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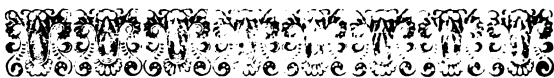
THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

A CATHOLIC TALE.

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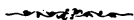
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INTRODUCTION.

THE following narrative is reproduced from the pages of the MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART, American edition, to which it was originally contributed. Having been already translated into Italian by the conductors of the *Messenger* published at Bologna in Italy, we have thought it only appropriate to republish it in the country for which it was written, hoping that in its present form the work may attain a wider circulation, and accomplish greater good. In addition to the illustrations it furnishes of the history, uses, and significance of the Sign of the Cross as employed in the Catholic Church—the subject of Spiritism, with its developments, receives particular attention. The sphere embraced by these topics, and others that are incidentally touched



upon in these pages, is one which so intimately concerns the daily life of Catholics in the United States, that we hope the work will be welcomed as a useful contribution to American Catholic literature.

The publication* from which it is taken,—inasmuch as it may be known less widely than it deserves to be, considering the character of the Devotion of which it is the organ, and in view of the fact that it neither seeks notoriety, nor is published for profit,—will, it is hoped, by means of this work and of others that will probably be reprinted from the same source, become better known to the class to which it especially addresses itself: the clients of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of the Apostleship of Prayer.

* "The Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a Monthly Bulletin of the Apostleship of Prayer." Rev. B. Sestini, S. J., Woodstock (College), Howard Co., Maryland.





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LEANDRO;

OR,

The Sign of the Cross.

I.

LEANDRO AND HENRY.

A YOUNG American, whom we shall introduce to our readers by the name of Henry, after having spent a few years at a college near his home, in one of the Middle States, became tired of college life, and, being the owner of a rich patrimony, resolved to follow the example of some of his companions by going to "finish," as he said, at a Prussian university. After two years' trial, however, he became more weary of the university than he had been of the college. He then tried another school in Germany, where he spent about

ten months, and then another for a still shorter period.

At last he repaired to Paris, where he began to waste his money and his time, as he had done before. Among other letters of introduction which Henry had brought with him to Paris, was one to a countryman of his, the delivery of which he had overlooked. When he at last called upon Dr. Albert Spencer, he found to his surprise and gratification that this gentleman had been intimate in former years in the family of his mother, a mother whom Henry may be said never to have known, having lost her in his infancy.

It might be added, indeed, that this poor youth had never known either parent ; for, some time after his mother's death, his father, still suffering from this great blow, of which the sight of his child deepened the consciousness, went travelling, directing his brother—the president of a large banking establishment in the State of New York—to place the boy in a college when of sufficient age to leave his uncle's roof, should the father himself not return in time to attend to it. The poor man never returned, dying of cholera at Calcutta. ✱

Albert was a young man, between his thirtieth and fortieth year, practicing medicine in Paris with a reputation for rare ability. His amiable manners and excellent heart at once captivated Henry's affection, and at his earnest request Henry, who had already been a resident of Paris for some five months, became an inmate of his house. It was no ordinary

kindness which urged Albert to extend this invitation, but a lively interest proceeding from several causes, of which the principal was the discovery that his young friend had abandoned the practice of his religion, and was not even firm in the faith. As Albert's history is not without interest, it will be useful to sketch a few of his antecedents.

All the members of his family were originally Presbyterians, and two of his uncles were still ministers of that denomination. Albert's father, having noticed in his boy, besides much talent, a great natural uprightness of character and sedateness of temper, as well as a taste for oratory, advised him to follow the example of his uncles. The boy, more to gratify the wishes of a father whom he greatly loved, than from any inclination of his own, left home at the age of sixteen, and went to live with one of his uncles. Up to this period Albert knew scarcely any thing about Catholics, and had never met any member of their Church. However, at the end of one year's instruction from his uncle, he thought he knew enough of their religion, which he considered the pest and scourge of the world. Yet, he desired to meet with Catholics, in order to observe from his own experience what he had so far learned only from books, and from the testimony of his uncle, the parson. The latter would never permit him while at his house to hold intercourse with Catholics, but on his return home, after his year's study, he sought for an introduction in a Catholic family, and was so fortunate as to find access to one

which was unexceptionable in point of position and culture. Here he soon became intimate, and was received upon those terms of familiarity which the equal social condition of all parties warranted. He availed himself of the ready welcome extended to him, to make himself acquainted with their daily life and conversation. To his surprise, the more he examined into the influence which their religion exercised upon them, the more directly did the result contradict all that he had been told of Catholics, or that he had read concerning them or their religion.

He was especially struck by the simplicity, innocence and unaffected piety of a young lady, a member of this family. He regarded her at a distance, as set high above him on a pedestal of moral excellence and purity, the possessor of virtues to which it was the ambition of his ingenuous soul to aspire. She was then engaged to the gentleman she afterwards married. Under these circumstances, she became his Mentor, and first, by her example, then by her prayers, and finally by her clear and convincing explanations of the religion she knew and loved so well, brought Albert to embrace the Catholic faith. This young lady was the future mother of Henry.

Albert's family were highly indignant at the step taken by him, and his father positively forbade him his house; offering, however, to receive him again if he would return to the Church in which he had been educated. His uncles left no means untried

to bring back the "apostate," as they called him, but all in vain. Finally, his father—a man of great wealth—told him that if he persisted in his determination, he must leave the country and cease to "disgrace his family;" moreover, that he could expect no share in his patrimony. Albert remarked that he had no means to go elsewhere, on which, his father, who was prepared for this answer, handed him some gold, and a check to the amount of a thousand dollars. "Here," said he, "you will find what you need; go away from us—we want no Popery in our family." Albert was of course greatly grieved at encountering so much harshness where he had hitherto met only love and affection, and was shocked that the illiberality and bigotry, which he had been told were the exclusive possession of the Catholic Church, and most foreign to Protestantism, could thus close against him a father's heart. The trial was a severe one; and nature, through his affectionate temper, and the accustomed dependence of his years, had no slight struggle to undergo, but grace triumphed.

A few days later he sailed for France. An English priest, whom he met in Paris, procured him some scholars in English, and befriended him in other ways. After a few months he began the study of medicine, which he continued for several years, always supporting himself by giving English lessons. At the close of his studies he passed a triumphant examination, and shortly after entered upon a practice which rapidly grew into success.

His first fervor in religion, instead of being weakened by his trials, was only strengthened, and he was particularly zealous in bringing into the bosom of the Church as many dissenters as he could, especially among his own countrymen. Of this number was the lady whom he had married about three years before the opening of our story. It is easy to see that to one of this earnest character, Henry's state could not be a matter of indifference. On consultation with his wife, they both concluded it advisable to invite Henry to make their house his own during his stay in Paris. Their hope was to reform his dissipated life, to correct his ideas, and bring him back to the practice of his religion. Henry was impressed by their kindness, and accepted the invitation without suspecting the object of it.

The doctor, however, soon perceived that the associations of the city, and especially of a city like Paris, counteracted the good effects that his counsel and his cares might have produced. Henry's heart was not really bad, but his head was light and his principles were unsettled, while his mind was intolerant of application. The doctor's wife had noticed all this, and one day she remarked to her husband that but little benefit was to be expected from their solicitude in his regard.

"To tell the truth," said Albert, "I am of the same opinion, yet I wish to employ every possible means to save this young man. Annie, whenever I think of him, the remembrance of his mother

passes through my mind, and I seem to hear her entreating me for God's sake to save her Henry from the abyss. How can I resist such an appeal? You know how much I, and I may say you also, owe to that holy soul."

"Dear Albert," replied his wife, "I fully agree with you, that nothing should be left untried to save him. I have for some time been thinking of an expedient that might prove successful. I have observed that Henry is naturally affectionate and even noble-hearted, and whatever may be his faults, is possessed of qualities which afford a basis of high character. If he were alone with a few mature friends, and withdrawn from his present associations, we might hope for favorable results."

"Yes, but where shall we find these friends, and what opportunities have we for placing him so happily?"

"If *one* friend would be sufficient, Leandro would be he; and as for cutting off all occasions, this plan occurs to my mind:—you know that travelling has been prescribed for Leandro, and we should endeavor to bring the two together, and then induce Henry to accompany him to America. An appeal made to Henry's sense of responsibility would arouse his ambition, I am sure, and if this much is gained, I venture to say that all is gained."

"Annie," said the doctor, "your project pleases me exceedingly. I shall go immediately to see Leandro."

Leandro Lopez, of a noble family of Andalusia,

was in his twenty-third year—some few years older than Henry—and a young man of excellent qualities. At the age of thirteen,* he had already finished his course of Rhetoric with rare success, and at that tender age, his familiarity with the classics—Greek and Latin—was truly surprising. He then studied Philosophy for three years, with equal success. In the natural sciences, he became particularly partial to mathematics, and would probably have devoted himself to some profession of which it was a specialty, had he not felt himself called to the ecclesiastical state. Wherefore, he entered a seminary, and began his theological studies, but towards the middle of his third year of study, his health failed, and he was threatened with consumption. The physician who attended the seminary advised his suspending his studies, and recruiting his health by travel. The physician had been a fellow-student of Albert's in Paris, and when his patient left for that city, gave him a letter of introduction to Dr. Spencer. In this, after recommending Leandro to the medical care of his friend, he gave a detailed account of his antecedents, and enlarged on his worth.

Albert had introduced him at his house, where he was always made welcome both by himself and his wife, who soon learned to entertain a high appreciation of his qualities of mind and heart. Amiable,

* In the south of Europe where young persons mature early, this is not an extraordinary circumstance.

polite, and ordinarily grave in society, he could be also sufficiently gay when needful. His range of information was varied and extensive, but was never displayed in conversation except with the utmost modesty. Besides his own native language, he spoke with ease French, Italian, and Portuguese, as well as English. What was to be admired in him above all was an exemplary piety, and an unswerving faith, of the genuine Spanish type, a faith which admitted of no compromises and yielded to no human respect. In a word, there was in him both virtue and character.

Leandro, besides being a frequent visitor at the doctor's house (where, however, he had only casually met Henry), had left to the doctor the entire direction of his health, and had found himself much improved during the few months of his stay in Paris, but still not entirely free from dangerous symptoms. Albert and other physicians were of the opinion that a sea voyage would complete his cure, and urged his undertaking it. The project of the doctor's wife came in to facilitate it.

The innocent scheme which Henry's thoughtful hosts had devised, was set on its way by bringing the two young gentlemen more intimately together. Happily, Henry soon acquired so great a liking for his new friend that he seemed to prefer his society to any other; Leandro's nobility of soul and dignity of conduct especially pleased him. When the good doctor found the two friends on such excellent terms, he one day said to Henry:

“You are the very man I am looking for. You have it in your power to render an important service.”

“Pray, of what service in the world can I be to anybody?”

“Do you not believe it? Suppose that through your means Leandro’s life could be preserved.”

“Leandro! What do you mean?”

“I mean that Leandro must cross the Atlantic, and needs to find on the other side a friend in whose care he may remain on some country place near the seashore. Have you not told me that one of your country-houses is so situated?”

“Yes,” said Henry, “but what friend will Leandro find there?”

“Why, he will find *you*. Do you think I would let Leandro go thither without you?”

Henry reflected awhile on this unexpected proposition, and then replied cheerfully, “With all my heart; your plan is an excellent one for him—in fact for both of us. I would willingly dispense with all the pleasures that Paris affords, for the sake of the service I could render Leandro, and the satisfaction I should enjoy in his society. But do you think it would be agreeable to *him*. We are friends it is true, but we differ so much in character and habits.”

“As for that, let me arrange the matter.”

“Very well, I am at your service, for Leandro is too good a fellow to lose if I can save him, and as this is the proper season for an invalid to travel, the sooner our arrangements are made, the better.”

The doctor had in fact already opened the matter to Leandro, informing him at the same time of the interest he felt in Henry, of the motives for it, and of the need the latter had of a true friend. Leandro, who had determined, in obedience to his medical advisers, to cross the Atlantic and spend the remainder of the summer in the United States, proceeding thence to Cuba to pass the winter, thought he could not do better than to follow the plan suggested, especially as Henry now urged it, who begged for the pleasure of being his host as well as companion. Moreover, while recruiting his health, Leandro thought he might be able to reciprocate his friend's services by bestowing upon him those of a higher order.

In about two weeks after, in the early part of July, the two friends took passage *via* England for New York. After a few days spent in England, they set sail. Fortunately the sea was placid, and the weather all that could be desired. No obstacle therefore intervened to prevent their enjoyment of each other's society, nor did the numerous groups of passengers scattered about the boat, enjoying the scene, and engaged in merry conversation, and with whom one readily forms acquaintance under such circumstances, withdraw Henry from Leandro's companionship. They sat beside each other at table, they paced the deck together, in a word they were for the first two days inseparable. On the third morning, however, Henry's seat was vacant at breakfast. One of the passengers seated

opposite Leandro, asked, with a significant smile, what had become of his friend.

"I do not know," replied Leandro; "perhaps he is sick."

"Why," said the other, "we have the calmest sea I ever saw in my life, and to-day it is especially so."

After breakfast Leandro went in search of Henry, and, having found him, "Well, Henry," said he, "what is the matter with you? are you sick?"

"I am as well as mortal man can be."

"Why did you not come to breakfast then?"

"To tell the truth, Leandro, I do not like to be laughed at."

"To be laughed at! How so?"

"You make a great sign of the cross before every body at the beginning and at the end of your meals, and (excuse me) by doing so, make yourself ridiculous, and what is more, me too. Leandro, I can bear anything but ridicule, and either you must cease making the sign of the cross after that style, or you must let me take my meals after you—unless indeed, I choose another place at table, and that would not look so well, either. Now, there it is, my friend," and, so saying, he smiled at Leandro and extended his hand to him.

Leandro took the proffered hand and pressing it said, "Henry, Henry, what is all this? Have you not told me over and over again that it was your boast to have been born in a free country, where all men are independent, and no one is the slave of the will or of the opinions of others? And the other

day, when you brought me to your celebration of the Fourth of July, in Liverpool, did I not hear sentiments like these repeated over and over again—that the only truly free country was your own, where, better than elsewhere, religious as well as civil liberty was understood and could be practiced? Now, suppose that I cease making the sign of the cross, do you not see that by so doing I should be lowering myself to become the bondsman of those who would laugh at me for making it? I shall do nothing of the kind, you may be sure, although I *have not* had the happiness to be born in the great free country of my friend.”

Henry felt mortified, and replied somewhat abruptly, “Yes, yes, that is all very well, but people ought not to make themselves ridiculous.”

“Ridiculous! What is it to be ridiculous? Does a man become so only when some persons laugh at him, when neither in his actions nor his words is there just cause afforded? If you place among the ridiculous all those who were *merely* laughed at, your list must include a great number of eminent men, and even some among the *most* eminent recorded in history. Was not Columbus, the discoverer of your great country, laughed at and jeered as a fool and a fanatic when he proposed to go in search of a new world? The mere fact of being laughed at by some can never convict a man of being absolutely ridiculous. To be so truly, one must be guilty of a folly or absurdity which deserves ridicule, and deserves it everywhere. Who



laughs at the sign of the cross in a Catholic country, or who ever laughed at it in *any* country before Luther trampled on the faith of which it is a symbol? How can you say—you, a Catholic—that the sign of the cross or the words which accompany it are a folly or an absurdity?"

"I do not say it is a folly, but those signs of the cross before and after meals, and before going to rest, or on rising, and on a thousand other occasions, seem to me superstitious. Why, I travelled oncè with a priest—he was saying his office, I suppose—who must have signed himself two or three hundred times in less than an hour!"

"Ho, ho," laughed Leandro, heartily, "are you sure you kept a correct account? Now, Henry, go to breakfast; we shall converse again on this subject, and I am confident we shall agree on this point, as we do on others."

"I do not know about that, for I tell you, Leandro, that although I have not been so much of a student as yourself, I have more knowledge about some things than you imagine. I have met with a good many intelligent men who have given me their views on this and like subjects, and their ideas appear to my mind very correct. They have convinced me also that such practices as the sign of the cross, the use of holy water, and of lights, and of a hundred other things, have been introduced through superstitious or fanatical motives by priests, or bishops, or popes, and were unknown to the primitive Church. Therefore, the use of them is

nothing less than a piece of superstition, and instead of attracting Protestants to the Church, they only serve to keep them at a distance."

"What a long tail our cat has got, Henry, if I may use one of your irreverent English sayings. But, seriously—since you prefer my conversation to your coffee—let me remind you of a circumstance that occurred during our short stay in London. It may throw a little light on your native convictions, when you are not under the pressure of bad advice or prejudice. Do you remember, Henry, the visit we made just one week ago to that Puseyite chapel, and what was said at the time? It was yourself that spoke. These Protestants, said you, after turning and veering about in all directions, at last fall back into the old Catholic practices, and no longer consider them superstitions, as their ancestors did."

Henry made no reply, except a slight shrug of the shoulders, as if to say, What next?

"Tell me then, what do you call a superstition?" continued Leandro.

"I understand well enough what a superstition is when I encounter it, but to put an explanation of it in as clear a light, might not be so easy," replied Henry, cautiously.

"At least those 'intelligent men' of yours must have conveyed to you the meaning they attached to the word 'superstition'?"

"I do not remember that they did."

"Yes, I am pretty sure they did *not*, and if they

were here with us now, a fine jumble of reasoning they would present us with, in attempting it. I venture to say that not one in a hundred of such men could give an idea satisfactory to any one else of what he means by *superstition*. If you choose, we might make the trial here among our fellow-passengers."

"O, no, no," exclaimed Henry, as if really afraid his friend might undertake an inquiry which he foresaw would end in his discomfiture, "let them alone."

"Then *I* will tell you what is to be understood by 'superstition ;' but first, you will admit—will you not?—that superstition must be something which is wrong."

"Of course I do."

"And so do I. Well, now, supposing God to have manifested to us—his intelligent creatures—a manner in which he wished us to honor him, could we be too particular in fulfilling his will on this point?"

"I do not think so."

"Again I say, neither do I. Then supposing the sign of the cross to be one of those modes in which God likes to be honored by us, could the use of this sign be a wrong action, a 'superstition'?"

"Certainly not, but the question is, *has* this sign been manifested from God? How could it be, since it, and other extravagances like it, were not known even in the time of the Apostles?"

"Pray, who told you that? If it was one of your



intelligent friends, did he give you date, and place, and person, for the origin of the sign of the cross?"

"No, why should he? What is there in that?"

"A great deal is in that, for those who are so positive in asserting that the sign of the cross is a novelty in the Church, should be able to give us a proof of what they assert. Now, no proof will suffice that does not fix the date, at least, of its introduction as a novelty. Otherwise all mere assertions that its *use* is a novelty are gratuitous, and amount to nothing. But let us even suppose that this practice *was* unknown to the first Christians; its introduction in the Church could be in no wise the fruit of superstition, for superstition, take notice—I give you now its definition—is, on the one hand, either the offering to God an honor—or to use a Latin word, *cultus*—which is unfitting, does not appertain to Him—or on the other, the rendering to a creature the honor due only to God. Now, neither of these circumstances is verified in the sign of the cross; for, the words which accompany the sign, express the mystery of the unity and trinity of God; the sign itself represents the cross, and is consequently an acknowledgment of the incarnation and death of our Saviour. Thus, the sign of the cross contains an explicit profession of the two principal mysteries of our faith, and consequently implicitly includes all the rest. It is a solemn act of religion which cannot but be most acceptable to God, even in the supposition that its practice and

its frequent use did not go so far back as the Apostolic times."

"Be that as it may," interrupted Henry, "if the primitive Church had no such practice, it *is* a novelty: and novelties, if they are not in themselves superstitious, are apt to lead the way to superstitions."

"Dear me, how zealous you, or rather your friends are, to preserve the purity of the primitive faith! And, after all, your solicitude in this case is quite superfluous. 'Thank you for nothing,' our primitive ancestors would say, if either of us *had* one among those early Christians."

"Well, Leandro, I defy you to show me that the use and practice of the sign of the cross go so far back as the primitive Church."

"I will show you this and a great deal more, my friend, that will convince you of the inestimable treasure we possess in the sign of the cross. But now go and take your breakfast; by this time you must have a fine appetite for it, and I am quite confident that after a few discussions between us, you will make the sign of the cross as squarely and broadly as I do, without troubling yourself whether any body laughs at you or not."

"Ha, ha! I hope you may see the day," said Henry, gaily, and forthwith descended into the cabin.





II.

THE STRUGGLE.

AMONG the passengers on the steamer with Leandro and Henry were some Sisters of a religious order. These, to be more retired, were accustomed to take their meals after the other passengers, and when Henry entered the saloon for breakfast, were about finishing theirs. As one of them was looking for the waiter, Henry caught her eye for a moment, and was astonished at the resemblance he perceived to his deceased mother, of whom he possessed an excellent likeness. The Sisters soon arose from the table, made a devout sign of the cross, said a short prayer, and retired.

The impression left on Henry by this unexpected reminder of his mother's memory, brought to his recollection circumstances which had of late occupied very little of his thoughts. When this very likeness had been given him, by one of her relatives, the gift was accompanied by words, which though uttered long since, had by their solemnity and the impressiveness with which they were repeated, fixed themselves deeply in his mind.

“This miniature belongs to you,” said the giver; “it is the likeness of your saintly mother. I have treasured it not alone for her sake, but also for yours, having preserved it all this time for the express purpose of giving it to you when you should be of an age to appreciate its value. You are now old enough to take that care of it which I should take if it were still to remain with me; moreover, you may possibly go abroad, and accident might separate us for years if not forever. Never part with this picture, and remember that her only grief on her death bed was the thought that she was leaving you without a mother to train you up in the fear of God, and in the observance of His holy law. Only a few moments before expiring, she made the sign of a cross on your forehead, and pressing on it her quivering lips, uttered this prayer: ‘Jesus, my Redeemer, grant that I may see my child again in heaven.’”

The remembrance of these words, thus unexpectedly revived in his mind, almost drew tears from his eyes, when he reflected, at this first moment that he had been isolated from all that had captivated his imagination and his passions, what that life had really been which had thus early received a mother's dying benediction.

His breakfast was speedily finished, when a contest arose in his mind which he had never experienced before. To gratify every caprice which appealed to his fancy had long been a habit with him, and if conscience resisted, he had accustomed

himself to turn a deaf ear to its admonitions. Especially had this been the case since his mind had been filled with the false principles of the infidels with whom his residence on the continent had brought him in contact. The exemplary conduct of Leandro and the holiness of those religious who had just left the room, inclined him by an almost irresistible force to follow their example, and reverently to lift up his hand and sign himself with the sign of the cross. Conscience loudly seconded the thought, and, this time, was less easily than usual put to rest.

But when the protest he had made shortly before recurred to him, his inveterate prejudices and his hitherto unsubdued pride supplied a force equally powerful in a contrary direction. Thus, he remained, balancing in his mind the opposing influences that were at work there, and withal looking so harassed, that the waiter standing near accosted him with the enquiry if anything was wanting. He got up abruptly, without making any reply, and raised his right hand to make the sign of the cross, but drew back indignantly, and hurried to his room, there to experience a still severer struggle. Had he obeyed the impulse of grace, all agitation would have been at an end: yielding to pride and human respect, the load he carried in his heart weighed the heavier.

- God gives us his grace, without which no meritorious work can be accomplished by us; but grace alone does not complete the work. Our coöpera-

tion requires a sacrifice from which we cannot fail to draw great benefit. Henry retired to his room, full of ill-humor and discontent. He first found fault with the officiousness of the waiter, then he inveighed in his mind against the "old fogysm" of Leandro, then the Sisters came in for a share of his ill-humor. "Though why should I care," said he, "for those mummies of Egypt!" Then he called to account his own mother, and was tempted to throw her likeness overboard, but at this thought he immediately recoiled, and shuddered with dismay. Turning then his indignation against himself, he called himself a coward, a barbarian, a heartless wretch, without character, without principles, without religion. At this moment he burst into tears, and found himself, he knew not how, on his knees, bending over his berth, and with his head buried in his hands, imploring amidst his sobs pardon of his mother, and mercy of God.

After this he felt relieved, but still far from being at peace. "What shall I do?" said he to himself, and reflecting a little, he opened his trunk, wherein he had placed a fine golden medal which the doctor's wife had given him on leaving. It was the "Miraculous Medal," and he had promised to wear it, though he had failed to do so. He kissed it, fastened it to the golden chain to which his mother's likeness was suspended, and placed the chain around his neck. He next took from the trunk a prayer book which Albert had given him, in which a devout picture of the Sacred Heart had been in-

serted as a mark to the page wherein he could find a prayer highly recommended by the doctor.

The prayer was the *Memorare*. Henry knelt again, recited the prayer, and made the sign of the cross, not without renewed remorse for having lacked the courage to make it in presence of others. Then he replaced the book, washed the traces of tears from his eyes, adjusted his dress, so as to leave no sign of disorder that might indicate his recent agitation, and went out to seek his friend.





III.

THE SPIRITIST.

AFTER Henry had left him to go to breakfast, Leandro went to his state-room to look for a book. Taking from his trunk a small volume, he looked over it, placed marks at sundry passages, and put it in his pocket. He then drew from a box a large bundle of manuscripts, each of which he examined until he discovered the particular one he was in search of. Replacing the others, he took this in his hand, and sallied forth to meet Henry, enjoying, while awaiting him, the sight of the ocean, of which he could never grow tired. The day was magnificent, and not a breath disturbed the surface of the sea, which was as polished as a mirror, and surged only in long and easy rolls, unbroken by a single crest. Nearly all the passengers were on deck, some in groups under a tasty pavilion stretched near the stern, others walking to and fro, and another party near the prow clustered around a tall, bony individual, who might have been taken for a vender of quack medicines. This group attracted Leandro's curiosity, who walked in that direction, but on coming near he observed

that the man ceased his discourse, fixed his eye on him with a malignant expression, and became strangely nervous. The bystanders naturally turned to look at Leandro, who, pretending not to notice this singular interruption, continued his walk to the end of the boat, and there leaned out upon the prow to contemplate the ocean. While here, two sailors who were bestriding the bowsprit, employed at some work on the rigging or sails, began to talk. Says one to the other,

"Didn't I tell you, Jack, that the Scotchman would soon have a crowd around him?"

"Sure enough, Bill, and how will the captain take it?"

"Well, he's below just now, but if he were here, he'd be almost mad enough to pitch the fellow overboard. He counts him one of the greatest scoundrels going."

"Then, why does he take him on board?"

"Why, you fool," says Bill, using a term rather expressive among plain people of familiar friendship, than of contempt, "the cap must take them that pays their passage, mus'nt he?—leastways if the police ain't got nothing agin 'em."

"I don't see it," returned Jack; "were'nt there two gentlemen came aboard with a friend of the captain and could'nt get passage, though *I* knowed there was berths to spare?"

"Yes, but them was two Catholic priests."

"I don't care what they were, if they was gentle-

men, and had the money to pay their passage; and I seen 'em take their money out."

"Well, Jack, I can't tell you nothing about it. All I knows is, that if this man gets a crowd around him, we shall have the devil's dance next."

"Yes, and Old Brimstone's artillery, too."

"Aye, aye, my lad—short range."

This dialogue, although rather obscure in its references, and leaving the mystery that attached to the stranger unexplained, was not lost on Leandro, who walked back to look for Henry, and found that meanwhile the crowd had dispersed, and the stranger was not to be seen. As he proceeded, a polite and very jovial gentleman, meeting him, accosted him in these words:

"*Bravo giovane, come va?*" (Noble youth, how do you do?) This gentleman, an agent travelling for a house in Leghorn, dealing in articles of sculpture—deceived by the brown cheeks and brilliant eyes of Leandro—had mistaken him for a countryman of his. Leandro replied:

"*Ba molto bene.*" (Very well.)

"I see that you are a Spaniard," said Signor Filippi—for this was the name of the Italian.

"Why did you address me in Italian, then?"

"Because I thought you were an Italian."

"And how did you discover that I am a Spaniard?"

"Your *ba*, instead of *va*, made me aware of it."

At this they both smiled, and continued in conversation as if they had been old acquaintances.

Leandro soon took occasion to enquire about the individual who had recently attracted his curiosity, and referring to what he had been able to gather from the sailors, was informed that their statement was correct in regard to the two Catholic clergymen being refused passage, although not through any desire of the captain's, who on the other hand would have been happy, if he could have found any pretext for doing so, to exclude this man, who was a notorious spiritist, and with whom, as he had been nearly all over the world, the sailors had probably travelled on some former voyage, and had witnessed the scenes to which they so mysteriously referred, or at least had heard their particulars. What these scenes were, the Italian afterwards detailed.

"I do not know whether you have noticed," continued he, "that there are some Sisters on board. They too might have been excluded if they had not, by the captain's advice, kept out of the way of certain parties until the steamer left."

"Is the captain, then, a Catholic?"

"As to that, I should say that he had no religion to speak of, but he is a good fellow and a man of sense, and has great respect for Catholics."

"If so, why are Catholic priests excluded?"

"Do you see that old gentleman with grey hair and a red nose, sitting opposite to us, near the railing?"

"He is resting his hands on his cane, and his chin on his hands?"

"Exactly: that old man is immensely wealthy,

and is one of the principal owners of this boat, and of course has a great deal to say as to who shall be passengers and who shall not. The spiritist is his particular friend, at least at this moment; and on his account the priests were excluded."

"But why is this?"

"That I shall have to answer by giving you the old gentleman's history, in the sequel of which you will find the reason. Let us take these seats by the taffrail, and we shall be out of hearing of others. This poor man some years ago lost his only daughter, whom he exceedingly loved, and having no religious faith, endeavored to find consolation in Spiritism. There is no spiritist or medium of note either in England or on the continent whom he has not consulted, in order to communicate more intimately with his dear Julia, and to learn her exact condition. The messages he received, were, however, so often absurd, and even contradictory, that instead of a remedy for his bereavement, Spiritism has only aggravated its sorrows. Still, he does not abandon hope, and having heard of this man about whom you inquire, and who not very long since returned from Sweden, after a stay of some years in that country, with an incredible improvement in his art, he lost no time in applying to him. The Scotchman, if such he be, is too thrifty not to profit by the golden opportunity, and, it is said, has already transferred a considerable sum from the old gentleman's pockets to his own."

“Our spiritist friend is not such an enthusiast, then, as to practice his art for the mere love of it?”

“Not he, indeed,” replied the Italian, “nor any like him. The captain has been assured by several credible persons that in a recent voyage to Brazil, the spiritist succeeded, either really or apparently, in evoking the spirit of Julia, who in a visible form spoke with her father.”

“This would be plainly a case of necromancy.”

“Nothing less; and subsequent circumstances prove it to have been so. The captain of the boat, in which this evocation took place, informed our captain just the other day of the following circumstances: There was, said he, a priest on board, who having been told on the morning after of what had occurred, went to see the captain to ascertain further particulars. Learning from the comments of the latter that these proceedings were very distasteful to ~~him~~, and moreover excited the superstitious fears of the crew, he asked the captain if he would like to be rid of the nuisance. ‘Nothing would please me better,’ replied the captain, and then he added indignantly, ‘since these people have set foot on board my vessel, I have thought the devil must have come along with them. You have no idea, sir, of the disorders which have occurred on board since these sorcerers commenced their operations.’

“‘Well,’ asked the priest, ‘do you suppose they will repeat their experiment?’

“‘I have no doubt they will, and this very evening: this infatuated old man is hardly likely to let

a day pass by without a visit from his daughter, now that his juggling friend has found a means to raise her—the Lord between us and harm!—as my cabin-boy says.’

“‘In that case, I shall hold myself in readiness to be present. If you see preparations made, be good enough to call me: I promise you that after that, they will think twice before they repeat any of their diabolical experiments during this voyage.’

“Towards midnight, in fact, the captain tapped at the door of the priest’s state-room, and the latter, who was sitting dozing in his chair, awaiting the summons, immediately came forth, and beheld a company assembled, and the spiritist leading by the hand up to the end of the hall a girl who was blindfolded. Arrived there, he made her turn around until she fell, then raising her up, he turned her again in the contrary direction until she fell again. He raised her a second time, and commanded her still to turn, which she did, but soon fell stretched on the floor as if dead.

“The spiritist placed a pillow under her head, and began to question her. At each question she answered in different languages, or at least in as many as those spoken by the bystanders. *This* evening she replied also in German, which she had not done on the evening before, from which the spiritist, who was familiar with the German language, perceived that some new spectator was present. However, he seemed to take no notice of it.

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“When these questionings were finished, the spiritist took the old gentleman by the hand and conducting him near the girl told him to speak to her freely, that she would respond to all his questions. The father in a voice trembling as much with agitation as with old age, said, ‘My good girl, call Julia, my dearest Julia.’ The girl was seized with a violent convulsion, and even foamed at the mouth. The fit gradually subsided, and when she had regained her former state of quiescence, she called ‘Julia,’ three times, raising her voice each time higher into a painful cry of lamentation.

“On the previous evening, Julia had appeared immediately after the third call, but this evening some moments ensued before a distant voice was heard, asking, ‘Are all here friends?’ ‘All: all friends,’ replied the spiritist; ‘come, beloved spirit of Julia, come and console your old father with your visible presence, and with the evidence of your happiness.’ A perceptible tremor ran through the assembly present, as a female figure suddenly appeared in the deep shadow at the end of the hall. It stood motionless. The spiritist renewed his invitation to Julia to advance towards her father.

“‘Ah,’ said the figure, in a voice of terror, ‘you have betrayed me. Not all are friends here. You have called me, not to console my father, but to add to my anguish.’

“When the appearance first manifested itself, the

priest had begun to recite some prayers, which he ended by making the sign of the cross contemporaneously with the last words of the spirit. At this moment all the lights suddenly went out, the voice of the spirit was heard in unearthly shrieks, attended by detonations like those of artillery fired at a short distance, and in rapid discharges, while the vessel rocked as if suddenly encountered by a succession of cross seas."

"I now understand," remarked Leandro, "the sailors' reference to 'Old Brimstone's artillery at short range,' Old Brimstone being the devil. In cases like this, much of the impression made must be attributed to the excitement of the imagination."

"Unquestionably so," replied Filippi; "nor do I feel inclined to admit unreservedly all that has been told me about the event: but what cannot be questioned by anybody is that as soon as a little order was restored, the poor girl who had acted as medium, was found *dead*, and that on arriving in port, several of the passengers were transferred from the boat to an insane asylum!*

* To say nothing of the results in this country, only a few years ago the spread of Spiritism had brought on, in one of the most important cities of France, such an increase of cases of insanity, that the ecclesiastical authorities, to arrest the evil, thought it necessary to apply some extraordinary remedy. The sermons on Spiritism which were subsequently published by Fr. Nampon, were preached on the occasion of these developments.

“The spiritist himself was severely beaten and bruised, by whom nobody could tell. The fact is, he was obliged to keep his room during the remainder of the voyage. This disaster did not, however, prevent him from making enquiries in regard to the German stranger, who, in his opinion, was connected with the failure of his incantations, and he learned that he was a priest. This will answer your enquiry why priests are now excluded from this vessel.”

“If the spiritist,” rejoined Leandro, nodding his head, emphatically, “thinks to continue his incantations on board this vessel with impunity, because no priest is present, he will find that there is at least one who knows how to make the sign of the cross, whatever may come of that. Now I think of it, I can see no other reason for that ugly scowl he gave me, than this very sign of the cross, for I know that he observed me while making it at table, and I dare say he has reason to stand in awe of it. I certainly have not otherwise vexed him. If there is any scheme for recalling ‘Julia’ again, be sure I shall interrupt it if I can. Tell me, since you and the captain are so well acquainted, why could not we three have a talk together about it? We may arrange affairs so that the spiritist shall rue the attempt.”

“Nothing can be easier. At this moment, however, I believe he is engaged with the pilot; I will look out for him when he leaves the pilot-house.”

“But why is it that this spiritist chooses the time of a sea-voyage for his operations?”

“Several reasons may be given for that. First of all, the old gentleman whom he has in hands, has so often changed his spiritist advisers, and would be so apt to abandon *him* on the occasion of a failure, that his greatest security consists in keeping his victim where it is impossible for him to stray off. Moreover he has persuaded him that the manifestations will be more easily accomplished at sea.”

“Poor infatuated old man,” interrupted Leandro, “how can he allow himself to be such a dupe!”

“Yes, I suppose he has as little fancy for such constant sea travelling as anybody can have whose regular business it is not, and when all else fails, his guide and instructor has found a resource in plying him with spirituous liquors, of which he knows that the old man is fond. Certainly, no one who witnessed the failure of the spiritist on the Brazil voyage, would willingly call his powers into play again; but on the other hand, he gains by every voyage a succession of clients who are new to his arts, and the close communication in which they are thrown enables him to realize all the advantages of his position, without any of the drawbacks which the exposure of the press would occasion. But here is the captain. Let me go and speak with him.”



IV.

WRONG VIEWS CORRECTED.

LEANDRO, left alone after the conversation with the Italian, recalled to mind his intended conversation with Henry, interrupted when the latter went to his breakfast. Looking at his watch, he found that nearly an hour had since elapsed, and he said to himself, "What in the world does keep Henry so long?" He had, however, scarcely returned his watch to his pocket when Henry made his appearance on deck.

"Why, Henry," said he, "you must have eaten all the meals of the day at once, to make sure of not sitting near me when I make the sign of the cross."

"On the contrary, I took a rather light breakfast, but I have been in my room ever since."

"Probably hunting up arguments to advance against what I have said about the sign of the cross?"

"No, indeed; so far from that, I should like to hear what more you have to say on the subject."

"Very well," said Leandro, not without some surprise at the remark, and at the tone in which it

was conveyed, "take this seat near me just vacated by a gentleman who has told me some extraordinary things quite *apropos* to our subject, but which I will not repeat at this moment. Here we can look out over the magnificent space which surrounds us, and no one will interrupt us. Now, Henry," continued he, placing his hand on the knee of the latter, "the language you have made use of about the sign of the cross, is anything but edifying. Without being aware of it, your words are only the last echo of the so-called Reformation, which under pretence of bringing the Church back to her primitive purity, repudiated the sign of the cross, but in doing so, only began that work of destruction, which finally shattered every salutary barrier erected by the Church to protect her children against the excesses of human passion; in a word, the whole aim of that movement was to destroy the Church, and with it the faith of all ages."

"Perhaps you are right," remarked Henry, in a calm tone, and rather as if speaking to himself, instead of addressing Leandro.

"Why, Henry, there is a great change in you!" exclaimed Leandro; "if you were still at the doctor's house, I should say that his wife had sprinkled your breakfast with holy water."

"Well, you are not far from the truth, for both Albert and Annie promised that they would not let a day pass without praying for me, and Annie gave me a medal which she called 'the miraculous medal,' and made me promise to wear it, although

in fact I forgot to put it on, and only did so just before leaving my room."

"That is right! excellent! my prediction will be verified yet; before our voyage is over you will be making the sign of the cross no matter who may be present. Now, see here," and Leandro drew from his pocket a book he had provided himself with, and handed it to Henry, "take that book and read it from cover to cover, but first let me point out a particular passage which will give you some idea of what the sign of the cross really is, and will no doubt correct some of your views. Here you have it."

Henry accordingly read in French the following passage, which we will translate for the benefit of our readers.

"Till now external circumstances have pleaded my cause, but let us come to its intrinsic merits, which for all reasonable purposes, may be epitomised in the following propositions: 1st. The sign of the cross is a sign which ennobles us, children of dust. 2d. The sign of the cross is a book which instructs our ignorance. 3d. The sign of the cross is a treasure which enriches our poverty. 4th. The sign of the cross is a weapon which disperses our enemies. 5th. The sign of the cross is a guide which leads us to heaven."

"Now," interrupted Leandro, "let your friends come and tell us that we live in times when it will never do to use the sign of the cross! that its use is a mere prejudice, a superstition!"

Henry, although much subdued in the interior

battle he had sustained, had still prejudice to maintain, and was not prepared to surrender the contest at once. So he replied, "This is all well enough, if what is here maintained be true; but it is one thing to advance propositions and another to prove that they are correct."

"As for that, you will find more than you want. But go on with your reading."

Henry continued, and after a few sentences reached this passage: "The sign of the cross is a divine sign, for it comes from heaven and not from the earth, which has not contrived it. Travel every country, examine all histories, you shall find no man who has invented the sign of the cross, no Saint who has first conceived it, nor even council which has prescribed it."

"What do you think of that?" asked Leandro, "the sign of the cross a novelty, eh? but a novelty introduced by nobody!"

"Really, I do not see," replied Henry, "how from the mere fact that the author of the sign of the cross is unknown, the inference should be drawn that it is a divine sign."

"If we find this practice in the Church everywhere and at all times, it is clear that it is a practice which dates from the foundation of the Church itself; and who is the *Founder* of the Church? Is he not a Divine Person? And if the Church, on account of her Founder, is a divine institution, the sign of the cross is also a divine sign."

Henry endeavored to find some argument to

oppose this, but without success, and ended with some vague remarks, to which Leandro replied,

"I understand what you want; you wish to see some testimony or know some facts which serve to show that the sign of the cross was positively in use in the primitive Church."

"Nothing less than that will satisfy me."

