

The Cross and the Shamrock eBook

The Cross and the Shamrock

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Page 1

CHAPTER I.

A death-bed scene.

A cold evening in the month of January, a drizzling rain storm blowing from the southwest, a cheerless sky, a dull, threatening atmosphere, together with almost impassable roads,—these are the chilling and uninviting circumstances with which, if we pay regard to truth, we must introduce our narrative to our readers. It is usual, with writers of fiction and romance, to preface their literary exhibitions with high-wrought and dazzling descriptions of natural and artificial objects—the sun, moon, and stars; the clouds, meteors, and other fantastic creations of the atmosphere; the seas, rivers, and lakes; the mountains, fields, and gardens; the birds, fishes, and the inhabitants of the savage forests, as well as the forests, groves, and woods themselves,—in a word, all nature seems as if conscious of the effects likely to result to the morals, habits, and projects of men, while some of your modern novelists are arranging their matter, sharpening their scissors, preparing pen, ink, and paper, and taking indigestible suppers to make way into the world for the offspring of their creative fancies. Ours being a tale of truth,—yes, of bare, unvarnished truth, yet of truth more interesting, if not “stranger, than fiction,”—it is not to be wondered that, when we acknowledge the homely dame, and her alone, as our guide, inspirer, and preceptor, we lack the advantage of romancers, and cannot command “a special sunset,” or a storm made to order, or other enchanting scenery, to introduce us to our patrons.

We must take things as we find them; and this is why cold, rain, and frost, the whistling of merciless winds, together with false and pitiless ice, constitute the principal features of our introductory chapter. The merry chimes of sleigh bells, as if to add gloom to the scene, were silent, no snow having fallen this winter, and the ice being irregular and lumpy. The streets of the city of T— were almost entirely deserted of foot passengers, owing to the danger of walking over the slippery pavement; while cabmen and omnibus conductors had cautiously driven their teams to the stable or smithy, to have them “sharpened” for the frozen coat of mail which enveloped the earth. When about dusk, an aged gentleman, in a cloak, with a sharp-pointed cane in his hand, might be observed moving along the gutter of a narrow street. Occasionally he would slip so as to come on one knee, and now he would steer himself along by taking hold of the sills of windows, and of the railings which here and there were erected in front of a few houses on the retired and deserted street on which he crept along.

At length he approaches an old three-story, red, frame-built house, which, from its shattered and dilapidated windows, at first seemed to be deserted, but which, from the description left by a messenger with his domestic in the forenoon, he could not doubt was the place where he heard the emigrant widow lay at the point of death.



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"Is this where the sick woman is?" said he to an old woman who opened the door.

"Yes, your reverence," answered Mrs. Doherty, at once recognizing the priest; "and thank God you are come. The Lord never deserts his own, praise be to his holy name."

"Is she very ill?" said Father O'Shane; for thus was named the sole pastor of the city of T—— in those days.

"That she is, your reverence, and callin' for the priest this three days; but as we heard your reverence say that you would be in the country till this day, we thought it no use to give in the sick call sooner. I myself gave it in this morning afore my poor, sick old man got up."

"God help the poor!" muttered the tender-hearted priest, as he ascended to the third floor, where the dying woman lay.

"Amen!" answered Mrs. Doherty, aloud. "You would pity her, your reverence, if you seen the misery they are in this two months; and it is easily telling they saw better days in the ould country. It is easily knowing *that*, by the *dacent*, mannerly children she has around her, God help 'em."

"Pax huic domui, et omnibus habitantibus in ea"—"Peace to this house, and all that dwell therein," uttered the priest of God, as he opened the latchless door of the room on the third story of the old "Oil Mill House," where the patient was extended on her "pallet of straw." For a moment he stood on the threshold, for within an unusual and solemn sight presented itself to his view. A woman of fair and comely features, between about thirty and forty years of age, lay as described on the floor, with four children kneeling around her. The eldest, a lad of about fifteen years, read aloud the litanies and prayers of the church for the dying, while the three younger children repeated the responses in fervent but trembling accents.

"Lord, have mercy on her," cried Paul, the eldest boy.

"Christ, have mercy on her," answered the younger children.

"Holy Mary." *R.* "Pray for her."

"All ye holy angels and archangels." *R.* "Pray for her."

"All ye choirs of the just." *R.* "Pray for her."

"All ye saints of God." *R.* "Make intercession for her."

"From thy anger, from an unhappy death, from the pains of hell." *R.* "Deliver her, O Lord."



“By thy cross and passion, by thy death and burial, by thy glorious resurrection, in the day of judgment.” *R.* “Deliver her, O Lord.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant from all danger of hell, and from all pain and tribulation.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Enoch and Elias from the common death of the world.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Noah from the flood.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Abraham from the midst of the Chaldeans.” *R.* “Amen.”



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“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Job from all his afflictions.”
R. “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Isaac from being sacrificed by his father.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Lot from Sodom and the flames of fire.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Moses from the hands of Pharaoh, King of Egypt.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Daniel from the lions’ den.”
R. “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst the three children from the fiery furnace and from the hands of an unmerciful king.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Susanna from her false accusers.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst David from the hands of Goliah and Saul.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Deliver, O Lord, the soul of thy servant, as thou deliveredst Peter and Paul out of prison.” *R.* “Amen.”

“And as thou deliveredst that blessed virgin and martyr, St. Thecla, from most cruel torments, so vouchsafe, O Lord, to deliver the soul of this thy servant, and bring it to the participation of thy heavenly joys.” *R.* “Amen.”

“Depart, Christian soul, out of this world, in the name of God, the Father Almighty, who created thee; in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who suffered for thee; in the name of the Holy Ghost, who sanctified thee; in the name of the angels, archangels, thrones and dominations, cherubims and seraphims; in the name of the patriarchs and prophets, of the holy martyrs and confessors, of the holy monks and hermits, of the holy virgins, and of all the saints of God. Let thy place be this day in peace, and thy abode in *Sion*, through Christ, our Lord.” *R.* “Amen.”

The offering up of this most beautiful prayer by the children for their dying parent was not unattended with several breaks and pauses, caused by the overwhelming grief of the poor orphans. They “gave out” the short prayers of the litany very well, and without much interruption; but when they came to the more solemn portion of that beautiful service, the “recommendation of a departing soul,” they could no longer restrain their tears or suppress their lamentations.



Small blame to the poor children for this manifestation of grief, since we have known instances of the most hardened hearts being touched, and the most manly eyes yielding their tribute of tears, at the bare recital of the most beautiful form of prayer for the “soul departing.” We have ourselves read this service a thousand times, at least, by the death bedsides of many “departing souls;” and never could we once go through the form of it entire without yielding



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to the weakness of nature, and becoming speechless by the violence of our tears. Let the most obstinate unbeliever attend but a few times by the bedside of a dying Catholic, and observe the piety and faith of the priest and people around the bed of the “soul departing;” and if he be not an atheist or a blasphemer of God’s providence, it is impossible for him not to perceive the superiority of the Catholic religion to all other forms of worship that ever existed. But to be present at the death hour of a Christian is a privilege which Protestants and unbelievers seldom or never enjoy; their levity and want of devotion, with their impiety and irreverence, being sufficiently powerful obstacles to their admittance into such sacred places as the chamber in which the sacred offices of religion are administered to the “departing soul.” It is only the true believers, and not “those outside,” who have the privilege of hearing the “prayer of faith” that saves the sick man—it is only they who enjoy occasionally the consolation from the inspiring words of the church to join their tears, and unite their sighs, sobs, and sorrows with those of their pastors and fellow-Christians, for the happy passage and merciful judgment for their departing brother. Such were the tears and sadness that Paul O’Clery and his little attendants shed around the bed of their dying mother.

“Paul, my child, why do you act so?” said she, gently chiding him.

“O mother! mother! how can I help it? Stop ye your crying there,” said he, taking courage, and turning to his younger associates. “Silence Bridget, Patrick, and Eugene. Answer me distinctly, and hold your grief. It will vex mother.” And he continued the prayer from where he left off with as good grace as he could.

The venerable priest, though inside the door, was unperceived during this affecting scene; and the heavy tears might be seen stealing down his furrowed cheeks as he surveyed the group before him.

“O, faith of my Lord, O, best gift of God, how precious thou art! Thou canst change men into angels, earth into paradise, and convert the misery and poverty of the poor emigrant into a picture like this, that heaven itself must delight to gaze on. That’s right, my darling son,” said he, “you have finished well; you have done your duty towards your mother, for which God will bless you, and I bless you in his name. In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.”

“The priest, mother!” whispered Bridget. “I know him by his cloak.”

“Glory, honor, and praise be to the Almighty,” said the calm and now rejoicing widow, as she saw the face of the venerable minister of religion. “The Lord is too good to me, not to let me die in a strange land, without the consolations of my holy religion,” she continued, kissing the silver crucifix of her beads.



The heart of the good man was too full to give utterance to many words; and seeing that Death was at hand, that already he was master of all but the heart,—for the extremes were cold and without feeling,—he ordered the children down to Mrs. Doherty's, while he heard the short and humble confession of the poor departing soul, administered the most holy viaticum, with extreme unction, and read the last benediction of the church—“In articulo mortis.”

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He then strengthened her soul with a few words of exhortation, and having prescribed a few short, ejaculatory prayers, bidding her to have the name, as well as the image, of Jesus ever in her heart and lips, he departed, promising to call again as soon as possible, taking the precaution to leave two dollars in silver and a three dollar bill on the little stool that stood by her bed. He had now, he said, to go about forty miles into the country; and he would, after his return, call to see how she was, and to comply with her request about the children.

“I commend you now to the care of God and his angel. God bless you,” said he, departing.

“Into thy hands I commend my spirit. O Lord, receive my soul. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, have mercy on me. O God of love, goodness, and mercy, accept my imperfect thanksgiving; save my soul, redeemed by thy precious blood, and make me worthy to see thy glory. I believe in thee, O Lord, I hope in thee, and I love thee. O my God and my Lord, who am I that thou shouldst visit me!”

With these and other fervent aspirations, this pure and exalted soul prepared for the manifestation of the glory of her Lord, and sighed to be dissolved, and to fly to the beatific vision that faith promised her, and through the merits of Christ she expected to obtain. After this, the symptoms of her disease became sensibly less dangerous than before the visit of the priest; but this calm, this seeming relief, was only temporary. Presently the impress of pale death was unmistakably settled on her calm brow.

CHAPTER II.

GETTING THE MOTHER’S BLESSING.

When the priest departed from the precincts of “Oil Mill House,” in company with the impatient messenger that required his services in the country, after a few words of encouragement and advice spoken to Paul, Bridget, Patrick, and Eugene,—for so were widow O’Clery’s children named,—they returned to the bedside of their dying mother. Little Bridget was the first to observe on the small bench by the bedside the money left there by Father O’Shane.

“Paul,” she whispered, “look here! This is money left, I suppose, by the priest.” Paul, who was acquainted with American coin, took up the eight pieces, or quarters, in silver, and the bill, and examining them by the candle, said, “O Bid, see how good the priest is! He has left us five dollars, or one pound, without saying a word about it. Mother, how do you feel? Look! the priest left us a deal of money here quietly.”



“God reward him for it,” answered she, with a hoarse and broken voice. “Paul, darling, go on your knees, you and your sister and brothers, till I give ye my blessing before I die. Quick, children, quick, while I have strength.”

“O mother! mother! sure you aren’t going to leave us orphans? May be you will get better now, after extreme unction.”

“Kneel down here by my side, my children,” said she, feeling that her time was now short. “Paul, do you promise me you will be a good boy, love God, and keep his commandments?”



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“Yes, mother, with God’s help. O woe!”

“Will you watch over your brothers, and sister Bridget, and go with them to the priest, telling him not to forget that I gave ye all up to his care, and the care of God and his blessed mother?”

“O, I will.”

“Bridget, Patrick, and Eugene, will ye obey, and be said by Paul, who is the oldest?”

“Yes, mother, please God,” they answered, amidst sobbing and tears that half choked them.

“God bless ye, and guard ye, and save ye from all dangers of soul and body. I give ye up to God. I place ye under the holy care of the blessed mother of God. I pray that ye may preserve pure the faith of Saint Patrick. I bless ye. O, pray for me. Jesus, into thy hands—Jesus—Mary—Jesus——.” There was a sigh, and by a single effort the soul extricated itself from its prison of clay to join the ranks of its kindred spirits. The widow O’Clery is no more, and Paul and his brethren are orphans indeed.

For a few minutes there was a deep silence in that chamber of death, and Paul repeated the “De Profundis,” in English, out of his Prayer Book; but when the cold and ghastly form of death was perceived by this poor company to be all that was left of their darling and affectionate mother, loud and mournful were their lamentations. Then, and not till then, did the forlorn state to which they were reduced reveal itself even to their juvenile minds. There they were, helpless and destitute, without father or mother, friend or relation; on every side strangers, cold, hunger, and want. The mysterious hand of Providence conducted them from comparative comfort, if not luxury, through several stages of trial, danger, and trouble, till they were now entirely stripped, like Job, of all but an existence to which death was preferable. Many are the phases of misery and crosses with which the life of man is surrounded in this vale of tears; but we think the condition of the orphan, deprived of both parents, and thrown for support or existence on a strange and selfish world, the most desolate of all. A policeman was the first who was attracted to the house of mourning by the wailing and cries of those whom this night saw alone and desolate. Mrs. Doherty, attended by an Irish servant maid from a neighboring house, were the next visitors; and, after piously kneeling around the corpse to offer their fervent prayers for the soul, they prepared to “lay out” the body. This consists, as all are probably aware, of washing the corpse, clothing it in clean linen, extending it on a table or bed, and putting up such temporary fixtures as would deprive the room in which it lies of the gloom and repulsiveness attendant on such an event. After arranging all things so that she looked “a decent corpse,” with the *religious habit* around her, Mrs. Doherty hung up the crucifix, pinned to a white linen sheet at the head of where she lay, placed her “Ursuline Manual” on her breast, and her beads on her arms, crossed on the body.



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“She was a handsome, fine woman, in her day, God bless her,” said Mrs. Doherty.

“Yes, any body can tell that,” answered Norry. “I wonder how they came here at all.”

“I know it well,” answered old Peggy Doherty. “She telled me all about it afore she took bad entirely. Her man was well off, and had a brother next to the bishop in the church, in the county of C——. When landlords began to root out the people from their homes, the brother of Mr. O’Clery, her husband, wrote letters in the newspapers about the cruelty of the landlord, who was called ‘Lord Mandemon;’ and on that account, and because the priest took part with the poor,—as they always do, God bless ’em!—the landlord came down on Mr. O’Clery, sold out his sixty milch cows, after being twenty-one days in pound; and though the cows were worth ten pounds each, Lord Mandemon’s agent sold them by auction, and he bought them back himself for two pounds each; and so the poor family was ruined. After that, O’Clery sold out another farm he had; and, collecting all that was due to him, he came to America, against the advice of the priest, his brother. He thought, he said, to live with his family in ‘a free country,’ where there were no landlords or tyrants, and, while he had some means, to buy a farm which he could call his own. But he took the cholera when within sight of land, and he only lived a few days. God rest his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed. And God help those poor orphans,” she said, piously, looking to where the little group, wearied from grief and crying, lay asleep on a straw bed.

“I do really pity the poor creatures,” said Norry. “I suppose they will have to go to the poorhouse.”

“I hope not; God forbid, *asthore*, the poorhouse is such a dangerous place for Catholics. I heard the priest say he would call to-morrow; and may be he will *do for* the little dears.”

“’Tis hard for him to provide for all that are in distress,” said Norry.

“I know it; but it would be a murther to let such well-reared and decent children into the hands of those poormasters, but especially that Van Stingey, whose great delight is, they say, to convart the children of Catholics to his own sect. See what he done to the little Cronin children, whose father and mother died lately.”

“I heard of that; but I am afraid the priest won’t be able to call on to-morrow, as he promised, if it continue to snow so.”

“O yea, God forbid; but it is a terrible night. Do ye hear how it blows? *O Heirna Diaa.*”

“Yes, and the snow is falling in mountains; the roads will be blocked up, and hills and hollows will be on a level in the morning.”



“God help every poor Christian that is out to-night,” said Mrs. Doherty. “I hope the Lord will save his reverence from all harm.”

“Amen!” answered Norry. “He will have a hard night of it. Had he far to go?”



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“He had, *agra*, forty miles out in Vermont; but sure he could not refuse going. The woman is just dying; and besides, she is a Protestant, who wants to die in the faith.”

“Happy for her,” said Norry, “if he overtakes her alive. How good the priests are to these Yankees, although they are always ridiculing the clergy; yet, if one of them is going to die, the priest not only forgives them, but is willing to travel any distance to do them a service.”

“Sure that’s the orders of God and the church,” said Mrs. Doherty. “It is not for them alone they are working, but for God, you know.”

“That’s true,” said Norry. “But still and all, when one hears how they are always ridiculing priests and nuns, and sees how they hate our religion, it is very hard, I think, to forgive them.”

“Yes, *agra*,” said Peggy, who was better informed than Norry; “so it is hard for flesh and blood to forgive the heretics; but, unless we forgive them, God won’t forgive us. The priest knows this well; and so, if there were two sick calls to come at one time to him, as happened lately, one a Protestant and the other a Catholic, he would go to the Protestant first.”

“That beats all,” said Norry, “and is more than I would do, if I were the priest; for I know well all that is said of him behind his back.”

“What harm will all that scandalous talk do the priest?” said Peggy. “It only does him good; and he has a blessing for being ‘spoken evil of’ like our Lord. He forgives all those whom God forgives; and so, if his enemy, the Protestant, falls sick, and wants his services, he goes to him *first*, in order that he may be brought into the church, where alone he can be saved.”

“Thanks be to God,” said Norry. “Is not it a wonder the Protestants don’t understand this, and look on the priests and the church as their best friends, seeing that the priests are as ready, and readier, to attend to them than to the Catholics themselves?”

“How can they understand it when they are blinded by love of money, impurity, and the hatred that the ministers excite against the church in the minds of their hearers? Wasn’t our Lord himself hated by those whom he most loved, and put to death by them? It is so with every priest who follows his steps, now as well as then. The world will always hate good.”

This Christian philosophy was a little too sublime for poor Norry’s mind, who was a long time among the Yankees, sufficiently instructed in the customs of this “free country” to be ready to observe the law of “Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and life for life;” and who, besides, had her naturally warm temper rather spoiled from her continual rencontres



with her mistress on such subjects as confession, priests' celibacy, purgatory, and other subjects too profound for the understanding of her mistress to know any thing about them, and too sacred in the eyes of Norry to allow them to be irreverently handled without saying something in their defence. It requires not only a perfect acquaintance with the sublime and heavenly tenets of Catholicity to speak of them with precision and propriety, but, in addition to a deep study of the truths of true religion, the *practice of her precepts*, and the frequent reception of the sacraments, are necessary to imbue the mind with the true Christian notions regarding her high commands.



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Poor Norry “had not a chance,” she said, of going to her duties for several years; and that is why she considered “Peggy Doherty’s” talk about forgiveness so strange and unaccountable.

“Yes, a *Greffour*,” resumed “old Peggy,” “we must forgive all the world; and myself would forgive any thing sooner than kidnappin’ or stealing away the children of Catholics, which these Yankee parsons are so fond of doing.”

“O, so they are, the villains,” said Norry. “Did they take away or steal any of this poor woman’s children? ’Tis a wonder if they didn’t.”

“Well, besides the four children you see here, *asthore*, she had another neat child, one year old, named Aloysia, whom a lady up town took with her, two months since, to rear her up along with her own children; and it was only about ten days since she got news of her death. When the poor woman heard this, the heart broke entirely within her, especially as she could not be present at the child’s death bed or at the funeral.”

“Why, that’s rather strange,” said Norry. “Did they send her word that she was sick?”

“Not a word. It was only when I went up to Mrs. Sillerman’s, the other day, to inquire about the child, she comes out and tells me the child died, and was decently interred. When I told the mother, she cried out, ‘O Aloysia, Aloysia, my darling! are you, too, gone?’ And she was not herself since.”

“I do think there must be something wrong in the matter,” said Norry. “Did you tell the priest?”

“No, I did not, for I had not time,” said Mrs. Doherty. “God forgive me. I have a doubt in my own mind that the lady of the house (I renounce judging her) was not honest when she told me of the child’s death. ‘Perhaps,’ says I to myself, ‘she is kidnapped.’ And she was such a purty angel, with a face you would delight looking on; and on her right hand,—the Lord save us!—a circle like a ring was on her middle finger. She was too good to live; and was made for heaven, I suppose. Glory be to God.”

CHAPTER III.

AN OFFICIAL.

Our poormaster, Van Stingey, was a very conscientious officer. He never squandered what he called the people’s property, the commonwealth. He was none of your vulgar, ordinary poormasters. He did not want the office; they only forced it on to him. Like some of your great statesmen, he acted for *man*, as he emphatically said; not for poor widows and orphans, taken one by one; that was only a secondary consideration. His whole duty, his very existence, seemed to be needed for the good of man, or humanity



in general. The question with him was, not how to relieve this or that poor man or woman. *That* might engage the attention of a man of no intelligence, no education, or no philosophy: what he aspired to was, always to act by principle; to act so that the state, or the people who owned *real estate*, and who elected him against his



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will, to see that their interests were attended to, whatever became of the poor. Accordingly, when he heard of any case of particular distress, such as that a poor emigrant died of misery in a cold, deserted house, our poormaster regretted it, as an individual; but, as an officer, he said, he acted according to principle. He could not betray his constituents, who elected him against his will, by any act of extravagance; and the good of the many must be consulted. "Even the Lord," he used to say,—for he was a religious man,—"when he created the sun, left spots in it." The best statesman must sometimes do what may be cruel to the few; but, in the end, it would turn out for the good of man. This district, since his election, now twice successively, had made a saving of some two hundred a year since he became its officer; and that would, in time, open the eyes of the people as to who were proper candidates for office, tend to diminish taxes, and, in fact, be a work for man—progress and virtue. Besides this, Mr. Poormaster Van Stingey had "got religion," by which he was wonderfully enlightened, having been so lucky as to gain that valuable accomplishment just six months, and only six months, before his election, at a camp meeting held near the village of M——ville.

"I tell you what, the fact of the matter is, Mr. Knicks," said he, "there is nothin' like religion. Before I got religion, and jined the church, I didn't have any knowledge of God. I used to pity these emigrants, seeing them poor and pale looking as death; but now, sir, I reads my Bible, and finds that the Lord must not regard nor love these Papists, wher'n he lets them run down so. The word of life is great."

"Wal, I do not know. I care not a straw about any church; but my old mother used to teach us, when children, that poverty and crosses were no sign of the Lord's displeasure; as witness holy Job and Christ himself, who were poor. In fact, she never stopped telling us, when boys, that riches were dangerous, the love of money the root of all evil, and that 'whom he chastiseth the Lord loveth.'"

"O, but your mother was a stiff Papist, you know, and did not understand the word of God."

"Yes, sir-ee, she did that; for I well recollect that, in the many arguments she had with father, she always had the best of it. That she had."

"She may argue from Jesuit books and the like; but the Bible she durst not look at, you know, Knicks."

"I know better, Van. Don't you talk so. I have got the very Bible she used and read every day—a great large one, printed in London. Mother was English, and herself a convert to the church of Rome, though father was Dutch."

“Why, I never knowed that, Knicks. That was a great misfortune. These priests, by the arts of Antichrist, will come round simple folks so, that they often succeed in leading them down to destruction.”



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“Well, sir,” said Knicks, “I can tell you I never met a Christian but my mother; and I cannot believe or listen to you say she went to destruction, but to heaven, if there is such a place. And again: if I were to embrace any religion, it would be the Roman Catholic religion; for it is the only *honest religion* there is. Father often brought Methodist and Presbyterian ministers to make mother give up her’n; but it was no go. She always treated them civil; but they had the worst of the argument, I can tell you. They brought their Bibles, and she her’n; and then they would set to, and be at it, till at last they were obliged to give up. The only difference between her Bible and theirs is, that her’n contained some fourteen or fifteen books more than the Protestant Bible. The end of it was, that father turned with mother, and had the Irish priest O’Shane to attend him afore he died. Mother got us all baptized too.”

“Indeed!” carelessly ejaculated our official. “I must call and see that Bible of yours some day.”

This conversation—which happened a few days before the death of our emigrant widow—between his neighbor “Knicks” and our official shows what an *enlightened gentleman* he was. Since his elevation to office, he also got promotion to another situation, which, though not so lucrative as that of poormaster, in the course of time, by proper management, promised to come to something. In a certain school house in his vicinity, where the faithful were too poor, too irreligious, or too pernicious to hire a preacher, our official held forth every Sunday, and several evenings on the week days, at prayer meetings, protracted meetings, and other roaring exercises. And to do him credit, his nasal accent and piercing shrill voice made him a capital substitute for the *hired* regular Methodist preacher. He could be heard for nearly a mile distant calling on the *brethern* and *sistern* to come to heaven.

“O, let us come!” he would cry; “we were made and intended for heaven. I see the shining seats, I see the crystal fountains, I see the Lord sitting on the throne. Come, sisters, come! I could embrace ye all for the Lord’s sake. I could hide ye in my bosom. O! O!”

There were some whose faith was not strong enough to place implicit reliance on the veracity of this very enlightened “minister of the word;” but the great majority believed, or pretended to believe, and expressed their faith by crying out, “Glory! glo-ry! glo-r-y!”

If a more particular or personal description of our official is required, we can state, from minute observation, that Mr. Van Stingey was of the middle size, of thin, cadaverous appearance, short neck, snake head, with lank, sandy hair, nose flat and simex-like, small eyes, one of which he kept continually shut, as if he supposed himself a match for the poor whom he had to deal with by keeping one “eye skinned,” reserving the other for some important office in church or state,



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to which he unquestionably aspired. Several times during the two months the destitute widow and her family were reduced to penury and sickness. Our worthy master was apprised of their condition by the neighbors; but he always answered that the law did not allow him to spend any more, just now; that these emigrants ought to remain at home; that they had no right to this country; that he heard a very godly minister foretell last year, at camp meeting, that the Romanists would yet have this country; that too many were coming by millions; that he feared that they could not be converted as fast as they were arriving; that they ought to be made pay a heavy sum, or sent back. "In short," said he one day to poor Mrs. Doherty, "I was not elected by them Irish paupers, and I never expect to be."

"If every thing you say was as true as that last word, I think you would be an honest man for wonst," said Mrs. Doherty; "for there is no fear that an Irishman's or a Christian's vote will ever elect the like of you. God forgive you this day!"

To suppose that any man could display such *bona fide* ignorance as this official did in the foregoing, would be to form an incorrect and inadequate estimate of the human mind. The fact was that Van Stingey was a false, low, cruel man, whose soul, steeped in the sensuality of his past life, had lost all that was divine in its nature. His circumstances were so reduced by his crimes and dissipation, that, being "too lazy to work, and ashamed to beg," he assumed first the guise of religion to gain popularity; and when he had "got religion," then the teachers of the stuff which they call by that noble name, to keep it respectable, procured him this office as a reward for his hypocrisy.

This was the official who startled the inmates of our house of mourning about five o'clock in the morning, when, thrusting his head inside the door, he cried out, "A corpse there, eh?"

"The Lord save us! Who are you, or what brings you here this hour o' night?" said old granny Doherty, suspecting him as "nothing good."

"Like you Irish, allers asking questions," said he, discharging a mass of tobacco almost in her face. "I am the poormaster; and, having received a report that there was a dead pauper here, thought I would have it put out of the way early, before the folks would get up."

"You are a very polite gintleman, God bless you. I hope she won't be buried so soon. This is not the custom in any Christian country. After to-morrow will be soon enough. You need not be in a hurry. We expect the priest here to see to the children, as he has already left some help, God bless him."

“She must be entered this morning, having died with the ship fever, I suppose. The citizens expect me to do my *dooty*; and that I will do, if the Lord spares me.”

“The dickens a ship fever nor no other fever she had; but the poor woman’s heart broke, seeing what she had come to in a strange country,” said Mrs. Doherty, pityingly.



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“Wal, wal, if she had trusted in the Lord, and knew the word of God, he would not have deserted her as he has,” hypocritically answered the official.

“I beg your pardon, sir, don’t judge rashly. She was not deserted by God, but died content and happy, after all the rites of her holy religion were administered to her,” was the prompt reply.

“You think so; but I want to know how she could love God without the Bible; and you Roman Catholics are not allowed its use.”

“God help those that can’t read so,” said Mrs. Doherty. “There is no chance for me or my old man, for neither of us can read it; but not so Mrs. O’Clery, God be good to her. She had her Bible, and many more good books.”

“Yes, sir,” said Paul, joining in the dialogue. “We have always had the true Catholic Bible, and mother always read it on her knees.”

“Wal, my good lad, you are *pooty* smart; and now get you ready, with the rest of you little critters, and come on the sleigh I will send for you. Let’s see how many of you there are. One, two, three, four—a great lot of ye. As I was saying, be ready to come up to the county house till I can get some folks to take ye in to keep till ye are of age.”

“The priest, sir,” said Paul, “promised to call to-day; and as he already has left us a good sum of money, I know the good man will provide for us till he writes to my uncle, who would be very sorry to hear of our going to the poorhouse or the county house, though it may be a better place.”

“My young lad, you will be provided for by law, and don’t fail to be ready by ten o’clock,” said the official, sternly, as he left the room.

In a few hours after, the body of the widow O’Clery was deposited in a rough, unplanned pine coffin, and placed on board a two-horse, open sleigh. The four orphans were stowed around in the same vehicle, and, in care of a constable, the *cortege* drove off at full speed to the cemetery. By half past eleven, the remains of the widow were consigned to their kindred earth, the few lumps of hard frozen clay on the surface her only monument—the sobs, sighs, and prayers of her own dear children the only requiem uttered over her lowly and soon-to-be-forgotten tomb. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors.” (Apoc. xiv. 13.)

CHAPTER IV.

THE POORHOUSE.



When Father O'Shane left for the village of B——, in Vermont, to administer the rites of Christian unction to a departing soul, the roads were very hard to travel, and his progress, in company with his faithful guide, was tedious and slow in the extreme. The call was to a sick woman named Finmore, who was in the last stage of consumption, and who had often, during her illness, expressed a desire that she should be attended by a priest before she would die. Her husband did not oppose her

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wish, but was yet either too indifferent on the subject, or too lazy, to go such a journey as to the city of T—— in search of a personage of whom he stood in such awe, and knew so little of, as the Catholic priest. A neighboring Irish farmer, named O’Leary, hearing of the wish of the dying woman, volunteered to bring the priest, if “there was one to be found in all America,” he said, “provided he got a horse and wagon from the stable of the rich Yankee.” And it was in company with this simple but brave and faithful man that Father O’Shane set out on the evening of the widow’s death. They had not advanced many miles, however, when the wind veered round to the north-west, and a most violent snow storm blew quite in their face. Slow and unpleasant was their progress over the hard, icy road; but in the course of a few hours their farther advance became an utter impossibility with a wagon. They had, therefore, to stop at a tavern; and after a good deal of entreaty, and after having fed their horse, they succeeded in hiring from the boss the use of a sleigh to carry them along to Vermont.

“Ye can’t travel nohow to-night,” said the boss; “the roads will be blocked up, chuck full.”

“We’ll have to travel, sir,” said the Irishman, “or die in the attempt; so let us have the cutter. Charge what you have a mind to.”

“Why, what in the world can be the matter? Ye ain’t subpoenaed, or going to arrest somebody?” said the jolly boss.

“Ah, no such thing, man,” said the farmer; “but there is a woman dangerously ill, and yon gentleman in the sitting room is a doctor, going to visit her. Cost what it may, we must go ahead.”

“O, that alters the case. Why did you not say so at first? and you should have had it and welcome. It will be ready in no time. Hitch on to that new, light cutter in the shed, Sam,” said he to the hostler.

“Ya, ya,” said Sam; and in five minutes the priest and his guide were again proceeding on their charitable mission. They reached their destination about two o’clock in the night, just one hour before the death of her on whose account they had come such a journey. Father O’Shane—poor old gentleman!—suffered terribly; had his ears frostbitten, and two of his fingers frozen. But no matter; a soul was to be saved, and that consideration alleviated all his sufferings, and rendered him dead to every thing—cold, pain, watchings, hunger, thirst, and weariness; nay, even death itself was but a trivial, inadequate price to be paid by a mortal man to gain an immortal soul to Christ and eternal happiness.

“’Tis an awful night, reverend sir,” said O’Leary. “I fear we can’t go ahead.”



“What matter, O’Leary,” said Father O’Shane, “as we reached in time? What is this night and all its violence compared with the sufferings of a poor soul in the next world? All I regret is that you did not send me in the sick call sooner. All is well, however; she was perfectly conscious, and, I hope, worthily received all the rites of religion. Hold up! you will rest well to-night, your conscience at ease, after having been engaged in such a meritorious act of charity.”



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In nothing does the church of God manifest the divinity of her origin and mission more than in the care which she bestows on her children, the adopted brethren of Jesus Christ, at the awful hour of death. She reserves all her good things for this her last service to her children. She sends her keys there, to the bedside of the dying man, to open to him the gate to the calm and peaceful walks of justification. She sends her oils thither, too, to anoint the Christian gladiator for his last and final struggle with his powerful enemies. She sends her divine manna, to strengthen him and sustain him for the trying and unknown journey; and she sends the music of her sweet hymns and litanies to cheer him on, and the light of indulgences and benedictions to guide his soul, illumine his understanding, and shed the rays of their heavenly reflection on the difficult passage that he has to traverse. And this food, these blessings, gifts, and graces, she has ready for all repentant sinners without exception, be they the inmates of the true fold, or straying without the boundaries of the city of God; be they the timorous souls who are already washed, or the negligent, who have followed the hard ways of the world. If, in her other functions, the spouse of Christ is “terrible as an army set in array,” “fair as the moon, and beautiful as the setting sun,” in this, her last office at the death bedside, she is all mercy, tenderness, and goodness. O, how cold, selfish, and intolerable would life be, if the Catholic church was not present, on all occasions, with the graces, blessings, and consolations of Christ!

“O Lord, if it be thy will, deprive us of every thing—riches, health, renown, pleasure; but never leave thy creatures, thy inheritance, thy children, without the consolations of thy church! O Lord, the many sheep that are here not of thy fold gather and bring in speedily, that there may be but one fold and one Shepherd, as thou thyself hast foretold.” Thus prayed this pious priest of God, after having added another strayed sheep to the fold of his divine Master; and his soul was at peace.

For two days the storm continued unabated, the whole country becoming like an undulating ocean of snow. Drift snow, mountain high, was accumulated in the valleys between hills; whole herds of sheep and cattle were suffocated; and the bodies of several teamsters, whose teams were overset, were dug out lifeless from under the drifts by the men who had assembled with their ox teams and shovels to open the interrupted communication with the city.

Father O’Shane bemoaned his fate in doleful terms; the more so as Sunday was approaching, when he feared he should be absent from his congregation; and he also regretted that he had it not in his power, according to his promise to the widow O’Clery, to visit her next day, and provide for her poor orphans among the benevolent of his flock. And, well aware of the character of the hard-hearted Van Stingey, he shuddered for the fate of the children.



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The apprehensions of the good priest were not groundless; for no sooner was the body of Mrs. O'Clery consigned to its narrow, cold habitation, than the official, assisting the children into the sleigh that had borne their mother's body to the tomb, drove off in a rapid trot towards the poorhouse.

"Have we far to go yet, sir?" said Paul, thinking that the "county house" was something different from the much dreaded poorhouse. "I am afraid Bridget will perish with cold, sir."

