep and lambs of his flock,' and gave unto him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he also declared that 'whatsoever he bound on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever he loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven.' But as under the old law Moses, the visible ruler of the ancient Theocracy, could not discharge alone all the duties belonging to his high station, and was therefore assisted by Aaron and his sons, who were solemnly consecrated by the functions of the priesthood, as well as by the seventy ancients, on whom a portion of the spirit of Moses was conferred to aid him in the general government; so in the Theocracy, if I may so express it, of the new law, Peter, its supreme visible ruler, was assisted by the other apostles who received from Jesus Christ a portion of the same power and the same spirit which had been given to their chief. For though to none of them except Peter did he give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, nor the general commission to 'feed his lambs and sheep,' he breathed on all and said to them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall

forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained.' To all he said, 'As the Father has sent me, I also send you. He that heareth you, heareth me; he that despiseth you, despiseth me;' and 'Go teach all nations, for behold! I am with you all days until the end of time.' St. Paul, in speaking of the whole apostolic body, says, 'Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you, bishops to rule the Church of God which he hath purchased with His own blood.'\*

"But," said Cora, "under the ordinary laws of nature, Peter and his companions could not live forever, or preach to all the world."

"Remark you," said Father Borgia, "according to the promise of the God-man, the Church was to continue forever, supported against all attacks by His presence, which was to abide with her until the consummation of time; therefore, it is certain that he intended his Church should always have a visible head pastor, holding from Him the same unlimited authority which Peter did, and also a succession of pastors, all united with their pastoral head in Christian doctrine. From which it appears that a continual succession of pastors and doctrine is annexed to the true church of Christ, and in this succession were some prophets, and 'some apostles, and some evangelists, for the perfecting of the saints for

\*Bishop Baines.

the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ till we come in the unity of faith, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we be henceforth no more children, tossed to and fro, carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and the cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.' In fine, since Jesus Christ has called us to his church for that same end which St. Paul recommends to us in the same chapter, 'to put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and holiness,' the church of Jesus Christ must be holy; that is to say, she must, by her doctrines, encourage holiness, and among her children have some, at least, remarkable for holiness. But where, my friends, I again ask, shall we find this church, founded by our Saviour and his apostles, and spread over all the world, if it be not the Roman Catholic? For this it was that the holy apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, centred at Rome. The faith of Rome was the same with that of the apostles, for St. Paul says particularly in writing to the Romans that 'their faith was his,' therefore she was apostolical. This same faith, as he testifies in the same chapter, was preached throughout the world, therefore she was catholic or universal. She was built upon a rock, therefore she cannot fail; she has always been, and is this day universal. All nations on leaving

paganism come into her fold. It is she alone that has a continual succession of pastors, from St. Peter down to our present venerable head at Rome, and is now, as in the days of the apostles, a visible society, under a visible head, who is for all the faithful a visible centre of unity for all the world. In all parts of the world she holds exactly the same rule of faith, therefore she is one. She has had an infinite number of saints of both sexes, of martyrs, confessors, and virgins, and she teaches her children the way of holiness, to fly from evil and do good; therefore she is holy, by consequence she inherits the true faith and religion, and is the true *Church of Jesus Christ*. Being true, she is therefore the only church entitled to our obedience."

"But the many wicked men who, belonging to her fold, have scandalized her pretensions to purity," said Blanche, "and the vile deeds which, perpetrated under her authority, must in consequence emanate from her—how can you reconcile this paradox?"

"They emanated not from her, my child," said Father Borgia; "her spirit, which is holy, acknowledges no fellowship with sin or crime. It is true she has been crucified again and again, and wounded by the deeds of those wicked or ambitious spirits who, wearing the garb of the sheep of her fold, were ravenous wolves, filled with malice and every other evil quality which

proceeds from the father of evil; and yet, as well might we accuse the beloved disciple of treason to his divine Master because Judas Iscariot betrayed Him to those who crucified him, or pronounce the faith taught by Jesus Christ an impure fabrication because the devil entered into one who was of the number of his disciples—the arch-traitor, who sold him—as to identify the vile deeds of wicked men with a religion which has taught through long ages, and still teaches, all that can sanctify the soul of man and fit it to enter into the unsullied presence of God.”

“You are right,” said Mr. Leslie, decidedly; “nothing can be more unjust than to condemn a system because some few of its followers commit sins against the laws of its morality.”

“And,” continued Father Borgia, “as incredible as it may seem, those very sects which pronounce her vile and full of error, and heap reproach on her sacred head because of the treasons practised against her holiness and purity by those who wore the garb but not the spirit of her faith, acknowledge without hesitation the sanctity of those saints who have flourished both in the early and later ages of the church. *They* professed, praised, and recommended no other than the faith of Rome, and rejected all separated from it; they were all members of this holy body, of which Christ is the head, in the communion of which, and in the defence of whose truths, thou-

sands of martyrs triumphed over death and the sharpest torments. All who ever fought against this everlasting kingdom in their separation from it—the followers of Arius, Pelagius, Marcion, Macedonius, Mahomet, with the Doctæ, Ebionites, Gnostics, Montanists, Manichees and numerous other sects, founded on the wild theories of human inventions, have with their authors perished, and returned to the darkness from whence they came. Until the year 1517 these new religions, in which are contained such incredible paradoxes, and which subject their followers *always* to doubts, perplexity and change, because they can neither be reconciled to the revelations of Christ or the principles of right reason—and which now oppose with such virulent animosity the Church of Rome—did not exist, neither were they known or professed by any man on earth. In fact, when we examine their various systems, we find they are but a revival, and so many unwholesome compositions out of the heresies which from time to time have been condemned by the Church of God. Thus the Doctæ denied the real presence in the Eucharist, and used it only as an emblem; the Ebionites denied the divinity of Christ, and believed that he was merely human; while the Gnostics, Valentinians, and others, anticipating Calvin and Luther, preached the doctrine of election and predestination; and all denied the authority of

the church, its apostolic descent, and rebelled against the supremacy of its head. But mark—this Church of Rome is the only one which, amidst storms of heresy, whirlwinds of error, and through the lapse of long ages, has always and still does retain the three marks of Jesus Christ, namely, she is one, holy and apostolical, and Catholic or universal. Did the founders of those new religions which so confuse the world by their contradictory doctrines ever work a single miracle in proof of their commission from Almighty God? Emphatically, no! On the contrary, they were men whose lives, so far from being remarkable for sanctity, were stained with sacrilege, libertinism, murder, apostacy and crime. One might as well acknowledge at once that the holy and pure God tolerated crime and turned a favorable eye on the degrading pollutions of sin, as to assert that *these* were commissioned by Him to declare his law and truth unto men. Their adherents labor in vain for the conversion of idolaters and the ingathering of nations; and though they extol and have faith in the merits of Christ, yet neglect to imitate his life, and are heedless in those great duties of avoiding sin and doing penance for sins committed, and of applying to themselves the practice of virtue and good works, cherishing the pernicious error so favorable to the instincts of nature, that our Saviour has by his death so abundantly satisfied

for our sins, and purchased heaven by his death, that all we have to do is to believe. But the infallible spirit of the true faith teaches us that, notwithstanding the passion and death of the Son of God be of themselves more than sufficient to cancel the sins of all mankind, and that his merits are of infinite value, our Saviour will yet have us to apply the fruits of them to ourselves, by imitating his virtues and co-operating in his dolorous passion; in declining evil and doing good. Jesus Christ came into the world on a double mission—first, to satisfy for our sins and deliver us from their extreme penalty; secondly, to give us a perfect pattern of all virtues and inspire us with a desire to copy them in our lives, as he has told us in these words, ‘I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you,’ and ‘Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart,’ and we are also informed by St. Peter that ‘Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.’ Oh, my beloved friends,” exclaimed Father Borgia, rising and standing before the little group, “come into this precious fold; make yourselves members of that holy body of Christ, which is the supreme head; return to the way of your fathers, to the path of the saints, to the religion which has stood for so many centuries, and been confirmed, maintained and watered by the blood of martyrs; a religion which all the ancient fathers of the primi-



tive church asserted and approved; a religion founded on the 'rock of ages,' against which our beloved Lord has promised that the gates of perdition shall *never* prevail. In this matter, I beseech you, have an eye to the salvation of your souls, for 'what will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' or 'what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' We have but one soul—it is eternal, and its eternal felicity can be gained by naught except a true faith; and as there is but one God and one eternity of the soul, so is there but one true faith, by which it may receive an eternal shelter hard by the throne of the heavenly King; and this faith is only to be found in the holy Catholic communion. Therefore, I beseech you, by your hopes of eternal life, to embrace it without delay."

Father Borgia was tall and pale, with a countenance which always wore the meek look of a saint, and now, as he stood erect, with the moonbeams falling like a halo on his white, solemn brow, and his eyes flashing with the spirit of the truth lifted heavenward, nothing could surpass the holy expression of his aspect. All were silent for several minutes, until Corinne, rising with tears in her eyes, approached her father, and, taking his hand, inquired, "Have I your consent, father, to become a Catholic?"

"My dear child," said Mr. Leslie, also much

affected, "you know as yet nothing of the sacraments and minor doctrines of the church. It would be prudent to understand their meaning well before you make so important a step."

"Father," she replied decidedly, "I am convinced beyond doubt that this church is, above all others, the only true church of God; therefore I cannot believe that she errs either in doctrine or the meaning of her sacraments! Have I your consent?"

"And I, my dear father?" said Blanche, approaching and taking his other hand.

Sister Therese, who had taken but little part in the evening's conversation, now came forward, as from some involuntary impulse, and stood with calm, pale face, and her hands clasped in an eloquent attitude of supplication, beside them; while Edgar St. Johns, affected to tears by the scene, silently joined the group. Mr. Leslie closed his eyes for a moment, and grew very pale; then rising, he pressed his daughters to his breast and exclaimed, "I am conquered at last! We will all go up together, my children, to this holy hill of Zion, and beneath the shadow of the cross learn the way to heaven. Father," said he, extending his hand to the priest, "be our guide."

"All unworthy as I am," said Father Borgia, deeply touched by this unexpected scene, "and trusting in the grace of God to replenish me

should I fail, I will. Oh, my friends! could the gold of Ophir, the diamonds of Golconda, or the pearls which lie in the deep purchase a single moment like this? No! for what worth would be the sovereignty of ten such worlds as this, with all their illimitable riches at command, to a man if he lose his soul! I welcome you, my children, to the threshold of the true church of Christ, and, as one of its duly authorized pastors, I promise you the shelter of its fold, and consolations and blessings in the name of Jesus Christ, which, like the beatitude of heaven, would require the tongue of an angel to describe them."

That night was long remembered at Elverton Hall, for then did this amiable family join, for the first time, with hearts and will in unison, in the worship of the true faith.

## CHAPTER X.

THE HAUNTED HOLLOW—CONFESSION—THE  
EUCHARIST—AN ADVENTURE.

**A** WAKENED with the first rosy beams of morning by the thrilling carol of a bird which had perched itself among the jessamine vines which draperied over their windows, Corinne raised herself on her elbow, and, looking around, saw that Blanche slept, and Sister Therese, who was always an early riser, had apparently been up some time, as she was dressed and kneeling before a table on which lay her open missal, and with her rosary hanging over her clasped hands was performing her usual morning devotions. There was a brooding sense of happiness in the young creature's heart which she could not for the moment define; but that sight brought at once the whole and distinct recollection of what had occurred, and her religious position, to her mind, and, making the sign of the cross, she immediately arose, and, kneeling, offered up her cheerful thanksgiving to Al-

mighty God; nor did her active faith hesitate to invoke the aid of the Mother of our Lord—of her who, raised above all creatures by the singular honors conferred on her by the Most High, is so justly entitled to our veneration and love. She awoke Blanche with a kiss, and, pointing to Sister Therese, whispered, “We, too, are members of the communion of saints.”

“Dear sister,” she replied, rising from her place of rest, “what a profound sentiment of rest and peace your words have imparted to my soul! Let me kneel, and with a thankful heart adore Him who has so wonderfully led us among the pastures of His fold.”

She took from a small drawer the ivory crucifix which Edgar St. Johns had brought her, and laying it on a table knelt to pray and contemplate the image of her crucified Lord, which is always so well calculated to bring into active life those springs of devotion which sometimes almost wither in our hearts unless called forth by some sacred and exterior symbol. Their maid, Amy, entered the room softly, and with a stare of silent surprise toward the Sister of Charity and Blanche, proceeded on tiptoe to whisper to Corinne “that Mr. Leslie was waiting an early breakfast for them and hoped they would hurry down, as he was anxious for them to take a short walk with him before the sun got higher.”

“Tell my father that we will not detain him a

moment longer than our toilette is made," said Cora, in the same subdued tone; "and do you return quickly, my good girl, and assist us."

The twins were soon arrayed, with Amy's assistance, in fine white cambric blouses, with a simple blue ribbon twisted beneath their small and exquisitely worked collars, which were fastened by a single large pearl on their bosoms. With Sister Therese they descended to the breakfast parlor, and found Mr. Leslie alone, who, after exchanging the compliments of the morning with her, embraced his daughters with paternal tenderness.

"We will sit down," said he; "Father Borgia and Edgar have been out an hour, and requested that we would meet them at the spot to which I am to conduct you."

"Quite mysterious enough for a novel, I declare," said Corinne, laughing. "It is something new to such quiet folks as we to have an adventure. I trust the rendezvous is in the 'haunted Hollow.'"

"We will fancy ourselves in the Isle of Delos while we search for the Apollo of its shades," said Blanche.

"True," replied Corinne, gayly; "I had quite forgotten the mysterious music of which we were to hear an explanation to-day. We shall not be disappointed, dear father?"

"Certainly not, my love; the mystery shall be

solved to your perfect satisfaction," said Mr. Leslie.

"We were in hopes also of having mass this morning," said Sister Therese.

"Perhaps we may not be disappointed, as Father Borgia has not said his," he replied.

"Begging you all to excuse me, my kind friends, I will in that case fast until the usual breakfast hour, as I hope to receive the Holy Communion this morning," said Sister Therese, modestly.

"I envy you! oh, how I envy you!" exclaimed Blanche, earnestly.

"What, dear child?" said she, astonished.

"I envy you the happiness of receiving such celestial food. Oh, that I were worthily prepared to receive it with you!" said Blanche, while tears filled her lovely eyes.

"Is it possible that you receive this usually difficult dogma with such ready faith?" inquired Sister Therese.

"As strange as it may appear," replied Blanche, "the doctrine of the Real Presence has presented few or no difficulties to my faith. The expressions—so decided and apparently so literal in their meaning—relative to the eucharistic feast, always confounded me, particularly in the sixth chapter of St. John, when compared with the belief of Protestants on that point; but when Edgar explained to me the belief of the Church

on the Real Presence, it all appeared familiar and easy, and seems actually like some newly-developed instinct, which I discover with joy, and wonder where it has so long remained hidden. Oh! I long for the time to come when I also may receive the food of angels!"

"Your ready faith in that which generally proves a stumbling-block to many is indeed a peculiar grace," said Sister Therese.

"A stumbling-block," said Mr. Leslie, "to those who wilfully close their minds to the literal meaning of the words of our Lord in the institution of the eucharistic sacrifice, and who heed as little the signification of the figures and prophecies of this sacrifice under the old law as they do its real accomplishment under the new. When they insist on declaring that the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb was figurative alone of the death of Christ, they forget that not one, but many were slain, which, after being offered and slain, were eaten by the priests who sacrificed, and the people; and seem to be waiting yet for the accomplishment of the prophecy of Malachi concerning it, by which it was clearly foretold in these remarkable words: 'From the rising of the sun, even to the going down thereof, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered up to my name a clean oblation, for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts.'\*



The Church teaches us, as well as the words of Christ himself, and the authority of tradition, that in the sacrifice of the Mass we behold that which was prefigured by the Paschal lamb, and also this clean oblation, which by her is alone offered throughout the world, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and also the miracle foretold by the royal Psalmist in the thirty-third Psalm, which is fully explained by St. Augustine, who says: 'To carry himself in his own hands is impossible to man and peculiar to Christ alone; he was carried in his own hands when, giving his body to be eaten, he said, This is my body.' The Council of Trent declares that the sacrifice of the Mass is one and the same sacrifice with that of the cross: the victim is one and the same, Christ Jesus, who offered himself for us once only a bloody sacrifice on the altar of the cross. The bloody and unbloody victim is still one and the same, and the oblation of the cross is daily renewed in the eucharistic sacrifice, in obedience to the commands of our Lord, 'This do for a commemoration of me.' "

"It is a wonder," said Corinne, over whose countenance a shade of sadness had gradually gathered, "which is so thoroughly opposed to nature and human reason, that it seems positively incredible."

"To the senses," said Mr. Leslie, "which are always ready with their plausible objections to

destroy the mysteries of faith, and seek into those things which are forbidden—the secrets of God—it is. But when our Lord says, ‘This is my body, this is my blood,’ no man, however ignorant, unless he labors under some obliquity of intellect, can mistake his meaning, particularly if he recollect that the words ‘body’ and ‘blood’ refer to his human nature, the real assumption of which by the Son of God no Catholic, at least, can doubt. If, as many assert, the sacrament presents nothing to our veneration but a memorial and sign of the passion of Christ, why are the faithful thus impressively exhorted by the apostle St. Paul, in energetic words like these: ‘But let a man so prove himself, and so eat of that bread, and drink of that chalice; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord;’\* and again he says, ‘The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the participation of the body of the Lord?’† Thus you see, my dear, the apostles viewed this doctrine exactly in the same light and meaning, and of the same importance, that the Church now does.”

“I cannot help being astonished,” said Sister Therese, “at the really Catholic arguments you

\*1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.

†1 Cor. x. 16.

use, sir. "I thought you were until lately a perfect stranger to our doctrines."

"No," said Mr. Leslie, smiling; "you are mistaken. In my search after a religion many years ago, I acquainted myself thoroughly with the most essential dogmas of the church, and was only deterred from becoming a Catholic by the fear that the religion had become corrupt in practice as well as doctrines, which was no doubt also mingled with a few motives of human respect. But come," said he, rising from the table, "let us go meet our friends, or they may think we have declined granting their request."