"If that is all you wish, read on."

Henry read this passage: "Tertullian, who wrote in the latter part of the second century, speaking of the sign of the cross, tells us, 'tradition teaches it to us, practice confirms this teaching, and faith employs it.'* St. Justin, who lived in the first half of the same century, not only speaks of the sign of the cross, but also the manner in which the sign was made.† These are the primitive times of imperishable memory, which the heretics themselves call the golden age of the Church, both in point of purity of doctrine and in the holiness of life observed, and at this period we find the sign of the cross in full use both in the East and in the West. Let us go further."

"Wait a moment," interrupted Leandro, taking the book from Henry's hands, "if you wish to see in what manner the sign of the cross was practiced in the time of Tertullian, read this other passage."

Henry read: "At each movement, at every step,

* De Cor. Mil. c. III.

† *Dextera manu in nomine Christi quos crucis signo obsignandi sunt, obsignamus.*—Quæst. 118.

going out or coming in, when dressing and bathing, when sitting at table or lighting our lamps, when going to rest, or whatever else we do, we mark our foreheads with the sign of the cross."

"Is that enough for you?" asked Leandro.

"Then why, Leandro, did you laugh when I told you that I saw a priest make more than a hundred signs of the cross in less than an hour?"

"Because I am sure he did not; but no matter about the priest, answer me this, what would your friends say, and what do you yourself say, with testimony like this before you, showing so plainly the practice of the primitive Church?"

Henry, having no reply to give, contented himself with a smile, and remarked that Leandro was too sophistical.

"Sophistical! where is the sophism? My dear friend, facts can never be sophisms."

"But after all, Tertullian is the only witness."

"Not so: did you not read the words of St. Justin? And even were Tertullian's testimony the only one given, this alone would supply all the evidence we require to show that the use of the sign of the cross dates from primitive times. But since the proofs you have read are not sufficient for you, I will give you more. Close your book and hear me." Leandro unrolled the document which he had brought with him from the cabin and continued: "This is one of my manuscripts, in which I shall be able to find other witnesses quoted besides St. Justin and Tertullian, in proof that the practice we speak

of was common to all the faithful of the primitive Church. To St. Justin and Tertullian must be added Lactantius, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Athanasius, St. Ephrem, St. Gregory the Great, and the other two Gregories, of Nazianzen and of Nyssa, respectively; St. Jerome, St. Ambrose, and others. If you would wish to go back to the very age of the Apostles, St. Ignatius, the Martyr, St. Denis, and St. Martial may be added to the list."

This array of names, for the most part new to Henry, convinced him, if he had not understood it before, that Leandro was amply provided with authorities in support of his position, and that he had better surrender at discretion; but he was not humble enough to acknowledge his incompetency to maintain the ground he had assumed. On the other hand, he did not feel inclined to listen to a long series of quotations which he thought Leandro was about to read to him, and exclaimed, "Surely, my friend, you are not going to read over the words of all these doctors, are you?"

"No, no, there is no need of so much, but I mention their names simply to convince you that Tertullian is not alone. My manuscript is at your service, if you wish to see their exact words, but I will content myself with quoting St. Martial. Do you know who St. Martial is?"

"I do not, indeed."

"St. Martial, then, was a Saint of the apostolic age, who was intimate with St. Peter, and who was

the *Socius* of the Prince of the Apostles in his journey from Antioch to Rome, and afterwards, himself, became the Apostle of the Gauls. Hear what this writer says of the cross and of the sign of the cross. *'Keep always in your mind and in your mouth, and sign yourself with, the Cross of the Lord, true God and the Son of God in Whom you believe.'** Here is also a short extract from St. Augustine, which I might read. *'If the Sign of the Cross be left out, either to sign the forehead of the believers, or the water wherewith they are baptized, or the oil with which they are anointed, or the sacrifice with which they are nourished, none of these rites is legally performed.'*† Here, you perceive, St. Augustine is even more full than the others: not only does he testify to the practice of the sign of the cross, but to such a practice of it as cannot be omitted, a practice connected with the administration of the sacraments; and as the sacraments have for their author no other than the Man-God, hence the origin of the sign of the cross is divine. Now, since mention is made of the sacraments, none of which is administered without the sign of the cross, I should like to make an inquiry of you. Do those intelligent persons who made you believe that the sign of the cross is a novelty, and an invention of popes and bishops, do they ever use the sacraments, or do they even know how many sacraments there are?"

Henry could only smile and shrug his shoulders

* Ep. ad Burdeg.

† Tract 118, in Joan.

as if to admit it might be very doubtful. "If," continued Leandro, "such persons are not practical Christians, do not make use of the sacraments, and are even perhaps unbaptized infidels, what authority is theirs? Shall we refuse credit to the Fathers, and give it to them—to these who blaspheme what they ignore, rather than to the Fathers who are prodigies of learning—to these whose lives, you cannot but know, are filled with abomination, rather than to the Fathers who shine in the Church of God by their eminent sanctity—to these who at an interval of so many centuries from the primitive Church, pretend to impose on us with their untenable assertions, rather than to the Fathers who flourished during that early period or soon after, and who accompany their words with evidences of the facts? Henry, I think I should do you injustice if I could believe that between these two sets of men, you could hesitate where to bestow your preference."

“Well,” returned Henry, “I think you take advantage of your superior skill by contending with one who has no experience in this sort of disputation. I confess the Fathers have a better claim to my confidence than my former friends, whose lives it is true,” said he, in a playful tone, “I did not find models of holiness, but, Leandro, I should like to see you undertake a controversy with *them*: I wager that they would not give up their ground so easily as you may think.”

"Would it be reasonable to expect it? No;



men of that stamp never yield,—but this is no proof that they are in the right, nor that their arguments convey any force against facts that are undeniable, or against doctrines that rest upon principles of faith that are equally assured. Let them go;—and now hear these words of exhortation which proceed from St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who, in speaking of the sign of the cross, urges its use before meals and before every ordinary action. *‘Let the sign of the cross be made on the forehead, nay, on everything : let this sign be made on the bread which we eat, on the potions which we drink : when going from and when coming home : before rest and when we are awake : when walking and when staying. For, great is the protection of this sign, freely granted to our necessities, and so easy to practice. It is a gift of God, a mark of such as are faithful to him, and the terror of the devils.’** St. John Chrysostom maintains the like language ; but not to weary you out, this will do for the present. Here is a quantity of other matter to the same point,” and Leandro, turning over page after page of his manuscript, pointed out to his friend long passages from the Fathers, bearing on the subject. “Here,” said he, “is an exhortation in recommendation of the sign of the cross, taken from the twenty-first Homily of St. John Chrysostom, to the people of Antioch. Next comes a passage from the forty-third sermon of St. Ambrose, then another most beautiful extract from

* Cath. 13.

St. Ephrem Syrus, a few words of which I must read to you. *'Let the sign of the cross be a shield of protection to you, and let the heart join the hand when it makes the sign in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. If thou be protected by it, no enemy will ever be able to hurt thee.'** And this is not all, for in the succeeding pages," said Leandro, rolling up his manuscript, "there are various notes concerning the rites used from the remotest antiquity in various churches, in which the sign of the cross never fails of prominent and frequent mention."

Said Henry here, "Excuse me, but I cannot yet see the use of multiplying so much this sign of the cross. Granting even that it dates from the Apostolic times—that it is a divine sign, or as much more as you like—its perpetually recurring use for every action and every occasion seems to me rather meaningless and extravagant; moreover I do not think you will find one text of scripture authorizing the practice."

"There you are back on your old ground," replied Leandro. "Meanwhile you acknowledge that there can be no extravagance in giving praise to God, nor can there be any in thinking often on the ineffable benefit of the Redemption; tell me, then, what would you think of a man who travelling in a land of enemies, never permits himself to part with his weapons, especially such as are infallible

* De Panopl.

in protecting his person, and enabling him to evade the insidious aggressions of his foe? Would you consider such a man foolish or extravagant?"

"In that light, certainly not."

"Let us make the application, then, to ourselves. Are we not pilgrims travelling through a land in which we are surrounded by enemies, and do you not hear how St. Ephrem calls the sign of the cross a shield which protects us from those enemies? Ah! Henry, how unworthy of you to call the frequent use of that sign a meaningless and extravagant action! Never allow such sentiments to pass your lips."

"At any rate, you cannot, as I say, find any text in scripture to justify the frequency of the practice."

"Henry, what do you say to the words of St. Paul in his epistle to the Colossians, '*All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.*'* And in that to the Corinthians, '*Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all things for the glory of God.*'† In what better way than by the sign of the cross, devoutly made, can we comply with the injunction of the Apostle?"

"Upon my word," exclaimed Henry, "there is no getting over the difficulty, in the way you put things, and you give one no quarter. You aim at gaining the battle on all points."

"Henry," rejoined Leandro, in a tone of feeling,

* iii. 17.

† I. x. 31.

“You found his exhibitions a deception, did you?”

“Not altogether. Hear what occurred. One evening, a class-mate of mine, who was fanatical on the subject of Spiritism, insisted on my going with him to one of the circles, assuring me, that anything I might wish to know concerning my deceased parents I could ascertain with the greatest facility, provided, to use his own expression, I wore no ‘Catholic charms’ about my person; I did not fancy trying the experiment, and replied to him that I did not wish to be imposed upon. ‘Well,’ said he, ‘write on a piece of paper any enquiry you wish to make; seal the paper in an envelope and give it to me, without communicating the contents to me or any one else. I shall keep it in my vest pocket, and when we get to the meeting you will see whether the medium is not able to read the paper from the pocket where I keep it.’ I agreed to this, and we went to the place appointed. The experiment succeeded wonderfully, the medium reading the paper (which I had written in English,) word by word, marking even the full stops, commas, &c. My companion, to convince me still further that the spiritist was not an impostor, had, before we left home, put into his pockets, in my presence, several articles, by the discovery of which he proposed to test the skill of the operator. Among these was a book, in which he had forgotten that he had left a certain letter. After the medium had finished the reading of my enquiries, and had given the replies to them, my

friend began to question her about the articles he had brought from home. All were mentioned except the book. Being asked again if there was anything else to be mentioned, 'Yes,' she said, 'but if I mention the rest, you will not like it.'

"'No, no ; go on,' was the answer.

"The medium read the title of the book, which, by-the-way, was an infamous one. She then went on to ask why he left in the book the letter he had received yesterday from such a one—naming her. My friend became as pale as a corpse, and requested the medium not to take any notice of the letter. But the mischief was done ; the name of the writer was heard by the bystanders ; it excited the jealousy of one of them, and the jealousy ended in a duel, in which my poor companion lost his life."

"Did you continue to go to the meetings after this?" asked Leandro.

"Certainly not, and I assure you, I detest the sight of that ugly wretch—who stammers, too, when he gets excited. To me there is something so repulsive about him that I cannot bear to look at him."

"Well," replied Leandro, smiling, "I cannot help feeling much as you do. While you were at breakfast, I saw that man with a crowd around him, to whom he appeared to be lecturing, and as I drew near and caught his eye, he assumed an expression such as I never saw surpassed in ugliness in my life."

"You should see him when he smiles," added

— end —

"I aim at winning your soul. I have no ambition for victories beyond this."

At these words Henry felt his eyes filling with tears, and as Leandro arose at the same moment, he proposed they should take their usual morning walk pacing the deck of the vessel.





V.

SPIRITISM IN STRAITS.

WHEN the two friends began their walk, Henry observed, "I see new faces to-day, and more passengers than I saw yesterday, or the day before; how is that?"

"I presume," said Leandro, "that, notwithstanding the comparative calmness of the ocean, there is motion enough to have kept these new comers, seasick heretofore, in their state-rooms."

"That must be the case."

While walking and conversing, the friends happened to pass near the place where Julia's father was sitting in company with the spiritist, and Henry's attention was attracted by the cracked voice of the latter. Turning his eyes in that direction, he recognized the spiritist as one whom he had met in Germany.

"Aha!" he whispered to Leandro, "so we have a spiritist on board!"

Leandro, turning to Henry with surprise, asked, "Do you know him?"

"I do, and I attended some of his exhibitions in Germany, too."



Henry. "He is more odious then than when he frowns. He looks as if he had been tasting unripe persimmons, one of our American fruits, which it will give me pleasure to introduce you to, by-the-by."

"Excuse me," laughed Leandro, "not if it produces that effect."

While thus conversing, Filippi approached, accompanied by the captain, to whom the former, with a few words of compliment, introduced Leandro. "Here," said he, "is the young Spanish gentleman of whom I spoke to you, and this is his friend, Mr. Henry Stamford."

"I am happy to make your acquaintance, gentlemen," said the captain. Then turning to Leandro, he continued, "and I must thank you, sir, for a signal service you have rendered to me and to many of our passengers."

"Truly," replied Leandro, "I am not aware of having done anything for you, or for any one on board that deserves your kind reference, and, therefore, I can claim very little merit for any service of mine."

"That may be, sir," rejoined the captain, "but I am obliged to you none the less, and you shall hear how. When this friend," pointing to Filippi, "came to my office this morning, he found me engaged with the very man on whose account he had called to see me. Who that man is you know well enough. He is no friend of mine, nor, I think, of yours either."

The Italian here observed, "Captain, the man is

not far from us now. I think we had better move elsewhere."

"Come to my office," said the captain. Filippi remained a little behind to say a few words to Leandro, while Henry and the captain walked on before.

"Are you a Catholic, also?" asked the latter.

"I am," replied Henry.

"I like Catholics," subjoined the captain, "and am happy to have any on board. I have often found them cheerful and reasonable when other people were not. But I did not catch your name."

"Henry Stamford."

"American?"

"O, yes."

"Are you related to Charles Stamford, the banker?"

"I am his nephew."

"Indeed! the son of Edwin, then?"

"Yes."

"I see the resemblance now, for I knew your father well. Filippi," said he, turning to the Italian, who, with Leandro, had now rejoined them in the office, "were you not acquainted with Edwin Stamford, of ———?"

"I was indeed, although quite young at the time. Still, I had already begun to travel for our house, and had filled orders for statuary for Mr. Stamford."

"This young man is his son."

Filippi, addressing Henry, expressed his gratification at knowing the fact, and added, "I not only

knew your father, but had met also your most excellent mother, who died so young, and left an only child, and that an infant. So you are he : how time flies !”

“ Yes ; I never had the happiness of knowing my mother, but I always preserve her likeness,” showing it to Filippi.

“ These are her features, just as I remember them, poor lady. I am sorry I did not see this likeness at the time your father ordered her monument from Italy. It would have suggested to me the proposal that her bust should be taken from it, which could easily have been done. But, by-the-by, I see there is an aunt of yours on board, your mother’s sister.”

“ An aunt of mine ?” exclaimed Henry, in great surprise.

“ Is it possible that you have been travelling together, and did not know it ? The name of your mother’s family is Langley, is it not ? Henry assented. “ And, captain, is not the family name of one of those Sisters recorded as Langley ?”

“ That is her name ; and your Uncle Charles,” said the captain, turning to Henry, “ pays the passage of herself and companions.” Henry was too astonished to make any reply, and the captain, putting his hand on his shoulder, continued, “ As soon as we leave the office, you shall go to meet her. Meanwhile, let us take chairs, for I have a fine story to tell you ; but, first, does Mr. Stamford know anything about this spiritist ?”

“He does,” replied Leandro, “and has met him before. He sympathises with him as little as you or I do, moreover.”

“All right, then,” replied the captain. “That scamp, gentlemen, came here this morning and had a great deal to say about my having admitted on board a young priest, as he said, against the express orders of my superiors. I was tempted to send him about his business, but suspecting that something had occurred to put a check to his operations, and wishing to know what it was, I concluded to let him talk on, and asked him who the priest was. I had noticed that as he got warm his excitement showed itself by stammering. Said he, ‘A d-d-dark c-c-complexioned young m-m-man,’ and so forth, describing our friend, Señor Lopez here, as I now see, and as I learned from you, Filippi.”

“‘That is the priest, is it?’ said I; ‘and how do you know it?’ ‘N-n-no m-m-matter how. D-d-didn’t I see him make the sign of the cross,’ said he, but he stammered so in getting it out as to be past my repetition. I thought the words stuck in his throat. ‘Oho,’ thought I to myself, ‘here is the gist of the matter, I suppose.’”

“‘And pray, said I, ‘what harm does the sign of the cross do to you? Is not a man free to practice his religion as he likes? You come on board to pester us with your accursed sorceries, and do you expect that I shall interfere to prevent a Catholic from making the sign of the cross, which hurts

nobody?' The man had the impudence then to call me a Papist.

" 'What business is it of yours,' said I, ' what I am and what I am not? If you have nothing else to say you may clear out.'

" 'No,' he replied, trying to get his tongue a little more in order, ' you have disobeyed orders, or been grossly careless, in admitting a priest on board, and the least reparation I can require of you is to stop his idolatrous ceremonies, and I expect you to agree to that before I leave this office.' Here, as I refused to do anything of the kind, we had it hot and heavy for a few minutes. I then saw plainly enough that, priest or no priest, the sign of the cross was a sore point, and from his insisting so much on its being discontinued, felt that it was going to be an obstacle to his juggleries. Wherefore, I have to repeat my thanks to our friend, the Señor, who may now see what service he has done us, and is likely to do us. At last, vexed with the man's persistency, said I to him, ' And pray, who are you, sir ?'

" 'I am,' said he, ' a man sent by the Great Light of the world, a friend of the happy spirits, a new and true guide to light, whom no one can pretend to resist, or has the power to.' At this insupportable boasting and lying, I felt much inclined to kick the man out of my room, but as he pretended to be omnipotent, concluded to have a little fun at his expense. ' Well, sir,' said I, ' if no man can resist your power, what need have you to apply to me to

put a stop to the sign of the cross? You can go yourself and force compliance with your wishes.'

"'No, no,' replied he, 'the order must be given him by one having legitimate authority.'

"'Goodness me!' exclaimed I, 'what more legitimate authority can you want than that of God himself? I cannot pretend to claim all the privileges you say you possess.'

"'That is not the thing. Matters of discipline on board the boat belong to you, and you are the man whom God designates by my ministry to put a stop to these idolatrous rites.'

"'I am? How do you know that?'

"'Do you ask such a question of a seer?' said he solemnly.

"'You are a prophet, then?'

"As I looked quite impressed, he glanced at me and said, 'I am.' His pretence of being a prophet gave me the best opportunity I could have for getting rid of the impudent fellow.

"'Very well,' said I, 'if you are a prophet, I must submit to your orders. Be kind enough to wait here a few moments until my return.' On going out, I met Filippi, and in a few words of conversation with him, learned, Señor, who you were, and how matters seemed to look between you and the spiritist and that you were the supposed priest. 'Come, come,' said I to my friend here, 'we shall have some fun,' and Filippi and I returned to the office, where I pretended to have sent for the 'priest' to come. 'Did you ever,' said the captain, turning to the

Italian, "did you ever, Filippi, see a man more knocked in a heap, as we say."

"Never, in my life. On hearing he was to come to such close quarters with a priest, he wriggled all over, as if an army of wasps had got under his clothing."

"And what do you say," added the captain, "of his grimaces and ludicrous efforts to deliver himself of words that would not come?"

"If it had been any other man," replied Filippi, "or under any other circumstances, I should have felt compassion for the poor wretch; but, as it was, I must say I enjoyed his embarrassment as much as you did."

"I am surprised," remarked Leandro, "that he did not leave the office."

"I don't know," said the captain, "what he intended to do or say, but I had had enough of him, and before he could quite recover himself to get his words out, I changed my tone and said to the man, 'Now, sir, you are nothing but an impostor. If you were a prophet, as you say you are, you would know that the young man who makes the sign of the cross is not a priest. You would know, besides, that I neither sent for a priest nor for any one else to come here. As to your pretended mission from God, and your omnipotence, they are sheer mendacities. No, sir, I shall not do what you ask of me. Nay, in future, I shall have the young man whom you fear, seated at table next to myself, and leave him free to do whatever he likes best.' This

thunderclap had the effect of changing the convulsive prophet into a humble suppliant, and he found words to say, 'Sir, it is not for myself that I ask the favor; it is for a poor aged father, who, if disappointed, will infallibly fall the victim of grief. His daughter, Julia, will not be able to console him and prolong for a while his declining years. Have pity on the poor man and stop this idolatrous sign.'

"'You know better than I, sir,' said I, 'that the old gentleman is accustomed to disappointments of this kind, and has always the restoratives at hand to console him for his disappointments. But if the old man is so anxious to have his Julia with him, we can render him no better service surely than to send him, as soon as possible, where Julia will be with him all the time. But enough of this; let me alone; I have some business to attend to with this gentleman.' The poor man left the room completely crest-fallen, although I should not be surprised if he were to turn to the attack, and so we must continue to counteract his efforts if possible. He has let out, I think, the secret of the simple way in which this may be done, and so we will make arrangements to ensure as much success as may be. Henceforth, at table, you, Señor Leandro, will sit on my right, Mr. Henry at my left, and you, Filippi, will sit next to one of these two. Do you know, my friend," addressing the latter, "if there are any more Catholics on board?"

"I do not know of any except the Sisters," replied he.

"O! the Sisters. Yes, yes, let them come," said the captain.

"But," remarked Filippi, "I do not think they would like to come, as they tell me they prefer coming after the others, in order to be more retired."

"At any rate," rejoined the captain, "you three will come, and you will do me this favor: you will each make a large sign of the cross, and, if you like, say prayers, also, before and after meals. Of course you cannot expect me to join you, but I will remain standing reverently during your grace."

At this proposal, Leandro, biting his lips to suppress a smile, glanced at Henry, who smiled faintly. However, all agreed to comply with the wish of the captain, and to commence that very day.

"But, Captain," remarked Henry, "you will drive away the spiritist from the table."

"I wish," said the captain, "that I could drive him away as far as the Sandwich Islands. However, I hope that, for this voyage, his operations are doomed to failure, thanks to the campaign opened by our Spanish friend here," and the captain warmly shook the hand of Leandro. Turning to Henry, he said, "But you must wish to see your aunt, and she, I am sure, will be equally delighted and astonished at meeting you. Filippi, you have made

the acquaintance of these ladies, and know where to find them. Take this young gentleman and introduce him to his aunt. You must excuse me, sir, as I am obliged to see the steward at this time. Good morning, gentlemen."





VI.

SPIRITISM DISCUSSED.

FILIPPI had noticed that the Sisters usually spent part of the morning on deck, seated towards the stern, either reading or conversing among themselves, or with some two or three other ladies. Intending to introduce Leandro to the Sisters, he took him along with Henry, but not finding the Sisters at their usual place, requested the two friends to wait until he should go in search of them. Leandro, finding himself alone with Henry, said to him, playfully, "Henry, you are nicely caught. My prediction is going to be verified sooner than I expected."

"O! dear me," replied Henry, throwing up his arms, "I never expected that the captain would ask such a thing of us."

"There is no escaping it now, however. Our word is given, and we must each of us keep to it."

"Well, well, certainly; but it is strange how things come about."

"Yes, human motives often extort from us what motives of justice, duty, and faith fail to obtain. The victory over ourselves is as great in one case

as in the other, but there is a wide difference in the value of the respective actions; in one case, our conduct, if not insincere, is at least devoid of all true merit, while in the other, the merit rises in proportion with the victory gained over self."

Henry mused a little on this remark, and then observed, "But what do you think of the Spiritists or Spiritualists?"

"I think as you do, that, although in many cases, their pretended intercourse with the departed, and their knowledge of secret things, or of future things, are mere illusions of their own, or deliberate impositions, in other cases the phenomena are too clear to admit of being doubted, and their existence can only be explained by attributing them to the intervention of the devil."

"But to have recourse to the devil for a solution of mysterious phenomena, has too much of the medieval style of deduction for me. We are not sufficiently acquainted with the power of physical agents in the purely *natural* order to justify us in referring such phenomena to a *preternatural* agency."

"I admit that we do not know the extent of the power, nor do we know even the quality of natural agents which produce some of the innumerable phenomena which occur in the world; but, this much we know, that there must be a proportion between cause and effect, and if the phenomena exhibited are of such a quality as to exceed all proportion between themselves and any physical agent whatever, in the order of nature, it is plain that we must go outside

of nature to find their true cause. What proportion do you find, for instance, between animal magnetism and the developments of a sleeping person who speaks with correctness languages he never learned? or reads books invisible to the naked eye? or prescribes remedies for maladies unfamiliar to him? or who produces psychological phenomena which bear no relation, whatever, to material agents, or to agents exclusively connected with matter? The disproportion between certain manifestations peculiar to Spiritism and the forces of nature is such that we are obliged to exclude the latter altogether as a motive power: then, outside of the material world, no agency is left but that of the good or the evil spirits.”

“Well, in this case,” observed Henry, “the spiritists claim that those spirits who intervene in their work are good ones, and that we have no right to calumniate them by saying that they have recourse to those which are evil.”

“No one, certainly, has the right to calumniate another, but I deny that to charge the spiritists with having recourse to evil spirits is a calumny.”

“They would ask the proof of such a charge.”

“Nothing easier. The good spirits—or, to embrace all in one, the Spirit of God—is a spirit of holiness, a spirit of justice, a spirit of truth; and whatever proceeds from this spirit cannot but partake of the holiness of the justice and truth of God. The evil spirits,—or, in the concrete, the spirit of the devil,—is a spirit of malice, a spirit of iniquity, a

spirit of mendacity ; and whatever proceeds from this spirit must partake of the malice of the iniquity and mendacity of the devil. Now, my friend, if by the quality of the fruit we judge of the tree, we cannot hesitate a moment in our estimate of the agency which is at work in modern Spiritism, and in fact in that of all ages, which, under different names, is always the same. The most shameless debauchery and the most complete irreligion are its ordinary attendants, as they form also the marked predispositions of its votaries. But, to return to your theory of physical agents, tell me, why is it that these spiritists are so much afraid of priests and of sacred things, even of so small a matter as a scapular, or a medal, ('Catholic charms,' as your German friend called them)—nay, even of the sign of the cross? You never saw or heard that the sign of the cross put a steam-engine out of order, or stopped an electrical current, or dimmed the electric light. If there were any harmony between the causes that underlie spiritistic developments and those that set scientific processes to work, there can be no reason why the presence of a priest, or the wearing of a scapular, or making a sign of the cross should prevent the attaining of results in one case and leave results undisturbed in the other. Physical agents, ponderable or imponderable, as they are called, will never, by their action, explain the results of Spiritism; and with the exclusion of these agents, there is no agent left but the spirit of darkness."

"Well," replied Henry, "I doubt very much if the

devil is as much afraid of sacred things, and the sign of the cross, as you say, or that he will refuse his intervention when such objects are brought forward to defeat the arts of magic. While in Prussia, I was told that in a certain secret society, meetings were held, in which the devil appeared in a visible form, and that one of the conditions to ensure his presence was the placing a crucifix in the middle of the room, nay, even a consecrated Host, if one could be got, and when they could not obtain that, all the ceremonies of Mass were performed, from the first sign of the cross to the last benediction. I merely tell you what was related to me, and that by more than one ;—their place of meeting was mentioned, as were also the names of the persons engaged in the operations which took place."

"Such things are not new to me," said Leandro. "Do you wonder at them? The greater the sacrilege, the easier the evocation of the demon. The crucifix, in such cases, and the sign of the cross, or the Most Holy Sacrament, are introduced for the sole purpose of insulting and blaspheming the Man-God, and of gratifying the hatred of Satan. It is not the material sign of the cross, (to limit myself to this alone,) which is to produce its effects; it is the sign of the cross accompanied by faith in the divine word, and by reverence towards the divine majesty. That this sign, used in such a manner, is a powerful weapon against the devil, admits of no doubt. Were you ever present at the ceremonies which accompany the administration of baptism?"

“To tell the truth, I do not think that I ever was, or if I was, I have forgotten it.”

“Well, the administration of this sacrament, especially in the baptism of adults, is preceded by numerous ceremonies, among which are the exorcisms, which are solemn injunctions to the evil spirit to leave that creature whom God has chosen for his child. The exorcisms are accompanied by signs of the cross repeated as often as the name of each person of the most Holy Trinity is mentioned. These ceremonies, bear it in mind, date from the apostolic times, and their practice is a constant lesson which the Church gives us of the efficacy which the sign of the cross possesses against the devil:—a lesson confirmed by words of the Fathers, Greek and Latin, who unanimously recommended the sign of the cross as a weapon of great power against the evil spirits. Innumerable examples of this power, from the primitive days of the Church down to our own, supply proofs in abundance, of the efficacy of the sign of the cross against the devil. You may see at the same time what manner of agent it is, that, in these spiritistic operations, is defeated by that august sign.”

Just as Leandro had finished these words, he beheld Filippi emerge from the cabin, followed by the Sisters. “Ah,” said he, “here is your aunt. Go and meet her. Sigñor Filippi will introduce me to the others.”



VII.

SISTER SABINA.

EUGENIA LANGLEY was thirteen years of age when her sister, the mother of Henry, died. She, with her mother, was present at her death, an event which could never be effaced from her mind. Eugenia was a most innocent child, devoted to her pious mother, and tenderly attached to her sister. As she resembled the latter in exterior qualities, so she had a soul formed as it were in the same mould. She displayed the same simplicity of manners, the same mildness of disposition, the same charming docility, the same piety and fervent faith, the same love of prayer, and of every thing which belongs to God; and what is much less common, the same contempt of worldly vanities, of fashion, and of idle conversations and amusements. It is easy to understand that the death of her sister was the deepest wound her heart could sustain. Still, her faith, the knowledge she had of her sister's piety, the holy death which the latter died, soothed an otherwise incurable wound.

After her sister's death, her first thought was to

ask her mother and her brother-in-law to allow her to take charge of her little nephew, with the view particularly of attending to his religious education so greatly desired by her dying sister. The mother was willing to take the child to her home, but Edwin would not then part with him. On her return home, after an absence of several months, the thought of her departed sister remained ever present to her mind, accompanied by an increased anxiety for the child, a greater disgust for the world, and a growing desire to consecrate herself to God.

Arrived at the age of seventeen, a proposal of marriage was made to her. At the same time, Henry's father, still inconsolable for the loss of his wife, resolved to go travelling, and he would not then have objected to giving the child in charge of its aunt. It appeared to her by accepting the proposal made to her, she could better fulfil this charitable care. On the other hand, her attraction to a higher state of life repelled the idea of consenting to the offer. "If God," she said to herself, "invites me to become his spouse, shall I give myself to a man? But if I do it, it is for a good purpose, and to please God. On the other hand, if God prefers that I should give him *myself* rather than my coöperation in saving a soul dear to me and to him, may I not run a great risk by taking the step I am now asked to take? O! if I could only know which is the more acceptable to Him!"

Notwithstanding her reflections on the subject, and her continual prayers, she could not succeed in

eliciting a motive to determine her one way more than the other. She had broached the subject to her mother, a lady of much judgment and experience, and what is more, of solid virtue and piety. "My child," said the latter to her one day, "you must come to some decision. You have heard me declare more than once that I shall not interfere with your election of a state of life; for although it is true you are mine, yet God has the first claim upon you as He has upon me, and I consider nothing to be more dangerous than to put our own choice before that of God, especially in a matter of such importance as a state of life, a point on which depends one's temporal as well as eternal happiness or misery. Choose whatever you know to be the will of God. Have no regard to my affection for you, nor to your attachment to myself. Be assured you cannot give a better proof of this attachment than by following the dictates of your conscience and obeying the will of God."

"Dear mother," replied Eugenia, "I am fully aware that you would never oppose what you knew to be the will of God, for this holy will is the only guide you have chosen for the actions of your own life, and I can never do better than by following your sweet example—but my difficulty is to find out this holy will." Then she opened her mind fully to her mother, and explained the considerations that embarrassed her.

"Well, my darling," replied the mother, "if your indecision arises from no other causes than these,

we can do nothing better than pray for light: here we are not far from the Convent of the Sacred Heart, where in a few days there will be a retreat given for secular ladies. There is no better means of removing all doubts concerning the choice of a state of life than such retreats afford. Let us both attend it; be assured we shall not fail to obtain what we seek, light to know the will of God, and strength to carry that will into execution."

Eugenia's doubts occasioned her to bring the question before the Director of the retreat. This Father, after hearing the case, remarked: "Both these desires of yours come, no doubt, from God, and since God does not contradict Himself, some means must be found to reconcile them both together. If you see that the only means of providing for the salvation of your nephew is to marry, and the state of marriage does not prevent you from giving yourself to God, you may marry."

"But, Father," said Eugenia, "I do not see how I can give myself *entirely* to God, and belong at the same time to a man."

"Neither do I," said the Father, "but if, on the other hand, by consecrating yourself to God in the religious state, you find that you can provide at the same time for the salvation of your nephew, you may embrace the religious state."

"Oh, Father!" subjoined Eugenia, "I wish you would tell me what you advise, and I will faithfully follow it."

"Oh, no!" replied the father, "this is to be your

work, not mine ; but be not afraid, we shall come to such meditations as will leave no doubt in your mind as to the course to be pursued in complying with God's will, and without excluding either of your desires."

This interview had already given Eugenia a clue by which she was to extricate herself from the perplexity that harassed her, but when that point in the exercises was reached to which the Father had referred, (the election of a state of life for those who were not irrevocably fixed in one,) the light that broke upon her mind became so clear and so unmistakable, and at the same time her joy became so overflowing, that no shadow of doubt was left in her soul. She could not refrain from hastening to her mother, in the conviction that by communicating to her the resolution she had formed, she should impart the serene joy she experienced within herself. The apprehension that the voice of nature—which in parents and even in such as Eugenia's mother, yields only a reluctant consent to a separation from their children—would interpose, did not cross her mind. Jubilant with happiness, she entered her mother's room, and embracing her, said :

"Oh ! mother, mother, the will of God is now clear, very clear, to me. God wishes me for Himself, and for Himself alone, and His I shall be. He is all powerful, and needs not my coöperation in saving my sister's child ; but He gives me assurance that whatever I shall ask of Him for the

salvation of that boy, will be granted to me. My resolution is taken, dear mother, never to be changed, I hope, during life."

"God be praised!" replied the mother, kissing her child and bedewing her cheeks with burning tears. "God rewards your docility, my dear, and your never-failing obedience to me. You have been a good child, and too good for me. God takes his own."

Poor Eugenia felt so moved at these words of her mother's, that she could make no reply. But the mother, resuming her habitual calmness and self-possession, said :

"Eugenia, there is no being on earth from whom I would less willingly part than from you, and the idea of separation is as a sword which pierces my heart; yet the thought that if I part with you, it is that I may give you entirely to God, is a reflection which imparts the sweetest balm, and soothes my soul beyond measure. And indeed what better could I desire for you than to see you chosen as the spouse of Christ, the spouse of Him who never dies, and who shares His immortality with those that love Him? a spouse infinitely rich, infinitely powerful, infinitely good, infinitely beautiful! The benefit which God bestows on you by this vocation is a benefit which has no measure. It is an honor which you and I must receive with sentiments of the greatest humility, as an honor infinitely superior to our merits."

Eugenia conferred again with the Director of the

retreat, who approved of her election, and having expressed to him the inclination she felt for a certain institute, he advised her to follow that inclination. In concert with her mother, the necessary arrangements were made, and she entered on her noviceship. Having commenced it on St. Sabina's day, the name of this martyr was given her. After her noviceship was ended, she was sent to Europe, where she remained until the period of the opening of our narrative.

As, before entering religion, she maintained a regular correspondence with Henry's father, so, after his death, she continued her correspondence with his uncle, principally for the purpose of keeping herself informed about the boy, for whom she never ceased to pray. She also wrote to Henry, but after he went abroad, none of her letters reached him. She thus lost sight of him, and the only information she could get concerning Henry was that he was trifling with his opportunities and wasting his time and his money, now in one place, and then in another, and disappointing the expectations that had been formed of him. This intelligence gave her great pain. Still, she never lost the confidence she placed in God, and always believed that by some means or other the boy would be saved.

This hope revived in her when, being called one day by her Superior, she was told to make ready to leave the next morning for America with three Sisters who were destined for that point, she herself



taking the place of another who had been prevented by sickness from going. The Superior in making this communication, added : " Three times have our American sisters asked for you, and something has always interfered to prevent your departure. This time, no demand has been made for you, nor did I intend to send you. It is, therefore, God, and God alone, who sends you, and who, no doubt, has designs in view unknown to us. Be ready then, to start with the other Sisters, and may God go with you." Sister Sabina knew that although the Sisters were to begin their journey the next day, they would nevertheless stop for over a month in England. Henry's uncle had repeatedly requested her to apply to him, in case she should return, as he could procure some facilities for her and for other Sisters who might travel with her. The Superior consented to her writing to him, and in return, orders were transmitted from America to secure passage for them on this vessel at the expense of the banker, and the captain was requested to pay every attention to them.

Filippi, after leaving the two friends, learned from one of the attendants in the cabin, that the Sisters had retired to their rooms, but the servant thought they would not remain a great while. In fact, before long, they appeared, and Filippi, approaching, politely inquired if there was one whose family name was Langley. Sister Sabina replied that that was her name.

“Are you not the sister of Caroline Langley who married Edwin Stamford?” inquired Filippi.

“I am,” replied the Sister, looking surprised.

“Would you like to see your nephew?”

“Henry?” asked Sabina, with increased astonishment. “Are you acquainted with him? Where is he?”

“He is travelling with us in this steamer.”

Sister Sabina raising her eyes to heaven, and joining her hands, exclaimed: “Oh! good God!” Then addressing the other Sisters, who had heard of Henry, and, at the request of Sabina, had offered many prayers for him: “Sisters, was not Mother right in predicting that my unexpected departure with you was a disposition of Almighty God, for some design of His loving Providence? And did I not tell you that my heart anticipated some benefit to my nephew? Truly, God is faithful to those that trust in Him! But can I see Henry now?” she asked Filippi.

“Yes,” replied the latter, “I came to seek you for this very purpose. If you prefer remaining here, I will call him down.”

“No, no, we will go up ourselves. Do you precede us.” Henry had supposed that when he met his aunt, he could be as familiar with her as is customary with relatives, but the moment he approached, he felt himself held back by a sentiment of reverence which, as he afterwards said, the angel within her inspired him with. He could not fail recognizing in her the features of his mother, as he

had already noticed, before he knew who the Sister was. After a few words of greeting on each side, Henry took from his neck the chain with his mother's likeness, and showed it to Sister Sabina, who, as she regarded it, seemed affected by the remembrance of her "dear Caroline." The other Sisters noticed the resemblance between the portrait and Sabina, and returning the likeness to Henry, his aunt remarked, "I wish you could have known this dear mother, and have been able to understand the petition she addressed to God for you, shortly before breathing her last. I heard those words with my own ears, and they have remained ever since engraven in my heart."

Henry replied, "Lalla, Uncle Charles' daughter, who gave me this likeness, has related to me also the words of my mother's last prayer, of which, I think, I experienced some effects not long since."

Filippi invited the Sisters, to whom he had already introduced Leandro, to take seats, and all walking forward were soon commodiously seated, Sister Sabina and Henry a little apart. "Well, Henry," said Sabina, "this is the first time I have seen you since your infancy, and the very first time I have ever conversed with you, for you were too little to understand anything when I last saw you. I did think that your mother's last prayer, and the sign of the cross she made upon you, of all of which, I suppose, Lalla told you, would not be lost on you."

"Yes," replied Henry, "Lalla told me every

particular she could remember,—but I doubt much if my mother would now be pleased with me.”

“How so?” enquired his aunt.

“Because I have been a wandering sheep, going far away from the path she would have traced out for me.”

“But the wandering sheep may return to the flock,—and is it not for the sake of this *one* that the Divine Shepherd leaves the ninety-nine in the desert, in order that he may go forth to seek it? Nothing more is needed than to listen to the voice of this loving pastor when he calls. Perhaps it was to enable you better to hear this voice that he has brought you where you are at present. Believe me, Henry, if you feel within yourself the desire of returning to God, and if God has so disposed that we should meet here thus unexpectedly, and have the opportunity we now enjoy of conferring together, this is the effect of the prayers of your excellent mother, my very dear sister Caroline.”

Henry regarded his aunt with attention as she spoke, and when she finished, exclaimed, “Oh! aunt, if I am to attribute to my mother’s prayers all that has happened to me during these few months past, I am indebted to her for much more than you yet know of. You have, no doubt, heard of a certain gentleman, a physician, now residing in Paris, who calls himself my mother’s convert, who corresponded with her, and after her death with your mother?”

“You mean Albert Spencer? Have you met him?”

“You remember him then. Yes, I not only met him, but I was an inmate of his house during the greater part of my stay in Paris, and until I left. He and his wife loaded me with attentions, and did all they could to set me on the right path, and if I am here to-day as the companion of the young gentleman introduced to you as Señor Lopez, it is to him that I owe it.” Henry continued, giving a minute account of the rare qualities of Leandro, and of the interest the latter had taken in his true welfare. He also spoke of the occurrences of that very morning, of his interior struggles, of the sign of the cross, and so forth.