"No fears of her; she's hardy, I guess."

"Yes, sir, but her dress is so very light."

"Well, she can pull that ere buffalo around her."

"Ou, hou, hou!" cried Bridget, breathing on her little bare hands, which she kept pressed to her lips.

"I hope, sir, you are not going to take us to the poorhouse," said Paul; "we don't want to go there. The priest that attended my mother—God rest her soul!—told us he would provide for us."

"Indeed! How can he do so?" said Van Stingey.

"Why, sir, I don't know; but perhaps he will write to my uncle, who is a vicar general in Ireland, and he will send us money to take us back home."

"Is your uncle in the British sarvice, then, and a general in the army?"

"No, sir, but he is a priest next to the bishop in station in the church."

"That's it, eh? Wal, I guess you better not talk of going back, any how. You must live here in this free country, and learn to be a man and a Christian—a thing you could not be at home, in the old country."

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied Paul; "the very best Christians are in Ireland, which was once called the 'Isle of Saints,' when all the people were Catholics; and where I came from, even now, they are all mostly Catholics. There are in the whole parish but two *peelers*, the minister and his wife, and the tithe proctor, or collector of tithes; in all, five Protestants."

"You are a lad, I see," said the official, as he dismounted from the sleigh and ordered the children to enter their new home.



“O, woe, woe, woe!” cried they, as they found themselves admitted as *paupers*, and enclosed within the precincts of the terrible poorhouse. “O Lord, what will we do?” cried they. “O sir, don’t keep us here, or send word to the priest first. I will go to his house, myself,” said Paul.

“Shet up, ye little fools!” said the official; “this is a better place nor ye think. Ye ain’t going to get no potatoes, nohow, but something better than ye ever were used to. Take these young ’uns to the stove in the kitchen,” said he to an under official. And the sobs and groans of the destitute orphans were drowned in the uproarious rumbling of the gong that called the officers of the establishment to dinner, it being now noon.

The repugnance of the Irishman to the poorhouse is proverbial. Neither prison, dungeon, nor death is invested with greater horror, in the minds of the peasantry of Ireland, than this institution. Solely founded, as they are told, for their special use and benefit, there are instances, countless, on record, where the affectionate mother has thanked Heaven, when by fever, plague, or hunger it deprived her of her darling infant, rather than that it should become an inmate of the poorhouse!

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“Is not this prejudice unreasonable and strange?” it will be asked. “And why is it that the Irishman shuns and abhors an institution which his English neighbor enjoys and petitions to enter?” The reasons are numerous, and the difference in the feelings of both obvious and palpable. It must be first remarked, that the Irish are a traditional people, and remarkably conservative of the customs and usages of their ancestors. They look back into the history of their country, or consult their fathers and grandfathers, and in vain look back for the existence of a poorhouse, or any necessity for its existence, before the advent of the “godly reformation” and the established church in their midst. They heard of such establishments as the ancient “*beataghs*,” or houses of hospitality, which were provided for the stranger and destitute in every townland, the doors of which were open day and night, and on the boards of which cooked victuals for scores of men were continually ready. These were the substitute for the poorhouse in the days when England and all Europe sent their poor scholars to receive a gratuitous education among the inhabitants of the Island of Saints. There the poor and the hungry could come in and eat, and be filled, and go his way, without being questioned who he was, without being asked for a *pauper ticket* to admit him, without being obliged or compelled to lead a life of celibacy, or running the risk of his soul’s salvation, to keep his body from perishing of hunger.

In a word, when Brian Boru expelled the Danes from Ireland, when Hugh O’Niel triumphed over the troops of Elizabeth, as well as when Dathi held the sceptre, or Nial of the hostages planted his colors on the Alps, there was enough to feed the poor of Ireland. There was no necessity for a poorhouse; and there is no need of it now, says the Irish peasant, if justice was done to Ireland. “Give us back our monasteries and abbeys, and we will bestow you the poorhouses.”

Besides these considerations, the English poorhouse has this advantage over the Irish one—that the former is conducted and presided over by Englishmen, who have a sympathy for, or at least are of, the same blood, religion, and race with its inmates. But in Ireland the case is different. The poorhouses, prison-like edifices, in Elizabethan style of architecture, presided over by Englishmen, generally, and nominees of the crown, are a monument of conquest and tyranny.

The inmates being principally “mere Irish,” and the cost of their support derived chiefly from the land, the landlords consider their health, comfort, or life of only secondary importance. Hence we find the number of deaths in these charnel houses averaging that of years of plague; and each pauper is allowed far less weekly for his support than the lord of the soil allows the meanest dog in his kennel. Add to these the separation of man and wife, the isolation of members of the same family, the dangers of perversion

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and proselytism to the thinning ranks of the “law church;” and then, if you can, blame the poor Irishman for his horror of the dreadful poorhouse of England. He saw hundreds of his neighbors enter the gates of the poorhouse, but he never saw one return back. Less active imaginations than that of the Irish peasant would be worked on so as to conclude that some means more *active* than sickness or old age were had recourse to, for the purpose of lessening the taxes on land, by getting rid of the poor.

In truth, the British poorhouse is a great government establishment, where the sons of the low squirearchy are provided for—a terrible mill, where the bodies and souls of Irishmen and women are ground up and annihilated—a labor-saving machine of political economy, introduced into the world by the robbers of the reformation, in order to get rid of surplus population, and in order that the Lazaruses of society might not disturb the false repose of their hypocrisy, by begging the crumbs that fall from their plunder-burdened tables!

The American poorhouse, however, is of quite a different description, and the promptitude and unanimity of the public mind regarding the necessity of a law to provide for the support of the poor are among the most laudable traits in the American character. In America, the patrimony of the poor was never wrested from the church, to which God committed their care; the charities and bequests of ages were not plundered and squandered by the vilest of the human race, as in Britain; hospitals, churches, abbeys, monasteries, convents, and other endowed provisions for the poor, were not robbed and confiscated by the sectarians of the new world, (probably because they did not exist there;) and hence the essential difference between the English and American poorhouse. There is no part of the Scripture the reformation people so rigidly adhered to, or now pretend to adhere to, as the advice of Judas, “Let this be sold and given to the poor.” They made the sale, but the poor they left unprovided for, till their numbers increased so as to threaten the ill-gotten goods of the plunderers, who at length passed laws compelling the poor to support the poor. And this was the origin of poorhouses—a true Protestant creation.

CHAPTER V.

THE O’CLERYS.

The O’Clery family was an ancient and honored one in Ireland. Princes, chieftains, and warriors of the name were renowned before Charlemagne or Alfred ascended the throne, or before any of the petty princes of the heptarchy ruled over the barbarous Saxons. Like all the royal and noble houses of Europe, the O’Clerys, after ages of glory and prosperity, had their hour of decline and decay also. But it was a question whether the virtues of this renowned house were more brilliant or conspicuous in the zenith of its

glory, or in its fallen or humbled state. The Irish church founded by Saint Patrick never wanted

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an O'Clery to adorn her sanctuary or to record her victories. The annals of the Four Masters will stand to the end of the world as a proud monument of the services rendered to the Irish church and to history by these illustrious annalists; and when the deeds of the most renowned knights and chieftains of this royal house shall have been obliterated by the merciless chisel of time, the authors of the Four Masters' Annals will become only brighter among the shining stars that adorn the literary firmament of old Ireland.

The martyrology of the Irish church can attest the virtues of constancy and patriotism with which the O'Clerys bore their share of the wrongs of Erin and of her faithful sons. Whether or not the subjects of our narrative, the poor emigrant orphans, had any of this royal and noble blood flowing in their veins, is a thing that we cannot genealogically vouch. But that they were not degenerate sons of Erin, or faithless to their allegiance to the glorious old church of their fathers, we trust this history will amply demonstrate. At all events, the uncle of our hero, Paul O'Clery, held a very high station in the Irish hierarchy. Having, with éclat, finished his ecclesiastical and literary primary studies in the colleges of his native land, he subsequently repaired to Rome, where he won with distinction the title of "doctor in divinity and canon law," and carried the first premium from many French, German, and even Italian competitors. Hence, soon after his return from abroad, on account of his learning, as well as his tried virtues, he was appointed the vicar general of the diocese of Kil——, a promotion which, far from exciting the envy, gained the unanimous approval, of the diocesan clergy. During the horrors of the general landlord persecution of the Irish Catholics, (for it is nothing else than a persecution of Catholics,) the O'Clerys found their name on the roll of the proscribed, and got notice to quit the homestead of their fathers. The principal cause for this proscription by the landlord was, that Dr. O'Clery, in the newspapers, exposed the system of cruel and barbarous extermination which took place on the extensive estates of Lord Mandemon—a gentleman who said he thought it far more honorable, as well as profitable, to have his princely estates in Munster tenanted by fat cattle than by Irish Papists. His lordship had also the mortification to learn that all the meat, money, and clothing he had employed for the last five years could not make one single sincere convert to his rich "law establishment." When the "praties" were dear, and the crops failed, there were a few, to be sure, who would profess themselves ready to "ate the mate" on Friday; but as soon as plenty returned, the "new lights" went out, or returned to ask pardon of God, the priest, and the people; and Lord Mandemon and his soup were pitched to the "seventy-nine devils." This failure, this result, so often before seen and felt, and so certain to follow, was,



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in his zeal for proselytism, attributed by his lordship to Dr. O'Clery's zeal and learning. For, whenever or wherever he went among the peasantry to preach to them in their own sweet and loved dialect, the "jumpers, the new lights, and the soupers" disappeared like the locusts from Egypt when exorcised by the magic rod of Moses. Hence the hatred with which the O'Clerys were persecuted. Hence, also, the oath of Lord Mandemon, that he would never return to his home in England till every Papist on his estates was rooted out. This oath was kept by his lordship, probably the only true one he ever swore; for in less than a fortnight he fell a victim to the cholera, and expired on board the Princess Royal steamboat on her return to Liverpool.

Arthur O'Clery, father to the subject of our tale, sold out a second farm he held near Limerick, turned all his effects into money, bade adieu to his beloved brother, Dr. O'Clery, who was averse to his emigration, and, in the autumn, set sail from Liverpool for New York, in the ship Hottinguer. He had all his family with him: they were comfortably provided with all necessaries, and, besides, had one thousand pounds, in hard cash, to start with in the new world. They were not long out at sea, when, owing to the crowd on board, the lack of proper arrangements, and room, or ventillation, as well as on account of the cruelty of the inhuman captain, ship fever and cholera broke out on board.

The number of bodies consigned to the ocean from that unlucky vessel was from five to ten daily, and among the victims of the plague was Arthur O'Clery. He was the only one of the cabin passengers who was attacked by the epidemic, which, in the ardor of his charity, he contracted while attending on, and ministering to, the wants of the poor steerage passengers.

Sad and impressive was the scene when the Rev. H. O'Q——, a young Irish priest on board, in the middle hold of the ship, where O'Clery had been removed by order of the captain, called on the six hundred surviving passengers to kneel while he was administering the rites of the church to the benefactor of them all. Never was a call on the piety and faith of any number of men more cheerfully obeyed. Instantaneously that mixed, nondescript crowd—Irish, English, Scotch, Welsh, Dutch—Catholic, Protestant, infidel—fell on their knees, and, if they did not pray, they paid that *outward homage* to Religion which sometimes the most indifferent and irreligious cannot resist paying her. Infidelity is a great coward, as well as a false guide. In her hour of ease and satiety, she pretends to scorn the threats and judgments of the Most High, and, like Satan in his pandemonium, to make war on Heaven; but no sooner does the roaring of the thunderbolt shake the earth, or the vast abyss open its devouring throat to swallow her unhappy victims, than she hides her head in the caves of the earth, or, flying to some secure place, abandons her votaries to the forlorn



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hope of trusting to the weakness of their own minds for resources to extricate themselves from the evils that threaten them. It was so on board the ill-fated Hottinguer. Those who, under the influence of the security offered by the prosperous sailing of the few first days, were bold, independent, and defiant of danger, no sooner did they see their comrades thrown overboard, after a few hours' sickness, than their hearts failed within them, their tone of defiance was turned into despair, their mockery of religion ceased, and that priest of God, whom they ridiculed, insulted, and despised for the first few days, was now respected, confided in, and regarded by them with sentiments bordering on religious homage.

Fervently did that priest, who thanked God that he was on hand, pray, not that God would restore him to his wife and children,—for all hope of recovery was now gone,—but that, in accordance with the anxious desire of the dying man, he should have the privilege of burial in a Christian, consecrated tomb.

“Pray, father,” said he, “that, if it be God’s holy will, I may be buried in a consecrated soil. It seems to me a sort of profanation, that the cruel fishes and those monsters of the deep, which we see leaping around the vessel, should devour my flesh, united with, and I hope sanctified now by, the flesh and blood of my Lord.”

The priest did pray, and the people joined in that impulsive prayer of faith, and that prayer was heard; for, though O’Clery breathed his last on board, and, by the captain’s orders, the sailors—poor fellows!—were standing around his berth, prepared, as soon as the last breath left him, to throw him overboard, yet he lingered for three days after; and they reached quarantine before that pure soul quitted its tenement of clay and winged its flight to heaven. The wife and her children had the body conveyed to shore and interred in the Catholic cemetery of New York, where a neat marble monument could be seen with these words inscribed:—

“Pray for the soul of Arthur O’Clery, whose body lies underneath. Requiescat in pace. Amen.”

It was thus that the O’Clerys were deprived of their good and virtuous father, and the widow of her husband; but this, as already has been partly seen, was but the beginning of their woes; for, after their arrival in New York, an individual, who, during the voyage, ingratiated himself with the family by his attention around the sick man’s bed, joined them at their lodgings. But in a few days they found him gone one morning, after their return from mass at Barclay Street Church, and with him the canvas bag, containing the thousand pounds in gold and Bank of England notes left by them in a trunk. Thus were six persons, strangers and destitute in a great city, reduced from competency to poverty at “one fell swoop” by the villany of a pretended friend and associate.



“O Lord, pity me! One misfortune never comes alone,” groaned the now poor and afflicted widow O’Clery, when she was informed by little Bridget that the “trunk was broke open,” and all the things ransacked “through and fro.”



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She soon saw that all she had was gone, and concluded that Cunningham, as he was absent from breakfast contrary to his wont, must be the thief. The police got immediate notice; advertisements were issued, and rewards offered, and in a day or two after Cunningham was arrested; but as none of the money was found on his person, and as there was no direct evidence of his guilt, the magistrate discharged him. The articles of dress in her well-supplied wardrobe were detained, in payment of her board bill, by the hotel keeper where she lodged in New York; and with the few shillings that remained in her purse, she, with her children, took passage on one of the Hudson River boats, hoping to make out certain acquaintances of her husband, whom she heard were settled in the vicinity of T——. The rest has been already told—namely, how she took sick and died after great sufferings; how her children were left destitute, and next to naked; how they were now reduced to the rank of paupers, and secured within the precincts of the county house.

“Of all the things which we brought from home with us, we have nothing of value now left, Bridget,” said Paul, “but this silver crucifix, which belonged to my grandfather. Glory be to God. Let us be glad that this has been left,” said he, kissing it with religious affection. “This is all we have now left. Let us defend it.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE COUNCIL.

Father O'Shane was now several days weather bound and laid up sick in Vermont, where, with great anxiety, he waited the first opportunity to return home to his mission; and the orphans were safely lodged in the poorhouse, where our friend Paul, to calm the anxiety and dispel the grief of his younger companions, began to contrast, with an air of satisfaction, the aspect of things here with what he had heard of the horrors of the Irish poorhouse.

“What nice men we have in America over the poorhouse,” said he; “they are very kind to us.”

“Yes; but I don't like that man with the great beard,” said Bridget; “he frightens me when I meet him. O, such a *feesage*; a robin redbreast could make her nest in it,” said she, smiling.

“He might be a nice man for all that, Bid. Most people here don't shave at all, you know, as we saw in New York. And did you notice that sailor that saved the boy who fell overboard, what a long beard he had? And he must be a brave, good man, to risk his own life to save another's.”



“Yes, Paul; but he was a Catholic, and from Ireland, too; for he made the sign of the cross on himself in Irish before he leaped out, for I was near him; and besides, I saw him going to confession to the same priest we went to the day after we landed.”

“And are not they all Catholics here, Paul?” said Patsy. “I seen crosses on three churches, the time I went with Mrs. Doherty for the priest for mother, God be good to her.”



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"No, Patsy, they are not; for if they were, there would be more than one priest for this large town; and you heard Father O'Shane say that there was only himself for all the city and a great part of the country," said Paul.

"I hope somebody will take us to mass on Sunday," said little Patrick; "and, Paul, will you ask the priest to allow me to answer mass? You know Father Doyle told us never to forget the lessons we learned of him."

"I'd know are there any nuns here," said Bridget. "O, how beautiful the convent chapel in Limerick was! I hope I have not lost my beautiful little silver medals and crucifix they gave me when I was coming away. No; here they are, and my Agnus Dei, too," she said, kissing them. "God rest mother's soul, how glad she was when I got these from the holy nuns!" And the tears streamed down her fair cheeks in floods.

"Hold your tongue, Bridget, again," said Paul, with emphasis. "Don't you know that mother told us not to grieve, but pray for her soul? And besides, in the 'Imitation of Christ,' which I read for you this morning and last night, it is said that grief kills devotion, and excessive, sorrow is a sin. You can serve mother, or rejoice her soul, by praying, but not by crying, Bridget."

"O, how can I help it? 'Tis against me will, Paul," said she, wiping her eyes.

"Always look attentively at that crucifix," said Paul, "and you need never grieve for any thing except sin. This is what Father Doyle used to say."

"O Paul, we have no father or mother now."

"Yes we have, Bridget—our Father in heaven, and the blessed virgin mother of God, our mother also," said the young preacher.

"How well the priest did not call as he said he would."

"May be he could not help it; he had to go far into the country, and the snow might stop him. You know he will find us out. The priest always visits the poorhouse in Ireland."

While this conversation was going on between the members of this poor orphan family, Paul acting the meritorious part of a comforter, (I say acting, for his own noble soul was almost crushed with grief, which he thought it better to disguise than to have his little charge rendered quite stupid and almost dead from crying and sobbing;) while this was the way Paul entertained his little charge, in another part of the poorhouse, in a well-furnished room, were seated around a table containing the "*reliquiae*" or remnants of a good dinner, five persons, engaged in earnest chat about the late importation of orphans.



“Really they are likely young ’uns, and no mistake,” said Mr. Van Stingey, wiping his mouth with the corner of the tablecloth.

“Dear me!” said a lady who formed one of the council. “Charles, if you saw them, they are perfect beauties, you would say. The oldest boy is as noble-looking a lad as ever you did see—Roman nose, raven hair, delightfully-carved mouth, and lips, and eyes, and eyelashes quite indescribable, so beautiful are they. The little girl is a perfect Venus; while the two younger children, Patrick and Eugene, are as if they came from the chisel of Powers, or some renowned artist of antiquity.”



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“Why, my love,” said Parson Burly, “you are quite classical in your description; whether or not it is a correct one, is another thing.”

“I assure you, Mr. Burly,” said Van Stingey, “that your lady has not described them beyond what is true. They are almighty fine young ’uns.”

“I want you to adopt that eldest one, Mr. Burly,” said the parson’s wife, who was president of the council. “He would make such an elegant preacher, I am sure. You must also change the name of the second boy from Patrick, which is so Irish, to Ebenezer, Zerubbabel, or some Scripture name, or even classical one.”

“Why, madam, I am beginning to get jealous, and to think you don’t sufficiently admire my powers of oratory,” said her husband.

“Well, my dear, putting aside jokes,” she solemnly remarked, “you know how much we need Irish ministers to preach to the Irish amongst us, who are the best church attenders on earth, I believe. And it is notorious, that those whom we can take out from the ranks of Papacy while young become the greatest ornaments to our denomination. Witness Kirvoin, Maclown, Moffat, and several others.”

“Well, well, my fair refuter,” said the parson, who really feared his wife would rivet her affections on the young orphan if adopted; “you know it would never do to keep that little fellow with us. How old did you say he was—about fifteen? Well, fifteen or sixteen—ya—you recollect how that old priest acted last July, at the village of Scurvy? A little girl I sent out to Brother Prim this priest smelt and hunted out; and actually broke in the room door where she was confined, and took her off by physical force to a Roman Catholic orphan house. These priests are terrible fellows; and your young fancy orphan, Paul, would soon find out the priest, and have his grievance redressed. And what is worse, this priest got Americans—ay, members of my own church—to applaud his conduct, and defend him from prosecution! The Irish are getting so powerful in this country,” said the parson, after a pause, “from their admirable union of purpose and the perfect organization of their church, that I dread their influence. In fact, ‘you catch a Tartar’ when you get one of them into your family. Ten to one, instead of converting this young Papist, he would convert our whole family to his own creed.”

“O Burly,” said the disappointed wife, “you are always a prophet of evils. I tell you, I must have that young lad, for I want him.”

“You do? Cynthia, my dear,” said the parson, “we cannot have the lad in our family. We *dare not*, without the consent of the trustees, who pay us our salary. Do you understand *that*, my fair disputant?” said he, triumphantly.

“Well, Burly, as soon as I recover the means my father willed me, I shall have that young man—already almost fully educated, as you can perceive—brought up for the church.”



“O, *then* you can try it, madam,” said the man in white neckcloth, in a sharp, sarcastic style; “but as for me, and I think my opinion is of some weight, I tell you much can never be made out of that shrewd boy.” There was a solemn, ominous silence, for a moment, in the company. “Did you remark the sort of dignified and independent motions of the fellow,” continued he, “when you had him here just now?”



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“Fellow!” said his wife, looking at her husband, in anger. “Is that a proper term to apply to the child?”

“It is not an improper or inappropriate one, not more so than calling him ‘child,’” said he. “I was just going to remark the coolness of his reply when you introduced my name as the parish clergyman. ‘A Catholic clergyman, I hope, sir,’ said he; ‘as such, I am very glad to see you.’ Did you observe how sad and demure he looked when told he was to be sent to school, where he could read the Bible, and become acquainted with the word of God?’ O sir,” said he, “much obliged to you; I have got a Bible already, and other good books of devotion, which we brought from home. I should be very glad to learn what is good,” said he; “but I trust I have got my catechism well committed to memory; and having made my first communion and been confirmed, I was discharged from class, and appointed a Sunday school teacher, by our good priest, Father Doyle.” And on my telling him that he could be a teacher here of a better religion than that of his country, he shook his head, declining the honor of the post offered, and remarking that “it was impossible to have a better religion than that which had God for its author—the Catholic religion.” With this bit he retired (ye all saw him, I need not repeat more) from our presence, a blush of mental triumph playing on his smooth cheek.”

“Sartain there was such a feelin’,” said an old gray-headed Yankee, who sat at the head of the table, and who was guardian of the establishment. “You can’t do nothin’ with these Papists,” continued he. “I have seed the attempts made time and agin, but allers fail. The very children, only five years of age, of that ere religion, refuse to eat flesh on Friday, or to disobey such other darned ceremonies of their church as they are brought up to.”

“Wal, Mr. Burly, madam, and my esteemed brother Valentine, my plan is this,” said Van Stingey: “send them, separate or in couples, here and there, into the country, and there, with the farmers, they will soon get used to our church ways, and be gradually broke in.”

“That you can’t do safe, neither, Van,” said the boss of the house, “for they would raise such a dust as would bring half the city around us; and you know the people would never consent to any thing like cruelty towards one so young and interesting as these here are.”

“You say the truth there, sir,” said the parson.

“It would be cruel to separate the dear ones,” said the wife; “wherever they are sent, let them go together. I could pledge my watch and wedding diamond ring to help to raise such beauties,” said she, passionately. “Surely they cannot be Irish, or they must belong to some race different from the Celtic half savages which we have read inhabit Ireland.”



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"You mistake, Cynthia, my dear," said the parson; "these are Irish, and genuine Celts, too, as one can tell from the hair and nose. I think, however, you exaggerate their beauty. Have you not read the European letters of Thurlow W—— and Horace G——, which described the middle and upper classes of the Irish as the most beautiful complexioned and dignified people in Europe or the world? Now, this is my mind, that you must get some farmers in a good Protestant neighborhood to adopt these children, so that they may all live in the same vicinity, if not in the same family; and by this means all unpleasant consequences will be obviated."

"I say ditto to that," said the Nestor of the council, old Valentine; "but you must lose no time, for the eldest lad told me the priest promised to call for them; and if that gentleman gets them into his hands, I'll warrant all your plans will be frustrated."

"That's just it. You have hit the nail on the head, friend Valentine," said Van Stingey. "I will take charge on them, and take them to that gentleman's house, in W—— county, who was here last week looking for a boy and a girl to raise; and *mebbe* I will scare up somewhere else for the other two young critters."

"Take 'em along, then, and see that you get your pay," said the boss, rising.

"O, never mind, leave that to me," said the vile, wily knave, as he went to see to his arrangements for carrying the orphans to parts unknown.

CHAPTER VII.

A RUDE LOVER OF NATURE.

Father O'Shane, who had suffered severely from the effects of exposure to the late violent storm, no sooner found himself a little recruited, and the roads passable, than he prepared to return to his residence in the city. He had, as conductor, a green young Irishman, lately arrived, who felt almost inspired by the unusual luxury, presented for the first time to his view, of a North American snowfall, and petitioned earnestly to accompany his reverence back to the city to enjoy the "glorious sport," as he called it, of a sleigh ride. The enthusiasm of the young native of the perennial green fields of Munster did not escape the notice of Father O'Shane, who himself was once not less enthusiastic, and now not altogether insensible, to the chaste and almost sublime beauty of Nature, when arrayed in her bridal robes of white on the advent of spring.

"Well, Murty, how do you like this manner of travelling?"

"Be gonnies, your reverence, there is nothing I like better. What a fine time it would be for tracking the hare, or hunting the fox!"

"You are fond of sport, I perceive."



“Bedad, sir, I would rather be out such a day as this, with dog and gun, than eating bread and honey. I wonder if they would put you to jail or transport you here, as they would at home, for fowling a bit in these woods?”

“No, Murty, I believe not.”



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“No,” said Murty, doubtingly. “You don’t tell me so, your reverence?”

“I tell you that there are no game laws, or only very nominal ones; so that, when you come back, if you and your dog traverse yonder mountain from top to bottom, you need not be afraid of the rifle of the gamekeeper, or of a sentence to a free passage to Van Diemen’s Land.”

“Murther! Must not they be very fine gentlemen here, to be so liberal? Signs by I shall, please God, one of these days, visit that old, grand mountain with the white head; and if there be a hare’s form in his rough sides or his curly beard, I will ferret it out, and soon have pussy by the hind legs.”

“I can see, Murty, you are growing poetical in your description of old Mount Antoine,” said the priest.

“Your reverence, did you ever see such a grand sight? I can’t help comparing that grand mountain there to the king of yon wild regions. The snow on the trees, on the summit, causes them to look like gray locks; and, looking down on the smaller mountains on every side, they appear like his subjects or his sons, which, in time, are to grow big like himself, affording shelter and refuge from the snares of the hunter to the wild animals of nature. O, how I like America!” said he, his enthusiasm still rising.

“That’s right, Murty; I am glad you do like it. Wait till summer or autumn, and then how beautiful these bleak hills will appear during these delightful seasons!”

“O sir, it is a great, grand country! No tyrants, no landlords, no poverty.”

“No poverty, Murty, except what is purely accidental, or brought on by the improvidence of individuals. In the very best regulated society there must, of necessity, be poverty less or more,” said the priest, by way of qualification.

“Every thing is free, and there is liberty for all. The very fences, you see, sir, unlike our stone walls at home, give liberty to the winds and storms to blow through them. The mountains are free to the huntsman; the very snow is free to blow and form itself into those beautiful banks, and little mountains, and castles, and stacks, and curtains, and drapery that we see on every side of us as we glide along.”

The priest listened with astonishment.

“Was there ever seen any thing so *purty*,” continued the peasant, “as those ridges and mounds of snow? I have seen the grandest buildings in Ireland,—Marlborough Street Church, in Dublin, the stone carving and ceiling in Cashel of the Kings, the stucco work on the old Parliament House in College Green,—but I think I see work in these fantastic snow banks that beats them all hollow. And—glory be to God!—all this beauty, so dazzling, so chaste, was created by a storm, when all nature was in a rage, and men

shut themselves up in houses from its violence! I am glad now," said he, "our landlord turned us out. I now forgive him for being the cause of our coming to this country of the brave and the free."



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“Was it a landlord who has been the occasion of so much enjoyment to you, Murty?” said Father O’Shane, drawing him out.

“Yes, sir. It vexes me to think of it, much more to speak of it,” said the simple youth, with a tear full created in his eye. “We, and our forefathers before us, had the farm of Lapardawn for more than three hundred years. A new landlord coming in possession of the estate, we got notice to quit, in the middle of winter. My father refused to yield the hearth of his forefathers without a struggle, and locked himself and family up. My mother was just after her confinement, and becoming short of provisions and even of water, she begged of the police who kept guard to hand her in a drink. They refused. She then begged, for God’s sake, to have a messenger go for the priest. For two days, the police refused to let any body out of the house, unless we surrendered. My father, who had cut a hole in the roof of the house to catch at rain water for my dying mother, made his escape through it. A neighbor, who handed me a drink of water through a broken pane in a window, had his hand cut off by a stroke from the police sergeant’s sabre. My poor mother died before the priest arrived. My oldest brother, seeing his mother dead, and that we had nothing now to guard, surrendered. We were all lodged in jail that night, and all our means were sold at auction. It was lucky for us we were put into jail; for, one week from that day, the landlord that was the cause of all our misery and of my mother’s death was shot dead on the road from our farm to the town of Ennis. If we were out of jail, we would all have been accused of the cruel landlord’s murder, and hanged; but we were, after one year in prison for the crime of defending our homestead, liberated, and came out in a body to America. And now I am glad of it, for two signs of tyranny I find wanting here—landlords and game laws. The absence of one allows me to trace the steps of the wild quadruped; and of the other, to trace my title to the soil which I shall possess, down to the middle of the earth and up to the sky, unfrowned on, or unawed by the landlord’s tyranny or the ‘peeler’s’ cruelty. This is partly why I like to see these mountains of snow,” said he, “for I think that neither landlords nor ‘peelers’ could exist here. They would become buried under these snow banks, for it is by night that they are generally patrolling the highways, and plotting against the peace of innocent families; and such a storm as the late one could not but be fatal to the villains.”

These and the like sentiments are those which generally pervade the bosom of the Irish emigrant after landing on this enfranchised land. Wonder not, then, you natives of this God-provided country, that the foreigner is likely to become more republican than yourselves, and that his is a keener sense of enjoyment than yours, from the evils of his antecedent life. Do not, therefore, become jealous of his purer and

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more ardent love for this republic, the inheritance of the oppressed; but, instead of envying his growing influence in this country of his choice and adoption, receive him with open arms, and make him a participator with yourselves in the good things which you and your fathers have enjoyed for ages, and your claims to which are grounded on no better title than that of the emigrant; and which title is founded on the adventitious discovery of this continent by a Catholic and a foreigner, and on oppressions undergone by your fathers in their native lands. Wonder not, then, that the Irish Catholic is the best lover of this country, and that he feels himself at home here; for his sufferings in the cause of liberty and of conscience have been such as to give him the strongest title deed to the liberties and privileges, if not to the enjoyments and comforts, of this favored land. Every prejudice is unreasonable, but none more irrational than that which would throw obstacles in the way of the gallant emigrant towards procuring a home and a sanctuary in this land of refuge and freedom.

The land is wild and uncultivated, with its womb groaning under the burden of plenty and fertility that have been dormant for ages upon ages, and that must remain so for ages to come, unless the thrifty hand of husbandry assist them into birth; and where are we to find, or when will the “nativists” be able to procure, as busy hands and stalwart arms, sufficiently numerous to bring into cultivation the millions of acres within the extent of our country, if the emigrant and foreigner are to be discouraged, and the mad clamor of the “nativists” is to prevail? It was not all native blood that was spilled in the establishment of the republic. It was not native genius alone that created the constitution, laws, and institutions of our country. It was not “natives,” of course, that first discovered, settled, or established the several states that form the grand Union. It was by emigrants, by “furriners,” that all these things were done. What, therefore, can be more ungrateful, if not more unjust, in the “nativists,” than to attempt to rob the poor emigrant of the rewards of his labor and merit, in order that they may enjoy all the fruit of the latter’s toil? This is the height of ingratitude and injustice; a far more glaring instance of both than that of the *reputed* forefathers of these “nativists” when they robbed the old Britons of their homes and of those liberties which they were *hired* to defend. What models of honesty, justice, and truth you are, most distinguished “nativists”! The foreigner built your house, after having first procured the site or the lot; they furnish the house with all useful, and necessary, and ornamental furniture; and these very emigrants are yet necessary to keep the house in order; and you come and threaten to turn them out, telling them you can now dispense with their services, and that they are “furriners”! And, what is more inconsistent and unjust still, by



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this policy of yours, if it could prevail, you would be doing the most effectual thing to annihilate yourselves, both physically, politically, morally, and socially. For, if you turned off all the “furriners,” not only would you sink in wealth and resources,—your ships unmanned, your factories unworked, your canals and railroads undug, and your battles unfought,—but your very blood would corrupt, and turn into water! Your physical stature would soon be reduced to the standard of the Aztecs; and, what is worse, following the natural channel of your Anglo-Saxon instincts, you would become a godless race of Liliputians! Yes, followers of Mormon Smith, Joe Miller, Theodore Parker, and spiritual raps. O nativists, to what an abyss your mental intoxication was hurrying you, in your blind zeal against the emigrant and the foreigner!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ORPHANS IN THEIR NEW HOME.

After the arrival in the city of the wearied missionary, his first visit was to the scene of his late visit to the dying widow; and learning all the particulars there that came under the cognizance of Mrs. Doherty, he next drove rapidly to the poorhouse, where, as we have already stated, the *pious* officials had arranged the details so as to disappoint the Popish priest of his benevolent designs, and to secure, if possible, the adhesion of the young and interesting orphans to what they called “Bible religion.”

When Father O’Shane called at the county house, he learned from an under official that the boss “*warn’t to home*; and,” said he, “the children hadn’t been here mor’n a few hours, when a highly-respec’able farmer had taken them with him to bring up.” He couldn’t “tell nothin’ about who the farmer was, or where he was from; but the children wor well done for, that’s all.” It was in vain the priest represented that the children were no paupers, but of highly-respectable connections, who were able and willing to provide for them. He didn’t “know nothin’ about that; but he knowed papers were signed, (as he was directed falsely to assert,) and that sartain the children could not now be claimed by any persons except their parents. They were now under the care of guardians.” After repeated visits, continued for weeks and months, to the same establishment, Father O’Shane could gain no more satisfactory knowledge of the fate of the orphans. He was obliged to relinquish his search in despair, concluding that the children were kidnapped, and that, except by God’s mercy, their faith and morals were doomed, under the influence of cold, contradictory infidelity or heresy. He mentioned the case to his congregation, earnestly soliciting their prayers for these poor orphans of Christ; and he oftentimes offered the holy sacrifice, to enlist the influence of heaven in their regard.



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Let it not be said we exaggerate this account of the conduct of the poorhouse officials; and from the improbability of such an instance of injustice and cruelty happening in our day, let not our readers conclude that such a case, and many such cases, happened not in times gone by. Then the Irish Catholic population of the state was not much more than what that of one county is now. Then an Irish Catholic could not get the office of constable or bailiff; now we have Catholic cabinet ministers, judges, senators, legislators, and aldermen.