As they stepped forth into the open air, Corinne with her father and Blanche with Sister Therese, each heart was affected by the tranquil beauty of the scene. Fragrant winds, laden with the sweets of wild flowers and clover pastures, crept lazily up and stirred the plumes of the forest pines, and whispered low melodies among the wide-spreading branches of the ancient oaks, while the roses and rich-hued blossoms that gemmed the earth moved gracefully to and fro, as if each responded to some glad throb in nature's mighty heart. The sky was flecked with a few snowy clouds, which floated through the azure depths like white-winged spirits on a mission of peace. Innumerable birds filled the air with sweet, wild melodies, while the distant sounds of lowing herds and beating flocks joined

with them in their matin hymn. Butterflies and humming-birds flitted about, with the sunshine glancing on their wings, on their way to cheat the orange blossoms of their sweets, and even the lowly grass hid the fragrant violet beneath its pointed blades, which bent down over them, and glittered beneath the weight of the bright dewdrops which the sun had spared.

“How nature rejoices in the harmony of her laws,” said Sister Therese. “Our merciful God has left nothing incomplete either in the temporal or spiritual designs which he intends for our good.”

“The angels themselves might rejoice on earth to-day,” said Blanche.

“Not because of its brightness, my child, for they are dwellers in a land where the unveiled presence of the Lamb maketh one eternal day, of whose light this is but a dim shadow. And yet, amidst all the glories which surround them, and the peace whereof they are full, so that it would seem there was naught else which could add to their joy, we are told there is joy before them upon one sinner doing penance.”\*

“By penance you mean confession, do you not?” inquired Blanche.

“Not exactly, unless joined with sincere contrition and true satisfaction. Confession is the exterior sign of inward contrition, without

\*Luke xv. 18.

which the healing influences and divine graces which flow into our souls through the sacrament of penance cannot be applied. The mere act of confession avails nothing; the sentence of absolution, which, in virtue of his authority, the priest pronounces, are all worse than naught unless the penitent feels sincere contrition and sorrow for his sins, and an earnest desire to avoid them, and gain new grace to withstand those which beset him. Without these essential qualifications, confession is sacrilege, and the sentence of absolution, so far from being of any avail to him, goes up to give testimony of his crime, and is recorded against his name on the pages of the everlasting archives."

"If one could be a Catholic without confession," said Blanche, hesitatingly.

"That is impossible," replied Sister Therese. "The seven sacraments of the church form a bright chain, which, if one link be lost, is broken and useless. If confession were not absolutely necessary, our divine Lord would not have left with his church the power of forgiving sins, or the authority to bind and loose on earth, saying, 'Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins ye retain, they are retained,' with the assurance that 'whatsoever they bound on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven.' Contrition, confession and satisfaction are the

three integral parts of penance, without which the divine power bestowed on the priesthood by our Lord, under the metaphor of the 'keys of the kingdom of heaven,' will avail nothing for us."

"But is it necessary to particularize every sin?" inquired Blanche. "You know, dear sister, the human heart is but an ever-springing fount of sin, which, flowing unbidden, oftentimes deforms our natures, and hurries away, on its impetuous torrent, its better inspirations. Can we not say, in general terms, we are sinners?"

"Because, my dear child, the human heart is desperately wicked, and above all other things deceitful; it needs a steady restraining principle, an impartial friend, a spiritual guide, which can protect, advise, and lead it in safety along the devious ways of life. Were you ill, or suffering from a malady which developed itself in a variety of painful symptoms that required prompt medical aid, you would not only say to your physician, in general terms, 'I am ill, and wish to be healed,' but, obeying the dictates of common sense and the laws of medical science, you would tell him distinctly, and without prevarication, all the particular details of your case, and note every painful symptom, without which it would be a moral impossibility for him to apply those remedies which would benefit you, or prevent a recurrence of your malady. There is a strong affinity between the character of a physician and a priest;

one ministers to a diseased body, the other to a diseased soul; and while one regards those patients more highly who will, without false delicacy, or prudish whims, give him a clear and succinct statement of their case, that their ministrations may be the more certain and efficacious, so our spiritual physician, who is bound under a religious vow never to reveal that which is confided to his ear, as our bodily physician is bound, by the ties of laws of honor, to hold sacred the confidence of his patients, must understand fully all those sins of pride, malice, ambition, evil desires and criminal wishes either against ourselves or our neighbors, ere he can understand the extent or enormity of the soul's disease, ere he can apply the balm of consolation to the wounds which sin has made, or loose us from the fetters in which it has bound us; ere our souls can be sufficiently 'proved' to enter through the power of the keys into the holy places of the kingdom of God, and partake of the angelic banquet which is spread therein."

"The thought of that," said Blanche, with an animated countenance, "reconciles me to all that is new or humiliating in the practice of confession. I perceive the truth and justice of your remarks, and, believing that the Catholic Church holds and practises the only true faith, yield perfect assent to all she teaches."

"Your sister has no difficulties about confes-

sion," replied Sister Therese; "we conversed until twelve last night on the subject, and she intends beginning a general confession to-day—that is, a confession of the sins of her whole life, as far as she can remember, after which she will be conditionally rebaptized according to the rites prescribed for this sacrament by the church."

"The same hour witnessed our birth, and the same hour shall witness a new and happier one, when the waters of regeneration are poured on us," said Blanche, in an earnest tone.

"And may you carry the white veil of innocence, which your souls will receive in baptism, unspotted to the judgment-seat," responded Sister Therese, solemnly.

"Pray for us," said Blanche, pressing her hand, "that our Lord may give us grace; but listen, dear sister," said she, pausing and laying her hand on Sister Therese's arm; "listen! surely that is music I hear."

"How sweet and solemn are the sounds," replied Sister Therese.

They were not deceived. There came stealing up through the woods a faint sound of distant music, which rose and fell with the winds, and whose soft, prolonged notes were solemn and beautiful. The birds hushed their songs for an instant, then, as if pleased with the melody, broke forth in louder strains, and flew as if in



ecstasy from bough to bough. Mr. Leslie and Corinne were far in advance of them, and only at intervals the glancing of Corinne's white dress through the trees gave indication of the direction they were taking.

"We are approaching the 'Haunted Hollow,' and the music seems really to proceed from it," said Blanche; "but, now I remember, did not my father promise to explain the mystery this morning to us? Then come, sister, let us walk faster; here, let us take this little path through the copse; it is narrow, but listen! how loudly swells the music! how much nearer it seems! Now we'll go around this rock, and down that little steep path, and we shall reach the Hollow before them. Take care of the branches about your feet, and those tangled vines overhead," continued Blanche, pushing them aside, and in the attempt wounding her hand. "Here, give me your hand, sister—a few steps further—there, we are safely down. Let us hurry around yonder clump of trees, and we shall be in the Hollow. Oh!" she exclaimed, suddenly stopping, "how beautiful! how beautiful! and, after all, there stands father and Cora before us, enjoying our surprise."

"Behold the mystery of the Haunted Hollow," said Mr. Leslie as they approached, pointing to the exquisite little chapel which he had erected with such secrecy.

“May we not go in?” asked Blanche.

They entered. The morning beams were streaming in through long, narrow windows of richly stained glass, and fell mellowed and trembling on the floor, which was painted in admirable imitation of marble. At the upper end stood an altar, covered with draperies of rich embroidery and decorated with clusters of the most fragrant flowers, amidst which blazed a number of wax lights, supported by the splendid candelabras which Edgar brought from Rome. A large picture of the crucifixion, which they had not before seen, hung in the rear, and filled up the space behind the altar between two narrow windows, which were absolutely gorgeous with stained glass. Father Borgia, clad in a rich white vestment heavily embroidered with silver, knelt on the broad altar-step, unconscious, in his deep devotion, of all exterior objects and sounds, while a silver urn standing at a short distance emitted the most delicious aromatic odor and diffused light clouds of incense throughout the place. Edgar St. Johns was seated at the organ, playing a solemn and devotional strain, and, Mr. Leslie whispering to Corinne, she joined him, and after a short whispered conversation began to sing with him from the notes the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Their voices harmonized admirably together, and as the tender and beauti-

ful language of the Litany, expressed in such harmonious accents, ascended towards heaven, Sister Therese, usually so calm and impassive, bowed her head and burst into tears at the familiar sounds. After the hymn was done Father Borgia proceeded to celebrate the holy mysteries, in the ceremonies of which he was assisted by Edgar St. Johns, and accompanied by the devotion and prayers of those present, who, being provided by his care with prayer-books containing explanations and devotions to be used during mass, were enabled to follow him regularly in the different parts of the sacred office. They had before seen mass celebrated in their cousin's oratory at home, but not with the same feelings that now pervaded their hearts.

They looked on it then as a solemn and imposing, though passing show; but now, with minds deeply solemnized, and spirits which comprehended the great dignity and importance of the venerable and mysterious sacrament, they yielded themselves up, with every wish and desire of their souls, to the truth and majesty thereof, and when they saw the Sister of Charity and their cousin approach to receive the heavenly banquet in which Christ gave them himself, they hungered like the children of Israel, who, while passing through the desert, starved, and were only satisfied when fed with bread which came down from heaven. When mass was over, so solemnly

were they impressed with the importance of all that had passed, that each one remained kneeling, in quiet recollection of the august sacrifice, which is an accumulative miracle of the immeasurable love of God to his creatures; and after meditating on the immense benefits which it conferred on those who believe and receive this mystery of faith, they silently retired from the chapel and waited without until Father Borgia joined them.

“You would not have us believe in Aladdin’s wonderful lamp, dear father,” said Corinne on their way home; “if not, explain this strange affair.”

“It will be no longer a wonder, my love, if you will only remember the interdict I laid on your approaching the Hollow some six or seven months ago. As to the rest, my frequent conversations with Father Borgia here and your cousin led me to the verge of Catholicity, and the thought struck me that I could not do a better thing than convert my summer library and music-room into a chapel. My mind, however, was not entirely made up until yesterday, when Edgar suggested the same thing and gave some very important reasons why it should be done. I half-reluctantly gave a consent, which the events of last night have not caused me to regret. While we were all enjoying our ride yesterday Edgar, with Sister Therese’s assistance—who

went to the Hollow after leaving Amy's mother—arranged the altar, and decorated it in the beautiful manner you saw."

"Ah, Sister Therese, you in the secret, too—who could have believed it?" said Cora. "However, I feel so charmed at the idea of having a chapel that I feel disposed to forgive everybody."

"By your wonderful magnanimity you truly make a virtue of necessity," replied Mr. Leslie, smiling; "but does it not seem as if Providence had directed everything? even the nonsensical fears of my people will be turned to good account. Really, I had no more idea that I was building a Catholic chapel when yonder edifice was commenced than I had of discovering the philosopher's stone. When my people find the phantoms which have haunted the Hollow are none other than myself and the organ they will not be so apt hereafter to give a supernatural coloring to those things which they cannot exactly understand. Perceiving the immense importance which the Catholic religion is to the soul of man, I intend having all their children instructed in it, and themselves also as far as they will consent. Twice a week regularly, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the chapel shall be opened for their use, when I will give them an hour and a half each day for instruction and an hour for recreation, during which they may either amuse themselves in an innocent way, or

work their own ground. This will prevent mental fatigue and dissatisfaction. May I ask your assistance, Father Borgia?"

"Truly may you," replied the reverend gentleman, grasping his hand warmly. "If any class of human beings on earth need care and religious instruction, it is this too much despised and neglected race. My life is to be one of missionary labors, and I could not, methinks, better correspond with my vocation than by devoting at least a portion of my time to those who, away from the land of their fathers, linger in weary bondage. The Catholic religion will teach them all which can make their inferior position, with its trials, one of merit to themselves here and hereafter. Its holy influences will encourage neither rebellion nor disorders, neither indolence nor licentiousness, but will prove a salutary check to all those evils which are of common occurrence among them."

"We will all co-operate in this good work," said Cora; "Blanche and I, following Father Borgia's directions, can assist in preparing the women and children for religious instruction. No doubt the maternal pride of the mothers will aid us considerably in our good offices towards the children."

"You are all so sanguine," said Edgar, smiling, "that I have not heard a single difficulty suggested. You will have not only the preju-

dices of years, rendered stronger by ignorance, to combat with, but habits and superstitions which are almost incredible, to overcome."

"Ah, well! it is true we expect all this," said Mr. Leslie, "but if one, in passing through a field of tares gather only one sheaf of wheat, would it not be worth the trouble? We shall need your assistance also, my friend. I have this affair much at heart. I do not purpose to have them taught anything which would prove practically incompatible with their position. I desire to elevate them in the moral scale by impressing on their minds that piety, honesty, faithfulness and the good works of religion can add a dignity to it. Unfortunately, we cannot do more."

"The church," said Father Borgia, "enjoins it as a sacred duty on masters to have a care of the souls of those committed to their care. The obligation and responsibility is as great for those who are their servants as for their own children. Their souls are of equal importance, and he who neglects the salvation of those subordinates which Providence or circumstances have confided to their protection is guilty of a great error—I may say sin—for will not Almighty God require their souls at their hands?"

"Well," said Mr. Leslie, "in Him we will trust for aid. He knows our intentions and will, I humbly pray, sanctify them by grace which will enable us to persevere in our difficult task. Be-

ing a Catholic myself does not satisfy me. I could not really rest last night for reflecting on the number of souls which by my carelessness or negligence may be lost. I would have my people, slaves though they be, come with me into the true fold of Christ, and *there*, at least, enjoy those equal privileges which, temporally speaking, are impossible. The building which we have just left will suit admirably for our purpose."

"Your plan, my dear uncle, is worthy of the religion whose spirit is charity, and which dictated it," said Edgar.

"What on earth will Mrs. Murray do?" said Blanche.

"Descend from the dignity of her office and become a private gentlewoman forthwith," said Cora; "she will never be anything but a Baptist on earth. But cannot we walk faster? Father Borgia has not yet breakfasted."

"How thoughtless we have all been," said Mr. Leslie. "I have been so accustomed to see the various divines with whom I have ever had intercourse enjoy a hot, substantial breakfast before proceeding to church that I must really base my apology to Father Borgia on that fact."

"My kind friends," he replied, "I do assure you that an apology is not at all necessary; I am not by any means suffering for my breakfast; on the contrary, an hour hence will do."



“But it must not do,” said Blanche; “I gave special orders about it, and I am sure it is waiting for you.”

When they arrived at the house and entered they found the table spread with every luxury that southern hospitality could offer; fragrant coffee, deliciously flavored tea, hot rolls, steaming cakes of various kinds, with ham, and oysters cooked in two or three different ways. Edgar and Sister Therese enjoyed it moderately, and he, as usual, by his gay manner and busy conversation, endeavored to divert the attention of the family from the spare diet of Father Borgia, who generally partook of bread and water and vegetables, varied occasionally by milk or a very small portion of meat. They had at first imagined that his appetite was bad; then, distressed at the idea of his being in ill health, they provided new delicacies and redoubled their kind importunities for him to eat, and added additional luxuries to the table, until on a hint from Edgar they forbore, although they then could not understand how such rigorous abstinence could benefit the soul. But they now began to comprehend why a “member of a thorn-crowned head” should not be too delicate or fastidious with regard to temporal luxuries.

“If you are not otherwise engaged, sir,” said Mr. Leslie to Father Borgia after breakfast, “we will adjourn to the eastern drawing-room, as I

have promised your assistance to Corinne on a subject which has given her no little anxiety."

"Ah!" said Father Borgia, "you did well. We will all defer our daily meditation for that which may perhaps prove of equal edification. I am at your service now, my child," he said, rising from the table.

"Perhaps," said Corinne, blushing, "the authority of the church on the subject which troubles me ought to make it perfectly satisfactory to me; however, I will state my difficulty. Being present on two or three occasions when Sister Therese and Edgar received holy communion I observed that, while you gave them only the bread of the sacrament, you received it under both kinds. It appears to me that all should receive the chalice as well as the bread; the command is equally obligatory on all."

"Your difficulty, my dear child," said Father Borgia, with that mixture of dignity and sweetness so common to his nature, "is no uncommon one. Our adversaries, from the days of the Manicheans to the present time, accuse us of robbing the laity of the blood of Christ by denying them the cup, but this is a palpable falsehood, for it is a self-evident fact, which both faith and reason teach us, that the living body of Christ cannot be without his blood, nor his living blood without his body; so that wheresoever Christ's body is, there is also his blood, for his body and

blood cannot now be divided, as being now immortal and impassible. Christ being raised from the dead, says St. Paul, dieth now no more; death hath no more power over him. Hence the faith of the Catholic Church is that there is contained both the body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ under either kind or species, therefore it necessarily follows that the Eucharist distributed under one kind only is not a lame or imperfect sacrament, since one sole species contains as much of Christ as both together—viz., all Christ entirely. Neither is there a greater measure of grace conferred by the sacrament precisely when it is taken in both kinds than when it is taken only in one, for, as St. Paul says, ‘An Israelite that gathered much manna had nothing over than he who gathered less,’ so a Christian who receives the sacrament under both kinds has nothing more of Christ, or of sacramental grace than he who received it under one kind only (if there be a parity as to the disposition of the receivers). It appears also from the words of the Apostle St. Paul\* that the apostles sometimes either administered the sacrament in one kind only, or at least judged it sufficient to communicate in one kind, if the church should so command it; wherefore, says St. Paul, ‘Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and

\*1 Cor. xi. 27.

blood of our Lord.' Hence, if an unworthy communion, though under one kind only, makes a man guilty of both the body and blood of Christ, in like manner in a worthy communion, though only under one kind, both the body and blood are received."

"I think," said Cora, "that the Protestant version reads thus: 'Eat of this bread *and* drink of this cup.'"

"It does," replied Father Borgia; "the translators of their Bible thought fit to corrupt the text, which they have done in this manner, by putting in '*and* drink,' instead of '*or* drink.' Thus our adversaries hesitate not to corrupt the Word of God in order to form an argument against us."

"Those Scriptures," exclaimed Edgar indignantly, "which the church preserved during the perils of fifteen centuries, unharmed and unchanged, whose translations, approved of by venerable councils, and in whose meaning the saintly ancient Fathers agreed in as with one spirit, thus to be perverted merely to make arguments in support of human systems! Shame! Shame!"

"Did the laity ever receive the communion under both kinds?" inquired Corinne.