“Henry,” interrupted Sabina, “truly, after God, is not the hand of your mother in all this? Albert has been the means of saving you, but he himself was first indebted for a similar favor to Caroline. The emotion of your conscience at the remembrance of your mother’s last words, the companionship of the friend with whom you have been so providentially associated, our unexpected meeting here, are not these all, doubtless, the effect of your mother’s prayers? If instead of myself, it were your own mother who now spoke with you and claimed your gratitude, what would you not do to show it? Henry, I long desired to take that place in the care of you which was left vacant by your mother’s death, but God had other views, and claimed me for Himself. The charge thus left to Him of providing for your salvation has never been intermitted, although you may not have allowed yourself to grasp the

hand that guided you ; but now His intervention is most manifest, and I trust that it is a grace which will not pass unnoticed, but will meet correspondence from you. I have prayed for you every day, and more than once a day, and shall always do so, repeating Caroline's supplication for you, and I hope in future to see you walking in the path of salvation."

Henry brushed a tear from his eye, and replied, "I hope so, too."

The efficacy of prayer is infallible, especially where offered for the spiritual benefit of those of whom we have charge. Parents are under an obligation to pray for the spiritual welfare of their children. Vigilance, good example, correction and parental charity, are also obligations of their state towards the offspring God has given them, but prayer is second to none of these. In many cases where other appliances fail, prayer proves victorious. The example of Henry's mother is but one among a number of others, of which the most familiar to us is that of the mother of the great St. Augustine. Examples similar to this abound, and many more remain untold, wherein prayer has been equally efficacious in conducting to salvation many a soul which would have been otherwise lost.

The conversation between the Sisters, Leandro, and Filippi had proceeded very quietly until towards the close of Sister Sabina's remarks, when it began to be quite animated. The Sisters appeared greatly amused at some account which the two gentlemen

were giving them. Sister Sabina, seeing Henry moved by her remarks, thought it best to let her conversation with him rest at that point, and turning round to the remainder of the party, asked what it was made them so merry.

"Oh! come here, come here, you will hear what is the matter," replied the Sisters. Henry and herself accordingly rejoined the others and found them speaking about the affair with the spiritist. The gentlemen repeated what had been already said, and then went on with the narrative, to the great amusement of Sister Sabina and her companions.

Leandro playfully remarked to Sister Sabina at the close: "If you wish to have further information about the fellow, you can get it from Henry, who is quite well acquainted with him."

"No, no, I protest!" exclaimed Henry; "how can you say so! No, indeed, Sisters, I am not acquainted with him at all, although I have seen him before. For that very reason I would like to have as little to do with him as possible."

"Except to make the sign of the cross for his benefit," remarked Sister Sabina, smiling. "Is not that so?"

"O, yes, and I shall keep my word; but don't talk to me of that scapegrace, whom I detest with all my heart."

"Fie!" said Sabina, "we ought not to hate anybody."

"Not even a man like that?"

"No, not even a man like that. We may hate or

detest his *works*, and we ought to do so, but not the *man*. Who knows but that you may convert him by the sign of the cross?"

"Convert *him*! Not a bit of it."

"Well," subjoined Sabina, "Cyprian was a famous spiritist, who employed his magical arts in an attempt to mislead St. Justina of Nicomedia, but she came out of his snares victorious, through the sign of the cross. Thereby she also obtained the conversion of Cyprian, who died a martyr with her, and who is therefore one of the noblest trophies of that august sign."

"See here, aunt," said Henry, with great earnestness, "if that man becomes a Christian, I bind myself to become a Trappist."

The company were quite amused at Henry's declaration, especially Leandro, who was about to add something, when the captain approached. The latter asked the Sisters, with great courtesy, if they would dine with the rest, as dinner was about being announced. The ladies thanked him kindly, but expressed their desire of dining afterwards, according to their custom on board.

"Certainly then, if you prefer it, ladies," replied the captain, "and we must try to do without you. But if you will excuse my interrupting your conversation, it is now time for these gentlemen to take seats with me at the table." The ladies assented and the party separated.



VIII.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS BEFORE MEALS.

WHEN the captain and his party entered the dining-room, the seats at the table were already occupied, except five reserved for himself and friends. Leandro was assigned to the first seat on the right, and next to him a friend of the captain, Mr. George Harper; on the other side, Henry and Filippi. The three Catholics made the sign of the cross and silently said a short prayer before sitting down, the captain and Mr. Harper standing meanwhile. The latter gentleman was well acquainted with Filippi, and had been introduced to the other two young gentlemen before entering the room. He was an American, who after considerable experience on the bench, was now Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the State in which he resided, with a reputation for great ability and uprightness.

The large number of German immigrants who had settled in his State had occasioned several cases to be brought before him, which, on account of his familiarity with their language, were given in charge to him for examination, and he frequently

employed the recess of Courts in journeys across the Atlantic, partly to facilitate the examination of these cases, partly for recreation, and had on some occasions been entrusted with official business between his own country and the German governments. He was just now returning from one of these excursions.

The Judge was not a Catholic, simply because he found it more convenient to live out of the Church than in it. His sympathies, however, were all in that direction, and on occasions when Catholicity was attacked he courageously undertook its defence. On the other hand, he despised Protestantism, as such, and entertained a fixed aversion for *parsons*, who, in his opinion, were at the bottom of all the political troubles of the country. He was a man of varied erudition, and fond of adding to his stock of knowledge; consequently took pleasure in the discussion of historical, political, and religious questions whenever he found them treated by competent persons. If he met with well-informed Catholics, he never failed to enter into conversation with them, and draw them out by enquiries on the subject of their religion, which, he used to say, was the only religion that satisfied his mind.

Filippi, on his way to the captain's office, after his interview with Leandro, had met the Judge and remarked that there was a young Spaniard on board, with whom he was sure the former would be delighted to be acquainted, and on the Judge's cordially assenting, promised to make the introduction on his

return from the office. Filippi, however, was absent so long that the gentleman, thinking his promise forgotten, went in search of him, and in so doing, found the captain in the cabin, who promised to supply for Filippi, and introduce him not only to Leandro, but to his friend Henry.

"Moreover," said the captain, "you might join us at table. I am just here for the purpose of securing the seats for the three, and I shall leave a fourth for you. But tell me, Judge, are you afraid of the sign of the cross?"

"What do you mean?" asked the Judge. The captain explained the enigma. Whereupon the other replied :

"You can afford me no greater pleasure than that of joining the company in the defeat of the spiritist, for I assure you, Captain," continued he with much emphasis, "there is hardly a worse cancer in modern society than this spiritism, and of course there can be no greater pests than its professors. Moreover, I have something to tell you about this very man, and more especially concerning an associate of his."

The captain proposed that they should go on deck, and after leaving directions with the steward, he accordingly ascended with the Judge. The remainder of the conversation we omit for the present, in order to return to our narrative.

The ceremony of the sign of the cross with the circumstances accompanying it, could not fail being noticed by many of the passengers, some of whom looked at the captain and his companions with sur-

prise; others smiled or made it the subject of a jocose remark: but there was one who had taken his seat near the captain's end of the table, who abruptly got up and left the room, with signs of considerable excitement. At this move, the captain and the Judge exchanged significant glances, but made no remark to the others. On looking around, the Judge did not perceive either Julia's father or his spiritist satellite, and on enquiring of the captain, learned that the former always had his meals served in his own room. The other one, as the waiter at his elbow remarked, had to-day requested the same accommodation for himself.

"Good!" said the captain. "But, Judge, if it is the sign of the cross he is afraid of, what do you suppose occasions his fear?"

"As to that," replied the other, "I think it is not any motive personal to himself that puts him in awe of it, but I verily believe that his familiar spirits are fearful of it, and that they fear it because it is a kind of religious rite."

"From which answer of yours," remarked the captain, "I should draw two conclusions,—one of which is that you regard the sign of the cross as a religious rite, and the other that you believe in the existence of an unseen agency in these spiritistic operations."

"Oh, as to the first," said the Judge, "I say nothing at present, but as to the other, my mind is made up. In *many* cases of spiritistic phenomena, as they are called,—although not in *every* case,—

there is evidence of some intelligence at work which is neither that of the operator, nor that of the medium, nor that of any of the spectators, but yet one which produces effects superior to human power. In this, I agree with the spiritists themselves. The only difference between us is this, they say the work is done by good spirits; I say, by bad, yes, decidedly bad."

"And what does our friend Lopez say on this subject?" remarked the captain, seeing that Leandro was attending with great interest to the remark of the last speaker.

"I endorse the gentleman's opinion without hesitation," replied Leandro, and the conversation continued until the greater part of the passengers had left the table. On rising from the table the Catholics renewed the sign of the cross, and retired to the captain's room above, to partake of a cup of coffee at his request. The room opened out on a handsome balcony towards the sea, which was spacious enough to contain the party, and as the coffee was being served, the captain remarked :

"Gentlemen, we have no news of the day here, except what happens on board the vessel, and that would hardly furnish items enough for a newspaper ; but my friend, the Judge, is never at a loss for matters of agreeable interest to talk about."

"Thank you, Captain," said that gentleman, "but I had rather be a listener than a talker," and addressing Leandro, continued: "I am curious to know what is the origin of grace at meals, and

especially should I like to know something about the sign of the cross."

"The origin of the grace at meals," observed Leandro, "is easily accounted for, independently of any specific origin, although I can satisfy your curiosity on the subject of its ceremonial origin likewise. Practically, to religious minds, its use before meals suggests itself for a double end, as a prayer of thanksgiving and a prayer of supplication. However, I am telling you what you know already, for I understand that in some families that are not Catholic the custom prevails, and that the ministers sometimes say a grace at your public dinners, and probably do so also at home."

"Oh! the parsons, yes, a 'grace' as long as the moral law," said the Judge. "But I think, when given in public, it is quite as much to display their own eloquence, as it is for any thing they may have to say to the Almighty."*

"Then in private families," interrupted the captain, "if such a custom exists, they do not say their grace in the bold upright way that you Catholics do, but after all are seated at the table, the one who *asks a blessing*, as it is called—generally the head of the family—dips over with his nose nearly to his plate, and all the rest do the same, until the prayer is said. I was once at a family Thanksgiving dinner of relatives of mine, at which a plate of

* Had the Judge and the Captain been Catholics, they would hardly have allowed themselves so much latitude of expression as they employ here towards Protestant persons and usages.

pickles stood near the head of the table, and when the grace had been said, I heard one of the younger guests ask its mother, 'Ma, what is it grandpa was saying to the pickles?' "

When the laugh this anecdote caused had subsided, the Judge requested Leandro to proceed with what he was saying, as he wished him, he said, "to begin at the beginning and go through to the end." Leandro accordingly proceeded.

"Well, then, as the history of prayer before meals is connected with the object for which the prayer is made, I repeat that this prayer has two points in view; one is to thank God for the nourishment He provides for our bodies; the other to supplicate Him that in addition to these and other gifts, He would grant that the food we take may strengthen and support our bodies, in order that we may serve Him better."

"That is very good and very commendable," remarked the Judge, "but there are other actions of the day quite as important, though not so necessary in the physical order, as taking our regular food. If you were in my place, with a case before you in which a decision had to be made involving important consequences, you could realize this. Why pray before meals, then, more than before other actions? And yet this would require of us an almost uninterrupted prayer."

"And in fact," subjoined Leandro, "the Apostle St. Paul tells us, 'Pray without ceasing.' "*"

Thessalonians v, 17.

"I do not know how it is," said the Judge, "that you Catholics always manage to have some scriptural text at hand, to support every proposition before you advance. But I do not see how it is possible to pray without ceasing."

"Our actions," explained Leandro, "are influenced by the intention with which they are performed, and as nothing is easier than to renew a right intention at stated times, say at least once a day, in the morning, so our actions performed according to that intention are an implicit prayer. Thus perpetual prayer becomes easy."

"Why, then, a *special* prayer before meals, more than before any other action?"

"Oh! there are reasons for that. One motive is deduced from the nature of that action: another from the constant practice of the Church, and from the example of her divine Founder; and still another from the unanimous consent of mankind."

"Well, well! That is covering the whole ground. I have no doubt you are master of the subject. Go on with it; you will afford me a real treat."

"As you please," continued Leandro, "though you give me more credit than I claim. The nature, then, of the action of feeding is purely animal, and whatever is animal has a tendency to lower our moral condition. Now, man is made for higher things than food and drink, and this fitness or destiny of his is alluded to in the prayer prescribed by the Church, to be used before the principal meal*

* "*Mensæ celestis participes faciat nos,*" &c.

and before supper.* Yet, the action of feeding being indispensable for us, we must proceed in this slippery path; and as when we walk upon a slippery path, we pay more attention to our steps than when we traverse safe and level ground, so, no reasonable man will wonder if we use precautions, when we nourish our bodies."

"I find this motive very philosophical," observed the Judge, "and exquisitely moral: of that morality which has never entered the head of our parsons, who are not at all apprehensive of the good things of the world, and who, as one of our daily papers says, are just as ready to accept a ten thousand dollar salary, and minister in sumptuous churches, and bow down before the fashions of society, as any of their parishioners are to build splendid houses and drive fast horses."†

"Judge," said the captain, "whenever there is an opportunity of pelting the parsons, you never miss it."

"I do not believe you are any greater admirer of them than I am," returned the other, at which the captain good-naturedly laughed, and the Judge continued, addressing Leandro: "But, sir, you mentioned other motives for the practice of prayer before meals: the constant usage of the Church, I think you said."

"Yes. But in speaking of this, I shall have to

* "Ad cœnam vitæ æternæ perducatur nos," &c.

† New York Times, Nov. 6th, 1858.

refer to the authority of writers to whom you probably do not attach so much importance as we do. I mean the Fathers; but you will doubtless accept them as witnesses of the facts to which they testify, and to which reference will be made." •

"I hold the Fathers in high esteem," returned the Judge, "and am happy to hear their testimony quoted on any subject."

"I shall not be able to quote long passages from them," resumed Leandro, "but I can say this much—that St. Jerome, Origen, and the Greek and Latin Fathers generally, testify to the practice of prayer before and after meals, as habitual in their time; and Tertullian, who lived in the third century, tells us: 'Prayer begins and ends our meals.'* Prudentius has also preserved among his poetical writings the prayers that were in use among the first Christians on these occasions. Other beautiful prayers recited by the ancient Christians before and after their repasts have been brought to light by modern writers.† These prayers, if modified as to the words, are still substantially the same with those handed down to us from century to century, from the primitive ages of the Church to our own days: and this traditional practice not only prevails among Catholics, but as you admit, even in some Protestant communities‡ or families."

* "Oratio auspicatur et claudit cibum." (Apol., III, 9.)

† Mamacki, *Cost. dei primi Cristiani*. Stuck, *Ant. Conv.*

‡ An English paper says that at Clement's Inn, an ancient legal corporation in London, grace after dinner is not only said

“Yes,” observed the Judge, “in my frequent journeys through England and Germany, and other Protestant countries, as well as in my own, I have observed this practice, but it is not very general. Now, where and when did it originate?”

“That is what I was coming to,—but I do not like to monopolize the conversation, and keep every one else silent.”

“My dear sir,” said the captain, “I have not for a long time enjoyed a conversation which interests me so much. But your Catholic friends here, who know all about these matters, may not find it so instructive as we do. Is that so?”

“Not at all,” replied Filippi, “you must not suppose that we Catholics have all as thorough a knowledge of the treasures we possess in our faith, as those have who apply, like our friend Leandro, to ecclesiastical studies, and who employ their learning for the benefit of others as well as themselves.”

“And as for me,” remarked Henry, “I am highly qualified, as Leandro here knows, to take the part of listener rather than speaker on such subjects, and I dare say he is very glad to give me the oppor-

but acted. Four loaves of bread, closely adhering together, typical of the four Gospels, are held up by the occupant of the chair, who raises them three times, in allusion to the Blessed Trinity, and then hands them to the butler, who hurries with them out of the hall with an alacrity which is emblematic of the freedom with which the bread of life is given to the world. This acted grace is of great antiquity, and clearly had a Catholic origin.

tunity of filling that post: indeed, I am most willing to fill it."

Leandro smiled, nodded pleasantly, and resumed: "Very well then. As to the origin of religious usages in the Church, I may say, in general, that whatever we see constantly and universally practiced in the Church, we may conclude had its origin when the Church had hers. This is to be said of the prayer at meals, and the sign of the cross, especially if no trace should exist of their specific origin. To justify our belief that these practices remount to the period of our Divine Institutor's sojourn on earth; we have the testimony of the Evangelists St. Luke* and St. Matthew,† in their narratives of the last supper. St. Mark‡ and St. Matthew§ again, in recording the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes, inform us that Jesus, having commanded the multitude to be seated, took the five loaves and the two fishes, and 'looking up to heaven,' 'giving thanks,' 'blessed,' &c., and then distributed the multiplied food to the assembly. The Fathers unanimously draw a conclusion from this action of our Lord's, which is thus expressed by Theophylactus, whose words I happen to remember, 'He consecrates and blesses the bread, to teach us that when we sit at table, we must first say grace, and then feed our bodies.'"

"Truly, Judge," interrupted the captain, "there is more information conveyed, and more common

* xxii, 17.

† xxvi, 30.

‡ viii, 6.

§ xiv, 19.

sense in a few words only of this young man, than in all the sermons I have heard delivered on this boat by our ministers."

"I think you put too high an estimate on my simple explanations," remarked Leandro modestly.

"Not at all," said the Judge ; "for my part, I have never met any of the gentlemen referred to by the captain who could give me solid satisfaction on these subjects, nor, I may say, on any others touching religion or its practices. The reason is, I suppose, that having no fixed creed of their own, and, therefore, not knowing what to believe, they know not what to make others believe. They have some catch-words, some texts of Scripture, which are wrenched out of their proper connexion, and made to do duty on all occasions, and some generalities which satisfy superficial enquirers—but as to anything profound, capable of meeting the wants of *mankind*, (not merely of religious milksops and monomaniacs,) and embracing a system which sits secure amidst all the variations of times, and ideas, and men—satisfying the philosopher as well as the earnest-minded of every condition in life—these shepherds are utterly deficient."

"Judge, you are rather severe on this class, are you not?" suggested Leandro.

"Severe? well, no. I am only *just*, I believe ; at least I hope so. The fact is, our Protestant communities are excessively ignorant in matters of religion, and to whom is this to be attributed if not to their pastors? Whereas, I have met among the

Catholics many a poor Irish or German laborer who has astonished me by the knowledge he possessed of his religion, and by the precision with which he stated its tenets."

"And yet, to listen to our preachers," added the captain, "one would suppose the Catholics to be the most ignorant creatures in existence—their religion a mass of superstitions—their Pope the anti-Christ, and so on."

"Captain, don't speak of it," interrupted the Judge. "I was fed on this kind of theological pap from my youth upward, and having grown wiser as I grew older, I sicken when I think of the impositions practiced on my credulity. A cause, even if a good one, that resorts to systematic calumnies, will never prosper by it in the end. A feeble or a doubtful cause thus sustained, becomes perfectly insupportable. Hence, I have made up my mind never again to set foot in a Protestant church as long as I live."

"I should like to know where you belong then, Judge," said Filippi, vivaciously.

"Yes, that is what I should like to know, too. Tackle him," exclaimed the captain.

"My dear Captain," cried the Judge, "answer for yourself."

"O, I am a regular church member—of the *broad* church," said the captain, laughing.

"Well, then," returned the Judge, "I suppose the same answer will do for me. I am free to go where

I like, and I shall use my freedom to keep very clear of the parsons and their conventicles."

"But, Judge," remarked Leandro, "for a legal man, your position is strangely inappropriate. Protestantism is a mere negation. You repudiate it without embracing the *positive* truths it denies. You hold, then, only to the negation of a negation."

"Two negatives make an affirmative, my dear sir; did you know that? However, I am not at present prepared," continued the Judge, as the laughter at this sally subsided, "to make a profession of faith. We must hear further from you, Señor, in regard to the subject we were discussing. Can you tell me if the practice of blessing the table had any precedent in the old dispensation, under the Jews?"

"Certainly, and not only among the Jews, but among the Pagans."

"Among the Pagans?" inquired Henry, with surprise.

"Yes, even among the Pagans, my friend. Would you have supposed that?"

As this information was equally new to all, they desired Leandro to give some details. He was about complying, when the Judge remarked, "But before you proceed, and lest I should forget to ask you again, would you be so good as to tell me why, in the blessing of the table, you introduce the sign of the cross?"

"Because," replied Leandro, "the sign of the cross is an act of acknowledgment and thanks-

giving; it is also an act of supplication; in a word it is a real prayer, and as excellent as it is brief."

"You go too high for me," said the Judge. "I need further explanation to enable me to see how the sign of the cross realizes all this."

"In the act of signing ourselves, then, with the cross," continued Leandro, "we invoke the most august Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, whom we confess to be the author of all things, the giver of all things, and the end of all things; thus it is that the act becomes one of acknowledgment and thanksgiving. The sign of the cross itself, superadded to the words employed, brings out in relief, so to say, the quality of Mediator possessed by the Son, who assumed the Mediatorship through His Incarnation and His death on the cross; thus inspiring an unlimited confidence that we shall obtain that for which the Son of God became Mediator: 'Behold, O God, our Protector, and look on the face of thy Christ.'* This is the supplication contained in the sign of the cross. In short, this sign may be compared to a precious jewel upon which is engraved a cypher or device epitomizing the whole of our faith."

"I see it all now," returned the Judge, "and your explanation enables me to appreciate an expression I remember hearing employed by one of your clergymen, of which I did not at the time gather the entire force. 'The sign of the cross,' said he,

* Ps. lxxxiii,

‘ought to be the boast of the Christian, being the most precious ornament which can ennoble his brow.’”

Leandro hereupon pressed his lips and slightly nodded to Henry, as if to say, “and you were ashamed of it!” We think better of our readers than to suppose any will be found among them to blush for the sign of the cross; but still, the example afforded by Henry is, we fear, not an isolated one among Catholics. Henry understood his friend’s meaning well enough, but, to escape embarrassment, turned to the Judge and reminded him, in a loud whisper, that Leandro had not yet described the customs of the Jews and Pagans. The latter could not help smiling at Henry’s ruse.

“Oh, certainly,” said the Judge; “excuse me, sir. Please continue from the point where I interrupted you.”

“But I have been talking long enough, in all conscience,” pleaded Leandro, looking at his watch.

“No, no; go on, go on,” exclaimed everybody, and Filippi added, “If you omit this part of your subject you leave the whole incomplete. You spoke in the beginning of three motives for using a special prayer before meals—one deduced from the nature of the action, another from the constant practice of the Christian Church and of its Founder; these two motives you have enlarged on, but the third, ‘the general consent of mankind,’ you have not entered upon.”

“If you would continue now, I should be

pleased," said the captain, "as I should like you to take us over the whole ground at once. At another time I might not have an equally convenient opportunity of joining your conversation, as my duties on board make my leisure very precarious."

"Well, gentlemen, as you please," replied Leandro. "However, my stock of information is not unlimited, and I must depend on my memory for what I have to say. Beyond that I have but little means of going."

"If your memory is as faithful to you in this," observed the Judge, "as on the preceding points, we shall wish for nothing better."

Leandro then continued: "The practice of blessing the table—and with repeated benedictions—was common among the Jews. *Stuck*, in his valuable work on convivial antiquities, describes the ceremonies of the Jews as follows: The father of the family, surrounded by his children, said, *Blessed be the Lord our God, whose goodness supplies nourishment for the flesh*. Then, taking with the right hand a cup of wine, he blessed it, saying, *Blessed be the Lord our God who has created the fruit of the vine*. He tasted it first and passed the cup around, that all might taste likewise. Next came the blessing of the bread, which the father held with both hands, saying, *Praised and blessed be the Lord our God who has drawn bread out of the earth*. He then broke the bread and took a morsel of it himself, and each one of the family did likewise. Then, dinner or supper began. When there was a change of wine,

or when new dishes were brought, the Jews had particular benedictions for these, so that each aliment was purified and consecrated. The repast was closed by chanting a hymn of thanksgiving."

Filippi observed, "It seems that our Lord conformed Himself to these customs in the Last Supper."

"He did," replied Leandro; "in this, as in all other things, He conformed himself to the law."

"You consider, then," subjoined the Judge, "that these ceremonies were legal with the Jews? I have no recollection of reading any thing of the kind in the Bible."

"Certainly you did not find these *details*, as described by the author I referred to, but you will find the command in general terms in Deuteronomy. *When thou shalt eat and be filled, bless the Lord thy God.** Then, what the Jews did in obedience to their law, the Pagans did, having either borrowed the practice from the Jews, or received it by tradition from the ancestors common to both races. 'Never,' says Athenæus, 'did the ancients take their meals without the invocation of the Gods.†' The same writer, in speaking of the Egyptians, informs us that they knelt to pray before their repasts. Livy, in denouncing a murder committed at a repast, alludes to a similar practice among the Romans‡. Besides, the libations so frequent among

* Deut. viii, 10.

† Dipnos, Lib. IV.

‡ "Commissum est facinus hoc sacrum atque atrox inter

them were never omitted from their meals, both before and after, and, as with other Pagans, these libations were an act of religion or sacrifice. Diodorus Siculus testifies to the practice of the Greeks in this regard, which contains something instructive for Christians as well as Pagans. Each time, says Diodorus, that pure wine was given, it was customary to say, *Gift of the Good Genius*; and, when at the end of the meal, wine was presented, mingled with water, they said, *Gift of Jupiter Saviour*; for, adds he, 'wine unmixed is noxious to the health of the soul, no less than to that of the body.' "

"Capital!" exclaimed the Judge. "I wish you would let me know in what part of Diodorus' history I may find this passage."

"The exact place I cannot remember, but you will find it somewhere in the Fourth Book. This historian also mentions the act of thanksgiving after the repast, as being customary among the Greeks. Plutarch and Sozomen add their testimony to that of the other authors I have mentioned. These practices have likewise been found prevailing among the Vandals, the Chinese, the Mahometans, and other nations: in short, the suffrage of mankind has been given in favor of prayers before and after meals."

"Do you know an idea that occurs to me, Captain?" said the Judge.

procula atque epulas, ubi libare Diis dapes, ubi bene precari mos esset." Dec. IV, L, IX.

“What is it, pray?”

“That Señor Lopez here, should give a lecture in the cabin, on this whole subject. I am sure that many of our fellow-travellers would be delighted to hear him,—and more than once.”

“The same thought has been passing through my own mind,” replied the captain, “and it seems to me also, that no better means could be found of disconcerting the spiritist and upsetting his projects.”

Leandro loudly protested against the suggestion. He urged that he had neither the time nor the books necessary for the successful presentation of the subject, even if his foreign accent did not present an essential obstacle. He was afraid, too, that the subject might not be found an attractive one by a mixed audience, &c. His friends and listeners were unanimous, however, in approving the suggestion and prognosticating his success, and even endeavored to impress on Leandro's mind that it was almost a matter of conscience for him to comply, considering the great good that would be likely to arise, either by correcting false views, or by setting honest enquirers into the right path. This last suggestion could come, of course, only from Filippi and Henry. The latter, whether moved by the progress of grace in his heart, or encouraged by seeing his friend so much admired, replied, when Leandro asked, “But what do you wish me to say?”

“Why, repeat what you have told us already, or,

if you choose, take only those five points you gave me to read this morning."

"Well, there is matter there, surely, for five good sermons, if not for as many lectures: but whether I take five points or twenty, what does it matter if I have not the leisure necessary to enlarge on them, or the materials to aid me, or perhaps even the gift to make myself agreeable?"

But the entreaties of his friends were so persistent that Leandro yielded at last, and even consented to give the lecture on the following day or evening. At the same time, he good-naturedly expressed the hope that stormy weather might set in so as to prevent the affair taking place. In fact, no motive would have induced him to consent except that held out to him that he should confer a benefit on his fellow-men—for, as to himself, his repugnance was very great to putting himself prominently forward in any way. He relied also on the influence of Judge Harper and the captain, and the good-will felt for them by the company on board, to prepare the way for his favorable reception.

The captain was called out at this moment, and, on leaving, requested the company to continue to occupy his room as long as they liked. But the Judge, consulting his watch, remarked that it was time for him to call upon the spiritist.

"I hope," said Filippi, "that you are not one of his clients."

"So far from it," replied he, "that I am going to take steps that will probably hinder his operations

altogether, and moreover avert dangers that some on board may be exposed to without knowing it."

Thereupon all rose to leave. Henry went to seek his aunt, and Leandro and Filippi proceeded to take a walk in the open air.





IX.

THE CRIMINAL.

LEANDRO and Filippi, as they walked the deck to and fro, fell into discourse upon the sentiments of Judge Harper, Filippi expressing his surprise that one so ill affected towards Protestantism, and so favorably disposed towards the Church, should be content with advancing no further, and professing no distinct doctrines whatever. "His is not the only example, either," he continued, "that I have met with in my frequent travels through England and the United States, of persons who have arrived at the very threshold of the temple, who admire its structure and its loftiness, are struck by its splendor, and attracted by its treasures of holiness, but never make another step forward to enter its precincts. This is mysterious!"

"The mystery," replied Leandro, "is not incapable of solution. Such persons ordinarily regard the Church as they would a museum of the fine arts—an interesting study, which awakens no deep convictions, and therefore leads to no profound consequences. Or, if something in it seems to

reveal a Divine Artificer, and command interior reverence and assent, motives of worldly pride or the attractions of worldliness in *some* form or other, procure a rejection of the thought. With many, the yoke of Christ has often been set aside, lest it should impede the mere liberty of pleasure. However, from whatever motive grace is rejected, progress towards the Church, which can be promoted only by grace received and corresponded with, is effectually suspended."

"It is sad," resumed Filippi, "to see persons so naturally upright, so well informed, and so eager for further knowledge, nevertheless remain in darkness. I wish I knew what means could be used to bring them out of it."

"I am well acquainted," returned the other, "with a saintly priest, a Portuguese, who is very happy in the means he uses for bringing dissenters into the bosom of the Church, and these are means within the reach of every one. Whether those he encounters are favorably disposed, or the contrary, he never enters into argument with them, but bids them pray, and gives them a medal or a picture of the Blessed Virgin, which they are urged to keep at hand. Some laugh at the suggestion: others positively refuse compliance with what they call an act of idolatry: but the good priest is never discouraged by refusals, and frequently succeeds in overcoming the repugnance manifested. This point gained, 'the fish is in the net,' he says, and the result is certain. By these simple means, he has

brought into the Church a multitude of schismatics and Protestants. Why not try the same experiment yourself?"

"I might, indeed," said Filippi, "but as there is a considerable difference between a saint and a travelling merchant like myself, there might very well be a corresponding difference in the fruit of their religious enterprises."

"Oh, you do yourself injustice, I am sure," replied Leandro, smiling. "The experiment would be worth a trial, at any rate. But to refer to another matter—can you imagine what motive the Judge can have for going to visit the spiritist?"

"I can only surmise, from a meaning glance exchanged between him and the captain at table, when a suspicious looking character, who is much in the spiritist's company, suddenly rose and left the room at the time of our making the sign of the cross, that there is some mystery about this man with which the two gentlemen are acquainted—and that this occasions the visit."

Filippi's conjecture was correct. Before the party had met at table, as related in the preceding chapter, the following conversation (referred to there) concerning this man took place between the Judge and the captain. His name had been entered upon the passenger register as Adolphus Stellman, so it was ascertained.

"Well," said the Judge, "his real name is Hellerbach. He is a notorious criminal, and was convicted at Munster, in Germany, while I was

once temporarily sojourning there, of highway robbery and assassination, and he had already received sentence of capital punishment, when he found means one night of escaping from his prison, as he had previously done in Pomerania, where he had for three years been held in irons. His flight from his last prison was so successful that no trace of him could be discovered, although the government employed the utmost vigilance in the effort to recapture him. There was a vague rumor some time afterwards that he had found his way to England. His reputation was that of a most dangerous man, and one fit for the execution of any scheme of villainy."

"This is a most extraordinary story," remarked the captain. "But might you not be mistaken in his identity?"

"Not at all. Besides his other marked traits I distinctly noticed as he passed in and out of the prisoner's dock—for I was a spectator in court every day of the trial—that peculiar limp of his which you might have observed."

"I have not perceived anything of the kind," returned the captain.

"Ah! he knows well how to carry his cork leg, so as to escape attention as much as possible; but he cannot deceive me!"

"If his having a cork leg will complete his identity, we can easily assure ourselves of that circumstance," said the captain. "There is a

French boy on board, assistant to the steward, who will soon find it out for us."

"How will he do that without the other's knowledge?" asked the Judge.

"Oh, leave him to his wits. He will discover a way. Here, Tom," said the captain, addressing one of the sailors, "go and find Pierre. Tell him he is wanted here."

The boy soon made his appearance. The passenger was described to him, and he was directed to find some clue to the fact required as soon as possible. Meanwhile, the two gentlemen awaited the result. Pierre departed, quite elated with his commission, and after a moment's cogitation, prepared a bundle of little billets of stove wood, around which he threw a rope, one end of which hung loosely to the ground. Having perceived the German moodily walking about, Pierre carried his bundle clumsily before him, running along with it in great haste, and as he neared his victim, pretended to step on the loose end of the rope, and so fell down directly in the path and almost on the toes of the German, grasping his legs as he fell, as if for support. This unexpected check caused the man to stumble and finally fall over, cursing terribly. The boy scrambled up and was on his feet in a moment, making profound apologies, which, however, would not have saved him from a beating, as the enraged German rose from the deck, had not some passengers interfered to pacify the latter and extenuate the boy's awkwardness. Pierre then made

the best of his way to the captain, and reported to him that the left leg of his man was artificial, relating with great glee the trick by which he had discovered it. The two gentlemen were greatly entertained with his narrative, and the Judge presented him with half-a-dollar for his ingenuity, which Pierre pocketed with much satisfaction.

"Thunder!" exclaimed the captain, after the boy had gone out of hearing, "this Hellerbach or Stellman is a fine fellow to have on board, truly! And a friend of the Scotchman's, too! Well, I am glad of it; now our high and mighty gentlemen, who have had reputable clergymen excluded from the boat for the sake of a rascally adventurer, may see what kind of company their protégé keeps!"

"These two," said the Judge, "have made their arrangements together for their mutual advantage, no doubt, though the spiritist may not be fully aware of all the antecedents of his confederate. Still, with such help, he is likely to find fewer obstacles in his path, be the means used to remove them what they may. From the little value this Hellerbach has heretofore put on human life, I should very much fear for the young Spanish gentleman you have spoken of, should he be an obstacle, real or imagined, to the accomplishment of any important end of theirs."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the captain, "if I thought that, I should clap them both in irons this very evening."

"Oh," replied the Judge, "there is no need for

precipitation. You have no evidence as yet of any criminal conspiracy. There will be time enough to take decisive steps when you have. Meanwhile, your knowledge of his confederate's character, if communicated to the Scotchman, will be a resource for keeping them in check. Had you not better see the man?"

"I think, Judge," replied the other, "that as the facts are all within your own knowledge, you would be the best person to communicate them."

"That is true," returned the Judge. "I will see him this very afternoon, after dinner."

"Besides," said the captain, "I am a little hot headed at times, and might grow too warm on this occasion, especially as I have already had one encounter with this juggler."

"Oh, I have no objection to putting the state of the case before our spiritist friend," replied the Judge. "I shall be cool enough, and I shall then discover, besides, whether the Scotchman is as great a rogue as his partner."

They separated to meet shortly at table, as described in the preceding chapter.





X.

DEFEATED PLANS.

YOUR readers will remember the interview which took place between the captain and the spiritist, in which the pretensions of the latter were so summarily disposed of. We resume our narrative as regards the spiritist, at that point. Leaving the captain's office, quite crest-fallen, he shortly met with his client, the old Englishman, who said to him querulously: "This is the third day on board, and the time is passing. I insist on seeing my Julia this evening. Make your arrangements accordingly."

The spiritist was very much embarrassed as to what answer to give, and feeling assured that his evocations would be fruitless so long as there could be any one present to employ the sign of the cross, endeavored to evade a direct reply. The old man having been often before disappointed, was in no mood to be put off, and pressed the spiritist so closely, that the latter was obliged at last to admit that there was an unforeseen difficulty in the way which would make so early a compliance with his request difficult if not possible. Whereupon the

old gentleman became highly indignant, and refused to be pacified by anything the other could allege. He declared he would have nothing more to do with the spiritist, and that as soon as the vessel arrived at New York, he should take the first steamer returning to England, and have done with the Scotchman forever. "I dare say," continued he, "that I have been a great fool to spend on you the money I have, and submit to so many discomforts to so little purpose. I shall not allow myself to be trifled with in this way any longer. I tell you that plainly."

"My dear sir," said the Scotchman, stammering terribly, "the fault is not mine. I must inform you that these people who are an obstacle to our operations are Papists, and that they practice superstitious rites which undo my work. If I can prevent this, all will go well, and I could gratify you this very evening, as you say. No doubt, however, a word from you to the captain to prevent their interference would secure our success."

"Nonsense!" replied the old man, "did you not tell me that if the Catholic priests were kept off the vessel, your success would be certain? I had the greatest difficulty in the world in preventing the passage of some of them, and now you tell me that even the ordinary Papists are in the way! No, sir, if they are any obstacle to you, you are an imbecile, yourself,—if this is not, in fact, a mere pretext to gain time and live on my means. In that case, you

are a scoundrel, sir. And you may go to the captain, yourself, or go to the —, if you like.”

Whereupon the old gentleman marched off to his state-room and locked himself in, giving orders to his body-servant that the spiritist was not to be admitted, and that no attention was to be paid to anything he might say or propose.

Not knowing what to do next, the spiritist thought to pacify his client by the usual appliances, and so went to prepare the particular beverage which had always heretofore, by its modifying influence on the old man, paved the way to a reconciliation when he was out of humor. He accordingly presented himself shortly after with a covered pitcher containing a compound very hot and very strong, prepared with the Scotchman's best skill, and doubtless from his own native “Glenlivet.” Finding the Englishman's servant at his master's door, he said to him: “Gregory, my man, take this in to your master. He is in low spirits to-day, and this will do him good. Let him use it generously.”

Now, Gregory was a man of robust proportions,—stubborn, like Englishmen of his class,—very devoted to his master, and supercilious in his intercourse with others. Besides, he naturally detested Scotchmen, and had a particular aversion to this one. He was sitting beside his master's door, pretending to read an old copy of the *London Times*, and gave no sign whatever of seeing or hearing the spiritist.

“Why, Gregory, don't you hear me? I say,

take this to your master, and let him have it at once. He is greatly in need of it." No reply.

"I say, you,—(the Scotchman began to grow red in the face and stutter)—what do you mean by this conduct?" He hereupon set down the pitcher, and pulled the paper roughly aside. Whereat, Gregory rose to his feet, and looking the Scotchman in the eye, began to draw up the cuffs of his coat, as if he were about to pummel him. The other, taking a hasty view of the burly form before him, prudently stepped backward, and finally retreated, threatening as he did so, to have an account with him and his master for this manner of behavior. As the Scotchman gave a last look back on going out of the door of the saloon, he saw Gregory pouring the contents of the pitcher with great deliberation into a vase standing beneath a water-cooler close by. He made a hideous grimace at this proceeding, and shook his fist spitefully, but as nothing remained to be done, passed on to console himself in the society of his ally, whom he found on deck.

"Why doctor," (the title he affected,) "what is the matter?" exclaimed his friend, on his approach. "You look tremendously out of temper!"

"Matter! Matter enough, I assure you," replied the other, hoarse with passion, and with difficulty commanding his tongue. "Come to my room and I will tell you."

They accordingly retired thither, and the spiritist indignantly repeated to his listener the occurrences of the day, from the interview with the captain to

the scene with Gregory. The obstacle to their proceedings apprehended from Leandro's presence had previously been discussed between the two, and Stellman (as we shall call him,) had summarily proposed to obviate the difficulty by drugging Leandro's food or drink ; or, failing that, presenting him with fruit or other articles drugged. Stellman proposed only to produce an effect which should cast Leandro into a stupor for such a period as would permit them to carry out their proceedings without fear of the sign of the cross. If any worse effect than this had followed, it probably mattered little to a man of Stellman's character, when once he had an object in view. The other, however, had objected to using an expedient so dangerous, until other means of success had been tried.

When Stellman had heard his partner's story, therefore, he said: "You would not take my advice, you see, and cut short the difficulty, at once. Now, you have brought all this on yourself by your obstinacy. Here, you have the means, by a simple expedient, of retaining the best customer you ever had or could have, and of obtaining success that will give you reputation as soon as you arrive at New York—and you throw it away. I should like to know what will become of all the brilliant prospects you have been holding out, of a tour through the States, if you make a miserable failure of this trip? If you are afraid to act, leave the matter to me. I will take the chances of success or failure."

“That would be all very well, if you would take them alone, but if our trick should be discovered, as it might easily be, by its effects, no one would think of separating my responsibility from yours. This is too dangerous an expedient to be tried within the limits of a vessel, and with two or three physicians on board.”

“Pray tell me, then, what you mean to do?” enquired Stellman. “As it is to your interest to have as many passengers present as possible at your *séance*, how are you going to exclude this Spanish fanatic?”

“Could we not manage to make him stay away, either by rendering ourselves disagreeable to him in some manner, meanwhile, or by exciting ridicule towards him among the other passengers?”