Then the ballot box was surrounded but by a few Irish naturalized citizens, and these not of such importance as to influence the election of a constable or poormaster; now the Irish adopted citizen, by the power he exercises in his vote, is solicited by candidates, from a town officer to the president; and whoever would attempt to reenact the kidnapping of Van Stingey, and many other officials of his class, in their days of petty power, would be sure to be compelled to retire forever from public life, and pass into the gloom and infamy of his depraved private circle. There were many exposures and wailings of the children of Israel on the waters of the river of Egypt, before Moses; and there was many an instance of the kidnapping of Irish Catholic children from their parents, or natural guardians, by the jealous Pharaohs of sectarianism, before the attempt made by Mr. Van Stingey to kidnap Paul O'Clery and his brethren.

In their new home, however, up to this time, Paul and his little charge were well treated, as far as meat and clothing were concerned. Even in regard to religion, and the devotional exercises prescribed by its precepts, there was no obstacle thrown in their way; although the fidelity of Paul and his sister Bridget to their morning and night prayers was quite astonishing to their patrons. A few indirect, covert attacks were all that, for many months, it was thought prudent they should have to encounter from the family, named Prying, with whom they staid. The truth was, that Paul, the eldest of the children, was such a smart, watchful, prudent young lad, his younger brothers and sister were so accustomed to obey him, and he exercised such emphatic authority over them, that it was the advice of the most prudent of the preachers who interested themselves in his case, to let him alone for the present. The change intended to be brought about was to be left to time, conversation, and the influence of common school education to accomplish. His education, in Ireland, was principally religious and classical, rather than commercial; and he was just now acquiring, in his present trying noviceship, what was precisely wanting to his previous course. He and his brothers, who lived in the next farmer's house, together with Bridget, his sister, who was under the same roof with himself, obstinately refused to attend the Sunday school, the meeting house, or to join in the prayer with which



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school was daily opened. Hence they were more than once publicly prayed for by the fanatical Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Mr. Gulmore, at whose church the Prying family attended. There was a sufficiency of prayers now “put up,” in Mr. Gulmore’s opinion, to begin the work of more practical conversion. Accordingly, a “big dinner” was prepared, a turkey cooked, and Friday fixed upon—the appetite being chosen, after a very ancient pattern in paradise, as the channel through which to “open the eyes” of these blind young Papists! Some neighboring ministers were of opinion that it was too soon to begin; but they were but Methodist, Universalist, and other preachers, who were jealous of the influence and of the salary of Mr. Gulmore, and who, besides, did not think it exactly fair that all the children should be converted to Presbyterianism, while there were a dozen as good denominations around, “and better too.” But the good-salaried disciple of John Calvin had no respect for such opinion; so “forthwith the good work must begin,” as he authoritatively said. He should not be trifled with any longer, or have it said that, after all the prayers “put up,” and pains taken, “they should still be left wallowing in the mire of Popery.”

“It should not be! It could not be! The power of the Lord must be made manifest. He could not any longer allow the light to remain under a bushel. It should shine, and he should then and there convert those obstinate young things to vital religion.”

“Some turkey, Paul, my dear?” said Gulmore, after having first served the ladies and senior members of the family.

“Not any, sir, thank you,” said Paul.

“Not any!” repeated the parson, frowning. “Why so? That’s not good manners, my lad.”

“If it be not, I am sorry, sir,” said Paul. “I cannot be expected to be very polite, or to know the usages of this country, as yet. So I beg to be excused.”

“You should not refuse the gifts of God when offered you,” replied *his reverence*.

“But I do not think it would be good for me to use these gifts of God in the present instance.”

“You must eat meat, Paul, and use the good things of our glorious country, or you will fail and die.”

“I know I will die,” said Paul; “and I guess eating turkey won’t make me immortal.”

A loud laugh followed this remark from all but the parson and a female member of the family. This “raised his dander a *leetle*,” as old uncle Jacob afterwards used to say.



“That is more unmannerly still, Paul,” said the parson.

“You think you are smart; but I tell you, child, you are ignorant, and impudent to boot.”

“I should be sorry to make a saucy or impudent answer to any body, much more to a clergyman of any church; but I thought you were aware that it is counted very insulting to Catholics to offer them meat on Fridays, as if they were apostates who would sell their souls for a 'mess of pottage;' and I thought you were aware that we are Catholics, and that our religion forbids us to eat flesh on Friday.”



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“I know, sir, the Romish faith forbids her votaries the use of meat; but, Paul, I thought you were now thoroughly weaned from such notions, from what you have seen since you came to this free and Protestant country.”

“All I have seen since I was unfortunately compelled to come to these parts, only confirms me in my attachment to the religion of our ancestors,” said Paul.

“My child, I love you,” said the parson, seeing he had been committed by his temper, and now changing his air of haughtiness into that of affected kindness; “I love you in my soul, and that is why I want to teach you to know Jesus, and to cause you to give up the fooleries of Popery. What can be more foolish than to abstain from what God has given for man’s use?”

“I hope I appreciate that *love*, sir,” said Paul; “but if you wish not to insult me, and if you do not want to cause me to doubt the sincerity of your love, you won’t call any prescription of the church of Christ foolish. The Scriptures tell us that we may lawfully and meritoriously abstain from many good and useful gifts of God—as Samson abstained from wine; St. John the Baptist from flesh and the luxury of apparel; St. Paul fasted and chastised his body; the Jews were commanded to abstain from the use of pork and other meats. Finally, our Savior promises to reward those publicly who will fast or abstain from food.”

“Ah, poor, lost, ignorant one,” exclaimed the parson, “you are in error; sunk in superstition!”

“I hope your assertions do not prove me so.”

“Paul, child, don’t you speak so to the minister,” interrupted old Mrs. Prying. “He is for your good, and desires to make you a Christian.”

“Ma’am, I don’t wish to insult any body, as I said before; but I can’t hear my religion run down and misrepresented while I know the contrary to be the fact.”

“Well, madam, let me alone; I will soon catch the lad in his own Jesuit net. Paul, you *know* the Bible, you think; where in the Bible do you find it ordered to fast from flesh on Fridays?”

“Where in the Bible,” said Paul, “do you find it ordered to keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday, the Sabbath? where are you ordered to build churches? where do you find authority for establishing feasts and fasts? where to hold synods or assemblies? where to baptize infants?”

“O Paul, the Bible does not order these things expressly; but the Christian church does.”



“Well,” said Paul, “it is only our church that forbids her children the use of flesh on Friday; and 'he that does not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.”

“But you ought not to obey the church in what is evidently wrong; and it must be wrong to forbid the use of meat made for man’s use.”

“If it was wrong, God would not have forbidden the Jews the use of meat that we now use as a gift of God.”

“That was in the old law. You cannot find any such prohibition in the gospel.”



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“I can. In the Acts of the Apostles, xv. 29, the use of blood and strangled meat is forbidden. Besides, our Lord fasted forty days from the use of all the good gifts of God in the shape of food. The Israelites fasted from flesh in the desert, and were terribly punished for asking for it; over seventy thousand of them having died as a punishment for their carnal desires.”

“Paul, I fear the Lord has deserted thee,” said this ignorant hypocrite, when he saw himself refuted by this young boy. “Don’t we read from the mouth of truth itself, that ‘what entereth into the mouth defileth not’?”

“I think I heard the teetotal lecturer on the road there say that a glass of brandy defiled a man; and I am sure a quart or two of it would cause a man to sin, and thus defile him. And as the apple in the garden defiled Eve, not by its nature, but by reason of the prohibition of God, so the meat on Friday does not defile of itself, but by reason of the prohibition of the church.”

“You should not obey the church, Paul, in all these things. It is slavery the most vile, so it is.”

“Is it slavery in one to obey his parents in what is good and useful?”

“No.”

“Well, then, the church is my mother; and when she prohibits an indifferent thing, I, as a good child, am bound to obey her, particularly when I have the promise of Christ that she can never err—that ‘the gates of hell can never prevail against her.’ We have an instance in this very county,” said Paul, now warming into the argument, “of the effects of a prohibitory law. A few years ago it was no harm to fish for pickerel in the lakes and brooks of this county; but some of the people petitioned the legislature, and got a law passed forbidding the fishing for such fish for twenty years; and now, whoever is detected in violating the law is fined or imprisoned. So it was no sin to eat meat on Friday; but the church, for wise reasons, and to encourage mortification, has forbidden its use; and so now, after the prohibition, just as after the passage of the law in regard to fishing, whoever knowingly violates the law disobeys the church; and he who disobeys the church, or his parents, offends God, and will be punished by imprisonment, death, or eternal condemnation.”

“That boy will never do any good, and is a dangerous viper in a family,” said the parson, abruptly rising, and taking his hat.

“Well done, my young paddy,” said uncle Jacob, as he saw the dominie retire; “you have beaten the minister holler. Ha! ha! ha! I am really glad you silenced his gab, for he is ‘tarnally blabbing about his religion; though I think he hain’t much of it himself, except counterfeit stuff, like a bad bill,—ha! ha!—that he wants to pass.”



“I hope he is not angry,” said Paul, timidly.

“Pshaw! And who cares, Paul? Let him cool, if he is mad, the darned fool,” said uncle Jacob. “I am glad to have the house shet of him.”



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Paul and uncle Jacob, with whom he was of late becoming a great favorite, retired for the evening to the latter's bed room, where Paul was accustomed to read aloud for him out of his Catholic books of instruction.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRYING FAMILY.

The farms of the brothers Prying were situated in a beautiful valley. On the one side were the Vermont snow-crowned and cloud-capped mountains, rising up like eternal ramparts against all eastern hostile incursions of the elements. On the other, or the western side, were the pleasant hills of York State, which, in contrast with the mountains of Vermont, looked like so many tumuli of the deceased Indian giants of ages gone by. In the centre between, in a southerly course, ran a clear, silver brook, well stocked with an abundance of trout and other species of the finny tribe. On both sides of this stream were situated the extensive farms of the Pryings. They had abundance of woods from the elevated extremes on either side. The rivulet constituted a cooling retreat for cattle in summer, and in spring afforded an abundant source of irrigation to the rich meadows on both sides.

Ephraim's family, where Paul and Bridget remained, consisted of Mrs. Prying, Amanda, the senior daughter, Melinda, and Mary, called after her grandmother, who was Irish. There were besides, Calvin, Wesley, Cassius, and Cyrus, younger members of the family, together with old uncle Jacob, an unmarried brother of Ephraim, the head of this family. We may as well here remark that Mr. Prying was, from the beginning, averse to receive these orphans into his house, seeing, as he said, "that he wanted no more such hands as they were;" but Amanda persuaded him, in order to have the glory of being instrumental in the conversion of the "interesting orphans," as they were called.

There were frequent friendly contentions in the family to see who would have the special care of the new comers. Little Mary insisted on having Bridget to sleep with herself instead of her sister Melinda, whom she wanted to dispossess. Wesley, Calvin, and Cassius wanted to monopolize Paul, especially on Sundays, when each of them were about to separate for their respective meetings to hear the preacher.

"Father," said Calvin, "won't Paul come with me? Our minister, Mr. Gulmore, is such a clever preacher, and our Sunday school the best and the largest."

"I say he shan't, now, Calvin," replied Wesley. "Your minister, the old feller, is nothing, compared with ours, Mr. Barker."



“Well, brothers,” said Cassius, “I don’t see the use of your jawing about it. But I say Paul had better come to our meeting—the very name, Universalist, signifying the same with Catholic, as I was telling Paul yesterday, while a-fishing, and as our minister said.”

“Well, boys,” said uncle Jacob, laughing, “my advice to you is; to see first whether Paul is willing to go with any of ye to yer meetings. I think his mind is made up to stay at home, like myself.”



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Amanda now stepped forward to inform this conference that Paul had been spoiled by their example; that he cried when told he must go to meeting; and that it was better now not to urge the matter further. In future, she intended to instruct Paul and Bridget herself; and she was resolved to cut off all intercourse between them and the younger members of the family.

Our readers are aware that Amanda was the Miss Prying, a child of her father by a former marriage; and besides this, she was an old maid. In addition to the foregoing circumstances, she became pious, attended camp meetings, donation parties, and *quilting matches* at young ministers' houses, who were just preparing to get a *rib*. And though she was praised as the best needle lady in the town, her epistles on love to young preachers were the most admirable mixture of classical and biblical composition that could be found. Though she had a good pair of hands at making pies, puddings, and other culinary preparations, though she was praised, flattered, and admired, yet nobody ever yet went beyond this. All was admiration, praise, flattery, no more. Again: Amanda, though a strict old school Presbyterian, in order to exhibit her liberality and prove that she had no objection to a partner from any of the other countless sects of Protestantism, be he Baptist, Methodist, or Unitarian—in order to prove her liberality, she attended the donations of the six ministers of her village, and each of the dominies received from her a neatly-worked handkerchief for pulpit use. Yet, though she was at once liberal and strict, pious and politic; though she induced one Sally Dwyer to join her church and declare she “got the change of heart;” though she was eternally working and planning to bring others to her way of thinking, and had some success in her proselyting efforts,—she never could, with all her art, biblical lore, and policy, succeed in causing any body to say, “I take thee, Amanda, to my wedded wife.” This was the chief point; and here is just where she failed. What was the cause of it? She was not too old—not near so old as Miss Longface, whom the youthful parson Barker lately wedded. “And besides,” said she, in a soliloquy, “when I was young, it was just the same bad luck. Is it that men are less numerous than ladies? There might be something in that, for she had seen it stated in their newspaper, ‘The Home Journal,’ that female births exceeded that of males by forty thousand annually in certain European kingdoms. The number of Popish priests also,” she said, “who remain unmarried, adds greatly to the superfluity of the female sex. Hence there is no part of the wicked Popish system I regard so much contrary to God’s holy word as celibacy. Celibacy!” she cried aloud; “one of the doctrines of devils, as any one can tell, who has been these twenty years in search of a mate, and could never yet find one! O horrid thought!” She had consulted the famous fortune

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teller at the state fair of Vermont, and, after having paid that “seer of future events” a fee of ten dollars, she found his prediction was false. For she was told she would be married within two years, and to a neighboring minister; but now it was twenty-six months since, and the only single minister around lately got married to Miss Longface, a very ignorant and unamiable person. But there was no taste, or judgment, or discernment nowadays in men, as this fact clearly proved. “Thunderation on them!” said she, in a rage.

Such were the ideas that were passing through the brain of Amanda one Sunday morning, as she lounged on the sofa of her sitting room, when, upon her looking out towards the lawn in front, she perceived Paul and Bridget kneeling by a seat, at the foot of a large wild plum tree that stood at the end of the green plot in front of the house, and that had its branches bent within a few feet of the ground by the embraces of a rich grape vine that for years had grown around it and impeded its development. For a few moments she watched the movements of the orphans as they smote their breasts at the “Confiteor,” or bowed their heads at the “Sanctus,” accompanying the priests who, they knew, in thousands of churches, were engaged in offering sacrifice to God; and reading the “Prayers at Mass” out of the Key of Heaven manual of devotion.

Instead of admiring this sincerity of devotion, or giving thanks to God for the grace of fidelity and piety that his mercy had vouchsafed to these children of grace, Amanda, as if she could not endure the sight of such happiness, or mortified at the miscarriage of her vain attempts to rob these innocent hearts of the treasure of true faith and piety which they possessed, still pale with rage in consequence of her ruminations about her own misfortune, the ill-tempered old maid there and then resolved to try another and a severer plan to effect her purpose of proselytism.

“Confound yer impudence, ye little Popish paupers!” she said to herself. “I shall soon make ye give up these superstitious practices. Paul, Paul, dear,” she said, tapping at the window, “come in out of that, come in Bridget, ye little fools; the sun will spoil yer features, cover ye with tan.”

“Yes, miss, in a few minutes; we are just finishing,” said Paul.

Ever since Paul came to this house, in obedience to the advice of his mother, as well as in accordance with the prescriptions of the excellent religious education he received at home in the diocesan seminary, he always read the “Prayers at Mass,” accompanied by his sister Bridget, first; and after having read them with her at home, he went across the brook to Reuben Prying’s, where his brothers lived, and taking them into the fields, or to the barn if the weather did not answer, he read for them the same devotions, causing them to answer “Amen” after the end of each prayer, and reading to them a chapter of the catechism for committal to memory.

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And to do justice to Reuben, whose wife was a southern lady, there was no obstacle thrown in the way of the children to prevent them from discharging their duties to their religion. On the contrary, the fidelity of Paul, and his watchfulness over the faith and morals of his younger brothers Patrick and Eugene, commanded the highest approbation of Mrs. Reuben Prying. And such was her horror of any thing like the domestic tyranny or intolerance of Amanda, that Mrs. Reuben always allowed the two young lads to say their own prayers in private, notwithstanding the advice of the ministers to the contrary. The only times that Pat and Eugene were ever asked into the parlor to pray was on some rare occasions, when Mrs. Reuben, through a laudable curiosity, and to serve as an example to her own children, caused the orphans to say their prayers aloud before retiring to bed. The two little fellows, one five and the other eight years of age, joining their hands before their breasts, repeated the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, the General Confession, the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the Prayer of the Angel Guardian and Patron Saint, and Prayers for the Dead: these they repeated aloud, and correctly, to the astonishment of the other children and the edification of the mistress.

"Ah, Reub, Ben, and Will," she said, "when will you be such good boys as Patsy and Geny? You can't say the Lord's Prayer yet."

"I can tell," said Reub, blushing, "more than Pat can. I know how old Mathusalem was, who was the wife of Abraham, and who was the mother of Solomon, and the wife of Putiphar."

"I don't know how to say so many prayers," said Ben, contemptuously; "but I can tell how many cents in ten dollars, how many states in the Union, and how large England is."

"I can sing a hymn," said Will, "which I heard in the choir in the Methodist meeting house when I went there with cousin."

"Let us hear you, Will," said his mother.

"Mother, I have only a little of it," said Will.

"Say all you remember," said she, "and sing it."

"The ladies first said, ma," said he, commencing,—

'O for a man—O for a man—O for a mansion in the skies.'

"The men answered,—



'Send down sal—send down sal—
Send down salvation to our souls.'

At this specimen of ludicrous poetical composition the mother burst out a-laughing, in which she was joined by the two arch Irish lads; and Will, discouraged, blushed and stopped.

"I would rather not have any prayer than have that foolish hymn," said Ben. "O Will! O, you goose!"

"Silence, boys!" said Mrs. Prying. "Pat and Eugene, can you not sing? Come, let us hear how you can sing. Commence. Don't be ashamed."

"Will we sing, ma'am, what the Christian brothers taught us?"

"Yes, Pat, any thing; don't be shy," said the lady. The lads began thus, with joined hands and uplifted eyes:—



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“Ave Maria! hear the prayer
Of thy poor helpless child!
Beneath thy sweet maternal care
Preserve me undefiled.

“Ave Maria! do I sigh
In deep affliction’s hour.
Nor to a suppliant heart deny
Thy mediative power.

“Ave Maria! for to thee,
Whom God was pleased to choose
The mother of his Son to be,
No prayer will he refuse.

“Ave Maria! then implore
One only grace for me—
This heart to give forevermore
To God alone and thee.”

“To bed, children, with you all,” said the good lady, covering her face with her handkerchief, for the tears started from their source in her noble soul on hearing this delightful hymn sung by the poor orphans, whose countenances looked like those of angels’ while chanting it. “God forgive those,” she said to herself, in a half-audible tone, “that would rob these poor children of that divine religion that teaches her children such heavenly hymns.”

This incident recalled to her mind vividly the days of her girlhood, when, in the “sunny south,” she heard Catholic hymns sung and Catholic devotion practised in the convent where she, though a Protestant, received her education. And probably her conscience, too, reproached her for the neglect of the good resolutions she formed while there.

CHAPTER X.

A RAY OF HOPE.

Many times during what we shall call his captivity within the gates of the strangers Paul had contrived to write letters to Father O’Shane in the city of T——, as well as to his uncle in Ireland; but from some cause or other, to his innocent mind inexplicable, the letters never reached their destination, nor were they ever after heard of. The postmaster of S——, not generally supposed to be a very exact man, particularly when remitting money in letters for farmers’ boys to their Irish friends in eastern or western parts, was ever ready to oblige, and with hearty good will entered into the views of,



Parson Gulmore, when he called on him, according to the advice of Amanda, “to have Paul’s letters seen to.” And never mind they were “seen to” and secured.

This disgraceful proceeding, so disreputable to all concerned, and so characteristic of the fidelity with which the business of “Uncle Sam” is managed, was not confined to the detention and destruction of the poor orphan’s letters, but to the piracy of their contents too.

There is no department of the public service in the United States so badly managed as the post-office department. Not only do robber postmasters continue in office after their exposure and their plunder of money letters, but they can be bribed to convey the epistles of individuals to interested parties, who would come at their secrets; and thus the most sacred and secret concerns of life are liable to exposure,



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and to be sold for gain. We knew a postmaster who for years continued to rob with impunity the letters that were deposited in his “den of thieves;” and when he was exposed and disgraced through the instrumentality of the writer of this tale, whole bushels of letters, directed to Ireland by poor emigrants to their fathers, wives, and sons, were found thrown aside in a nook of his office; the sole motive for this scandalous robbery being the plunder of the twenty-four cents paid on the letters to free them to Europe.

Sadly did the mysterious miscarriage of his letters puzzle the ingenuous heart of poor Paul; though he had reason to suspect, from certain hints thrown out by Amanda, that she, somehow or other, was in possession of their contents. On a certain day, however, a circumstance convinced Paul that he could not now expect an answer from his letters to Father O’Shane; for Miss Amanda had just pointed out to him a paragraph in the newspaper stating that the Catholic priest of T—— had died of ship fever, taken by him in the discharge of his duties among the sick of his flock.

“God rest his soul,” said Paul, raising his eyes to heaven; “he was a good friend to us in our hour of need.”

“What’s that you say, Paul?” said Amanda, with a frown. “Did I not tell you repeatedly, Paul, that it was useless to pray for the dead?”

“I know *you told* me that often, ’Mandy; but am I bound to believe you, when I know the church teaches me the contrary? In fact, the Bible says it is ‘a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.’” (Mac. xii. 42.)

“Don’t you call me ’Mandy, Paul,” said the vain old maid; “my name is Miss A-man-day.”

“A-man-a-day,” said Paul, with a sarcastic smile. “I beg pardon,” said he, “miss; I must guard against that blunder in future, and say *A-man-a-day*.”

“Ah, you naughty boy!” she said, catching him by the hand. “Come here to me till I teach you the knowledge of God’s word. Now, Paul, that passage you quoted I do not find in my Bible.”

“No,” said Paul, “for your Bible is no other than an imperfect, mutilated Bible, corrupted by the men who made your religion. The Catholic church, from which the Protestants stole their piecemeal Bible, always regarded the book of Machabeus as the inspired word of God.”

“But, Paul, it is so foolish, this ‘half-way house.’”



“Then, miss, you must blame God, who created it, for the folly of his not consulting with some Protestant philosopher before he created such a ‘half way.’ For most certainly there was always, since the dawn of creation, a third place; as, for example, the place where the souls of the just were confined before Christ, who was the first to ascend into heaven, as himself says in his gospel. Now, the Bible does not say that this half way was ‘foolish,’ or abolished either. Besides, it is but reasonable that there should be a place to purify the frail and imperfect soul before admitting her to God’s holy presence.”



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"Where the tree falleth, there it lieth," said she.

"Yes, fallen," said Paul, "it lieth there till it is taken away to another place. Where the soul falleth,—that is, whether in a state of grace or in sin,—there it will lie forever; but those who go to purgatory die in a state of grace, and so their eternal destiny is heaven—like those just souls who died before Christ; yet they are not fit for heaven immediately, for 'nothing defiled can enter therein.'"

"You wrote to the priest, didn't you, to say masses for your mother's soul in purgatory? How do you know she is there?" said Amanda, unguardedly.

"I hope she is in no worse place," said Paul, the fire kindling in his dark Celtic eye; "and whether in heaven or in hell,—which God forbid!—the mass can do no harm, but tend to the honor and glory of God, and I hope procure me and the celebrant merit. But, Amanda, how do you know that I wrote any such request to the priest? I know you are above reading my letters, though I should leave them open under your eye; but I am afraid that hypocritical-looking postmaster may have kept my letters, and given them to somebody. In Ireland, that crime deserved hanging as a punishment; and I do not know what I would do to any body I would detect in opening my letters, and pilfering my secrets," said he, raising himself up.

"O, my dear Paul," said the old maid, perceiving her imprudence, "I only guessed at the contents of your letters. We Yankees are great at guessing, you know. Be silent; shut up, my good fellow," she added, going over to the window. "What crowd is that there below on the road?"

An unusual sight in that part of the country now presented itself to view. Slowly moving along the road was a crowd of men and women—the men, as they came up, taking off their hats, and the women courtesying, in that way that only Catholics can courtesy, to a young gentleman, who, seated in a one-horse carriage, the top lowered down, seemed to be engaged, as he was, in earnest conversation about some subject of an absorbing interest to those around him. In truth, any body, even Amanda, who never saw one, could have guessed that this personage, surrounded by so many of the Irish railroad laborers lately settled in the vicinity, was no other than the Catholic priest. Paul's eye, so lately kindled into passion from the hints dropped by Amanda about the foul play regarding his letters, became immediately subdued into composure, and, taking out a small miniature reliquary and silver crucifix which he ever wore on his breast, he pressed them to his lips, saying to himself, "Glory be to God; and Mary, his virgin mother, be ever blessed. I see the priest, if he is alive." And instantly he was over the fence and on the road.

"There is one of 'em," said Mrs. Murphy, "your reverence; and it would be a charity to do something for the poor children, for they were well reared."



Paul could not, owing to the tears that rushed on him in floods, dare for some time to join the crowd to offer his respects to the representative of religion; and it was a full quarter of an hour before he could say, "Welcome to these parts, your reverence."



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"Thank you, my child," said the priest, reaching him his hand.

"Forgive me, sir," said the poor youth; "I can't but weep, 'tis so long since I saw a priest or heard mass."

There was not a dry eye in the crowd as the young lad clung to the priest's hand, embracing it, and crying aloud, "O my uncle! my uncle!"

"Take him into the shanty and calm him a little," said the stalwart missionary. "Poor little fellow! poor child! poor child!"

"O, God help the orphan!" said Mrs. Murphy again, fearing she had not touched his reverence's heart. "It would be the charity of God to do something for them. The men would be all willing to subscribe."

"We will do all we can," said his reverence. "God will provide for them, if they be what you represent. Meet me here to-morrow, at six o'clock. We will have mass and confessions here in the shanty, as we could procure no better place. Give word around through the entire neighborhood. Good by for the present," said he, moving along towards the village of S——.

"God speed your reverence," answered a hundred voices, as they returned the adieu.

This was the first night since the death of his beloved mother, and that was over two years, that the slightest ray of hope penetrated the burdened but confiding soul of Paul. For himself he did not much care. He could have escaped any day, and repudiated the iniquitous contract by which the villanous poormaster had sold him and his brethren; but what was to become of his younger sister and brothers? He knew how to plough, mow, cradle, and farm it, as well as any body of his age. He knew how to read, count, write, and even defend his religion, against all opponents, as he did last winter at the Lyceum; but what was to become of Bridget, Patrick, and little Eugene, who had yet many years to serve? This was what puzzled him. But now the priest had come for the first time to this remote region, and *he* knew what to do, and would not desert the orphan, for no priest ever had done so. He felt there was to be now a change, and he felt assured that it would be for his good. "Thank God," said he, "I saw the priest at last. I return thee thanks, my God, and thee, my mother in heaven, now my only mother, and I thank all the heavenly citizens and all heaven, for this dawn of hope that I feel in my soul. O Lord, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Fervent and pious were the prayers offered to God on this night by Paul, as he thanked him for having seen one in whom he could confide as a friend, as well as because he was preparing to go to his religious duties on the morrow. Let it not be said that it was superstition in Paul to thank God so fervently for having permitted him once more to converse with his priest. What can be imagined a more worthy cause for thanksgiving



than the meeting with a true friend? What better gift can we receive from God than a friend? And who ever, in need, has failed to find the good priest a friend in all emergencies?



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CHAPTER XI.

VAN STINGEY AGAIN.—HOW HE GETS RICH AND ENDS.

After a year or two in office, our friend Van Stingey found Fortune rather adverse to him, a thing not unusual with the worshippers of that fickle goddess; for not only was he put out of office by the influence of the “furren” vote thrown against him, but his farther promotion even in the church became almost problematical. His was now a rather unpleasant situation. He was not only defeated at the ballot box by the “Irish element,” according as Mrs. Doherty foretold, but he was in disgrace with many of his regular church-going brethren. This latter trial was caused by the well-known fact that a negro girl, who was put under this *religious* man’s care by the abolitionists, and who was now two years in his family, had just given birth to a young mulatto child in his house. Yes, and worse; the miserable yellow thing not only was born, and in health, under the roof of this *religious teacher*, but he was mortified to find that it had his very nose on its face, and could not by any possibility be fathered on any body else. Thus were the prospects of this pious gentleman blasted in one day. He got religion, but now it failed him. He was of the true nativist stamp in politics; but here again his defeat was signal and complete, and all through the suffrages of foreigners.

What was he to do for a living? He must give up religion and politics, and take to some other pursuit. Loafing or living on his neighbors was now impossible, as he was in disgrace with many; and besides, he had a wife and family to support. Peddling was so common, that nothing could now be made in that line; and besides, it took some capital to start with—a thing that was out of the question in our ex-official’s case.

The only chance now open for him was the railroad, and to the railroads he said he would betake himself as soon as he could. On the railroad he saw men of little talent, of less honesty, and of no capital, amass not only a competency, but wealth, in a few years; and our official was very anxious to try his luck in that line of business. Accordingly, when the Northern Railroad was about to be let, Van Stingey, in company with four others, put in their estimate, which was the very lowest, and they thus succeeded in getting ten miles of the road. The partners of Van Stingey were one Purse, one Mr. Kitchins, one Timens, generally called Blind Bill, one Whinny, together with Mr. Lofin, an Irishman. They had the job now, but had neither horses, carts, shovels, nor any of the various implements necessary to carry on the work. A council was held among these five worthies to see what was to be done. They had neither money, nor means, nor credit to begin with, and how were they to fulfil their contract? Most of them were novices in this sort of business; but there was Mr. P. Lofin, whose experience was something, and who suggested a plan which could not but succeed, if his advice was followed. The plan was, that they should advertise for three thousand men and several hundred horses, and on the strength of their advertisements, and their

certificate of having obtained such a respectable contract, try to borrow some provisions on three months' credit.



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In a few days, the public places of the cities of T—— and A—— were posted up with large placards, and advertisements were inserted in all the daily papers, which read thus:—

WANTED.

Three thousand men to work on the Northern Railroad at one dollar a day of twelve hours. Men who wish to work extra time will receive extra wages.

Wanted, also, six hundred horses to hire, at three dollars a day for every team, on the same work.

P. LOFIN,
VAN STINGEY,
KITCHINS, & CO.

In a few days, not only did the three thousand men make their appearance, but twice that number were now located on the site of the proposed line. But how were so many men to live? There was some delay in proceeding with the works, and Van Stingey and Co., having represented themselves as very independent and wealthy contractors, said that, as they did not like to be hard on the men, they would give them free sites for their shanties, which the men could afterwards have without the necessity of having to pay so much a month for their use, as was the custom with other but less honorable contractors than Van Stingey, Purse, Lofin, & Co.

This bait took “capitally,” as Van used to say, and not only were two hundred shanties built, but the praise of the “ginerous contractors” was in every mouth; and “Hurrah for Lofin, Van Stingey, & Co.,” became a regular toast among the men, as they went to spend a shilling in the company’s grocery store. The shanties were now up, and the horses, three hundred in number, all ready for work; but a week, and another, and a third passed on, and not a sod of ground was broke on the ten miles of our independent company’s contract. Here was now a sad and alarming spectacle. Thousands of men, women, and children, seduced into a wilderness by the specious promises of these vile knaves; and now, after having spent every penny they had earned for years, brought to the very verge of starvation. Some were obliged to trade off and sell their clothes for food; others had to open small retail groceries to keep themselves and their neighbors from starving. The more independent in circumstances were obliged to mortgage their horses and carts for provisions and fodder; and all had, as far as their means went, to patronize the new store opened by the contractors, who retailed provisions and groceries, to those who had any thing to lose, at a profit of one hundred and a quarter per cent. on their original cost. For three months this was the state of things on the contract of our *honorable* company. Works not yet commenced, men and horses half starving, occasional murmurs among the most knowing of the hands—which murmurs



were, however, soon allayed by the representations of the bosses and their countryman Mr. Lofin, who pledged *his honor* as a “gintleman that the whault lied intirely with the directors, and the *faurmuns*, who refused to settle for the right



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uv way.” The mystery was soon cleared up by the appearance on the ground of Messrs. Van Stingey, Lofin, & Whinny, with fifteen constables, who laid an injunction on all the shanties, and quietly, revolver in hand, drove off the three hundred horses to the county town, to secure those contractors in their pay for the debt into which they brought all those men whom they got to deal in their store, or who had any property. This is the way thousands of men were deceived, betrayed, and robbed of all they possessed in the wide world. And this is the way in which Messrs. Van Stingey, Timens, Kitchins, Whinny, & Lofin supplied themselves with horses, carts, shanties, and all other necessaries for carrying on the work according to agreement. The plan had so far succeeded; the only question now was, how to deprive these poor men of all legal redress, and have them exterminated from the neighborhood. This was not difficult to effect with poor men who were half starved, and who had to look out for work somewhere else for the support of their families. Those men who had the means left had quitted this cursed ground already, and Mr. P. Lofin struck on an expedient by which others, the more bold, were soon compelled to follow them. He proceeded some eighty or a hundred miles into the State of Massachusetts, where he represented to several hundred men from the part of Ireland to which himself belonged, which was Connaught, that several of their countrymen were driven off and ill treated by Munster men and *far-downs*, and that now they had not only a chance of defending the *honor* of the *province*, but, by driving off their *far-up* and *far-down* enemies, they could have a year’s job, and a dollar a day.

This was enough; one thousand men immediately started for the scene of action, breathing vengeance against their fellow-countrymen, and determined on establishing the “anshint ghilory of Connaught.” Every unfortunate Munster or Ulster man they met on their route was knocked down, and left senseless on the road; and shouts of victory were heard, and shots were fired, in anticipation of the triumph that awaited them. Lofin, the head mover in all these disgraceful scenes, now drove off to the capital of the state; and—will it be believed?—this vile, low wretch, who could neither read nor write, succeeded in getting the loan of *one thousand muskets* out of the state arsenal to enable him to carry out his murderous and swindling scheme! A few days previous to this, Lofin got some few boards on his work set fire to, in order to have a case made out for the authorities, and by this means, and through the influence of political wirepullers, he succeeded in getting the arms of the state placed in the hands of his ignorant dupes, for the murder of their plundered countrymen. During these troublesome times, the house of Father Ugo, the priest of these parts, was literally besieged with weeping women and enraged men, stating their grievances, and asking for advice and counsel; for they had no other friend.



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“Surely,” said his reverence to one Hannohan, whose eight horses were seized, and who had used some violence in defending his property, “surely the law will not sanction such barefaced plunder. I am witness myself of the cruelty to which many of you have been subjected by these villanous contractors. I know the decision of the law will be in your favor.”

“Law!” said poor Hannohan. “God help us if we have to look to *law* for justice; go to law with Old Nick, and the court held in the low countries! Besides, we are going to be attacked and butchered in our beds by night. You know Mr. Lofin’s men are all up and armed every night, firing rounds, and shouting till our wives and children are almost scared to death.”