"Yes, my child," replied Father Borgia, amused at Edgar's vehement exclamations; "when the Manichean heresy, which held the cup to be unlawful and not the blood of Christ, but the gall of the devil, sprung into existence, the

church, to exclude them from the communion of the faithful, commanded the laity to receive the holy Eucharist under both species. So now she commands them to receive it under the form of bread only, to detect those who deny that Christ is wholly contained under both species alone. There are other reasons of importance which may also be quoted against the practice. In the first place, wine unadulterated with spirit, which is prescribed by the church, is difficult to get and soon decays, so that the sacrament could not be well kept, which would be necessary for the sick. It would endanger many irreverences of spilling the chalice if all, old, young, halt and blind, sick and lame, were bound to receive it. For these and for one or two other reasons equally just we find that all are not bound to receive it under both kinds, and that Christ has left the manner of receiving to the determination of his Church."

"Is it certain, father," said Corinne, almost ashamed of her doubts, "that the doctrine of the Real Presence has been believed by all ages of the church from the first to the present?"

"Shall I go back to the hour when our Lord himself said, 'This is my body?' "\* said Father Borgia. "The word 'this' expressed the entire substance of the thing present, and therefore if the substance of the bread remained, our Lord could not have said, 'This is my body.' In

\*Matt. xxvi. 26.

St. John he also says, 'The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world;'<sup>\*</sup> the bread which he gives he here declares to be his flesh. A little after he adds, 'Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you;'<sup>†</sup> and again, 'My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood drink indeed;'<sup>‡</sup> when, therefore, in terms so clear and explicit, he thus calls his flesh 'meat indeed' and his blood 'drink indeed,' he gives us sufficiently to understand that the substance of the bread and wine no longer exist in the sacrament."

"But does not St. Paul, whose authority you have so often quoted, sir, after the consecration, call the sacrament bread?" asked Corinne.

"This argument will appear very weak, my child," replied Father Borgia, "if you will observe two things. First, though the Scriptures positively affirm a change of the substance, yet sometimes call things by the name they bore before their substantial change. Thus, though the waters were changed into wine at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, yet the evangelists call it 'water made into wine;'<sup>§</sup> and again, we are told plainly in Exodus ii., that Aaron's and the magicians' rods were changed into snakes or serpents; yet after the change it calls them rods; 'Aaron's rod devoured the magicians' rod.' The second

\*John vi. 52.

†John vi. 54.

‡John vi. 56.

§John xi. 9.

thing which you must observe is, that the Scripture frequently calls or gives a thing the name of that which it resembles; thus, because angels appeared in the resemblance of men, they are spoken of as men, both in the sixteenth chapter of St. Mark and the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Luke, and in many places also in the Old Testament. What wonder, then, that St. Paul calls the sacrament bread, since it bears the appearance of bread, and was bread before the power of God changed it?\* Who could bear to look on the unveiled countenance of the Lamb? What human eye could endure the splendor of his face? What mortal would dare receive in his unworthy breast an object of such resplendent glory? Behold his goodness, his mercy, towards our human nature! He veils himself under the simple and familiar form of *bread*, as he once veiled himself under the form of a feeble babe and a dying man; he covers over his divinity, as it were, with a plain and simple garment, that we may approach and receive him with humble confidence, and for this unequalled and splendid gift he requires—what? our faith. Could any but a seraph's tongue describe its excellence in a worthy manner? Can we, while clad in mortal flesh, give thee, oh, Jesus Christ! that adoration and honor which this inestimable gift demands? The soul may feel in silence its divine sublimity,

\*Council of Trent.

but this is all; words cannot express it; and, overpowered, we can only exclaim, with Thomas, My Lord and my God!"

• Father Borgia closed his eyes for a moment, while his face absolutely glowed with a rapid and inexpressible change, which made it appear as if a beam from the spirit-land had suddenly descended on it; but, instantly recovering his usual composure, he again became pale, and, subduing a certain confusion of manner which he had betrayed on observing that his emotion was noticed, continued the subject:

“In the second age of Christianity St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, and disciple of the apostles, who suffered martyrdom about the year 107, in his epistle to the Christians of Smyrna calls the Eucharist ‘the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father raised by his bounty.’ Thus the disciple of the apostles wrote, who certainly knew the meaning of their doctrines. In the same age St. Justin, martyr, in his apology to the heathen emperor for the Christian religion, affirms, ‘That as our Saviour Jesus Christ was himself, by the word, made flesh, and took for our salvation, both flesh and blood, so are we taught that the Eucharist is the same body and blood of the same Jesus incarnate.’ Would any man in his senses write thus to a heathen if he understood Christ’s words in a figurative sense? In the same age



St. Ireneus, in his fifth book against heresies, speaking of the bread and wine, says, 'That by the word of God they are made the Eucharist, which is the body and blood of Christ.' In the third age St. Cyprian, in his sermon on the Lord's Supper, says, 'The bread which our Lord gave his disciples being changed, not in shape but in substance, by the omnipotency of the word, is made flesh.' He likewise says that in the Eucharist 'We eat Christ's body and drink his blood.' Origen, respected in all ages for his profound learning, tells us that 'In the old law the manna was a figurative food, but now the flesh of God is meat in reality, as he himself says, My flesh is meat indeed.' Then follow a host of others—Tertullian, in the third age; St. John, Chrysostom and St. Ambrose, St. Gregory Nysin, St. Cyril, patriarch of Jerusalem, and the great doctor of the church, St. Augustine, who flourished in the fifth age, and an army of innumerable saints, martyrs and doctors, who give one and the same testimony of the truth of the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and in the same sense which the church teaches in this our day."

"Then," said Corinne, while tears streamed over her cheeks, "who am I, what am I that I should disbelieve after such incontestable proofs? Oh! when shall I become a member of this religion of saints?"

"You are already one, my dear, in intention,"

said Sister Therese, taking her hand. "Were you to die with those intentions, without the opportunity of practically carrying them out in your life, the church would acknowledge you among her departed children. But you will live, and I hope ere many days to see you a visible member of the fold which has but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, in the enjoyment of all its sacramental consolations, and filled with hope in the world to come."

After dinner Mr. Leslie and Father Borgia visited the numerous cottages of the blacks on the plantation. After conversing patiently with all, and explaining in simple language what was required of them, some consented to hear the instructions; others declared their religion was good enough, while a few, looking askance at the priest, eyed him suspiciously and positively refused, and others, professing no religion, were pleased with the novelty of the thing and said, carelessly, "Oh, yes, sir; we will come." One point, however, was agreed on—they were all to send their children to be baptized the next Sunday, and regularly at the stated periods for instruction. The evening was spent in planning a suitable and commodious house, in a healthy situation, as a place of refuge for the infirm and superannuated, where they might be properly cared for, and only employed in certain light works suitable to their age and habits. These

plans were eventually carried out, and although the planters around pronounced Mr. Leslie to be a madman, and declared that such an example ruined their slaves, he persevered, and in a year or two his charity towards his people was amply rewarded. His harvests increased, his barns were no longer robbed, and they became, apparently in direct opposition to their natures, thrifty, industrious and cleanly, while order and morality generally prevailed, until his plantation was a model which was praised throughout the state.

That night, after the evening devotions were over and the family were on the eve of retiring, the house servant entered the drawing-room and informed Father Borgia that a strange gentleman wished to see him. He went out immediately, and returned in a short time, saying that "it was a person on business, and he would be obliged to Mr. Leslie for the use of his library an hour."

"Certainly, sir, with pleasure," said Mr. Leslie; "but is your friend incog.?"

"He wishes to remain so," replied Father Borgia. "His errand is a religious one. This is all I am at liberty to reveal at present concerning him."

"Ah, father," said Corinne, in her gay way, "do give a hint! Does the person wish to become a Catholic? Just tell us that much."

“Oh, Mother Eve! Mother Eve! will you never be buried?” said he, smiling, as he took a light from the table and left the room.

The family soon retired, and Mrs. Murray was aroused with a start from her slumbers by hearing the house door close, and a horseman galloping rapidly over the gravelled carriage-drive.

## CHAPTER XI.

## A DISTINGUISHED CONVERT—A PAINFUL INTERVIEW—TRIALS.

FATHER BORGIA'S nocturnal and mysterious visitor came regularly twice or thrice a week to see him, at the same hour and in the same manner. But he was so perfectly silent concerning him, and never hinted in the slightest or most indirect terms who he was or where from, that the family began to think it was an affair of such secrecy they would never be able to fathom it, when one day a party of visitors came from E——. Among them were the two ladies, Mrs. Dunmore and Mrs. Catesby, who on a former occasion fell into such a warm conversation about the doctrines preached by the minister, who had been twice reprov'd by his bishop for trying to disseminate a Romish spirit among his people. After the compliments of the day had been exchanged, and some trifling conversation on trifling subjects disposed of, Mrs. Dunmore, who seem'd on the eve of really exploding with some wonderful piece of news, asked

Blanche, during a brief quiet interval, "if they had all heard what had happened in E——."

"No—anything extraordinary?" she answered.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the gossiping lady, and fairly started on her favorite hobby. "You know everybody has said for a year past that our minister, Mr. Forrester, did not preach sound doctrines; well, lately he has been getting more and more mystical, and never failed in his different discourses to say something odd about auricular confession—was that it, Mrs. Catesby? Yes!—well—auricular confession, priestly absolution, and sacrifice in the Lord's Supper, and a good many other things that I cannot remember. And his servants say that he muffles himself up and scampers about the country at night on horseback, and don't get home sometimes until midnight; some say he's after no good, and is studying magic; others declare that he used to meet a Catholic priest somewhere, in some out-of-the-way place! However, I wouldn't swear to that part of the story, and will only tell exactly what I know. On Sunday he got up into the pulpit, and as usual we expected to hear an eloquent sermon, mixed up, of course, with a little Catholicism; but he was as pale as death—wasn't he, Mrs. Catesby?—and tried to speak, but he could not, and stood some time with his head leaning on his hand; then at last he began

in such a low, trembling voice, that one could scarcely hear him, but when we *did* hear him, didn't the congregation rise up and stare! for he said it was the last time he would ever appear before them in the character of their pastor; that he could not conscientiously practise a religion which he did not believe; that he was convinced that the Church of Rome was the only true church, and on that account he intended to sacrifice everything for it. But oh! he told it in such beautiful words, and his language was throughout so affecting, that everybody cried—didn't they, Mrs. Catesby?—for he was a good man, Mr. Forrester was. Even the old men who got up and left the church in anger couldn't help shedding tears, and stood at the door listening. You may depend there was a little talking after church was over; some were mad and some sorry, some pitied, but all went home with heavy hearts."

Mr. Leslie and his daughters glanced at Father Borgia, who nodded intelligibly enough to convince them that Mr. Forrester and his visitor were one and the same person.

"And only think," said Mrs. Catesby, "of his giving up four thousand dollars a year! That is the most wonderful thing of all, and the people say he must be sincere, at any rate. My husband says he is going to be a Catholic priest—ain't it a pity?—he is so talented!"

“Which will cause him to appreciate more sensibly the sublime truths of the Catholic religion,” said Mr. Leslie, seriously.

“La, me!—do excuse me; I really forgot you were all Catholics, but it does seem so odd to me how any one can belong to such a strange kind of religion,” remarked Mrs. Catesby.

“Have you ever read a Catholic explanation of the Catholic faith, madam? If not, allow me to hand you this excellent book,” said Father Borgia, handing her “Milner’s End of Controversy.”

“Oh, no! I never read a Catholic book in my life, but I know all about the religion from reading history and our religious papers. *They* explain it all, you know, when they refute it, and I am pretty sure it would never suit me. I won’t take it, I thank you,” said she, rising in haste to go.

“I suppose,” said Mrs. Dunmore, looking significantly at Blanche, “we shall have a Catholic wedding in the country soon. I hope I shall see it; it would be such an odd kind of a novelty.”

“La, me! yes,” added Mrs. Catesby; “and all in Latin, too. How does one know when to say yes, or draw the glove? Oh, gracious! I should be frightened half to death!—but good morning, good morning—we must drive over to the Oaklands now, and tell Mrs. Herbert the news.”

That evening Corinne, with little Irene for a



companion, was sauntering along the beach. Corinne had a small book which she read, and said her beads alternately, and the child amused herself by gathering the bright shells and scraps of mother-of-pearl which glittered among the white sands. They had not been long there when Mr. Leslie, who appeared to be hurried as he approached, joined Corinne and informed her that Evelyn Herbert was at the house and earnestly requested an interview with her on business of a delicate nature.

“Father,” said Corinne, “if his visit is any other than a friendly one I cannot see him. I do not wish to converse with him, even, unless the rest of the family are present.”

“My dear, when I inform you that he has requested my permission to address you, I hope you will change your mind,” said Mr. Leslie, seriously.

“Has he dared!” she exclaimed, with flushed cheeks, and turning her flashing eyes full in her father’s face; “I thought I had been sufficiently explicit with Mr. Herbert on that point.”

“Has he ever mentioned the subject to you, my daughter? If so, why such repugnance? for, on my honor, such an alliance ought not to be trifled with,” said Mr. Leslie.

“Yes, sir,” she replied, more gently; “Mr. Herbert honored me some weeks ago by offering me his hand, an honor which I decidedly declined,

and you will, if you please, see him on our return, and say that my determination is unalterable."

"Cora," said Mr. Leslie, taking Irene in his arms, as they turned homeward, "this is a match which above all others would please me. I have watched the upward and splendid progress of that boy for years, and secretly wished that I might one day or other have the honor of calling him—son. Young, handsome, moral and refined in manners as he is elegant in taste, with a reputation unequalled in the state for everything that is noble and excellent, I can really discover but one reasonable objection you could possibly have, and that is the difference in your religion."

"Religion! Alas!" said Corinne. "Father, I will see him on one condition, and that is that you may be present. I would have you hear him answer one or two questions which I intend proposing to him; *then*, if you still persevere in your wishes concerning the alliance, why——"

"My beloved child," said Mr. Leslie, interrupting her hastily, "do not misunderstand me. As much disappointed as I may feel in case you refuse so brilliant an offer, yet not for the dower of a kingdom would I put force on your inclinations, or compel you to bestow your hand unless your whole heart accompanied it."

"Thank you—thank you, dear father," said Corinne, kissing the hand she held; "then all my doubts and fears are over."

Little Irene was sent to Blanche, and Corinne, with cheeks glowing like a fresh rose, and her eyes sparkling with health and the excitement of her long walk, entered the drawing-room leaning on her father's arm. Herbert approached and would have taken her hand, but with a stately mien and calm exterior she repulsed his familiarity, and, passing on, seated herself near a table covered with a number of exquisite foreign toys and a few splendidly bound books. After a constrained and awkward conversation, which lasted only a few minutes, Herbert requested the honor of a private interview with her.

"I have no secrets from my father, Mr. Herbert," she replied, coldly. "I will not affect to misunderstand the object of your visit. You have gained my father's permission to address me, notwithstanding the positive interdict I laid on such a course; and in his presence, therefore, I prefer hearing what you have to say, as I have in turn one or two questions to ask you, which I trust, on your honor as a man, you will answer."

"This is a most unusual proceeding, Miss Leslie," he replied, "and I could wish it otherwise, but be it as you say." Then, leaning over her chair, he told his love in such a winning tone of eloquence, and with such sincere expressions of devotion, that Mr. Leslie, who marked his countenance, which, filled with manly beauty and

every indication of a superior intellect, fluctuated between his hopes and fears, wondered if it was possible that Corinne could reject one who, being the most splendid match in all the country round, was the cynosure of every eye. But she heard his protestations and promises coldly. Once only a deep flush dyed her white forehead and crimsoned her cheeks, but this was all, and no change or emotion of any kind passed over her face. When the low murmur of his voice was stilled, and he stood by her side with his arms folded on his breast, waiting with feverish anxiety for her reply, she said:

“Mr. Herbert, I cannot imagine the motive from which you again venture to speak to me on this subject after what has already passed. However, I suppose I must feel honored by your proposals, which I again decidedly decline. But in justice to myself, and to ward off the accusation of unnecessary coldness or hauteur towards you, you must allow me the privilege of asking you one or two questions, which I call on you as a man of honor to answer without equivocation. Do you believe in the revealed truths of religion?”

“Really,” he replied, wincing at the question, “this is very singular. However, I confess that I do not profess the doctrines of any peculiar creed. Like your father, Mr. Leslie, I have not yet found a religion to suit my beau ideal, but, on

my honor, I feel the utmost liberality towards all."

"Your evasion is ingenious, sir," said Corinne; "but you must have been out of the neighborhood or you would have heard ere this that not only my father, but my sister and myself, have found a religion which answers our most sublime and sanguine hopes. We are Catholics."

"Catholics!" he exclaimed, starting. "True; I have been to Charleston, and only returned last night. I congratulate you, upon my honor."

"Spare your ironical congratulations," replied Corinne, "and answer my question. Do you believe in the revealed truths of religion?"

"My dear Miss Leslie, give me but the faintest reason to hope that at some future day I may win your hand, and I pledge you my word as a gentleman that your religion shall never be interfered with. On the contrary, every facility shall be afforded for your innocent devotions which may lie in my power."

"Sir," she said, indignantly, "answer me. Do you believe in God? Do you believe in his revealed Word, or is it only when heated by wine that you declare yourself an—atheist?"

"Evelyn," said Mr. Leslie, approaching and taking the young man's hand within his own, "answer truly, I implore you. I could never consent to wed my daughter with one who professed so dark and hopeless a philosophy as this. On

your honor as a man—by the happiness of her you love, and by the peace of these gray hairs, I command you to reply without equivocation.”

“Thus adjured, I will, though it sever every fibre of my heart. I am what doctors of divinity call an atheist,” he replied, with quivering lip; “and for this you spurn me, Corinne—you, who might, if I am wrong, win me from error and mould me as you would. But could I hope that, notwithstanding all, there is some hidden pulse of your heart which pulsates for me, that my principles are the only barrier between us, it would in no slight degree reconcile me to my fate.”

“Do not deceive or flatter yourself with regard to my concealed feelings. I assure you that, although your atheistical principles are an insuperable objection, there are other things, which *you* are conscious of, and among them a want of that preference on my part towards you which is so essentially necessary to wedded happiness. But I have already said more than I anticipated; let us end this conversation, which has been so painful to us both,” said Corinne.