“What would a man like that care for ridicule, who is not afraid to make the sign of the cross before the whole company? And as to insulting him, we should have to be careful on that point so long as the captain is his friend, and perhaps abettor.”

“What do you advise, then?” asked the Scotchman.

“I have given my advice, and you are not willing to take it.”

“I might be ruined if I did,” replied the spiritist.

“You certainly will be if you do *not*,” rejoined the other. “Do you see this box?”—taking out a small box, and tapping it—“One pinch of this powder may be made the means of your stepping

into fortune, and for my share in the result, I agree to manage the matter for you."

"But, Adolphus, what avails it to get one Papist out of the way, if there be others on board equally as hostile to our success?"

"Who says there are others?" returned Stellman. "And even if there be, they are not such bigots as this man, I presume, who has made himself observed by everybody:—and they would hardly attempt any papistical tricks on us."

"That may be, but had we not better ascertain who are our Catholic passengers, and what we are to expect from them? If I understood the captain aright, he is going to have some with him at table."

"It wants an hour to dinner yet," said Stellman, looking at his watch, "and I will look around, meanwhile. There may be others, as you say, and as I have not noticed who the lady passengers are, I will inquire about them, also." He accordingly strolled into the dining saloon, where he met one of the two girls the "doctor" had brought with him as mediums. This one, a girl of German origin, was named Cornelia, but her name, for reasons hereafter to be mentioned, had been changed by him to Sibyl. Of the other, Milly, we only know that she was the daughter of Jewish parents, and a wretched person.

"Sibyl, my good girl," said Stellman, in as bland a tone as he could assume, "pray enquire if there are any Papists on board, especially among the ladies."

“I do not need to inquire,” said she, ill-humoredly, “I know there are.”

“Who are they?” asked he, “and where?”

“Please find out for yourself, and let me alone. You can discover them as well as I can,” replied she.

“Sibyl, why are you so cross, and how am I to know a Papist from any body else?”

“If I am cross, I have my reasons,” returned she, bitterly. “If you want to see Papists, there is a batch of them sitting on deck, now.”

“Well, Sibyl, it is not a matter of mere curiosity that makes me inquire. It is one that concerns us as spiritists, and may have something to do with our success.”

“Oh, it does, does it?” said she, cutting him short. “Well, make the best of it. Go up there and you will find them,” pointing to the stairway and flouncing away.

“What ever can have got into the girl,” muttered Stellman to himself, as he mounted the steps, “to make her so sour-tempered—and how could these nuns,” (as he got sight of their dress,) “have come on board without our perceiving them sooner? These Papists are everywhere, confound them! and everywhere they are interfering with our plans. I wish these people were at the bottom of the sea, this minute. But I see no way to get rid of them. I must find out who are in their company; these may be more of the Pope’s minions—Jesuits in disguise, like that Spanish fellow, I suppose.”

And he gritted his teeth, but tried to look composed as he advanced towards the part of the vessel where the Sisters were conversing with Leandro, Filippi and Henry. At some little distance from them he found a gentleman, seated in a camp-chair and engaged with a book. Taking a stool and placing it near him, he inquired if he knew what order of nuns these ladies belonged to.

"That I cannot say," said the gentleman, "I only know that they are Catholic Sisters."

"And are those gentlemen with them also Catholics?"

"I know that one of them is, and I believe the other two are, likewise, as they are the only gentlemen I have seen the Sisters conversing with."

"Excuse me, sir, for asking. I spend so little time with the passengers generally that I had not observed these ladies before."

"You are quite welcome to ask, sir. On the contrary, the most of my time is spent in the saloon, as I have a troublesome rheumatism which does not allow me to move about a great deal. The fine weather has tempted me above stairs to-day."

"Ah, I can sympathise with you. I know what it is to be confined to one spot from a similar cause." (The similar cause was a ball and chain.) "But this has doubtless enabled you to become acquainted with our fellow-passengers, or at least to know who they are."

"Yes, I think I know who they all are pretty well."

"Do you know, then, if these are all the Catholics who are on board?"

"If these *are* all Catholics, there are no others."

The conversation was continued for a time on indifferent topics, and Stellman, before returning to make his report to his partner, awaited the hour of dinner, that he might determine by ocular demonstration, if possible, which were the Catholics.

He was so disgusted and enraged when he saw the three Catholics making the sign of the cross at table, while the captain and Judge Harper stood reverently by, that, as we have seen, he left the table precipitately, forgetting even his dinner, and made his way to the Scotchman's apartment. The latter was greatly discouraged by the report brought to him, and both were completely at a loss to know how they were to fortify themselves in their spiritistic operations against so many enemies. They discussed a number of plans for holding their meeting without admitting the Catholics, but no one of them proved, on examination, practicable.

Meanwhile, they had reason to fear that the persons on board to whom they had made promises of a triumphant exhibition of their skill, would regard them with contempt. They would lose a number of prospective clients, to say nothing of their principle dependence for revenue and *éclat*, the rich old Englishman. They concluded, then, to inform those to whom they had announced their

plans, that the latter being unwell, was unable at present to bear the excitement which the evocation of his daughter would occasion, and thus putting them off, the two could await a favorable moment, should any occur, for the execution of their project before the close of the voyage. Just as they had arrived at this conclusion, a rap was heard at the door, and it was announced that a gentleman wished to see "the Doctor."

"Go then, Adolphus," said he, as the other rose to depart, "and give out what we have agreed upon; and meanwhile tell Sibyl to keep herself in readiness for the occasion, If she is out of temper, or capricious, do not mind it, I know how to manage her."

The visitor was here ushered in, and proved to be Judge Harper.





XI.

THE VISITS.

JUDGE HARPER'S entrance seemed slightly to disconcert the spiritist, but recovering himself, he invited his visitor to a seat, and requested to know how he might serve him.

"In nothing, thank you," replied the Judge, "on the contrary my visit to you has reference to a service I may possibly be doing *yourself*."

"Oh! ah!—indeed!" said the other, enquiringly, with some return of embarrassment.

"Yes; that person who has just left this room,—do you know the kind of character he is? I should hardly suppose that if you did, you would choose him for an associate."

Now, the Scotchman, to do him justice, was ignorant of the particulars with which the Judge was familiar, but still he had knowledge enough of his man to surmise that he was capable of desperate things, even if the gallows had not already a mortgage on him. Yet, it would not do to surrender his friend's character without some effort at defence, especially as it was called in question by Judge Harper, an ally of those whom he chose to regard

as enemies. He believed that Stellman was a Hungarian, and so, assuming as much coolness as possible, he requested to know how long his visitor had known him.

"If you wish to know that, I can tell you: for ten months past."

"For ten months,—and did you meet him ten months ago in Hungary."

"I did not, for I never was in Hungary."

"Then, Judge, you could not have met my fr—— Mr. Stellman, for at that time he was in Hungary and nowhere else. You are mistaken in the person."

"That is simply impossible, unless I am mistaken in my own identity, also. Your man is a Pomeranian, and was for nearly three years in prison in his own country, and would be there now had he not escaped from his place of confinement. He very soon after committed a murder, under circumstances of great atrocity. For this he was tried and convicted at Münster, and would long ago have been hung, had he not escaped a second time, and concealed himself no one knew where."

This communication evidently disconcerted the Scotchman no little, but rallying to the necessity of making the best of the case, he alleged that Stellman had lived in England, as he himself knew, for many years, and was only occasionally absent from it, and that he had always understood these visits were made to Hungary on family affairs.

"His absence may have been occasional, as you observe," said the Judge, but his last visit was cer-

tainly not to Hungary. It was to the prisons of Pomerania and Münster, whence it seems he escaped to England, notwithstanding that he has but one sound leg to stand on, a defect which proved one clue to his conviction."

The Scotchman moved his chair uneasily at this remark, for he had discovered that Stellman was accustomed to disguise his lameness, though he himself had become aware by accident that one leg was artificial. "The coincidence is remarkable," replied he, "but I still trust that you may be mistaken in your man."

"Quite remarkable," said the Judge, ironically, "another equally remarkable is that he bears another name which is neither Hungarian nor is it the one he calls himself by."

"I am aware that 'Stellman' is not even an Hungarian name, but then I believe he has changed his name for family reasons, and to avoid inconveniences arising from incorrect spelling."

"Yes, to avoid inconveniences, but quite of another kind. His name is Leopold Hellerbach, and I remember reading, even in the English papers, an account of his last crime, of his conviction, and of his escape. You might have read as much, yourself, since you were residing in England at the time."

The spiritist was struck dumb at this, and exhibited so much embarrassment, that without waiting for further reply, the Judge proceeded: "You must see that his position is extremely critical, and

that as the captain is acquainted with all that I know upon the subject, he might if he chose, on our arrival at New York, retain the vessel in the outer harbor until he should send for an officer. Your own relations with Stellman, as his friend and associate, compromise yourself, and I have therefore thought it my duty to come and give you this warning."

"By whom have you been authorized to address this language to me?" enquired the other.

"By no one. I feel sufficiently authorized by my knowledge of facts, to make to you in all candor a communication of which you can avail yourself for your own protection,—if you choose. As to the captain's actual intentions in regard to your associate, I am not informed. What I do know is that he is excessively annoyed at the spiritistic operations you are both engaged in, and so long as he sees these things going on, he is embittered against both of you. Under these circumstances, it would not be surprising if he should be driven to use the utmost severity towards either one of you against whom an action may lie, as we say in legal phrase."

"But, sir, *I* am no Pomeranian with an unexpired term of imprisonment hanging over me in one country, and a sentence of death in another. I am, I hope, a reputable person, and not an accomplice of——"

"Oh!" interrupted the Judge, rising to leave, "you are not accused of Hellerbach's catalogue. I have no wish to inquire into your private life, but

your association with one who can be proved guilty of that man's crimes, exposes you to consequences which you can estimate for yourself. My advice to you is to quit at once all attempts at the practice of your profession while you are on board this vessel. Moreover, if anything should transpire of a criminal nature, you may be quite sure that the captain will not lose a moment in putting your German in irons, and then *your* security will depend on circumstances. I hope you perceive that, as I said at first, my visit had in view a service to yourself. Good-morning." And the Judge went out, leaving the spiritist in a state of alarm that almost paralyzed him. After pacing his room for some time with rapid strides, absorbed in anxious thought, he seized his hat and went forth to seek his confederate. He had hardly closed his door behind him when he was called by one advancing from another direction.

"Oh, Mr. Hebert, is that you? Excuse me for a moment. Go into my room, I shall soon be there," said the "Doctor," who hurried on, and after some trouble succeeded in finding Stellman near the ladies' cabin.

Now the portentous information just communicated to the spiritist would have seemed the most natural subject for him to broach on such an occasion, and indeed he had half made up his mind to ask for explanations at once; but the embarrassment he felt in speaking of it, especially in his present excited state, caused him to defer doing so. What was certain, was, that he must now provide

for his own interests, and to do that it was necessary to suspend at once all arrangements for an open exhibition of spiritism. His first enquiry of Stellman, therefore, was if he had met with the medium.

"I cannot," said the other, "find Sibyl anywhere. She is not with Milly, she is not on deck, nor with the ladies in the cabin." (Milly was the other medium.)

"Oh! no matter, you need not search further. She is probably visiting in some private room. There is nothing to be done, at least for some time to come." Seeing the look of surprise with which this remark was received, the spiritist continued, bringing down his hand vigorously on a table at which they were standing, "Stellman, our coming in this accursed steamer is the worst speculation we ever made in our lives."

"How so? What has happened now?"

"Ah, don't ask me! Mr. Hebert is waiting for me in my room. I will tell you all at another time." And he ran off, leaving the other in considerable perplexity. Now, this Hebert whom he went to meet, and whom he found turning over the leaves of Lilly's Astrology (one of the "Doctor's" literary treasures) was a passenger with whom an intimacy had grown up on account of their common interest in Spiritism. Hebert had been originally, if not a minister, at least a "professor of religion" in one of the stricter sects, a Baptist, or a Presbyterian, or perhaps a supporter of each in

turn. He had certainly changed his religion several times, dipping into Swedenborgianism among the rest, whence he had probably derived his present taste for spiritist phenomena. Whether these changes betokened any activity of religious conviction, or whether or not they were the mere effect of instability, or only proceeded from motives of personal interest or advantage it is not worth while now to inquire. It appears that the only definite residuum at present, of his various religions,* or of any one of them, was an immense contempt for an obscure body of people called Catholics, in regard to whom his ignorance was as profound as his contempt; yet, very inconsistently, he experienced towards them at times also the throes of a lively hatred. Such persons are to be found in communities where Catholicism is comparatively unknown, and where a species of social repute is to be acquired by clinging to the skirts of some one or other of the various sects that divide the public favor. The truth must be told moreover of Mr.

* In our portraiture of Hebert, we intend no assault on honest minded persons who belong to any sect, or even on those who exchange one sect for another. Those who sincerely accept the teachings of a sect for religious truth, or those who seek for it, now in one sect, now in another, become, if they are sincere, and as courageous as sincere, Catholics at last. We speak here of one whose qualities of heart are of a different order. Neither here nor in the criticisms indulged in by the Judge in a former chapter, do we allow ourselves the latitude of language we have heard Protestants employ towards others as Protestant as themselves.

Hebert, that he was a sad backslider, and that having quarrelled with his wife and separated from her, he had supplied her place with the wife of a British army officer with whom he ran off from the East Indies. His personal security in England was endangered by the approaching return of the indignant husband; hence his flight to the New World with his stolen property. His interest in Spiritism was very great, and his desire to witness the evocation by the Professor of the old Englishman's daughter intense. Nothing but this had brought him to the "Doctor's" room at present, to make enquiries. The latter had expected something different, and therefore replied at first rather abstractedly and coldly to the enquiries made on a subject now rather a sore one to him. Seeing that this manner of his excited too much surprise and curiosity, the Scotchman was obliged to rally, and answer with a little more vivacity.

"I fear, my friend," said he, "that after all we shall have to postpone our operations. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to gratify yourself and your excellent wife, as well as other passengers who wish us well, but unfortunately the old gentleman is indisposed, and in his present state the excitement that he would experience from his daughter's presence might have serious results. Moreover, we are just now literally infested with papistical spells."

This last remark was made in a tone and manner of extreme bitterness, and the speaker followed it

up by discharging all the pent up wrath of his soul upon a religion so opposed to the religion of the spirits. He wished therefore to see it even exterminated from the earth, in order that no check might exist to that more free intercourse of man with spirits, which existed before the origin of this religion. He had also the hardihood to declare that the eminence of the ancient nations in war, in government, in philosophy, literature, and art was due in a great measure to the inspirations of the spirits with whom they held converse, who taught them also how to enjoy life truly. Whereas, this religion, which arose to oppose their influence, placed shackles on the progress and happiness of man, and yet threatened with eternal misery those who refused to be sheltered beneath its dogmas. In short, not only did it absurdly lead men to reject temporal advantages of the first importance, and was at open war with the exigencies of our nature in general, but it was also an object of such hatred and aversion to the spirits, that they refuse now to manifest themselves as familiarly as they did before Popery was known, or as they still do where it has not obtained a firm foothold.

Here he paused to take breath, and Hebert availed himself of the interval to give an assenting groan, and to add that the very name of Popery ought to be swept off the face of the earth. He proposed himself as one of the champions ready and willing to assist in this holy cause.

“Yes, Hebert,” continued the other, “nothing

less than this will do, and I am rejoiced to say that the secret societies are working effectively to this end. The press is in trusty hands, and knows how to avail itself of the advantages it possesses. It is sapping the very foundations, and authors, artists, and politicians are helping to shake down the old edifice. Our friends are gradually getting into control in government councils, and what they cannot destroy in one generation they will in another by their system of education, in which they are managing to push the Church more and more out of her former office of instructor. The Papists call this system a system of *infidelity* and *immorality*, ha! ha!" and the spiritist laughed viciously.

"Ah! it is a good work, it is a noble work!" ejaculated Hebert, unctiously. "Do the Papists understand all their danger?"

"Well enough, and they are struggling to save themselves as best they can. The old Pope has called a Council,* too, that he may help his people to keep their heads above water for a time longer, I fancy. But we shall drown 'em out at last—drown 'em out at last! Why, there'll be a fine revenge taken for the insults they have offered to the spirits of the olden times. We shall have those good old times back again, and brighter than ever, with the grand old spirits to converse with us, that spoke under the names Rome and Greece gave them. The present undress of the theatres, the softness of

* Alluding to the Vatican Council, then summoned.



private dances, the splendor of personal ornament, the luxury in living, in dresses, and amusements, will make people at home with the age when it shall come again. Then, there is force enough in the party of independent and progressive minds to make us feel sure that the day of emancipation is rapidly approaching, and that the overthrow of the enemies of light is only a question of time."

We must say that the spiritist seems sadly astray in his definitions, calling slavery, freedom, and darkness, light, but as his ideas are those of a very large and a very hopeful party, his expressions may appear in no wise unfamiliar to our readers. Hebert thought the services of the Protestant clergy, especially of the more advanced sects, in putting down Popery, ought not to be overlooked.

"Yes," replied the other, "when we look over the field, it does seem as though the whole world were with us. We are moving, moving, moving—horse, foot, and dragoons: heavy artillery, light troops, and skirmishers. We shall leave these fellows not an inch of ground to stand on, or at least we shall drive them back again into their dens under ground, which is almost the same thing."

"What do you mean?" asked Hebert.

"Why, don't you know the catacombs at Rome? The Catholics had a long lease of them once, and they have been exploring them again and mapping them out. All in good time, say I. They will find everything there to suit them when they resume possession, except space and ornament. There are

their altars, and their saints, and their crosses, and their prayers for the dead, just as they were sixteen hundred years ago. A few repairs and a little new furniture will restore every thing. There let them swarm, and leave the face of this happy earth to us, where we know how to live as men ought to live. Then will come the time when people shall see what we mean by 'Progress.' But Hebert, I believe the struggle is going to cost more than the councils of our secret societies can accomplish, more than can be effected by the writings of our literary men, the pencils of our artists, the ingenious laws of our legislators. Harangues from the pulpit and the forum, and the epigrams of our wits are also doing a good work, but all these are not enough."

"Pray what more could you have, or what more is there need of?" asked Hebert.

Before we give the reply of the spiritist, let us remark that nothing could be more reasonable than his expectations, so far as they were founded upon the imposing character of the forces employed in this warfare upon the Church. Were she a human institution, and not a divine one, her destruction were a foregone conclusion; and the downfall of the Church—in other words, of Christianity—would be, as this man believed, and as others like him believe, a mere matter of time. But the hand of the Almighty is not shortened, nor can His promise ever fail. He will protect her until time shall be no more, and meanwhile will turn to her

advantage even the schemes employed by her enemies for her destruction. Thus the wicked will coöperate, though unintentionally and unwillingly, in her triumph: but He desires also the voluntary and the hearty coöperation of His own friends to this end; He desires it on the part of those whose office it is to instruct and to lead others in the way to salvation:—on the part of those whose duty it is to study, that they may labor for an eternal, as others do for a perishable end:—on the part of those whose province it is to promote works of charity, that they may employ a zeal corresponding to the diligence of the emissaries of evil:—on the part of all who have once devoted themselves to His service, a persevering fidelity, a constant and ready obedience to His laws and to the laws of the Church (which are also His), a never-failing promptness and fervor in prayer, with the most entire confidence in Him to whom their prayers are addressed. Thus will the simplicity of the dove avail more than the cunning of the serpent, and evil be overcome by good—its dark and threatening cohorts scattered before the advancing armies of the true children of light. But let us resume our narrative.

“You think, perhaps,” replied the Scotchman, “that we have an easy task before us in overcoming Popery: but it has already stood for eighteen centuries against every kind of attack, and, though none of these assaults have been so skilfully contrived or have enlisted forces so unanimous and

extensive as the present, there is reason to believe that more is required, and, rather than fail, we must have that more: Hebert, I tell you we must have—*blood!*”

Hebert, not being prepared for such a truculent announcement, gave a start, but as he was about to speak, the other interrupted him. “I say, the men of the great French Revolution understood these things better, and we must take example from their work.”

“But,” interposed Hebert, “violent means like these have seldom produced any effect.”

“That is because they were interrupted too soon. If once blood flows, let it never cease flowing until the work is accomplished, whatever mawkish sentiments of so called ‘humanity’ may interpose. Humanity has to protect its own rights, now. Woe to it, if after unsheathing the sword, it allows it to drop before the protection of mankind is assured. I hope you are not one of the *moderate* school.”

Hebert, embarrassed by the violence of the speaker, replied humbly that the long experience of his friend with the spirits, and the wisdom that he must have imbibed from them, were an assurance that his conclusions were guided aright. He would only remark that he thought some denominations of Protestants not much less “Romanistic” than the Romans themselves, and that the “Doctor’s” idea might embrace a larger field of work than he now supposed.

“Not at all,” replied the other, “the most high-flying of the Puseyites (if you mean such as those) are separated by an impassible barrier from Rome, whatever their theories may be. No, it would be a mere waste of time to attack non-Catholics, whatever name they may call *themselves* by. If we once succeed in overthrowing Popery, we shall have nothing to fear from any other quarter. Be assured of that. The religion of the spirits will then be the religion of the world: but if it has to cost blood to establish it, then blood we must have.”

Our readers may imagine that language like this is introduced to give force to our narrative at the expense of truth. Such, however, is not the case. There are throughout the world numbers of men ready to precipitate a catastrophe like that of 1789, and they would draw in their train hundreds of thousands of followers, if the day of license (called “liberty”) should dawn. We have examples of this growing tendency in the European revolution which centres in poor Italy. While Cavour was alive and at the head of affairs, a general assembly of the various lodges of the Peninsula was held, and one of the two sections into which the members were divided, declared for Red Republicanism pure and simple, modelled after that of France in '89 with all its train of horrors. Documents of unquestionable authenticity show that had the invasion of Rome in 1867 been successful, the most frightful scenes of deliberate slaughter would have occurred. Let us, however, hear our spiritist again, who, after acknow-

ledging the assistance the "party of progress" derived from the governments, in its assaults upon the Church, added :

"Still, we see no one at the head of affairs with the spirit of a Julian, that staunch enemy of Popery, and friend of the spirits, whom the monkish historians have tried to make odious by fixing upon him the title of Apostate. Moreover, if it is expedient to adopt the harsher measures of his predecessors, the Moderates may take comfort from Julian's plan. He never republished their sanguinary edicts, yet blood was copiously shed under his administration."

"Nevertheless," remarked Hebert, "Julian did not finally succeed any better in his object than they. On the contrary, the only effect of his measures was to knit together more closely those on whom he made war, and cause their objectionable tenets to take deeper root."

"Because," answered the other, angrily, "Julian had not time to complete his work. Had he returned alive from Persia, I guarantee that he would have left us nothing to do. As it is, we must resume his task where he left off." After this bloodthirsty utterance, which expresses the secret desire if not the published programme of the enemies of Christianity—who are at war with it wherever the Catholic Church is attacked,—the envenomed spiritist continued :

"Oh, Hebert, that mark of baptism which these people apply to their neophytes,—those crosses with which they accompany the rite,—you have no

idea of the abhorrence in which they are held by our enlightened and beneficent spirits,—who actually fly from them. To give you an instance of even a remote influence these detestable spells exercise,—you know Sibyl, don't you?"

"Who?—that fine girl who acts as medium for you?"

"The same. Let me tell you by-the-by, that when I can succeed in establishing through her communication with the spirits, she is the best medium I ever had; better than Milly, and better even than poor Anastasia whom I lost during my unfortunate voyage to Brazil, but, would you believe it!—when I have succeeded in conquering her stubbornness, I am obliged to use the most effective resources of the art in order to bring about a communication from the spirits, and all because, as they say, *she smells of the baptism of her father*, and they cannot tolerate it! Nay, they sometimes, on that ground, refuse all communication whatever, though they make her pay dearly for it when they do manifest themselves, for having then no longer control of her faculties, they play wonderful tricks with her and turn her, as it were, inside out. You should have heard the charming conversation of Julia with her father through Sibyl! In this and in others similar, what candor, what familiarity of speech, what delightful pictures of the life of the spirits in their various spheres, and what distinct and attractive outlines of their theology,—of the true religion.

But those accursed crosses, those hateful spells of papistry, those——”

“But, doctor, do tell me,” interrupted the other, overcome by curiosity, “was Sibyl’s father really a Papist, and how did she escape becoming one herself?”

“He was a Papist, and a Papist he died, shortly before Sibyl was born ; but her mother, who hated Popery as much as you or I do, disregarding very properly the bigoted wishes of her husband, and of surviving relations, constantly refused to have the child baptized. The mother married a second husband, one of her own way of thinking this time, but as Sibyl grew up, the couple were so annoyed by her repeated requests to be allowed to become a Catholic, that they determined to send her away where she could not be influenced by her relations ; for they suspected them of being at the bottom of this trouble. I happened to be in a neighboring town to that where this couple lived, and they were among the number of those who came to visit me professionally. Their object was to consult the spirits, and they had no doubt of being wisely directed by them in the steps they should take. They brought Sibyl with them, though of course not into the consultation, and I went out to see her, for I was just in want of a new medium, Milly being sick much of the time, and Anastasia having too much to do. She struck me at once as being a suitable subject, being just turned of fifteen, of intelligent appearance, and in robust health. Her

parents were also respectable people, and she had good manners. After exchanging a few words with her on different topics, I returned to the parents. 'Come,' said I, 'I can settle the difficulty at once,' and I made the proposition to take her off their hands and assume charge of her until her eighteenth year, when, if she did not choose to remain longer with me, or if she did not marry meanwhile, she would be at liberty to return to her home. I promised that she should be well treated, that she should find no Popish inclinations in the companions she would travel with, and would be so completely cut off from Popery in every shape, that she would probably never think of the subject again as long as she lived. Moreover, she should return with a certain sum, which I named, and which for a young lady of moderate means, was a contribution towards her pin-money not to be despised. The proposition was not received with the alacrity I expected, and I had to see the parents a number of times before I could gain their consent; perhaps I should not then have succeeded, had not the spirits with whom they communicated, advised them to this course."

"Well, but you succeeded at last," observed Hebert, "and did the girl accompany you willingly?"

"No, indeed; there I had another delay, but I sent Anastasia to keep her company, and that clever girl soon found means of gaining her over by flattering her ambition with the prospect of brilliant

successes. Anastasia had very winning ways, and Sibyl was attracted to her by these. She also began to think, in which Anastasia did not contradict her, that away from her mother and step-father she would be more at liberty to follow her religious inclinations. As soon as her consent was finally given, I left that part of the country immediately, and now Sibyl has been with me for over two years. I assure you, however, I have had great difficulty in overcoming her obstinacy, at times, and in fact, since she is as headstrong now as she was the day I first saw her, should not have overcome it at all but for the means employed to almost force the subjection of her will to that of the spirits." Here the spiritist went on to detail the methods that proved effective in conquering the repugnance to these diabolic spells of this poor victim of the bigotry of her parents and the arts of an intriguing fanatic. In the course of his narrative his face had subsided into the malicious smile common with him; just as he was concluding, a violent rap came to the door and Stellman entered in great excitement.

"Oh, Doctor! Doctor! have you heard the news?"

"News? what news?"

"Why, Sibyl has drowned herself!"

The spiritist stared at Stellman for a moment in blank amazement, and then broke forth into such a torrent of curses, that his own fallen spirits seemed to be supplying him with words. The other two

men endeavored to calm him, but were obliged to let him finally exhaust himself. He then begged that he might be left alone; he would inquire the particulars hereafter. In fact his behavior led his two friends to believe that he had apprehended such a catastrophe. However, they left him to himself, and proceeded to gather further information in regard to the startling event reported.





XII.

SIBYL.

THE following were the circumstances that led to the reported drowning of Sibyl. Milly, her companion, had been sick ever since the steamer left Liverpool, and Sibyl had attended her almost constantly, although the incompatibility that existed between them had rendered this service anything but an agreeable one to herself. Milly, on the one hand, was as hostile to Catholicism as her employer. In fact, she hated every religion, even that of her Jewish parents. She was besides of a vindictive temper, and although she knew how to make herself agreeable, had no real fund of amiability to sustain the test of long companionship. Indeed, her sallies of temper were sometimes carried to an unendurable point of bitterness, and her language then became as reckless as her mood was desperate. Now Sibyl, although embittered by the position in which she found herself, naturally shrank from the rude and unwomanly violence of her associate, and was shocked at the language she made use of in speaking of a religion to which she herself was so sensibly attracted.

Sibyl had her faults, but they were not deeply set like those of her companion; they were rather the growth of present circumstances, and were, in a measure, forced upon her. Her original noble and upright nature qualified her for a far better and happier life than that she now led.

Sibyl, having noticed on the third day of the voyage the presence of the Sisters, felt her former yearnings for their religion revive. She could not but be struck by the modesty and religious calm which distinguished them, betokening an interior peace to which she herself had long been a stranger; she felt drawn to seek their company, thus to lay the foundation of a future intimacy, but on the other hand was repelled by the sense of her own unworthiness, which seemed to render such an association a great presumption on her part. So violent was this struggle, and so keenly did it agitate her, that poor Sibyl gave way in private to a torrent of tears. When this interior tumult subsided, a sorrowful quiet succeeded, tempered by a hope that the path of happiness was not entirely closed to her, and that she might yet find the means of attaining it. Removing the traces of tears effectually, as she thought, she sought Milly's room to enquire after that unprepossessing invalid. The latter took very little notice of Sibyl's kind inquiry, but observing her still swollen eyes, she conjectured she had been weeping.

"Aha!" said she, with malicious triumph, "so you have had your ears boxed again, have you!"

(It must be admitted that the "Doctor" had used this violence towards Sibyl more than once, with the effect of reducing the poor girl to sullen non-resistance.) "Well, I dare say, you did enough to deserve that, and a great deal more. I wonder the Doctor has the patience with you he has, anyhow. Oh, you needn't look at me that way; what do I care for the spawn of an old Papist. Faugh! why don't you go follow him, wherever he is!"

Sibyl did indeed look astonished and indignant at so unexpected and rude an assault, but mastering her feelings as well as she could, she replied: "Milly, I needed but this language from you to determine me in a course I have long meditated. Yes, I shall go; I shall put an end to this desperate way of living. You will never see me more, and this is my farewell." Saying these words she passed to the door, but ere it had closed behind her the spiteful Milly, unawed by language which seemed to betoken an awful catastrophe, cried out:

"Go, go; I hope I never may see you again; never, never, nev——," here the door closed and cut off the sound of all further iteration.

Sibyl hastened at once to find the captain, whom she discovered immersed in the preliminary arrangements for the dinner at which the demonstration of the sign of the cross was to be made, as before referred to. He was just arranging the seats for his friends. Sibyl approached him with great agitation, and requested to speak with him a moment.

“Dear me, Miss,” said he, “what has happened? you are looking very strangely.”

“O, Captain, it is not what *has* happened, that brings me to you, but what may happen if you do not assist me at once. Oh, what shall I do if I cannot speak with you this minute!”

“Calm yourself, my good girl; it is true I am never absent from my guests at this time, and I am especially engaged with them to-day, but if what you have to say is of the importance that I judge it to be, from your manner, it is my duty to attend to you at once.”

“No—no;—give me a hiding place, I ask no more until you are entirely at leisure. Do this, Captain, without delay, and let me retire to it unseen, and you shall know all when you are at liberty to seek me there.”

“Nothing can be easier, Miss, if this will answer: I shall certainly not delay seeing you longer than I can possibly help. Step this way, if you please.” The captain conducted her by a little stairway to an upper room adjoining his office, used for the storage of table articles, and the entrance to which was quite private. “Here, Miss,” said the captain, unlocking the door, “you are entirely secure, and no one has access to this room but myself. If you are not afraid of being left alone, I can lock you in here until my guests leave me free. Ah, there’s a rocking-chair, fortunately, and near it a shelf of books; so you need not feel the time heavy until my return.”

“ Oh, Captain, I thank you from the bottom of my heart,” said Sibyl, with tears in her eyes ; “ I wish for nothing better, and now you need not leave your guests on my account until you feel yourself entirely at leisure to hear what I have to say.”

“ Thank you,” said the captain, “ and if you need a lunch meanwhile, here are crackers and cheese, and even a decanter of sweet Malaga, though I shall take care that you shall not want for something more substantial, later.”

Sibyl repeated her thanks, but said that lunch or dinner either was a matter of indifference to her at this time ; so the captain retired, locking the door and taking the key with him. It will be remembered that the after-dinner conversation on the day in question was considerably prolonged by the discussion growing out of the topic of the sign of the cross. The captain, indeed, became so interested in it, that he quite forgot his prisoner, until the steward called him out, that he might procure some stores from the room where Sibyl was. The captain was thus reminded of his engagement, and finding that the steward could conveniently wait for what was wanted, made some pretext that the article was not in readiness to deliver at that moment, and that Pierre could come for it at the end of half an hour. As soon as the steward had disappeared, the captain hastened to Sibyl, and found her quietly musing, with an open book resting upon her knees. He apologized very regretfully for his delay, but Sibyl assured him

that there was no need, since she had passed the time more contentedly than any similar period for many a month past. If the captain was now ready to hear what she had to say—the captain begged that she would proceed—she could better explain the occasion for this strange step by the account she shou'd give him of her present circumstances.

So, Sibyl went on to relate how she had been surrendered by an infatuated mother into the hands of this odious being with whom she was then travelling—how the profession he followed, and the practices employed in it, became more hateful to her day by day—what indignities she suffered at the hands of the Scotchman and others of his party, with details that moved the captain to the greatest compassion—and how, cut off from her relatives, and forbidden any chance of escape, (from the vigilance with which she was watched, as well as from the impossibility of assuring herself a suitable home among the strangers by whom they were constantly surrounded in their travels,) her life had become a burthen to herself; so much so, that had it not been for some sentiments of religion she still preserved, she would ere this have ended it in the manner which Milly had understood her to threaten. She repeated the language she had used on quitting the latter, and stated the circumstances that led her to employ it, explaining how the sudden hope that arose in her breast of securing her escape and of eventually placing herself under the protection of the good Sisters on board, to whom she had felt so

strongly drawn, had occasioned her to act precipitately, and perhaps embarrass the captain by the sudden emergency in which he found himself appealed to as her protector. However, it was to her a question of life and death, for—: here the captain, interrupted her in a burst of generous fervor.

“Say no more, Miss—you have done what I honor and commend you for. If you could have foreseen exactly what has occurred, or had had the time to plan anything, it would have been proper, of course, for you to confer with me before embarking in any step so decided as that you have just taken: as it is, you have confided your safety to a man who never yet betrayed his trust, and who would protect you with his life, if it were necessary.” Here the captain stood up and struck his broad breast proudly. Interrupting Sibyl’s acknowledgments of gratitude, he continued: “Yes, Miss, so long as I walk this deck as commander, no man, woman, or child shall appeal to me for protection and go away disappointed. But why should you make any secret of your intention? Am I not able to guard you against all molestation? I vow and declare that I would pitch the spiritist and his gang overboard, before a finger should be raised to harm you. I scorn to be keeping a secret from this Scotch fellow, as if I were not a match for all the law, or muscle either (for that matter), he could bring against me.”

“Oh, sir, you are too kind,” exclaimed Sibyl,

“but if you understood my feelings, and appreciated the desire I have to escape excitement and publicity of every kind, and my wish to accomplish in quiet what can be done in quiet, you would leave things as they are. Since you will aid me in the plan I have so suddenly adopted, I would not for the world have any one informed even of my existence, except those who would be likely to befriend me under the circumstances. Milly will report to the Doctor and others that I have drowned myself—my disappearance will confirm the statement—and I shall be left unmolested in the refuge you will be so good as to allow me until we arrive at New York.”

“Your wishes, Miss,” exclaimed the captain, “shall be faithfully respected. Hang it, you are right, as the ladies always are. I should have made a muddle of the business if I had managed it my way. Your secret shall be breathed to no one, except to the Sisters and a few trusty friends, who will, I know, sympathize with you, and perhaps aid you; and you shall be cared for as I should care for my own daughter. We will arrange particulars hereafter, and meanwhile I must smuggle you up something to eat. Halloo! what’s that?”

There was a great rattling at the door-handle of the Captain’s office, near by, and a shrill juvenile voice exclaimed, with a slight French accent: “Hi! hi! where’s Cap’n?” This interrogatory was probably of the nature of a soliloquy, for the captain pushed open a little shutter about on the

level of his chin, and looking out espied Pierre outside, and nobody else. So, remembering the directions he had given the steward, and telling the boy to wait a moment, he took out the articles for which the steward had sent, locking the door after him. As the boy was receiving them, a sudden thought struck the captain. "How is this, Pierre?" said he, "did you hear anything of any young woman throwing herself overboard two or three hours ago?"

Pierre opened his eyes to their widest extent. "Why, cap'n, no. What young 'ooman?"

"Is one of the Scotchman's girls missing? If she is, I don't know any other on board likely to do such a thing."

"There!" exclaimed Pierre, with an air of conviction, "I saw one of 'em this morning looking, oh so sad, so sad—*toute eperdue*, as we say in French: I will go see if she is not find; if no, mon Dieu, it is all gone with her."

Pierre hastened away to deliver the articles to the steward so that he might the sooner go about and enquire into this astonishing circumstance, and the captain immediately provided himself with some cold chicken and other edibles, which he carried unobserved in a covered basket to the fugitive. Meanwhile the enquiry made by Pierre had precisely the effect the captain expected, of spreading through the vessel the rumor of the catastrophe. Some were even found who declared they had seen a white object floating away from the ship, but at

such a distance when seen that they did not distinguish it clearly, and in fact had not attributed much importance to it; but they now remembered that the outlines were those of a female dress. Clearly Sibyl was missing and nobody could find any trace of her. Thereupon, others remarked that they were not at all surprised; that the girl had appeared downcast and reserved ever since she had been on board, and they had no doubt she had meditated this step from the first. Then arose a discussion as to the motives that probably led to the act, and the discussion naturally took a range which involved the possible responsibility of her master and his associate. Those who were not sympathizers with the spiritist's art, began to surmise that all was not right in that quarter, and cast looks askance at Stellman, who, with pallid features, was seen hurrying with two or three friends towards Milly's room. His principal was at this time engaged in conversation with Hebert in his own room, as related in the preceding chapter. Stellman, after knocking nervously at the door, was admitted.

"Oh, Milly!" exclaimed he, "is this the truth I hear? Do you know that they say Sibyl has drowned herself! Can this be so?"

"Is that the report?" enquired Milly, calmly.

"Yes," answered the party all together, "every one is talking of it, and Sibyl is nowhere to be found."

"Then, I believe in my heart and soul," replied

she, "it is true, for that is just what she said she was going to do," and Milly repeated the announcement Sibyl had made, omitting of course such expressions as would tell against herself.

"And why did you not let me know of this," enquired Stellman, "when I called here before dinner to look for her?"

"Because," rejoined Milly, "if she really did what she said she was going to do, she was dead and drowned long enough before you came. I don't believe in making people uncomfortable before the time, especially if the thing is past remedy. If she was *going* to do it and hadn't yet done it, *you* couldn't have stopped her. That's my thinking."

"And you know nothing further?" asked Stellman, curtly.

"Nothing at all," and Milly half closed her eyes in an indifference, real or affected, that seemed almost contemptuous.

"Well, you are devilish cool about it," remarked Stellman, angrily, as he turned to leave with his companions.

Milly opened her eyes to dart a supercilious glance at him, but he had already turned his back on her.

Stellman immediately made his way to his principal, to make the announcement which, as we have seen, threw the latter into such a paroxysm of rage. His companions, after hearing Milly's

account, of course confirmed the passengers in the belief that poor Sibyl was no more.

While this agitation was proceeding among the passengers, the captain was gathering further information from Sibyl, and discussing plans for the future. She expressed a desire that the Sisters should aid in placing her with a Catholic family in any capacity in which she could be received, until she should think fit to return to her own home. Meantime, she hoped to be strengthened for the journey of life before her, and should prefer not to encounter the tide of opposition that her religious views would meet with at home, and also the possible trouble that would arise from the news of her return being carried to the spiritist, until the lapse of time would put the latter danger out of the question, and she should be prepared for the former through the influence, example, and instruction of those with whom she might now take up her abode. Subsequent arrangements should be determined by the judgment to be adopted, after mature deliberation, in the quiet of an edifying domestic circle. The captain approved of her views, and remarked that there were some Catholics on board, besides the Sisters.

"I know it," said Sibyl, "but those Sisters! Oh! how I wish I knew them! but I am so unfit to ask such a favor! Yet they might be of the greatest service to me."

"And so you *shall* know them," replied the captain, "I am sure they are too good to be other-

wise than pleased at the prospect of helping an unhappy fellow creature. Let me acquaint them with your wishes. You could not find safer friends."

"As you please, sir; such a one as I, should never presume to go to them uninvited."

"Tut! tut!" said the captain, encouragingly, "you must not look at things in that way. I know they will never regard anything but the service they can render you. Indeed, I think I shall see them before I arrange any place for your accommodation on board. I shall have to leave you here, therefore, until dark, and as soon as it is safe for you to pass unobserved to the room provided, I shall call and conduct you. So, you will leave everything to me?"