“What can I do?” said the priest. “You know I have been censured before for interfering when some of the men were on a strike for higher wages; and I can’t expect to have any influence with such men as you have to deal with. They are a lawless and hardened set of knaves.”

“God help us, then, your reverence,” said Hannohan; “I and my family may as well go into the poorhouse or starve, if you can’t influence that Mr. Lofin, who is a Catholic, to let me have my eight horses and carts, for I owe him not one single cent.”

“He may call himself a Catholic, Mike,” said Father Ugo; “but he cannot be a Catholic, or even a believer in God’s justice, if he is guilty of all those villanies which are laid to his charge. It would be no use for me to speak to such an abandoned scoundrel and robber as, by all accounts, he is.”

Poor Hannohan got the benefit of law, which resulted in his losing his eight horses and carts: a warrant was issued for his capture, for threatening the robbers of his property with chastisement. He was taken in a few days, and lodged in prison, where he died in a fortnight of the injuries inflicted on him by the drunken constables, who succeeded in arresting him after a two days’ chase through the woods. No doubt *the good Catholic*, Mr. Lofin, rested quiet when he heard of the death of this formidable opponent. And I suppose, by way of appeasing the public indignation,—for I do not think he had any dread of the anger of Heaven,—his name appeared, a few days after, at the head of a list of subscriptions for the support of an orphanage in the city. And well he might spend a little of his profits in *charitable* objects, for he and his partners had, by the late manoeuvre got up under Lofin’s auspices, saved not less than five thousand nine hundred dollars’ worth of property in horses, carts, harness, and shanties! We have heard of robbers in Italy and Spain, who, after they rob and murder the rich, are very *liberal* to the poor, although, like your railroad-contract robber the poor Italian brigand has not the chance of having his name published in the newspapers, or read out from the pulpit, as a good, charitable, and humane gentleman. Of the two charities, I think that of the obscure brigand is the most worthy and laudable.

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One Sunday evening, as Father Ugo was returning from service in the country, where he officiated every two weeks, he came up with a large and enraged crowd of people on both sides of the road on which he travelled. On one side of the way about one hundred carts were placed in a line, so as to form a rampart and protect some two hundred men, who, with loaded muskets, crouched behind the carts as if watching for an object to fire at. An occasional shot was fired from this rampart, and the volley was returned slowly but deliberately from an old house in front, on which this large body of men were making an assault. While the priest stood at a distance, looking on at this horrid contest, he was perceived by the people in the house, who at once despatched a messenger to inform his reverence of the danger they were in, assailed by so many men resolved on their extermination. At no small risk, leaving the messenger in charge of his horse, he entered between the ranks of the combatants, and, with crucifix in hand uplifted, he implored the assailants, in the name of Christ, to desist from their cruel warfare, and take some other means and time than the Lord's day for getting possession of that old house about which the contention arose. By a great deal of difficulty, and after a speech of an hour, he succeeded in quelling this cruel and disgraceful riot, and before he left the ground he had all the arms secured in one pile, and conveyed to an adjacent farmer's house for security.

After this the work went on peacefully. Van Stingey & Co. made money, and were now rich; the poor priest had every thing but the thanks of the contractors for his pains, and he concluded, from his experience of this and other railroads and public works in America, that, of all the men living, the railroad and day laborer of this "free country" is the most ill treated and oppressed. He has to work from dark to dark; he has to take *store pay* for his wages; and he has to obey the nod, look, and arbitrary commands of the lowest, cruellest, and most brutal class of men on earth. I ask any man, Is not this slavery? Van Stingey was now rich—had horses, wagons, and a splendid mansion. He took another, and a third contract, in which he was very successful. One day, however, he was on his work, and a blast having failed to go off, Van ordered his men to return to the dump. They refused. He stamped and swore, and then and there discharged all the "darned paddies," who were not fools enough to get killed. So himself and his nephew, who bossed for him, returned to the "cut," where they were no sooner arrived than the blast went off, and poor Van Stingey was blown into atoms.



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Thus perished, at the height of his success and of his guilt, the meanest and most worthless of the human race—the mocker and robber of the poor, the persecutor and kidnapper of Paul O’Clery and his brethren, the merciless swindler and defrauder of the laborer’s wages, and, finally, the hypocritical sensualist and drunkard. We boast of our progress, and advertise, as proof of it, the number of railroads in operation, their extent, and the rapidity of the motion over their iron surface; but the trials, tears, labors, sufferings, and injustice which our indifference or avarice has inflicted on those thousands of our fellow-creatures whose hands have built them never occur to our minds or cause us a single regret, while glorying in the advancement of our “great country.” “How can we help *that?*” answers Uncle Sam. “It is the contractors that are unjust and cruel, and the men themselves that are not ‘wide awake enough’ in allowing themselves to be so imposed upon.”

The whole fault is yours, “Uncle,” and lies at the doors of the people, who, having the power to protect the laborer by law, neglect to exercise that power, and, by this their neglect of duty, create your Van Stingeys, your Lofins, your Blind Bill Timenses, your Whinnys, and other villains, who are a disgrace to our country, and whose crimes, encouraged by our silence and tolerance, will ultimately bring the vengeance of Heaven on us and our children. *Quod avertat Deus.*

It has been remarked by some, that if the tears shed by emigrants on the bosom and on the banks of the great Father of Waters, the Mississippi, were preserved in a great reservoir, they would form a lake many fathoms in depth and many miles in circumference. With less exaggeration can it be stated, if the number of men killed, murdered, and otherwise cut off, on the railroads of the Union, by the ill treatment, neglect, cruelty, avarice, and malice of contractors, storekeepers, overseers, and bosses,—if all these men’s dead bodies were placed within three feet of one another, or even side by side, they would cover, from end to end, the ten thousand miles of railroad that are within the United States. And if the tears shed on the Mississippi would make a lake the size of the Lakes of Killarney, the tears shed on the railroads would form a body of salt, burning water, as great in bulk as Lakes Superior and Ontario together. If there be any irresponsible, cruel, barbarous despotism on earth, in savage or civilized life, it is emphatically in the discipline that prevails on the railroad *regime*. There is no man daring enough to speak a word in favor of the cruelly-oppressed railroad man, except an odd priest here and there; and even he has often to do it at the risk of having a revolver presented at him, or having his character maligned by the slanders of the moneyed ruffians whose crimes and excesses he may feel it his duty to reprimand. Father Ugo was not the man to wink at the cruel treatment to which, in the part of the railroad that ran through his mission, his poor fellow-men and fellow-Christians were submitted; and he had, consequently, often to experience no small share of the malice, and a *tolerable* share of outrage, in the shape of threats and insulting language, from our independent company, Lofin, Van Stingey, Whinny, & Co.



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CHAPTER XII.

MASS IN A SHANTY.

There was great bustle and preparation in the valley of R—— Creek, on Ascension Thursday. Hired men were up at *three* o'clock that morning to do "chores," and hired girls were busy the night before in arranging the household, so that the female *bosses* of the several farm-houses would be able to find all things in order. Many and violent also were the arguments that passed between Catholic servants and their heretical masters and mistresses, on one hand to ignore, and on the other to assert, the right to worship according to one's conscience. Yes, to their shame be it told, the Protestant sects in America, as they do in all countries where they have sway or are tolerated, practically deny that article of the federal constitution that guarantees the right to every citizen to worship God according to the dictates of conscience or individual judgment. With the word *liberty* ever on their lips, like the lion's skin on the ass, to deceive, the sects, great and small, from the Church of England down, down, down to the Mormons or Transcendentalists, through the grades of Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, all play the tyrant in their own way. All act the despot, and would exercise spiritual tyranny, if in their power. For proof of this, the history of the "Blue Laws" in the land of the Pilgrims is only to be consulted on this side of the Atlantic; and at the other side, modern as well as by-gone records show, that, wherever Protestantism had the power, *there* the few were oppressed by the many. Every sovereign, from Elizabeth down to Victoria, acted the tyrant over the Catholics; and in Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, and the Protestant Swiss cantons, persecution is now a part of the laws of these several states. Persecution is not sanctioned by the laws of the United States, if we except the prescriptive code of New Hampshire, which comes under that genus; but if it be not legalized, we are not to thank Protestantism for that. Wherever it has sway in the family, in the town council, or the assembly, there the cloven foot of intolerance and persecution is seen from under the sanctimonious gown it puts on. Indeed, although the compulsion of the conscience is not enforced by State laws, it is attempted, as far as practicable, where its effects are more galling, and its existence more intolerable,—namely, in the family at home, or in the camp or barrack abroad. Catholic servants are not only denied the right to attend their duties in many families, but actually forced to hear the disgusting ranting or ludicrous prayer of any impostor who may take on himself the office of preacher. And Catholic soldiers are punished by fine and severe corporal chastisements for refusing to attend the service of an heretical chaplain. And no senator, zealous for liberty, raises his voice on behalf of the Catholic soldier, and of the Catholic servant

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girl, while they are exposed to a persecution such as no Catholic government, king, or despot ever attempted to force on the consciences of their dissenting subjects, not even Queen Mary, of England, excepted; for the so-called persecution by Catholic princes has never been to compel men to adopt a new religion. Protestants in Europe and here attempt to compel the adoption of their false tenets by those who are neither desirous nor willing to adopt them, and who already profess a true religion. This is what makes a vast difference between the persecution your “Madias” suffer, and this ten times worse persecution which many an otherwise honest and kind-hearted American farmer allows to take place in his family. The Day of Judgment alone will reveal to light what trials, crosses, and real persecution Catholic servant men and women have to endure in remote and country places from the bigotry, hypocrisy, and cruelty of ignorant, unfeeling farmers and their wives, goaded on, no doubt, and urged, by low, base, and brutal parsons, who have scarcely enough to eat, and who envy the priest the comparative independence which the liberality and true Catholic charity of his flock enable him to maintain.

By these remarks I am not to be understood as saying that good-nature, justice, and even generosity, do not govern the conduct of the American people. I am aware of their kindness, hospitality, and philanthropy; but these fine traits of character are obscured, perverted, and rendered abortive, whenever the demon of sectarian influence touches them with her black rod. And, like the Jews, while they are persecuting the Holy One of God in his humble members, they think they are doing a service to God. Such is the effect of the poison, in the shape of religious instruction, infused into the minds of this noble people by the lying and ignorant teachers that they allow to instruct them. The American people are generally so busy, so intent in making a fortune or a livelihood, that they have not time, as they cannot have the inclination, to pay much attention to religious training. Hence it is in the science of the soul and salvation, as in that of medical science, the number of impostors and quacks is infinite.

The following dialogue between an Irish Catholic servant and her *evangelical* mistress will serve faintly to illustrate what is the weekly, if not daily, recurrence in tens of thousands of families all over this “free country”:

“You can’t go, that’s the amount of it, Anne,” said Mrs. Warren to an Irish Catholic servant maid of hers, who heard of the priest’s being at the shanties on this morning.

“Why so, ma’am?” said Anne. “All the girls of the country around are allowed to go; but I never get a Sunday or holy day to myself. It is too bad.”

“Why don’t you come with us to our meeting, where all the decent folks go, and none of your Irish are present?”

“Many decent folks go to ‘Old Harry!’” cried Anne, in anger. “Is that the reason I must go too?”



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“Anne, your obstinacy in refusing to join our family worship has made me resolve not to let you go to hear the old priest. And your refusal to attend to the sermon of our preacher, Mr. Scullion, has also displeased me much. I mean to punish you according.”

“Why should I go hear the old sinner’s stuff,” said Anne, “when your own sons laugh at him and say he is a fool? Besides, I am told he is ever abusing the Catholics, and I heartily despise his nonsensical, lying cant.”

“Well, Anne, I am determined to punish you for it,” calmly replied the mistress. “So you can’t see the priest to-day. That settles it.”

“I beg your pardon, ma’am; the priest I will see, please God, let what will happen.”

“You must leave this house, then.”

“Small loss, madam. America is wide, thank God!” answered Anne.

“Don’t you know Mr. Scullion is a brother of mine?”

“I don’t care, ma’am, if he was your father. I know he is ignorant or malicious, either one or the other, or maybe both, or he would not speak of the Catholic Church as he does. Oh, dear,” she cried, bursting into tears of anger, “what a ‘free country’ it is! The Protestants in Ireland were decent. They came, attended by the peelers, to their tenants, telling them they must conform to the will of the landlord, or quit their homes; but here ye say all religions are equal, and yet ye try to compel us to go to listen to low, ignorant preachers, who know they are lying about the Church of Christ. Ye want us to change the religion of St. Patrick and of the martyrs for such ridiculous churches as ye have here. Oh, dear! oh, dear!” said the poor girl, as she contrasted her present situation with what it was when she was at home at her father’s, where she heard Mass daily, and knew not what it was to suffer persecution for conscience’ sake.

While scenes such as we have here described were taking place in the farmers’ houses, and such scenes are not occasional nor unusual, all was busy preparation at the shanties. The largest shanty in the “patch” was cleared of all sorts of lumber. Forms, chairs, tables, pots, flour and beef barrels, molasses casks, and other necessary stores were all put outside doors. The walls, if so we can call them, of the shanty, were then hung round with newspapers, white linen tablecloths, and other choice tapestry, while a good large shawl, spread in front of the altar, served as a carpet on which his reverence was to kneel and stand while officiating. Green boughs were cut in a neighboring wood lot and planted around the entrance by the men, while around the altar and over it were wreaths of wild flowers and blossoms, gathered by the little girls of the “patch” in the adjacent meadows, in order to prepare a decent place for the holy Mass. At an early hour the priest made his appearance, and was very much pleased to see the transformation which the piety of these poor, hard-working people wrought



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in the appearance of the humble shanty. For fifteen miles along the line the crowds were gathering, and the works were suspended for the day. The overseers and contractors, to do them justice, had no objection to this occasional interruption of their profits. At all events, they knew it was a holy day; and even they, with all their irresponsible control over their men, had ample proof that, even in the wild deserts and savage woods of America, the Irish Catholic “remembers” the Sabbaths and festivals of his God or his Church.

Long before the hour of Mass, the shanty was crowded, and many were the comments and remarks made on the physical powers and other external accomplishments of the new priest.

Some remarked that his reverence,—God bless him!—need not be afraid of travelling alone through these lonesome glens, for it would require “a good man to handle him; that it would.”

“That’s thue,” said another; “he would be able to ‘settle bread’ on a half-dozen Yankees any day; that is, provided they did not use any weapon but the arm that God gave ’em.”

“But you know,” said a third, “these Yankees always carry a *rewolver* or two in their pockets, the treacherous rogues. Look how they killed that Irish peddler, and robbed him, and fired six shots into Michael Gasty’s house the other night, and he in bed quietly sleeping.”

This and other such narratives and comments were the order of the day outside the door, only where those who were careless or not preparing for their duties were congregated. Inside, a large crowd of women and rough-fisted men gathered around the door of the temporary confessional, and it was near noon before the priest ascended the temporary altar to offer up the “victim of peace” for the assembled sons of toil. Upon his reverence asking if there was anybody to answer or serve Mass, several presented themselves; but he accepted the services of Paul, because he had been accustomed from his childhood to wait round the altar, and he was the most intelligent of those who offered to assist the priest while celebrating.

The substance of the priest’s discourse was, that they should not forget that it was God’s will that the holy sacrifice should be offered in “every place, from the rising to the setting of the sun,” and that probably they were made the instruments which he made use of for the *literal* fulfilment of that famous prophecy; for if they were not here employed on these public works, probably the holy sacrifice would not be, for years and years to come, offered up in such places as this. That they should all regard themselves as missionaries engaged in God’s service to spread the knowledge of the true religion in this virgin soil among a people who had lost the true mode of God’s

worship, though a generous and successful race of men. That they should guard against drunkenness and faction fights, for these crimes brought their proper punishment

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both here and hereafter; and that they should, by pure morals and fidelity to their religion, rather than by controversy or disputation, make a favorable impression on, and confute the errors of, those opponents of their faith among whom their lot was cast. In fine, that they should lose no opportunity of receiving the sacraments, for, without their use, salvation was very difficult, if not absolutely impossible. Let them not regret the loss of this day, or think it too much to dedicate it to God's service: that was the chief end for which they were created. When population was small, and a livelihood easily obtained, and men had to work but little, God had appointed one day in the week to rest and service. Now, when the cares, distractions, and labors of life had increased a thousandfold, it seemed not too much if, instead of one day, two or more days were devoted to rest and worship. And if the Church had her way unrestricted, she, by her festivals and holy days, would do a great deal towards alleviating the present hardships of labor, and men would be taught to be content with a competency, and employers would treat their men with kindness and justice combined.

"You, poor fellows, have to work hard, frequently for years, without having a chance to frequent the sacraments. Thank God, then, and be grateful for this opportunity, and spend this day as becometh Christians. You are exposed to dangers from accidents, and frequently from the influence of evil-advising men. In Religion and her resources alone you can find the only safeguard against the effects of the former, and the best security against the wiles of your enemies: keep the commandments, and hear the Church."

On this day no less than ninety-five received, and the effects of this one visit even were felt by the overseers and employers of these men for months to come. Even Anne Council, the girl whom we introduced as disputing with her ignorant mistress about "the freedom of worship,"—and which dispute was then decided in Anne's favor by the interference of the boss, who remonstrated with his wife on her imprudence in resolving to discharge her maid in the midst of their hurry, while there was no chance of having her place supplied,—even Anne, brought to a better sense by the advice of the priest administered in confession, when she came home asked her saucy mistress's pardon for speaking back to her this morning.

"I forgive you, Anne," she said; "though I am sure there is not a *lady* in the hollow that would put up with your impudence but myself."

"I know I am hot," answered Anne, smothering her anger at this second provocation in being called *impudent*. "The priest told us to be obedient to those even who are not amiable nor kind; to serve them for God's sake, as a punishment for our sins."

"Now," said Mr. Warren to his wife, "you see Anne has rather improved by her visit to the priest, which you thought to prevent. Were you and I to be *at her* for six months, we



could not get her to acknowledge as much as she now has. The fact is, I am certain those much-abused priests are far ahead of our dominies in knowledge of religion and human nature. It is impossible otherwise to account for the influence they exercise over the ungovernable Irish race, and over those millions whom they instruct and rule.”



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"It's all priestcraft," said his wife.

"I don't know, Sarah, what craft it is, but I wish our ministers learned a little of the same craft; for they are fast losing all influence over the minds of the people, and especially over that of the youth. That we can all see."

"That's because people are daily getting worse," said this female philosopher.

"Worse! Then whose fault is it that they are? What have we ministers for, but to prevent this state of things? There are six of them in the small village of S——, and it can't be beat in the Union for blacklegs and rowdies. Would we have so many wild, irreligious young men, and women, too, if, instead of six preachers, we had six Catholic priests? I would like to see one of your young ones show such signs of a superior mind and training, such manliness and fortitude, as that Irish Catholic lad, Paul, down at Prying's. They have had all the ministers within fifty miles of you to convert him, but they could no more move him than they could Mount Antoine. In fact, he beat them all to pieces in Scripture and argument. Take no more pains about religion, wife," said the honest Yankee; "let Anne alone. I won't have her disturbed any more on the subject. If there be any religion on earth, those very people have it whom you want to bring round to the exact pattern of your favorite minister's manner of doubting. It's ridiculous, wife," said he, rising, and calling his men to the fields; "it's ridiculous to try to convert these Catholics, who appear to have some religion, to the countless systems of NO RELIGION that are so numerous on all sides around us. I say it's ridiculous," said he, departing.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TEMPTER AT THE WOMAN.

It was arranged among the Pryings and their advisers, one day in August, that, as Amanda said Paul was an incorrigible young man, he should be sent off to the State fair of Vermont, and, in the meantime, a certain "true blue" Presbyterian minister, named Grinoble, should try his hand at converting Paul's little sister Bridget. It was, some thought, wrong to begin with Paul, as all experience, but especially scriptural testimony, taught that temptation was more likely to succeed when woman was the subject or the instrument. So thought Parson Grinoble; and, with true serpent wisdom, he concluded that it was through the woman, the weaker sex, that, in this instance, Popery was to be conquered. Besides, this old hand at proselytism read somewhat of the epistles of St. Paul, and read there of the success of his predecessors in unbelief in seducing "silly women," and ensnaring their confiding souls within the meshes of their wily nets. So thought Mr. Grinoble, and he began to act on it on the day in question, by going into the kitchen and addressing himself to Bridget, as she was peeling apples for cooking, in the following manner:

“Come here, my dear, and shake hands,” said his dominieship to the girl.



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She walked over shyly, holding the knife in one hand, and stretching forward for the other.

“Sit down here beside me, on the settle, my dear.”

“I must do what 'Mandy ordered me, sir,” she said, excusingly.

“Oh, don't you fear Amanda,” he said; “I will be your security, my little woman, that she won't be displeased. Dear me, what nice hair and purty curls you have! and such beautiful teeth! Don't you think Miss Amanda is jealous of your charms? eh? Why do you turn away your head, my pet?”

“I don't like such talk, sir,” she answered. “My Prayer Book, in the 'Table of Sins,' says it is a sin to listen to praise or flattery.”

“Well said, my little lady,” said the tempter. “You are right, Bridget; I was only trying you. I do not wish you to sin. You know I am the minister. I love you, and wish to see you a good Christian,” said he, caressing her.

“I thank you, sir,” was her answer.

“Now, my little good one, I want to tell you some news. I have a message for you,—a letter from a friend.”

“Please show it, sir,” she said, impatiently; “perhaps it is from my uncle, in Ireland, to whom Paul often wrote, but never got an answer back.”

“No, my dear, it is from your father,” said the tempter.

“My father is dead, sir,” she quickly rejoined. “It can't be from him, anyhow, God rest his soul.”

“It is from your Father in heaven,—behold it!” said he, in a dramatic accent, and pulling out of his breast-pocket a small octodecimo Bible.

“Queer letter carrier, and purty heavy letter,” grinned a young fellow, who was sitting by, waiting for the return of the boss to employ him.

“Christ sent you this by me,” said the dominie, presenting the Bible. “It will teach you the knowledge of the Lord, and the true spirit of his gospel.”

“Never knew before that the Lord kept a post-office,” said the young Celt; “but I'm sure he never sent the like of you to be letter-carrier,—too slow, too stupid, entirely, entirely; and not very honest, maybe.”



"I am not addressing you, sir," said the parson, gruffly. "How do you like that, Bridget?" said he, plying his arts.

"It is very nicely bound, sir," said she; "but I dare not take it without acquainting my brother Paul."

"Now, my little favorite," said the representative of the serpent, "if your uncle at home left you all his property, would you not like to be able to read the *will*, or would you wait for Paul's leave to read a document by which you inherited so much wealth?"

"Perhaps not, sir," she answered, "particularly if he did not forbid me to do so."

"Very well, this is the will, the testament of God to all men, to me, to you. Now, Bridget, learn this will, read it, study its contents, without consent of priest or brother. Don't you see how proper this advice is?" said he, thinking he had her little reasoning powers conquered.



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“Yes, old fellow,” said the young man at the table; “but if that will was disputed, which would you do,—submit it to an able lawyer, or go into court yourself without advice or counsel? You surely would fee a lawyer, if money or property was at stake. Well, you ‘omadawn,” said our young stranger, “don’t you see that, though that Bible is the will, the devil, and his small heretical attorneys—Luther, Calvin, Wesley—dispute the will, and the Church is the able advocate, and judge, too, that will conquer the devil, and put to shame his agents, and secure the stake, which is heaven, and the salvation of the soul? Let the child alone,” said he, boldly, “as you see she doesn’t want your biblical pills, or, ‘be the tinker that mended *Fion-vic Couls’ pot,*’ I will turn you out of doors, if I were to hang for it after. Let the child alone this minute,” said he, firmly.

“Who are you, sir?” said the indignant parson, turning to view his antagonist. “How dare you interrupt me when I am not addressing you?”

“I am an Irishman and a Catholic,” said he; “and furthermore, if you wish to know my name, it is, sir, Murty O’Dwyer, Tipperary man and all.”

The reader will recollect the rollicking young attendant who drove Father O’Shane in the snowdrifts from Vermont, a specimen of whose oratory we have given in a preceding chapter. The antagonist of Parson Grinoble was no other than the same young man. He had rambled up to this neighborhood in search of work, and hearing that Mr. Prying was in need of a hay hand, he waited his return from the Vermont State fair.

The minister Grinoble returned to the parlor to report progress to Amanda, and to represent the controversial rencontre which he had with O’Dwyer, while Murty learned with wonder and indignation from Bridget, that they were the children which cost Father O’Shane so much vain search, and that they were kept in continual annoyance by all sorts of male and female religious quacks and mountebanks, all bent on the work of perversion. “Oh, thunder and age!” said he; “and ye are widow O’Clery’s children, God rest her soul! What a murthur Father O’Shane could not find ye out before he died! The Lord have mercy on him.”

“We have heard he died,” said Bridget. “Is it long since, sir?”

“Almost two years. He published ye in the *Boston Pilot*, and all the newspapers. He even offered a reward for yer discovery. Oh, *mille murther!* what a pity I did not know ye were so near home!”

“I suppose uncle wrote to him, and sent us money to take us home again?” added pensive Bridget.

“Money!” said the disinterested young man; “what money? I would give all I earned since I came to this queer country myself to have ye found out. We all thought ye were



lost, drowned, or killed on the railroad cars. I am glad I have found ye out; ye will have to leave right off. I will take ye away myself to-morrow.”



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“Oh, no, sir!” said Bridget; “we can’t leave this till our time is served out or our board paid,—two dollars a week for nearly three years. The priest, not long since, came here to see if he could get my brother and me off, but they told him they would not let us go. And besides that, they insulted his reverence by telling him, if he dared to come to try to kidnap us, they would tar and feather, or shoot him, the Lord save us.”

“I wish to God I was present,” said Murty; “I would settle bread on some of them; that I would, and no mistake,” said he, bringing his clenched fist down on the table, “if I heard them insult the minister of Christ in any shape or form. Oh, America! America!” said he, in an undervoice, “I am deceived in you. I thought you were a second paradise, where all was peace, and comfort, and justice, and prosperity, and true liberty. But alas! I find all my ideas of your character erroneous and false. All the crimes of the old world are not only here, where we thought the very soil was virgin pure and unstained, but here in the most odious forms. The poor at home were naked, and hungry, and ground; but most of them were *innocent*, and *an innocent man is not entirely miserable*. The poor here, besides their poverty and wretched slavery, working eighteen out of the twenty-four hours, are almost all wicked in addition. The crimes in the old country, that aristocratic institutions kept up in the inaccessible palaces of the rich,—like the panther’s den on the summit of yonder mountain,—here are familiar to the lowest and vulgarest of the populace. In the old country, the few and the rich were unjust, cruel, wicked; it was so in Ireland. Here the vices of the few are ingrafted on the many, and, like the small-pox, they do not become weaker, but stronger, by universal propagation. I wish I never saw you, America,” said he, musing, his head resting against the wall; “I wish I was in the grave with my two sisters and mother, rather than here to witness the slavery, corruption, and vice of America.” The remainder of his musings were lost in the sighs and emotions that proceeded from his manly bosom.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FRUITS OF THE CROSS.

Paul was now a free man, the term of apprenticeship having expired. It was his right now, according to the terms of the implied contract, not only to receive support and clothing, but wages; and Mr. Prying was very willing to keep him in the house and give him a man’s wages; but this conflicted with Amanda’s plan and that of her advisers; consequently, Paul was reluctantly obliged to part with the society of his sister Bridget, who had yet a part of her term to serve, and to look out among the neighboring farmers for a situation. This he soon found in a gentleman’s family named Clarke, who was very glad to receive such a modest and intelligent young man into his family. This Mr. Clarke was not a farmer by profession, but

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a lawyer, and editor of a daily journal in the capital of Vermont, and only spent a few days in the summer and fall with his family at the farm. Paul's chief occupation was to attend young Master Clarke in his sports of fishing, fowling, and riding on horseback. The duties of his present situation afforded Paul not only time and leisure to keep up his accustomed religious exercises, but, in addition, he was able to revise what he had previously studied, and to add considerably to his stock of useful knowledge. The equal terms and familiarity in which he stood in his relation with his young employer afforded him an opportunity of revising Virgil, Sallust, Lucian, and other classical authors, the use of which he was so long obliged to discontinue.

Mr. Clarke was delighted when he learned from his son that Paul knew Greek and Latin much better than his former teacher in the academy. And this information he knew to be correct, from the fact that he found his son had learned more during vacation, in company with Paul, than he did during the whole year before in college. He therefore advanced Paul's wages by one-third, and prolonged his son's stay in the country beyond the usual period. This generous and kind-hearted man was also sensibly affected when Paul, at his request, related how he came to know Latin; how he was nephew of the grand vicar of Kil——; how he had spent five years in college; how his father was obliged to emigrate with his family; how he had died on the voyage; how they were robbed of a thousand pounds; how his mother sunk under her trials; how he and his brethren were kidnapped out hither; how the priest of T—— had advertised for them; and how, "I suppose," said he, "they gave us up in despair; thinking, probably, that we were lost in some of the late steamboat disasters; but here we are yet, thank God!"

Mr. Clarke, with the instinct of a true-hearted Yankee, immediately saw into the snare laid for the faith of the young orphans; and he thanked his God mentally that he had come to the knowledge of these facts, for he was the man to expose and reprobate such foul play. "I now well remember, Paul," said he, "the advertisements respecting you and your brothers and sister. I shall see to this business, I promise you. In the meantime, be you and Joe good friends. Don't spend too much time at fishing and gunning, but study a good deal. Good-by, Joe, my son. Good-by, Paul. I shall soon return again to see you."

Paul took every favorable opportunity to visit his sister and brothers, to console and strengthen them against the temptations to which he knew they were exposed.

"Now, Patsy, my boy," he said to the elder of his younger brothers, "every time you look at that cross—show it to me—have you lost it?"

"No, sir-ee; I never put it off my neck since mother put it on," said Patrick, pulling it out of his bosom.



“Every time you look at that crucifix,” continued Paul, “think how our Lord God Himself suffered; how, when he was a boy like you, he was good, obeyed his parents, and was subject to them. Now, you have no parents here but one, the Catholic Church; and if you obey not her counsels and precepts, you will not be rewarded by Christ, whose image you wear around your neck. Say the Six Precepts of the Church for me, Pat.”



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“First. I am the Lord thy God—”

“Oh, Pat, you are saying the ten commandments of God. Your little brother Eugene can say *them*. I examined you in these before.”

“Oh, I forgot. 1st. To hear Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. 2d. To fast and abstain on the days commanded. 3d. To confess our sins at least once a year. 4th. To receive communion at Easter. 5th. To contribute to the support of our pastors. 6th. Not to solemnize marriage within forbidden degrees, nor clandestinely.”

“The first precept, Patrick, we cannot keep here, as we are not near the church. But the second, ‘to abstain on the days commanded,’ we can keep. Do you ever eat meat on Friday, Pat?”

“Never but once, through mistake,” said Pat. “I thought it was Thursday. Mr. Prying is always wanting me to eat it every day, and so was a gentleman whom he called the *priest*,—sure he is not a right priest, is he, Paul?”

“Not at all, Pat; he is only a Protestant minister.”

“A minister!” said Pat, in astonishment. “Why did they call him a priest? He wanted me and Eugene to eat meat on Friday; but I said I could not, it would make me sick. Then Mrs. Prying told him to let me be; that she could not allow any interference with our religion; and since that, the minister never returned to our house, or nobody said a word about it. I think she is very good. She often cries when she hears me and Eugene speaking of father and mother, God rest their souls! Paul,” said Pat, introducing a new subject, “ain’t there a hell to punish the wicked, as well as a heaven to reward the good?”

“Certainly, Pat; does not the Catechism say so?”

“Yes, but yesterday, Cassius Prying tried to persuade me that there was no hell. He said all would go to heaven, in the end. I told him it was no such thing. He said the minister said so.”

“Oh, Patrick, my boy, beware of Cassius; you must not listen to his talk, for it is wicked. God tells us there is a hell, and we must believe all he teaches us by his church and his word, or we will be condemned to hell forever.”

“Oh, the Lord save us! I won’t hear to Cassius no more.”

“That’s a good boy, Patsy; mind to watch Eugene, and make him do as you do. We will all soon be going home to uncle’s, please God.”

“How soon, Paul? I am tired of being in ‘Merica.”



“Very soon, please God. Good-by, and be good: learn this, the eighth chapter of the Catechism, next.”

“I will, Paul, with God’s help.”

This is the way Paul, our hero, took care of the responsibility God had thrown on his tender shoulders at the age of fifteen. Never did missionary or priest labor, by prayer, and prudence, and anxiety, to save souls to Christ, as Paul did to save his brothers. He was to them the true Joseph, who not only kept their bodies from starving, but preserved their souls from a worse than Egyptian captivity. And not only did his exertions produce the desired effect on the immediate objects of his solicitude, but God added as the reward of his zeal other souls, “not of this fold.”



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Old uncle Jacob was all but disconsolate at the loss of Paul. He was his bed-fellow for years, and every night and morning was witness of his piety and punctuality in prayer. And although poor uncle Jacob himself had long since learned to doubt of all forms of faith, he could not be indifferent to the example set him by Paul's steady devotion. The poor old man, besides, led a very innocent life, and the grace of God had few obstacles to contend with in its influx into his empty but innocent soul. He was often heard to say in presence of even Mr. Gulmore, the minister, and Amanda, who might be called the female parson, that, if any religion was worth having, it was that one which made Paul so victorious in his arguments, and so pure and pious in his conduct. "That was the young one," said uncle, his voice trembling with feeling, for he loved Paul as a son, "that was the child that deserved to be called one; that knowed what he owed to God, and man too."

"He was as cunning as a fox, and as full of the spirit of Popery as an egg is of meat," said Mr. Grinoble bitterly.

"I know him to be as innocent as a dove," said uncle Jacob, warmly, "and believe him to be as full of the Spirit of God as Samuel was in the temple. There, now."

"Then, uncle Jacob, I see you are beginning to believe in the Bible," sarcastically added the parson. "I am glad to find your mind inclined in that way. I hope you will soon get religion and the change of heart."

"I hope and pray to the Lord," said the old man, in a voice little removed from that of one in tears, "to change my heart, and give me religion, as I now believe there is such a thing on earth. But, Mr. Grinoble, your hard and cruel religion, I trust, shall never be mine. God forbid! *It* will never change my heart."

"Uncle, don't you talk that way," said Amanda. "This is very unpleasant. Take no notice of him, sir," said she, addressing the parson, who appeared to be disconcerted at this pointed attack of uncle Jacob.

"Amanda, I will talk so, I must talk so," said poor uncle, rising. "How can ye reconcile it to religion, to justice, or to charity, the snares and plots laid by you, miss, in company with those *men of God*, to rob that poor child Paul, and his little sister and brothers, of their ancient, noble, and holy religion? Fie, fie, fie! Is it such conduct you call religion? It is the very reverse. It resembled more the conduct of the serpent in paradise, than that of the meek disciples of Jesus Christ. It was more like the religious profession of Herod, to get the Child at Bethlehem into his clutches, than anything else we read of, your conduct was. There is more Bible for you, Mr. Grinoble," said he, slamming the door after him, and retiring to his room.

"'Tis not much use attempting to convert such an old hardened sinner," said Grinoble, smothering his mortification at the rebuff of uncle Jacob.



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“That Paul has ruined him,” said Amanda. “I would not be a bit surprised if he died a Papist yet.”

“Sure you would not let the Popish priest visit him, on any account?” said the tolerant parson.