“And are all the hopes of my lifetime to be thus in a moment crushed? all the bright visions which lured me onward in the path of fame to melt away forever? Corinne—Miss Leslie—unsay your words; bid me hope that the coyness of modesty dictated those expressions which

have so wounded me; say but one word—reach me your hand in token that you will grant me the boon I ask—for, alas! it will be like tearing the chords of life asunder to give you up!” he exclaimed, passionately.

“Mr. Herbert,” said Corinne, calmly, while tears trickled over her now pale cheeks, “I pity you—forgive the expression—but I pity you. There are many fairer and better in this world than I—seek a mate among them; and oh, sir! let me beseech you by all you hold sacred to give up all those things which are stamping ‘wan ruin’ on your soul. I will pray for you, my father will pray for you, and Blanche and Edgar, too, that you may return to God, to your Father’s house, to Him who gave you all those splendid gifts, which you seem madly determined to enthrall in the iron subjection of your gloomy and soul-destroying creed.”

“You reject me, then, entirely?” he said, gloomily.

“I do, and decidedly,” she answered, calmly.

“Then, Miss Leslie, farewell—forever!” he said, snatching her hand and pressing it for a moment to his lips; then, wringing Mr. Leslie’s, rushed from the house. The next morning he was on his way to Washington.

A few evenings after the Sister of Charity, with Blanche and Corinne, were sitting with their work-baskets around the lamp, when Mr.

Leslie, Edgar and Father Borgia, entering, joined the group in time to hear that the ladies were discussing the event. Corinne changed color and would have discontinued the subject, but Edgar seemed disposed to banter her and made some observation to that effect.

"Really, my dear," said Mr. Leslie, "among friends you need not shrink from the subject; I, for one, honor you for your courage."

"And I," said Father Borgia, "for resisting splendid temptation."

"Well," said Blanche, "I dare say you were right, dearest Cora; but how could you be so cold and cruel? I am glad my feelings never had to pass through such an ordeal."

"By which you mean to be very complimentary to me," said Edgar, laughing; "however, I confess that Herbert would prove a dangerous rival."

"I think, or rather fear, that our single daughter will be very fastidious in her choice of a husband," said Mr. Leslie; "but what says she? not a word? not a smile? And, is it possible? Can those be tears? Why, my child, what mean they? Believe me, I meant no reflection on your conduct of last week, which I now highly approve. I assure you, that so much confidence have I in your good sense and judgment, that your choice, whoever it may hereafter be, has already my approval."



“My choice is already made,” said Corinne, in a low voice.

“Aha! this is something new,” said Mr. Leslie, starting, while all looked astonished.

“My dear father and friends,” said she, recovering her serenity, “you may think me an enthusiast when I tell you more concerning this choice, which, I assure you, is irrevocably made. I wish to be numbered among the holy daughters of St. Vincent de Paul.”

“Father,” exclaimed Mr. Leslie, “you knew of this!”

“I did, sir; but Miss Leslie will acquit me of suggesting the idea to her,” he replied.

“Or even encouraging it,” replied Corinne, smiling. “No, Father Borgia, *you* did not suggest the idea, certainly.”

“I presume, then, that you owe your present sentiments to Sister Therese,” said Mr. Leslie, gravely.

“No, my beloved father; only in an indirect way. He who suggested it is not mortal, and whispers daily, with a still, small voice, *Leave all thou hast, and follow Me*. He, our divine Lord who was so poor on earth that he had not where to lay his sacred head, invites me to his holy poverty, and by every eternal consideration urges me to suffer with him through his suffering members. Day or night I cannot rest for wishing, in the practical works of the Sisters of Charity,

to imitate and follow him, through poverty, humiliations and death. Oh, father! dear father! you would have bestowed me on one who perchance would have made my life miserable and my eternity terrible; you would have given me unreservedly to one who, while he could have placed me in a high and brilliant position, would have made me almost a stranger in my own home; and would you refuse my poor services to our Lord, to Him who will bless the sacrifice and in the end give me, in exchange for a crown of thorns, a crown of imperishable glory, and for a coarse robe, a garment of righteousness; who will cause the blood and dust to be wiped from my pilgrim feet, and have placed thereon sandals of rest! Let me go, my father—let me be nearer the cross—let me walk with our Lord among the poor——”

“Corinne,” said Mr. Leslie, interrupting her, “come hither, my child; let me feel your forehead and hands; you look feverish. There, sit here, near me; but no, your forehead and hands are cool; your cheeks have no fever in their glow. But tell me, is this a momentary flash of enthusiasm, or the result of calm and deliberate reflection? Would you leave me, now that my hair is whitening with age? Could you depart from your sister, from whom you have never been separated a day, and consent to behold no more the home of your childhood, or visit no more the grave of

that mother who died in giving you birth? Corinne, could these soft, delicate hands, which even the harp-strings scar, which have never performed a more arduous duty than tending the flowers—think you, my child, that they could toil from morn till night? or think you, that form as delicate and fragile as a lily's, could spend whole nights in a hospital ward, tending poor wretches, who are, perhaps, dying with pestilence, delirium or infectious fever?"

"Almighty God will give his servant strength," replied Corinne.

"Could those tiny feet," continued Mr. Leslie, "which weary with the fatigues of a single dance, endure the painful hardships of days, months, years? And this dear head," said Mr. Leslie, drawing her head to his breast, while big tears rolling from his eyes fell on it, "which has ever been pillowed in peace, and rested thus daily on your father's breast or in your sister's arms, which, when it ached or felt weary and heavy, knew the hands which could soothe its distress—say, my child, how could it rest among strangers? Who would soothe its pain? Who regard its burning? Who care for its heaviness, my beautiful one?"

"Father, dear, you but give expression to thoughts which have before troubled and tempted me—thoughts which are but the demands of nature; and are not the demands of

nature too often opposed to the grace of God? Everything, therefore, that is contrary to His holy will comes from no doubtful source," said Corinne, calmly. "I have been, it is true, a Catholic but a few weeks; it was only a few days ago that I received for the first time the communion of the body and blood of our Lord, and yet it seems an age; it is new, and yet it seems old; and as unaccountable as it may appear, this desire or vocation feels like some old, familiar emotion, like a long, steady progress to one point. I care not for the world, and my body—it is but dust, animated by an immortal spirit, which, like it, cannot sink into a state of annihilation; therefore, when He who gave me this life now claims it for his service, how can I—how dare I—refuse so small, so insignificant a thing, particularly when I am assured that my services, no matter how long, how self-denying, or how great, will never be commensurate with the exceeding great reward which will await me?"

"Are such things required of us?" said Mr. Leslie to Father Borgia, with an expression of great anxiety.

"When God demands them, certainly," he replied. "But why regard that as a sacrifice by which you honor Him and do service to Him, while at the same time it gives you an opportunity of gaining merit and grace for yourself?"

Blanche wept. Sister Therese was silent, but

her usually calm, pale face was lit up with an expression of intense satisfaction. Edgar looked serious and puzzled, while Corinne's countenance was the only happy one of the group.

"My dear father," she continued, "you will have Blanche and Edgar always with you, and you know you could come and see me occasionally; and even I, if I find I have not a vocation or become dissatisfied, can leave the order at the expiration of a year. Only see how many advantages you will have, notwithstanding all."

"But, Cora," said Edgar, "would it not be better, or more wise, to postpone the matter until your vocation is put a little to the test?"

"Father Borgia has advised me to wait a year, which I intend doing; then, my dear father, you will give me without reserve to the service of our Lord, will you not? I scarcely know why I commenced this subject to-night, but it is perhaps as well. You are all now prepared for an event which, if I live, will assuredly take place."

"Ah, well!" said Mr. Leslie, sighing, "a year's probation is something, and yet I hope nothing from it but your prolonged stay among us during the time. I know your decision of character and firmness of purpose too well, my dear, to expect you to change, particularly on a point to which the inspiration of religion has led you. But your vacant place will never be filled by my hearth, my darling, when you leave me, and I.

shall mourn your absence as if you were already an inhabitant of yonder heaven."

"Dear father," said Corinne, regarding him with a look of unspeakable affection, and brushing from her cheeks a single tear which rolled over them, "the trial is, I know, one of magnitude to you, but our good God will give you strength and grace to bear it. Edgar, you were in E—— to day; did you hear anything of Mr. Forrester?"

"Truly did I," he replied; "he is as much, if not more, the subject of conversation than we ourselves among the polite circles in E——. I called on him to console and congratulate him, and found him one of the most interesting men I ever met with."

"Ah!" said Mr. Leslie, to whom a change of conversation seemed a relief; "what are his prospects?"

"In a pecuniary point of view, gloomy enough; but he is cheerful and happy, trusting in that promise which says, 'Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added to you;' but, if I had dared, how gladly would I have offered him assistance," he replied.

"Does he intend remaining in E——?" inquired Mr. Leslie.

"No, sir; he goes in a day or two towards the north, where, I suppose, he will become an inmate of some seminary," said Edgar.

“Such is his purpose. Through the influence of the Bishop of Charleston, Bishop E——, he has received the most hospitable and friendly invitations from the superior of a theological seminary in New York, whither he intends going. If he does not study for the priesthood his intellectual acquirements will obtain for him a class or two in some literary institution, which will yield him a moderate income. But is it not the hour for evening prayer, my children?” said Father Borgia, as the little musical clock on the mantel chimed eleven.

The next day Mr. Forrester was surprised by receiving a small package containing five hundred dollars. There was no clue by which he could trace the gift back to the generous donor, the paper in which it was wrapped containing only these words, written in a strange hand, “From a friend.” A day or two after, being invited to spend a week at Elverton Hall, he mentioned the circumstance at dinner. Mr. Leslie’s face became slightly flushed as it was commented on, and Edgar, who was examining the piece of paper on which the words were inscribed, detected at once his uncle’s handwriting, but, appreciating both the delicacy and humility which thus proffered the gift, he remained silent, and did not reveal his discovery in any way or to any one, except by an eloquent glance at his uncle, which he understood.

## CHAPTER XII.

“Where is the tree the prophet threw  
Into the bitter wave?  
Left it no scion where it grew,  
The fainting soul to save?”

FREQUENT and long were the conversations which Mr. Leslie had with Corinne on the subject of her vocation for a religious life, and although he could not reconcile all his preconceived ideas on the point as yet with a long, long separation from the child he so devotedly loved, she had, by her steadiness of purpose, her humble piety and cheerful hopefulness of manner, so familiarized him with it that he now always conversed calmly and almost resignedly on the subject. The two, Blanche and Corinne, were woven in, as it were, with one profound sentiment of affection in his heart; he never thought of one separate from the other; he never felt a joy that was not shared by both, and could not resist the idea that in parting them he would lose both, or, dividing it, a portion, if not all, would be destroyed.



"Surely you do not doubt my love for you, my dear father?" said Corinne, one day.

"No, my child, not exactly that; but heretofore I have been the first in your affections, and it appears to me that in a religious life you will become so thoroughly dead to the world and all human endearments that I shall hold but a secondary place in your regard," replied Mr. Leslie.

"Father," said Corinne, "in forgetting you I should be a monster of ingratitude, which heaven itself would spurn. No! Almighty God requires not an annihilation of those dear ties which he himself has formed and sanctioned; he only demands a subserviency of them to his divine purposes. He sometimes honors us by demanding our services, insignificant and poor though they be, for the advancement of his honor and glory, which, while they involve some few sacrifices, and put our faith to severe tests, neither sanction a forgetfulness of the authors of our being, or the want of a proper degree of love towards them."

"In such a case, my dear, how do you define a proper degree of love?" asked Mr. Leslie.

"A degree of affection which, though necessarily great and strong, should be inferior to the love and duty we feel and owe to God, which, yielding with ready obedience to his commands, *leaves all* to follow him, and trembles at the sentence which declares that if we love father or mother more than Christ he will disown us in the

hour of judgment before the angels of heaven—which seeks after righteousness as the first of all, and over all considerations, and, unfettered, runs after the blessings which are promised to the ‘poor in spirit,’ to ‘those that mourn,’ and to the meek,” said Corinne, while her face was irradiated with the animation of her feelings.

“But you seem to bestow no thought on the keen wound which will be inflicted on my finest parental emotions by the loss of your society, and in the reflection that while I am sheltered in the sweet sanctuary of home and enjoying its repose and luxuries, you, who have been so delicately nursed, may perchance be exposed to hardships unaccustomed and hard to bear, and perhaps to the poison of pestilential disease. Does not the ordeal cause you to shrink and tremble, my child?” said Mr. Leslie.

“Father, you have read of those three Hebrew boys who, because they refused to worship a golden idol, were cast into an ordeal of fire, the heat of which was so intense that those who approached fell scorched to the earth, and how God, to protect and comfort them, sent his angels to walk with them through the flames, and how, all unharmed and unscathed, they rejoiced in their midst and sung praises to God? Do you recollect it, dear father?” asked Corinne, while a tear flashed for a moment in her eyes, then fell trembling to the ground.

"I do," he replied, unable to say more.

"That same God, my father, will also protect and strengthen me, the weakest of his servants; but, dear sir, when we offer anything to God, we must offer it entirely and without reserve. Make up your mind now to do so with regard to me, and I venture to affirm that, so far from feeling all those anxieties and distractions which you dread, you will be rewarded by an interior tranquility and entire confidence in the care and goodness of God which you never before experienced," she replied.

"I feel that I am perhaps ungenerous, and also selfish, towards that God to whom I am indebted for every blessing and good gift, and therefore not acting in accordance with the holy spirit of our religion; but, my child, nature has ever warred with grace, and although grace urges me to give up every objection in your favor, nature, with all her sweet ties and eloquent influences, overpowers the rest. Pray for me, and I will pray, my dear daughter, that grace, which comes alone from God, may be granted to me to act in this matter according to his will. But," continued Mr. Leslie, as if afraid he had conceded too much, "there is one condition to which you must agree ere I can give you the result of my final determination on this point."

"Name it, father," said Corinne; "I am sure you will require nothing of me which is inconsistent with my wishes."

“I will. The time, as you know, which was appointed for the marriage of your sister is now near at hand; a few weeks longer and she will be the wife of Edgar. Instead of making a bridal tour, as we at first intended, through the northern states, we have determined, in company with Blanche, yourself, and your pet, Irene, if you choose, to travel a year in Europe. You will then see the world, with its splendid monuments of man’s ingenuity and greatness, and hear the musical hubbub of its pleasures and mark the social happiness of its denizens; and although, my child, I neither wish nor expect you to partake of its pleasures or engage in its vain amusements, I do wish you to make use of the opportunity in a calm and deliberate manner, and let the result of your observations decide in the affair,” replied her father.

“This is a trial at which I should perhaps tremble,” said Corinne, meekly; “but, trusting in God, I accept it as one of the ‘splinters of the cross,’ which they who love Him are expected to bear. I agree, with all due submission, my dear father, to your proposition, hoping that at the end of the appointed time you will no longer throw an obstacle in my way.”

“If at the expiration of the year spent in travelling,” said Mr. Leslie, “you still persevere in your determination to become a Sister of Charity, then, my child, as much as it will cost me, I

will give you up without reserve to the life to which I believe you are called."

"Thank you, thank you, my kind, dear father," said Corinne, quietly brushing off a tear; "God will reward you with tenfold blessings."

"We will now consider the affair as finally disposed of," said he, with an almost imperceptible quivering of his lip, "and change the subject."

"Who will take charge of your affairs while we are travelling, sir?"

"Edgar is in treaty with the protégé of Evelyn Herbert, Willie Stevens, whom, no doubt, you remember. I am told that he is pious, prudent, industrious and quite capable of attending to all my ordinary business, which I can readily believe, both from my own observation and the testimony of persons who have known him from his boyhood."

"I hope Father Borgia remains?"

"Yes; he will remain six months longer, and if he gets the permission of his superiors in the meantime, until we return. The bishop of C—— has invited him into his diocese, but in consequence of this and another arrangement he respectfully declined. He intends assisting the clergyman in E—— in the arduous duties of a mission, which is thirty miles distant, where the people, poor and ignorant, and without a regular pastor, are in danger of forgetting the practices of their religion."

“Has this mission been long unattended to?” asked Corinne.

“It has not been entirely neglected; but, as you know, the reverend gentleman in E—— has a large and troublesome charge of his own, and is not, in consequence, able to visit those poor creatures often,” he replied.

They were interrupted by the entrance of Edgar St. Johns, who looked pale and agitated, and held an open newspaper in his hand. He sat down without speaking, and, leaning his elbow on the table, rested his forehead on his hand.

“Are you not well, Edgar?” said Mr. Leslie.

“Yes, sir; yes, quite well,” he replied, glancing uneasily at Corinne.

“You are disturbed, Edgar,” she said, observing it; “has anything unusual occurred?”

“Nothing personal—an old friend—an old playmate—but I cannot express myself—here, sir, do you read the melancholy news,” he said, handing the paper to his uncle.

“Gracious God!” exclaimed Mr. Leslie, running his eyes rapidly over the paragraph which was pointed out. “Evelyn Herbert! Alas, poor boy! poor boy!”

“What has happened to our friend, dear father?” inquired Corinne, anxiously; “he is not dead?”

Mr. Leslie reflected a moment before he handed her the paper, and although he observed

that she trembled and was slightly discomposed, he was assured that the agitation of her manner proceeded alone from a friendly interest in all which involved the happiness of the family at the Oaklands. Evelyn Herbert had fought a duel. At a political dinner party in Washington, which had been given in his honor, a certain measure in which he was much interested became the absorbing topic of the hour. It happened, unfortunately, that a senator from the north was in the city at the time, who was also invited to the dinner. His opinions were antagonistic to those of Herbert, but he held them confined within the bounds of courtesy until the wine circulated freely and turned the cool current of reason into a torrent of fire, which consumed not only the proprieties of social life, but scorched the soul and maddened the brain. Bitter, burning, scalding words passed between them; opprobrious epithets, impugning honor, truth and courage, were tossed with over-true aim from one to the other, until, like a maniac, Herbert arose and dashed the contents of his goblet into the face of his opponent. Then the scene beggared description; friends threw themselves between the two raging men, but not before Herbert received a blow on his face, which in a moment seemed to sober him. He became instantly calm, and his countenance was terrible with its concentrated expression of rage and livid whiteness, and, ex-

claiming with a voice which, though low and scarcely above a whisper, was heard by all with startling distinctness, "Sir, blood alone can wash from my cheek the pollution of your touch," left the room. A challenge passed, was accepted, and, notwithstanding all that mutual friends could do and the vigilance of the police, they met on the fatal ground at Bladensburg, and, horrible to relate, at the first fire Herbert's antagonist fell mortally wounded, while he, half frantic with remorse, knelt by his side, and in a few moments saw him die, murmuring the words of, "My wife! my children!"