"Indeed, captain, I could desire nothing better. I am too thankful for your kindness, and I am sure that in your hands everything will be done for the best."

"All right, then," said the captain, cheerfully, "and now I must make you a prisoner again," and took his leave. Sibyl heard the key turn in the lock with a joy at the possession of her seclusion, and at the prospect of her future deliverance, beyond description. She involuntarily raised her heart to her Maker in profound thanksgiving for her escape. It was the first prayer she had permitted herself since shortly after she had left her home.

The Judge had returned from his visit to the

spiritist, and was on deck with Leandro and Filippi, discussing the universal topic of the drowning. They were the first parties the captain met. "Why, my friend," exclaimed the Judge, "I had almost thought you had dived for the missing lady, and gone to 'Davy's locker.' Everybody has been asking where you were, and if you could not throw any light on this mysterious affair."

"Missing lady?—mysterious affair?—Why, what do you mean?" said the captain, pretending surprise.

"Is it possible that you, of all men, don't know what has happened? Why, here is one of the mediums of our friend, the spiritist, has gone and drowned herself!"

"You don't tell me so! Is that an ascertained fact?"

"Nobody seems to doubt it. The girl is missing, at any rate, and where else can she be if she has not gone to the bottom? Besides, the other medium says she declared her intention this very morning of doing this thing, and no one has set eyes on her since. And that was some hours ago, you know."

"Well, gentlemen, let us return to my office," said the captain, "and discuss the matter." When he had closed the door, he said: "Now, gentlemen, you are all entitled to my perfect confidence, and I must acquaint you with a fact which you will carefully conceal, and not communicate by word or sign to any living person. The medium is not

dead. She is alive and well, and in concealment on board this boat."

An universal expression of surprise and gratification followed this announcement, and all asked questions at once.

"Well, the poor girl has taken this method of escaping from the party she is travelling with, and good reason enough she has for it, too. After leaving the other medium under the impression that she was going to destroy herself, she immediately came to ask my protection and assistance in the matter, and, gentlemen, I am going to see her safely landed and put into proper hands, afterwards."

"Captain," interposed Leandro, "would you have any objection to my friend Henry being informed of what you have told us?"

"Not at all," replied the captain. "On the contrary, the poor thing seems to have a leaning towards you Catholics, and I am going to interest the Sisters in the case. Mr. Stamford would be the most proper person to acquaint his aunt and her companions with the girl's safety, in the first place, and I should like very well if you would bring him here."

"Señor Lopez," remarked Filippi, "stay where you are, I will go for your friend, who is below conversing with his aunt." Just as the words were uttered a rap came to the door, and Henry himself entered. The rumor had reached the Sisters, and he had just left them to gain further information

from the captain, if more was to be had. The good Sisters were in great affliction at the awful and unprovided end of the poor creature, and Henry was most anxious to console them by holding out, if he could, any hope that the rumor was unfounded. The captain assured him that there were great hopes that way, and to the relief of the young man, informed him of the truth, stating Sibyl's wishes in regard to an interview with the Sisters, and repeating the caution he had before enjoined on his friends. "Not so much," continued the captain, "that the case really requires this secrecy, as the young woman could be amply protected should she withdraw herself openly from the spiritist's control; and she could show good grounds before a court to justify herself, should her master appeal to the law on their arrival. But all this would involve publicity, and keep up a ferment of excitement around her until the case was settled in court, and she wishes at this moment for rest and quiet."

"This would make a nice case in court," remarked the Judge, musingly, "a very pretty case."

"Come, come, Judge, no professional insinuations here; you can't have the case before the court," said the captain, good humoredly. "You professional men are all alike. A surgeon will slash one to pieces to get at a tumor, and call it a beautiful operation afterwards. No, no, this may be fun to you, but it is death to us, as the frog said to the boy throwing stones. I should be held for trespass, perhaps, or detained as a witness, and in short the

girl does right enough in not involving me in legal squabbles, much as the case might interest the lawyers."

"Oh! well," replied the Judge, laughing, "I think legal science might dispense with the developments of this particular case. As Judge, I dismiss the case from court."

"Thank you, Judge; and then there will be less fees for the lawyers. Now, Mr. Stamford, will you please hasten and relieve the good Sisters of their anxiety; but speak to them privately."

"Before I go," said Henry, "I think I ought to tell you that two of the Sisters, who are from Germany, were reminded by this reported event, of a circumstance that may have some bearing on the parties on board. They state that about two years ago, a spiritist who had been giving exhibitions in the town in which their convent was situated, had taken away with him a girl from one of the neighboring towns, whose mother, being bitterly opposed to her being a Catholic, had put her into his hands in order that she might be removed from Catholic influence; and that he had got off with her before any of her other relatives could interpose to save her. Might not this——"

"Why, this is the very account the girl herself gives," interrupted the captain. "There is no question that these are the parties. Now, this is interesting; who would have thought that this lone creature would have found in the company on board any tie

connecting her with her own home! What a happiness it will be to her to know of it!"

"Indeed," replied Henry, "I hardly know whether the pleasure can be greater to her than to those I shall inform of the fact." Henry repaired to the cabin, and calling his aunt from the room to which she had now retired with the other Sisters, communicated to her in a whisper the news he had brought. Sister Sabina could with difficulty restrain her emotions. "Oh! thank God," she exclaimed, raising her eyes to heaven. "Let me carry the joyful tidings to the other Sisters."

"Be pleased, aunt, also to return with the two German Sisters; I have something to add that will be especially interesting to them."

After a short delay, Sister Sabina re-appeared bringing with her the two Sisters, looking very much relieved. Glancing around to see that no one was within hearing, Henry announced what the captain had stated in regard to Sibyl's history, proving that she was the same person of whom they had been speaking. A murmur of surprise and joy ran round the little circle, and the elder of the two Sisters proceeded to enlarge on Sibyl's history, the particulars of which they had often heard from a cousin of hers, who was a religious in the German house. Sibyl, she said, must be an assumed name, given either from caprice or for purposes of concealment, for the cousin always spoke of her as "Cornelia." Her father, who belonged to a steadfast Catholic family, had married,

against the protestations of his relatives, into a family equally well-known for its anti-Catholic proclivities. Such incongruous marriages, remarked the Sisters, bring no blessings with them, or if the usual evil results do not follow, it is owing to a special intervention of Divine Providence. The father himself, when about to die, was greatly disturbed at the possible fate of his unborn child, but drew what consolation he could from the promise exacted of his wife that it should be baptised in the Catholic Church, a promise which was never fulfilled. The poor man regarded his own early death as a punishment sent by God for having been governed in so important a step as marriage, by motives that were purely worldly, instead of listening to the voice of conscience and religion, and to the remonstrances of affection. At that moment when the truth can no longer be disguised from ourselves, he saw his error in its true light, and in atonement cheerfully offered his life if thereby the blessing of faith might be vouchsafed to his offspring. "He saved his own soul, we hope," continued the Sister, "but his sacrifice has not brought its fruit to his child. The second marriage of Cornelia's mother with a man of like sentiments to her own, frustrated all the hopes that Cornelia's Catholic relatives had entertained of the fulfilment of the promise made to the dying father. As time went on, their restraint of the child in the direction of what were now her own wishes also, grew more marked; and before she had arrived at

an age when she could assert her independence of her parents in matters of religion, she was in a manner stolen away by means of this contract between a heartless mother and the equally heartless stranger into whose hands she was delivered. The mother retracted, but too late. The spiritist escaped from the country with his prey before either she or Cornelia's other relatives could overtake the party."

"The parents of Cornelia," continued the Sister, "enjoyed a respectable position among the people of their village, and their means were as good as those of the best of their neighbors in the same rank of life. These circumstances made it the more singular that they should act towards Cornelia as might be expected only of persons who had nothing to lose in the esteem of their neighbors, or who were driven by poverty to submit to the dismemberment of their family. Thus we see to what lengths religious bigotry will sometimes carry its dupes. Cornelia's cousin, who was already an inmate of our convent at the time of her disappearance, has offered unceasing prayers to God for the restoration of the poor girl, and was always asking the rest of us to pray for her intention; what that intention was, we could very well conjecture, knowing how deeply she grieved for the lost one. Indeed, she added to her prayers the offering of her own life for her restoration, as Cornelia's father had offered his for her preservation in the first place. God be praised! —He seems at last to be about to answer so many

fervent petitions, and will no doubt compensate for the long delay He has permitted, by the redoubled favors He will bestow at the end : but, I trust, not at the cost of the life of our good little Sister. Now I have told you all that was essential about Cornelia, or Sibyl, as she is called, and I should like you to let us know more about the present affair. What decided her to take this step ?”

“The captain only told us in a general way,” replied Henry, “that she had eluded her keepers, leaving them under the impression that she had drowned herself, and then placed herself under his protection. He did not say whether this was a long meditated scheme on her part, or whether she was driven to it by some recent occurrence, but he did say, Sisters,—and I should have told you this at first,—that she retains her Catholic inclinations, and that she sincerely desires to make your acquaintance, and also that you should know the circumstances I have told you of; only, as the captain says, the greatest secrecy must be observed, lest the spiritist should come to hear that she is alive. He would no doubt make trouble by endeavoring to reclaim her, and would at least occasion herself and others great annoyance, even if he should not succeed in his object.”

“Praised be Jesus Christ,” exclaimed both the German Sisters in their native tongue.

“For ever and ever, Amen,” added Sister Sabina in the same language, and continued: “Yes this is grateful news, indeed. Assure the good captain

that the Sisters and myself will feel it a matter of conscience to observe secrecy to the utmost. Say to him, moreover, Henry, that we shall be only too happy to accede to her wishes, and that we regard it as a privilege which Almighty God has granted us to assist in any way in enabling this poor girl to embrace a more reputable life. You had better, my child, go see him at once, and tell him that we are impatient to welcome her; and that I think, moreover, our arrangements would admit of her being secluded even in our own apartments—to which I am sure the Sisters will not offer any objection. This is probably the most desirable plan that can be formed.”

Henry accordingly went to seek the captain.





XIII.

THE TUMULT.

THE rudeness which Milly had displayed towards Sibyl, and her unfeeling conduct afterwards, were not so much the fruit of her hardness of heart as of feminine jealousy proceeding from a consciousness of Sibyl's superiority to herself in many respects. Sibyl had often been praised and admired, when Milly had been passed over in silence; and the spiritist himself, reprehensible as his behavior had been to Sibyl at times, still preferred her services on all important occasions to those of Milly. These things sank deeply into Milly's heart, and animated her with immeasurable spite against her companion. If envy can infuse bitterness into the most placid dispositions, it may be imagined how that passion ran riot in a breast where no moderating influences reigned. Milly, as we have seen, had no religious principle to guide her, nor even that feeble substitute for it, self-respect, to keep her within bounds. Hence, we may understand her behavior on hearing of the supposed catastrophe. The angry remark of Stellman on quitting her room (since she felt it as a reproach),

embittered her the more. Milly had not even the prudence to hide her feelings from her visitors. The physician of the boat, making his daily call, had proffered some words of consolation on the loss of her companion. The manner in which his remark was received occasioned him a surprise which Milly could not help noticing. Perceiving the *faux pas* she had made, she endeavored to repair it by reflections upon the poor girl.

"You wonder," said she, "at my speaking so—but you did not know that girl. She was an insupportable creature, and as obstinate as a mule, besides; so much so that the Doctor, though he thought more of her than he had any right to, sometimes had to give her a good thrashing. I rather think she got one this morning—and deserved it, of course."

"Oho!" thought her visitor, although he was too much disgusted to make any remark, but took his leave as soon as possible—"so the poor creature has been driven by ill-usage to take her own life!"

Such a communication as this evidently came in no way within the bounds of that professional secrecy which it is the duty of a physician to preserve, and he therefore had no hesitation in repeating it to others. Of course, as the report spread from one passenger to another, Milly's conjecture became magnified into a positive assertion, and intense indignation was excited, especially on the part of those who had already begun to regard the spiritist and his companion with suspicion. When

the rumor reached the ears of the captain, he thought it his duty to make enquiries of Milly, although Sibyl had alleged no violence as occurring that day. He therefore took Judge Harper with him as a witness, and repaired to Milly's room. One of the hands was also directed to remove Sibyl's trunk from the room, she having described it to the captain. The man waited outside while the two entered. Milly, to be consistent, adhered to her statement, and, in a spirit of bravado, even strengthened it, thinking that she was only throwing odium on poor Sibyl.

"Do you suppose," asked the Judge, "from what she said when she saw you last, that this whipping determined your companion to put an end to her life?"

Milly, now seeing that in her malice towards Sibyl she had seriously compromised her employer, showed considerable agitation, and for a moment was at a loss what to reply. "Oh! as to that," she answered at length, "she said not a word, and I don't believe she took it so ill as to kill herself on account of it. In fact—in fact—Sibyl did not like us—any of us—and I suppose she thought to spite us,"(here Milly seemed to rally) "especially the Doctor; it would be just like her. Or, perhaps she wanted to be talked about:—that would not be very unlike her, either."

"Captain," said the Judge, turning to leave, "I think there is nothing to be gained by a longer interview."

"No," replied the other, "will you be so good as to send that man in? I will rejoin you in a moment."

"Here, Carroll," said the captain, addressing the man as he entered, and pointing out Sibyl's trunk, "take this trunk and carry it to my office."

"Why—you—what do you mean!" exclaimed Milly, starting up from her couch, "that trunk is our property. What gives you any right to it? Put that trunk down this minute, you man." The porter, thus addressed, paused as he was about lifting the trunk to his shoulder.

"Go," said the captain to him quietly, "you have your orders." The man accordingly shouldered the trunk and proceeded as directed.

"I'll tell you what it is, you confounded pirate," screamed Milly at the captain, "you'll pay for this. If you think——"

"Girl," said the captain, sternly, "hold your tongue." At this moment, one of the chambermaids, a portly, middle-aged person, was passing the door, and was called in by the captain, who whispered some directions to her and left her within, while he immediately rejoined the Judge.

"Good heavens!" remarked the captain, drawing a long breath, "what an atrocious termagant!"

"Why, what is this?" enquired the Judge, pointing out to the captain a crowd pressing about the door of the spiritist's room, gesticulating and talking loudly. They hastened thither, and just as they neared the crowd, the man nearest the door shook

it violently and exclaimed: "Come out here, you villain, and give an account of yourself."

Milly's false report was already producing its effect; but it was not to be supposed that this adjuration of the spiritist could exert any very enticing influence upon that individual. At any rate, the captain flung himself in a moment into the midst of the gathering, thrusting aside the man at the door, and bracing himself firmly against it.

"Come, gentlemen," said he, "I am ashamed of you. This sort of thing will never do. If this man has been guilty of any offence, it is my place and not yours to take account of it. As commander of this vessel, he is responsible to me, and I am responsible to the owners for any breach of the law that occurs on board. Allow me to say, gentlemen, therefore, that you are taking upon yourselves what does not belong to you, by interfering in any way between one person and another on this boat."

"Captain," cried the man who had been clamoring at the door, "if this fellow has been the cause of that girl's throwing herself overboard, he should go over after her."

"It remains to be proved that he has been," replied the captain. "We don't acknowledge *Judge Lynch* here. I am competent to see that justice is done, and I shall not surrender my right to irresponsible parties: be assured of that. Gentlemen, you will please retire."

The Judge lent his aid to disperse the assemblage, who, indeed, except a few grumblers, made no diffi-

culty in obeying the captain's orders. The firmness of the stand taken by the latter, and the confidence felt by every one in his adjudication of the affair, contributed to pacify the crowd. Seeing the coast clear at last, the captain demanded and received admittance. Here he found the spiritist, Stellman, and Hebert, looking very pale, but greatly relieved of their fright by the captain's intervention: every word of his speech having been heard within.

"Now, sir," said he, "I don't know whether you (addressing the spiritist,) have been guilty or not of what has been alleged against you, but, if you please, I should like to hear what you have to say about this matter of assaulting that medium of yours, who, they say, has in consequence thrown herself overboard?"

"I assure you," said the spiritist, "that I have given no cause whatever for such a charge. This girl's services have been most valuable to me, and I should be far enough from doing anything to cause her to take such a step. No one can feel her loss more than I do."

"Yet there must have been some ground for these rumors of ill-usage. Why, otherwise, should the girl have acted as she has done?"

"That, sir, is as great a mystery to me as to you. These gentlemen can testify that I have always used the greatest indulgence towards her, though her behavior has at times been extremely perverse. I presume the girl drowned herself in a fit of moodi-

ness. Surely, I cannot be held responsible for actions that proceed from a disordered brain."

"Tell me now, did you not inflict corporal chastisement upon her this very morning?"

"I!" exclaimed the other with surprise and indignation: "I have not seen her at all to-day."

"That is so," exclaimed Stellman and Hebert.

"Yet your other assistant has just declared in the presence of Judge Harper and myself, that you did actually beat her this very day."

"Then Milly tells a downright falsehood. If any one has laid hands on her, it is not I, whatever Milly or any one else may say."

"For my part," said Stellman, "I have seen the girl but for a moment, and that in the saloon, in the presence of others. She seemed then in an excited frame of mind, and answered a question or two I put to her, in a very abrupt, not to say, uncivil manner, though I had neither said nor done anything to offend her."

"If Milly makes such a statement," resumed the spiritist, "she affirms that of which she has no knowledge and could have none, since she has been confined to her own room by sickness ever since we left port. I cannot understand why she should make it unless her mind is wandering, or unless, indeed, there is a general conspiracy on board this boat to injure me and break up my business, and she has clubbed in with the rest."

"I vow, it looks as if this were the case," observed Stellman angrily.

"I know nothing of conspiracies," replied the captain, coldly. "You had better look to yourselves. Let every tub stand on its own bottom. The matter can't be left as it is, however. The state of feeling among the passengers, and the necessities of the case require that I should interpose, both for the good order of my vessel, and for the protection you yourselves stand in need of. I shall be obliged to insist on your remaining in this room, and not quitting it until I provide another more suitable. I must request also that you dispense with company, at least for the present." At this intimation, Hebert took his hat and left.

"Do you mean," asked Stellman, "that I shall remain cooped up here, too?"

"I do," replied the captain. "You will keep company with your principal."

"On what ground do you proceed in this manner towards me?" asked Stellman, arrogantly. "No one implicates me in this trumpery business. Of what do you suspect me?"

"Of much more than you imagine."

"Pray of what?" insisted the other.

"Mr. Hellerbach, do not oblige me to speak of these things."

Stellman, hearing himself called by his true name, which he had communicated to no one, was thunder-struck, but recovering his boldness, remarked that that was not his name.

"I know it is not the name you are known by

here, but it was none the less yours when you were last at Münster."

"At Münster!" exclaimed the other, aghast. "What do I know of Münster? I never was there in my life."

"You were not there last year under trial?"

"No, sir; you mistake me for another person. Doctor, *you* know how long I have been with you. Has it not been for ten years? and did we ever set foot in Münster?"

N-n-no, *we* never did," said the spiritist, answering safely.

"There is no occasion for controversy on this subject," interposed the captain. "I know my ground, and unless you can disprove your identity by something besides words, I shall maintain it. If you are not Leopold Hellerbach, let me see that your left leg is a sound one." At these words the man was completely cowed, and sank into a chair without another word. "You will keep your door locked," continued the captain, as he turned to go, "or rather, I had better take the key myself. If any one wishes to see you, he can come to me."

As soon as the captain had left the room, Stellman burst into a fit of rage, and began to curse the unknown individual who had been reporting "calumnies" of him; and, to be impartial, bestowed the like maledictions on the captain for repeating them, while he showered others upon Sibyl, Milly, and every one else who had intentionally or otherwise had any hand in bringing about the present

state of affairs. Before exhausting his vocabulary, he did not forget Leandro and the other Catholics on board, and then concluded with a broadside upon the Papists in general. Meanwhile, the other remained in gloomy silence, without undertaking to add anything out of his own ample resources to this torrent of vituperation; he was indeed engrossed in considering the extremely unfavorable "situation." Stellman, after a pause, asked:

"Who has been relating this cock-and-bull story about me to the captain, or anybody else? And how did that blusterer know that my leg was artificial? Have you," turning almost fiercely to the Scotchman, "told any one of this circumstance?"

"How could I?" returned the other, "since you never informed me yourself."

"Oh, excuse my vexation; of course you know nothing about it. But did you ever hear anything of this—of this—strange story of the captain's?" and Stellman regarded his companion with uneasiness.

"Never before to-day. I am bound to say, however, that this Judge, who is a friend of the captain's, did this morning volunteer, unasked, a communication on the subject; having been, as he says, an eye-witness to all that occurred in Münster."

Stellman started, and let slip a furious oath, adding, "And why did you not tell me this before?"

"For the simple reason that Hebert had been with me ever since, and I have otherwise seen you

but for a moment. You would not have had me speak of such things before strangers?"

"No, certainly not. Was it in consequence of that statement that you gave up your intention of having a *séance*?"

"It was not so much on account of that statement as on account of the warning with which it was accompanied. When I spoke to you in the saloon, the Judge had just left me, giving me to understand on the part of the captain that we might expect trouble, if our intention was carried out. Hence, my notice to you not to look further for Sibyl. You thought strangely of my change of purpose, but neither of us thought of anything so strange as that Sibyl should, at that moment, have been floating, a corpse, in the sea."

"*Strange?* Why, I see nothing and hear nothing that is *not* strange on board this boat;—I believe you,—our coming in it was the worst speculation we ever made in our lives."

"Well, we will say nothing at present about the Münster business. We are in a hobble just at present that will require all our resources to get out of."

Stellman paused a moment to anathematize the Judge, and then enquired what resources he looked to.

"I have one which, if it does not fail us, like everything else on this accursed boat, is sufficient; it is in the assistance *Arkael* will give us."

"Arkael!" ejaculated the other, lifting his eye-

brows with surprise. "But he *has* disappointed you often before."

"Yes, on minor occasions, but never on one where my personal security was in question. Take care how you speak of the spirits; you know how they resent any slights cast upon them; we must do all we can to gain their good will, for we are sorely in need of their assistance. My greatest fear is, however, that by some means or other, one of these Papists may bring in his spells to defeat us, and that would ruin everything. Arkael holds that gentry in special abomination, and will do nothing for us if they interfere."

"I wish he might tear to pieces any one that would," growled Stellman, clenching his fists. "If I knew the man that would attempt it, I should make short work with him."

We need not prolong the conversation at this point. "Arkael" was, as our readers may have conjectured already, one of those evil spirits with whom the Scotchman held communication. That such intercourse should exist in our times, reviving what many have regarded as obsolete traditions of a past age, should not be surprising if we reflect that a religion exists, especially devoted to the treasuring up of the revelations of these spirits, and which employs in the development of these intercommunications means which have assumed the title of a science; the rudimentary machinery, (table turning, planchette, &c.,) being familiar to half the families of the land, while its more recon-

dite processes are in the hands of professors of the "science," or of the priests and priestesses of Spiritism as a religion. Notwithstanding that much quackery may be employed by its professors, there are enough genuine developments in the "science" to startle the most incredulous; and the "Religion of the spirits" is sufficiently definite to have won devout followers and enthusiastic hierophants. We already know to what proficiency the "Doctor" had arrived in the occult art of which he made profession, and to what extent he could reckon upon the intervention of his familiar.

To deny the possibility of occurrences of this nature is to set up one's own crude theory of what is impossible against the testimonies afforded in Holy Writ, and in the writings of Origen, St. Augustine, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Leo, and others of the Fathers. The practice of exorcism in the Church, coeval with the Church itself; the evidence afforded by various Councils, and in the terms of the Canon Law; the unanimous consent of theologians, and the uninterrupted accord of all nations, together with the experience of successive ages, all afford proofs of the reality of demoniac interference in the affairs of men. Nor was any serious doubt ever thrown upon the subject until at a comparatively recent period of the world's history. The wave that then swept away the belief of any portion of mankind in these exhibitions of preternatural power, was but the immediate precursor of another that obliterated in the minds of this class all genuine reverence for

the scriptures. Thus was Voltaire's remark justified as indicating the sequence of ideas in the world of unbelief: "If there be no devil, there is no God."

The next phase in the history of skepticism is illustrated by what we behold around us at the present day. The proud minds which had rejected the true faith, have been made, by the wonderful displays of preternatural power exhibited by Spiritism, the first converts to the new religion of *the spirits*, the warmest apostles of the "doctrines of devils." Thus cunningly does the Evil One avail himself of the decay of faith, to entrap partizans for himself. Such are the penalties which await the unhappy wanderers from God's house! They will follow teachers who "will turn away indeed their hearing from the truth, and will be turned to fables." (11 Tim. iv. 4.) In God's infinite goodness he has provided far differently for us, by imparting to us all holy and salutary doctrine, having spoken to us "on divers occasions and many ways, in times past, to the fathers by the prophets; last of all, in these days has he spoken to us by his Son." (Heb. i. 1, 2.) As the reward of faith, moreover, He has promised us that "The eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. ii. 9.) Yet, man, rather than submit his understanding to the Word of God, and his will to the divine commandments, proudly exclaims: "Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?" (Ps. xi. 5.) In search of a delu-

sive freedom, he abandons Truth and its Divine Author; he rejects the supernatural, but cannot silence the cry of his heart which finds no peace in the bonds of the natural order to which he restricts its aspirations. The thirst of his soul for God he allays with draughts from broken cisterns, and finding not the freedom and joy which are the inheritance of the children of God, he accepts in place of Divine Revelation, superstitions which degrade his mind and corrupt his heart.





XIV.

ORDER RESTORED.

AS the captain left the room of the spiritist he met a knot of the late besiegers, who eagerly questioned him in regard to the facts he had elicited. "I have reason to believe," replied the captain, "that the report of the Scotchman's ill-treatment of the girl on this particular occasion—whatever might have been his conduct towards her on others—is a misstatement, made, perhaps, by the other girl out of spite against her companion, but still, a misstatement. I beg you then, gentlemen, not to harbor any further designs against this man, and not to attempt anything that would reflect discredit on you as gentlemen, or on me as commander of this boat."

"Oh, certainly not. Agreed, agreed!" exclaimed they.

"Well, then," continued the captain, "I shall see that he keeps his own room hereafter, and here the trouble is at an end. Is that so?"

"Undoubtedly, Captain," replied the principal spokesman, "and we were, perhaps, too hasty in

our resentment, or at least in our way of showing it, for which we owe you an apology."

"All right, all right," returned the captain, heartily.

"But," remarked another, "this fellow had promised, I hear, a rare entertainment for this evening. He had given out that he was to raise a beautiful spirit, and here is all our fun spoiled."

"He will have enough to do now," remarked the captain, "to keep up his own spirits, let alone attempting to raise others. However, I promise you an entertainment in its place. We shall have a musical soiree this evening, and I invite you all to it. As we shall have refreshments afterwards, perhaps the spirits will favor us in another form."

The party clapped their hands, and in the midst of the laughter, the captain retired. Seeking the steward, he gave him directions about changing the room of the spiritist, and keeping it under *surveillance*.

Henry and Filippi met him just as he was leaving the steward. They had heard from Judge Harper that the excitement in regard to the spiritist had subsided; and they congratulated the captain thereupon.

"Yes," replied the captain, "and I greatly feared we were going to have a riot,—confound these spiritists! The Judge, by-the-by, did yeoman's service in quieting the angered passengers. And now, to make all smooth, after this exciting day, I have determined to arrange a little musical enter-

tainment for this evening, and if our Spanish friend will be ready to give us his lecture, we shall precede it with that. We have some excellent instrumentalists on board—Germans; and the gentlemen and ladies who sing have promised their assistance. They tell me, however, that they have no basso, and therefore, Filippi, I shall have to depend upon your aid."

"Certainly," replied Filippi, "provided I know beforehand what selections will be made."

"That may be easily ascertained. I have requested Mrs. M—— to take charge of that department, and will introduce you to her. She will also arrange a time for rehearsal."

"That, of course," replied Filippi, "Henry, do you not sing?"

"I do not," replied the latter. "But, Captain, you know you gave me a commission to my aunt and the Sisters."

"To be sure. I beg pardon for not thinking of asking you as soon as I saw you. What does your aunt say?"

"She wishes me to say to you that both herself and her companions would be only too happy to welcome the poor girl, and to shelter her among themselves, and in fact, to serve her any way in their power."

"Good creatures! Well, do you thank them for me most heartily, and say that I shall contrive, while the company is engaged at this entertainment,—and this was another motive I had for giving

it,—to bring her to them. So, Filippi, we will go and call on Mrs. M——.”

“When the hour of supper arrived, the captain, after seeing the passengers seated, conveyed some edibles to Sybil, and found her fast asleep in her rocking chair. As he struck a light, she suddenly awakened, exclaiming: “Oh, mercy, I am lost!”

“Why, what do you mean, my good girl?” said the captain. “There is no one here to harm you.”

“Oh, captain, is that you! Thank God! I have just had a frightful dream. I dreamed the Doctor had discovered me, and that he had tied me to a post with ropes, while Stellman and Milly were sharpening knives to cut me to pieces. I thought that the grating made by your match was the scraping of the knives, and that they were about to be plunged into my flesh.”

“Poor thing! you are not used, as I am, to sleeping in a chair. You can dismiss all fears in regard to your late companions. To avoid any possible evil consequences, I have taken measures to have them all kept close in their rooms. And now I have excellent news for you. The Sisters, after being informed of your case, have expressed a warm interest in your behalf, and they have even suggested your sharing their apartments during the remainder of the voyage.”

“Oh, how can I ever be thankful enough for such goodness!” exclaimed Sibyl, clasping her hands, “such goodness to a miserable creature like

myself! But, Captain, do they know what manner of life mine has been?"

"They know all," replied the captain. "Make yourself easy. I judge that this very knowledge inclines them the more to receive you with eagerness, since they have been informed also of your strong desire of doing better for yourself."

"Oh, if God spares my life, the good Sisters shall see that my resolution shall never waver."

"I believe you; and I shall avail myself of an opportunity which will occur later in the evening when all will be gathered elsewhere, to convey you thither. Have you a heavy shawl that you can throw over your head and person?"

"I have nothing with me but what you see."

"Oh, by-the-by," rejoined the captain, "I have had your trunk taken to my office, and I shall carry it to the Sisters' apartments myself, presently. At the same time, I shall procure a large shawl, and bring it with me when I come. And I must hurry, too, before the company leaves the supper table."

So saying, the captain hastened to his office, and brought the trunk, which was fortunately not very large, on his own shoulders to the room of the Sisters. As they were to take their supper after the others, they were in their rooms, and opened the door to the captain's knock. "Here, ladies," said the captain, in a whisper, "is the trunk of your future *protégée*. Where shall I place it?"

"Here, if you please, Captain," said Sister Sabina, coming forward, and indicating the best portion of

their accommodations. The captain, as he set down the trunk, could not help giving utterance to some remark at their giving up this room.

"Oh, yes," replied Sister Sabina, "I suppose you remember how the father of the prodigal son treated him on his return. Did he not call for the best robes, and order the fatted calf to be prepared, and make a feast such as he had never made even for the son who had been always faithful to him? We should reproach ourselves if we did differently, with such an example proposed to us with our Lord's own lips."

"Well, indeed, Sister, I believe your kindness is not misplaced. The poor girl can hardly find words to express her thankfulness to you, and at the same time the confusion she feels that, her life having been what you know it to be, you should still receive her so willingly."

"Such sentiments as these," remarked the Sister, "show excellent dispositions, and if God does not reject the returning sinner, neither should we, who desire to be His servants. We give Him thanks for enabling us to fulfil His holy designs. Let her take courage: she shall feel, while with us, like a child of the family, and we shall await her coming, anxiously."

The captain explained his plans, therefore, and the Sisters promised to be in waiting for Sibyl at the time appointed. Meanwhile, they provided him with a shawl for her. When he had left, Sister Sabina observed to her companions, "All goes well

so far, but I cannot dismiss some feelings of apprehension in regard to contingencies that may arise."

"How so?" exclaimed the others

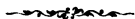
"Because," replied she, "I fear that the arch-enemy will not surrender his prey without a struggle. This unfortunate creature has from her infancy been within his grasp, not only because her life has been so ill-ordered, but also because his hold has never been loosened by the waters of baptism."

"But, Sister," interposed one, "so far as her recent life is concerned, whatever has been evil in it seems rather to have been forced upon her, and the poor girl appears to have been entirely the unwilling victim of the schemes of others."

"This is the very reflection that oppresses me. The devil, to be sure, hates all mankind alike, but there are certain souls whom he seems to have selected as the special objects of his malice. This has been Cornelia's case, hitherto, and therefore, judging from other examples, I fear that every resource of Satanic power will be employed to defeat or delay her deliverance."

"Still, Sister Sabina," remarked another, "the greater our need, the greater will be God's help afforded."

"That is true," returned Sister Sabina, "and I shall never lose confidence in God, whatever I may see to discourage me in the empire of evil over all the children of men, myself not excepted, who am so unworthy of all that God has done for me. Still,



He sometimes lets us feel how violent is the malice of Satan, in order that we may more clearly recognize the Hand that delivers us, and may cling to it the closer." Sister Sabina's words seemed prophetic, as we shall presently learn.





XV.

THE FIRE.

THE evening being superb, the passengers had gone on deck after supper, in order to enjoy the magnificent spectacle afforded by the sea and sky, lit up by the splendors of a glowing sunset. Henry and Filippi resolved to solicit the Sisters to enjoy the scene also, and, therefore, returned to the saloon just as they were about leaving the supper-table, and invited them. The Sisters having consented, the young men hastened back to where they had left Leandro and Judge Harper, and prepared seats for the whole party. The Sisters soon made their appearance, were seated, and the Judge was introduced to them. Leandro shortly excused himself, the captain having requested him to preface the entertainment by his lecture on the Sign of the Cross; and it was time to prepare for it. Filippi also took leave in order to help in the arrangement of the concert.

The remainder of the party, after admiring the beauty of the scene, entered into general conversation, and the Judge, discovering that some of the

Sisters spoke German, began to converse with them in that language. He availed himself of the opportunity to say that the story of Sibyl had been communicated to him by the captain, and that he would be pleased to learn from them the particulars which they had formerly repeated to Henry. After hearing the account of Sibyl's origin, and of the locality where she had spent her youth, the Judge remarked, that nothing would be easier than to restore her to her friends whenever she should wish to return, and that if, as she said, she would prefer being, for a while, with an American family, he could indicate several where he knew she would be willingly received. Sister Sabina was pleased with the suggestion, and thought it might be availed of, thanking the Judge for sharing in the interest they themselves felt in behalf of poor Sibyl.

The gradual disappearance of the other passengers from the deck turned the conversation to the subject of the lecture and soiree, which were about to commence. The high terms of praise in which the Judge spoke of the character, learning, and talents of Leandro, and the commendations heaped on him by Henry, made the Sisters regret that they could not be present at the lecture. Sister Sabina explained that the arrangements made with the captain for receiving Sibyl at that time would prevent her presence, and that the other Sisters would not be willing to go without her. She requested Henry to remain on the look-out in the vicinity of their apartment at the time

appointed, to see that no one should be near, and thus possibly discover Sibyl's secret. Henry very willingly agreed to this, and being in high good humor, amused his aunt by suggesting the various pretexts he should employ to lead off any stragglers who might show themselves, and if they were averse to moving on, the means he should employ to expedite them. "Now, aunt," continued he, "after you have seen your guest safely housed, come and enjoy the music. In fact, I am sure you are a singer, yourself, and will consent to take a part. Suppose I get you the *Miserere* from Verdi's opera of *Il Trovatore*. You can look over the score and construct a solo out of it."

This absurd proposition made everybody laugh; and Sister Sabina, replied: "Well, Henry, I know not what sort of a singer I am, but whatever I may do in that way, I hope it may always be in singing the praises of God, and not your opera music. Besides, after witnessing your efforts to keep people from discovering Sibyl, I think I should hardly feel like singing a *Miserere* of any kind."

The conversation was thus good-humoredly continued for a short time longer, when the Judge, looking at his watch, remarked that it was very near the time for the lecture to begin, and therefore excused himself and took leave, Henry accompanying him. The Sisters, finding themselves now alone on deck, remained for a while in admiration of the spectacle around them, which to hearts accustomed to behold God in the works of His

hands, could not but inspire sentiments of praise and adoration. The stars faintly appeared, one by one, amidst the still surviving glow of the firmament, while the depths of the ocean began to be lighted up with the phosphorescent flashes which are so striking a feature of a night-scene at sea. At last, proceeding to their own apartments, and being about to pass thither by the little stair-way before mentioned, their course brought them near the apartment in which Sibyl was. As they reached this spot, they were chilled to the heart on hearing within a voice crying for help. On attempting to open the door, Sister Sabina found it locked, and exclaimed in trembling tones :

“Who is there? What is the matter? Why do you not open the door?”

“Ah! I have no key,” cried Sibyl, “there is fire somewhere; this room is filled with smoke, and I am suffocating. Oh, help me!” Then a fit of violent coughing succeeded, and as soon as Sibyl could recover breath, she cried out: “Go for the captain at once—for the captain, and nobody else. Oh, hurry!”

The Sisters surmised at once that this was Sibyl, and were overwhelmed with terror, not only at the thought of the imminent danger that was threatening her and all on board, but at the prospect of Sibyl's spiritual peril. Then, the forebodings of Sister Sabina forcibly recurred to their minds. Should the danger be even a passing one, the discovery of Sibyl's secret seemed now inevitable. However,

these reflections were but the flash of a moment, and two of the Sisters were despatched at once to find the captain, wherever he might be. The others prayed and wrung their hands, but maintained sufficient self-restraint to keep from uttering outcries. The smell of smoke was now plainly perceptible.

"Friend," cried Sister Sabina, "the captain has been sent for. We are the Sisters; will you tell us who you are?"

"I am the girl who was to go to you;—oh! my God, save me!"

"Is there no window you can open to let in air?"

"There is a little window, but it is closed in such a way that I cannot get it open."

"Break the glass, then." In reply to this, Sibyl said something that could not be understood, and began to cough more violently than ever.

The two Sisters, who had gone for the captain, had shortly encountered one of the officers of the boat, who, seeing their agitation, begged that he might be allowed to know what was the matter; but they urged him to go at once for the captain, for that no one else could be of any service. He requested them, therefore, to remain where they were, and the captain would soon be at hand. The interval was not long before the captain appeared, but to them the delay was agonizing.

Meanwhile, the Sisters at Sibyl's door called to her to repeat with them a prayer that relief might speedily come, to which she gave her assent in a faint voice, and they began on their knees to recite

a Hail Mary, but on arriving at the words, "pray for us sinners," they heard a fall within, and felt sure that Sibyl had fainted, especially as she made no further reply to their call.

"Oh! Sister," exclaimed Sister Sabina, "let us call upon the merciful Heart of Jesus to rescue this poor child and to save us from the terrible danger that hangs over us." She therefore recited the following prayer, the other following her word by word: "O, most holy Heart of Jesus, refuse us not the boon we ask of Thee; preserve this creature of Thine in her soul and body, and bring us help in this dreadful necessity. Oh! one single desire of that most loving Heart of Thine, that Heart which is so readily moved to mercy, will suffice to preserve us all and to defeat Thine enemy, if this be indeed the work of his malice. Oh, Sacred Heart of our dear Jesus, come to our assistance!"

The words were hardly uttered when the captain made his appearance in great haste, attended by the two Sisters who had been awaiting him. Fortunately, no one else followed. As he arrived, he asked the Sisters to hasten to their apartment and be ready to receive Sibyl there. It required but a moment for them to comply, and Henry having been on watch, there was no one near to perceive the movements going on. The captain followed immediately, bearing Sibyl insensible in his arms, her figure being concealed by the shawl. Sibyl was by no means of a slight frame, but the captain, in his energy, carried her as if she had been an infant, and

placed her on the bed pointed out. "Now, Sisters," said he, "do not give way to your fears. Pray that this fire may be mastered. If the worst comes to the worst, I shall see to your safety in time. Keep your door fastened."

So saying, he hastened back to the vacated room, and could perceive only smoke, without any indication of the source whence it came. He at once went to his office and gave three successive signals communicating with the engineer's department. At the first, the engine was stopped, and the steam discharged with the usual noisy rush through the valves opening from the boiler; at the second, the fires under the boiler began to be extinguished; at the third, four or five officers and men made their appearance on deck. Some of these were directed by him to tear up the planks of the room, while the others prepared hose to direct upon the fire when discovered. Everybody on board perceived the stopping of the engine: general confusion followed, and the passengers were not long in discovering the nature of the impending calamity. Rushing hither and thither, they uttered loud outcries, and but for the commands carried to the sailors, who obeyed with firmness and promptness, great loss of life would have ensued from the frantic attempts to get possession of the boats, which were already guarded. The captain shortly made his appearance at this scene of the struggle for their possession.

Amidst the clamor, his stentorian voice made itself heard: "Gentlemen, we do not know if there is

really any serious danger, but your conduct will certainly lead to disaster. Leave these boats. Whatever the danger may be, there is ample time to attend to every one's safety; meanwhile, each passenger will receive a life-preserver, and the steward is now distributing them on the forward deck. If we must take to the boats, you will have timely notice, and no one's life need be in peril. Now, we must have order,—order, I say,—or the officers will be able to do nothing.”