“I fear pa would, for you know uncle Jacob left him this farm, and more than half what he possesses in money and stock. Come, tea is ready.”

Poor uncle Prying, as we have said already, was the senior brother of Ephraim and Reuben Prying, and was now about seventy-two years of age. During the last twenty years of his life he labored under a slight asthmatic affection, which lately increased in violence, and, joined with a disease of the liver, which physicians said he suffered from, now seriously endangered his life. Since he was eighteen years old, Mr. Jacob Prying never went inside a meeting-house or professed any religion; a conclusion which he partly was drove to by the hypocrisy of a certain minister in his neighborhood, who wanted to have Mr. Jacob married to a daughter of his, who, two days before the marriage, he found out, accidentally, had been seduced by an ex-senator in Boston. This piece of deception on the part of the religious teacher, and the treachery of the *maid* herself, so disgusted Jacob Prying, that he registered a vow in heaven that he never again would allow himself to become the victim of hypocrisy or of female dissimulation. The parsons, all round, because he was proof against their transparent baits, to fill their meeting-houses, cried him down as an infidel, whose heart was hardened, and who despised the Bible. Uncle Jacob never attempted to dispel the prejudices raised against him by the malice of despised dominies; but his heart refuted their lies, for it was open to every noble and humane influence, and, above all, undefiled from the corruption of the world. Hence, in his hour of sickness, in his hour of trial and need, the Almighty rewarded him for his natural good parts, and sent His angel to conduct him, by the simple means herein recorded, to the bosom of that holy religion, outside which there is nothing but bitterness and woe, and without which “it is impossible to please God.” Knowing the nature of the enemies he had to contend with, poor Mr. Jacob Prying was silent on the subject of his religious doubts till the advent of Paul to the farm. Like the ancient noble Roman, who, under the garb of folly, concealed his profound heroic wisdom, uncle Jacob was content to be called an infidel and unbeliever, so that he might preserve his heart undefiled, and ready for that precious pearl “of great price” which his heart sighed for, and which he was about now to receive; becoming, in his latter days, a further illustration of the Divine narrative that “God adds daily to the Church those who are to be saved.”

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONVERSION.



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“The Lord be praised; I am glad to hear it,” said Paul, one day, as he sat by the bedside of uncle Jacob, who was now in the last stage of his disease. “Paul,” said the dying man, “while I was robust, and independent in means, I relied too much on these gifts of God, and too little on the Giver of them. But now, when this frail wall, that shuts the soul in from her world of kindred spirits, is nearly worn down, and the glorious light of eternity shines through the chinks of this earthen rampart, in all directions I see the necessity of having the soul prepared, thoroughly washed, before she goes into a world of such purity and justice; and you have convinced me, or, rather, God has taught me, that it is only in that religion of which God alone is the Author that the means of purification can be found. So, Paul, in God’s name, take a team, and go for the priest of God immediately; there is no time to be lost. ’Tis consoling to reflect that there is a priest of God now to be had on earth, as well as in the days of the ancient patriarchs. How merciful God was,” said he, soliloquizing, “in leaving us on earth a priest, a representative of his divine Son, to prepare the soul for the terrible voyage of eternity! All eternity is not too long to thank him for this blessing.”

Paul communicated the wishes of his dying brother to Mr. Ephraim Prying, who answered, “Certainly, Paul; why not? Go for the priest; take the best team—that black mare, there, is the fastest traveller. O my poor brother, why will you leave us?” said he, as he rushed up to his brother’s bed room.

It soon went abroad that uncle Jacob was at the point of death; and all the friends and many neighbors were assembled around the bed, and among others Mr. Barker, the Methodist preacher, who thought, as the Presbyterian dominie’s nostrums were rejected by Jacob, his own, as being more novel, might have the desired effect. And though these several ministers were jealous each of the influence of his neighbor, yet any thing with them was preferable to the priest. Let uncle Jacob turn Turk, Jew, or Heathen, any thing but a Papist, and the six sectarian teachers of the village of S—— were content.

“Now, brother Jacob,” said his roaring reverence, after a long-winded prayer, in which he professed to command great influence with the powers above, “how do you feel? Tell us your experience, and what you see.”

“I am afraid, if I tell ye what I think and feel,” said the feeble invalid, “ye may not like to hear it, and I do not wish to give offence. I have something else now to occupy my time besides talking for your entertainment.”

“O, by all means, brother,” said the reverend roarer, “tell what you experience; we will not be displeased, but I hope edified. I have prayed earnestly to the Lord Jesus for thee, and he has answered me—I have been heard.”



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“Well, my experience and conviction are, that there is no real religion, but superstition or infidelity, in all the sects that I ever yet knew around here. My experience is, that I led a very worthless and careless life, for which I expect God’s pardon; but I fear ye parsons will have a hard account to settle for the contradiction and confusion ye have introduced into the Christian religion. Ye first attempted to make an infidel of me, by your glaring contradictions and hypocritical pretensions; and now, on the very brink of eternity, ye would deceive my soul into the delusion that I am fit for glory direct, in the blossom of my sins, ‘unhouselled, unanointed, and unannealed.’ Retire from my presence, ye deceivers, and make way for the minister of God’s church, who can absolve me from my sins in the person of Christ, give me his true body to repair the ruins in my own body and soul, and strengthen me, by the oil of faith, against the terrible struggle that I must encounter, and the awful journey over which I must pass. O Lord,” he cried, “forgive these persecutors of my soul; and, O virgin mother of Jesus, obtain for me to confess my sins and repent ere I die.”

All were astonished at the foregoing impassioned speech of uncle Jacob. The parson retired like an evil spirit exorcised by the powerful words of holy writ. The room was empty, and the priest was soon after at the dying man’s bedside. After a full, sincere, and humble confession, conditional baptism was administered; and, confirmed by all the rites of the church, purified by penance, strengthened by the holy eucharist, and healed by the holy unction of heaven, that pure soul passed away to God in two days after, having become speechless in about an hour after the administration of the sacrament.

“Now,” said the priest, addressing Paul, “did I not tell you God had some mysterious design in view by the succession of trials which he enabled you to pass through? But for you, probably, this good soul would not have heard of the Catholic church; but for your mother’s death you could not be out here, where the malice of those who wanted to rob you of your faith sent you. It is owing to the robbery of the money you possessed that your mother died; and, finally, but for the cruelty of the landlord and his injustice, you might be now at home in Ireland, and probably studying in Maynooth College. See how God brings good from evil. See how, as he made the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart contribute to the glory and miraculous power of Moses and Aaron, he continually makes use of the tyranny of the landlords of Ireland—not inferior to the cruelty of Pharaoh or Herod—to contribute to the spread of the faith, without which there is no salvation, among the generous and naturally good people of this vast country.”

“I understand it all now,” said Paul, “and thank God for all that has happened to us.”

“That’s right, my boy; you will be yet a priest, perhaps, yourself. I must now prepare to return.”



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As Father Ugo passed down stairs, he was met by Mrs. and Mr. Prying, who invited him to the parlor, and by a good deal of persuasion prevailed on him to remain there over night, rather than go to the hotel six miles off. Even the bigoted Amanda was very anxious to have an argument with a real priest—that mysterious sort of being whom she never saw, but heard so much about.

Father Ugo was a robust, brave-looking man, of unaffected manners, bordering on plainness, though highly educated, and accustomed in Europe, where he was chaplain to Lord C——d, to the most aristocratic society. Perhaps it was owing to his knowledge of the vanity of aristocratic airs that he affected such a plainness of manners, being thoroughly tired of the odd, unmeaning ceremonials of fashion. It must be confessed, at any rate, that he entertained no small contempt for the mushroom aristocratic imitations that he witnessed in America; and this made him a little sarcastic, and therefore rather rude, in his association with what he called “the monkey aristocracy” of the new world.

Such being the sentiments of Father Ugo, the reader ought not to be surprised that his reluctance to enter into a theological discussion with Amanda was great, and his answers to that indefatigable *she bore* rather curt and ironical. After a good deal of conversation about the weather, crops, the telegraph, railroads, thunder storms, electricity, and such other subjects as were suggested by the climate and state of the weather, Mr. Prying left the room, wondering where this priest got his knowledge, and how could he be one of that low, canting, Scripture-phrase class to which all ministers he ever knew belonged, and in which he thought the priest must have exceeded the ministers in degree as much as the Green Mountain exceeded the little knoll in front of his house.

“That’s a well-read, intelligent fellow,” said he to his wife.

“We allers heard they knowed nothing but ignorance and idolatry,” she carelessly remarked.

“I guess those who represented the Catholic priests as such are the most ignorant,” was the remark of Ephraim.

“Well, sir,” said Amanda, who was now alone with the priest in the parlor, “there are many admirable things in your religion; there are indeed.”

“I am glad you think so; but are not all its institutions admirable and perfect?” said the priest.

“I can’t concede that, by any means,” she replied, with a consciousness of her logical powers. “For instance, there’s celibacy; why don’t you priests get married? I think this very wrong; the Bible calls it the ‘doctrine of devils’ to encourage that institution.”



“I am astonished, if you think so, miss,” said the priest, “you have not got married yourself before this, for you appear to be of age.”

“O, that, perhaps, is my own choice,” she said, coughing with embarrassment.

“Well, it is my fixed and determined choice,” rejoined Father Ugo, “to lead a single, unmarried life, free from care and anxiety.”



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"I think you are mistaken, sir," she said; "the single life is one of much more care and anxiety than the married. Witness pa and ma; how happy *they* have lived for thirty-five years in this our homestead."

"Although such may have been *your* experience, miss," said Dr. Ugo, "I must beg leave to decline accepting it as an authority, particularly when I have my own experience, though not so venerable as yours, to balance it. Besides, does not the inspired St. Paul tell us that those who are married are divided, and have heavier cares; while those who lead a single, chaste life, as he did, would be better able to serve God free from anxiety?"

"O, Paul," she replied, "was very poor authority on the subject, being a bachelor when he wrote that passage. Probably in after life his opinions underwent a change on the subject. I am aware of his oddity in that way."

"Do you joke, miss?" said the priest, solemnly. "If you do not joke, I have no hesitation in saying you blaspheme, in thus trifling with the words of the Holy Ghost."

"I am serious, sir," she said; "it is your church that is guilty of misinterpretation of God's word, and, in addition, denies its 'free use' to the people."

"I hope my church, miss, will never allow her children to trifle with God's holy word as you have now been guilty of," said the priest.

"What's this? At theology again, Amanda? I think you have met your match at last, daughter," said Mr. Prying. "This young lady has taken to the study of Scripture and theology," continued he; "she and the several ministers who visit here are ever at controversy, and she seldom comes off second best, I tell you."

"Don't you speak so, father," she said; "no, I don't, neither. I have been arguing with this gentleman about celibacy, and we can't agree about the interpretation of a text; that's all. But this is the birthright of every American citizen, the right to differ; the right to read the word of God, and to interpret it each for himself, without let or hinderance."

"I have no great desire, nor does it at all accord with my notions of propriety, I assure you," said the priest, "to enter into controversial disputations around the fireside, in a family whose hospitality I am enjoying, and especially when a lady is my antagonist."

"O you need not be particular," said this female bore; "we are used to such discussions. I had a few questions to put to you as a Catholic priest, of which I had taken notes, and my object is information on those points, as much as the refutation of your church doctrines."



“Any information you require I am ready to afford, if in my power; but I have a horror—I suppose from the invariable habit of my past life—of introducing either political or religious discussions into the fireside family circle.”

“We are always disputing here,” she said. “I am a Presbyterian, Cassius a Universalist, Wesley a Methodist, and Cyrus has taken to the spiritual rapping, and is a ‘medium.’ So you see controversy is no novelty here.”



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"In Europe, miss," said the priest, "we never introduce——"

"In Europe," she said, interrupting Father Ugo, "there is nothing but tyranny, despotism, poverty, and superstition. We despise the customs of Europe, sir. I am told," she added, after a glance at her notes, "that priests in general, and you in particular, forbid Catholics to attend the meetings, or join in the prayers or worship, of other denominations. Is this true, or how can you reconcile it with liberty or religion?"

"Certainly," said the priest, "it is our duty to guard the Catholics from such immoral customs. We do not believe any of the sectarian denominations, into which I regret to learn your family is divided, derive their existence or institutions from God, or contain the *ordinary means* of salvation. And while under this belief, in which we are joined by millions upon millions of Christians, living and dead, how can we join your prayer or worship, when we know it to be spurious and illegitimate?"

"I shall, before I am done with you, sir," she replied, "prove your church idolatrous, and all Papists idolaters; and this is one of the proofs, this horrid opinion of yours, sir."

"It is not my *opinion* at all, miss," said he, coolly; "it is my *faith*, and that of God's church in all ages. Now, on the very plea that we all are idolaters, as you call us, for this very reason you should except your hired help from joining in your 'long prayers.' For if you have any faith in God, or believe you address him in prayer, why should you insult and mock him by taking an unenlightened, Papistical idolater to join your petitions? If you were to go to ask a favor of a king, or of the president, would you deem it prudent to take one to accompany you who was guilty of high treason? Would not this lead to your certain rejection from the presence of majesty or excellency with disgrace and punishment? Now, Catholics, if they be idolaters, are guilty of treason against Heaven. Do not, then, insult heaven and its divine Majesty, by asking them to join in your 'holy prayers.'"

This "nonplussed" the self-confident and vain Amanda; all she could answer was, that "that was fine Jesuitism."

"Meditate well on it," said the priest, "and repent, if you have been guilty of violating the laws of God, the laws of your country, and the dictates of reason, by compelling Catholics to join in your, to them, repulsive and unlawful worship. Forgive me, miss; I must be off. Good by. God bless you," said he, departing.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ENLIGHTENED CITIZENS.

"Any news this morning, squire?" said Mr. Wakely, the tavern keeper, to his *honor* Squire Wilson, as he entered the bar room with a cigar in his mouth.

“Wal, nothin’ except this report of the turning of old uncle Jacob Prying, if we can give credit to such a rumor.”



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"I seed the priest riding past here two days since," said the tavern man, "and his team half dead from driving. There can be little doubt of Jac's conversion to the Romish faith. I asked that young lad Paul, who used to stop at Prying's, and he said it was true."

"'Tis really astonishing," said Benjamin Lifford, the Quaker. "I'd have let him die without a minister, if he did not content himself with the infloence of the speerit. These is how I would sarve thee, Jacob."

"I consider Mr. Prying rather simple to allow such a man as the priest to come into his house at all," said his *honor* Squire Wilson, the Universalist.

"Had it been my brother," said old Elder Fussel, "I would pay no attention to the dying request of old uncle Jacob. That would be the way to bring him to."

"That would be cruel," said High Sheriff Walter, "seeing that Jacob left him all his property, real and personal. Besides, this is a free country, and I say a man ought to be allowed to embrace any religion he has a mind to. That's my creed, at all events."

"Yes," said Mr. Ebenezer White, the Methodist class leader, "*pervided* the creed he wanted to jine was the religion of the Bible; otherwise not."

"Do not the Roman Catholics ground their doctrines on the Bible?" said the sheriff. "That they do, and their Bible contains many books that yours does not contain."

"Nonsense, sheriff!" said his enlightened *honor*. "The Papists never read the Bible. I have a boy, Thomas Noonan,—you know him,—and he neither will read it himself, nor listen to it read. The priest won't allow him. No Catholic is allowed to have or read a Bible."

"You state what is not true," said a loud, emphatic voice from behind the stove. It was the voice of Murty O'Dwyer.

"I guess, squire, you are in error there," said the sheriff. "My boy, you know, Patrick, a very strict Catholic, every month at confession with the priest, has a Bible with him in my house, which Bible the priest gave him. I have read the book time and again. Nay, I heard the priest preach out of our Bible last summer."

"Is it not astonishing," began Murty again, "that, though ye all differ in opinion, ye agree in hating and maligning the church of Christ? Though ye can't 'join in love,' ye know well how to 'join in hate.' Here are unbaptized Quakers, groaning Methodists, blaspheming Presbyterians, faithless Universalists and Unitarians, and humbug spiritual rappers; and yet ye not only coincide in hating the pope, but ye are all intolerant and cruel save this gentleman here," said he, pointing to Mr. Walter. "Now, will any body tell me whence is this hatred?" said the Irishman, pausing. "Is it grounded on knowledge or



well-formed opinion? No; for ye are all grossly ignorant of the principles and facts of Catholicity, as ye have shown by your statements about the Bible. In truth, it is impossible to evade the conclusion that ye hate the church for the same cause that the devil envied and hated our first parents; namely, because he saw them the heirs of that bliss which he and his rebellious crew had lost.”



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“Take care what you say, my man; the law does not suffer any person to disparage the Bible so,” said the squire, threateningly.

“I am not afraid, sir, to speak my mind, whatever you, as the representative of the law, may threaten. 'Tis really amazing that ye should be so busy and troubled about Catholics, take such pains in kidnapping Catholic children, and forcing Catholic servants to go to listen to your disgusting prayers and bellowing preachers, when your own children are beyond your control; go to bed like cattle, without ever bending a knee in prayer; and if they go to ‘meeting,’ as it is properly called, it is only to mock the ‘old fool’ who holds forth to them.”

“There is some truth in what he says,” added the sheriff, looking at the squire.

“Agree among yourselves first,” said the Irish peasant, “before you commence to convert Catholics. Convert the rowdies that crowd your village and city tavern bar rooms before you extend your zeal to those who are in no need of it, or on whom it will be all spent in vain. Agree about the meaning of one single text in your Bible before you hand it to us for our study.”

“We all agree it’s the word of God.”

“Well, the word of God cannot contradict itself, and yet the religious system of each of you contradicts that of his neighbor. One man says Christ is God; another denies this; and both quote Scripture in proof. This man says bishops are necessary and divinely appointed; the next man denies this totally. The Quaker denies what the disciple of Calvin or Knox believes, while the Universalist ignores what the latter professes; and now the Mormons, spiritual rappers, and Transcendentalists explode the Bible altogether. The Catholic church, with those countless millions of her children that constitute her body, has been reading the Bible and studying it these nineteen hundred years, and never yet, with all her learning, could find two opposite meanings to one single text; never once contradicted herself.”

“You don’t say the Catholics are allowed the use of the Bible, do you? or that there was any Bible in the world but the one Luther found in the monastery hid, in the year 1517?” said the elder, who did not well hear, as he was somewhat deaf.

“Do you seriously believe that we Catholics have not leave to use the Bible? I tell you we have, and always had, the unquestioned right to its proper use. Even before the art of printing was discovered by a Catholic, and when books were scarce, a Bible, in large, plain writing, was chained to a stand or desk in each parish church in most countries, so that all who wished could read. I saw one of these stands, which turned on a pivot, in an old Catholic church in Yorkshire, England, where it remains to this day. And as regards the absurdity that Luther found the only copy of the Bible extant in a monastery or university, that story is refuted by the fact that there were millions of Bibles, and

countless editions of it, printed before Luther was born. Indeed, I have just read in this Protestant paper, here, that there is a Bible in Cincinnati, printed in 1470; that is, nearly fifty years before Luther began to revolt.”



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“Why, Betsey Darcy, that jined our kirk at the late revivals, told us, public, in the meeting house, that the priests in Ireland would not allow any Catholic to read the Bible; and she said that was the first one she ever saw which I handed to her,” said the pious elder.

“Don’t you believe her, elder,” said Murty, “for I saw that same girl handle a true Protestant Bible in Ireland, when she attempted to father her illegitimate child on an honest man, but when she was, instead, convicted of perjury the most gross. She has had two other fatherless children since she came to ‘free America;’ and now, after having been rejected from the humblest society of Catholics on account of her immoralities, she, of course, takes refuge among the impeccable saints of Presbyterianism, where she ranks high in the scale of sanctity.”

“Sartin,” said the sheriff; “she is a hard one, I do believe. I saw her drunk at the donation visit of dominie Grinoble, last winter.”

“Yes,” said Murty, “when you get such a convert as this unfortunate reprobate, you boast and write tracts to herald the conquest; but such conversions as those of Spencer, Brownson, Wilberforce, Newman, Lords Camden, or Freeling, are as nothing in your eyes. You stuff your ears when you hear of them, cautiously keep them out of hearing of your sons and daughters, and these glorious conversions never appear in your shabby, lying newspapers. I do really pity the blindness of Protestants,” said he, rising and walking out of doors.

Next day after these events, the funeral of uncle Jacob took place, and these ministers, whom, while he lived, he could not endure, and who heartily hated him, came, when he was dead, to offer their services over his remains. If any thing was required to show the meanness and inconsistency of Protestantism and its teachers in this country, it is the readiness with which they will officiate over the body of a man dead, over whose soul, while living, they could exert not the smallest influence. We have known several instances where Methodist and Presbyterian hirelings, in consideration of the fee of three or five dollars paid them, preached long sermons, and opened the gates of *their Elysium* to the souls of men who became converted from the sects to which these hireling parsons belonged. Nay, in cases where the deceased committed suicide by hanging or poisoning, we heard parsons officiate, and promise the friends, for certain, that the soul of the suicide was in glory, because sometime ago he happened to get religion, or join the Sons of Temperance, or conform to some other requirement of fanaticism. Thus, in the present case of uncle Jacob, Mr. Barker, the Methodist, and Parson Grinoble, the Presbyterian, and Mr. Gulmore, another style of Presbyterianism, all three vied to see who would *be hired* to do the last service to him whom, while alive, they all despised. Mr. Gulmore, however, had the best luck, and accordingly mounted the pulpit to pass sentence



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on the departed soul of uncle Jacob. He descanted for a considerable time on the virtues of the deceased while young, told all he knew of his religious experience, not forgetting the virtues of the entire family, and what they had done for religion by circulation of tracts, by subscription to Bible societies, by adopting and raising of destitute orphans, and other good deeds, all tending to the honor of Calvinism. "The only instance of any thing like want of belief that happened for a hundred years in the family," said he, "was the seduction of our brother to the ranks of Popery. His faith was weak, my friends," he continued; "but if he did not believe strongly, *we believed*, and our faith saved him. His soul is in glory, I have no doubt. The faith of his family and all our faith saved him. Glory be to the Lord. Amen."

The conclusion of this discourse was applied to the warning of the faithful against the influence of the Papists; the necessity and obligation incumbent on all to compel their Catholic servants to join their prayer and other meetings; and, above all, to take care that all Popish books and publications, should be excluded from their houses. "We are fallen on dangerous times, my friends," he said; "and if the friends of the Bible and free religion do not combine their efforts against the common enemy, our institutions are doomed, and the glory of our country is extinguished forever."

The reader is not to imagine that Mr. Gulmore and men of his class are so brutally ignorant as some would imagine. When, therefore, we hear them speak of our *institutions* being in danger, they mean the *institutions* of heresy and sectarianism; namely, parsons, and their wives and children, and countless sects and contradictions in creed—institutions that, sure enough, are in imminent danger, and doomed to fall before the irresistible and unerring progress of Catholicity. But will this divinely decreed result be injurious to the progress or prosperity of the republic? On the contrary, there can never be a real union among the States till the minds of the people, north and south, are united in faith and sentiment. And by the annihilation of sectarianism and its castes, the people will be freed from a very burdensome tax now going to the support of a large and lazy body of men, women, and children, whose only object in existence seems to be to eat and consume, and who, besides, by their idleness and habits, keep up a system of detraction, jealousy, and discord among otherwise well-disposed citizens, that, like so many cancers, are eating into the very vitals of the public morals. Let not the American citizen, therefore, bewail the certain decline and rapid decay of the *institutions* of sectarianism, but rather pray for the dawn of that glorious approaching day when, as we are but a one people and a united nation, we may have but one religion, and a country that will know no sectional divisions.



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CHAPTER XVII.

“HE AND HIS WHOLE HOUSE BELIEVED.”

Paul, now, though full of anxiety and care on account of his young charge, was comparatively well off. His good fortune removed him from the neighborhood of all that was low, fanatical, and cruel in New York, to the capital of Vermont. And he felt the change for the better, sensibly, in quitting the birthplace of “Millerism,” and going into a comparatively enlightened region. He thought there were, as he said, some gentlemen and ladies here in Vermont; but he could never see one of either species, properly so called, where he lately lived. The truth was, Mr. Clarke, his present employer, was a well-bred, full-blooded Yankee; and though his notions of Catholicity were such as he gleaned from the rabid discourses of half-educated preachers, and a few anti-Popery tracts which he read, his gentle and noble mind could not sanction for an instant any thing like persecution on account of religion. Hence, besides the favorable impression which the talents of Paul made on him, he considered it time to show him some kindness, to compensate for the ill treatment he underwent under the machinations of Parson Gulmore and Amanda Prying, and their clerical associates.

“Paul,” said Mr. Clarke, on Saturday night, at supper, “I am glad you are beginning to like this part of the country. I will endeavor to convince you that all America is not like your late home in York: all parsons are not like Mr. Gulmore, whose conduct in regard to your letters I cannot sufficiently condemn; nor are all young ladies of the same temper as Miss Amanda Prying.”

“I do not blame Amanda much, sir,” said the youth, fearing that he might be led to any thing bordering on detraction; “she was very kind to me in all things, except that she wanted to keep me from mass, and tried to force my sister and myself to attend Mr. Gulmore’s church.”

“That was very wrong of her, Paul. I do not think Miss Martha, here, will be so cruel as to require you to do any thing against your will; nor would she interfere with your letters to your friends, as I have no doubt Amanda has interfered. Well, Martha,” said the good-natured father, looking with pride towards his eldest daughter, a bright girl of sixteen, “are you going to force Paul with you to church; to compel him, whether he likes it or not, to eat flesh meat on days forbidden by his church? And will you forbid him to write to his uncle, who, I doubt not, is a very respectable gentleman in Ireland?”

“God forbid, father, that I should be guilty of half that. However, we shall be very glad if Paul comes to our meeting house, seeing we often go to hear the priest, Father O’C——, of the Catholic church.”



“I should be very sorry to disoblige any body, but especially one so amiable as yourself, miss,” said Paul; “but I do not think I can conscientiously go to any church except the Catholic church.”



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Mr. and Mrs. Clarke smiled, and a significant glance passed between them at the gallantry of this speech.

“Why, Paul,” said he, “I think you are a leetle too particular. It would do you no harm to hear our preacher, Mr. Holdforth; I do not see what can be wrong in it, no more than our going to hear the priest.”

“The only difference is,” said Paul, quickly, “that our religion and service being right, and yours being wrong, you can attend our service without scruple, but I could not attend yours without sin. It would be a loss of time, a bad way to spend the Sabbath, or Sunday; the sin of curiosity, or the danger of being an encourager of, or countenancing, a false worship, unauthorized by God or his church.”

“Ah, Paul,” said the editor, “this is taking a high ground, and rather a new one to me; and besides, this is not very logical, for this is what we want to see. This is just the question in dispute between the Roman Catholic church and the Protestant; *viz.*, to which of the two belongs true and lawful worship.”

“You are a lawyer, sir,” said Paul, “and you must know well the evidence is all in favor of the Catholic church—being that founded by Christ, and ruled and guided by the apostles. For, go back to the very apostolic ages, and you will find the rites and the ceremonies of the church, recorded in the writings of the ancient fathers,—as, for instance, in the works of Tertullian, Ireneus, Ignatius,—to be the very same as those now practised in the Catholic church in this country and all over the world.”

“I confess, Paul,” said he, “that the external evidences are rather favorable to Catholicity; but we principally depend on internal evidence, or the feelings of our minds.”

“That,” said Paul, “is no evidence at all; for you have to do with external facts. Institutions, history, monuments, testimony of men, customs, and habits, are the only evidence you can bring to bear on this controversy. How would you like to try a criminal by internal evidence—to tell a jury that you had ‘internal evidence’ of the innocence or guilt of the man accused? How could you discover whether or not Caesar lived by the light of internal evidence? Is it by internal evidence you learn that such cities as Rome, Paris, or Constantinople exist? No, sir; it is by *external* evidence, which is altogether in favor of our church; and this is more valuable than all the internal evidence that ever existed in the minds of fanatics, from Simon Magus to John Wesley, or from the Gnostics to the spiritual rappers.”

“Husband,” said Mrs. Clarke, “I am afraid of your reputation in this argument about religion.”

“Madam, it is not *reputation* I seek, but truth; and if I can find it in the Catholic church, I shall embrace it myself, and all my family.”

“You may bid adieu to most of your subscribers, then, after you become a Roman Catholic,” said madam.

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“My dear wife,” said he, impressively, “you ought to know me sufficiently well to be convinced that not only the success of my journal, but even the entire of my means, with my personal feelings, would be willingly sacrificed by me, in order to secure for myself, and for you all, what is infinitely beyond all earthly or temporal considerations; namely, the salvation of our immortal souls.”

“I did not want to insinuate, my dear, for a moment, that you could be influenced by such a consideration as the success of your journal in a matter of such everlasting importance. I only dropped the remark casually and without reflection,” said madam.

In order to explain more fully the seriousness of Mr. Clarke’s desire to learn more and more regarding the Catholic church, and to account for his rather too easy concession to the arguments of Paul, we think it right to state that he had lately become a member of a literary and religious society established in his native city, under the presidency of a minister of an Episcopal church. The object of this society, partly religious and partly literary, was to infuse a new spirit into the thinning ranks of Episcopalianism, by searching for, and bringing to light, in the popular form of lectures and dissertations, the evidences in favor of Protestantism, which, they supposed, were to be found in the writings of the primitive or ante-Nicene sages of the church. We do not think it would be appropriate to class this society under the appellative “Puseyite,” for they had no direct connection or communication with that now rather celebrated school of schismatics, but undoubtedly the objects of both were analogous. Mr. Clarke’s occupation was so much confined to the business of his lawyer’s office, and his time so much engrossed by the attention required of him as an editor, that he had very little leisure to attend the regular meetings of the society, of which he was elected an honorary member; and hence, while he was at home and at the table, the whole discourse was on religion; for these were his only leisure hours. Paul he found not only well instructed in his religion, but capable of explaining very satisfactorily to him various points connected with such an important matter as that on which his mind of late turned its attention, and on which he desired the fullest information.

Great was the joy and consolation of Paul, after the dialogue given above; and long and fervent were his thanksgivings to God, for choosing him so far to be the instrument in bringing his employer to the resolution of *examining* Catholic doctrines. For who ever seriously examined and did not find the truth? “No,” said Paul to himself, “never did any body examine into or compare the relative claims of the Catholic church and her countless opponents to be considered divine, that did not decide in favor of the former.” And well knowing that Mr. Clarke was a man not to be turned aside from his resolution

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by any human motives or selfish considerations, Paul wisely concluded that “he and his whole house” would become reconciled to the church. And so they were. Mr. Clarke was the first member of the “Literary and Religious Society of Vermont” who became a convert. The next was the reverend president of the society; afterward one and another, till the entire society, consisting of some fifty members, submitted themselves to the sweet yoke of faith; and now there is a church, a resident priest, in that very locality, and using the very meeting house where the ex-Episcopalian minister preached. Under God, all these conversions were owing to the tact, prudence, and other admirable virtues, as well as the thorough Catholic education, of Paul. To this very day, Mr. Clarke, the Rev. Mr. Strongly, and many other members of the society acknowledge that it is to the circumstance of Paul’s living in Mr. Clarke’s family that he owed his conversion, and that the secession of Mr. Clarke from their ranks was what principally hastened the conversion of the whole society. Thus God frequently makes use of what appears to us very inadequate means to the most glorious results. Thus are the weak and humble of his church made use of, like David, to subdue her enemies, and bring them under the salutary sway of her dominion. And while this servant boy and that hired girl are acting the hypocrite in attending this master’s meeting, or joining his long prayers, or eating meat on Friday, in violation of the precepts of the church, they are becoming stumbling blocks on his way to salvation—resisting the design of God, who wishes all men to be saved, as well as ruining their own souls. “He that despiseth small things shall fall by little and little.”

While these events were the order of the day in Vermont, the proselytizers in York were not idle. Amanda now, since Paul had not only left the house, but even went away from the neighborhood, thought she, and her coadjutors the parsons, would have little difficulty in converting Bridget. But the latter now, besides having once a month an opportunity of hearing mass,—the new priest, Father Ugo, having made it a rule to visit the railroad laborers as often as he could, and being pretty well grounded in the catechism,—in addition to these very important aids to combat temptation, Bridget had also Murty O’Dwyer, who was hired in the house, to take up the cudgels for her against Amanda and Parson Gulmore.

“Prepare, Bridget, to come with me this evening to Sabbath school,” said the persevering Amanda. “I want to show them how well you can read, and also I want them to admire these nice flowers of your hat, and your pretty new dress, to see how smart you look.”

“Why, miss, if that be all you want, I can’t go, for that would be a sin. Vanity, you know,” said the little roguish girl, looking sarcastically at Amanda.

“I am the best judge of that, missy,” said the old maid. “Go on and prepare: you must come. You are getting very ugly since you got the habit of seeing that old priest of late.”



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“I beg your pardon, miss. It is not for the priest’s advice I refuse joining your worship, but because God forbids it and the church. Before the priest ever came here, I refused, during more than two years, to go to Protestant meetings or Sunday schools, which cost me many a tear and a scolding; and the priest’s advice has not made me more determined than I was before never to put my foot inside your ugly meeting house or Sunday schools.”

“If I asked you to go to the priest to pay him a quarter to pardon your sins, you naughty Irish girl, you,” said Amanda, in a passion, “how readily you would obey me, you naughty thing, you!”

“You’re welcome to your joke, miss,” answered Bridget; “but if you are in earnest, I must say that it is not true that Father Ugo, or any other priest that ever lived, charged any money for hearing confession. Confession was ordained by Christ, our Lord; and those who do not go to confession cannot lead a pure life of virtue, nor preserve the love of God in their souls.”

“Indeed, miss!” said Amanda, with a sneer. “I see the priest has been giving you a lesson. As if none but Papists knew what purity or virtue was—the low set of Irish that they are!”

“Our books of devotion say as much,” said Bridget; “and it stands to reason, for if Catholics who frequent confession have enough to do to keep themselves undefiled, how much more difficult is it for those who do not confess at all? Besides, by confession restitution is enforced, and whatever your neighbor loses by fraud is restored.”

“Is it not strange, then, that the Irish Papist who robbed your mother of the money does not think of restoring it? And you say he had the priest’s certificate of confession in his pocket?”

“That is not the fault of confession, miss. May be he would make restitution yet, if God give him grace.”

“I have been listening to you, miss, this half hour,” interposed Murty, who now entered from the back kitchen where he was smoking, “and I am really shocked to find you tamper so with the virtue of this innocent girl. You first attempt to reach her pure soul through her vanity, by praising her dress and accomplishments; and she nobly rejects the temptation. Next you attempt to conquer her fortitude, by maligning and ridiculing the most sacred institutions of her holy religion; and here again you fail. It is the strangest thing in the world, in my mind, that you should continually annoy that poor orphan, and stranger again, that her noble fortitude, her piety, her faith, fidelity, and other heroic virtues have not converted you, and those who have been for years witness of them, to something like admiration of them.”



“But she is so obstinate, Murt,” said the old maid.

“Yes,” said he, “and in that she is right. Yourself had an opportunity of information on all these subjects, and, I understand, discussed them at length with the priest in person. You ought to know better, then, than to repeat to this child a pure fable, that you dare not hint in the presence of the priest; namely, that he levies a tax of two shillings or half a dollar on every penitent whose confession he hears.”

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“That is generally believed,” said she, ashamed that her violent attack on Bridget had been overheard by one whose good opinion, of late, she was rather anxious to secure, for a delicate reason that shan’t be mentioned here.