Corinne was deeply shocked, and sat holding the paper in silence, while her cheeks wore the hue of marble. At last tears gathered in her eyes and slowly trickled over her face, and she exclaimed, "It is terrible! it is terrible! Oh, honor, thou veiled prophet! thou phantom, hiding misery and death beneath a seductive veil, how many hast thou lured to ruin! That is no honor, father, which makes a man either a murderer or a suicide, for he who conquers is a murderer; he who falls dies a suicidal death, even while his intentions are murderous, and goes, sent by the hand of one equally erring with himself, into the awful presence of an offended God. And Evelyn Herbert, the pride of his native state, is a murderer! Oh, God! send him repentance, send him repentance, until he is driven to



thee, and pity the gray hairs on which he has brought this heavy grief!"

"His parents—alas for them!" said Mr. Leslie, in a low voice.

"Shall I go to them, father?" said Corinne, rising; his mother, I am sure, is nearly broken-hearted. Come, Edgar, come with me."

"Would it not be better, my dear Cora, to defer going until to-morrow?" said he, gently.

"No," she said, decidedly; "with my father's consent I will go now. You know she has no friend near her except the judge, and I presume he is too much troubled himself to afford her much comfort. It is my duty to go, Edgar; you know how she always loved me. Shall I go, father?"

"Yes, my noble child, and I will go with you; you teach us our duty," replied Mr. Leslie.

Throwing on her hat and wrapping a shawl around her, Corinne placed her hand in her father's arm, and they walked rapidly towards the Oaklands. Consternation sat on every face. Judge Herbert, with his arms folded on his breast, was slowly walking to and fro in the dark, deserted hall, and when he saw Mr. Leslie grasped his hand in silence, and without noticing Corinne pointed to a chair; while ever and anon the most piercing shrieks from an upper chamber directed her to the bedside of the frantic mother. But what a welcome awaited her! As

she approached the bed, and would have taken Mrs. Herbert's hand, she turned with a long, loud cry, away from her, and reproached her as the cause of all their agony in terms which were bitter and hard to bear; but, without speaking, she knelt by the bedside, with meek patience and sweetness, to pray for that distracted parent who was thus severely chastised. Paroxysm after paroxysm of misery darkened her mind, and Corinne might as well have whispered to the whirlwind, or tried to stay the waves of the sea, as to have uttered consolatory words to her, for, tossing to and fro on her bed, she tore her hair, and cursed the hour which gave birth to her erring son. One moment she seemed like an avenging angel denouncing his errors, the next, with her hands clasped and eyes streaming, she called him by every tender name and shielded him in fancy on her bosom, as in days of yore, when he was a sinless child, and declared that not the testimony of all the world could make her believe that he had taken a fellow-creature's life. Occasionally, taking advantage of a moment's quiet during an interval of her delirium, Corinne would bend over her and whisper soothing, tender words, but they fell on the sufferer's ears unheeded; then, kneeling again, she renewed her supplications to Him who has promised not to break the bruised reed. Evening wore on, darkness, and finally the gloom of night, and she had raved on, until, ex-

hausted, she sunk into a profound though troubled sleep. Judge Herbert came into the room, followed by a servant with lights, and the house-keeper, and, thanking Corinne in a whisper for her kindness, gazed down on the pale and troubled face of his wife, until big, hot tears rolled over his cheeks and fell on her hand, which he had taken within his own.

“Farewell, Miss Leslie,” he whispered, following her to the door; “think not too harshly of the poor boy; he was too high spirited, too imperious, but, depend on it, Evelyn never intended to be a murderer. I can, in imitation of a certain lord chancellor of England, say, had we served our God as well as we have served the world, had we adored him as we did the creature he gave unto us, this sorrow would not have come on our gray hairs. But go to your peaceful home, and when there forget not to pray for the broken-hearted——”

Corinne wept, and, unable to speak, pressed his hand with reverence and affection to her lips, and, kissing Mrs. Herbert on the forehead, left the room in silence. As they left the house, Mr. Leslie and his daughter, a horseman dashed furiously up, and as the light from the open hall door streamed out on him they recognized the white, agonized face of Evelyn Herbert. They did not pause, but with sad hearts returned home. Smiles had vanished from Elverton Hall; every

member of the family who had heard the news felt the most profound commiseration for the afflicted circle at the Oaklands.

"Thank God, Corinne dear," said Mr. Leslie, as they sat around the drawing-room table after tea, "thank God that you did not love him. How bitter, how bitter would be your agony now!"

"Happy indeed for me," she replied, "that the object on which my hopes are placed is both sure and steadfast. In the world those who sow in joy reap in tears; but out of it, those who sow in tears reap in joy."

Mr. Leslie sighed, and, requesting her to uncover her harp and play for him, laid his head back on his chair and closed his eyes, with an expression of painful thought on his countenance.

"Come, Blanche, let us sing 'Ave Maria, guardian bright!' it will tranquillize us all; but where is Father Borgia? He might sing with us."

"He was sent for, to visit a dying person, soon after you left," replied Edgar. "A man who was in early life a Catholic, but who, neglecting first one, then another pious practice, finally forgot all, and has lived for thirty years in the open violation of all the precepts of the Church."

"Does he belong to our neighborhood?" inquired Corinne.

"He has settled in it lately," he replied. "Do you not remember seeing a tall, respectable, gray headed man, who was here to see your father sev-

eral times on business? Well, he was one of the workmen employed in giving the finishing touches to our little chapel. Father Borgia met him there several times when they were putting in the windows, and during one or two accidental conversations learned the fact, and from that hour let no opportunity pass without beseeching him, in the most pathetic terms, to become reconciled to the Church. He promised to do so time after time, and really seemed penitent, but has put off the affair until the eleventh hour. God have mercy on him!"

"As it is probable he is now in his last agony, or near it," said Corinne, timidly, suppose we say a decade of the rosary for him."

"You are right, dear," said Mr. Leslie, kneeling; "we will say the decade of the second dolorous mystery for his departing soul, that by the powerful aid of the Mother of Jesus it may, through his merits, be at last saved!"

Thus, while the pious priest was at a distance and wrestling in prayer with God for the soul of the dying man, this pious family joined him in his intention, and though unseen by him, and at a distance from the scene of his Christian labors, they aided him by their prayers, and, animated by the spirit of the same faith, besought that God might sanctify them to the salvation of the soul of the dying penitent. After this act of disinterested and pious charity they sang the hymn,

and with their thoughts lingering around the form of the contrite sinner, many an unspoken prayer ascended upward with their rich, harmonious voices to the mercy-seat in his behalf. With hearts tranquillized more by the holy influence of charity than the music they gathered around the table again to pursue, with peaceful hearts, their usual evening avocations. In about a half hour Father Borgia returned, looking pale and exhausted, and said "that the man, though a small degree better, was still in danger; his physician said he might live until the next day at noon, and, as he was truly and sincerely contrite, he trusted that he would have the happiness to administer the sacraments of the Church to him; and," continued Father Borgia, lifting his eyes heavenward, "may our blessed Lord look down in mercy on his soul! May the immaculate Virgin Mother intercede for him, and the holy apostles make intercession for him; and may he at last be, through Christ, purified by the flames of purgatory, and admitted to the beatific vision!"

"Amen—may it be so!" said Mr. Leslie and Edgar, reverently.

After a respectful silence the sisters resumed their work, and Edgar, taking a manuscript from his pocket, drew his chair near the table and opened its leaves.

"What have you there, Edgar?" inquired Blanche.

“An old Catholic legend,” he replied; “would you like to hear it?”

“Oh, yes; but on what subject is it written, and by whom?” she said.

“An author, perhaps, of whom you have never heard—Henry Sickius—and is one of the many sacred legends of the olden times from which the subjects are taken which are so magnificently painted on many of the cathedral windows of Europe. Nothing that Milton ever wrote surpasses in sublimity the fragment which I have translated from one of Father Borgia’s curious old books for you.\* It derives its sublimity of tone and soul-touching grandeur from the mysteries of the resurrection.”

Mr. Leslie also drew near the table to listen, and Father Borgia excusing himself, retired to spend an hour or two in silence and devotion before the bell rang for evening prayers. Blanche shaded the lamp, and Edgar, with a clear, deep-toned voice, commenced the legend thus:

“Jesus is dead. \* \* \* \* darkness overshadows the earth; Jerusalem is all in confusion; the people murmur; but, unmoved by these events, the chiefs of the priests pursue their designs. They seal the entrance of the sepulchre

\*Selected from the “Catholic Magazine” of August, 1845, and can be found, with interesting details, in a paper on “Archæology and Glass Painting,” with the legends connected therewith.

where Jesus reposes; they station near it a guard of soldiers, and cast into prison Joseph of Arimathea, because, in the name of the disciples, he had come to ask for the body of their Master. But all these precautions are useless. The guards of the sepulchre arrive, and proclaim that Christ has risen from the dead; that they saw him spring forth from the grave and speak to the women who sat and wept hard by. Though the people refuse to believe it, they persist in declaring what they have seen and heard. In vain is an attempt made to bribe them; the news continues to spread in every direction, and is confirmed every moment by the arrival of further intelligence. The venerable Joseph of Arimathea adds to the confusion of the magistrates by announcing to them that not only had Christ risen from the grave, but that also several illustrious individuals had returned to life with him! "Listen to me," says he; "we all knew Simeon the high priest, who received the infant Jesus in his arms when he was presented in the temple. Simeon had two sons, and we all assisted at their death and sepulture. Now come with me—see their tombs; they are open! Carinus and Lucius repose no longer there. They are at this hour in the town of Arimathea, where they pray in silence, without speaking to any one." This intelligence casts dismay among the chief priests and Pharisees, and no one doubts it after the tes-



timony of Joseph of Arimathea. They now deliberate on what is to be done. On motion of Joseph of Arimathea the resuscitated sons of Simeon are called into the synagogue, and requested by the magistrates to relate the events which had taken place in the region of the dead, and how they had been restored to life. Upon this Carinus and Lucius betray considerable emotion, and, lifting their eyes to heaven, then making the sign of the cross upon their tongues, they request that a book might be given to each of them, in order to write what had taken place. The books having been furnished them, they sat down and wrote in silence what follows: We were seated with our fathers in silence, in the depths of the grave, when suddenly a light, warm and brilliant, darted like a beam from heaven and illuminated our midst. Then the father of the human race—Adam—and all the patriarchs and prophets exclaimed, This light comes from the Author of all light, and announces the dawn of eternal day!

“‘Isaiah then arose and said, Behold the light of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, of whom I foretold when on earth; Land of Zebulon, land of Naphthali, men of Galilee, the people who are in darkness will see a great light, and it will shine upon those who sit in the shadow of death!

“‘And we all rejoiced at the splendor of the

light that shone about us. Simeon, our father, cried out in a loud voice, Glory be to Jesus Christ, Son of God, of whom I said formerly when he lay in my arms in the temple, Mine eyes, oh, Lord, have seen thy salvation—the salvation thou hast prepared for the world; a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel!

“ ‘And all heard this with increased transports of joy. Then in the midst of us came one like a hermit of the wilderness, and we interrogated him: Who art thou? He answered, I am John, the voice of the Almighty; the prophet; the precursor who walked before him to prepare his ways and give to the people the science of salvation. Seeing the Saviour of the world coming to me, I cried out to the people, Behold the Lamb of God, who washes away the sins of the world! I baptized him in the waters of the Jordan; and I saw the Holy Ghost descend upon him in the shape of a dove, and I heard a voice saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And now again I walk before him, and announce to you that his coming is nigh.

“ Hearing that Jesus had been baptized in the Jordan, the first created among men, Adam, said to Seth, his son, My son, relate to the patriarchs and prophets what the archangel Michael said to you when, old and infirm, I sent you to the en-

trance of the earthly paradise, to ask for some balm from the tree of mercy to anoint my decaying limbs! Seth, then drawing near to the patriarchs and prophets, related to them what follows: My father having become old and being near his death, sent me to the gate of paradise to beg of God that he would permit me to enter and gather some oil from the tree of mercy. I obeyed my father; and as I prayed at the entrance an angel of the Lord appeared to me and said, What do you want? the balm of the tree of mercy to restore your father to health? You can find none here now. Go back and tell your father, when four thousand years shall have elapsed, the beloved Son of God will descend upon earth and resuscitate the body of Adam, with those of all other good men who have died during that period, and, ascending from the waters of the Jordan, he will anoint with the balm of mercy all those who believe in him, and that balm will endure until the end of time. Then Jesus Christ will introduce thy father into Paradise.

“The patriarchs and prophets were filled with joy on hearing these words of Seth.

“But while this beautiful and majestic reunion of the saints of the old law is convened, a dark conventicle of demons deliberate on the treatment which they will offer to the soul of Jesus when it descends into hell. “I have triumphed over him,” exclaimed Satan; “I have

excited the Jews against him, and at this very hour he is expiring on a cross." This chief of the rebel angels, who presides in the councils of the infernal hosts, speaks of Jesus in a tone of derision: "That Jesus," says he, "who proclaims himself the Son of God, and who is but a man, is afraid of death, crying out, 'My soul is sad, even unto death.' And yet," adds Satan, "he has greatly opposed me, for he has cured a vast number of wretches whom I had deprived of the use of their limbs; and several souls I was carrying to thee, oh Lucifer, he has rescued from my grasp." \* \* \* \* Lucifer is the king of the infernal empire, and Satan is his first minister. Lucifer, who proudly holds the sceptre, cannot share the disdain his subordinate power manifests, for a man who has opposed their designs with so much success. "Who is he, then," asks he, "this man who fears death, and yet surpasses in power all the powerful of the earth, who have been brought hither without resistance? If thou, Satan, speak the truth, he may be a God who pretends to fear death in order to deceive thee. Woe to thee, woe to thee forever if thou art vanquished!"

"Satan affects not to fear Jesus, but boasts that he has him in his power, and that his friends, the priests, the scribes and the Pharisees, will send his soul to him forthwith.

"While Lucifer and his first minister were

thus conversing a voice like that of thunder was heard: "Princes, open your gates; be raised up, eternal gates, the King of glory is advancing." *Tollite portas principes, vestras; et elevamini portæ eternales, et introibit rex gloriæ!* Hearing these words Lucifer cries out to Satan, his minister, Fly away! leave me, or if thou art a valiant warrior go and give battle to that King of Glory. He then drove him away, and, calling his impious army, he said to them: Close the brazen gates, fasten the iron bolts, and resist with courage if you wish to escape captivity. The saints, hearing these orders given by Lucifer, felt indignant, and unanimously exclaimed: Open your gates and let the King of Glory enter; and David, raising his voice, added: Have I not said, Let us sing the Lord's mercy; let us celebrate his marvels towards the sons of men, for he has burst the brazen gates, and the iron bolts he has broken? Have I not also said: The dead will be resuscitated, and those who are in the graves will rise again; they on earth will rejoice, for the dews of heaven have come unto them? And all the saints repeated: Lucifer, open thy gates; from this day thy power has ceased; and the voice from without resounded again as a clap of thunder: *Attollite portas principes, vestras; et elevamini portæ eternales, et introibit rex gloriæ.* Lucifer, as if he did not comprehend, asked: Who is this King of Glory? . . . I know these

words, answered David; I formerly pronounced them. I will repeat them to thee, oh, Lucifer: He is the mighty and powerful God—powerful in wars: he is the King of Glory. He has listened from heaven to the groans of the captive, and he has delivered the sons of the dead! No sooner had David pronounced these words than the King of Glory appeared in human form. His presence illumed the eternal darkness, and loosed our fetters.’ ”

“I can see it all,” said Blanche, “as on a widespread and brilliantly covered canvas. How simple, and yet how grand!”

“And so probable in its details,” said Mr. Leslie, “that one can scarcely believe it is not the work of inspiration.”

Corinne was silent, but from her brightened eyes and kindling cheeks it was not difficult to imagine the impression which this sacred legend made on her.

“In using the words of M. Douhaire,” continued Edgar, “I express my own sentiments. ‘It would be difficult to imagine,’ said he, ‘a more striking and more dramatic scene. Could fancy create a bolder contrast than that presented between the venerable assembly of the saints gathered around the Father of mankind at the dawning of their deliverance, and the infernal congress of demons united to devise a plan against Jesus? But the most ingenious idea is that sol-

emn confronting of the two periods, the old and new, that verification of the prophecies by the prophets themselves, and that awakening of a generation of four thousand years at the sound of a voice which they had only heard before in a mysterious manner.' But to continue the legend: 'The shock and agitation caused by the arrival of Christ in the kingdom of the dead soon reach its farthest boundaries. The dead awake and rise to a man, still under the impression of a pleasing dream, and they contemplate in holy ecstasy the completion of the promises in the belief of which they descended to the grave.

“ ‘Christ extends his hand towards the just. At his feet Adam, the father of all men, sings in rapture that beautiful psalm of David, in which David himself exclaims: *Cantate Domino canticum novum quia mirabilia fecit*, &c.—Sing a new canticle to the Lord, for he has done marvels, &c., and the crowd of the just repeat Alleluia, amen. On the other side are heard the maledictions and gnashing of teeth of the demons. Then as the just ascend to heaven—a glorious and ransomed company—they are joined by two men of old. Who are you, they ask, who go up to heaven with us, although you shared not our captivity in the shades of Hades? One of them answered, I am Enoch, transported from earth to heaven by the word of the Lord. This is Elias the Thesbite, carried away on a fiery

chariot. We did not taste death as the rest of men; the Lord has kept us in reserve for the days of Antichrist. After having combated against him with miracles and prodigies, we shall be put to death in Jerusalem, and on the fourth day after we shall be again carried to the skies. Enoch and Elias were still speaking, when there advanced towards them another man, of wretched mien, who bore, with difficulty, a heavy cross on his shoulders. Who art thou? they asked; for thy appearance is that of a thief. Why this cross on thy shoulder? He answered: You speak the truth; I have been doing evil on earth. The Jews crucified me with Jesus of Nazareth, but, seeing the convulsion of all nature at his death, I acknowledged him as the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, and I prayed to him, saying: Remember me, oh, Lord, when you will be in your kingdom! He heard my prayer, and, inclining his head, he said to me: Amen, amen; I say to thee, This day thou wilt be with me in Paradise; carry this cross with thee; go to Michael, the archangel, who watches at the gate of heaven, and say to him: Jesus, the Son of God, at this time crucified, hath sent me hither. I did thus, and the angel opened unto me and gave me a place, saying: Wait here a little; Adam, the first man, will soon arrive with all the just. When I saw you all reunited together I came to join you.