The passengers, somewhat quieted by the captain's address, proceeded to the forward deck, and he himself returned to the post of danger. Reason, however, has but little weight in a panic, and the quiet of the passengers was not of long duration. From where they stood, they could soon see a column of smoke arising at the point where the hands were at work under the captain's orders. “The captain is deceiving us,” cried one, loudly, “see there, the fire is gaining.”

“We are lost,” cried another.

“Why should we stand here looking on?” cried a third. “Let us help to put out the fire.” Then a disorderly rush took place in the direction of the men who were at work in the neighborhood of the fire. Everything was in confusion in a moment; and the men, who had already begun to have grave misgivings, found themselves unable to do anything effective. The captain, who was overseeing the work, called upon them to stretch a rope across the vessel, and exclude all who were not working under

his orders. The men promptly executed this command, running the line in a manner nowise gentle, whence considerable struggling and violence ensued, in which several of the passengers were trodden under foot, and not a few vented their wrath and terror in oaths.

"Now, men," said the captain, seeing the necessity of decisive language, "if a single passenger puts his foot across that line knock him down with a belaying pin, or anything else that comes handy. I warn the first man that attempts to cross it, that if I am near enough I will knock him over before he can say *Jack Robinson*." And the captain advanced towards the line, looking extremely determined.

Overawed, the passengers kept their distance, and the men were immediately enabled to work with efficiency. Amidst a general cry of terror, the reflection of a flame within the room manifested itself to those without, but its baleful light was but of short duration, for the outburst of flames indicated the exact spot of danger; a flood of water was poured upon it, and continued to be plentifully supplied. At last the sullen and slowly rising clouds of smoke which succeeded the flames, became thinner and thinner, until after about twenty minutes labor, it was evident that the fire, whatever its origin or locality, was completely extinguished.

The captain, after posting one of the hands to watch the premises, lest some unextinguished embers should revive, signalized the engineer to

resume his duties, and hastened to announce to the Sisters that all was safe, and that he trusted their prayers had helped to this fortunate result. Sibyl, he learned, had entirely recovered, and was then sitting up and engaged in conversation. No more fervent and sincere thanks ever ascended to heaven than those which arose from the hearts and the lips of the Sisters, and of their newly welcomed-guest, whose rescue had been accomplished under circumstances so critical, but who now felt the joy of a double deliverance from peril of soul and peril of body. The remaining passengers of course recovered their serenity as soon as it was ascertained that the danger was at an end, and peace and quiet reigned where so lately all was alarm and disorder.

Sibyl, after having been placed, all unconscious, in the Sisters' apartments, had shortly revived, and, opening her eyes, found herself in a neat little room and the Sisters standing by her side, one of whom was fanning her and another bathing her temples with cologne. Her first exclamation was one of surprise, and the returning color of her cheeks came and went in the mingled emotions of joy and confusion which she experienced on finding herself in the care of the Sisters. She supposed they had forced open the door of the room where she was, and had borne her thence, until informed of the manner in which her rescue had been accomplished. She then began to pour out her acknowledgments of gratitude to her preservers, especially to the Sisters, who, she hoped, would now enable her to

turn to good account the life that had been so wonderfully spared. "Ah! Sisters," cried she, "I am a poor lost creature and not worthy of the kindness you have shown me."

"Now, my child," said Sister Sabina, caressing her, "we will speak of these things when you are stronger. If you have been lost, you are found again; for the heavenly Shepherd has sought for you in the wilderness, and has placed you in our hands—blessed be His holy name. Take this cordial, my child, and then we will beseech our Lord to preserve us from further dangers."

"And are we in great danger?" asked Sibyl.

"We do not yet know; but God is all-powerful to save us from this and even greater danger. We will kneel down and implore His mercy. Stay where you are, my child," seeing that Sibyl was about to rise.

The Sisters then recited the Rosary together, and Sibyl joined them in spirit, although the joy and consolation she felt at the spectacle so novel to her, of the religious upon their knees, praying with so much fervor, distracted her to such a degree that she was obliged to close her eyes in order to pray with any attention. She felt, as she afterwards said, like one but lately transported from the depths of the abyss to the opening gates of heaven, and experienced a kind of calm assurance that such prayers must be heard. Hence, when the captain came, just after they had risen from their knees,

announcing that all was safe, she had hardly occasion to feel relieved.

"Oh, Sisters!" exclaimed Sibyl, after the captain had left, and they had poured out their thanksgivings to God for His merciful intervention, "how I envy you! Pray for me, that I may be enabled to atone for my wretched life," and the tears flowed plentifully down her cheeks."

"God has touched your heart, my dear girl," replied Sister Sabina, "and He will finish the work He has begun. Then, you will be *all* His."

"Oh! God grant it," returned she, sobbing, "and what a work of mercy will He not thus perform towards a soul which long since cast Him out; but He knows, too," and here her sobs interrupted her utterance, "how I was at first dragged into all these sins against my will. Still, I knew better—I knew better. God forgive me!"

"My child, calm yourself, there is not one of us who is not by nature separated by an infinite distance from God, and we have all strengthened this distance by sin. Yet, He is not prevented from reaching out to us the hand of fatherly compassion, and even bestowing upon us endless favors and graces, often greatest where sin has most abounded. Ah! the infinite goodness of God knows how to overcome the infinite malice of sin!" Then the Sister went on to explain the beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan, showing how it applied to Sibyl, the Good Samaritan being our Lord clothed in the likeness of a sinner with our human flesh,

while she was the poor wounded traveller, left robbed, and abandoned by the way. "He," continued the Sister, "will pour upon the wounds of your soul the oil and wine of His sacraments, healing and invigorating you, and closing the cruel scars which your spiritual enemies have left there. Then your soul will be as free from stain as that of the newly baptized infant, and will be the object of the admiration of the angels and of the love of God Himself. How true it is, as has been said of Him, 'I shall seek that which was lost; and that which was driven away, I shall bring again; and I will bind up that which was broken; and I will strengthen that which was weak.' In short, the Heart of Jesus is an abyss overflowing with love, and its bounty is measured by the extent of our needs."

Sibyl felt herself strengthened under these consoling words, and overcome with emotion, she arose and cast herself weeping upon the neck of the Sister, while the other Sisters mingled their tears of joy and compassion with hers. One of the German Sisters pronouncing her name, "Cornelia," she regarded her with glad surprise, and exchanged enquiries in the German language. She soon became absorbed in the account given her of her relatives and of their present condition, and heard with wonder of that one who had become a Sister in their community. It would be impossible to convey any idea of the delight with which poor Sibyl listened to these accounts from home,—that home,

the remembrance of which had been the theme of so many moments of sorrowful retrospection, and which it had appeared to her she was never more to regain.

When told of Judge Harper's suggestion, she expressed the utmost gratification, and gladly approved it, saying that she now hoped to return home at some future day, but that she must in the interval become a good Christian, be instructed and baptized, and learn what it was to be a practical Catholic before she should undertake to revisit the scenes of her childhood. "Dear Sisters," said she, "you must begin the work, and you must see it safely accomplished. Oh! do not let me leave you until you see me kneeling, a Christian, at the foot of your own altar." The Sisters promised that they should not part until this was done. They then sought the rest so needed after the excitements of the evening.





XVI.

AFTER THE FIRE.

FEANDRO, at the outbreak of the fire, nerving himself with Christian fortitude, had withdrawn Henry from the crowd of agitated passengers, and leading him to their state-room, invited him to join in prayer that God might avert the danger which threatened them. Henry, docile to his friend's request, offered no objection; in truth, the influence exerted upon him through the edifying example of his companion, aided by the admonitions of his excellent aunt, had begun to operate a change in him which the lesson of present danger could not fail to assist. Now, by the providence of God, the indifference in which he had been fortified amidst the gay and frivolous associations which had surrounded him in Paris and elsewhere, began to give way before the solid attractions of genuine goodness. The opportunities for distraction which a great capital, with all its resources of pleasure, had offered to one whose means enabled him to avail himself of them at discretion, no longer thwarted the growth of serious reflection: instead of these, a contingency of peril and possible death arose to

confront him, evoking into speedier activity those sentiments of religion which still held a place, though an obscure one, in his heart. These sentiments had been implanted there in his early youth, and although the thoughtlessness of mature years may have overshadowed them, his early training had preserved him from the pit-falls of gross corruption in which many young men bury forever all the noble aspirations of their earlier life. Thus it was that in his inmost soul there remained faculties which were accessible to the reviving sense of Christian duty.

The two friends recited together the Litany of the Saints and other prayers, and then repaired to the deck. The critical moment of danger had not yet passed, and they were witnesses to the scenes of frenzied excitement among the passengers to which we adverted in a former chapter. They themselves, fortified by prayer, experienced neither the transports of terror to which so many surrendered, nor, when the danger was over,—as was the case shortly after their appearance on the scene,—the equally extravagant transports of joy which succeeded. After the danger had passed away, and the other passengers had mostly retired, they still remained, in company with the Judge and Filippi, watching the men at work. The captain noticed them, and passing over to them, words of cheerful congratulation were exchanged. He proposed meeting them as soon as his duties would allow, and gave them

the key of his office, that they might await him there.

Had not the excitement of the evening rendered them indisposed to rest, while it also furnished abundant food for conversation, the party might have become weary of waiting for the captain, for it was quite midnight when he made his appearance, his arrival being preceded by that of the steward bringing glasses and a pitcher of hot punch, which proved very acceptable, and to none more so than to the captain himself, after his fatiguing labors. In reply to the enquiries addressed to him, he gave his opinion that the damage done by the fire was not very great, but that it could not be exactly estimated until daylight; that meanwhile the boat would lie to, and not put on steam until all essential repairs were completed. In order that these repairs might be accomplished as expeditiously as possible, they would signal any passing vessel for a relay of hands. "I hope," continued the captain, "that a few hours' delay will not occasion our friends in New York any great uneasiness."

"But," asked the Judge, "how do you account for the fire in the first place?"

"To me its origin is perfectly mysterious," replied the captain, "and if those spiritist fellows had not been securely locked up, I should imagine the fire was set on purpose by one of them. I can assure you," continued he, in answer to their exclamations of surprise, "that such things have been done. A passenger on board of a steamer commanded by a

friend of mine, was identified on the passage as a notorious criminal, for whose apprehension a large reward had been offered by the British authorities, and lest he should be delivered into the clutches of the law, he resolved to commit suicide, and at the same time, in a spirit of diabolical malice, take the lives of all on board. He found means to set fire to the boat, but it was discovered and extinguished before any serious damage had been done, and the fellow was thereupon secured in such a way that any similar attempt became impossible."

"But do you mean to say," inquired Filippi, "that these spiritists are characters of this sort?"

"Ask the Judge," replied the captain. "*One* of them certainly is, and he knows that *I* know it."

The Judge accordingly gave the history of Hellerbach *alias* Stellman, and the captain completed it by an account of his last interview with the parties, adding: "Still, when I come to think of it, I hardly see motive enough on the part of Stellman to commit such an act, even if he had had it in his power. I had not positively threatened to give him up to the authorities, for extradition, although he may have surmised such an intention from my putting him, as it were, under arrest. Then, it is not likely that he cared so little for the lives of the 'Doctor,' of Milly, of Hebert and his wife, and other friends, as to involve them in any mad attempt at self-destruction. Moreover, as I said before, he hadn't the chance of doing it, even if he had desired it."

“I am not so sure of that,” remarked the Judge. “A man who could escape from such a prison as the one at Münster, guarded by officers of known fidelity and vigilance, and yet leave no traces behind by which his after course could be conjectured, is not likely to find any stronghold on board this boat that would greatly restrain his freedom. I don’t suggest this as any reason for believing that he set the fire, for, as you say, the probabilities are all against such a supposition; but I believe Stellman could have got out if he had been so minded.”

“We will see about that,” said the captain, and applying his lips to one of the speaking tubes, communicating between his office and other parts of the boat, he gave directions to have “Jerry” called. “Aye, aye, sir,” was the response that came welling up from some interior quarter. “I posted one of my best men,” continued the captain, “to watch the apartment where these fellows are locked in, and Stellman must have had the devil to help him, if he could give Jerry the slip.”

“And so he might have had,” replied the Judge.

“Yes, his correspondence in that quarter is intimate enough,” remarked Leandro.

“Pooh! pooh! gentlemen, no devil for me,” returned the captain. “I admit, that if this rascal could get out, and meant mischief, he might have vented his spite by doing something that would occasion damage and confusion, and if he could get his friend the devil to help him and his party out of the danger afterwards, he might have even set

fire to the boat; but when it comes to that, it was as easy to get the Old Boy to attend to the whole business of the firing, as to get him to let *him* out for the purpose. The question is, *could* this man have got out, devil or no devil. Ah! here is Jerry."

Jerry, a man of middle age, of sturdy frame, with an abundant head of hair sprinkled with gray, and enormous eyebrows, here entered, tarpaulin in hand. "Jerry," said the captain, "there is a mooted question here, and I have sent for you to settle it. But, first, will you have a glass of grog?"

"Never drinks nothing," remarked he, sententiously.

"Ah! yes, I remember; well, I won't press you. I respect your principles, Jerry, and I should be the last man to wish you to break through them. But now about these fellows I set you to watch; have you kept your eye on them?"

"Haint left my post, cap'n."

"Well, I thought I could depend on you. But didn't the alarm of fire even make you look out for yourself?"

"I allow I was some skeered, captain, but I got no orders to leave. 'While the light holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return.'" The relevancy of this scrap of hymnology did not appear very striking to any one else, but as Jerry accompanied its utterance with a wave of the tarpaulin, the point was not questioned.

"How did you manage, then, about bringing them their supper?"

“Told the steward to send it by Ben Woods.”

“Ah, then *you* took it in to them. What did they say to you?”

“Why, that there Scotchman let on that you had some woman of his hid on board, and swore he would have revenge;—likewise, for locking him up.”

The captain and his friends opened their eyes in blank amazement at this announcement, and the former exclaimed: “Well, I begin to think that these fellows deal with the devil, sure enough, or how would they know that Sibyl was alive, and on board? Tell me, Jerry, did you see or hear anything extraordinary while you were on the watch?” Jerry nodded his head slowly and mysteriously.

“What was it?” they all exclaimed.

“Well, gentlemen, I’ll tell you no lie. Such a rumbling and growling—a kind of kept-down-like—as I heerd inside of that room for one time, passes all. I aint heerd nothing like it since I went to a raree-show of creeturs in our town, when I was a toddling boy. Presently, the noise all tapered off to one gruff voice like a mastiff’s. Ben and me listened awhile, but couldn’t make no head or tail out of what was going on, and Ben he took and put for it in short order, and I was a-most skeered enough to foller. Now, I couldn’t see nothing, but that’s what I *heerd*.” And Jerry again nodded his head mysteriously, while his great eyebrows seemed to grow more portentous and shaggy than ever. All eyes were now directed to the captain, to know what he would say about this new development.

After biting his lips awhile, in great perplexity, said he :

"I swear, this jugglery beats me out. I know how to deal with men and things in any common shape. But if I have to take the devil for a free passenger, who is to pay the scot? And how is *he* to be kept to rules? I wonder what will happen next! Jerry, you can return to your post. I wish you would come to me at any time of the night that you hear these strange noises repeated."

The others were somewhat inclined to laugh at the captain's manner of expressing himself, but Leandro stepped forward and requested to whisper a word in his ear. The suggestion he made was that the captain should take the rest he so much stood in need of, and that he himself would occupy a lounge near the room of the spiritists. If anything occurred, Jerry should call him, and him only. He could venture to promise that their incantations should soon come to an end. The captain finally gave his consent. "All right," said Leandro aloud, "and now, captain, we will bid you good-night, or rather good-morning."

"Well, friends, there is one round more of the punch; take a night-cap." So, after sipping mutual good wishes, the party separated.





XVII.

THE ENGLISH STEAMER.

HE repairs the next morning began at daylight, but the need felt of a more numerous force to complete them without delay, caused a vigilant lookout to be kept up for passing vessels of a size likely to have men to spare for the purpose. One of the crew was stationed aloft with directions to notify the captain whenever a sail appeared. Within an hour, the latter had himself made two or three journeys up the rigging, spy-glass in hand, only to discover that the vessels observed were of the ordinary tonnage of merchantmen, and not likely to be of use to him. Feeling rather fatigued by a species of exercise no longer usual with him, he refused to go up at the next call until told that a volume of smoke on the horizon indicated a large steamer. At this information, he hastened up again, and was gratified to find that the approaching vessel was one of a size for which it was worth while to set signals. This was accordingly done, and the passengers, gathering on deck, began to watch for its approach.

Meanwhile, a brisk conversation was proceeding among them, which evidently had reference to something else besides the approaching steamer or the events of the late fire. In fact, Jerry had informed two or three that some extraordinary occurrences had taken place during the night in connection with the spiritists, and it was this report which, proceeding from mouth to mouth, began now to monopolize the general attention. Divested of the extraneous marvels with which the narrative had been embellished as it came from Jerry in the first place, and which it gathered to itself afterwards, the facts were simply these: Towards two or three in the morning, the mysterious sounds which Jerry had referred to while in the captain's office, were again heard by him in the room occupied by the spiritists. According to previous arrangements, he aroused Leandro, and both proceeding together, listened for a while at the door. Then Leandro knelt down, made the Sign of the Cross, recited some prayers, and threw towards the room some holy water from a phial with which he had provided himself. These movements of Leandro, as described by Jerry,—who did not know what the sign of the cross was,—would have led any ordinary hearer to suppose that the young Spaniard had, himself, been dealing freely in incantations.

According to the account afterwards given by Leandro to the captain and other friends, no sooner had he begun his prayers, or even made the sign of the cross, than the character of the sounds heard

within the room of the spiritists changed, from an occasional hoarse and sepulchral rumbling, to a rapid succession of accents on a higher key, indicating pain and agitation, and then seemed swiftly to retire until they were no longer heard. Hardly had the key changed, than a commotion was heard within the room, accompanied by two or three faintly suppressed groans. After this, all was silent, except the last retreating sound of what seemed a wail of supernatural anguish. These mysterious sounds, which, though not loud, could be distinctly enough recognized in the silence of the night, filled Leandro with involuntary dismay, and so terrified Jerry that his imagination probably conjured up visions of spectral figures fleeing in confusion. Leandro saw nothing of the kind, but Jerry stoutly averred that *he* did, and we have no means of throwing further light on the subject. At any rate, it is not surprising that Jerry's version proved intensely absorbing to those who were then engaged in discussing the affair; and had there been even no sequel to it, a sufficient reason would have been found for the curiosity everywhere expressed to see the agent in these wonders. But this was not all.

Jerry, although he had the key of the room, and felt a profound curiosity to look within, after the subsidence of the marvellous noises,—and indeed, he even feared that some catastrophe had occurred, so death-like was the stillness,—could not overcome his apprehensions sufficiently to look in until broad daylight lent him courage. What was his astonish-



ment then to see the Scotchman on the floor and Stellman on a chair, both perfectly insensible ! The captain was immediately sent for, and taking Leandro with him, entered the room. On the table and on the floor were objects and instruments of strange mechanism or fashioned of repulsive materials, which, in connection with the profession of these men and the reported occurrences of the evening, the captain judged to have been employed in necromantic or diabolical incantations. Seizing them with disgust, he threw them out of the window, and applied himself to the resuscitation of the men. Finding that both his efforts and Leandro's combined had no perceptible effect, and as his presence was needed elsewhere, he requested the latter to remain in the room until the arrival of the physician of the boat, whom he would send immediately. He relieved Jerry of his charge, and told him to go to his bunk and take some rest.

Jerry retired, shaking his head and talking to himself ; and meeting two or three passengers who were among the first to leave their state-rooms, could not refrain from asking them if they had heard any strange noises during the night. On their answering negatively, and enquiring why he asked, he was too full of the subject not to feel a species of relief in communicating to them all he knew, and possibly more than he knew, so difficult is it to limit one's self to prosaic exactness in relating any sort of marvel. When asked who was the young man who had made the strange signs

outside the door, Jerry could not say, not having heard his name, but thought he was a "furriner," and described him as a "dark-complected" young man, with black eyes and hair. The gentlemen would have satisfied their curiosity by looking into the room, but the physician had already passed in and locked the door, in accordance with the captain's request. Here, for the present, we will leave him and Leandro, and mingle again with the company on deck.

From the description Jerry had given, the passengers began to fix upon Leandro as being the agent in the spiritist's discomfiture,—for such they judged it to be,—and the most of them were glad of it. "Oh, yes," said one, "the person Jerry speaks of must be that rather reserved young man who looks so much like a churchman."

"To be sure," said another, "the same who sat by the captain yesterday, and made such a big sign of the cross before he took his seat."

"I wonder," remarked a third, "if it was the sign of the cross that played the deuce with the Scotchman? Who killed Cock Robin?"

Standing a little apart was a rather pompous looking individual, whose manner had in it an assumption of *nonchalance*, who neither asked questions nor appeared to listen to what was said; but at this last remark, turning his head superciliously towards the speaker, he said, sneeringly:

"The sign of the cross!—Humph!"

“Why, Mr. Hebert,” said one of the group, “you don’t think much of the sign of the cross, then?”

“I don’t think much of *idolaters*,” replied he, curtly.

“Well, if ‘*idolaters*,’ as you call them, can put a stop to the tricks of spiritists, their idolatry can’t be all that it is said to be. There must be some good in it.”

“These gentlemen,” replied Hebert, stiffly—for it was no other than that friend of the spiritists—“are engaged in a worthy profession, and for my part I can see no good in any system or in any measures that might interfere with their practice of it, even supposing all to be true that you have heard,—and it remains to be seen how much truth there is in this rigmarole of a superstitious old sailor.”

“Then you believe in spiritism?” rejoined the other. “Pray, what is there good in spiritism?”

“It is the only true doctrine of a better life, and it is no superstition like Popery. In fact, it is the enemy of that rubbish of the Dark Ages.”

“A fine doctrine that is, that drives some of its followers to insanity and others to suicide, like that poor girl that drowned herself yesterday, besides setting people loose from their lawful wives and husbands and consorting them with others that don’t belong to them.” This home-thrust, unintentionally given, caused Hebert to wince. Turning red in the face, he blurted out:

“I didn’t know we had so many Papists on board.”

"I don't see any Papists here," remarked the Judge, who had just before joined the group, and who looked around him as he said this, "or rather *Catholics*, for I suppose that is what you mean by the nick-name, but if your friends are apostles of Spiritism, and Spiritism is what I have found it all over the world, defend us from the God of the spiritists! The Catholics have a religion which has at least a character and a history, and I have always found that those who observe its precepts were at least as good, and as wise, and as happy as any of their neighbors, and were capable of making others so to an extent I never saw realized outside of their Church. Their Church does not depend upon mysterious communications made by table-rappers and trance-mediums for what it is to believe and teach in the nineteenth century, and if Spiritism is an enemy to it, it ought to be, for the Church is the open enemy of all superstition and superstitious practices."

"Have it as you will," replied Hebert; "I am not disposed to pursue the subject where every one has his mind made up on your side."

The approaching vessel had now come within hailing distance, and our captain's speaking trumpet being brought into play, interrupted the conversation at this point, and turned the general attention to what was passing. The vessel proved to be a large English passenger steamer on her way to Liverpool. In answer to the request that a boat's crew might be sent to assist in making repairs, a



party was soon despatched from the steamer, which was joined by the English captain himself. Being welcomed on board, the men were soon merrily at work, while their commander, after viewing the damage done, was entertained by his host, and then, so numerous were the requests for an introduction to the burly, pleasant looking Briton, the latter was obliged to hold a sort of reception.

Meanwhile, since we have for some time lost sight of the old Englishman, whose infatuation on the subject of Spiritism had been the occasion of the presence of its two professors on board—let us state that, notwithstanding the indignation with which he had rejected the overtures of the Scotchman, whose peace-offering had met the untimely fate at Gregory's hands of being poured into a slop-jar, he consoled himself in his vexation with so liberal a supply of its equivalent that he tumbled off to sleep and remained oblivious of everything that passed for twelve or fifteen hours. He was awakened at last by the pounding and hammering caused by the men at work on the repairs. While he lay rubbing his eyes, and wondering what was the matter, and why the vessel was not going, Gregory entered; the latter in answer to the sleepy enquiries made of him, startled the old man into complete wakefulness, and also into some degree of sobriety, by informing him of the narrow escape they had all had from a dreadful calamity. When informed further that the force he heard at work was partly supplied from the English steamer *Eagle*

on her way to Liverpool, and commanded by "Capt. Nelson," he bounced out of bed, and avowed his determination of seizing this opportunity to return home, from which he was now distant only four days' sail.

Capt. Nelson being a friend of his, he resolved, when he heard he was then on board, to solicit being taken, with his suite, to the *Eagle* on the return of the boat. He accordingly sat down to his writing-table, and with trembling fingers indited a few lines to that effect, bidding Gregory deliver the same and bring an answer. The old gentleman immediately began to make his toilet, in which he was so expeditious that he was nearly dressed when Gregory returned with Capt. Nelson's compliments, placing his accommodations at the service of his friend. "All right, Gregory," said he; "now pack up and let us be off this devilish boat. We can easily get ready within the two or three hours that Nelson says we shall have."

"What about the Doctor, sir?" asked Gregory with a grin.

"Perdition take the Doctor, and the other man too. I shall have nothing more to do with the humbugs. Are they around?"

"Not that I knows on, sir, I hear they're very sick; but there's a long story about it."

"Then let them stay sick, and I want to hear nothing more of them; but I intend to carry Sibyl with me. She had as little notion of taking this journey as I had, and it is my belief that she can

just as well call up my dear Julia without those imposters as with them."

"Sibyl!—why, sir, she drowned herself yesterday."

"Drowned herself! What do you mean?"

Gregory then related the occurrences of the day before. His master listened in silence to his narrative, and then ejaculated: "Plague take her! And did Milly drown herself, too?"

"No, sir, but she's been too sick to leave her room."

"Then let her be *carried*. If I can't get one I'll take the other, and I have bespoken three places of Nelson. She will get well quickly enough when she reaches shore."

"But what will the Doctor say, sir? She's under engagement to him."

"And *he* is under engagement to *me*. Let him put in a word if he dares."

"Lord, sir, he haint got a word for nobody, now."

"Then he can't interfere. Tell her to pack up her traps, and get ready to go aboard the *Eagle* with me. She will be glad enough, I warrant; she shall be lodged in my house, tell her, and shall want for nothing. If she knows her business as she ought, she is a made woman. I vow, if she can procure me another interview with my Julia, she shall be set up for life. Now hurry and see her, and then let us get our own things together."

Gregory departed, not altogether well pleased, with his errand, for he had no affection for

“mejums,” and stood rather in awe of their powers. Moreover, he did not like to have “the sperits a-kicking up a bobbery” in his master’s house, and molesting the old gentleman’s last days. Milly, and the janitress whom the captain had placed in charge of her, were engaged in a lively quarrel when Gregory rapped at the door and delivered his message. This speedily put an end to the dispute, as Milly was overjoyed to get away, while the other was no less pleased at parting with her troublesome charge; but without displaying her gratification, said she would go and “ask the captain” about it. Milly gave her a parting benediction, and said she should go “in spite of the captain or anybody else.” As to the spiritist, the obligation she was under to ask *his* consent was a point that did not molest her conscience.

The captain was not only highly pleased with the arrangement proposed by the old Englishman, but also sent him the balance due him for the uncompleted voyage, which the latter declined to receive. The only regret our captain expressed was, that he could not ship off the two professors likewise, but they were not in a condition to be removed.

In due time, the repairs being completed, Captain Nelson re-embarked his men, our captain providing another boat for the old Englishman and his party, and the crew of both put off to the British packet, amidst cheers and waving of hats. Steam was up by the time our own boat returned, and amidst the enlivening strains of the band of musicians on board,

who had been got together in honor of the occasion, our steamer resumed her journey, and cleaving the waves as swiftly and majestically as ever, was soon out of sight of her late visitor.

Cheerfulness and vivacity now marked the countenance of every one, and the general gayety was even more noticeable than it had been at the moment when all danger from fire was at an end. So true is it that the motives of our happiness are mostly comparative! Nothing, indeed, makes us appreciate the value of prosperity so much as the fact that it is newly acquired, or newly rescued from jeopardy. Mankind would, however, be less elated under these circumstances, and less despondent under adversity, were it their constant practice to behold, in the disposition of events, the overruling providence of God. In default of this devout habit of mind, prosperity proves often but an incentive to pride and sensuality, while reverses give rise only to murmuring and discontent.

Among the cheerful faces present, we cannot, however, number those of Hebert and his stolen wife. Although they rejoiced no less than others at escaping a fate for which it must be admitted they were but little prepared, they were now suffering from mortification at the discomfiture of their friends, the spiritists, whose present condition was also a source of uneasiness. In addition to this, they were disappointed in the reception of some spiritual revelations which had been promised them, whereby they were to be guided in certain measures that closely con-



cerned their present interests and movements. They were also vexed at hearing the laudatory references to Leandro that were so frequent, and were indignant at the attitude of triumph he thus occupied,—although he assumed nothing for himself. They therefore kept retired, and when obliged to mingle with others, as at table, maintained a chilling reserve.





XVIII.

THE LECTURE.

LEANDRO'S lecture was not delivered on the previous evening, as may very well be surmised, the alarm of fire having occurred just as he was about beginning it. The captain now begged that he would favor the company with the lecture on the present evening. Meanwhile, the novel interest attaching to Leandro, caused the passengers, or at least many of them, to second the captain's request. Leandro had never at any time mingled with the passengers indiscriminately, and the curiosity of which he could not fail to perceive himself the object this morning, had made him shrink still more from the general concourse. No sooner had he left the room of the spiritists, in whose condition some slight improvement was manifest, than he found himself overwhelmed by enquiries in regard to his share in what had occurred, which a sense of delicacy would not allow him to reply to, except vaguely. This modesty and reticence only stimulated the desire of his "interviewers" to hear his lecture, in which they hoped he would be more explicit, the subject seeming to require it.

Under the circumstances, Leandro thought it best not to decline an occasion which might result in good, and therefore soon retired to his room to review his material, intending to arrange and perfect it. Meanwhile, Filippi also resolved to avail himself of the interval to assist Mrs. M—— in putting new pieces upon the programme for the musical entertainment, which was to follow the lecture. All day long, therefore, Leandro was agreeably diverted, and perhaps even sometimes distracted by the fragments of melody which reached his ears from those engaged in practising their parts.

The day wore on without any special incident. Leandro did not entirely deny himself to his friends, for he spent some time with them after dinner and after supper, and the circle was increased on each occasion by the presence of others, who were at their own request introduced to him by Judge Harper or Filippi. Everybody was charmed with his simple and unaffected manners, and his frank and cheerful conversation. At the hour appointed, the audience had all assembled in the saloon. Even Hebert was observed in the back row of seats, having come, perhaps, to criticize the statements he might hear, and find what fault he could. After an overture by the band, a table was placed for Leandro, behind which he quietly took his seat, placing before him no manuscript, other than a few memoranda.

Whatever apprehensions might have been felt that the speaker would be embarrassed in the use

of a language not native to him, were soon set at rest, for Leandro had happened to be a good student of English. A foreign accent was of course discernible, but his words were well chosen and his manner was deliberate; so that nothing was lost. A certain grace and persuasiveness of style, added to the Celtic force which was inherent in him, rendered it even a pleasure to listen to his discourse. He began it by an allusion to the miracle performed by Peter and John, in the cure of the lame man at the gate called Beautiful, as recorded in the third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; quoting in this connection the words afterwards uttered by Peter, in presence of the multitude: "Ye men of Israel, why wonder you at this? The God of Abraham," &c.

"These words," said he, "recurred to my mind when some of you, my friends, kindly complimented me on my successful intervention, as you considered it, on a recent occasion, in certain extraordinary results which followed from the employment of the sign of the cross. Though not indifferent to your good opinion, I must waive all personal credit or importance as attaching to me in that affair. Almighty God—the God of our fathers—has been pleased to show in what esteem He holds the Sign of man's redemption, employed even by the humblest of his servants. It becomes us, then, to appreciate at its full value this august Sign through which God deigns to deliver us from evils of soul and body, to repel malignant spirits, and to defeat their unhallowed

purposes." Leandro then went on to explain the subject of demoniac intervention, to insist on its reality, and to allege proofs thereof. He also pointed out the dangers they incur who place themselves within the power of spirits who are the bitter and implacable enemies of the human race.

As to the sign of the cross itself, the speaker went on to enlarge on the dignity to which it was entitled in the esteem of all, and the power which was inherent in it. "But above all," added he, "I wish to have you appreciate in its true light the honorable distinction which attaches to those who employ this sign as a testimony to themselves or to others of the faith that is in them. Yes, the sign of the cross ennobles us." He maintained this proposition by showing, 1st, that the sign of the cross had a sacred origin; 2d, that it illustrated this origin in its effects, and 3d, that it was the recognized badge of the most venerable and respectable society on earth. He continued: "A sign which can justly claim so lofty an origin, can never fail to confer honor on those who employ it. No nobility, indeed, can be higher than that which is noble by the impress of Almighty God. The origin of the sign of the cross confers upon it this nobility, and imparts the same to those who employ it in accordance with its sacred character." The testimonies which Leandro furnished in regard to the origin of the sign of the cross were the same which he made use of in his discussion with Henry, and may be found in the fourth chapter of this narrative.

Against its alleged novelty he quoted the testimonies of the ancient Fathers, there also referred to, only giving the passages more at length, and developing the subject so as to make his point equally clear and striking.

"The sign of the cross," continued Leandro, "thus shown to have been in constant use in the earliest Christian ages, and associated with the most sacred rites of religion, is a sign which the Christian of the present day has a right to be proud of as the ancient badge of his religion. But the age in which we live is one that plumes itself on the exhibition of a species of worldly dignity, of so-called self-respect, and of intellectual emancipation; ideas, which so far as they have any definable meaning, work only mischief, especially in the minds of the young, who are already inspired by the spirit of the age with a contempt of authority of every kind, paternal, social, intellectual, and divine. It is an abasement of their dignity to employ the practices of 'an age of ignorance and superstition.' Yet, I trust it is clear, that a practice dating from the origin of Christianity, 'the purest age of the Church,' as all agree to call it, intimately bound up with that origin, and descending to our own days, can in no sense be termed a superstition. It would, doubtless, not be difficult to make it equally clear to you, that other practices and tenets discredited under a similar pretext, are susceptible of a like defence; but I need not go aside from my path to discuss them. Were we to grant even that the practice of

the sign of the cross dated but from the middle ages, we should still have to concede that it was at least harmless, and that as the expression of a distinct religious sentiment, namely, the sign of faith avowed, or confidence reposed in Christ's redemption, its use could be even considered commendable. Employed to this end, in the spirit of religious independence, he who signs his person with it, when occasion calls for his doing so, gives evidence that he respects himself, since he marks his person with a sign so honorable in its purport; and he who respects himself entitles himself to the respect of others. What device so striking yet so unpretending,—so comprehensive, yet so simple,—have the enemies of the sign of the cross recommended in its place, as the symbol of a religion which to be true must after all be the religion of the cross? In what manner are we to recognize in these objectors the exponents of this religion of the cross?"

Here the speaker drew the portrait of various classes of objectors, from the nominal Catholic, to the downright infidel. He argued that neither of these extreme classes was entitled to hearing on this subject, the first on account of his inconsistency; the last, because he was disqualified by his open profession of unbelief from passing as an authority. As to the hostility of the sects (who occupied the intermediate ground,) to this venerable memorial of the faith of their Catholic ancestors, Leandro adverted to their course more in the spirit of compassion than of anger, and yet did not spare

them a few satirical touches, which, however, were not offensively presented. In fact, his audience applauded him as heartily at this portion of his discourse as at any other. We might except Hebert, whose supercilious attitude and expression sufficiently indicated his feelings.

"Yet," continued the speaker, "when we follow many of these advocates of exterior self-respect and dignity into the actions of their private lives, we find that these men, so proud of their honor, and so zealous to maintain it, frequently permit themselves to sink to depths wherein the native dignity of neither soul nor body meets recognition ; and society will reprove them less for these excesses, than it will the Christian who is seen faithful to his religion in all its requirements, interior and exterior. Provided exterior propriety be not too rudely shocked, a man of this class may occasionally mingle with the base, or even corrupt the innocent ; he may devote his time to the merest worldliness ; he may slay his brother under pretext of vindicating his own honor ; he may turn his back on his earliest domestic ties, and form others under the color of legal authority, and the world will look upon him with toleration, if not with indulgence, nay, in some cases regard his conduct with approval ! Ask a man of *this* class what he thinks of the sign of the cross and of those who employ it, and his reply will be in terms of unmeasured scorn. There are others who believe that they are maintaining the dignity of that intellect with which God has endowed them,

when they surrender it to every passing delirium of belief which professes to deal with mind and soul. Far from them is indeed the humility that takes refuge in the simple sign of the cross. The language I use may appear strong, but none who have had experience of the world can allege that it is exaggerated."

Murmurs of assent were heard, as the speaker paused for a moment to take a glass of water. Hebert uttered the word "Bosh," and then subsided into silence. Leandro concluded this portion of his subject, by contrasting with these followers of theories dictated by false pride, the humble, consistent, courageous Christian—who never forgets that the cross is the source of true dignity, the pledge of a real happiness, the balance in which all things in the world are to be weighed—the Christian, whose privilege it is to testify, by the devout respect he shows for the sign of the cross, to the estimation in which he holds all that that sign represents. He contended that until we returned to the religious principles of the "ages of faith," when that sign was everywhere in Christendom the recognised symbol of faith in a Redeemer, no remedy would be found for the evils that infect modern society; and that it would be a happy day when the universal restoration of the sign of the cross should indicate that return, and unite us in spirit with those among whom that sign originated.

"In illustration of my third point," continued Leandro, "let me remark that the scion of a family

venerable for its antiquity, made honorable by its achievements, and eminent for its virtues, may justly glory in his family escutcheon. He will carve it in marble over his portals, engrave it on his gems, display it on his plate and his furniture, and emblazon it on his carriage ; and he does well, for 'the glory of the children is their fathers.' Now, the sign of the cross is, to the Christian, what the escutcheon of a family is to a member of that family. It is his badge, his coat of arms, his decoration, the sign by which he claims alliance with the noblest lineage in the world.

" Our noble vessel will soon enter upon a stream to which there is no parallel anywhere. It retains its individuality in the midst of the ocean which surrounds it. It is a warm current flowing on the cold bed of the ocean, and bound in by its waters, but always retaining its warm temperature ; perpetually pursuing its onward course, experiencing neither drought nor overflow, but ever expanding as it proceeds. The rivers of the *land*, whatever benefits they may impart to the countries they irrigate, are subject to all the contingencies of drought or of overflow, and may, and often do bring disaster and ruin upon the dwellers on their banks. Yet, *the Gulf Stream*, incomparably greater than the largest rivers of Asia or of America, is never other than a source of perennial benefits to the lands which it approaches in its course, and even to regions remotely on its confines.

• " Take now any empire on earth, even the most

extensive of them, whether of this or of other countries, not even excepting that vast one whose shores we are approaching. Each has its definite limits, extend these limits as you will; and each is subject in its internal economy to political vicissitudes which may change or destroy its character, or may even leave it but a shadow of its former self. It may be swept away by its external enemies: it may bring evils upon other empires: it may fester within itself, and corrupt its own citizens. But there is an empire which is confined within no bounds, is inaccessible to ruin, disruption, or decay, although it maintains no armies to guard its possessions, and relies on no political power to sustain it: and this, notwithstanding that it is surrounded on every side by hostile elements; finally, it can never bring other than benefits to the world at large, nor prove other than a source of blessings to all nations.

“This life-giving stream, this beneficent empire, is the body which is known as the *Catholic Church*. Like the Gulf Stream, its course is in the midst of the ocean of the world, but it ever remains distinct from it, nor can tempests or billows turn it aside or obliterate it, or weaken its wide and ever enlarging influence. Its current diffuses warmth and vitality over regions near and remote, and even moderates the chilly reign of the winter of unbelief in distant lands. As an empire, the Church extends her sway over millions of subjects, but unlike all other empires, is bounded by no limits but those

that confine the world. Nay, this empire of the Church stretches beyond the limits of terrestrial things, into that realm of the spirits undergoing purgation, and that other realm for which they and we are preparing, the everlasting abode of the blessed in heaven.

"She can experience no downfall, she is subject to no decay. She has enemies, but they are not restrained or subjugated by the arm of flesh, nor does she rely on political machinery to preserve her existence or to accomplish her work. She yields benefits to all, and even moderates the ills of those who are estranged from her; while she inflicts injuries on none. Her banner is the Cross. Under this standard she rallied her infant forces; under this standard she gathers at this day the nations of the world. To this standard her children look up with confidence; and under it they range themselves, proud of its protection, and strong in the courage they imbibe from it."

Here Leandro was interrupted with loud applause, which he modestly acknowledged, and continued: "The images I have employed will convey to you an idea of what the Catholic Church is, in the mind of her members. Can you wonder that they prize their connection with her, that they set her claims far above those that have their origin in anything human? If the children of a noble house show their regard for their ancestral dignity by the respect which they exhibit towards their family escutcheon; nay, if nations adhere to their respec-

tive banners, fling them to the breeze with exultation, and salute them with reverence, how much more ought not they who belong to this chosen people, this royal nation, this most ancient and glorious of families, to testify their profound respect for her own standard, clinging in their hearts to the cross emblazoned thereon, glorying in giving it exterior honor, and signifying their faith and loyalty by devoutly marking it on their persons.