“It is generally *talked*, but not *believed*, dear miss, unless by the idiots and children into whose minds it is continually dinned by malicious persons, who know that their occupation would be gone if the truth were known, and who struggle to shut out the light and knowledge of Catholicity from the souls of their wretched hearers with the same cruelty that the tyrant shuts out the light of heaven from the dungeon of his captive. I thought this was a free country,” he continued; “but I find the most odious of tyrannies, domestic tyranny, and the tyranny of opinion, established here. I, myself, have been its victim in no less than six instances. Yes, miss, I was turned out of employment, and cheated out of my wages, as I would not say my prayers with, or square my creed in accordance with, the notions of my eccentric and fanatical employers.”

“That was too bad, Murt,” said she, laughing. “Ha, ha, ha!”

“It was almost as bad as your own attempt to rob these orphan children of the faith of their fathers. For they were young, innocent, and helpless; but for me, I am able to work, and can defy any tyrant your country affords,” said he, in a passion. “There is not, I believe,” he added, “on earth, a more odious tyranny, except the landlord tyranny in Ireland, than that of your sectarian Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Nothingarian tyranny in America.”

“You Irish should learn to correspond with the institutions of the country, and should not attempt to introduce Popery into this Protestant land.”

“Protestant land!” said Murty. “We never dream of this being a Protestant land when we land on its shores. We look on it as the land of liberty, where no form of religion is dominant, and where all are equally protected. Protestant land! Why, this sounds odd in a world first discovered and trod on by Catholics. This sounds bad in a republic established by the aid of Catholic arms, blood, and treasure, despite of the tyranny of Protestant England. This slang of Protestant land is intolerable in a people against whose liberties no Catholic sword was ever unsheathed, though the founder of the sect of which your friend Mr. Barker is preacher, John Wesley, offered George III. the services of his forty thousand Methodists to put down the American rebellion. What American, what republican, then, of spirit or intelligence, can for an hour profess himself a follower in religion of such a fanatic as Wesley, with this well-known fact staring him in the face? How noble the conduct of Catholic France, or Catholic Ireland, when compared with Protestant England or Protestant Germany, at the time of the revolution! The two former Catholic nations sent their men, ships, money, clothing, and provisions, to aid your insurgent ancestors; Germany and England sent their armed vessels, their cannon, and their hireling soldiery, to burn the homesteads, desolate the fields, and murder the wives and children of your forefathers.”



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"I am afraid, Murt," she said, "you will convert me to your notions." This was said with a tenderness that could not be mistaken.

"I fear not, miss; you are too old for that," said he, meaningly.

"I am not so very old as you suppose. I am not so old as uncle Jacob, yet," she said, perceiving that her meaning was understood by Murty; "and he became a Papist before he died."

"God gave him the grace, and I pray that you may receive a like grace; but I suppose you allude to a different sort of conversion?" said he.

The truth was, Amanda, having failed to secure the permanent regard of any of her numerous admirers, was foolish enough, as most old maids are, to suppose that some green, young, inexperienced lover would be most likely to be caught in her net. Hence she had her mind fixed on Murty, whom she regarded, as he really was, a young man of talent, and whose dependent and menial condition she considered as calculated to balance the disparity in their age, and as likely to insure her success. This was why she felt so mortified at being detected by him in her late attempt on the faith and resolution of Bridget, having, since her designs on Murty, promised to let the orphans have their own way, after having attempted to convince him that she was quite indifferent on the subject of religion, and "that she would be very glad to know more from him about the Catholic church."

The detection of her insincerity in this instance, and of the falsity of her professions, put an end to all her further hopes regarding the gallant young Irishman, who could not tolerate a falsehood in any body, but especially in a lady, and who ever after avoided her society as much as possible. His presence, however, in the house was a sure guaranty to Bridget of full religious toleration, Amanda's fiery zeal for religion being succeeded by a flame of a somewhat different nature.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION."

We devote this chapter of our narrative to the record of a very strange succession of circumstances, no less so, however, than true. They may serve as an illustration of the wonderful and mysterious workings of Religion on the soul, and, at the same time, afford an instance of the absolute insufficiency of speculative belief or theoretic religion, without the every-day practice of her sublime and simple lessons.

One morning, in the town of Sheffield, England, one John Cunningham, after confession and communion, called on the Catholic pastor of that town, for the purpose of procuring a line of commendation, or testimonial of character, that might be of use to him, as he



thought, to get him employment in some part of the new world, to which he was preparing to emigrate. The poor fellow then little dreamed that a priest's recommendatory paper, instead of a dollar bill, was the worst possible substitute in certain parts of America; and, if of



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any conceivable effect, was likely to prove an occasion to him of such annoyances, on account of his faith, as we have described in these pages. "The character," however, he succeeded in procuring, and written in no niggard terms. If it offended in any thing, it was in being too favorable to the bearer. It was by means of this paper, with the respectable name of Rev. Dr. H—— at its foot, that Cunningham succeeded in ingratiating himself into the confidence and favor of the O'Clerys during the voyage, as well as by his attention to Mr. Arthur O'Clery during his fatal sickness. The reverend gentleman whose signature stood at the foot of the "character" was well known to the O'Clery family; and hence, undoubtedly, originated the intimacy, strengthened by his asserting falsely that he was a relative of the priest, which subsequently enabled him to rob the poor widow and her orphans of their entire means. Accomplished villain as he was, Religion had not yet lost her whole sway over his soul, and by way of punishing himself, but in reality, making bad worse, the second day after his liberation from arrest consequent on the theft, he listed in the United States army, and was hurried off forthwith to the field of battle, in Florida. The gnawing worm of remorse still followed him on board of ship, and in barrack, and on the scorching plains of the south. He had less dread of the sabre, or grape, or rifle of the enemy, than of the thought that he had robbed the poor widow, and availed himself of the confidence of confession to elicit from his too confiding director the paper that principally enabled him to do so. He had plundered an honest family of their all, and it was of no use to him. The injury done was severely felt by not only one, but several. The pleasure, comfort, or happiness to him was nothing at all. Unhappy man, what was he to do? He could not help it now; the enemy was before him, and he could not turn his back, and the money was lost forever. He feared death would deprive him of the means of making restitution, for he had a presentiment he would fall on this very day. First, that sin he committed in Liverpool, when, in an evil hour, yielding to the advice and example of wicked companions, he took to drink in order to smother the thought of it; and drink caused him to rob the widow, and to shun further the thought of these crimes he enlisted in the army; but yet, here, in the very ranks, with drums beating, and music playing, amid the shouts of Indians and din of battle, the sins were uppermost still in his mind. How horrid must be the feelings of poor Cunningham, with death staring him in the face, and yet he expected nothing but judgment after death! In vain did he look around for the tall and venerable form of Father McEl——, to cast himself at his knees, and ask for advice, blessing, and forgiveness. He was nowhere now to be found. O misery unspeakable! And but yesterday, but this very morning, four hours ago, that father went through the ranks, encouraging the men,

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and exciting them to contrition. Ah, yes! But yesterday Cunningham had got some drink, and, not perceiving the danger, refused to confess. But now, if he could see the priest! "O God!" said he, "where is the priest?" Some of his comrades, who heard this exclamation expressed aloud, laughed; others taunted him on his evil conscience. However, down on his knees he fell, as if unconscious of the presence of his comrades, and promised, if God spared him, on the first opportunity, that he would not only restore the stolen treasure, but, if necessary, travel the whole Union in search of those whom he robbed; and ask their forgiveness for the injury done them. He had scarcely risen into the ranks of his comrades when the hostile fire opened on the plains of Tampa, and a bullet from the rifle of the enemy shattered his arm to pieces. A few hours decided that well-known victory of the Americans, and Cunningham had not long to remain on the field, exposed to the scorching sun, when he was conveyed to the hospital. Though the pain he felt in his arm was great, that which rankled in his bosom was greater; and on his reaching the hospital, he called out for Father McEl——, before he would allow the surgeon to inspect his arm.

After the amputation of the limb he recovered, got his discharge, came back to New York, and, in company with a respectable Catholic citizen, went out about seven miles east of Brooklyn, and there, at the foot of a maple tree, they dug out of the ground, three feet deep, the bag sure enough, containing every sovereign and note of the money stolen from the widow O'Clery. They went with it right straight to the priest of St. Peter's Church, who, upon hearing the recital of the now penitent thief, promised that he should suffer no legal consequences, and inserted advertisements in the papers to find out where the O'Clerys might be.

This information was communicated to Paul by Mr. Clarke, and to Bridget by Father Ugo, on the same day.

This news, when made known, created the most intense excitement. Amanda was now very polite to Bridget, whom she marked out in her own mind as a suitable wife for her eldest brother Calvin. Paul was declared to be a young "likely gentleman," of real genius. The two younger brothers, Patrick and Eugene, were lauded, flattered, and admired. In fine, the sudden change which took place in the relation in which they stood in the house of bondage was such as to cause Murty to remark to Paul,—who lost no time in coming to pay for his brothers' and sister's board, although the term of servitude of Bridget was now almost expired,—“Paul, I see that it is not our faith that is so much hated by these goodly Christians as our poverty.”

“There may be some truth in that,” replied Paul.



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“Ever,” continued Murty, “since it appeared in our papers here that you had your thousand pounds restored to you, all mouths are full of your praise. You were uncommon children, and it was cruel of the minister Gulmore to conspire against you. It was infamous in him, they now say, to have your letters ‘burked’ in the post office, as it appears from Amanda, who has turned informer on the parson, because he did not marry her after his first wife’s death. Before this ye were paupers, Irish, and Papists; now, you and your sister and brothers are noble and likely young people.”

“O Murty,” said Paul, “I can see the hand of God in all this. Where I have lived for the last three years, several families, together with my friend and former employer, Mr. Clarke, have been converted. The very minister, Mr. Strongly, has embraced the true faith; and another parson, Rev. Mr. H——, I am sure, only waits instruction to enter the gate of life within the true church.”

“Thank God!” said Murty O’Dwyer. “I thought these Yankees never could be good Catholics, they are so fond of money, trading, cheating, and legal swindling, such as assigning, and mortgaging, and the like.”

“O, bless you, Murty, all Yankees are not alike. There are no better Catholics on earth than Americans, when they once get the faith. Mr. Clarke, and my friends in Vermont, who consider me as instrumental in bringing them to the true faith, have paid for my education in the college of G——, after they found that I was resolved to embrace the clerical state.”

“That was very generous of them, indeed, sir,” said Murty, assuming a little less familiarity; “those here, in this neighborhood, cannot be much blamed for their bigotry; they know no better, imposed on for ages by such fellows as Miller, Scullion, Barker, Gulmore, Grinoble, Scaly, and the like.”

“But it is not so in the cities, Murty,” continued Paul; “and it will not be so here long; for now railroads are building, light, and liberality, and, I trust, charity, are extending their influence. We must do our part, by being good, and virtuous, and prudent; try to gain them by our good example, rather than by argumentative or angry discussion. ‘They know not what they do’ when they contemn, or attempt to stop the progress of, our faith. They are a naturally good and kind-hearted people; as witness how they assist the sick and give hospitality. Such virtues must ultimately gain for them the grace of conversion. The greatest obstacle in their way is the low cunning of the unprincipled parsons, who, from being peddlers, and poor, shiftless mechanics, without any proper discipline or preparation, take to the less laborious trade of preaching. Pray for them, Murty—pray for them.”

“I have a far stronger inclination to curse them,” said Murty.

“Fie, fie, Murty; that is not Christian.”



“That I know,” said Murty; “but have you heard that I have been cheated out of near two hundred dollars by my employer, and all through the influence of a villanous parson who got divorced from his wife, on account of a short answer I made him?”

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“What was the answer, Murty? I suppose it must be droll.”

“One day,” said Murty, “this Parson Boorman dined where I worked for two years, and, to convert me from the error of my ways for observing abstinence on Friday, commenced saying, ‘Don’t you see, Murty, how foolish and unreasonable you act? You eat butter and use milk that come from the cow, and you refuse to eat her flesh. It’s all the same, my Irish friend,’ continued the dominie, pitying my ignorance. ‘I have no great desire, Mr. Dominie,’ said I, ‘now, for controversy, being fatigued after my hard day’s work; though it takes but little learning to refute your profound logic. If there is no difference between drinking milk and eating flesh, then you may as well eat your mother’s flesh, parson, as suck her breast; and as you, I expect, have done the latter, therefore, dominie, you must be a cannibal. How do you like this?’ said I.

“‘O,’ said the dominie, ‘the butter, you know, that comes from the cow, what do you say to that?’ ‘I say, parson, that there is another substance besides butter that comes from the cow, and you would not like to dine on it.’ At this the whole company laughed outright in his face, and from that time to this the dominie never ceased to persecute me.”

“That was a very queer way you took to silence the dominie,” said Paul; “but I presume, after that ludicrous answer, you met with very little religious controversy afterwards.”

“That’s true,” said Murty; “but I have suffered the loss of my wages through the unrelenting malice of the Presbyterian dominie.”

“Never mind, Murty; do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who persecute and calumniate you. For your kindness to Bridget while I was away, I feel bound to give you some remuneration. Have courage, have courage, and think better of the Yankees. The more you know of them, the better you will like them. They have their faults,—as what nation has not?—but they have their virtues also.”

This conversation took place between Paul and Murty in the farm house of Mr. Clarke, where he had just arrived, as well to spend the vacation as to make arrangements regarding the future of his brothers and sister. Murty, upon hearing of his arrival, lost not a moment’s time in going across lots from the Pryings’ farm to that of Mr. Clarke, thinking he might be the first to communicate to Paul the joyous intelligence regarding the recovery of the lost money, and the pleasing change in the opinion of all regarding him and his brethren.

Paul could not but feel grateful for the kindness of his friend Murty; but he was too well practised in Christian perfection to indulge in any thing like excessive joy, and too well accustomed to refer every thing to God to claim any merit, or take any pleasure, in the flattering eulogies of all his acquaintances, as repeated by Murty.

CHAPTER XIX.



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WHAT HAPPENED TO LITTLE EUGENE O'CLERY.

Fortune now began to smile on Paul O'Clery, and to make amends for the long course of ill usage to which she had subjected himself and his kindred. He had not only enjoyed the sympathy of friends, and his talents had not only gained him the good will and respect of his superiors and classfellows, but he now unexpectedly found himself in possession of a handsome sum of money, the fruit of the honest industry of his parents. The true Catholic training which Paul received from his very infancy taught him the impropriety of immoderate joy or gladness, and the severe trials of the last few years had chastened his naturally hilarious and pleasant mind to a temper of habitual calm and reserve bordering on melancholy. It must be confessed, in this instance, however, that his spirit felt unusually buoyant and glad, as he returned, under present circumstances, to the scene of his late trials and humiliation.

There are few persons born, however propitious the position of their horoscope, who have not, some time or other, to experience the feeling attendant on a transition from an inferior condition to one of more respect and honor. It will not, therefore, be difficult to imagine what were the sentiments of our young hero on his return from the south, on this occasion. He was a slave; he is now a freeman. He was a menial; he is now a gentleman. He was the subject on which the hypocrite and the impostor sought to try the success of their well-taught deceptions; now, his virtues, his manners, and his success are in the mouths of all men; and those who plotted against his soul are ready to do homage to his accomplishments. When St. Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, returned to the house of his former master, who held him in slavery,—the glorious prelate and saint to the hut of the slave,—what must have been the feelings of his exalted and inspired soul? Not those of hatred, vanity, or earthly exultation, but those of charity, thanksgiving, and apostolic zeal, if not those of gratitude, to his pagan master. Kindred to these was the mental exultation of Paul O'Clery, on approaching the valley of R— Creek, the scene of the most meritorious part of his life, and still the novitiate of those who were the most dear to him on earth.

He determined not only to redeem his sister and brothers, by paying the customary sum for whatever clothing and board they had received, but resolved, as soon as possible, to have them placed in a suitable educational establishment. Bridget was already free, and by right entitled to something handsome in remuneration of the services she had rendered in the family in which she was so long a menial; but Paul was determined that she should not only refuse accepting what was to fall to her share, and what in justice she could claim, but said every thing should be paid for—board, lodging, and even her "*common-school*" education. "This last item," he said,



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“was not of the most choice description,—that is, the ‘common-school’ learning,—but such as it is I am unwilling to accept it gratuitously.” He had come to the same conclusion regarding Patrick and Eugene. O, it was on account of these latter children, principally, that Paul rejoiced and thanked God that restitution had been made of the stolen money; for he had a burden of care and anxiety on his mind on account of these two children. It was so difficult a work, especially as himself could not be with them, to save young boys like them from the contagious vice so prevalent in this country; and, above all, so hard to preserve young boys in the atmosphere of your “common schools.” Bridget might be said to be safe, for she could remove to a better and more Christian neighborhood, or return to her friends in the old country; but Patrick, and, above all, Eugene, who were in the hands of utter strangers, how were they to be saved from the universal corruption, when deprived of the continual guardianship of their faithful brother? These were the considerations, and not the sole recovery of the money restored to him, that contributed to the increase of the joy, and gratitude, and thanksgiving in the heart of Paul that now pervaded it. Alas! that this joy and these pleasant anticipations of future prospects were of such short duration!

In order to understand the following statement of facts in relation to the fate of poor Eugene O’Clery, it is necessary here to observe that, just after Paul had, by means of the support received from his convert friends in Vermont, been enabled to enter college, a gentleman, who stated that he took a great interest in Paul, from what he learned from the Rev. Mr. Strongly about him, wrote him a long letter.

The burden of the epistle was, that the writer was a minister, with views not far removed from those of the Rev. Mr. Strongly, the convert to the Catholic church; that he had heard a good deal about Paul and his trials and success; that he lately visited at Mr. Reuben Prying’s, where his two little brothers now remained; that he pitied them, but especially the younger, for that they lacked the opportunity of a better and more *Catholic* education; that, in fine, he, Dr. Dilman, if Paul consented, would take the younger, Eugene, with him into the city, where his education could be attended to, and where he, at least, might be saved from the influence of the barbarous mannerism and irreligious taint of these country “common schools.” His reverence the doctor furthermore added, that Mr. Prying had no objection to the arrangement he proposed, and that he had conquered the repugnance that Mrs. Prying had to the separation of the brothers by the very flattering terms on which he offered *to do* for the child.

In a postscript of this letter, it was stated by this veracious *Christian minister*, as he signed himself, that he would send Paul quarterly or monthly bulletins of Eugene’s progress in science and virtue, and, above all, that his faith should not be tampered with in the slightest.



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The effect of such an artful piece of diplomacy may be easily conceived. The bait of the parson took, and Paul was for once overreached. The unsuspecting youth took this gentleman to be a clergyman of the same stamp with his friends Rev. Messrs. Strongly and H——. And the fact that Parson Dilman was acquainted with the former honorable men, was enough to throw Paul off his guard. The parson's talk, too, about "*Catholic education*," and the "barbarous" common schools, served still to deceive, not only Paul, but even the professors of the college to whom the epistle of Parson Dilman was submitted for advice and direction.

Paul was enthusiastic in the praise of his two reverend convert friends in Vermont, (who were the only two Protestant parsons he intimately knew before or after conversion,) and hence, when questioned by the professors about what he might know of his correspondent, he answered that he knew nothing; but the fact of his intimacy and acquaintance with the ex-parsons Strongly and H——, his friends and patrons, was "a good sign of his honesty and honor." The shrewd Jesuit professors smiling at the poor child's credulous and confiding disposition, told him that, as he had such an opinion of the worth and honor of the fraternity of dominies, he might commit his brother to the charge of one, and especially as he stood in very great danger to his faith and morals where he was at present. His situation might be ameliorated, but could not be much worse; but the good fathers declined taking the responsibility of giving a decision on the subject.

"The letter promised what was fair and honorable, but there might be deception," said they.

"Deception, reverend fathers!" said Paul. "I can't suspect any such thing in one so intimate with my dearest and best friends, the converted clergymen in Vermont."

"Well," said the sons of Ignatius, whose wise experience had taught them to have little faith in heretical parsons, "you can use your own discretion, my child."

Paul, acting on the impulse of his own feelings, thinking it would be a rash judgment in him to suspect evil design in one who professed himself favorable to Catholicity, and, besides, was of the same sentiments in religion, or nearly the same, with his convert friends in Vermont, immediately wrote in answer to Dr. Dilman, consenting to have Eugene go with him. But there was to be no legal binding in the matter, and honor was to be the only bond under which his younger brother was to be held bound.

The day now arrived for Eugene to part—alas! that it should be forever—from the society of his brother and sister. At first, some opposition was made by Patrick and Bridget; but when shown the letter of their brother Paul, they were reconciled to what they thought the temporary separation. Eugene himself was calmed, and his sorrow turned into joy, by being told that he was going towards where Paul was, and that, like enough, he would meet him on his way.

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“Can I see Paul there?” said he, drying the tears that stood in his eyes.

“Sartain you can. Don’t you like that, Bob?” said Reuben, who was in the plot with Dilman.

“Well, I’ll go, then,” said the child. “Good by, Bid; good by, Pat. You stay there till Paul and I come to see ye.”

All the household of Reuben embraced Eugene, and made him some little present, before he set out. An abundance of tears were shed by young and old, as the melancholy and thoughtful face of Eugene was seen by them for the last time.

Truth compels us to say a word or two in reference to the antecedents of this reverend doctor of Presbyterianism into whose *protection* this innocent lamb was taken. Dr. Dilman was about sixty years old at this time; and after having lived in some manner with his first wife for near thirty years, had lately taken out a bill of divorce by law against the “old woman,” to make room for a young *religious lady* in his reverend bed. During his long life, he had changed his creed no less than nine times. He was first an Episcopalian; but having been refused ordination in that sect, on account of some peccadilloes of his youth, he joined the Methodists, from whom he received conversion and a call. Being a man of undoubted talent, and thinking the Methodists were too slow in promoting him, he became a Baptist. His next hop was to the Universalists, whom, because he found too penurious, he deserted for the Congregationalists, from whom he got a call to a southern pro-slavery church, where, after amassing considerable wealth in cash and “human chattels,” he resigned his charge, came to the north again to recruit his sinking constitution, and, after trying two or three other minor sects, he settled down an old-school anti-slavery Presbyterian. Poor man! his star has gone down now, and his memory will soon be forgotten; but the anecdotes and tales that his extraordinary life illustrated will not be forgotten for generations to come. The passage in his study, through which he used to admit his “Cressida” from a secret door communicating with his “basement church,” is now shown as a specimen of his skill. The transformations and metamorphoses he used to undergo, like Jupiter of old, in order to pass unobserved to the retreats of his “Europas,” on the sides and on the summits of the classically-sounding hills of the city of his ministry,—all these things, and more, are known to the poorest retailers of interesting stories and anecdotes. In a word, he was as impure as Caligula, as cruel as Nero or Calvin himself, and as violent as Luther or John Knox.

Yet it is a melancholy fact in connection with, and illustrative of, the spirit of the Protestantisms of the United States, that for twenty years and more, with all this guilt, with all the crimes in the calendar on his head, with the full knowledge of all his sins of impurity, hypocrisy, intolerance, and cruelty to his wife, this *reverend gentleman* was the most popular, well-supported, and *respected* minister in the whole state in which he resided. He was a good preacher, an eloquent expounder of the word, a smart man;

that was enough. Protestantism could not afford to lose him now, when she was so spare of the giants to which she owes her existence.



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This was the Rev. Dr. Dilman who took Eugene under his care about whom Reuben Prying remarked, after he had left the house, that the doctor was a “real smart man.” “Your church, Murty,” said he, “can’t scare up such a grand preacher as that. Did you hear that lecture he delivered last winter against Popery? He is an honor to our church, I can tell you.”

“Why so?” said Murty; “what has he done that you esteem him so high?”

“Nothin’, but bein’ so eloquent and talented, and able to address such a feeling prayer *to his hearers*.”

“Bless you, I know one much more talented than ever he will be,” said Murty.

“I guess not, Murty,” said he, shaking his head; “who is it?”

“Why, the devil,” said Murty, “beats him all to pieces. Your parson only opposes the pope, you say; whereas the devil opposes both the pope and the Almighty. What is any of your ministers to great ‘Ould Harry’? I bet you are beat now. Ha! ha! ha!” said the Irishman, laughing.

“You are a curious feller, Murty,” said Mr. Prying.

“Am I not right?” said Murty. “You praise your minister, *not* because he is good, charitable, humane, chaste, or pious, (all which he possibly may be,) but solely because he is talented or endowed with genius. Well, then, I tell you this gains him no merit, for he received this gift from God. He may abuse it; and, at any rate, the devil, the very enemy of God, is endowed with more genius than he and all the Protestant parsons living put together. I think this is fair *arguing*, Mr. Prying, don’t you?”

“Let’s drop it, Murty,” said Mr. Prying, not liking to hear any more of such “arguing,” particularly as the children were present, and seemed much to enjoy the home-spun comparison between the Dominie Dilman and “Old Harry.” This was the first time they were observed to laugh since the departure of poor Eugene.

Meanwhile, poor Eugene arrived in the city of the parsonage of his reverend protector, where he was received with apparent affection by that gentleman’s wife. During the first three days after his arrival, several of the “saints,” male and female, of the doctor’s church, came to see the new acquisition, as well as to congratulate the parson on the success of his plan. The little orphan was flattered, caressed, and encouraged by the promise of nice clothes and other presents. And it would be unnatural to expect that the innocent heart of a child of his age, now between eight and nine years, could remain insensible to the caresses and favors bestowed. The little lad felt quite content; nay, a gradual sunshine began to spread over the calm melancholy of his angelic face.



They first imposed on the child by telling him that his reverend protector was the priest. He believed it for some time; but when, after two weeks were elapsed, he was permitted to go to church, he was perfectly surprised at “the quare way the priest said mass.” He saw no candles lighted on the altar. He heard no little bell rung at various parts of the service. He saw no persons “bless themselves” there, either. “I suppose,” said he to himself, “they would not tell a lie; but that was a very strange mass I was at to-day.”



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Friday came round soon after, and then little Eugene learned where he stood. Then he saw what hypocrites the self-styled priest, his wife, and all in his house were. He had perceived his reverence help himself plentifully to fat meat; and Eugene was invited to eat it himself, but declined, saying, "I would be a Protestant if I eat meat on Friday; and I fear ye are all here Protestants." A suppressed laugh was all that his remark could elicit from these worthies whose gluttony gave him such scandal.

Eugene's eyes were further opened by some boys at school, who laughed heartily at his expense when he asked about the "strange mass" that he had heard on Sunday.

"What mass?" said they; "sure it is only the Popish priests that offer mass, and it is a wicked thing to go to mass."

The poor child, on seeing the snare laid for him, burst into tears and wept aloud, calling for his brother Paul by name, and crying, "O woe! woe! woe!"

The school madam was attracted by the lamentable cries of the lad, and, learning the cause of them, reprimanded the impudent boys, and tried to console him. Her attempts were, however, in vain. The child seeing himself sold and betrayed, his candid soul fell back to its former melancholy, and he drooped under the weight of the injustice of which he was the victim.

From that day forward he refused to attend either the night prayers of the "false priest," or to go to any of his meetings, and to the hour of his death this resolution could never be shaken by all the wiles of his persecutors. Several new arts and schemes were tried to vanquish his resolution, but all to no purpose. He was alternately coaxed and threatened, but all attempts either to flatter or force him proved ineffectual. He was several times locked up in a dark room, which was the terror of a young nephew of the parson, who was in the house, but which had far less terror for this young confessor than the smiles of his false friends. He was heard by young Sam, who often went to the door of the dread prison, chanting his favorite hymn, thus:—

"Ave Maria! hear the prayer
Of thy poor, helpless child;
Beneath thy sweet, maternal care,
Preserve me undefiled."

And when spoken to through the keyhole, he answered that he was not a bit afraid of "Spookes," and that there was plenty of light for him to say his prayers. Even the parson himself, in company with his wife, went to listen at the door of where their prisoner was confined, and for a moment their hard hearts even were softened by the sweet, plaintive chant of the "Ave Maria."



“Are you sorry for your disobedience, now, Eugene?” said the parson; “and will you attend prayers and meeting when you are told?”

“I can’t promise to do what would displease God, and what my brother Paul and the priest told me not to do, sir,” said the child.

“Don’t you know, Eugene, the priest is a wicked man, and the Lord will punish you in a dark dungeon, darker than that room you are in, if you do not do what I tell you?” added the persecuting parson.



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All this talk was lost on poor Eugene, who continued chanting his little hymn, or repeating the "Hail Mary" and "Holy Mary," for his father and mother's souls. In a word, after a series of whippings, confinements, and scoldings, after compelling him either to eat flesh on Friday, or fast all day without any other food, Parson Dilman, out of sheer shame, gave him up, and confessed himself vanquished by the Catholic child. He did not give him up for good, however, but, by way of making more sure of his victim, he sent him out into the country, to undergo the treatment of a more zealous and perfect disciplinarian than himself. This pious Christian was no other than Shaw Gulvert, who was known to be a prodigy of sanctity, and had a world of zeal in reconciling obstinate heretics, or pagans, (as he called all but his own sect,) to the true standard of old Presbyterianism. He could boast of having most of the Old Testament by heart, making a prayer or "asking a blessing" of one hour's duration in the delivery; and by these virtues, and others he knew how to practise, every person who lived in his house, or came within the influence of his zeal, was sure "to get religion in no time." 'Tis true, he met some unlucky converts, and one or two very obstinate Papists whom he did not convert at all; but he soon despatched and discharged these latter. And he was especially mortified at the conduct of one Tipperary man, named Burk, who had the audacity to bring the priest to say mass in a house which the latter rented from him. The house has ever since been locked up, the pious Christian, Mr. Shaw Gulvert, preferring to let it rot and totter in ruin, rather than run the risk of having a Catholic tenant, who, like Burk, would be wicked enough to allow the priest inside the threshold.

This is the gentleman who is intrusted with the conversion of poor Eugene O'Clery, the Irish emigrant orphan; and he set about the work in right earnest fashion.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SAME, CONTINUED.

During the first two months, Eugene had comparatively but little to fear from the bigotry of his protector at Greenditch; but he was not indebted for this limited peace to the generosity of Mr. Shaw Gulvert. Indeed, that ignorant and cruel man dared not to execute his designs regarding the little confessor of the cross, while his two hired men, named Devlin, were in his house to enlighten his ignorance and reprimand his audacity. These two young men, brothers, were hired for a year by Gulvert, under the impression that they were native born; but after the contract between them was signed, and especially when Friday came on, Mr. Gulvert found he was *gulled*, and ran off to the parson, one Waistcoat, to see what was to be done. The young men told him not to be alarmed if he thought their presence would endanger his peace of mind, or that any dangerous consequences were to be apprehended from two such formidable soldiers



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of the Pope as they were; that he could easily get rid of them by paying them their year's wages, and they would go elsewhere to work; but that, while in his house, they insisted on perfect religious and mental independence. "And in future," said they, "we expect to see cooked and on the table, on Fridays and fast days, such food as we can partake of without scruple of conscience, or violating the rules of the Catholic religion, of which we are unworthy members."

"This is strange," said Gulvert; "why did you not tell me ye belonged to Rome, and were Irish?"

"Why did we not tell you? Because you did not ask us. And besides, boss, you hired us to work, and not to worship or believe according to your notion."

"I have never before kept a Papist to work for me," said he, drawing a heavy sigh.

"Well, boss, you can't know much about them, then. Perhaps you will be agreeably disappointed, and find that, if we do not join your very long prayers, we will *work* as well as the most red-hot Presbyterian."

"I am much in doubt about that," said the boss.

"Why so, boss? Can we not handle the plough, use the scythe, or the cradle as well as if we were of your school of heresy?"

"I allow; but the good book says that 'men don't gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles;' so I am afraid my crops would not prosper, if religious men were not employed in my fields."

"O, you need not be alarmed, boss. God makes his sun to shine on the good and the bad; and though we Papists appear very wicked in your pious Presbyterian eyes, or in those of your amiable Methodist lady here, we will guaranty your crops will be as good as those of your neighbors, otherwise we will ask no pay. Ain't this fair?"

"Yes; but the good book, you know. The Bible says so plainly," answered the wife, "that men gather not grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles."

"Bless you, madam," said the elder Devlin, "you are mistaken in the meaning of that text, which has a figurative sense, and has no reference to corn, pumpkins, rye, or any other crop that your farm produces."

She shook her head in dissent to this speech, and in a most sanctified tone said, "Our minister, Dr. Waistcoat, always applied that text to the Papists when advising us against employing Romanist hired help."



“That only proved him a booby, madam,” said Devlin. “That text partly alludes to the Presbyterian sect, and partly to the Methodist, to which you belong.”

“I would like to see how you can show that,” said she, affecting great learning in such interpretations.



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“As clear as mud, madam,” resumed Devlin. “The Presbyterian religion is the ‘thorn’ tree on which no ‘grapes’ grow; for that sect reject the Holy Eucharist, containing the blood of Christ, of which the grape is a figure. It is full of thorns, for it persecutes and stings the head of the Savior in his representative the pope; and it produces no ‘grape,’ no sacrament, no good works, no refreshing food or drink. Again: the ‘thistle,’ that produces no figs, is the Methodist religion; because, though it has plenty of stings and prickles to wound the hand that touches it, the very ass that goes the road can bite off its head. Or, in other words, though ye Methodists are malicious enough, all your malice is harmless to the church, and a very fool can refute or crop the most formidable of your arguments.”

This queer *private interpretation* disconcerted the *learned* boss and his better half, and during the remainder of the service of the Devlins they did not hear much more about the religious interpretations of these professors of two contradictory sectarian creeds. The Devlins showed, not only to the boss and his wife, that they knew more about the Bible than themselves, but the minister, Mr. Waistcoat, was soon convinced, by conversation with them, that they were not to be duped. The consequence was, that the persecution to which Eugene was subjected was arrested for a time; and it was not till after the Devlins were paid off that this innocent child was again subjected to a series of punishments and brutal treatment without parallel in the records of modern persecution.

Every Friday that the young confessor refused, after the example of holy Eleazer, “to eat flesh, or go over to the life of the heathens,” (2 Mac. vi. 24.) he was compelled to go without food till the Sunday following. He was flogged with a “black snake,” till the blood flowed in rills, every time he refused going to meeting. He was compelled to stand out under rain and storm, scorching sun and chilling frost, during the time the family spent in prayer. Yes, tied with a thong to the pump by his little soft, white hands, the juvenile martyr had to bear the merciless violence of the elements, or consent to share in the blasphemous prayers of his persecutors! And, O God! worse than all, they robbed him of his rosary, and of the little bunch of shamrocks which were the only legacy of his dying mother to him, and which his sister Bridget and he took so much pains to keep alive in a small glass vase brought from Ireland. The “*Agnus Dei*” and “*Gospel*” which it is usual with Irish Catholic children to wear around the neck, were also forcibly stripped off his person and put into the stove.

All his much-prized memorials were now gone—his beads, or rosary, with the crucifix attached, to remind him of his Redeemer; his little vase of shamrocks, to remind him of Ireland and St. Patrick; and his “*Gospel of St. John*,” and “*Agnus Dei*,” to recall to his mind his dignity and obligations as a believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and his confidence in the Lamb of God who took away his sins. These constituted all the riches and treasure of Eugene, and of these he was plundered and stripped ere he was confined in the old deserted house that stood a few rods away from the dwelling house, and where soon all the persecutions he suffered were terminated.