“Thus spoke the good thief, and all the saints, after having heard him, exclaimed: Thou art great, oh Lord! and great is thy power! . . .

“Here end the revelations of Carinus and Lucius. The two sons of Simeon were forbidden to reveal anything further touching the mysteries of heaven. They were commanded, after having shown themselves in Jerusalem, to retire to the other bank of the Jordan into a rich and pleasant valley, and there to celebrate the Passover with other holy personages restored to life, in order to accomplish the great mystery. Three days only had been allotted for the term of their residence on earth.

“‘When they had finished their writing,’ continues the legend, ‘they arose and gave one of their books to the magistrates, and the other to Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. They were then transformed, becoming white as snow, and disappearing. Their books, when compared, were found exactly alike, the one not having a single letter more than the other.’” . . . .

All were highly pleased with Edgar’s manuscript, but their various comments were interrupted by the entrance of Father Borgia, who entered the room just as the clock chimed eleven to read the night prayers. The bell rang, and Sister Therese came down to join them in their pious devotions, followed soon after by a few of the domestics, who had been waiting patiently

until this rather late hour to join also in this act of religion which sanctifies the past hours and deeds of the day.

Repose had scarcely settled through the household when a violent storm of thunder, lightning and rain arose, which threatened to tear up the strongest trees of the forest, and caused the house to tremble as if by the shock of an earthquake. Between the hours of one and two, while the rain still descended in torrents, a messenger arrived in hot haste for Father Borgia to come immediately to the man he had left a short time before. They believed him dying, and, yielding to his prayers and tears, one of his fellow-workmen consented to venture out in the storm and bring with him the minister of God. He did not hesitate a moment when the servant who opened the door told him the man's errand, but, taking a small gold case from a cabinet, which contained the blessed sacrament and the holy oils, he was in a few moments prepared to attend the summons. He arrived in time, as the penitent man lingered until sunrise, when he fell gently asleep, trusting in the mercies of Christ for mercy and salvation. The family at Elverton Hall had not been disturbed by the departure of Father Borgia, and the next morning, when they went to the chapel at the usual hour—seven o'clock—to attend mass, they found him there, kneeling with an aspect of rapt devotion at the

altar. Their entrance aroused him from his meditations, and he proceeded to celebrate the holy office, requesting, ere he began, their prayers for the repose of the soul of the departed one. At breakfast they were much edified by a description of his last moments.

Corinne intended seeing Mrs. Herbert again on this day, but the arrival of Evelyn rendered it now impossible. Mr. Leslie and Edgar rode over to the Oaklands, and brought back the intelligence that, although they remained in the deepest affliction, both the judge and Mrs. Herbert seemed to be much consoled by the presence of their son, who expressed both by his appearance and manner signs of the keenest remorse. Blanche frequently visited Mrs. Herbert, accompanied sometimes by Corinne and at other times by Sister Therese, who gradually acquired an influence over her which taught her to look for consolation where alone it could be found—in the consolations of religion; the family at the Hall were not, therefore, surprised when one morning the judge himself came to invite Father Borgia to visit his lady as her regular pastor, and instruct her in the dogmas of the Catholic religion, which she had determined to adopt.

Days and weeks passed on, and the happy circle at the Hall discovered every day some new and perfect beauty in the ancient faith which they had adopted, as Father Borgia explained

in his usual happy manner those few points of doctrine with which they were not familiar, and instructed them in those minor tenets and practices which, though not considered absolutely essential to salvation, are the natural consequences of faith, which, like the smaller and apparently insignificant portions of creation, make it, as a whole, harmoniously perfect throughout. Their charity, which had heretofore been indolently passive, until appealed to by startling emergencies or palpable want, threw off its inertness, and, under the bright beams of the new sun of righteousness which had risen in their souls, sprung forth into active life, to be clouded no more in mists or uncertainty, and sought out among their own people and the poor of the neighborhood worthy objects on whom they might bestow their care, and share with them the superfluities of life. The children of their female servants were faithfully attended to by Corinne and Blanche; they had already formed two large classes, some of whom, with quick memories and docile dispositions, were making considerable progress in their catechisms. Sister Therese visited many of the women in their own houses, accompanied sometimes by Corinne, and patiently explained to them in simple language the Catholic doctrines and the great necessity there was for them to embrace them. With the devotion of the rosary they all seemed

particularly pleased; and the most prominent object in many of the cottages was a picture of the Blessed Virgin, and occasionally a set of prayer-beads, which they had received as rewards of their application and attention to religious instruction from Father Borgia. The exertions of Father Borgia, Mr. Leslie and Edgar among the men were crowned with partial success, and on Sundays and Wednesdays, and very often at the early Mass on other days, a congregation of some twenty or twenty-five men, with their wives, might be seen devoutly attending the chapel in the Hollow. Corinne had, with Mr. Leslie's consent, formally adopted Irene, who was faithfully taught, not only to lisp her prayers at her friend's knee, but place herself daily under the patronage of the Mother of God. She was duly initiated into the mysteries of letters, and astonished the whole family one morning by spelling, without assistance, b-a, ba. She was perfectly interesting, and every one indulged and treated her with such a degree of tenderness that, had it not been for the wise control of Sister Therese and her friendly advice to Corinne, the lovely child would have become that most disagreeable of all living creatures—a spoiled pet. As it was, her childhood promised richly for her riper years; and if well trained she bid fair to be as perfect in character as she was in physi-

cal beauty. She frequently pointed to a small red mark in the shape of a strawberry or cherry, which seemed as if it had been stained on the white skin of her arm, just below the shoulder, by some indelible Indian dye, and said, "My mamma tiss it too much," and which afforded her a constant memorial of that tender parent; for it was never noticed by herself or others without bringing forth from her some simple and touching remark concerning her.

One day Sister Therese received a letter from E—— which required, if her health was sufficiently restored, her immediate presence in one of the northern cities to take charge of an infirmary, in the place of the superior, who had just died. She was far from being perfectly restored to health; she continued feeble, and it was evident that her nervous system was seriously debilitated; however, she regarded not her weakness or ill-health, now that her services were positively required, and, notwithstanding all the affectionate and pressing invitations which she received from her friends to remain, determined to start on the following morning. When it was known through the house that she was to leave so soon every countenance wore an expression of sadness; even Mrs. Murray had the grace to say: "She was a sweet lady, and it was a pity she was going away."

“But you will come again, marm,” said Mrs. Murray to Sister Therese, who went after tea that night to take leave of her.

“Not unless I am shipwrecked again,” she replied, smiling. “It is against the rules of my order to visit for pleasure; therefore, as it is more than probable we shall never meet again, here is a small keepsake for you; wear it, for my sake, around your neck, and say occasionally the little prayer which I have written on this slip of paper,” continued she, putting a black guard, to which was attached a miraculous medal, about Mrs. Murray’s neck, and handing her a paper on which was neatly written St. Bernard’s exquisitely touching prayer to the Blessed Virgin.

Mrs. Murray wiped her eyes, then her spectacles, and, looking through them at the first words of the prayer, said: “I’ll wear it for your sake, marm; but indeed I can’t pray to no one but God. I see no use in praying to a woman, when we can go right to the fountain-head.”

“If by the fountain-head you mean God, we cannot address a prayer to her without addressing him. We do not ask the Blessed Virgin to save us; that would be idolatry; we ask her to *pray for us*. To whom, therefore, can she intercede for us, if not to God? You believe that the prayers of the righteous avail much, even on earth, and no doubt frequently ask your friends

to pray for you; how much more holy, how much more efficacious, then, are the prayers of those who, cleansed from every earthly stain, exist in the presence of God forever!"

"It won't do, indeed; I can't and won't do it, hoping you'll excuse me," said the old lady. "I'll wear the bit of silver, but as to praying to it or to her, I can't, and it's no use to listen even to such talk."

"Well, well," said Sister Therese, "wear the medal; I will say the prayer daily for you, that God in his mercy may remember your kindness to a shipwrecked stranger by bringing you ere long into the fold of his true faith. Farewell, Mrs. Murray; we shall meet, I trust, in a better world."

"I hope we may; *I'm* sure, anyhow, of getting to heaven, and I hope I shall see you," she replied, stiffly; 'and hoping you won't be hurt, marm, I must take this 'ere thing off my neck, for it seems like as if my throat was a twitching inside with it. I'll keep it in my drawer, and you needn't, with many thanks to you, say that 'ere prayer. It's heathenish-like, and I, being a Bible Christian, don't care about worshipping women. I hope, marm, you ain't offended or hurt, and wish you may have a pleasant journey and get home safe and sound, and at last meet me in heaven."



“Thank you for your kind wishes, dear,” replied Sister Therese, meekly. “May your wishes in my behalf be accomplished. Farewell.”

“Farewell, marm,” said Mrs. Murray, wiping her eyes; “I wish I had a nice Bible to give you to read, but mine is old and tattered. Anyhow, try and get one, and saarch it well; it will put you in the right way. Good-by.”

Mr. Leslie conveyed Sister Therese, accompanied by Corinne, some twenty miles on her journey in his own carriage, and, placing her under the protection of an elderly lady, a friend of his they accidentally met at the railroad depot, and who was going direct on the route as far as the seaport town, where they would take passage in one of the northern line of steamers for B——. They bade her an affectionate adieu, and left her, with many regrets and a promise to see her ere long in that city. When they returned home Mr. Leslie found that Willie Stevens, the young man for whom he had written to manage his affairs during his absence in Europe, had arrived. His peculiar trials, his education, a degree more cultivated and refined than ordinary, his piety and gentle manners, prepossessed them all in his favor, and Mr. Leslie admitted him at once into the family circle as a friend.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE BRIDAL—LEAVING HOME.

**B**RIGHT and beautiful dawned the bridal morning of Blanche Leslie on the earth.

The rosy beams of the sun, newly risen, fell with a softened light through the silvery haze of an Indian summer sky, and the woods, gorgeous with the crimson and yellow hues of autumn, looked as if they were arrayed in holiday attire for the occasion. The low, sweet sounds which ever made rich music about the old hall were still heard; the distant murmur of the tranquil ocean, the songs of the birds, the hum of the bees, and the rustling of vines and flowers, with deep, long-drawn echoes sweeping up from the depths of the woods at intervals, as some heavy bough, borne down by its own fruition, fell, or the partridge, uttering her short, musical note, sprang on frightened wing from the earth, to find a shelter in the dense foliage overhead. At an early hour, arrayed in pure white, with long white veils thrown over their heads and floating in pure and graceful folds around them, the

twins, preceded by Father Borgia and accompanied by Mr. Leslie and Edgar, walked towards the chapel in the Hollow, now known by its more Christian name of Our Lady's Chapel. To their astonishment they found it profusely decorated with flowers, and as the morning beams streamed through its painted windows as through prisms, and floated like glories through the atmosphere within, the effect was rich and beautiful. Lilies and white roses, with many an orange blossom, clustered on the altar and diffused a delicious perfume throughout the chapel. They would have been left in doubt as to the identity of the person whose refined taste had so beautifully arranged it all, had not Willie Stevens, who did not expect them so soon, betrayed himself by entering with two large white vases, one in each arm, filled with orange-flowers and arbor vitæ, relieved by clusters of delicately tinted roses, which he, modestly blushing, arranged on each side of the altar on the floor, which now gave it the effect of a pyramid of light and flowers. A few favorite servants, trimly and gayly dressed, now entered, that they might be as much as possible with their beloved young ladies and join in the worship of religion with them for perhaps the last time. It would be utterly impossible to describe the mingled feelings of joy, sadness and hope of those present. The circumstances were peculiar under which they had assembled. It

was the bridal morning which brought such a sense of present happiness to Edgar and Blanche, and while Corinne's pious wishes afforded to her a fount of ever-springing joy and anxious hopes, the thought of separation connected with them gave to Mr. Leslie the most exquisite pain. These things, added to the circumstance of their being on the eve of departure for a strange land, perhaps never to return, made the Mass one of singular devotion to them all. Tears fell unbidden from every eye as they individually invoked the blessing and aid of Almighty God on their various designs, and never, perhaps, had each one so sincerely and distinctly felt their own utter helplessness and dependence on Him, or the need of that life-giving bread which they were about to receive. As the holy office gradually proceeded to the great and accumulative miracle, by which the bread and wine of the sacrament, by the power of God and the words of consecration, becomes the real body and blood of Christ, every emotion of their hearts was absorbed in the sublime and holy mystery, and in adoration to God for the love displayed to his creatures, who first not only so loved them as to incarnate his divinity in human flesh to suffer for their salvation, but gave *himself* to be their immortal food until the end of time; a sacrifice in which is daily renewed the sacrifice of the cross in an unbloody manner, as an actual commem-

oration of Him, and the most powerful and efficacious means of salvation. And when the solemn moment arrived for them to communicate, how distinctly could they comprehend the necessity of an immortal food, to satisfy the longings and hunger of an immortal soul, and how utterly insignificant appeared the figurative meaning insisted on by some of all those sublime promises which our Lord in the institution of the Eucharistic feast made to his church; how like painted shadows, dimly defined, and without substance, they appeared, with the life-giving reality. Like their fathers in the wilderness, they eat manna and refuse that bread which cometh down from heaven, of which Christ is the substance, and which confers on him that eateth worthily eternal life.

After Mass Father Borgia made a short and impressive address to the betrothed pair, pointed out the new and important relations which they would hereafter hold towards each other, and dwelt particularly on the necessity of all the practices of Christian virtue to enable them to discharge their mutual duties in a manner well-pleasing to Almighty God; after which, giving them a blessing, they all sang together—for the last time together—accompanied by the sweet-toned organ, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

The morning meal was taken almost in silence, and yet it was not a silence which proceeded

either from unhappiness or gloom, but a subdued and peaceful tranquillity, which led each heart to commune with its own interior thoughts and brood in silence over its own peculiar hopes.

All was bustle throughout the house, except in the part immediately occupied by the amiable family. A large party from E—— and the neighborhood was expected, and Mrs. Murray who, between her grief at the anticipated parting, the excitement of the occasion, in which her reputation as the queen of housekeepers was involved, and the struggle to control her emotion, was particularly exact in her demands on her subordinates, and seemed to consider it a point of honor to put everybody in exactly the same degree of mental and bodily excitement that she herself was in. About twelve o'clock the guests began to assemble. Carriage after carriage, horseman after horseman, dashed up to the house and deposited their charges in gay and elegantly dressed groups on the broad steps of the spacious piazza, where they were met by Mr. Leslie, who introduced them into the drawing-rooms. As Mrs. Murray heard of the various arrivals her agitation reached its acme, and if the body of a dear and departed friend had been on the eve of removal to its last resting place the expressions of her grief could not have been more frantic. One moment she would add a leaf or blossom to the wreath which surrounded the

snowy bridecake, then, bursting into tears, would turn hastily away, and probably come in rather violent contact with some of the half-grown servants, whom she had called in to her assistance, who were rewarded for being in her way by a well-aimed blow; then she snatched off her spectacles from her nose and put them in her pocket, when, soon forgetting the fact, she ordered two or three of those present to commence a close search after them in the most improbable corners and out-of-the-way places, until, finally, throwing herself desperately on the bed, she declared it all came of the new religious turn that had got at the Hall—everything was turned topsy-turvy; she believed it was all bewitched with the strange doings!

We might describe the wedding, but why? It would be like an oft-told tale; therefore we will content ourselves with saying the company was numerous, gay, and composed of the *élite* of the Old North State, but, like “bright, particular stars,” the beautiful twins of Elverton Hall, the bride and her sister, excelled all; and every one present ungrudgingly asserted, as they stood hand in hand, Blanche leaning on the arm of Edgar St. Johns, before Father Borgia, arrayed exactly alike in rich white satin dresses, and almost covered with long transparent veils, which were confined around their heads by a tiny wreath of orange-blossoms, without any other ornament

whatever—that nothing half so lovely had ever been seen.

The admiration of the company was, however, in a measure divided by curiosity at the the wedding ceremony, which was performed by Father Borgia, who was dressed in rich sacerdotal vestments, and, to the satisfaction of all, had a great deal of Latin in it. They were, however, so prepossessed by his meek and dignified deportment, his courteous manners and edifying and intellectual conversation, that not a few among them declared they intended to come frequently to Mr. Leslie's chapel for the purpose of hearing him preach and say the Mass, of which they had, since Mr. Forrester's conversion, heard so much. The congratulations and kind wishes over, the sisters retired to exchange their rich bridal robes for dark travelling dresses, after which they returned, Corinne holding little Irene by the hand and followed by Amy, who were to travel with them, to receive the adieus of their friends and servants. Tears were shed, kind words spoken and blessings bestowed on both sides, and after kneeling together to receive Father Borgia's blessing, they entered their travelling carriage. There was a waving of handkerchiefs and hands and a murmur of good wishes, a straining of eyes to catch the last look, and in another moment the trees concealed it—another glimpse, and they were out of sight. \* \* \* \*



## CHAPTER XIV.

## LEAVING THE WORLD—CONSCIENCE—ELVERTON HALL.

SIX years had glided rapidly by, and Time had, as usual with him, sown tears as well as blossoms on the earth. The Leslies had returned from their tour in Europe, where they had seen and duly appreciated all that was most interesting and worthy of observation. But a view of the ancient world, its sublime relics of genius and art, its faded glories and splendid remains of past ages, the magnificence of its courts, the pride and state of its monarchs and gayety of its capitals—so far from winning Corinne Leslie from her pious purpose, made her long more ardently to fly from its beguiling flatteries and the soul-destructive repose of its seductive paths to the safe and holy way of the cross, which, though narrow and steep and strewn with thorns which wound the pilgrim feet of those who persevere unto perfection, leads direct to the very portals of the heavenly world.