“They will not fail to remember that it was this banner which has given courage to millions of those who followed it to shed their blood for the sake of Him who sanctified the cross by expiring on it. It was under this standard that other armies of solitaries, of penitents, of virgins, of apostles, of doctors, advanced to perfection in the way of God. It was this banner to which the fathers of old looked up, and which shed upon them the inspiration which fills their heavenly doctrine. This is the banner which has never ceased to be the object of attack on the part of most powerful enemies, and yet, after all attacks, the only one which has never been wrested from the hands of its holder,—for she who bears it is the Spouse of Christ—the holy Catholic Church.”

We have given only portions of Leandro's lecture, but still enough of it to afford an idea of its scope. On its conclusion, a large number of his hearers, after testifying their approbation by loud clapping of hands and other demonstrations of approval, came forward to congratulate the speaker, and to thank him for the new and favorable light in which

he had placed a subject which had always been presented to them under a cloud of misrepresentation and reproach. The Judge was one of the first of these, and the heartiness with which he and others conveyed their acknowledgments, caused Leandro to feel indemnified for the violence he had done himself by coming forward as the public apologist of his Church and of its practices.

Whatever might in the end result from the favorable impressions in behalf of the truth which so many had admitted receiving, Leandro felt satisfied that those present would at least perhaps regard with a kinder feeling than heretofore, the religion to which so many of their fellow-Christians were attached; they might also begin even to respect that *Sign of the Cross* which the children of the Catholic Church cling to as the exterior badge of their fidelity to her.

Our readers may wish to know what was said by those who dissented from Leandro's views. No one appeared in the character of a fault-finder, except Hebert. His first intention in going to hear the lecture at all was really, if we may judge from a remark that he let drop, to take note of the statements made, in order to prepare a lecture of his own in opposition. The cordial reception, however, which Leandro's lecture met with, appeared to have discouraged the gentleman in this undertaking, if he did propose it, for he certainly was not heard from in that connection afterwards. That he was irritated at Leandro's success, may well be imagined. In

fact, he retired to his room immediately, not even waiting for the concert that was to follow. He remarked to one of his acquaintances, as he passed out: "This Spanish fanatic has *words* enough; if I had an equal chance to be heard on the other side, I should show what his *ideas* were worth."





XIX.

THE INTERIOR TRIAL.

TWO or three days had passed since the fire, during which Sibyl had profited by the repose and quiet of her retreat, surrendering* herself with quiet cheerfulness to the gentle influences by which she was surrounded, and hearkening with docility to the instructive conversation of the good Sisters. These signs of Sibyl's rectitude of purpose proved very encouraging to her new friends, and they anticipated no difficulty in preparing her for the important step she was day by day contemplating with increased eagerness,—her entrance into the Church by the gate of holy baptism.

Sister Sabina, however, could not repress a certain uneasiness of her own, which, perhaps, was suggested to her from a longer spiritual experience than the other Sisters had enjoyed, or, it may be from a spiritual penetration peculiar to herself. She had been impressed also, by the history of a former conversion with which she was familiar, wherein the subject, who had previously been addicted to the superstitious practices of Spiritism, had been greatly impeded in her religious progress by most

violent temptations of every kind. So greatly was this poor lady imperilled thereby, that she would, to all appearance, have fallen back into the abyss from which she had been snatched, but for the constant care of a zealous priest who made it a point to watch over her with the greatest solicitude, and, by a ready application of suitable remedies, to repel the attacks by which her perseverance was endangered. The Sister, therefore, though confident, from Sybil's wonderful rescue at the moment of their common physical peril, that she was under the special protection of God, did not fail to watch for symptoms of spiritual danger that might manifest themselves. Without betraying her thoughts to the other Sisters, she accordingly noticed every movement of Sibyl's, and every indication that her exterior action might give of the thoughts that were passing through her mind.

On the third day of Sibyl's arrival among them, Sister Sabina observed her to be at times rather abstracted, and to wear, at these moments, a troubled expression of countenance,—sometimes even to heave a deep sigh. These, thought she, were signals of danger; so, after the other Sisters had retired, and Sibyl herself was asleep, she occupied a chair in the corner of the apartment occupied by the latter, and leaning her head against the partition, rested as she best might. In this unusual position, it is not to be supposed that her rest was either very sound or very continuous, and Sibyl apparently not awakening at the break of day,

Sister Sabina at that hour retired to join the other Sisters in their ordinary morning devotions. When they had concluded, all except Sister Sabina and one of the German Sisters, Euphrasia, retired to the upper deck to enjoy the fresh morning air. The two Sisters left were conversing, when Sibyl entered from the adjoining apartment and bid them good-morning, to which both replied, Sister Euphrasia in German—Sibyl responding in the same language. Her manner was calm, but not characterized by her ordinary cheerfulness, as Sister Sabina at once observed. "And now, my child," said the latter, "how have you slept during the night?"

"Indeed," replied the other, "I did not once awaken."

"Thank God for that! And by-the-by, have you said your prayers?" "No!" "Then we will say them together,—shall we not?"

"Yes, whatever you tell me to do, I will do."

"Every good Christian,—and you, I hope, will soon be one,—says his prayers. In the morning, it is our first duty to thank Almighty God for the protection He has afforded us during the night, and to beg the continuance of the same throughout the day that has opened. Our last sacred duty at evening, is to thank Him again for the countless favors bestowed upon us in the interval. Weak as we are, and powerless to protect ourselves without the help of God, we need to recommend ourselves to His care,—and we may be sure that our prayers will not

be unheard. Let us fulfil the duty the present moment requires of us."

She accordingly led Sibyl by the hand into the room of the latter, and read the morning prayers contained in the little prayer book that had been devoted to Sibyl's use. When they had risen from their knees, Sister Sabina remarked: "Now that the soul has had her food, we must attend to the wants of the body. The Sisters will return, and bring us some breakfast before a great while."

"And are you not going out to take yours?" asked Sibyl.

"No, my child, I prefer to take it here with you. I have some questions to ask you. Tell me, is your mind quite at rest?"

"My mind?—at rest?" replied Sibyl, with an air of hesitation, while a troubled expression flitted over her features.

"Because," continued the Sister, "if anything disturbs you, I should be glad if you would give me your confidence, that I may understand and remedy your trouble."

"Suppose there should be no remedy?" asked Sibyl, gloomily.

"I will suppose nothing of the kind, let your difficulty be what it may, a real one or an imaginary one."

"Ah, it is a real, and no imaginary one," replied the other in a tone of distress. "What can you do?"

"Sibyl, I am only a woman, and not by privilege

the administrator of God's holy Sacraments, but, with His grace, I believe, nevertheless, that if you will open your heart to me, I shall find means to allay any trouble you may experience."

"No—no—no," replied the girl, covering her face with her hands, and rocking her body to and fro.

Sister Sabina saw that the moment of danger anticipated by her had arrived, and that the tempter was being enabled, through the persistent silence of Sibyl, to complete the crafty toils with which he was investing his victim. In the exercise of her charitable zeal, she therefore employed every means of persuasion to induce Sibyl to lay open her heart. But, as this zeal was prudent, no less than charitable, she forbore to press her when she found that the only effect of her solicitations was to heighten the agitation of the poor girl without rendering her any more communicative. Had the latter yielded to the invitation addressed to her, half the trouble would have vanished with the declaration of its nature, and all would shortly have been set right. Thus, Sibyl hugged her chains, and left no opportunity to her charitable friend to strike them off. And thus do all those act, who, under the influence of what may be sometimes a mere phantom, interpose an effectual barrier to all measures for their relief. It is certainly not prudent to reveal our secret carès indiscriminately,—but there are those whose prudence, virtue, and experience entitle them to this act of confidence on our part, and from

whom, in return, we may expect some lightening of the burthen to which we are unequal of ourselves. Above all, it is at the feet of the minister of God, that we may, while yielding obedience to holy laws which have been framed for the consolation and the cure of souls, expect that peace and light which are unattainable by means purely within the secular order. This result is one of the blessed fruits of the Sacrament of Penance, that wise, beneficent, and consoling institution, which is capable of lightening the deepest woes, and of healing the most inveterate wounds.

Sibyl could not be persuaded even to join the Sisters, who were now in the adjoining room, having returned from breakfast; Sister Sabina therefore brought in breakfast for both, and endeavored by cheerful conversation to change the current of her companion's thoughts. In this, she was only partially successful; after the meal was over, Sibyl still preferred remaining where she was, and alone, and said she would occupy her mind with a book. Whereupon, Sister Sabina removed the breakfast equipage, and rejoined her religious companions. After closing the intervening door, she said: "Ah! sisters, the critical moment for Sibyl has come;" and in answer to their enquiries, continued: "You may remember that before Sibyl was brought here, I expressed my fears that the enemy of souls would offer some resistance to her escape from him, since her occupation had made her an especial minister in his service—and you

know what happened soon afterwards. He has renewed his attack in another form, and is now, I fear, filling her mind with images of despair."

"Poor Cornelia!" remarked one: "Can that be so?"

"I have very little doubt of it; the signs are tolerably manifest. If we were as unwearying in doing good as the enemy is in contriving evil, what a different place the world would be, considering who is the Master of all who would help us!"

"We will pray with all our might, Sister, that God may bring her help in her necessities."

"Do so. The need of prayer may be most imminent. She has told us more than once, that although she was thrown unwillingly into the associations from which she has just escaped, she has much to reproach herself for, nevertheless, while those associations lasted. Who knows but that she may have made some compact with the evil spirit! Her repugnance to opening her heart makes me fear it."

"Yet, who but God has placed her in our hands, desiring that by our means she should take the first steps towards Him? I cannot believe, then, that He will let us fail," remarked Euphrasia.

"Nor does my faith waver as to the final result, but, since prayer is the key that God has placed in the hands of faith, to unlock all His treasures, let us pray, now, that this danger may pass like the first."

"So, the Sisters with one accord, went upon

their knees, and, after following the prayers recited by Sister Sabina, each devoted herself in silence to communion with God. One of the German Sisters performed in this private prayer an act of heroic virtue which deserves especial mention. She related afterwards to Sister Sabina, that, at that moment there flashed across her mind, she knew not why, the remembrance of a person whom she had attended, who died of a most painful and loathsome malady; and that although she never felt a greater horror of the recollection than she did at this very moment, there was coupled with it a sweet suggestion to offer herself, by a triumph of grace over nature, to endure the same malady, should God accept this sacrifice as the price of the favor implored for Sibyl. She embraced the inspiration and made the offering, but God doubtless accepted the good-will with which it was made, and exempted her from compliance with its terms, as we have never since heard of her suffering a diminution of any kind in her ordinary health. When they had completed their devotions, Sister Sabina suggested that Sibyl and herself had better be left together, and that the others should proceed to the cabin or deck. She requested them, should they meet with Henry or Leandro, to ask their prayers; and added, that when they returned, (which needed not be earlier than two or three hours,) she trusted that the clouds which obscured the mind of their guest would have been dissipated.

The confidence with which she spoke, the high

esteem they entertained of her virtue and discretion, and the entire trust they reposed in prayer, strengthened as it was in efficacy by the offering each one had made, made them feel a happy assurance that the words of Sister Sabina would prove prophetic. At her request, they locked the outer door, taking the key with them, she having a duplicate which could be used if needed. As soon as they departed, she resumed her prayers in behalf of poor Sibyl; loss of sleep, however, during the preceding night, left her unable to continue on her knees longer than half an hour and she was obliged to seat herself. No sooner had she done so than she fell sound asleep.

Meanwhile, Sibyl, after having vainly attempted to concentrate her mind on her book, had dropped it, and to ease her agitation, began to traverse her room to and fro with nervous and rapid footsteps. So violent became her anguish, that she would have put an end to her life on the spot, had there been means at hand to accomplish the deed. Full of this thought, she cautiously opened the door of the adjoining apartment, determined, if egress was attainable, to throw herself into the sea. Seeing no one there but Sister Sabina, sound asleep in her chair, she tried the outer door and found it locked. Returning to look for a key, she found a bunch of them and quietly tried every one, but without success. Then, she searched drawers and boxes for one that would fit, and still was unsuccessful. In this state of distraction, she went in and out between

one room and the other, her eyes glancing uneasily from the sleeping Sister to the door, and back again to the Sister, her body trembling and her hands nervously contracting. It was evident that the key was in one of Sister Sabina's pockets, and she felt impelled to search for it there, painful as it was to her to descend to such an act. Her agitation, however, was too great, and her hand trembled so violently that the Sister was awakened, and in a moment comprehended the state of the case.

"Sibyl!" exclaimed she, and the other, starting back, dropped into a chair, overcome with confusion. "Sibyl, can it be possible! And are you looking for the key of the door?"

"Oh! Sister, I could not help it," exclaimed she, "but let me go! let me go!"

Sister Sabina pausing a moment, and first raising her eyes to heaven, as if for light and direction, replied with calmness and sweetness,

"Yes, my child, I shall unlock the door shortly. Remain where you are," and taking the crucifix, which lay upon the table beside her, she arose with an air of majestic self-possession, and making the sign of the cross with it over Sibyl, uttered the words: "*This is the Sign of the Holy Cross; let the adversary flee away; for the Lion of the tribe of Judah shall conquer.*"

Sibyl closed her eyes, and a strange tremor shook her frame. She covered her face with her hands, and for a time there was a profound silence. Then,

Sister Sabina, taking the key from her pocket, and unlocking the door, said:

"Sibyl, you are no longer under constraint. Your way is free to you."

Without moving from her chair, the latter, heaving a deep sigh, replied: "Sister, there is a great change in my heart. I tremble at the thought I was nursing a moment ago. Oh! what would have become of me had it worked its fruits!"

"Then, my dear child, stay with us. God be praised! He has done for you what none other could have done. *I might* have helped you, perhaps, had you opened your heart to me, but your silence rendered me powerless, and so you have been left to struggle alone in this unequal battle, with only one shield between yourself and destruction—the boundless compassion of Christ crucified—but, thanks to the cross and to Him that died upon it, this shield has proved all-sufficient."

"Ah, how wicked I have been! Yes, and how wicked I *am*," exclaimed Sibyl, bursting into tears.

"Now, my dear," returned Sister Sabina, kindly, "you should learn from all this the danger of suffering the spirit of pride to influence you. I think I understand your case. As you began to know God better, and to comprehend something of His infinite holiness, the thought of your past life and of the many offences that stained it, grew upon your mind in colors of ever-increasing blackness; and you knew, as yet, too little of His infinite compassion and charity, to encourage you to cast your sins

with perfect confidence at the feet of His crucified Son, where you would have found consolation and courage. Hence, the pangs of conscience became unendurable, and your mind, in some measure, lost its balance. It was but one step more to seek to bury all in——”

“Why, Sister,” interrupted Sibyl, looking up with surprise, “you are describing my mind exactly! From what a fate you have snatched me! I need not open my heart to you, then, since you know everything already.”

“Then it was this and nothing worse; I feared that, besides, you were held by some unholy compact you might have made with the evil spirits you were accustomed to communicate with, in the practice of your late profession.”

“Oh, no! No!”

“Nevertheless, the necessity was imperative that while this temptation was gnawing your heart, you should reveal it, in order to obtain light and help. But here, pride asserted its claim, and rendered you dumb; and you resisted the invitation I tendered you, in all kindness, to reveal your trouble. Did you imagine, my child, that I was influenced in this effort by curiosity, or by any motive, in fact, that did not refer entirely to your good?”

“Indeed, Sister, I never for a moment doubted your charity and goodness. I was half inclined to tell you all, but shame prevented me, and moreover it seemed to me that my case was desperate beyond remedy. I can see now, that it was only a

monstrous pride that brought me to this pass, and I beg pardon of God and of you for suffering myself to be ruled by it."

It was now Sister Sabina's turn to brush away a tear from her own eyes, and she rejoined, "You need no forgiveness of mine, my child, or, if you do, I grant it most willingly ; but I cannot help thinking that this humble acknowledgment of yours must greatly endear you to the heart of our Lord. May He preserve you from ever again falling a victim to pride ! Pride is always at the bottom of a reserve of this kind, and leaves us alone with ourselves in our contests with our spiritual enemies. How little we can do, thus unassisted, against enemies so powerful, let your present experience make you fully aware of, and I trust the lesson will never need to be repeated."

"Never, I hope. If I should ever fear for myself I shall immediately have recourse to the blessed cross, and call upon Him who was crucified upon it, to save me."

"You can do nothing better. Indeed, the mere sign of the cross, devoutly made, may free you from the most troublesome temptations,—that sacred sign which has been, perhaps, the instrument of your deliverance on the present occasion. The apostles of old cast out devils in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and for us Catholics, Jesus still lives and reigns—blessed be His holy name ! Your enemy in this combat is doubtless one of the most powerful and malicious among those evil spirits who

have rendered you assistance in the unhappy profession you have been engaged in, and who is enraged at seeing you snatched from the grasp in which he felt assured he held you."

"It would not be strange if it were so, for although I have experienced attacks of despondency before, there was always a gleam of hope in my heart that led me to expect better days, and of this hope I was now utterly deprived."

"And your desolation seems entirely inexplicable to you?"

"It does indeed, for whatever hopes may have buoyed me up, before, they were as nothing compared to those I had *a right* to entertain now; cut off as I have just been from the evil associations that have been the bane of my life, and entrusted to the guardianship of religious women, of the faith I have always desired to embrace."

"You must know then, my child, that the hope which buoyed you up before was a special grace from God. As God's graces are *His own*, they are not at *our* beck and call, to be commanded by a simple act of our will. For some reason—perhaps in the punishment for the pride you suffered to reign in your heart—He withheld this support from you, and left you to yourself. You must learn from this that in the order of grace we are not 'sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God.' (II Corinthians, iii, 5.) Better all these lessons now at the beginning of your conversion, than later."

“I will endeavor, dear Sister, to lay these lessons all to heart, and to draw fruit from this severe trial.”

“I pray that you may, and that you will never lose sight of the advantage to be gained from these rough encounters with your first obstacles in the path of salvation. I see plainly that God has a special love for you, since, from what He has permitted to happen to you, first and last, He has allowed you thus early to understand how complete must be your dependence upon Him: how great are your weaknesses; and with what remedies they are to be met. From the assaults of pride you are to learn the necessity of simplicity and humility. In all spiritual dangers you are to learn the value of the cross as a means of deliverance. In physical perils, and amidst the snares set for you by the wicked, God wishes you to know that He alone can effectually protect or rescue you. Learn, finally, my dear Sibyl, that not otherwise than upon the ruins of pride can a Christian life be built up, and that no hand but God's can lift you above yourself, your weaknesses and your passions. Of yourself, you can do nothing. Be humble then, Sibyl, and all will be well. God will, in return, bestow upon you many blessings, less dearly bought than those which have been the fruit of your interior trial, but none the less precious.”

“Oh! may God grant it! Sister pray for me! Pray for me always.” In uttering these words, Sibyl knelt, and taking the hand of Sister Sabina, raised it to her lips with respectful tenderness. At

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this moment the other Sisters returned, and needed not many words of explanation to understand the happy change that, during their absence, had been wrought in Sibyl's heart. The calm joy that lighted up the countenance of Sister Sabina, the peaceful tears that flowed down the cheeks of Sibyl, more eloquent than words, inspired their hearts with new thanksgivings for the boundless mercies of God.





XX.

THE DANISH FAMILY.

ST. AUGUSTINE tells us that "God knows how to draw good from our misfortunes and sins." (Ep. 166, ad Hier.) Certainly, the order of Divine Providence is not in the least changed by the malice of men or of devils. The good, in fact, which God manages to draw from the malice of creatures is greater than the good which would have accrued had that malice not existed. This may suffice as an answer to the question: "Why does God permit moral evils in the world?" This doctrine could be illustrated by innumerable examples, but, not to go beyond our narrative,—let us remark that had Sibyl's mother not inhumanly surrendered her to the spiritist, but had, on the contrary, kept her at home, permitted her to be baptized, and attached her to herself and her infidel husband by kindness, there is every reason to fear that Sibyl's natural pride and ambition would have had full sway, and that the danger of her losing her faith would have been very great. Again, the humiliations incident to her connection with the spiritist's party, and finally, the insults of Milly, forced her to

take that step which separated her from her corrupt companions, withdrew her from their disreputable manner of life, and cast her lot among the saintly persons by whom she was doubly saved. Henry's light and unsatisfactory conduct abroad furnished occasion to his friend, Dr. Spencer, to provide Leandro as a traveling companion for him, with the subsequent beneficial results to Henry, of which we have already seen something and shall see more.

Leandro's journey has now been the occasion of the defeat of the unhallowed schemes of the spiritists, while it has, on the other hand, enabled him to uphold, in the presence of those who were heretofore strangers to his faith, the power and dignity of the Holy Cross, and its claim, as a symbol, to the respect and veneration of Christians. Nay more, as incidental to this, the seed of divine faith has no doubt been planted in the breasts of many who heard his energetic and conclusive apology for the Cross and the Sign of the Cross, topics which recent events had made so conspicuous. We know, indeed, that among those who listened to him, one family at least, has already profited by the occasion.

George Klinkow, a Dane, with his wife, Emma, their three young children, and his sister-in-law, Sophia Stroem, a girl in her seventeenth year, composed this family. They had been brought up in Lutheranism, and had never known any other religion, but were simple-hearted, excellent people, strictly moral, and greatly attached to each other; keeping, consequently, greatly retired within their

own circle. George had been among the crowd assembled around the spiritist at the time when, as related in the earlier part of this narrative, Leandro, passing at the moment, was the occasion of the Scotchman's directing towards him that bitter scowl noticed by all present ; and George heard the latter afterwards say that the presence of "that papist" would be likely to disturb his operations. This seemed to the honest-minded Dane a singular remark, and he bethought him of asking Sophia,—who, being a girl of much talent and maturity of mind, was generally referred to in cases of doubt,—what might be the explanation of it. Sophia, after reflecting a moment, replied that she thought the spiritist must be an imposter, for, said she, "If the spirits are good spirits, they would not fear Catholics or any other persons ; and if they are bad spirits, why should they fear Catholics any more than they fear ourselves, for instance,—unless we suppose Catholics to be better than we are?"

"Yet the spiritist," remarked George, "is not afraid of any but Catholics ; so he told us when that young man had passed by,—and he seemed to be so vexed that he could hardly get the words out."

"Well, it is odd," replied Sophia, "but I do not know what other explanation to give. Emma, what do you think of it?" addressing her sister, who was present.

"I should like to know more about this spiritist—who he is, and what he is, and on what grounds he claims to have credit given him," responded Emma.

“Well, I can only say,” continued her husband, “that there are no less than five persons on board who declare that they have been present at this man’s exhibitions in different towns in Germany—which he has travelled all through—and that there is no doubt in their minds, from what they have seen, that he really has communications with spirits. Besides, one of the party travelling with him tells me that on two occasions in the city of Munich his exhibitions failed, and that on one of these occasions there was no means of accounting for it except by the fact that a Catholic priest was in the assembly. On the other occasion, it was ascertained that a Catholic lady, whom her Protestant husband had obliged to accompany him there, had brought with her a rosary, on which she kept repeating her prayers all the time.”

George’s hearers seemed amazed at this statement, and Sophia presently remarked: “If Catholic prayers can restrain the operations of spirits,—and they must be evil spirits, or no prayers of any kind would have this effect,—then I shall have to entertain a different idea of Catholics from any I have ever had before.”

“Moreover,” added George, “it is common talk among the passengers that two priests were refused passage on board this vessel on account of this man.”

Mrs. Klinkow, fair-minded though she was, could not help feeling somewhat disturbed at these revelations. If all these things were true, it seemed plain

enough that the traditions in regard to Catholics and their religion, which passed current among Lutherans for truth, must needs be discredited. What then? This strong buttress failing it, where might not Lutheran orthodoxy itself be found, in presence of this strange "crucial test"? Nor must we allege bigotry as the source of this train of thought: this good woman, her family, friends and neighbors, had accepted Lutheranism as religious truth, and were ignorant of any other religion that could dispute its claims: and life-long prepossessions, especially on the subject of religion, are seldom disturbed without a shock. She, therefore, deprecatingly replied to Sophia: "It is true that we have not really much knowledge of what Catholics are; but it would be rather hasty to conclude that they have any advantages over us in religion. And even admitting that this man does communicate with spirits of another world, is it so very certain that they must be wicked spirits?"

"As to that," returned Sophia, who was more intrepid in her conclusions than her sister, "I feel satisfied that God would permit no man on earth to restrain the operations of spirits unless these spirits were, themselves, opposed to God. Could God grant this power against spirits that were ministers of *his*? and does not the Holy Bible tell us that the good spirits *are* ministers of God? Now, if Catholics alone can prevent the operations of the spirits, it seems to me that it can only be because

they are better friends of God than other Christians."

A shade of anxiety crossed the features of Emma at this reply; she doubtless saw that if Sophia should, with her usual candor and straightforwardness, follow up the conclusions she seemed entering upon, they might become divided in religion; and her affection for her sister could not but suggest a pang to her heart when she thought of this possible issue. However, Sophia's argument could not well be gainsayed, and as George himself only looked puzzled, and scratched his ear, Emma remarked: "My dear, I think we had better try and have a positive knowledge of all the facts in the case, and until we acquire it, not discuss conclusions."

Sophia, therefore, dropped the subject, not wishing to wound her sister's susceptibilities—and awaited further developments. It was not long before they were startled with the report of Sibyl's suicide; and, after the terrible fright of the fire—at hearing of the surprising events that attended the secret effort of the spiritists to practise their unlawful arts. These events gave rise, of course, to no little comment in the family circle of the Klinkows, but without any decidedly obvious result, except that the impression already made upon Sophia's mind, seemed deepened. She saw, in the supposed fate of Sibyl, an evidence of the nefarious results of Spiritism, and she judged its character and that of its professors, accordingly: on the other hand, the

discomfiture of the latter through the means employed by Leandro, invested his religion and its powers with new claims to her attention. She resolved, therefore, not to stop at this point, but to make enquiries into the nature of Catholicism and its doctrines. The announcement of the forthcoming lecture by Leandro appeared to afford her the opportunity she coveted, at least upon one point, and she joyfully availed herself of the occasion to be present, playfully insisting on her sister's attending also with George; Emma wishing to allege, as a pretext for staying away, her imperfect knowledge of English. "Oh! no matter," said Sophia, "I know English enough for both of us. I shall not let you lose any part of the lecture, if I can help it. And if you stay away, you will miss the whole."

The lecture made considerable impression on the mind of Emma—more, in fact, than she was willing, at the moment, to acknowledge. Her husband did not hesitate to express his pleasure and satisfaction, but Sophia was delighted. In the pauses of the lecture, she would press her sister's hand, and whisper to her, "Oh! Emma, how mistaken we have been all our lives about the Catholics!" When it was over, they all joined heartily in the applause given to the speaker, and each compared notes with the other in regard to the impression produced on them severally—though this was confined rather to the manner than the matter of the speaker, for Emma, probably to escape any utterance on the latter point, opened the conversation by extolling

his modesty of demeanor and the unflinching boldness with which he declared his religious convictions. Her husband was struck with the same traits, and admired the earnestness and the tone of conviction with which he enforced his arguments. Sophia was surprised at the learning brought to bear on the subject, and at the clearness and force with which the deductions of the lecturer were drawn, so unlike what she had been prepared for, from all she had heard of "Popish ignorance and fanaticism."

In fact, for this worthy family, the lecture was an event which marked a long step in advance of their heretofore contracted ideas, and if more was not said among themselves of the religious impressions created by it, it was because each preferred to reflect in secret on the new light vouchsafed. Sophia, however, could not rest satisfied without hearing further on a subject which presented to her mind attractions so unexpected, and she desired that her brother-in-law should invite Leandro to visit the family. George, being naturally very bashful, and further embarrassed by the nature of the request, delayed compliance for two or three days, although he faithfully promised every morning to make the request that very day. At last, one afternoon when they were all on deck enjoying the fine weather, Sophia, pointing out Leandro walking and conversing with Judge Harper, urged her brother not to lose more time in extending the invitation, or the short period intervening before

they would reach land would deprive them altogether of the pleasure of an interview. George, seeing no help for it, was about taking courage to go forward and address Leandro, when he was restrained by the reflection that it might be uncivil in him to obtrude himself while Leandro was engaged with a friend. He resorted therefore to the expedient of writing a request in French, on a slip of paper: "Will Mr. Lopez be kind enough to let me know by bearer when I may have an opportunity of seeing him? G. Klinkow." "Now," said he to Hilda, his eldest child, a little flaxen haired creature of seven summers, "do you see those two gentlemen walking there, my darling?" "Yes, papa." "Well, take this paper to the gentleman who is nearest to us, and wait to hear what he says." "Yes, papa," and away ran the child; but on arriving near the gentlemen, she apparently forgot her directions, for she stopped short and began to look first at one and then at the other with her large blue eyes. The Judge observing her, and taking her to be a German child, addressed her in that language: "Kleines Mädchen, wen suchen sie?" Little Hilda made no reply, but only held up the note, which the Judge took from her hand: after which she ran back to her father, without waiting for an answer.

"'Mr. Lopez,' why, this is for *you*," said the Judge, handing the note to his companion.

"Surely," replied Leandro, glancing at the contents, "and who is 'G. Klinkow?' He wishes an

opportunity of speaking with me, and sends the request by note, as if I were as high and mighty as a Spanish grandee."

"I suppose the little girl who brought the note was to return with your answer."

"And what has become of the child? How am I to find the sender?"

"I see the little thing yonder; those are her parents she is with, I presume. They look like Germans, and are no doubt good honest people in middle life, who would really take it as a favor to have some conversation with you. The note must have come from them."

"That is a class of persons I never slight, for they are generally in earnest, and do not consider the passing of compliments as their first duty, as their betters in rank do. But this note is in French—yet not in a French hand—can they be Alsatians?"

"That we can easily discover; if they speak French, at least, we can get along; and if German is their language, I offer my services as interpreter."

"Thank you, Judge; let us go that way at once."

They accordingly advanced towards the spot where the family were seated, who, on their approach rose respectfully, while Klinkow, overcoming his bashfulness, stepped forward to greet his visitors. "Sir, I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken," said he, addressing Leandro in French, "but after hearing your lecture, which gave us so much satisfaction, we could not be content until we had had some conversation with you about—about

—well, about religious matters. This is my wife, sir, and this is her sister, and she was more anxious than any of us to see you.”

“Indeed! well, this is my friend, Judge Harper. He is an American. And you—you are——?”

“I am a Dane, sir; we are all from Copenhagen. Gentlemen, will you be seated?”

“And this is your little messenger,” remarked the Judge, after all had taken their seats. “I think she forgot part of her message—eh?” And the Judge playfully pinched Hilda’s cheek, who ran and covered her head with her mother’s apron, and then laughingly peeped over it at him.

“Yes, this is our little Hilda,” replied the mother, “and she is not good for much, only good to keep bread from spoiling,” saying this in Danish to the child, who hugged her and hid her face in her dress.

“Hilda does not understand anything but Danish,” remarked Sophia, “but we all speak French—the grown ones, at least. In our trade in Copenhagen, it was commonly spoken.”

“But my lecture was not in French,” observed Leandro, “and how could you understand it?”

“Well, we know some English, too,” replied George.

“Then I must have succeeded in my own English better than I thought,” returned Leandro, smiling, “if I could be understood even by those to whom it was a foreign language.”

“I believe we did not lose much of it,” said

Sophia, "and at any rate what we understood has given us a desire to hear more from you."

"I hope you don't want another lecture," said Leandro.

"Oh no! not that," they all exclaimed, laughing.

"Is there any special point on which you wish for information? If so, I am at your service. Then, you are not Catholics, I suppose."

"We are not," replied George, "but we are willing to know the truth, wherever it may be found. It never fell in our way to hear more than one side, and in such circumstances one might easily miss learning truths that it is important to be acquainted with. We have reason to suppose that there are some such in your religion, and——"

Here the Judge broke in: "Yes,—I can tell you that any religious truths that are not embraced in the religion of Señor Lopez,—the Catholic religion,—are not worth knowing."

"And is it *your* religion, too?" inquired Sophia, innocently.

"Oh! don't mind my friend, the Judge," said Leandro, gaily, "he is like the sign-post which points the way to others, but never goes itself."

The Judge laughed heartily, and the others smiled,—a little gravely perhaps,—while Sophia ingenuously asked: "How can that be?" which made Leandro and the Judge both laugh, the former replying: "I am afraid that question is more than he can answer."

"I retire from the discussion," said the Judge,

smiling and waving his hand deprecatingly, "and leave the floor to my friend."

"Sophia," said George, turning to her, "you know what to say to Mr. Lopez better than I do. Tell him what you wish to know."

Sophia accordingly suggested a number of points in regard to which she wished information, which Leandro supplied to her entire satisfaction. George occasionally threw in an enquiry, and appeared content with the answers he received. His wife, however, said but little, and seemed rather ill at ease. Sophia, perceiving this, availed herself of an occasion, when Leandro was making an explanation to George in regard to some point on which the latter had questioned him, and turning to her sister, said in Danish: "And you, Emma, why are you so reserved? This gentleman is kind enough to listen to all we have to say, and to explain everything to the best of his ability; have you no questions to ask? or are you really not interested in the subject?"

"Sophia," returned her sister, "I want to know what all this is going to lead to."

"My dear sister, I can answer for myself. If the expectations I now begin to entertain are fulfilled, I shall probably find the Catholic religion to be the true one. Certainly there are in it, even from the little I have heard, means of good and helps to good which I never dreamed of as being a part of any religion on earth. If I find that all holds together in reason, and if I become perfectly convinced of its

claims on my obedience, I know very well that this is God's claim, and I dare not resist it. I shall then certainly become a Catholic."

"And do you suppose that others can so easily throw off the ideas of a life-time and adopt new ones,—just as we would substitute a new dress for the one of last year?"

"I do not suppose that *I* should do anything that surpassed what others might do in the like circumstances. •As to the dress, although it is a mere exterior affair, while religion is a matter of the soul,—and a change of dress is a human action that requires no motive but convenience, and only ordinary help, if any; whilst the adoption of God's truth must be inspired by Him for His glory and our good, and we shall be assisted in it by His help,—still, I will use your figure, and say: If last year's dress is not adapted to our present necessities, and we can no longer get along in it, we ought to cast it aside without hesitation; and in the same manner, if our old ideas prove out of place and impracticable, we ought to reject them and accept those that appeal to our present convictions,—highest convictions. Because a dress is old or an idea is old, I should not be attached to it on that account alone, and put myself in a condition of constraint and embarrassment for its sake. This is a state of slavery: it is not the liberty of the sons of God."

"How can you reflect in that way, Sophia, upon the religion of our parents, our relations, and our country?"

“I believe that God made one religion for the whole world, and not different religions for different countries. I love Denmark, but God is the author of religion; and, besides, I see now plainly that Lutheranism has no right to the claim of being the old religion of our country, for it is not. I love my relations: I also respect the memory of my parents, and I believe they did the best they could with the religion they had; but if there is a religion which was established before they were born, which remains after they have departed, and which we find to be the true one—though they were ignorant of it through no fault of their own—I can see no weight in their example in religious matters, except so far as they did what they thought was good and right for everybody to do. In this respect, I shall always try to remember the good they taught me, whatever may be my religion.”

“Well, what then?”

“Why, I shall continue the inquiries I have begun, and if I can no longer satisfy myself with Lutheranism, I shall certainly put it off, and take in its place the religion that *does* satisfy me, by whatever name it may be called. If it is the *truth*, that is enough for me. I think I shall only be doing what is right, and shall expect God to help me, because I propose what is purely right.”

“I hope, my dear, that you do not intend to do anything hastily.”

“Indeed, Emma, I shall do nothing that I am not solidly satisfied is right; in other words, I shall do

nothing at the present time that is not done for eternity ; but as soon as I know what my duty is, I shall not delay in performing it, for I think God would be displeased if I did. Because a man may happen to have been born blind, is that any reason why he should refuse to see, when his blindness could be removed? And would it be reasonable in him to allege further that he ought to remain blind because his parents and relatives and countrymen were born blind? On the contrary, he ought to be glad to obtain his sight, that he might help them and benefit himself."

"And would you leave me?" said Emma, with tears in her eyes.

"Leave you, my dear sister? What should put such an idea in your head? God made us sisters, and I am sure I should never cease to love you, whatever might be your religion or mine. I am certain God would never forbid me to love you, or even to love you any less than I do now, unless, indeed, I love you too much already," and Sophia pressed her sister's hand affectionately.

"Well, Sophia," returned Emma, brightening up, "I shall never ask you to go against your conscience for my sake, for that would be to expect from you an unreasonable love, and God would not bless it, or me."

"Well said, my dear Emma; but after all, why should there be any difference in our way of thinking on this point. Truth is truth, and there cannot

be one truth for me and another for you. Do you think there can?"

"No, indeed. Truth is truth all the world over, if it be God's truth."

"I shall follow no other truth than God's truth, you may be sure. If George sees things in the same light, he will do as I do, and why should you alone remain behind?"

"I have no wish to, if I can accept the same conclusions that each of you may consider sufficient to justify you in taking that step."

"I do not see why you may not; but, while I do not intend to do anything rash, and George is too prudent a man to do so either, I do not wish you to follow our example from any motive except your own personal conviction that the course we take is the proper one for you to take also. Now, will you agree to take part in our enquiries, and to share in the information we gather?"

"Certainly. I hope we shall be united in this as in everything else, and if any advantage is to be gained, that we shall all enjoy it together. But on a question so important as that of accepting a religion, it is necessary that matters should be sifted to the bottom, and, depend upon it, I shall adopt nothing without proof."

"Nor I. But Mr. Lopez has finished his explanation, and I have something more to say to him,—Mr. Lopez," resumed Sophia, in French, "there is a great deal to be learned on this question, especially

for those who have heretofore been such entire strangers to the Catholic religion."

"Undoubtedly, and you would not be justified in giving up your present religion and adopting another—even the Catholic religion, infallibly true as I hold it to be—unless you are clearly convinced that the religion you adopt is the only true one. That once ascertained beyond question, of course your duty is plain."

"That is precisely to the point. My sister, here, says that this is a question that ought to be sifted to the bottom, and that for one she is not going to take anything without proof. You have satisfied us—at least you have satisfied me—upon the points we have asked you about, but many others are likely to arise, some of which I half anticipate already. But our voyage will soon come to an end; we cannot expect to see much more of you, or even to take up a great deal of your intervening time."

"There is no necessity to depend upon my humble assistance. The Sisters whom you may have noticed on board will be most happy to converse with you at length, and to tell you what books to procure, on your arrival in New York, that will help you in your investigations. They will be the best judges, if you accept their services meanwhile,—though I by no means withhold my own, also,—of what you need, and they will know, or can easily know the titles of Catholic books of instruction or controversy that are to be had. In a

missionary country like the United States, I presume there is no lack of such publications."

"They are as thick as the leaves of Vallombroso," remarked the Judge.

"That is abundance enough, in all conscience," returned Leandro, and, addressing the Danish family: "Would you be willing that I should speak to the Sisters about the matter?"

"Nothing would please us better," rejoined Sophia. "Is it not so, George, and you, Emma?"

George looked to Emma, who replied: "Certainly, if those ladies are willing."

"That I can answer for, almost without asking them, but I shall make it a point to see them, nevertheless, and let you know before evening sets in. You will find, I hope, that our Church is that 'city set on a hill,' which no one can fail to discover, who is at all earnest in looking for it. But, as God's grace alone can conduct you into it, you ought in your prayers to ask His assistance, that you may not fail by the way. God bless you! *Au revoir.*"





XXI.

THE LANDING.

ANY requests were made that Leandro would give another lecture, but, some rough weather shortly intervening, he was dispensed from the necessity of giving even a reply to the invitation, being too sea-sick to think of the undertaking. Averse as he was to appearing in public, though not unwilling to gratify any reasonable request for information, he regarded his sea-sickness as a god-send which put another lecture out of the question.

He was, however, the recipient of numerous kindnesses on the part of the passengers, such as presents of grapes, oranges, &c., invitations to visit them at their homes, on arrival, and even requests to spend some days with them. It had been arranged, however, that Mr. Charles Stamford, Henry's uncle, was to be for the present Leandro's host also, and while thankful for the attentions offered him, the latter was obliged to defer any definite reply, awaiting the good pleasure of Henry and his uncle.

As our narrative now draws near its close, we must bring together its scattered threads. The spiritist, whose mysterious incantations had been interrupted by the equally mysterious catastrophe referred to in chapter XVII, remained until the termination of the voyage in the condition of insensibility in which he had been found. At least, the improvement manifest was but slight ; he occasionally opened his eyes with a vacant stare, but gave no sign at any time of active intelligence. Mentally and physically, he appeared to have met with a shock beyond remedy. Stellman had been removed to his former room, and was progressing more favorably.