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One evening in October, the team of Mr. Gulvert broke loose from the post to which they were tied while he was at meeting, and, taking fright, rushed along at full speed on a narrow by-road by the river that ran through the village, till, coming in contact with the root of a tree that protruded from the road, the horses and wagon were precipitated over a fall of some twenty feet into the channel of the river beneath. As the night was dark, and the road the animals took in their furious course was not known, it was not till next morning that the fate of the team was discovered, though not only Gulvert himself, but his hired help, including his servant girl and wife even, were out all night on the search for them.

If the most unexpected calamity had visited these *enlightened* Christians—if two of their children, instead of two of their horses, had met with a sudden death,—their grief could not be more heartrending or despairing than on this occasion. The whole family was in an uproar. There were wringing of hands, lamentable cries, and bewailings the most bitter, of the death of the best team in the town of Greenditch. The very children, down to the youngest of six years old, joined their tears to those of their parents and the adult members of the family. Not a wink was slept, not a morsel of victuals cooked, nor even a fire kindled in Mr. Culvert's house that night, and it was more than a week before the pious Mrs. Gulvert could be consoled or prevailed on to show herself down stairs. She was either really sick, or affected sickness, so that it was doubted whether or not she could survive the loss of her "darling team." O, what a loss was there! "The team would fetch two hundred dollars between two brothers, and it was only last month the new wagon cost seventy or eighty dollars; and all now gone."

"What a misfortune that I went out to hear that preacher at all on the Sabbath!" said Gulvert. "Had I remained at home, or walked down to meeting, I would be three hundred dollars richer to-day than I am now."

"Pa, where were the two Paddies, Pete and Bill, that they did not mind the team while you were in meeting?" said young Harry.

"Hang the cusses, Harry! They wanted to hear the preacher, too," answered the father.

"If I were you, pa," said little Libby, "I would keep the price of the hosses out of Pete and Bill's wages, the ugly fellows, that did not mind and keep the team from running away."

"That would be but sarving 'em right, Lib," said her mother, heaving a sigh.

"Yes, wife," said Gulvert, "that I would gladly do; but you know they are in my debt. I will be glad enough if they wait to work out the money that I have advanced them."

"You didn't *advance* them money, did you, Gulvert?" said his wife.

“Yes, I did that,” said he, “by the advice of that old fool Parson Waistcoat, who expected, as he succeeded in converting Pete and Bill Kurney, that he would also convert the rest of their friends, if they were out here from Popish Ireland.”



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“O Gulvert,” said his better half, sobbing again anew, “you will kill me! I cannot live with you, that is the amount of it! How dare you, sir, lend money, or dispose, of my means, without first having consulted me! I lay my death at your door!” she added, in a sharp, angry tone.

“Dear wife, don’t blame me——”

“Away, old man!” she interrupted, “away, and leave me here to despair! I fear I will never again leave this bed; and if I find myself able, I shall never after spend a day in your house, but go back to my native state, and take out a bill of divorce against a man who knows nothing but to spend and squander the means of his family.”

“O ma,” said Libby, “do go away from father, the ugly fool, and I will go with you, won’t I?”

“He ain’t nothing else, sis,” said she, “but a poor ugly fool, a shiftless, good-for-nothing old man. O, me! O, me! I could easily have known that this would be the case, from the dreams I had for two nights.”

“I had a dream too, ma,” said sis, who, though only going in her eighth year, was perfectly well versed in all the arcana of the science of interpretation. “I dreamed I saw you crying, ma,” continued Lib, “and that there was blood on the stairs, and all way up garret, and that Shaw, my father, had spilt the blood all round.”

“That’s just it, sis,” said her mother; “the blood signifies the death of our ‘darling team;’ my crying is on account of them; and Shaw, the fool, your father, was the cause of all this trouble, and that is why he appeared to you to spill the blood. My dream was not so clear as yours, but I could have guessed that something was going to be the matter.”

Poor Gulvert was in great pain, in consequence, among other things, of the oft-repeated threat of his wife to separate from him; and, to give vent to his sorrowful reflections, he went up garret as quietly as he could, and folding himself up in several heavy “comforters,” or padded quilts, he forgot his grief by falling into a sound sleep. Meantime Pete and Bill Kurney, the two Irish converts of Parson Waistcoat, seeing things in confusion, thought that now was the time for them to free themselves forever from the hypocrisy, as well as bad board, of Mr. Culvert; and, to add to the grief of Mrs. Gulvert, next morning they were not to be had. These knowing fellows, hearing of Gulvert’s character, put themselves in his way, and being questioned as to the nature of their doctrines, and finding them suitable to his taste, he hired them, and brought them home to work on his farm. They not only became “converts” during the first week in his house, but went to meeting regularly, where they were complimented on their highmindedness and independence in shaking off Popery, and got frequent chances to tell their experience. Besides their hypocrisy, these were thorough scoundrels; for they

not only robbed their employer of the two hundred dollars which he had advanced them to bring out their



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parents from the old country, but in addition to this, and to the severity of the punishments which their apostasy occasioned Eugene, these consummate miscreants seduced the two sisters of Mr. Gulvert, one of them an old maid, whom they imposed upon by their lying representations and profane discourses. Here was a little more of the natural fruit of Mr. Gulvert's great zeal for his sect. His two hired men were gone, without having served one eighth of the two years they had agreed to work for the money advanced to them; both his sisters, *pious things*, yielding to temptation, were in a fair road to disgrace; and, to cap the climax of the unfortunate man's guilt and remorse, Eugene O'Clery, neglected in his prison in the old house, on the morning of All Saints' day, first of November, was found dead on its damp floor! Yes, this spotless, innocent, and almost infant but heroic confessor of Christ, after a course of worse than pagan persecution continued for more than two years, in the midst of legions of blessed spirits passed out of this world, to add to the joy and glory of heaven by his heroic virtues. O ye mock philanthropists, ye lovers, on the lip, of freedom of conscience, where was your voice, where your sympathy, where your indignation, where your meetings, speeches, and resolutions, when this Catholic child, this destitute orphan, this noble son of Catholic Ireland, this spotless confessor and glorious martyr of Christ, was being sacrificed, like his divine Master, to the demon of cruel sectarianism? O, the blood of this innocent Abel, of this infant martyr, shed by the cruel Herod of Presbyterianism, will cry to Heaven for vengeance on your heads, and bring a curse on your hypocrisy and dissimulation.

The news of Eugene's death, communicated by the servant maid, created a sudden fear, but very little sympathy, in the brutal family of Mr. Gulvert. Overwhelmed by the loss of their "darling team," and confounded by the loss of the money which the mock converts succeeded in cheating them of, they had neither tears nor sympathy to spare for such a trifle as the death of a "little Papist child."

The servant girl, however, who was a Scotch lassie, called Jane McHardy, cried bitterly over the death of the "poor orphan laddie," and, in company with two neighboring workmen, or cotters, who *passed* for Protestant Irishmen, watched around the corpse all night, and on the day of its interment in the pagan cemetery, situated in a barren corner of Gulvert's farm, they lingered for a considerable time around the spot, to the scandal of the religious people who assembled to take a look at the "face of the dead," and who began to suspect that those two pretended Protestants were Catholics in disguise. Their suspicions were well founded, as their subsequent conduct proved; for the two cotters, on the Sunday following Eugene's death, went to the meeting house for the last time, where they, in giving their experience, boldly professed themselves Catholics, asked pardon of the people for having deceived and imposed on the public, inveighing, at the same time, against the system of persecution and underhand proselytism that prevailed, and which produced the death of Eugene O'Clery.



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“Your ministers think they have great merit,” said the Irish cotters, whose names were Lee and Twohy, “when they succeed in causing a lax Catholic to trample on every precept of his religion and to perjure himself; but as God is just, and as those who counsel to evil partake of its guilt, and will have to suffer its punishment, so will all the sins that your minister’s cruel advice led us to commit be laid to his charge before the just tribunal of Christ.”

After this speech, the two Irish Catholic cotters retired from the meeting, and ever since these two men have proved, by their repentance, zeal, humility, and perseverance, that, though they fell from the external practice of their faith, they did so influenced by the evil advice and misrepresentations of persons who took advantage of their inexperience and poverty to lead them astray. They were gradually, however, becoming reconciled to the hard life of hypocrisy and sin which they were induced to enter on, and might have forever continued in the reprobate path on which, in an evil hour, they walked, had not the cruel martyrdom of the holy orphan child aroused them from their slumbers. Thus, as of old, does the “blood of martyrs become the seed of new Christians;” and thus is Erin, even in America, still true to her Heaven-appointed destiny—which is, that of being a missionary and a martyr in the new world as well as in the old.

CHAPTER XXI.

“Considerate, et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus.”

“Attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow.”

LAM. JER.

There was a complete suspension of the ordinary occupations on the farm of Gulvert for near ten days, owing to the trials with which his family was visited. The wife was still confined to her room, and continually threatening her husband with the divorce, who, on his part, had no heart to conduct the necessary work of his farm, he felt so dispirited at the loss of his team and of the money out of which “his converts” had tricked him. Add to this that there were very ugly rumors going the round of the neighborhood in reference to the ill usage the little Irish orphan met with. While he was living and in suffering, there was nobody to sympathize with him or to say a word in his favor; but now, when that sympathy could do him no good, according to the custom of modern philanthropy, there was an abundance on hand, and the conduct of Shaw Gulvert, as the agent of Parson Waistcoat, was censured by a thousand tongues. This is characteristic of Protestant charity: when one is dying of hunger, or forced to beg a crum of bread, she shuts her ears, and points to the prison or poorhouse, as the only proper retreat for whoever is compelled to commit the *sin* of mendicity; but no sooner does the victim of her own neglect or misdirected benevolence die, no sooner is he out of the reach of all human relief, than the heralds of Protestant charity gather round his

tomb, to proffer their assistance, aid, and liberality—like the Jews building the tombs of the prophets put to death by their own malice.

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This was the case in the instance here related. Some were for having the body of the martyred Eugene exhumed, to see if there were any marks of violence visible. Some proposed to raise a collection to have a monument raised on his grave, and all unanimously condemned Gulvert's cruelty to the "dear little child." What principally turned the current and force of public opinion against Gulvert was, that he was impudent enough to go and demand restitution of Parson Waistcoat, of the money that, on account of his recommendation, he advanced to the runaway converts. And the parson, to be revenged on Gulvert, on next meeting day called on the congregation for their prayers, to save said Gulvert from the relapsing gulf into which he had fallen. The parson, enraged at being held accountable for the money lost by Gulvert, through his own "want of godliness," as he termed it, and incensed on account of Gulvert's declaration of deserting his church, held him up continually as a stray sheep, and already, if not lost, far advanced on the broad way to perdition. In the midst of this excitement, the progress of public feeling against Gulvert was suddenly checked by the following afflicting and sudden accidents.

The wife of Gulvert, being a Boston lady, of course was altogether in favor of the Sons of Temperance; but, by some means or other, she happened always to keep a little in the house for medicinal purposes. It was well known, among the well informed, that this lady, having been "jilted," or, in other words, deceived, by a merchant in her native city, who promised to marry her, was subject to frequent melancholy attacks, and on these occasions especially did she make use of "medicinal brandy." She suffered from one of these periodical attacks now, and, consequently, the medicinal glass was always within her reach. On the small stand by her bed stood two tumblers, one containing the medicinal "eau de vie," and the other was half full of vinegar.

She ordered Jane, on this fatal day, to pour a little laudanum into that tumbler that contained the vinegar, to see if, by applying it to her temples, it would not allay the terrible headache which she said had tormented her. Instead of pouring the poison into the vinegar glass, where would the Scotch Abigail empty the cruet but into the tumbler with the brandy in it? Her mistress soon after quaffed off the liquor into which the poisonous drug had been poured, and in an hour after she was a lifeless corpse. This was not all; for, on the day of the funeral, young Harry, Mr. Gulvert's son and heir, in order to show his devotion to his beloved parent's remains, was all the morning busy in collecting flowers with which to deck the room where she was laid in state, and, attempting to reach a flower that grew out of the side of a deep, deserted well, in the lower end of the garden, the little fellow fell in and was drowned. "When the feet of them who buried" Mrs. Gulvert "were at the door," they found



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out the corpse of Harry was at the bottom of the well. It was a long time before any body could be induced to go into that well, as well because it was very deep as on account of the prevalent report in the neighborhood that Gulvert's father had killed a negro and cast him into the well, with heavy weights attached to him. After several unsuccessful attempts to raise the body, they at length succeeded, by the aid and undaunted courage of a young man who was just after riding up to the crowd, and who, on learning the cause of such a gathering, generously volunteered to go into the well, notwithstanding the hints he received from some of the bystanders that the "nigger" was at the bottom. In a few minutes Paul O'Clery was at the bottom of the "enchanted well," and, amid shouts of "Bravo!" and "Well done!" almost instantly returned, with the lifeless body of little Harry in his arms. But what's this that he finds tangled in the drowned child's hands? It is surely the beads of his beloved mother, which she bequeathed as her dying legacy to his youngest brother Eugene. How did it get into the well? He trembled visibly as it struck his mind that possibly Eugene might have fallen in too.

"Are you sure there is nobody else in?" said he to the bystanders.

"No, there ain't nobody else in," said Gulvert; "all we have left, now, are around here."

"And how came this relic to get into the well?" said Paul. "I think I saw this before."

"That? O, that's a toy that a young Papist orphan which we had used to say his prayers on."

"And where is that orphan now? O, tell me, where is he? For God's sake tell me, where is my beloved brother?" exclaimed Paul.

"He is dead."

"O, don't mock me, but tell me the truth. I assure you I am a brother of the orphan child, Eugene O'Clery. What has become of him?"

"We do not joke, my young gentleman," said an aged man in the crowd. "Your brother, the orphan you allude to, died suddenly on the night of the first of this month, and was interred in yon mound on the second of the month."

"O Lord! O Lord! grant me patience. O my brother! O Eugene! O beloved child of our hearts! what has become of you? Did you die on your bed, or meet with an accident? or how did these beads you loved so well come into this horrid, pestiferous well? O, woe is me! Why did I ever let you out of my sight? Why did I not remain in servitude and slavery, rather than let you into the care of the cruel, false-hearted stranger? O villanous deceiver! O infamous prevaricator! Parson Dilman, why did I listen to your seductive promises?"



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The reader may imagine, for we cannot adequately describe, the burden of woe and grief which took possession of the soul of Paul when he found that his darling brother, on whose account he suffered so much anxiety and came such a distance, was gone forever from his sight. And when he learned how he died; how, after countless tortures, by whippings, by hunger, and by confinement, the delicate martyr of Christ was allowed to perish on the damp floor of an old, deserted house; how he was deprived of the memorials of his faith and country; how he was buried with as little ceremony, and as much indifference, as if he had been an irrational animal,—when he learned all these circumstances from the two Irish cotters, Lee and Twohy, it took him to pray continually not to yield to feelings of hatred and revenge.

A circumstance related to him, however, by the peasants, whose hospitality Paul consented to avail himself of for a few days, served to reconcile him to Eugene's fate, and to inspire him with the most exalted sentiments of forgiveness and good will towards the murderers of his brother. Every night since Eugene's burial a bright column of light was seen rising from his tomb, and terminating in the heavens above, where the column became gradually wider, till it became like a wide circle of glory, similar to that which appears around the moon on a winter's night, when the atmosphere is at the snowing temperature. In the centre of the circle appeared a beautiful cross of most perfect proportions, and so bright in the bright circle that it was perfectly dazzling, and the sight could with difficulty be fixed on it for an instant.

This phenomenon was seen by the two Irish cotters frequently, and all the neighbors around had observed the lower part of the column, but concluded that it was phosphorus, which, they said, from some cause or other, either the nature of the soil or from the bodies interred there, ascended to the clouds, attracted by some atmospheric body there. Paul, too, was blessed with this happy sight, but without indulging in the gratification of a too curious or protracted observation of this vision; and being fully convinced that it was no phosphoric combination of natural phenomena, concluded to take off the body of his beloved brother, and have it interred, in a Christian manner, in the same consecrated tomb in which the remains of his father reposed. He was also fortunate enough, by the payment of a liberal bonus, to succeed in raising the body of his mother, whose tomb he was able to find out, by a measurement which, on the day of her interment, he had made, and from certain stones placed by him at the head of her coffin.



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Thus, by the piety of a son and a brother, were the three bodies of these members of this pious and renowned family united again after a temporary separation. “Lovely and comely in their life, even in death they were not divided.” In a Catholic cemetery, in the vicinity of New York, can now be seen a beautiful monument of Italian marble, with the names, ages, and places of the nativity of Arthur O’Clery, and his wife Cecilia, and their son Eugene, inscribed in a neat cruciform slab in one of the faces of the monument. In another slab are carved, in “bold relief,” the little vase of shamrocks brought by the family from Ireland, together with the *Rosary and Cross*, suspended from the hand of the virgin holding the child. On the third square of the tomb is conspicuous a figure of Erin, holding in her right hand a crucifix, and with the left hand pointing it to her children, with the words, “*Sola spes nostra, ubi crux ibi patria*”—“This is our only hope; wherever the cross is honored, call that your country.”

After having seen to the proper execution of all things in reference to the tomb of his family, Paul O’Clery, with a heavy heart, returned to acquaint his little brother Patrick and sister Bridget about the fate of Eugene. He did not forget, however, before quitting the last resting-place of his parents and brother, to have the grave fenced round with a neat iron rail; and fixing all inside the fence in the form of two pretty flower beds, he, with his own hands, carefully planted the roots of the shamrocks which were brought from Ireland, and which he luckily found in Mr. Gulvert’s kitchen garden, where they had been thrown, after having been taken from Eugene. And to this very day these shamrocks flourish—neither frost, nor cold, nor parching heat, nor inclement seasons being able to retard their growth; as if their verdure and flourishing vegetation were supplied from the pure and genuine Irish clay to which the bodies of the three O’Clerys have been long since reduced.

Paul now saw his people reduced by more than one half. When they left Ireland, they were seven in number; now they were only three. He was too well trained in Christian resignation, however, to repine at what evidently appeared to him the dispensation of Heaven. After the example of holy Job, therefore, he praised the Lord, to whom, if he deprived him of his good parents, he was also indebted for being placed under the care of such patterns of virtue. These several trials, and the consequent distractions in which they involved him, made him more disgusted than ever with the world; and his desire to consecrate himself to God in the holy priesthood became stronger and stronger every day. The Almighty seemed to have some special mission in view for this spotless child of St. Patrick, when his mercy had conducted him, like the children in the fiery furnace, so early through such meritorious trials and sufferings, as it requires the most faithful correspondence with grace to endure, and it falls to the lot of a few to encounter.



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The end of all his difficulties and trials had now arrived. From this day forward the breeze that bore him along in his ecclesiastical voyage became fairer and fairer, till, advancing from virtue to virtue, and honor to honor, he became the glory of the church, and exercised such influence on the destinies of his countrymen and of those committed to his charge, that he might adopt the language of Joseph to his brethren: "God hath sent me before you into Egypt, that you may be preserved on the earth, and have *food to live.*" (Gen. xlv. 7.) But this is anticipating what naturally should have its place at the conclusion of our narrative.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DESERTED HOME OF THE ORPHANS.

"Now," said Murty O'Dwyer, one Sunday evening, as all the members of the Prying family were seated around the tea table, "will any body doubt the usefulness of confession? The very robber who, while under the influence of drink and evil advice, plundered the widow O'Clery and her orphans of their money, has returned from the scorching plains of the south, in obedience to the advice of the priest to whom he confessed, to make restitution; and he has made it."

"It beats all I ever heard," said Mr. Prying.

"That is only an ordinary occurrence with Catholics," rejoined Murty. "Thousands of dollars, and I might say millions of money, are yearly restored to those to whom it belongs, through the influence of this divine institution."

"I wonder what has Paul done with the rest of the money, after paying for the board of himself and his sister and brothers?" said Calvin.

"He has given me two hundred of it," said Murty, "to compensate me for what I lost on account of the malice of Dominie Boorman, the Presbyterian, because I could not believe according to his cruel code of irreligion. He paid one hundred dollars for masses for the soul of poor Cunningham, who died of fever and ague one week after his having made the restitution. Two thousand, I believe, Paul paid into the convent where his sister Bridget has gone to become a nun. And the rest, I believe, he spent in raising an elegant monument over his parents and beloved Eugene's remains. O, yes, I forgot; he paid five hundred dollars towards the new Catholic church, S.A., where his convert friends reside."

"It is to me the strangest thing on earth," said old Mrs. Prying, "how liberal these Catholics are in paying to the support of their religion. Where on earth do they get the means to put up such costly buildings as they have erected in scores, within my own knowledge, these past five years?"



“So far from this being strange,” said Murty, “madam, it is the most natural thing in the world. We know the Catholic religion is true. We know it has God for its Author, and that through its teachings all men must be saved that will be saved. Knowing this, we understand the merit of supporting such an institution. What is the whole world to a man if he lose his soul? and how can a man save his soul, if true religion be wanting?”



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“Ah, what a noble critter that Bridget O’Clery was!” said Calvin, changing the subject to her whose image stood uppermost in his mind, “What a pity,” he continued, “that she should ever become a nun! Do nuns ever get married, Murty?”

“Don’t you know so much yet, Calvin? Certainly, they never do get married. They vow to consecrate their hearts forever to God. In fact, they anticipate, here in this life, what all the blessed do in the next life—to live in God, and for God. I think the life of a holy nun,” said Murty, kindling into enthusiasm, “is superior to that of an angel, and the merit far greater.”

Here it is as well to state that Calvin Prying, of late years, lost all that zeal for stiff Presbyterianism that possessed him in his younger days,—an ordinary occurrence with American Protestant young men,—and that, instead of his former zeal, he now had the utmost indifference, if not contempt, for the teachers of the hard creed of his cruel namesake of Geneva. He had a heart, too; and though a phlegmatic and a rude one, it could not remain insensible to the chaste charms and virtuous beauty of Bridget O’Clery. For years this feeling was growing on him—the exhortations, and lectures, and advices of little Parson Gulmore to the contrary notwithstanding. In a word, though she was “Irish” and a pauper, in the slang of parsons and officials, and though the vulgar little dominie was continually ridiculing the Irish and the Catholics, Calvin saw that Bridget was beautiful in countenance, and light as a humming bird in heart—-circumstances which insensibly made an impression on the rude material of which his own was made, creating there a feeling of love bordering on admiration and distant esteem. No sooner, however, did it reach his ears that the money was restored to the orphans, and he was told that Bridget was likely to have a portion of some thousands of dollars, than his former esteem and admiration, as if by magic art, was turned into love. And now, who dare say word against her? and how low, contemptible, and wicked the counsels of Parson Gulmore, who attempted to prejudice him against such a treasure, such a model of every virtue, such an angel, as she “always appeared to him to be”! He would have cheerfully “accepted the hand” of the poor “Irish” orphan when that hand had some thousands of gold dollars in its beauteous grasp. The Yankee is not remarkable for having an eye for the beautiful in nature or art; but when *dimes* and *dollars* are in prospective, none is more penetrating or sharp-sighted than he. Beautiful paintings, cathedrals, the noblest creations of the chisel, the most enchanting landscapes have just as much attraction for his genius as they can be made available “for making money,” and no more. It was from the same principle that Calvin Prying’s love for Bridget O’Clery originated. Hence he was highly enraged at the idea of her going into a convent, and had a strong notion in his head to call a “public mass meeting,”



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and pass resolutions against the constitutionality of allowing young ladies of respectable fortunes to enter convents. Indeed, he so far succeeded in creating an excitement in his favor about deterring Bridget from entering the convent, as to get, by the payment of a small sum, one of the daily papers of the city to write an article in his favor, entitled "*Abduction!*" During a few days, the editor of the same filthy sheet repeated his scurrilous attacks on Catholicity, not forgetting to squirt a good deal of his dirt on the Rev. Dr. Ugo, whom he blamed for encouraging the girl's vocation, and thus depriving the *hungry* Presbyterian Calvin of a fair wife and a handsome fortune.

There was no great tumult created, however. Election was approaching, and that absorbed all the excitable matter of the people, in spite of the newspapers. The disputes and defences of the faith which Murty O'Dwyer had to maintain since the departure of the young, "beautiful Irish girl," as Bridget was called, were many and critical; but an event now happened, that fanned the latent but active anti-Catholic fire into a furious flame.

One evening, at supper, after the news arrived at R—— Valley that Paul O'Clery was not only a priest, but stationed in the second city then in the Union, Amanda, casting her malicious eye at her youngest sister Mary, on whose calm cheek she saw, and seemed to envy, the innocent blush that started there, on having heard the paragraph alluding to Paul read and commented on, thus addressed her:—

"Ah, Mary, what do you say, now, to Paul, who is forever estranged from you? for he is not only a priest, but a missionary among the 'Irish,' and, of course, can never care about you again."

"I am glad to hear he is a priest," said Mary, in a gentle voice; "for I believe he will be more happy so than in any other situation in life. I am sure I wish him happy, for he was ever good and amiable."

"But yet," rejoined the old maid, "he never made you any return for all your fondness for him. He never writes you any loving letters, nor cares whether you are living or dead, or else he would write, or send you some tokens of friendship."

"You know a little too much, Amanda," said Mary. "I never asked him to write; and I know he loves me so far as to pray for me, and that's all he ever pretended to; and as for presents, I do not covet them, as I have got this beautiful one, a miniature of the mother of God, set in gold, which Paul presented to me when here last. See it here," she said, drawing it from her bosom. "I would not give this for all the presents in New York."



“Idolatry! idolatry!” cried out Amanda. “Idolatry!” cried out Calvin and the rest of the family. “Idolatry! yes, as the Lord liveth,” groaned a hollow, dramatic voice, as he entered by the woodshed way to the dining room. It was that of Rev. Mr. Gulmore, who after a long absence, hearing the Romanizing tendencies that threatened to desolate this once stanch Presbyterian family, came, he said, “with his sickle,” to cut down the cockles, and “weed out this once fertile but now overgrown garden.”



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“What is this I have been hearing?” thundered the little thick man, stamping on the floor. “Is it possible that my senses deceive me? or have I heard and seen the daughter of my friend, my Orthodox—once Orthodox—friend, draw forth her idolatrous bawble from her American bosom, and defend its use and veneration with her tongue? Is this true? Tell me! Speak!”

There was a short pause after this short declamation, delivered in the most passionate form. At length, Mr. Prying, senior, coolly answered, “Yes, Mr. Gulmore, I ’spect Mary is lost to your church, and inclined to the Catholic system.”

“O Lord, forbid it!” cried the little thick man in white choker. “It cannot be; we cannot allow it. I shall storm heaven with prayers. I shall do violence to the Lord. I shall catch hold of him, and not let him go till he give back this lamb to my bosom.”

Such were only *some* of the expressions, blasphemously familiar, which this clerical mountebank made use of during a full half hour, that he almost electrified the whole company by his half-mad gesticulations and discourses. At length, when his legs began to fail, he got on his knees, or rather on his *heels*—a posture the Irish call “on his *grugg*.” He prayed, and roared, and screamed, and he cried, as it were, shedding tears, to the alarm of the oldest members of the family, who feared he might burst a blood vessel, as he was a short-necked, plethoric, chunk of a man; and to the infinite amusement of Murty O’Dwyer and the younger members of the family, who, from the violence of the laughter that seized them, were in danger of meeting that fate from which the former wanted to save the parson.

This levity on the part of the youngsters did not escape the notice of his *weeping* reverence; and he no sooner recovered himself than he administered a sharp reprimand to all concerned, but especially to Murty.

“I pity men of your country,” said he, addressing Murty,—who, it must be recollected, had made very great improvement in his education since we first introduced him to our readers,—“I pity men of your country, on account of the ignorance in which they are kept by the soul-destroying system of Popery that binds them down.”

“Indeed, Mr. Gulmore,” said Murty, “I am sorry you don’t take some other means, besides those not very enlightened prayers you have volunteered to favor us with, to dispel and instruct our ignorance.”

“Why, thou Papist boor, durst thou deny the power of prayer?”

“No, sir. I have great faith in prayer, especially the prayer of a ‘just man;’ but God forbid that I should regard your eccentric, indeed, I might say blasphemous, effusions as prayer! You talk of the ‘ignorance’ of my countrymen! Ah, sir, I have no hesitation in

saying the most ignorant among them would be ashamed of such silly-acting and disgusting cant as you have just now delivered.”



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"I blame you not," deluded Papist; "you have not felt the 'power of prayer,' brought up in all the ignorance and idolatry of the 'scarlet lady.' But it is not for you I prayed or wrestled with the Lord, but for my beloved dove, this innocent victim of your idolatry and the hellish arts of your church. Do you not feel the change of heart, Mary, my love?" he said, approaching near to the girl. "Tell me, have I gained thee? Has the Lord heard my groanings, and sighs, and petitions for thy restoration to the creed of our Protestant fathers? Do, Mary dear, tell me the feelings of thy heart! Do, love, comfort me by the assurance that I have gained thee!"

"Mr. Gulmore," answered the good child, "I thought you had long since ceased visiting us, and we hoped never again to be annoyed by your ministrations. Your conduct in combining with my step-sister here, in conjunction with the late postmaster of S——, to prevent Paul from holding correspondence, has disgusted, not only me, but even father, beyond the limits of reconciliation; and whatever I may think of your religion, be assured I have no two opinions about yourself."

"O, she is lost, I greatly fear! Fallen is an angel from heaven! Save, save, O Lord!" cried the parson, as Mary Prying rose up from her seat and left the room.

The foregoing rebuke of the spirited girl brought this craven-hearted dominie at once to his senses, and during the remainder of the evening he was more rational in conduct and discourse, seeing that Mary was the darling of her father, who would allow the parson to make no reflections on the motives that actuated her in the steps she was about to take.

"I am afraid, parson," said Murty, breaking the embarrassing silence that continued for a few minutes, "I am afraid the lady has eluded the forceful grasp of your powerful prayer. I guess she will become a nun, too, notwithstanding your great efforts to make her sing

"But I won't be a nun; I can't be a nun;
I'm so fond of pleasure that I can't be a nun."

"I greatly fear, yer riverince," said he, affecting the broadest Irish brogue, "y'll have to phray a great deal yet afore you convart her from her resolution."

"We must submit to the decree of the Lord in all that he has planned from the beginning of the world, Murty," said the parson, resignedly.

"Think the Lord has decreed Mary for the nunnery, reverend and learned sir?" said Murty, affecting great politeness.

"Not exactly, Murty; but the Lord, by his inscrutable decree before the creation, has passed sentence on all accountable beings: some he has delivered over to



irremediable wrath, and others he has predestined to glory and bliss eternal; and no efforts of men can reverse these irrevocable decrees.”

“O, dreadful!” said Murty. “I always heard that God willed all men to be saved; that it was in every man’s power to avoid evil, and do good; that the giving of the commandments supposed the perfect liberty of men; and that, supposing the grace of God, all men had the means of salvation within their reach. If your system were true, all efforts of man to save himself would be useless, and all your pulpits and sermons would be worse than useless; for they would be a gross imposition, and a loss of time.”



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“There is where you are in error, Murty,” said the parson. “Churches, pulpits, Bibles, and ministers are the machinery the Lord makes use of to secure the perseverance of the elect.”

“That talk appears to me silly,” rejoined Murty. “The elect are to be saved, or they are not; if they are to be saved by the decree of God, then there is no use of you and your machinery; if they can lose their ‘election,’ and become reprobate, then your theory is contradictory, absurd, and grossly perverse of the gospel. Take your choice of the horns of the dilemma.”

The parson here entered into a very unintelligible explanation of a subject which constitutes, in defiance of common sense and of the plainest teaching of the gospel, the leading dogma of Presbyterianism; namely, foreordination, or the eternal decree of every man’s election or reprobation, irrespective of free will, good works, or even the all-saving merits of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“How contradictory the tenets of sectarianism!” said Murty. “You, that accuse Catholicity of teaching absurd and incredible doctrines, are yourselves enslaved by the most incredible and contradictory creeds. It is the same in every sect. Take the Methodists, and they are the very contrary of what their name signifies. Instead of following any *method* in their mad orgies, they would seem to be, *intellectually*, the successors of the ancient bacchanalians. They would carry man back to his primitive *woods*, and, by the medium of plenty of ‘straw,’ would annihilate the distinctions between the sexes, by introducing a promiscuous intercourse, and legalizing, by custom, the most indecent practices.”

“You have been at a camp meeting then, I see,” said the parson, glad that attention was turned from his own sect to one that was a rival of it.

“Yes, sir, I have, I regret to be obliged to confess,” said Murty; “and I must say that the Methodists, by their conduct there, showed themselves more ingenious in inventing the means of election than those of the church of Calvin.”

“How so, Murty? In what do they exceed the Presbyterians?”

“Why, in this, that they have beat you hollow in securing salvation. You make use of churches, pulpits, parsons, Bibles, and anti-Popery lectures to secure the election for the brethren; but the Methodists secure the same gift by means of some ‘straw.’ At the camp meeting held last year at M——ville, of which the Irish laborer who spent a night there said, ‘that there were more *souls made there* than converted,’—at that meeting, where there were twenty thousand persons present, I heard a preacher cry out, ‘More straw! more straw! Fifty souls lost for the want of straw!’ Now,” continued Murty, “this is what I call progress, to make as much out of a good bed of straw as you do out of all your church machinery for saving souls.”



“Ha! ha! ha!” said the parson, turning to Mrs. Prying. “He is right; I saw and heard them myself at such absurdities.”



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“Then,” said Murty, “you or any other Americans who are aware of such gross impositions on the credulity of your people, and of their gross ignorance, should be the last persons on earth to reproach the Irish or any other people with ignorance, superstition, credulity, or fanaticism. Good night, parson, and every time you are tempted to reproach an Irishman with ignorance, think of ‘More straw! more straw! Fifty souls lost for the want of straw!’ and that this sermon was preached in enlightened America of Bibles!”

After the departure of Murty from the room, Gulmore, to make amends for his senseless conduct in his attempts to convert Mary Prying, became very complaisant, and, for the want of a better subject, resumed the subject of the extravagances of the Methodists where Murty left off. He knew, also, that old Mrs. Prying had an antipathy to that sect.

“The Irishman is an amusing fellow, I perceive,” commenced he; “he is not far wrong in his description of the Methodists, I can tell you.”

“I never could bear that denomination,” said Mrs. Prying, “especially since the time that Morefat carried on over in Vermont; and I am still more displeased since that Minister Barker seduced Amanda to his meeting, together with others of our regular members.”

“They are a horrid set!” said the dominie. “Did you not hear of the donation party at brother Funny’s, last new year’s?”

“No. Do you mean the talk about Miss Talebearer?”

“Worse than that, although nothing secret. Nothing that the whole town has not heard. You know Mr. Funny was rather poor, having been but a few months on the ‘circuit;’ and so Mrs. Plumpcheek, wife to Aaron Plumpcheek, while he was off in Virginia, went to the party, and there offered to kiss every man that would pay her a dollar for the proceeds of the donation! The consequence was, that she realized seventy-five dollars in hard cash, though most of the boys paid her but two shillings. And thus poor Brother Funny made a handsome sum by the *free charms* of Mrs. Plumpcheek! Ever since her husband is made jealous, and I think he has reason.”

Sectarians, you who are so loud in your pretended zeal for education and morals, you who talk so much and loudly about the corruption of Popery at home and abroad, why do you not cast the beam out of your own impure eyes, and then you may see in your own land of plenty, carried on under the *sanction of what you call religion*, scenes such as the annals of paganism can scarcely parallel.

We can prove the facts related above by Parson Gulmore to be literally true, and to have happened annually for years under the sanction of *religious* ministers, and exposed to the cognizance of fathers and mothers accompanied by their *daughters* and *sons*.

We publish these things reluctantly, on account of our readers; but we must tell the truth, though it be piecemeal and in fractional parts, rather than in the full view of its naked reality.