It was, therefore, with a sad heart that Mr.

Leslie, in accordance with his promise, gave his unqualified consent, after their return, for her to enter her novitiate at Mt. St. J——'s. She did not return to Elverton Hall, but, after spending a few happy days with Sister Therese in B——, went, accompanied by her father and Irene, who was to be educated under the care of the pious and accomplished sisters who have charge of the academy, to Mt. St. J——'s. Blanche felt as if she could scarcely survive the pang of separation, and was so ill for several days from the effects of fatiguing travel and mental excitement in consequence of it, that they all feared she would sink under it; but skilful medical care, and, above all, the consolations of religion, healed the wound, and ere long she learned to think of her sister as an angel, who only wore the garb of humanity; and when Mr. Leslie returned from Mt. St. J——'s with cheering accounts of the absent one, her happiness, her tranquil joy, and the tender friends by whom she was surrounded, they proceeded homewards, missing her society, it is true, but with souls drawn nearer to heaven by the sacrifice, and feeling honored that God had chosen one from their midst to serve him in a peculiar and especial manner. They had long prayed for these sentiments of resignation, and while endeavoring to conform themselves in spirit to the will of Almighty God, supplicated him in secret that their human and natural in-

clinations might also be subject to it without reserve in regard to this; but these blessings were withheld until the sacrifice was complete, when their hearts became gradually filled with the most resigned peace and an increase of interior devotion.

Father Borgia, by the advice of his superiors, remained a year longer at Elverton Hall, during which time the number of Catholics in the neighborhood increased so rapidly that "Our Lady's Chapel" could not contain half their number, and, there being much wealth among them, they soon erected a handsome and commodious church on a site presented to them by Mr. Leslie.

Ere the time approached for the beloved and pious pastor, Father Borgia, to leave the little flock to go among the wilds beyond the Rocky Mountains to carry the tidings of salvation to the hordes of red men who wander there, he had, by his representations and influence in the proper quarter obtained a zealous and worthy clergyman to supply his place. Among the most important conversions was Mrs. Herbert, who, literally driven by affliction to the foot of the cross, was an edifying example to all of penitence and resignation.

Evelyn Herbert was a wanderer, none knew whither. Writhing beneath the consciousness of being a murderer, although by legitimate, or, as the world would say, by *honorable* means,

without a hope or firm principle of religion to steady his soul amidst the undisciplined passions of his nature and those mad theories of his proud mind, which mingled together in such chaotic disorder, he became reckless, and plunged wildly into the vortex of the wildest dissipation. He grew prematurely old; his eagle flight was brought suddenly low by the poisonous shaft which had entered his soul and festered there for years; it told at last, and the wound, when it had corroded, deprived him finally of every redeeming trait of moral beauty. He became morose and averse to society, and, like a sword rusting in its scabbard his mind, so richly gifted with all that could ennoble human nature, preyed on itself. No endearments, no friendship, no menaces or advice could win the wretched misanthrope from the fiery circle which surrounded and scathed him, until at last, wearied with importunities and maddened by conscience, he disappeared from his home, none knew whither. But prayers followed the wanderer. The mother, from whose neglect—oh, mothers! what fearful powers of life and death are yours!—proceeded all these disorders, kneeling daily, a lowly penitent before the altar of God, prayed for his salvation. This was all which she, in her agony, thought of. She cared not what evil might befall his body, or what ills of poverty afflicted him, and was indifferent to a separation which might last as long as

they both lived, so that his soul—his immortal soul—was touched with contrition and driven to seek a reconciliation with God. Scarcely an hour passed, while waking, that she did not implore the Refuge of Sinners, the Mother of Sorrows, to guard her prodigal child from the pitfalls which abounded in the dark and gloomy way he had chosen; and even while sleeping her soul, still intent on its object, would cry out, with agony unspeakable, "Spare him! oh, God! spare his soul!" and with a throbbing heart awake, but to continue the prayer as she turned her white and wasted cheek on the pillow, which was literally wet with her tears. Judge Herbert endured the bitterness of his trial in proud silence. No one could tell how it affected his interior life. His hair had grown much whiter, and his face paler and thinner, but no other token gave evidence of the busy care within, and although Father Borgia, who was always favorably received by him, made several ineffectual attempts to introduce spiritual matters through the medium of his keen and deep troubles, he was silently and firmly repulsed, until, hopeless of gaining his confidence, he desisted, and was obliged to content himself with constant prayers in his behalf. Willie Stevens, whom Mr. Leslie had employed to manage the affairs of his plantation during his absence in Europe, gave such unlimited satisfaction by his prudence, integrity and excellent management

that he was prevailed on to remain and take into his own hands the entire charge of his concerns. The people on the plantation regarded him as a friend, and such was the excellent and pious example he always set before them, and so benevolently, yet firmly, were his reproofs always administered to them, that his influence was almost unlimited. The remembrance of his trials taught him many lessons of charitable forbearance, and also the emptiness and deceit of the world's promises, and how worse than vain are all things which are separated from the love of God and confidence in his justice; but this, so far from embittering his mind against mankind, taught him to pity and pray for their infirmities, that they might be induced to leave the paths of error and enter into the fold of that true religion whose spirit inculcates the divine precept of praying for those who love us not and despitefully use us. Frequent and fervent were the prayers of this pious young man for Evelyn Herbert, and if he had a care on earth it was anxiety for him, who, when all the world had forsaken, supported and gratuitously defended him. . . .

Years passed on and the family at Elverton Hall continued in all the practices of Catholic devotion and well-regulated charities. Blanche had become the mother of two lovely children, who soon filled up the vacuum in the little circle which was occasioned by the absence of Corinne,

and who gladdened the declining years of Mr. Leslie and shed joy and blessings around his daily paths. They soon learned to lisp their simple prayers before the image of the Mother of God, and while listening to the sweet, low tones of her whose arms encircled them as they knelt, learned to feel that they had also a mother in heaven. The name of Corinne might be heard morning and evening, mingling with their simple and innocent prayers. Mrs. Murray continued firm and positive in her opinion of the infallibility of her peculiar religious views; and, although she became gradually accustomed to the "Catholic innervations," as she called them, she never failed to bestow anything but a blessing on them whenever Corinne's name was mentioned in her presence; "for," exclaimed she, at least every day, "if it hadn't been for the Catholic religion—if it is a religion at all—she would be here this minute, the darling, instead of straggling about the world waiting on poor folks—she, indeed, who ought to have a servant at every finger to wait on her. I date," she used to say, "all my grievances from the night that ship was wracked about here, and though I'd often heard of evil spirits riding about on the clouds in a storm, I never believed it until now; and if there wasn't witches about that night *I'm* a false prophet." And although the whole neighborhood gradually felt the beneficent influences re-

sulting from the conversion of the family at the Hall, she obstinately maintained that they were no better now than they were before, and if they had turned Baptists instead of Catholics the same things would not only have been done, but done ten times better! Notwithstanding but few of Mr. Leslie's slaves, in a comparative point of view, became Catholics, the good example of those who did exercised a salutary influence over the morality of all, and was gradually preparing the way for the conversion of many more to the faith. Once a year regularly, no matter where, or in what part of the country, Corinne—or Sister Mary Bernard, which was the religious name she had assumed when she made her vows—was, Mr. Leslie, with Edgar and Blanche, visited her, and always returned edified and delighted with her cheerful, useful and humble piety. No one could have recognized, beneath the modest garb of St. Vincent's holy daughters, in this humble servant of the poor, the scion of one of the oldest and proudest families of Carolina. No; with her worldly garments, its changing fashions and costly appliances, she had thrown off the remembrance of those adventitious superiorities, and chose only to recollect in the past the wonders of God's love to her and her own unworthiness, which, by comparison, exalted with a greater glory the merits of Christ. She heard words of commendation and praise with alarm and con-



fusion, and received reproof with sweetness and silence. Persevering, cheerful and true to her vocation, she became a model for all, while she, in her profound humility, wished to be really and truly the servant of all. Her beauty, which had assumed with her new character a spiritual and angelic cast, in many cases won the confidence of those who, hardened and embittered by many an outbreking sin and weary trial, would otherwise have turned away from aught that beamed not with kindest and holiest feelings of the human heart. They listened while they gazed, as she told them of their Friend above, and the Refuge of Sinners, until they almost fancied that one of God's angels had descended to lead them back to the pleasant ways of virtue and the sweet consolations of religion. And yet, what was this beauty to her who never thought of it but as a painted thing of dust and ashes, which would one day become food for those slimy reptiles which batten on the dead, and heeded it not, only as a source from which she oftentimes gathered sweet flowers of humility to wreath in with her crown of thorns! . . . .

One afternoon in May Edgar and Blanche, with the children, went out on the eastern piazza to enjoy the widespread scenery of the changing ocean and the soft southern winds which came floating so musically through the tree-tops, laden with the fragrance of a thousand early

flowers and sweet-scented shrubs. The birds were, as of old, singing gayly in the sheltered woods, or trilling their wild notes on the wing, which mingled in clear harmony with the mirthful tones of the children's voices at play, while, ever and anon, the harp—Corinne's harp—on which Blanche had been playing, responded in exquisite strains to the long-drawn breath of the wind which sighed among its strings. Edgar was adding the finishing touches to a group which he had painted of Blanche and the children, and calling the little creatures to him held it at a short distance before their wondering eyes. They looked at it curious and amazed, then peeped around to see if their mother sat where they had last seen her, or whether it was really she who smiled on them from the canvas; then, looking at each other, pointed with their dimpled fingers at their portraits, exclaiming, "That's you, Cora! that's you, Eddy!" and ran laughing to their mother's outstretched arms. Mr. Leslie, who had been at E—— on business, returned an hour earlier than he was expected, and, coming out of the drawing-room into the piazza unseen by them all, clasped both mother and children in his arms.

"Dear father," said Blanche, "welcome home!"

"Truly welcome, thou best of fathers!" said Edgar, approaching with a smile; "but, surely,

sir, you have found a bag of gold on your way home, you look so supremely happy. I have not seen such a delighted countenance for years."

"I am," said Mr. Leslie, "perfectly overjoyed; now guess at what."

"Is Corinne coming home?" asked Blanche, playfully.

"My child," he replied, almost reproachfully, "in that case you would see tears rather than smiles. God forbid that such an event should ever occur."

"A letter from Corinne?" inquired Edgar.

"Yes, and containing the most remarkable news; upon my honor, I don't think I could read it again without committing some extravagance, so send these noisy ones away and read it together, while I go to the church and make an act of adoration and thanksgiving to our good God for all his mercies unto us ere I proceed to the Oaklands with it; it concerns the inmates there most materially."

## CONCLUSION.

## LETTER FROM CORINNE TO MR. LESLIE.

EDGAR placed his painting in safety on the easel, then returning to the side of Blanche opened the letter and read it aloud. Again, dear reader, wrap the seer mantle of fancy around thee, as thou once didst when thou stoodst with us by the bedside of a dying boy, who, by the unholy prayers of a frantic mother, was withdrawn from the shadow of death which hung darkly over him; fancy thyself one of the group with us, and let us adore the wisdom and mercies of those providences which so often appear to us sharp and bitter, while we hear the strange events which are recorded in that letter.

“DEAR FATHER:

“I wrote you a long letter two weeks ago, and, according to a rule which I had laid down for myself to follow, I was not to write again for four; but circumstances sometimes occur which, in spite of all our good resolutions, give the same to the winds. In the first place, I have been re-

called by our dear Mother Rose from New Orleans, and am now with our beloved friend, Sister Therese, on duty at the infirmary here. How wonderful are thy ways, oh, God! they are past finding out! We obey what appears to us the ordinary course of events, and recognize not the hand which guides us, until some great purpose of the Almighty reveals it to us. What are we but dust and ashes? and what am I but a worm of the dust, that thou shouldst have chosen me, oh, Father of mercies, as the instrument of thy will? But whither am I going? my dear father will ask, and what does the child mean? To render myself more intelligible, I will say that, with all due submission to the will of our Lord, I am so perfectly, so entirely happy, that if my spirit could only just now be unfettered from her bonds of clay, how gladly would she soar to the land of angels, to rest in ecstatic gratitude forever at his feet! But of this there is no hope. In the first place, I am not worthy—that is, I am all unworthy; in the next, I am a perfect impersonation of health, and think it more than probable that I shall live to be called ‘grandmother,’ as one or two of the very ancient sisters, who are superannuated and remain at the mother house resting from their labors are called by the dear community at Mt. St. J——’s. But where am I? In the clouds, you will fancy; but when I tell you, my father—let me hold you a little longer in

suspense; it is not well for too much joy to come all at once; prepare yourself to hear something which will gladden your inmost soul, and make you forget you are growing old. Wonder and admire the ways of God, extol his wisdom, and let us humble ourselves with grateful hearts before him, when I tell you that Evelyn Herbert—the lost prodigal—is a penitent, and waiting humbly to receive the sacraments of that religion which he once despised, and shedding tears day and night, as from some inexhaustible fount of repentance, and then venerate with silent joy, or hymns of praise, the power of the goodness of the Almighty! But I must tell you how it was, after hinting at the other event, which has almost made me wild. *Irene has found her parents!* You must excuse all incoherencies in this letter, for I do assure you my better spirit is whispering ‘Praise God! praise God!’ until I can scarcely refrain from filling the sheet with hymns and canticles of praise, instead of writing a straightforward statement of facts. But I will try, and as I am not blessed with an ubiquity of tongue or hand, you cannot hear both at once; therefore I will commence with the most important—the conversion of Herbert.

“Last week, at night—it was perhaps eleven o’clock, a patient was brought in who alarmed the whole house by his violent outcries, shouts and blasphemies. He had been found wounded

on the steps of his hotel, and raging mad under the influence of the demon—*delirium tremens*. I put my hands over my ears to prevent their hearing the most shocking imprecations and vilest blasphemies of the most holy and reverend names, and kneeling by my bedside buried my face in the pillow that I might more effectually shut out every sound. Some one touched me on the shoulder; it was Sister Therese. ‘Come, my dear child,’ said she, ‘Dr. R—— has just told me that the person brought in is terribly wounded on the head and arm; let us go; our services are required.’ Trembling and shrinking, I was on the eve of pleading an excuse; but my guardian angel was by my side, and without speaking I soon arrayed myself in my habit and accompanied her. We first entered the little chapel, which is in the second story, and prostrate before the altar implored strength and grace from our Lord for the trying duties of the night; then, entering the sick ward, approached the couch where the man lay foaming and shrieking. He was bound down with cords, and surrounded by a group composed of the attendant physician, two students of medicine and three or four patients who were convalescent, and, disturbed from their early slumbers, had approached through a vague feeling of curiosity to look on the cause of such unusual disquiet; but as soon as they perceived us they stood a little to one

side, and I caught a glimpse of a face which terrified me by its faded resemblance to one I had known in former times. On a nearer approach I beheld indeed the features of—Evelyn Herbert. Sister Therese had seen him twice at Elverton Hall, and recognizing him immediately grasped my arm. ‘It is he!’ I whispered. But oh, how altered was he! His hair, seven years ago black and glossy as the wing of a raven, now hung in scanty withered locks on his forehead, which, seamed with care and dissipation, had lost its whiteness and polish, and was now livid and corrugated with deep wrinkles and swollen veins; his eyes, so remarkable for brilliance and expression, glared like a madman’s, or gazed around with a leaden, stupid and despairing glance. All was changed! He was a perfect wreck, and emaciated as well by disease as past excesses. I was making lint and preparing it for the use of Dr. R—— while I made these observations. The pillow on which he lay was crimsoned with the blood which oozed from the frightful wound in his head, and added to the horror of the scene. After many ineffectual efforts Sister Therese, by her firmness and kind manner, soothed him during the intervals of his madness, while Dr. R—— dressed the wound, after which he became more composed, and, being under the influence of a strong opiate, fell into a profound sleep. We watched beside him all night, and I succeeded in



putting a medal of the Blessed Virgin around his neck without disturbing him, after which I knelt and said for him the beautiful and tender prayer of St. Bernard to the most compassionate of mothers. The next day he was conscious, but in an excessively weak and exhausted state. Dr. R—— pronounced him incurable, and gave it as his opinion that a month or six weeks was the farthest extent to which life could endure, and thought it more than probable that he would die suddenly before the expiration of ten days. Oh, father! can you imagine the agony of my soul when I heard this sentence? when I thought that in all human probability this, the playmate of our childhood, the companion of our youth, the idolized child of a fond mother—and that mother our best friend—would die *impenitent!*

“I could not sleep at night for praying, and when, after prevailing on my director, the Rev. Father H——r, to go in and speak to him of religion, death, eternity and a judgment to come, and hearing that he repulsed him with rude and bitter oaths, my cup was full, and I could only pour forth my prayers and tears at the foot of the cross, and implore that, like the thief who was crucified with our Lord, he might be saved even in the eleventh hour. Oh, my father, *you* know that no human weakness was blended with the deep anxiety which I felt for the soul which

thus stood trembling on the crumbling verge of eternal death. Fearful that he would discover and recognize me, I never stood or entered where he could obtain a full view of my face; in fact, there was no need, for, in attending to his wound, we generally stood at the head of his bed. One evening, as we were dressing it, he grew restless and impatient, found fault with all we did, accused us of harshness and roughness, and, putting up his hand, would have torn the bandages off; but, laying my hand on his, I put it back, saying, 'Be still, sir; you are already on the verge of the grave, and that awful eternity which lies beyond will ere long discover its realities to you. Hasten not, therefore, your entrance into the dark and terrific future.'

" 'So soon—so soon,' he muttered; 'but whose voice is that? I have heard it before. Who are you?'

" 'A Sister of Charity,' said Sister Therese.

" 'Her name?'

" 'Sister Mary Bernard,' was the reply.

" 'Poor fools!' he said, bitterly, 'why do you trouble yourselves about such an outcast as I?'

" 'For the love of God, for the sake of Him who suffered, not only for us, but for you,' said I, in a low tone.