Thus stood matters with these two men, when, towards the distant West, the blue outline of the shore, slowly rising to sight, indicated the proximate termination of our steamer's eventful voyage. By degrees the sea became smoother, and the passengers ascended to the deck to note the glad signs that announced their approach to the habitations of men. They were shortly boarded by a pilot, and as they advanced, many another white sail was encountered, gliding over the dancing waters ; or a busy steamer ploughed its way, leaving a foamy track far behind. Then the outlines of the shore arose with more distinct and impressive beauty, and, one by one, the spires of the great commercial metropolis of America revealed themselves. The Sisters, after thanking God that the perils of their journey were over, also went to enjoy for awhile

with the others, the beauties of the panorama now opening before them. The greater part of the passengers, however, soon descended to make their preparations for landing, and were speedily immersed in the engrossing occupation of packing up.

Stellman, as we have just said, was in an improving condition. His first thought, on recovering his benumbed faculties, had been, after a hasty retrospect of dismay, to consider the perils of his position. What, if the captain, indignant at the renewal of spiritistic operations, and Judge Harper, who was in possession of such damnatory knowledge of his past career, should denounce him to the police, on landing—and he should be transported to the scene of his former crimes to undergo the expiation demanded by the law which had been so long cheated of its victim! The thought was death! He determined, therefore, to feign continued insensibility, that he might thus be left to watch his chances for escape.

Besides the surgeon, and the attendant deputed to nurse him, none visited him except Hebert. Feeling confident that the latter would never betray him, he availed himself of an occasion when the attendant had gone out and had left Hebert alone with him, to throw off all disguise, and enter into conversation. Hebert was naturally enough filled with curiosity to learn the particulars of what had transpired on the memorable evening when the operations of the two spiritists had been brought to so untimely an end. On this subject, however, not

a word could be extracted from the discomfited operator, who forbade a further reference to it. All he wanted, he said, was life and liberty. Others might play the horn-pipe for the devil to dance by, and they were welcome to all the good it might do them ; for his part, he was done with the business. But the world owed him a living, and he was bound to have it, in some form or other. He should go free in it, too, or it would not be the world for him to live in—and here he tapped ominously on the little box of poison he always carried about him :—moreover, no man should rob him of his right to live and to be free ; and he that should lay violent hands on him, to effect this, should not attempt it and live. He was too feeble, he continued, to determine upon any plans at present, but he desired his friend meanwhile to take an opportunity, whenever he could do so without observation, of removing to his own trunks such articles as he pointed out. In regard to the Scotchman's condition, Stellman received in silence the information given him by Hebert.

By connivance with one another, similar interviews were frequently held by the two friends, and it was no slight satisfaction to Stellman to be able at such times to relieve himself of the constraint of acting a part. At last, hearing that they were in sight of land, he requested Hebert for an address by which a letter would reach him, saying that he should hear from him, and that meanwhile he had formed plans which he thought it best not to com-

promise any one by imparting. He bid Hebert farewell for the present, requested him to tell the attendant that he (Stellman) was sleeping more healthily, and had better not be disturbed, and to make a pretext of keeping the attendant employed in helping to pack his trunks, or otherwise, as long as possible. As soon as Stellman found himself alone, he selected out of his trunk a disguise, one of those without which he never travelled. By means of his other clothing, he fixed up a figure in the bed to represent himself, and then, with a long staff in one hand, and a rusty travelling bag in the other, which held all indispensable clothing, he made his way out of his room and into the steerage. All over the boat, people were running to and fro, each one engaged in his own affairs, and full of preparation for landing, so that our skillful rogue was not noticed. In the steerage, he ensconced himself in the back ground so as to attract no attention. He was thus enabled to pass out when the steerage passengers did, and was no sooner on land than he hastened to put as great a distance as possible between himself and danger.

Whether Judge Harper and the captain intended to carry out the design attributed to them by Stellman, or whether it were even practicable to do so, we do not know,—but certain it is that when the attendant, alarmed at the protracted sleep and noiseless breathing of Stellman, undertook to wake him up, and found only a large doll in his place,—the individual it represented being already on his way

to the far West,—the circumstance would have been sufficient of itself to confirm their intention: but Stellman, in his escape, had left no clue by which his course could be followed, even if it were desired. Doubtless, Hebert afterwards heard from him, and transmitted to his new *alias* the articles of which he had taken charge: but we have never since heard of either of this pair. The Scotch spiritist was carried on shore in a litter, lingered a few days in a hospital, then “died and made no sign,” and his unblessed remains were deposited in an unhonored grave.

As to the Danish family, both the Sisters and Leandro availed themselves of the excellent disposition manifest among them to see them often and converse on the truths of religion: thus, the interval that elapsed between their first interview with Leandro and the termination of the voyage, though only of three days, sufficed to ground them in the principal tenets of the Catholic faith. Even Mrs. Klinkow finally displayed an interest in the subject as hearty as the rest. As the family was, on landing, to proceed immediately to Minnesota, no opportunity was afforded to prepare them thoroughly for their reception in the Church, but they were provided by Sister Sabina with a letter to the priest residing in the county to which they were destined, through whose good offices the work might be completed. They also procured in New York such catechetical works as the Sisters recommended. On calling at Sister Sabina's convent, they learned to

their great joy that two of her companions were to go West, and would accompany them the greater part of their journey. The day after their arrival in the city, therefore, they all set forth together, each party equally pleased to have the company of the other, and the good Danes eager to complete their union with that household of faith of which they were already members in spirit.

Sibyl, whom we shall henceforward call by her true name of *Cornelia*, experienced during the remainder of the voyage no further trial of her fortitude. The interval passed swiftly with her, so laden was each day with consolations and so blessed by the acquisition of new light in the path upon which she had set her feet. Her mind, no longer oppressed by the grossness which necessarily formed a part of the daily life around her in her former sphere as medium, rose to the full measure of its native capacities, and expanded as flowers do in the generous sunshine. She quickly comprehended the truths set before her, followed them promptly to their next consequence, and drew fervor, strength, and encouragement from all.

The departure of Milly and the catastrophe to the spiritists had left *Cornelia* free from all danger of molestation on the part of her late companions, and she might therefore have again appeared among the passengers, to announce by her personal presence, the fact of her being alive; but regret for her past course, and a sense of shame from having been known to all as the associate of characters whose

vileness none measured so well as herself, precluded her from wishing to mingle with the other passengers. Moreover, the seclusion she now enjoyed possessed for her a charm she was unwilling to dissipate, (so true is it that the love of solitude is the genuine growth of a devout spirit,) and her time was furthermore so usefully employed in the study of religious truth and in practices of devotion, that she felt indisposed to surrender it to exterior distractions. Still, it was but just that the impression prevailing, of her death, and a death so tragic in its circumstances, should be removed; she therefore permitted the captain and her other friends to let the truth be known. She also consented to make her appearance at table, after the news of her safety had been generally circulated.

At Cornelia's request, one of the Sisters wrote to her cousin, the nun in their German house they had just quitted, informing her of the circumstances under which they had met with Cornelia, of her sojourn with them, and of her determination to enter the Church without delay,—adding that no further uneasiness need be entertained in regard to her; that she would remain, by her own choice and by their desire, an inmate of their house until her future movements should be decided upon, or at least until she should hear from home; and that she desired all information in regard to herself to be kept for the present from the knowledge of her mother and step-father. This letter was despatched as soon as our steamer arrived at New York.

When Mr. Stamford had learned by letter from Henry in Paris, that he was about to take passage on the very steamer in which he (Mr. S.) had arranged for Sister Sabina to come over, he was no little surprised at the coincidence, since it was evident that neither knew of the other's movements. He trusted, principally for his nephew's sake, that Henry and his aunt might have met each other on board, although it was quite possible that they might not. It was with no small satisfaction, therefore, that on boarding the steamer when she arrived, he found Henry sitting with his aunt, waiting to greet him. Mr. Stamford had provided a carriage for the Sisters, and brought his own for Henry and Leandro. Cornelia making a fifth in the Sisters' party, Mr. Stamford insisted on taking Sister Sabina in his own carriage to equalize the parties.

Then farewells were exchanged, the Sisters thanking Judge Harper and Filippi for their courtesy and kindness, promising to pray for each, as Sister Sabina remarked, "according to his needs," which remark the Judge considered to have special reference to himself, since they doubtless thought his needs the greatest, and he hoped, therefore, (he said,) without wishing to rob his friend Filippi of what was needful for him also, to get the principal share of their prayers. To this Sister Sabina replied, that she thought he would; which raised another laugh, and so they pleasantly parted. The remainder of the party expected to meet the Sisters as well as each other. They were about ascending

to the deck when the good captain came posting along in great haste, resolving, he said, to let his officers manage the boat in their own way, rather than fail to pay the last attentions in his power to the ladies. He therefore conducted them, not only to the gang-way, but went ashore and handed them into their carriages, amidst many thanks and blessings from the Sisters for this and all the other favors with which he had distinguished them. The captain averred that they had received no more attention from him than in his mind they were entitled to, the world over, and that he thought their presence in his boat had hindered misfortunes and brought a blessing, and he only regretted he had not Sisters oftener among his passengers. He thought that a vessel at sea was often as much a hospital as those hospitals on shore, to attend which orders of Sisters were founded ; and that out of so many orders for the land, he thought one at least ought to be appropriated for sea-service. Sister Sabina replied with a smile.

Cornelia was soon housed with her friends. By instinct, quite as much as from the example of her companions, she made it her first care to repair to the chapel of the convent, there to worship her Lord, invisible, but, as she felt in her inmost soul, truly present ; to offer the tribute of her joy and thanksgiving ; to prostrate herself in spirit and in the humblest sentiments of a penitent, and to implore the favors and assistance she still stood in need of from her Heavenly Father. By her own

request, Cornelia was assigned such duties in the house as could be fulfilled by one not a member of the community, and she applied herself with as much zeal to menial labors as to any others that might be assigned her. Meanwhile, she continued to receive instructions, and was in a short time judged fit for baptism. Finally, this grace was conferred upon her, the ceremony taking place in the community chapel in the presence of only a few friends invited by the Sisters, and the Sisters themselves. It may be imagined what a day of joy this was, especially to the poor girl, who found herself at last sheltered in the arms of her Redeemer, safe, in the love and strength she found there, from the grosser perils of the world. Leandro and Henry were also present, under circumstances which will be related in the next chapter.

She was already a Christian, and had indeed made her first communion and been confirmed, when a reply was received to the letter written to her cousin in Germany. It expressed the joy with which the news concerning Cornelia had filled the hearts of the writer and of all her religious sisters, and was full of humble thanksgiving to God, that she, for whom they had prayed so long and so fervently, had been the recipient, by a providence so singular, of such crowning favors. The letter further stated that Cornelia's Catholic relatives, living in a town not far distant from the German convent, had been written to, and that she might expect to hear from them very shortly. In another

week this letter also came, with an earnest demand from Cornelia's relatives for the pleasure of seeing and embracing her that was so long lost, and was now doubly found. To ensure this, the means were enclosed for the expenses of her journey thither. This letter also stated that the Catholic portion of the family no longer lived in the same town with Cornelia's parents, and that the latter should be informed of nothing in regard to her, until she should decide, after her arrival in Germany, what to do about going to see them.

No obstacle, therefore, existed to Cornelia's enjoying the happiness of revisiting the scenes of her youth, and of mingling freely with those relatives from whose society she had formerly been so much debarred by the bigotry of her parents. Now *their* religion was *hers*, and—thank God!—no one, not even her parents, could deprive her of its consolations. Sister Sabina recommended her to accept the invitation, and she accordingly wrote to say that she should shortly set out upon the journey. She herself would have deferred her departure, owing to her attachment to the Sisters, an attachment which she interpreted as possibly a call to join their order. Sister Sabina saw the obstacle, and having no reason to believe that Cornelia had any real vocation, said to her: "My child, pray God for light to know His will, but now put no delay to your departure." Cornelia accordingly made her preparations for it. Her regret at leaving her friends, those faithful instruments in the hands of God for bestowing upon

her the blessings both spiritual and temporal she now enjoyed, was somewhat mitigated by the fact that Sister Sabina herself and her only other remaining companion on the voyage, had received directions to repair very shortly to the house in the West whither the other two Sisters had preceded them. Cornelia, in bidding them farewell, said that she could not help believing that their mutual separation was only temporary, and that if Divine Providence did not invite her to become a permanent member of their household, it would at least afford her the opportunity of dwelling near them, and of sometimes seeing the best friends she had upon earth.

On her arrival in Germany, Cornelia was welcomed by her friends and relatives with every demonstration of kindness, each contending with the other for the pleasure of retaining her as a guest. But about her visit to Germany, which lasted only a few months, it is enough for us to say that during the interval, following the advice of her relatives and of her confessor, she consented to marry a worthy youth with whom she came back to be a permanent resident of the United States, and was so fortunate as to be settled quite near the Sisters. Before her marriage, however, she wrote the following letter to her mother, to whom, for reasons of prudence, and in accordance with advice received, she had not as yet announced the fact of her presence in Germany.

“MY DEAR MOTHER:

“I hope that the memory of your long lost daughter, of your Cornelia, still has a place in your heart. If I could suppose that it had not, this letter, I should say, comes to revive it,—to assure you that Cornelia still lives, and has not ceased to think of you, and that she is at this moment not far from you. May she hope that this information, therefore, will bring gladness to your heart, and be the occasion of her receiving from you some token of maternal affection?

“Mother, I abstain from judging your motives in placing me, still a child, in the hands of that unprincipled man from whom I have since experienced so much baseness: a man who was a stranger to you, and yet for whom I was torn from my home and friends. Mother, the recollection of that dreadful evening when you and I were parted, and forever, as it often since seemed to me,—makes me shudder. Still, I have never ceased to love you and to wish you well, believing in my heart that you were misled by evil advisers, and that you acted under momentary influences to which you must have since regretted yielding,—influences which are unfitting for any to be subject to, especially for you, a mother. Oh, that your eyes may be opened, if they are not already, to the horrible nature of those doctrines under the inspiration of which my separation from you was effected,—and the sinfulness of those practices with which your unhappy daughter has perforce been so long familiarized!

“Ah! I am sure you could never have dreamed of all I have suffered from those wretched associates of mine with whom my fate was bound up for two long years, and from whom escape was impossible but by death; especially, of what I have suffered from him into whose custody I had been delivered,—a man with whom self-interest and passion were paramount, and whose profession it was to minister to wickedness that has its seat beyond even the confines of this world, the wickedness of the lost spirits, the unrelenting enemies of our race,—while *me* he made his accomplice in *all*. Even death I would have welcomed, had I been prepared to meet it. Nay, I should have sought it of myself, had I not feared a worse destiny to follow, and had not God likewise inspired me with confidence in Him, and led me to look for the dawn of a brighter day. He *has* indeed fulfilled and more than fulfilled all my expectations,—but of this presently.

“I must confess, however, that my own vanity and pride had no small share in bringing on my fate in the first place, and rendering it the more bitter afterwards. My false ambition and my love of admiration were engines made use of by others against myself, and, in my downfall, I was able only to value the rectitude I had thrown away by the void occasioned from its loss. The terrible lessons my experience has taught me, have weaned me forever, I trust, from all deliberate affection for those vices; and God, I hope, will complete the work by giving

strength—or, I might rather say, giving birth—to the virtues which are their antidotes.

“Such language as this from me, must appear singular to you, and I hasten to account for the change that has taken place in one whom you knew only as a wilful, self-seeking child, with some vacillating desires to do well, perhaps, but even in these, growing feebler day by day. In what spirit you will receive the communication I have to make in regard to my religious sentiments, I know not; had I believed that you could have received it even with equanimity of mind, I should not have deferred to this moment making it, or now employed the medium of correspondence. I should have gone to throw myself into your arms and to tell you all with my own lips as soon as I had set foot again on my native shore. Considerations that I cannot overlook, cause me to act differently, and to await here the issue of this communication.

“God has, I say, realized in my behalf the unbounded tenderness of His love, and put forth the strength of His omnipotent arm. He has first set me free from the grasp of the wicked persons (I do not hesitate to call them so) with whom my lot was unhappily cast; He has thus rescued me from perils of body, and delivered me from snares of the soul in a truly wonderful manner. He has given me in keeping to those who have been angels of salvation to me, and by whose means I have been made a member of the household of the King—of the King of Glory. Yes, God has realized the

desire of my dying father and the aspirations of my own early youth—and I have been received by baptism as a member of the Holy Catholic Church, Roman and Apostolic. In imparting to me this crowning mercy, God has caused my soul to overflow with such torrents of joy, that the mere remembrance of the day of my baptism brings tears of happiness and gratitude to my eyes. Such is the intelligence in regard to myself which it is the principal object of this letter to convey, intelligence so unexpected to you, and probably so unwelcome, in view of your life-long prejudices, that you will not be surprised that I have been and am in doubt as to the effect it may produce on your mind, and that I conclude to await here the result of this communication.

“But I have more to add. With the approval of my conscience, and by the counsel of those who are as wise as they are holy—Oh! I little dreamed once that the world contained such!—I have agreed to become the companion in the bonds of matrimony of one whom you probably know, or, if you do not, whom every one that does know him declares to be entirely worthy of the esteem and affection I feel for him. In ten days from this time the ceremony will take place at the village church of It will be a nuptial Mass, for he is also—thank God!—a Catholic, and a good one. We shall then leave almost immediately for America. There, I shall have the happiness, besides, of being near those angelic creatures, (they are Sisters of the

same order as my cousin, who is in the Convent of) to whom, under God, I owe so much already, and from whom I expect so much support and consolation hereafter. I shall never again meet that wretched man into whose charge I was committed, for he is no more. He promised you to drive from my mind all idea of baptism, but you see how he has failed. May God have mercy on him ; and I forgive him all the evil he has done me ; but unless some communication passed in his last moments between God and his soul, of which no mortal can penetrate the secret, he is lost forever.

“Before entering upon so serious a step as a change of life, I have thought it my duty to invoke my mother’s blessing on the step I am about to take,—on myself and on him who will shortly be your son. This notice will enable you to meet us at least a week before the event, if such is your wish. I need not say how happy it will make me to embrace you once more before we part, perhaps forever.

“Your welfare and your happiness, dear mother, are the subject of my daily prayer ; but I pray especially that God may enable you to share the happiness of soul your daughter enjoys, to possess that peace which is not of this world, but which the mercy and goodness of God will render as accessible to you, as He has made it to me, provided that you desire it, and that you pray for it. That you may do so, is, and will continue to be, the fervent prayer of your

CORNELIA.”

This letter was received by her mother, and as Cornelia afterwards learned, occasioned her to shed tears, but she expressed her approval of the step her daughter intended to take, for she well knew, at least by reputation, the young man who was to be her husband. Her first impulse was to go at once, and throw herself into her daughter's arms, asking pardon for the injustice she had been guilty of towards her. When these emotions had subsided, however, and her feelings of bigotry had time to revive, a change came over her. This change was artfully stimulated by her husband, who had great influence over her, and had really no affection for Cornelia. Her jaundiced mind then began to discover in her daughter's letter only implied reproaches for the past, and insults for the present; —reproaches for a course of action towards her daughter which the mother now pretended to justify, and insults in casting obloquy upon that "religion of the spirits" to which the latter was still fanatically devoted. This view of the matter was strengthened by Cornelia's explicit avowal of her own adhesion to Catholicism, a religion the mother hated: and hated the more bitterly, as her experience with Spiritism developed the utter antagonism existing between it and Catholicism. Cornelia's commendation of this religion to her mother's acceptance, moreover, was regarded by the latter and her husband as "a piece of audacity."

In a few days, a cold reply came to Cornelia, stating that if the latter preferred a worn-out

superstition to the "religion of truth and light," and found herself so happy with those who were strangers to her mother's acquaintance and home, her mother's presence at her marriage would doubtless occasion an embarrassment which she would prefer not inflicting. This cruel letter cut Cornelia to the heart, but after recommending herself to God with many tears, and seeking for strength and comfort at the foot of her crucifix, she arose calm and collected and offered this last sorrow as a part of the expiation due from her to God on account of past sins.





XXII.

CONCLUSION.

THE country house to which Mr. Stamford conducted Leandro and Henry was situated at no great distance from the city of New York, and overlooked its beautiful bay. It was a species of rural palace embowered in groves, at which the thriving banker was accustomed to pass the greater part of the year. It was also the home of Henry's own childhood, having been the former residence of his father. Here the two friends enjoyed a period of delightful repose and recreation.

As Sister Sabina expected shortly to proceed to her final destination in the West, Henry availed himself of the interval, to visit her at her convent in the city every day or two, occasionally accompanied by Leandro. His aunt was to him a cherished link uniting him with that father and mother he had lost, and with that past which now, on his return to his native land, filled his mind with touching memories. He no longer turned aside with a jest the kind exhortations she addressed to him. The soil of his heart so long irresponsive to the influences of grace, now drank in the dew of

holy thoughts, and fructified in measure. He felt grateful, indeed, that an ocean at last separated him from those scenes of gayety and frivolity which had made him forget the salutary influences of his early home.

Nothing had struck him more forcibly than a visit he made, the second Sunday after his arrival, (the first being spent in the city,) to the village church near his uncle's country place. It was in this church that Henry, in his twelfth year, had made his first communion. That scene, as he entered the church to-day, was suddenly brought before him. There stood the confessional where with so much simplicity he had declared all the faults of his youth, and bowed his head with deep contrition to receive the grace-giving absolution of the priest. There was the altar, flower-crowned as on the day of his communion, to which he had lifted up his eyes in prayerful hope, and turned his heart full of holy desires. He called to mind the very spot at the railing where he had knelt to receive his Lord, and the memory flowed back upon him of the rapture he had enjoyed, and of the peace which had closed him in as with a golden cloud. He now realized the happiness of that first communion as the truest he had ever felt ; while the phantoms he had since pursued in the name of happiness, stripped of the delusions a perverted imagination had thrown around them, stood forth as gaunt and wretched spectres.

There came forth, to minister at the altar, the

same good parish priest who had so diligently instructed and prepared him for that early day of benediction. But few years had in fact rolled by, since, and had left no sensible impression on the good man's form and features. So moved was Henry by all these reflections and reminiscences,—and so true is it that a good first communion is an almost certain pledge of the final return of him who may afterwards wander from the path,—that, from the moment he entered the family pew, he did not rise from his knees until the time for Mass to begin; remaining with his face buried in his handkerchief, shedding abundant tears. Nor did he finally leave the church until he had solemnly resolved to return to his duties without delay.

Leandro readily conjectured the feelings which were passing in the bosom of his friend, for he had been a gratified witness of the change which was being gradually wrought in him, but, with proper delicacy, he refrained from making any observations. When Henry, on their way home, remarked that he had made his first communion in that church, Leandro understood all.

That evening, however, as the two friends went to take their promenade together in one of the wide gravelled walks near the house, skirted by syringas and roses which filled the air with perfume, Henry produced his beads, and suggested that they should recite the Rosary together. Leandro complied with a joy beyond what he dared express, and freighted his invocations with prayers in behalf of his friend.

He was, therefore, quite prepared for the confidence Henry afterwards gave him in regard to his intentions. Confirming his good resolutions with sweet and grave words, Leandro suggested that they should call upon Sister Sabina in the morning and share the gratifying announcement with her.

After a night of peaceful and happy dreams, they repaired to the city and called at the convent. Sister Sabina received the news they brought with an emotion which left her tears rather than words as the means of expressing her feelings. As Henry intended to prepare himself for communion on the following Sunday, Sister Sabina urged that he should make it in their convent chapel, as that was also to be the day of Cornelia's baptism. Henry very joyfully acceded to this arrangement, and Leandro promised to unite with him in communion, and also to serve the priest's Mass, as well as assist at the subsequent ceremonies of baptism.

We need not dwell upon this occasion, which was one so full of deep religious joy, not only to Henry, who renewed the sweet and holy memories of his youth, and to poor Cornelia, as we have seen already ; but to Sister Sabina, who beheld the fruit of her prayers and the hand of God in both events, —to the Sisters who so deeply sympathized in the interest of the occasion,—and finally to Leandro, who at last saw his mission to Henry crowned with success. He begged permission of Henry to acquaint Dr. Spencer in Paris, the good and provident friend who had directed their steps together,

with what had occurred, and to allow him the exclusive pleasure of conveying the information; the letter was despatched accordingly.

Leandro was to leave for Cuba in October, and although the state of his health did not make the attendance of a companion necessary, he was rejoiced to find that it was Henry's own wish to accompany him on the voyage, and to remain with him during his winter's stay on the island. The interval before their departure was agreeably spent in visits to friends old and new, and in an excursion with Judge Harper to the Falls of Niagara, Lake Champlain, &c. Leandro, also, desirous of making some acquaintances among the Spanish residents of the metropolis, found means of introduction to several families of his nationality. Among these, was one with whom he became finally very intimate, frequently passing with them, at their urgent request, two or three days at a time.

The family of Gasper Menendez was one which preserved, in its adopted country, all the vigor and fervor of its Spanish faith. Hence, the regard in which both host and guest held one another. Henry, who was seldom much separated from his friend, frequently accompanied him in his visits, and shared in the attentions and respect of which the other was so constant a recipient. A few days before the departure of the two for Cuba, as they were returning from a visit to the house of Señor Menendez, Leandro, after speaking of some arrangements for the voyage, remarked that Henry

had not informed him of what his plans were, when he should return home in the spring. He hoped that Henry would not content himself with merely living on his income without engaging in some regular pursuit which would preserve him from idleness and its attendant dangers.

"I am the more anxious on this subject," continued he, "since I shall probably part with you on the shores of Cuba in the spring, taking passage thence to Spain direct ; and leaving you companionless, and without settled plans in life, I should part from you with grave apprehensions. Not that I doubt the strength of your present good resolutions and your entire earnestness as to the future, but since man is so much the creature of circumstances, your perseverance will be greatly imperilled in a state of life without definite aim and occupation. Hence, before you set out, if there is any arrangement you can make which will secure you regular employment on your return, I beg of you to see to it. My interest in you will not allow me to say less."

"I am glad to say," replied Henry, "that I have anticipated your prudent suggestion, although I thank you for it just as heartily. Had I not neglected my opportunities, I could have qualified myself for filling usefully a career of literary labor, which I see to be greatly needed here, where but few of our Catholic young men can be found to undertake it, either because necessity obliges them to seek a living otherwise, or because they lack the

educational taste and finish to fit them for such a career. As it is, however, and recognizing from motives such as those you suggest, the entire necessity of my being regularly employed, I have made arrangements to that effect, to be consummated on my return from Cuba, from which, I regret to hear you say, I shall probably have to proceed home without you."

"Yes," returned Leandro, "I myself must act upon the principle I lay down for you, or something like it. I ardently desire to resume my theological studies as soon as the complete restoration of my health will enable me to return to my native land, in order that I may qualify myself for that state of life to which God calls me. The more I see of the world, the greater is the need I perceive in it of additional laborers in our Lord's vineyard, and it is my wish that no unnecessary delay should occur in realizing my own aspirations in that direction. Hence, my wish to return to Spain direct from Cuba, instead of making a *detour* by the United States. I have already grown so much stronger, and feel so much better, that the sea voyage to the island and thence to Spain, with the interval of the winter in Cuba, will, I believe, make my health really robust."

"I trust so, indeed, and I wish that God called me to an equally sublime state of life, but my confessor tells me that I am to live in the world, and do my best there, and I submit. I have therefore made arrangements with my uncle to enter his

banking house, on my return, with a view to preparing myself for sharing in his business hereafter, to which in due time, I shall bring, I hope, experience, as well as capital."

"That is very satisfactory, indeed; your next care, then, must be to choose wisely the friends of your leisure hours, so that you may not drift in with the mere horde of fashionable young men, among whom, as a class, I see little to admire, so far as my limited observation goes, except the faultlessness of their toilettes."

"This is another matter, Leandro, which has greatly occupied my thoughts. I see around me a great number of young men of the stamp of those I was intimate with in Germany and in Paris. I used to think that they were fine fellows, and while abroad, I made myself at home with them accordingly, and became in all things one like themselves. Of late, however, so great a revolution has occurred in my ideas, that I no longer seem to see with the same eyes; and the prospect of falling again, through constant association with this class of persons, into the frivolities that I hope to have abandoned forever, discourages me. Display, and the pursuit of pleasure and excitement form a great part of the existence of these young men; and fashion and wealth are the gods they worship. It would be difficult for me to find a Leandro among them, and yet, I need the strong stay that would be afforded me by one worthy and devoted friend."

"Your affectionate heart, Henry, entitles you to

at least this much, and you have every claim otherwise to the possession of a true and worthy friend. Yet, among so many who are comparatively strangers to you here, the task of choosing one or more such companions might prove a difficult one, as you suggest. If you are to live and labor in the world, it seems to me that the best plan would be, and it would be only a measure of prudence, to select a companion who would be one for life,—in other words, to marry.”

“This is also my confessor’s advice; but is the choice of a wife more easy than that of a friend?”

“Perhaps not. But the traits that are to guide you in this choice are more definite than those which go to form the essentials of character in a congenial spirit of your own sex. You will surely meet, some day, among those of your own circle, and in a Catholic family, a young lady whom you will recognize as a suitable life-companion by these signs:—that she is a good Christian, a good daughter, and a good sister, one whose heart is more in her home than in the world outside, and more in God than in either: a person of suitable culture, manners and intelligence, and finally, one whom you feel you could love or have already begun to admire.”

“I think I can safely say, Leandro, that I do not need to *begin* my search, for the character you describe is known to me already, and you have but drawn the portrait of her whose father’s house we have just left,—Mariquita Menendez.”

“Mariquita! The description certainly applies. And do you entertain for her the sentiments that would justify you in asking her to become your wife?”

“I do, with all my heart. And I am only restrained from declaring them, by the doubt I am in, whether my proposal would be acceptable to herself and her family.”

“So far as she herself is concerned, would you expect a young lady of her prudence and modesty to let her sentiments be known to you!”

“Well,—no,” stammered Henry, a new light seeming to break on him, “that would be unreasonable, I admit.”

“Well, then, as to the family, I know their sentiments towards you sufficiently well to assure you that your application for the young lady’s hand would meet with no opposition from them, to say the least.”

“You advise me then to proceed.”

“I do, for this young lady is every way worthy of you. I would recommend you, however, to speak to her parents first. It is possible they may not entirely assent to the American custom (such as I learn it is,) of leaving these things to be managed entirely between the young people themselves; and they might expect to be consulted first, in regard to the intentions you cherish towards their daughter.”

“I don’t object to that, provided their view in these matters does not also impose it on them as a duty to fetter the choice of the young lady herself.

I should not wish to marry any one who would make a sacrifice of her own preferences in accepting me, or would receive my proposals out of a sense of duty to others, even to her parents, and not chiefly for the reason that she equally reciprocates my attachment."

"That is a very American sentiment,—in the style of independence and equality,—but I do not know that you are far wrong."

"Yes, in domestic settlements, I think principles of equality should even be carried further. A perfect parity in the condition of the contracting parties is not to be looked for, and is not always even in the highest degree desirable, but certainly a general equality of condition is a great security against dissensions and difficulties that might arise without it. Equality of *consent* is but one branch of the general principle which I like to see governing marriage contracts. Conjunction by antithesis is all well enough as a rhetorical figure, but not as the model of marriage relations. In these, besides parity of consent, there should be some parity of exterior condition."

"Why, Henry, you are growing quite philosophical!"

"Possibly. There will be some need of philosophy for me, indeed, if I am to submit the arbitrament of my happiness to one of whose sentiments I may say I am entirely ignorant. Still, I see no escape. I think it enough, however, to approach in person *one* of the parties to be consulted, and I

would thank you therefore, Leandro, if you yourself would broach the subject to the father, in my behalf. My aunt says you are my Archangel Raphael, though she adds she does not think me quite a Tobias; and as the Archangel did not quit Tobias, until he had found him a wife, so I desire that you should complete the many services you have rendered, by aiding me, to the extent of the service I ask, in gaining a partner.

"I accept the trust, being quite confident of the result. At the same time, I am as far from being an Archangel as you are perhaps from being a Tobias: nor, indeed, is it necessary in this conjuncture that I should be, for the sake of your Sara, for I do not believe that there is any evil spirit in her that must needs be driven out by me, whereas Sara had seven."

"Nor do I," returned Henry, laughing.

"Well, I shall be in the city again to-morrow," concluded Leandro, "and will see Señor Menendez on the affair."

"Thank you, my friend, and you will return before evening to acquaint me with the result?"

"Yes, before to-morrow night you can, if you choose, learn from each of the parties to be consulted, what you are to expect."

"I shall be happy to put an end to the suspense I am in. I have begged God to direct me aright in my intentions in this matter, and this evening we will recite our beads for the same intention. Whatever happens, will, I trust be for the best."

“With the spirit by which you are governed, there can be no doubt of it.”

Leandro, leaving Henry at home the next day, called on Mariquita's father. The kind enquiries of the latter for Henry readily opened the way to Leandro's development of his mission. Señor Menendez, as soon as he learned that Leandro had been formally deputed by Henry to represent him, gave his proposal a most cordial reception. He would not undertake to speak for his daughter, but Henry had his entire permission to address her, nor would he do anything to bias her judgment any further than to authorize her suitor to say that her parents had no objections to offer. Whether Mariquita married Henry or another, he knew that Henry possessed one requisite that she would consider indispensable in any one approaching her with similar proposals, and that was a Christian character, supplemented by a faithful compliance with his duties as a Catholic.

Leandro, fully content with the result of his mission, returned to make his report to Henry, who thereupon lost no time in proceeding the same evening to the house of Mariquita in order to ascertain in what degree of favor he stood with the young lady herself. He was agreeably surprised to learn from her, after she had accepted his proposals, (which she only entirely acceded to when she learned that her parents had given them their approval,) that she had long regarded him with especial preference. Henry could not sufficiently

admire the maidenly modesty and self-control she had exhibited in giving no exterior sign by which he could have divined her real feelings. It was arranged, therefore, that the marriage should take place after Henry's return from Cuba, whither Leandro and himself were to set out in about a week's time.

In the interval before their departure, Henry received a letter from Dr. Spencer and his wife, full of joy and congratulation, on the subject of his return to the practice of his religious duties, an event which the Doctor said, gave him a happiness equalled only by that he himself experienced on the days of his baptism and first communion. They had delayed replying for a while until they could have a suitable present prepared for him, which he was to keep both as a mark of their affection and as a memento of the particular event communicated to them. He would receive, therefore, at the same time with their letter, a reliquary containing a fragment of the True Cross, which they had obtained from Rome through the hands of a bishop, with the proper documentary authentication accompanying it. They had had the reliquary set in a gold case adorned with brilliants, with the inscription on the back: "Albert and Annie Spencer to Henry Stamford," together with the date of Henry's communion in the convent chapel.

Henry, in replying to his friend's letter, said he knew not how to make a sufficient acknowledgment for this beautiful and touching gift, except by

acquainting them with his engagement to Mariquita Menendez, the loveliness of whose character he described. He enclosed also their joint carte-de-visite. This communication, he thought, would give his friends pleasure equal to that he himself enjoyed in the receipt of the present they had sent him. He enclosed Albert's letter to Sister Sabina, who was now in her Western home, and added the news of his intention to marry, and to whom.

Leandro also accompanied Henry's letter with one from himself, in which were these words: "The prospect of Henry's union with this excellent young lady, is to me a source of profound joy, and of thankfulness to God, whose blessing I believe will attend it. Mariquita Menendez, in the traits which distinguish her, in her high principles, her solid piety, her singleness of heart, reminds me of your Sister Carolina, Henry's mother, as you have drawn her character to me, heretofore. Were she now living, I am confident she could not have desired for her son an alliance more suitable in every way. The Spanish firmness of Mariquita's character, united with her warm heart, and the suavity which presides over all her actions, cannot but exercise a most salutary influence on Henry, in deepening and strengthening the good that is in him, and protecting him from all influences which might be hurtful to him."

We need not dwell upon the incidents of the sojourn in Cuba, which was heartily enjoyed by the two friends. The return of spring found Leandro

restored to entire health and strength, and full of impatience to return to his seminary in order to complete his studies and prepare himself for ordination. Henry, notwithstanding the regret he felt at parting with so true and noble a friend, would not press him to vary his plans, for he was conscious of the value to religion and the Church of the services which could be rendered by one of Leandro's zeal, talents, and acquirements.

Leandro and Henry, therefore, parted on the Cuban shores, one to enter upon the arduous but consoling tasks which are the lot of the true priest : tasks in which he will advance the glory of God and the good of souls, and commend himself to angels and to men by the perfection with which he will fulfill them ; the other, to exercise the duties and assume the responsibilities which are the part of the good Christian and the good citizen : a career in which he will reflect honor on the Catholic laity, by the manner in which he will exemplify the virtues which belong to his station, in justice, in charity, in all the relations of life, social, domestic, and public. One returns to Catholic Spain to employ the resources of mind and heart with which God has generously endowed him, in the cause of religion, and in behalf of Spain's ancient faith, threatened in its rights and in its dignity by the rising wave of revolution, and assailed by her own recreant children. The other turns his face to the shores of the New World, to sustain by the example of a good life, and through the influence

which his countrymen will always accord to genuine worth, the growing Church planted on the virgin soil of America side by side with many an exotic, from transatlantic hot-beds of heresy and religious revolt. Long overshadowed here by the rank vegetation around her, that Church will at last rise to the stature of majesty and comeliness which are befitting her; and beneath her wide-spreading branches shall repose myriads of those who now either know her not, or know her only to misjudge her. In the rising fortunes of the American Church, in her comprehensive charities, in her all-healing and beneficent influences on society, Henry Stamford will sympathize as one whose heart and whose hand is with her, and the tenor of whose life will illustrate and enforce the holiness and consistency of her teachings.

The day succeeding the departure of Leandro for Spain was to witness Henry's departure also for New York. The two friends bade each other adieu with promises of life-long mutual remembrance, and with poignant regret at the thought that they might never again meet on earth. Leandro, however, assured his friend that he should never be absent from his prayers, nor from remembrance in that great sacrifice which it would be his privilege some day to offer. Henry, on the other hand, pledged himself to continued fidelity in the principles which Leandro had instilled in his mind, or rather revived there, and to the practice of which he had led him on by precept and example. Especially, in defer-

ence to that Sign of the Cross, the use of which would always recall to him the incidents attending the early stages of his own conversion, he resolved never to fail in employing it with devotion, and never to omit it before and after meals, hoping thus to bring a blessing on his house and board. With him the Sign of the Cross would also be a constant souvenir of his friend—that friend who had proved himself, moreover, so able a defender of it, and so zealous an apologist for its use.

On Henry's arrival home, he found the following letter awaiting him from his aunt. He read it with emotion, and lost no time in communicating its contents to her he was shortly to call his wife, and who, with him, would ever in after life love and cherish the wise and holy counsels of Sister Sabina. With this letter our narrative closes.

“MY DEAR NEPHEW:

“The information you have given me of your intended marriage with Miss Mariquita Menendez, and the terms in which both yourself and Señor Lopez speak of the high qualities of that young lady, and of the advantages, spiritual and temporal, likely to arise from your union, have filled my heart with joy.

“I thank God fervently for all His blessings and favors to you, and for finally crowning your return to Him by the gift of a companion capable of aiding you in the good path on which you have entered.

“It would be presumption in me, perhaps, to add

anything to what has been suggested to you by your own reflections in regard to the state of life you are about entering, enlightened as you now are upon your duties to God and your neighbor. Nor need I add to the counsels which the wisdom of your Confessor, Father ———, or the affection and zeal of your friend Leandro have supplied; but I will let the little magazine I enclose with this, speak in my behalf.

“It is a monthly publication, the first article of which, in the present number, bears the title, ‘The Heart of Jesus and the Sacrament of Matrimony,’* and it is to this, especially, I desire to direct your attention. Read it carefully and thoughtfully, and you will derive from it a degree of edification and instruction such as I could not hope to supply by any thoughts of my own.

“Be faithful, my dear Henry, to the striking graces you have received. We are each of us surrounded by dangers, from which we need God’s providence to preserve us unharmed. If we make light of the graces we have, we know not if we shall receive others either so abundant or so efficacious. If you would escape ruin, therefore, regard each grace as though it were the last, and employ it accordingly.

“I trust that you will feel less sensibly the loss of your prudent and accomplished companion, now that his place is filled in a still more intimate relation

* Messenger of the Sacred Heart, Vol. II, page 199, June, 1867.

by one who is so well qualified to be all in all to you. May God bless her and you, and so govern and direct you in your conduct to one another, and in your dealings with the world, that charity and peace shall be your joint possession so long as you both live in this place of exile!

“Whatever my prayers may be worth, they shall always ascend to Heaven for you and yours, and I shall cherish the hope of one day seeing both of you, if your leisure will allow you the opportunity of coming so far as this. The Sisters who were my companions from Liverpool join with me in my congratulations, and will unite with me in my prayers for you. I rely much, also, on those which will be offered in your behalf by Señor Lopez, who is, I believe, a true friend of God, and who affords a noble example of what one should be who aspires to functions so exalted as those he is about to embrace.

“Begging the prayers of Mariquita and yourself for me and my community, believe me,

“Your affectionate aunt,

“SABINA LANGLEY.”



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