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Is it not time to say to these hypocritical sects, "Physicians, heal yourselves"? Look into the conduct and constitutions of your own bodies ere you turn censors on others. The corruptions and deformities of your own bodies will take all your zeal, all your energy, and all your lives, to correct, purify, and eradicate, leaving the Catholic church to reform whatever abuses may have crept into the lives or morals of her children by the ordinary resources, which are ample, and always within her reach.

Really, the hypocrisy, audacity, and malice of the Pharisees of old, in persecuting Jesus Christ in the flesh, were not equalled, in degree or intensity, to the malice and hypocrisy of sectarians, under every Protestant title, in their unrelenting hatred of the same divine Person in his mystical body here on earth!

'Tis all nonsense to reproach *Catholics* with conduct similar, or as gross, as these instances of immorality which we justly charge on the Protestant sects. Catholics, as individuals, may be, and have been, guilty of grave crimes and scandalous immoralities; but does the church countenance or connive at their conduct? No; we say, emphatically, No. On the contrary, she condemns vice in every shape, and denounces, like another Baptist in the wilderness, the wrath of Heaven on the workers of iniquity. Is there one of her precepts, counsels, or rules, that guards not against sin and its occasions? According to the accusations of her enemies themselves, who reproach her, with too much severity, of imposing too many restrictions on the passions, is she not continually preaching up to her followers the necessity of self-denial, humility, purity, charity, prayer, fastings, watchings, and, above all, OF SHUNNING THE OCCASIONS OF SIN? Hence, in the whole volume of her history for eighteen centuries and better, we read not of one *camp meeting* sanctioned by her, nor that she ever authorized her ministers to *feel "for the change of heart"* in young ladies, to proclaim the use of "more straw" for the conversion of both sexes, or to raise funds by the abominable practices of the "donation parties" for the support of her institutions. And mind, these scandals the sectarian churches sanction and carry on under the sun of heaven, by day as well as by night, exposed to the jeers and ridicule of one another, and to the condemnation of the Catholic church. When they are such in "the greenwood, what would they be not in the dry"? If, like the Catholic church, they had the world to themselves for "a thousand years and more," what abominations would their spurious churches have not only tolerated, but have instituted and approved? If they have produced Mormons, Transcendentalists, Universalists, and spiritual rappers, in the nineteenth century, what monsters would they not have produced in the ninth?

In the "dark ages," the Catholic church saved the world, preserved literature, civilized real barbarians, and, above all, practised, as well as preached, a PURE MORALITY. The Protestant sects in this enlightened age, by their novelties, by their dissensions, and, above all, by the low standard of morals which they inculcate, threaten to throw the world back again to the dark chaos from which Catholicity has drawn it, and to substitute for the glory of Christianity the miserable philosophism and superstition of the degenerate days of paganism.



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In proof of these statements, we refer any candid mind to the “spiritual rappers,” “women’s rights,” “Mormonism,” “gold hunting, and other manias,” which, within the last few years, have sprung from the sectarian systems and their teaching, and from no other source.

We are horrified at the morals and tenets of the Gnostic sects, the Manicheans, the Albigenses, and other defunct heresies of old; but we doubt if any thing more impious, immoral, or absurd happened under the auspices of these by-gone sects than the blasphemies, delusions, and corruptions carried on under the cloak of your “camp meetings,” “revivals,” “mediums,” “spiritual wife system,” and other modern *reproductions* of the Protestant Christian churches, falsely so called.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN WHICH THE SCENE OF OUR TALE IS CHANGED.

The events recorded in the foregoing chapters, as you are aware, good reader, happened principally among the poor and humble of life; and this was in accordance with the scope of our narrative, having no higher ambition than to chronicle the lowly annals of that numerous class of the community. *Nunc paulo majora*. Now we must introduce you into high life. We turn our eyes to one of those grand mansions of the rich,—one of those palaces of the “upper ten,”—where few of the humble are privileged to enter, much less to be introduced or admitted on terms of familiarity. It is our privilege to introduce you, friend of the blistered hand and dusty coat, but of the honest heart, into that palace of the merchant prince of the second city in the Union, in order that you may see and judge for yourselves whether or not more happiness dwells there than in your homely residence. See the imposing structure, with the neatly-mowed lawn in front. Observe the taste and artistic skill with which the walks, the little hedges, and the shrubberies are laid out. You can yet get but an imperfect view of the proud edifice itself, which seems as if a monarch, that looks down with dignity and authority on the countless array of ordinary buildings that extend as far as the eye can reach on every side. The gates, as you enter the enclosure, are of massive iron, painted green, and, by the help of machinery, yield to the gentlest pressure of the hand, as if some spirit of the ancient fabled Olympus kept guard at their hinges. It is a complete “*rus in urbi*,” inside the outer wall. Here the luxuriant grape vine creeps along in graceful festoons, groaning under the pressure of her full paps; there the lofty and beauteous palm spreads his cooling and protecting branches.



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On one side see the fruitful lemon and orange trees, bending under the weight of their golden and emerald productions; on the other the fragrant apple, the sweet pear, and mellow peach borrow support from the strong granite wall to bring their burdens to maturity. Behold there two fountains casting their crystal and refreshing contents aloft, as if making restitution to the thirsting atmosphere for what they stole from him under ground. The water falls back again, however, and is received by the marble basin at the base, to form a neat pond, where gold and silver fish sport and gambol. A little at a distance, to the rear, the fragrance of honey and the busy hum of the bee are perceived by your grateful senses. The place looks like an earthly paradise; every thing there seems to laugh without restraint, from the creeping rose fastened to the hedge to the tall, princely-looking mountain ash, with its bunches of red berries.

The only one living thing that seemed pensive and sad there was a lovely, delicate fawn, which rested, with her head drooping, at the foot of a rose bush, on the summit of the little green mound which was the centre of this delightful spot. Perhaps the lovely creature is after being weaned from the udder of its affectionate dam; or, perhaps, she grieves for the absence of some favorite in the palace of whom she is the pet. But that the creature grieves is evident, for you could see the two moist tracks furrowed on the smooth face, from the tears that have flowed there.

But the inside of the "great house," who can describe it? From the ground floor to the uppermost attic, the rooms presented that waste of furniture, in the shape of sofas, ottomans, easy chairs, couches, carpets, tapestries, curtains, paintings, pier glasses, plate, and a thousand other articles contributive of ease and luxury, which the most extravagant expenditure could procure or vanity suggest. In truth, the interior was the exact counterpart of the exterior, in the artistic arrangement and splendor of every thing. To the eye of an observer, on an ordinary occasion, every thing appeared gorgeous in the extreme; but on the occasion we describe, when preparation was making for a grand reception, all was joy, mirth, luxury, and happiness. Servants of every color and hue were seen moving through the labyrinths of the saloons and chambers of this great palace, uncovering the long-concealed splendors of valuable articles, and arranging every thing for the most advantageous show.

And

"Now through the palace chambers moving lights
And busy shapes proclaim the toilet's rites;
From room to room the ready handmaids hie,
Some skilled to wreath the headdress tastefully,
Or hang the veil, in negligence of shade,
O'er the warm blushes of the youthful maid."

Splendid services of gold and silver plate met the eye in every direction, on their way to the grand dining room; while, from the remotest part of the building, the sense of

smelling was simultaneously assailed by several currents of delightful culinary exhalations, which, like the winds in the cave of AEolus, struggled for egress from their confined birthplace.



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This is one of those occasions on which the Dives of this sumptuous palace, Mr. Goldrich, intends to celebrate his birthday; and as he can't tell where he was born, nor can he show any genuine images of his ancestry, (except that he came down a scion from the great "Anglo-Saxon race,") he is determined to make amends for this calamity he could not help, and the want of taste in his father, whoever he was, by spending an ordinary fortune in the present celebration, and thus combine the splendors of all the possible past anniversaries of his birth in one grand, unrivalled celebration to-day.

"And here, at once, the glittering saloon
Bursts on the sight, boundless and bright as noon."

The select music of splendid bands now announced the movements of guests towards the grand banquet room. In pairs they enter, and singular; the short procession is now at an end, and the places are filled up with the scanty number of twoscore guests, male and female.

You would have supposed, from the preparation, that the inhabitants of the entire city were invited; but no, the exact number was forty, besides the members of the rich man's family. And this happened not by accident, or because of the penury or avarice of Mr. Goldrich, but because in the whole city there were no more than twenty families who ranked in the sphere of the "upper ten" in which "mine host" moved. These shining figures, that you can scarcely look at without risk to your eyes from their jewelry, are the ladies who leave us in doubt which they love most to exhibit—their charms, or the richness of their ornaments. Among that bright array of female beauty there is missed the fair form of one who was, heretofore, an ordinary occupant of an honorable place at the family table. It was the chair of the rosy-cheeked Alia that was unoccupied at this splendid circle. The presiding queen of the feast, Madam Goldrich, apologized for the absence of "poor Alia," by representing her indisposed; and at the announcement of this dispiriting intelligence, disappointment marked the countenances of the guests, for Alia was the brightest star that shone in that brilliant galaxy of fashion.

Being the oldest among the children of Mr. Goldrich, Alia possessed all that graceful and dignified superiority over those whom she regarded as her younger sisters, which are the acknowledged privileges of age in every well-regulated family, and which her superior talent seemed naturally to enforce.

Years rolled on, and the dear child lived in blissful ignorance of her origin and desolate condition, till the jealousy of her younger sisters excited her suspicions, and she began to mistrust the genuineness, as she felt the coldness, of that parental affection which the pretended authors of her existence so long counterfeited. During many months, if not years, these suspicions preyed on the poor girl's mind; and though she never dared to mention them to any save old Judy, the



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negro woman, she felt satisfied that her sisters and herself could not belong to the same stock or the same race. The transparent delicacy of her complexion, the rosy tint on her cheek, unrivalled by the costly paint of her sisters, the shining blackness of her splendid hair,—all these circumstances pointed her out and proclaimed her as of a different race to those whom she hitherto regarded as her kindred. Long had she mused on the cause of this disparity, and much had she suffered, in the depth of her soul, from the representations and suggestions of her active imagination in reference to her origin, and many were the tears shed by her while oppressed with these doubts. But the events of this day, added to the late insolent conduct of her sisters, which provoked the reprimand of her peevish mother guardian, who told her to curb her “Irish temper,”—these cleared up all her doubts; and, filled with a melancholy joy at a revelation she owed to the jealousy and vanity of a proud mother and her daughters, Alia retired to her room to give vent to her feelings in sobs and tears.

“Thank God,” she cried, “I know what I am, or ought to be. Thank God I am Irish, too, for I often wished I belonged to that much-abused and persecuted people. But O, where shall I find my parents? or how came my lot to be cast in this proud palace, which, alas! I too long regarded as my home? O, who, who will restore this poor ‘exile of Erin,’ to the home of her unknown parents? How gladly would I exchange all the splendor of this place for the homeliest cot in that land of the shamrock and the cross; ay, the poorest ‘cabin, fast by the wild-wood,’ in the land of St. Patrick, and my unknown ancestors.”

Such were the soliloquies of poor, despised Alia, in her room on the third floor, where old aunt Judy, the negro, having missed her favorite from the grand company, after having sought her in vain in the lower saloons of the house, just entered her room.

“Dere, now, Miss Ali’, am poor aunt Judy half kilt from sarching for you all over. What make you be here, and all the gran’ gem’men asking for you?”

“Ah, aunt Judy, why have you all along denied of me all knowledge of my extraction, parentage, and race? Did you not know that I was Irish? and yet you always denied that I was, though I have suspected I was, and you must have known it, having lived so long in the family. This is not what I expected from you, aunt Judy,” she said, casting a look of gentle reproach at the old negro.

“O, dear, miss—O, dear,” cried the poor affectionate creature, bursting into tears; “don’t blame dis ole nigger, but massa and missus, and Miss Sillerman, sister to the missus who died last year. They forbid aunt Jude to tell who rosy-faced Ali’ was. I was bound to swear not to tell. If they knowed I did hab a *parle* vit you on de subject, they would turn poor ole Jude out de door to die in the poor *maison*.”



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This poor negro woman was a native of St. Domingo, and, at the time of the revolution there, came to New Orleans, in care of a child belonging to one of the white planters who was murdered—which child, by the way, has since become a pious and eminent clergyman. By some accident or other she fell in with the Goldriches, in their commercial visits to New Orleans, and, though brought up a Catholic, the poor thing forgot all practice of her religion, and this accounts for her evasions and denials to the repeated questions of Alia regarding her parentage and birth.

“Pon my fait, miss,” she ever said, “I know nothing about you, ’cept that you are the rose-cheeked Ali’, the *fleur de lis* of the flock.”

Promises, and flattering presents, and all other persuasive arts of Alia to get the secret out of Judy proved useless. She had promised to keep it, and no human authority, she thought, could ever cause her to violate that promise. Although Judy had, through fear of displeasing her patrons, given up all public practice of her religion, she nevertheless never denied that she was a “Catholique,” and never omitted to recite full five decades of the beads after going to bed. She declared she could not fall asleep till she complied with this rather lazy effort of prayer. Besides these rather faint evidences of her faith, she often told her loved Ali’ that she intended calling in the priest at the hour of her death; and she confided to the honor of the young lady this secret desire of hers, and elicited many promises from her Ali’ to send for his reverence when she would perceive her end approach. “This is rather a singular notion of yours,” Alia used to say. “If you are a Catholic, and believe your faith the best, or the only true one, why do you not practise its teachings, and fulfil all the requirements of your church? I am sure neither father nor mother would blame you.”

“O miss, I feard, I feard,” the poor, timid soul would answer. “But tink of vat I tol’ you; when I go to die, send for the *bon* priest, who know how to do the ‘*parle Francaise*,’ and I pray for you when I go to heaven.”

“I shall do that for you, poor aunt Judy, or even attend you now, while you are in health, to the Catholic church, where you can go to the sacraments, and become a member again of that church which you have so long neglected, but which yet seems still to retain a strong hold of your affections and heart. Won’t this be the best course, aunt Judy? I will attend you to the church of that zealous young Irish priest whom I see so often hurrying along here to his sick calls up town; and as I suspect I am ‘Irish’ myself, I hope he will not be displeased at my call.”

“O, you no Irish, miss, at all, but good Yankee. But tish better not go for de priest till he come to me when I go to die. Now I have religion here in *mon coeur*; ven I die, I profess her open.”



“Well, Judy, act as you wish; but it appears to me your conduct is singular. I shall do my part, however; and if there is a priest to be had in the city when you take to your death bed, you must have him to attend you.”



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It was by such communings and conversations as the foregoing, during the leisure hours of aunt Judy and her loved Ali', that mutual confidence and disinterested friendship grew into maturity between them—the childish and helpless simplicity of the one, and kind and good-natured condescension of the other, producing the like effects in the hearts of both respectively—that is, disinterested friendship. Yet strong as this friendship was, and enthusiastic as was the love of Judy for her “rosy-cheeked” favorite, they were not sufficient to cause her to reveal the secret of her birth and adoption, even at this hour of Alia's deepest grief and affliction.

There were two causes for this her unaccountable silence. Firstly, she had promised not to mention the slightest circumstance connected with the adopted child, and she feared punishment from the anger of her proud massa, whose disgrace might be the consequence. And again, having been in the habit of hearing all sorts of reflections on the “Irish,” whom some mad abolitionists would gladly enslave in place of the blacks, poor Judy thought to save Alia from the mortification of finding herself “Irish,” by her equivocation and falsehood.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SHOWS HOW THE CROSS AND SHAMROCK WERE PERMANENTLY UNITED AFTER A LONG SEPARATION.

Paul O'Clery had been appointed pastor of one of the principal churches in the second city in the Union, as we have before mentioned, and already the evidences of the “care of souls” with which he was charged for several years began to manifest themselves on his placid brow. His was a life of unceasing activity. The visitations of the sick, the calls of charity, the hearing of confessions, together with the instruction of youth and the preaching of God's word,—these, the ordinary lot of pastors, constituted but a share, and not the largest one, of his onerous duties. Ever mindful of his own destitute condition while an orphan deprived of both parents, all the orphans of the thickly-inhabited district that constituted his mission became objects of his special care. And at a time when such an institution as a Catholic orphanage was regarded as visionary, or the ephemeral creation of a too ardent zeal, this good pastor succeeded in founding and supporting an asylum which has since become of incalculable value, not only to the Catholics as a body, but to the inhabitants of the whole city and state. A house of refuge for repentant Magdalens, placed under the care of the Sisters of Mercy, commanded his next care. In a word, the founding of schools, hospitals, confraternities, guilds, and other pious institutions exercised all of his time that was not devoted to his strictly ecclesiastical duties; so that his sister Bridget, known in religion as Sister St. John of the Cross, complained a good deal of his want of charity in not having visited her but once in seven years. “Ad majorem Dei gloriam,”—“To the greater glory of God,”—was this pious Levite's motto; and he was dead to all the ties of flesh and blood, and heedless of all calls save those of charity to his God and his neighbor.



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In the pulpit, the spontaneous eloquence of his heart chained the attention of his hearers; and his discourses, though rather inclined to asceticism than controversial, went to the hearts, and convinced the understandings, of unbelievers of the divinity of the doctrine he preached. No class of his fellow-creatures was excluded from the influence of his boundless zeal. Protestants—to whom he was very mild, on account of his knowledge of the ignorant prejudices in which they are bound by the malice of their teachers—heard him, and became converts to the church of God. Even the neglected negro race claimed and received a full measure of his zeal. He established a school for the children of these neglected sons of Africa, and never lost an opportunity of visiting them at the death bed or in the hour of serious sickness.

It was on occasion of one of these visits that God rewarded his priest, even in this world, by the joyous disclosure which we here record, and which, next to his grace of vocation to the priesthood, of all the manifestations of God's mercy to him, claimed his sincerest gratitude and thanksgiving. After the end of the grand "birthday banquet," which lasted for a day and two nights, Alia's position at the palace became more disagreeable than ever. The young girls frowned on her and shunned her society, and Madame Goldrich, after she had got over the fatigue of the party, read her a smart lesson on her "ill manners and Irish temper," because she dared to absent herself, to the disappointment of the guests, from a table at which she was denied her proper and usual place. "Alia, this conduct of yours must be reformed, and that quick, or your separation from this family, to which you do not belong, must soon take place. I ain't goin' to let you take precedence of my children no longer."

To this vulgar speech of the "princess, our hostess," as she was flatteringly toasted by a John Bull guest who was there, Alia answered not a word, but, having retired to her room, fell on her knees and prayed long and fervently to the God of her fathers to assist her by his inspirations, and direct her to the best, in her present perplexity. Having unburdened her bosom of a load of grief by a copious effusion of tears, and felt in her spirit that calm resignation which a sense of its own forlorn condition and a total reliance on God are calculated to inspire even in the unregenerate and imperfect soul, Alia now proceeded to the chamber of old Judy, whose expected illness had at last arrived, having been ill now for three days. On perceiving her entrance into the room, the old negress appealed to her in most supplicating terms to fulfil her promise to send for "de priest, for now de hour am come. O Ali', angel, dear," she cried, "do not let me die without the 'bon Dieu,' or I lost foreber. O, haste! O, haste!"

Alia lost no time, but, taking pen and paper, wrote as follows to the bishop of the diocese:—



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“The Right Rev. Catholic bishop is respectfully informed that there is a negro woman lying dangerously ill at Mr. Goldrich’s, who, being a Catholic, desires the last rites of that church. Being a native of St. Domingo, the French is her vernacular tongue; for which cause it will be desirable, if possible, to send, a clergyman who can speak that language.”

A young negro lad was the bearer of this despatch, and he returned in less than an hour, attended by Rev. Paul O’Clery, whom the bishop sent to answer this urgent call, all those of the episcopal residence having been out since early morning attending on the sick in their respective localities. In order to avoid any further cause of displeasure to Mrs. Goldrich, Alia had given the negro lad instructions to bring the priest in through a private door that communicated with the garden, rather than attract attention by entering the hall door. She had a full view of the countenance of the young priest, through the window, while he was crossing that part of the garden that lay next the houses of the city, and, strange! her heart throbbed, and an indescribable sensation passed over her frame.

“How happy,” she thought, “must be the sister of such a gentleman as that! how different her lot from mine!”

The priest entered, and was received with a very polite bow by Alia, which was returned profoundly. Declining to take a seat, on account of his many other urgent calls, he was escorted to old Judy’s chamber by his fair guide, who, on the way thither, explained to him what sort of a person she was, and how odd in her notions about religion. Having conducted him to her bedside, she made a polite bow, and retired, asking if her services were further needed.

The priest answered, “No; that he believed all the requirements for this holy but melancholy service were prepared, and that he supposed he had to thank her for the nice arrangements he observed.”

“Yes, mon pere,” said old Judy, in half French, half English, “there is the ‘*chandel*,’ the ‘*eau-benite*,’ the ‘*la croix*,’ and the rest, that I keep many year for my deathday.”

It was only when she retired from the chamber that the priest caught a full view of the fair Alia; and now

“A strange emotion worked within him, more
Than mere compassion ever worked before.”

He saw in this interesting stranger the strongest resemblance to his own sister Bridget. There were the same raven hair, the same candid and large eyes, the same broad and well-set teeth so peculiar to the O’Clerys, and the same form almost to a line. The groans and urgent call of his penitent Judy, however, soon recalled his mind from its



reveries, and he banished all thoughts of Alia, as temptations, or, at least, speculations, which it was for the present useless to entertain. He put on his stole, and after a short aspiration for light and grace to discharge his duty to the sick woman, was just in the act of repeating the prayer, "*Dominus sit in corde tuo et in labiis,*"—"May the Lord be in your heart and lips,"—when the creature, raising herself up in her bed, prevented him, saying, "Mon pere, I vant, before I begin the confession, to tell you a secret that burden my mind long time."



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She then proceeded to tell how that young lady he had just seen had been adopted, or rather kidnapped, by the family she now lived with; how her name was changed from Aloysia to Alia; how this scheme was planned and carried out by Miss Sillerman, Mrs. Goldrich's sister, who died not long since; how, till of late, she was brought up as one of the family; how carefully she was instructed in all the ways of the Presbyterians; and, above all, how they endeavored to conceal her family name, for fear of being claimed by her friends. "But, mon pere," said she, in continuation, "though I forget the family name of this young, lubly lady, I have an article here (loosing an old-fashioned workbag) which may tell her family name."

With that she handed Father Paul a neat ruby necklace, with a rather heavy gold clasp, on which were carved deeply a cross, interwoven with shamrocks, with these words, in italics, "*The O'C— Arms.*" This was enough for Paul O'Clery; he had no doubt of having seen and conversed with his own dear, long-lost sister, a few moments before. He sunk down on his knees, buried his face in his hands, and tried as well as he could to suppress the emotions that pervaded his bosom. After having prepared old Judy for heaven,—having first prevailed on her to make these disclosures in presence of witnesses, on condition that the circumstances of her revelation should not be published till after her death,—the priest retired from that palace, promising to call again, accompanied with another gentleman, in the afternoon. Lest his feelings should betray him, he retired from the house with as little delay as was consistent with politeness; and he trembled all over as he a second time returned the greeting of his dear Aloysia, as she conducted him to the door.

With as little delay as possible, he sought the office of his legal adviser, and, accompanied by a judge of the Supreme Court of eminent character, and the legal adviser, and a third, all Protestant gentlemen, he sought the sick chamber of the old negress again, and there her deposition, and a confirmation of her previous account of Alia's bringing up and captivity, were obtained. They had scarcely concluded her testimony, when poor Judy bid farewell to the world and its crosses, and the priest had the satisfaction of bidding God speed to her soul in its passage to eternity, having read for her the last benediction a second time.

The presence of so many strangers in the house naturally created some surprise among the inmates, and shortly the death chamber of Judy was filled with the members of the family, of both sexes.

An explanation of this unusual and unauthorized proceeding was demanded by Mrs. Goldrich, which the eminent judge consented to give, provided an *adjournment* to a more appropriate court was agreed to.



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His honor was in the act of unravelling the mysterious but well-connected development of old Judy—a work of supererogation on his part, as far as madam was concerned—when the fair-faced Alia herself made her appearance; and her reverend brother Paul, no longer able to check his feelings, sprang forward, and, seizing her white hand, kissed it, saying, “My dearest sister Aloysia, welcome to the embrace of your brother! ’You were lost, and I have found you; you were dead, and are again come to life! Rejoice, and be glad.’”

This was too much happiness for Alia to bear up against without momentarily yielding to the shock, and she sank, as if lifeless, on a couch. She was soon restored, however, and surrounded by the seemingly affectionate caresses of her envious *mother* and jealous sisters. She had to hear all their arguments to persuade her to prefer her present splendid misery to the equivocal boon of having found out a poor, destitute brother, though it was not yet clear whether she could call him by that name. Appearances were deceitful.

Father Paul listened meekly to the smooth discourses and flattering promises of the rich lady and her children, not doubting, if she were an O’Clery, which side she would choose.

“You are young, my dear Aloysia, but yet at or near the age of mature understanding; and I know a brother cannot command you as a parent could in this ‘free country.’ You have your choice—the traditional glory of the old family of O’Clery, two brothers, and a sister as fair as yourself, together with the old faith of St. Patrick,—the glorious CROSS and the immortal SHAMROCK,—all these balanced against this grand palace, probably great earthly comforts, and a religion that ’is not fit for a gentleman.’ Have your choice; choose boldly, and at once, and free your brother from suspense.”

“Are you my brother?” she said, wildly, “or do I dream? Have I a brother on earth, and one so worthy as thou? O, I have no second choice,” she cried, falling at his feet, and wetting them with her tears.

“Plant this Cross in my bosom,
And this Shamrock in my hair;
And these are the only ornaments
I ever again shall wear.”

The spirited girl prepared immediately to quit the splendid palace, and she came to the resolution of taking nothing with her, either of dress, or trinkets, or jewelry. “Naked and bare I came into this family, and with one single dress shall I leave it,” said she, “feeling sufficiently enriched in what I have this day found—a brother, with the Cross and Shamrock of the O’Clerys. O, what complete changes! Instead of Alia, I am Aloysia; instead of Goldrich, I am O’Clery.”



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Paul did not think it prudent to allow his sister to quit the house of her rich patrons so quickly, especially as Mr. Goldrich was from home, and till the public should be satisfied, and all doubts about her identity resolved. There was some opposition made by the parsons, one of whom, a Mr. Cashman, was long fishing for the fair hand of Aloysia; but this little dust raised by the "white necks" was soon hushed, when the record of the baptism of Miss O'Clery was produced, and when the book of heraldry was consulted to verify the armorial bearings of the O'Clerys, which were, as we said, carved on the clasp of her necklace; and, above all, when, on the left-hand ring finger of the young lady, the same impression of a ring appeared which several persons testified having seen on it when an infant.

CHAPTER XXV.

CONCLUSION.

During the *denouement* of the events recorded in the preceding chapter, and the discussion of them by the various *religious* newspapers,—each of which, like a well-trained spaniel, tried to bark so as to secure the approbation of those from whom it derived its food,—Father O'Clery continued in the discharge of his ordinary duties as if nothing strange had happened. He addressed one letter on the subject to the leading secular journals of the city, showing, by the most convincing chain of evidence, the identity of the lady passing so long for a daughter of Mr. Goldrich with his own younger and long-lost sister, and satisfying all but fanatics and bigots of his prudence, and the propriety of the steps taken by him for her recovery.

Mr. Goldrich, in the mean time, returned home, and though he could not but feel astonished at the developments which took place in his absence respecting his adopted daughter, he was too shrewd and too keen a man of business to make himself a tool in the hands of bigoted parsons, or to deny the validity of the evidence proving her to be no other than Aloysia O'Clery. This was enough. What now was become of all the talking, writing, swearing, and preaching of the dominies? To what purpose was this big talk, loud exclamations, puzzling interrogatories, and flaming articles of the Babylonian press? For a whole month nothing was published by the editors but "leaders," "articles," "paragraphs," "communications," "reports," "speeches," "lectures," "sermons," "mass meetings," "resolutions," "protests," and "letters of correspondents," regarding this "Popish plot," "this Romanist aggression," "this priestly insolence," and a thousand other names, threats, and unflattering epithets against persons and institutions, whose only connection with the case of Miss O'Clery was, that they belonged to the Catholic church, or dared to speak the truth, or claim their rights. Now the hundred-headed Cerberus of the press is silenced, and skulks into its dark lair, beaten and silenced, but not ashamed of the filthy dribblings of its lying



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tongue. Now all the talk, articles, and “leaders” go for nothing, since Mr. Goldrich acknowledges “the priest is right; she is his sister.” But did not that clamorous press, that bellowed and hallooed on the rabble to rob, murder, and destroy,—did it not recall its words, apologize for its naughty language, and retract every charge groundlessly made? Like a convicted felon, did it cry *peccavi*—I have sinned, been misled, or misinformed? No; not a sign of repentance has been manifested, not an apology made, not a word of retraction uttered by these self-styled philosophers of the press, who think they are responsible to no law, human or divine, and who say they have a world to redeem, and nations and peoples to regenerate. We have read countless folios of calumnies, misrepresentations, and black libels on every thing sacred and venerable on earth, by the American press, during several years that we have read newspapers; but we never yet found one editor to retract, apologize, or mend his manners and language, except when compelled by the cudgel or by the law. What an anomaly does the observation of the conduct of the world present to us! They refuse “to hear the church,” or be guided by the teaching of men who have spent their lives in preparing and qualifying themselves for the office of public teaching; and they submit themselves blindly and without control to the guidance of men whom they know not, who have not always the best moral characters, and whose training, in most instances, does any thing but qualify them for the dangerous office they fill.

The instance which is here given of the almost unanimous hostility of the press to the cause of justice, truth, and honor, illustrates what we say; and the obvious conclusion is, that the “fourth estate” itself needs reclaiming—the great modern reformer needs reformation.

Soon after Mr. Goldrich’s return home, he called on Father Paul O’Clery, and, with a great deal of good nature, congratulated him on his very providential discovery of his sister, “my dear adopted child. And now, reverend sir,” said he, affectionately, “I beg to tender you the hospitalities of our house. As your sister has been for so many years one of the family,—and not the least loved one, I assure you,—I hope I may, without impropriety, by right of relationship by adoption, claim you as a member also.”

Father Paul answered by assuring him he appreciated his kindness; that he acknowledged the honorable connection in full; and that, though this very affectionate advance had not taken place, Mr. Goldrich would ever be regarded by him with feelings of veneration and love, on account of his affectionate kindness to his sister, in giving her such a superior education, and treating her on terms of equality with his own children. The highminded and liberal gentleman, after having shed tears at the idea of losing his dear adopted girl, departed, having previously extorted a promise from Father Paul to attend a great party in honor of Aloysia, at the palace, on the evening of the next day.



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In the mean time, Aloysia's room was besieged with crowds of anxious visitors and voluntary condolers on her resolution of renouncing wealth, pleasure, and Protestantism, for poverty, Popery, and penance. Rich merchants came, offering to settle annuities on her for life; rich widows came, with their tracts and Bibles in one hand, and their real estate deeds and scrip in the other, hoping to conquer her resolution; and eloquent parsons, with their "sweet speeches and flattering discourses," were chasing one another, like clouds driven by the winds, to and from the well-furnished boudoir, all charged with the same apostolic office of saving a soul, a beautiful, interesting one, from falling into that world-wide "net" of Popery with which St. Peter and his successors have never ceased to "catch men," since the days of Jesus Christ. All the discourses, prayers, entreaties, threats, crocodile tears, flatteries, misrepresentations, legacies, settlements, and other seductive allurements have miscarried, this time. A Catholic Aloysia was baptized, and a Catholic she is resolved to live and die, with God's grace.

The "big dinner" was prepared at the rich man's house, where Father Paul through courtesy attended, and where he was obliged to defend, in a speech of some length, the violent assault of that Parson Cashman, who we told was fishing for the hand of Aloysia, but who now, because she rejected him with scorn, had the bad taste to insult the whole company by his *champagne*-inspired attack on Ireland, her creed, and her children.

Paul completely refuted his charge of ignorance of the Irish, by contrasting their religious knowledge with that of the English and Americans; in the former one of which countries there are seven or eight millions of pagans, and in the later so many thousands who follow such impostors as Miller, Smith, spiritual rappers, Transcendentalists, Fourierites, and other impostors notorious for their crimes.

"The reverend gentleman forgets," said he, "that Ireland was once, and for ages, the most enlightened country on earth, and deserved to be called "the Island of Saints;" and that whatever of ignorance, poverty, and crime—which, thank God, is little—she is afflicted with, was inherited by her from the curse introduced into her by the upas tree of Protestantism. Ah, sir, the eulogy of England comes with a bad grace from the lips of a son of America, which she oppressed, and which, but for Catholic arms, might be now, instead of a great republic, a badly-ruled province of Protestant England. Study history, sir; study history; and you will soon think better of Ireland and Catholicity, and less of England and her persecuting Protestantism." And with that he retired.



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The remaining part of our tale is soon told. Paul O'Clery, from being a good priest, became, in addition, a great man; his virtues, learning, and genius soon attracted the notice of the princes of God's church. He was consecrated bishop, "*in partibus infidelium*," and he is now a pillar of God's church, and an ornament in his sanctuary, as archbishop in one of the great cities of British India, in Asia. Behold, my young readers, how the church opens the gates of her treasures, and encourages the promotion of the humblest of her children. Virtue and genius are the only titles to nobility which she regards. Every office in her gift (and she has stations too high for angels) is open to the humblest aspirant to perfection. How many scores of young men might be now shining lamps in God's sanctuary, instead of being degraded to the level of the drudges of the earth and the slaves of the world, if they only resisted the glittering bait of temptation at first, and took as their model Paul O'Clery, the orphan boy!

What became of Aloysia, do you wish to know? She joined her sister Bridget in the nunnery, and after atoning by her tears and repentance for the *material* heresy of her youth, she lately fell a victim to fever, contracted by her in caring for the poor negro slaves of New Orleans. She preferred to die a saint than live a princess.

Eugene, as you already know, died a martyr for his faith, having been persecuted to death by Parson Dilman and Mr. Shaw Gulvert of evil memory.

Patrick returned to Ireland, where he has lately purchased an estate under the encumbered estates law—the very same estate on which his father lived under Lord Mandemon.

You recollect Van Stingey, the first persecutor of the orphan family, was blown up by powder, and perished miserably. Amanda Prying met a fate little better. Having been in the habit of imbibing strong drafts of chloroform, for purposes of intoxication, she was found dead in bed one December morning, after having imbibed too strong a dose.

The youngest child of Reuben Prying met with his death in this way: Willy, the youngest but one, hearing that somebody was to be hanged, asked his pa how the operation was performed. The father, of course, believing that "knowledge was power," taught the child how to act the hangman, and the lesson was not taught in vain; for, the next day, Willy, experimenting on the "knowledge" communicated, hanged his younger brother, Lory, dead. Thus perished the darling son of him who combined with the parson to kill Eugene O'Clery.

I forgot to say that Mary Prying, the innocent, good girl, and the admirer of Paul, became a convert, and is now a nun, called Sister Mary Magdalen.

But what of the Parsons Grinoble, Gulmore, Barker, Scullion, and the others, who had a hand in robbing the orphans of their faith? They are all alive yet, and, according to their limited capacities, doing all the harm it is possible for them to do, in propagating error

and disseminating discord. And your friend Dr. Ugo, who was instrumental in saving the orphans, is yet living, and battling for the faith, never omitting to inculcate fidelity to the CROSS and attachment to the SHAMROCK on all his beloved parishioners and hearers. Amen!