" 'Pshaw!' he said, contemptuously, 'you are mistaken; but you are kind-hearted, and remind

me of my mother. I had a mother, but her heart is broken,' he said, while a tear trickled over his wasted cheek.

" 'She lives,' said I, in the same low tone, 'to pray and intercede for her prodigal child.'

" 'That voice again! Corinne Leslie—it must be yours!' he said, attempting to rise that he might see me; but I glided quickly from the ward, and did not return until the next day to the ward where he lay.

"Father H——r, who had become much interested in his case and history, again visited him that evening and conversed two hours with him. I say conversed, but it is not so, for Evelyn preserved a moody silence, and, morose and abstracted, did not deign to reply once to any observation or question he proposed. Father H——r, disappointed, and almost hopeless of his conversion, at last bade him a kind adieu, and rose from the side of the couch where he had been sitting, to go.

" 'I thank you,' said Evelyn, 'for your absence, sir.'

" 'Shall I visit you again, my friend?' asked Father H——r, mildly.

" 'Go to the d—l, sir!' he said, 'but excuse me from any more death-bed homilies. I tell you briefly and shortly, I believe in nothing of the kind!'

" 'Oh, merciful Lord! Jesus Christ!' cried

Father H——r, clasping his hands, ‘pardon the insults which are heaped on thee; and by thy five wounds, pity this impenitent sinner!’

“‘Go, sir!’ he exclaimed, in a rage. ‘Oh, that I had strength to hurl you, hypocrite, from the room!’

“‘You have *not* strength, my son,’ replied Father H——r, mildly. ‘He who gave, has taken your strength from you and laid you low—a thing dependent and helpless, subject to his holy and just decrees, and will, ere many days elapse, aye, perhaps many hours, recall the soul, which in the early dawn of your existence proceeded from him unsullied by crime, but which, through your fault, is now a deformed, polluted and ruined thing. There *is* a God—there is an eternity, and to them you are rapidly hastening! Sign not then, my poor child, your own perdition by despising and turning away from the cross; feel willing to be crucified with Christ, that you may be saved from the flames of hell—those flames which everlastingly consume, yet never diminish a single iota the existence of the immortal soul!’

“‘Bugbears will not frighten me, priest! Go! I bid you once more, or I will hurl this at your head!’ he exclaimed, infuriated, and snatching up a small stone pitcher which stood on a table by his bedside.

“‘Go I cannot; strike me, spit on me, insult

me as you will, I leave you not until you give me some token of repentance, until I see a light dawn on your darkened soul; until I hear you acknowledge Him whom you now deny with such imprecations, and ask Him with penitent tears to pardon you your trespasses. They are great, I know; they outnumber the sands on the ocean-shore; they are crimson, like blood; but oh, sir! the mercy of our God is infinite; it knows neither space or bounds; and the blood of Jesus Christ can wash your soul, now ensanguined by the stains of many years, as white as snow. He implores you from the cross—oh, sir! delay not, delay not——’

“ ‘What, ho!’ he cried, with white, quivering lips, ‘are ye all leagued against me? We have a madman here—take him out—take him out!’

“Father H——r stood gazing down a moment on him, then, bursting into a flood of tears, clasped his hands, and while those drops from pity’s sweet fountain streamed over his face he prayed a moment in silence for the impenitent one, and then, with a heavy heart, left him.

“When I went into the ward about nine o’clock he was evidently sinking. He appeared to be in the most frightful agonies, but spoke not a word, and writhed and turned, while monstrous groans, that echoed through the silent ward, burst involuntarily from his lips.

“ ‘Are you in much pain, sir?’ I asked, in a low

voice. The lamp was so shaded that he could not see me.

“ ‘The pains of hell,’ he cried, ‘already consume me!’

“ ‘May I pray for you, my friend?’ I asked, timidly.

“ ‘Ha! ha! ha! pray? yes, but for what? Yes, pray; you are kind, and it will gratify you. Pray on from now until doomsday, if you choose—ha! ha!’

“I knelt, my father—trembling in every limb, I knelt to pray for the dying man. I made my communion that morning for him, and Father H——r had remembered him while offering up the holy sacrifice, while Sister Therese and two other pious sisters said the rosary daily for him. I closed my eyes, and committing him as well as myself to the mercies of God, said distinctly these words:

“ ‘Remember, oh, most compassionate Virgin Mary! that from all ages it is unheard of that any one was forsaken who, placing himself under thy maternal protection, implored thy assistance and begged the favor of thy prayers; animated with the confidence which this inspires, I fly to thee, oh, Virgin of Virgins and mother of my God! and in the bitterness of my sorrow I throw myself at thy feet! Oh, Mother of the Eternal World! despise not my humble supplication, but listen graciously, and mercifully grant the request

which from my heart I make. Intercede, oh, Refuge of Sinners! for this soul, and by thy powerful intercession with thy divine Son, may it be rescued from perdition and eternally saved!

“When I finished I looked up, expecting to see the smile of scorn wreathing his lips, and hear taunting words, when—oh, wonder of wonders! oh, miracle of grace! he lay with his hands meekly clasped on his breast, and tears streaming in torrents over his cheeks.\*

“‘Wretched, wretched, miserable sinner that I am!’ he whispered; ‘oh, God! oh, God! I dare not ask for mercy! Patient Christian, whoever you may be, bring hither some one who can speak peace to my troubled soul—ruined! alas, ruined! how ruined!’

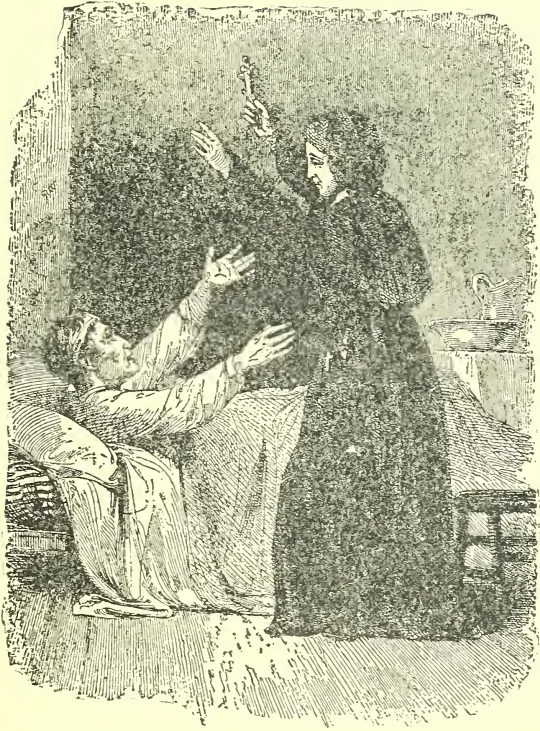
“‘Behold him! behold him who will save you!’ I cried, placing a crucifix in his unresisting hands, and left the room in haste to send for Father H——r.

“Two days have elapsed and Evelyn Herbert

\*The coincidence between this circumstance and one which occurred in Alexandria, District of Columbia, is purely accidental, as it was written some time previous to the time the latter interesting conversion took place. However, these miracles, through the intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary, are by no means rare or singular in the Church. One of the most interesting, however, which has occurred for many years, is that of Monsieur Ratisbonne, who, being a Jew of the strictest sect, was miraculously converted to Christianity in Rome a few years ago, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of God.

spends every hour of his waning life in the profoundest acts of penance. I have not seen him since. My mission is accomplished—my prayers with regard to him are answered, and a discovery now might agitate and carry his feelings back to those days which he should forget forever. I shall not, therefore, see him again, unless my services are positively required, which is not probable, for he is now quiet and as placid as a lamb. The holy names of Jesus and Mary are ever on his lips; the crucifix I gave him never out of his hands, and Sister Therese says that the tears which flow incessantly from his eyes, have almost worn channels in his cheeks. He asks pardon of all for the trouble he gives, and had he the strength would arise and kiss the dust from the feet of Father H——r, while every service which is rendered him is received with the greatest confusion and humility. Oh, my father! let us venerate the beloved name of Mary, while we give glory to our Lord. He is as docile as a child, and yields with the utmost simplicity and piety to all the requisitions of religion. He has been baptized, and confessed frequently, and such is his sense of humility and unworthiness that he trembles at the idea of receiving the adorable sacrament, which he looks on as the greatest boon which can now be bestowed on him. He will communicate to-morrow morning. Sister Therese says also that he has regained the gentleness





"BEHOLD HIM! BEHOLD HIM WHO WILL SAVE YOU!" PAGE 281.



and elegance of his manner, which now betrays itself in every movement, and the faded beauty of his fine, intellectual face is almost revived. Dr. R—— said to-day: ‘Can it be possible this is the same man, sister, that we had here a day or two ago? I never saw a creature so changed.’

“‘In the great change, Doctor,’ I replied, ‘which you behold, and at which you seem surprised, there has been no human agency. It is one of those miracles of grace by which Almighty God chooses, as by a distinctive mark from all others, his church shall be known.’

“He was silent and thoughtful for a moment; but, taking up his hat, walked out without making a reply, humming in an undertone some light opera air.

“Go, my father, a messenger of peace, to the broken-hearted; go to Mrs. Herbert—tell her these wonders—tell her that the prodigal has returned, and there is great joy in his Father’s house; a new robe has been put on him; the dead is alive, and the lost found. Alleluia! alleluia!

*Thursday.*—Yesterday was another day of wonders. It is a season of the year when many strangers visit the city, some on their way north, and others returning from various watering places to their southern homes, and, as usual, we have many visitors who come to see the institution as one of the lions of the city. Among other arrivals was my beautiful child Irene, whose

health having suffered from too much application to her studies, was sent down by the superior of the school to spend a week or so with me, to see if change of air would prove beneficial to her. She is now twelve years of age, tall and well formed, rather delicate and fragile in appearance, with features whose exquisite loveliness is surpassed by the virtue and dignity of her pious mind. She was seated in our parlor near a window, which was shaded by a number of plants which had been for successive years cultivated by the Sisters who from time to time had resided at the Infirmary. She was embroidering a rich pattern on fine India muslin, which she intended having an alb made of to present to Father H——r for a Christmas gift. There were no strange visitors in the house, and as the reception hour was nearly over we congratulated ourselves on a little quiet, when the door opened and a gentleman of a prepossessing countenance entered, on whose arm leaned a lady, who appeared almost exhausted by the effort of walking from their carriage to the house. We immediately handed her a chair and procured a glass of water, which she gratefully accepted, and that seemed to refresh her. Sister Therese, who was not in the parlor when they came, now entered, and, approaching the strangers to exchange the usual compliments of the day with them, was surprised and shocked when the lady, who gazed for a mo-

ment intently and full in her face, uttered a piercing shriek and fell fainting in her husband's arms.

"'I feared this—I feared it,' said the gentleman, much agitated.

"'Sir, can we be of any service to your lady?' inquired Sister Therese.

"'My dear madam,' he replied, 'you will excuse the trouble we are giving you when I inform you that a Sister of Charity is intimately connected with one of the most painful incidents of our lives, and, strange to tell, you bear a strong and remarkable resemblance to her. This resemblance, which must be accidental,' he added, with a deep sigh, 'has no doubt affected Mrs. Sinclair and caused her emotion.'

"Sister Therese, becoming pale, passed her hand rapidly across her eyes, and, turning away, was obliged to sit down for an instant, but soon recovering her composure, said:

"'You will not, I trust, accuse me of impertinent curiosity, but, if it is not a family secret, allow me to ask what that incident was.'

"'A shipwreck,' he replied, hastily, while by a strong, manly effort he controlled the emotion which moistened his eyes and wrinkled his brow.

"'On the coast of Carolina?' inquired Sister Therese.

"'Exactly so,' he said, looking with intense and curious interest in her face; 'we were bound from Havre to New York. We had pleasant weather

until we rounded the Cape, when a storm arose with such fury that it tore our sails to ribbands and splintered the masts, and in this disabled condition the ship was driven in by furious winds on a reef and dashed to pieces. Our only child was on board, who attached herself in a singular manner to a Sister of Charity who had been to France for her health, and was now returning home. They both perished,' he said, bowing his head on his breast and no longer attempting to conceal the fast flowing tears.

“ ‘A God of love rules even the storm which seems to wreck our dearest hopes,’ said Sister Therese, looking up with that sublime and uncommon expression of rapt devotion which I have oftener than once remarked; ‘but how, sir, were yourself and lady saved?’

“ ‘We clung to a portion of the wreck when the ship parted, which was washed by the receding surf far out to sea. One of the sailor boys was saved with us, and from him we heard that which has since made life of little value. In the rush which was made for the long-boat, when the ship struck, our child was separated from us, nor could we, in the darkness of that distracting moment, recover her,’ he replied.

“ ‘But how know you, sir, that the dear child perished?’ she again inquired.

“ ‘The boy who was saved with us saw her clinging to the bosom of the Sister of Charity,

when an immense wave washed them overboard. He saw them both perish. More than once, while drifting—we three—alone on the still stormy ocean, did we almost pray that it might also engulf us; and had it not been for the suicidal nature of the act, we should have unfastened our hold from the tangled fragments to which we clung and yielded our bodies up to the insatiable cravings of those dreary waves, which had engulfed our darling, our beautiful one. But God preserved us, no doubt for some good end, and after floating two days without food or water a large ship came in view, which seemed to be bearing down directly across our course. They saw us—we were saved; but, madam, if your kind curiosity is now gratified, I would prefer dropping the subject; it is too painful, and my wife recovers.’

“ ‘Did I not say that Almighty God ruled and directed the storm? Admire his ways! Adore the wisdom of his providence! I am the Sister of Charity who was your companion in that ill-fated ship, and your child—lives. Come hither, Irene, my love!’ said Sister Therese, leading her from her retired corner; and as she stood, with glowing cheeks, half hidden by those long, shining curls, which you, my father, have so often played with, Mrs. Sinclair opened her eyes, and gazing for a moment wildly on her, exclaimed:

“ ‘Take me hence! oh, take me away, my heart

is breaking! Whence come all these visions of the past? Oh, my child! my darling!"

"'Mildred,' said Mr. Sinclair, 'be more calm, my love; *all* did not perish in that dreadful storm.'

"'But my child—oh, madam!' she said, as she again caught a full view of Sister Therese's face, 'surely, surely you are the same who was with us when—but I will not name it; it is like driving a steel into the depths of my soul! but tell me, in the name of God, did *you* see my child perish? Did you—did you—tell me, I can believe you?'

"'Your child lives!—behold her!' said Sister Therese, pointing to Irene.

"She sprang up, and, laying her hands on each of the dear, astonished one's shoulders, scanned every feature; then, hastily pushing up the short sleeve she wore, saw the red mark which we had so frequently commented on and admired; and, as if all doubt was at an end, clasped her in her arms, exclaiming with rapture, 'My child! my child!' then after looking again earnestly and long on the dear one's face, which she had covered with kisses, whispered in a kind of quiet ecstasy, 'I thank thee, oh, God!' and fell again fainting on her husband's breast. . . . Oh, my father! such wonders I never expected to see on earth! such joy, that one feels more of heaven than earth! Yet amidst all comes a pang, telling me that I must give up my darling child to those who have stronger and more natural claims



on her love than I; to remind me that I must not in the midst of pleasure forget the cross. Oh, no! dear Saviour, I give her up, as I have given up all else, for thee! only do thou keep me close to thy wounded side, that I may have no hope, no love, no joy that is not in thee! Farewell, beloved ones—father, sister, brother and little innocents! Praise God for all his mercies, and pray for the least and most unworthy of the servants of our Lord!

MARY BERNARD.

On the reception of this news Judge Herbert, accompanied by his lady and Willie Stevens, started at once for B——, and by rapid stages soon reached their destination; but the penitent Evelyn Herbert was no more. Suffering with patience, and edifying all by deep contrition and unshaken faith, until the hour of his last agony came, he fell sweetly asleep—calm, trusting and hopeful in those promises spoken by Him who can alone give rest to the weary and heavy-laden. Tapers burned around the dead, emblematic of the soul that dies not, and the light which guides us through the valley of death; and as their beams fell on the face of the dead, no sculptured image of martyr or saint ever wore a more holy expression of rest. Mrs. Herbert approached; at first an ague shivering convulsed her frame, then a few tears trickled down on the marble brow of her child; but this was all; a beam of in-

effable peace lit up her careworn features, and, stooping, she kissed his forehead and said, "God bless thee, my darling!" then with a strong, sweet voice intoned the "Te Deum Laudamus." With one accord, and as if moved by an involuntary impulse, all stood and in thrilling tones, amidst tears of joy for a soul redeemed, and with the peace of angels shining on each brow, they sang the Te Deum around the dead! \* \* \* \*

The parents of Irene were never weary of acts of gratitude to the two Sisters of Charity who had borne so important a part in the preservation of their child, and the rich gifts which they would have heaped on them were by their influence and advice distributed with no sparing hand among the needy poor. They settled in B——, and after keeping Irene at home with them a year—during which time they saw the two religieux daily and made frequent pilgrimages to Mt. St. J——'s, she returned thither, and in a few years completed an education which, while it did her credit, reflected greater honor on the care of those who superintended it. Her pious example and their constant intercourse with the Sisters of Charity caused her parents to investigate the Faith, which they ere long embraced.

Amy, the faithful Amy, the companion of their wanderings in Europe, Mr. Leslie freed; she also became a faithful and pious Catholic, and as

lady's maid to Irene spent her life in peace and comfort, with few trials and but little labor.

Under the humble garb of a lay brother Willie Stevens lives in the practice of the most perfect Christian virtues in one of the communities belonging to a mission of the Redemptorists in the west. Judge Herbert, whose character only wanted religion to make it perfect, became a Catholic, and was an active coadjutor of Mr. Leslie's in every public and private charity, and every scheme relative to the lawful improvement, mental as well as moral, of the numerous servants on their respective estates. Mrs. Murray, we regret to say, remained invincible, and not infrequently gave secret and sage advice to the children of Blanche concerning the sin of "worshipping saints and angels, and stocks and stones," which might have sown bad seeds among their growing faith had it not been for the wise supervision of their parents, whose firmness and tenderness, always consistently displayed towards them, had so completely won their confidence that in the smallest difficulties they invariably appealed to them. And when mildly reprov'd by Blanche, she would again scold about that "shipwreck." But while she denounced, all others blessed the Sister of Charity.

THE END.









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