## Clutch of Rome.

BY "GONZALES."

CHAPTER XIII -Continued. THE TEMPTHSSS FOILED

Suddenly, he became conscious that the floor was surging and swaying under his feet. And he half fell with Ida Olney still clasped in his arms on to a divan. The silken walls seemed be be closing in on them. The Egyptian lamp swung violently to and fro. A low rumbling noise fell upon their ears. A marble cupid came tumbling down from a bracket and struck Ida Olney, who was pale and vivid with fright, on the shoulders. She started up mutter-

"For God's sake, let us go to the street."

But, before she could reach the door and succeed in opening it, the earthquake had spent its force. In the confusion and babble of tongues which followed, Father St. John made his adieus and escaped from the house. The heaviest earthquake that had visited San Francisco for several years bad saved him from utter ruin. He pulled his hat low over his eyes and hurried to his own home. A revulsion of feeling had come to him, and he was filled with loathing for himself and for the woman whom the earthquake had snatched from his grasp. He passed a painted harlot standing under the blaze of a street lamp. She said something to him as he hurried by. In those gleaming eyes and blackened brows and red-bedaubed mouth, he seemed to see a hideovs likeness of Ida Oiney.

Arriving at his home, he found Mrs. Gibbs waiting up for him by the fire. A longing came over him, man though he was, and priest to whom had been entrusted the eternal salvation of souls, to kneel at the feet of the comfortable and motherly woman, and sob out his trouble with his head on her lap as he had often poured out to her the troubles of his childhood. The good woman looked at him as he entered the room and uttered an exclamation at his pale tace and heavy eyes, under which black circles had formed. Her first thought was of some calamity of the earthquake.

"Are you hurt, Fablo?" "Am I hurt, No," he answered wearily, "why do you ask me?" And he took a low chair by her side.

"Oh, you look dreadful bad, and the earthquake, you know, was quite severe. I thought perhaps something had befallen you in it."

"Harm befallen me in the earthquake! I shall offer up prayers tonight and bless it."

Mrs. Gibbs looked steadily at her nursling a moment, then got up and put her hand on his head. It was burning tacy, in her odorous room in the sub teeth.

"Fabio St. John, there is something your shoes. I am going to give you a hot foot-bath and a glass of hot lemon-

St. John caught the skirt of her dress as she started to leave the room.

"Listen to me a moment, Mother mind. Your medicine would be useless. I want meditation and prayer. I have been called tonight to witness the result of wrong doing and evil thinking. I am grieved that there is so much sin in the world and I have not the power to wipe it out. I thank God for the earthquake, because when He caused the earth to tremble, it must warn His sinful creatures that He can be as terrible in His wrath, as He can be musatisfied now, Mother Kate, that the put his slim, white hands on Mother Kate's broad shoulders.

"Don't be making yourself sick, dar- safety. ling, over the misdeeds of others; sure to it," and a tear came into her carnest, also forgive? grey eyes.

like all the rest."

young priest whom she believed the some one more worthy than I to guide. "Well, your grace, with sorrow do I casiest to forgive. Knowing this, he saints had elected to glory from his Yours most humbly, earliest infancy could do no wrong. Prayer for him, from such as she,

while he, in a measure, censured the was on the alert.

before a large, Iron crucifix; but no Saint Joseph had left in her hand. audible words of prayer fell from his agony of his soul.

If Father St John had been a cloistbefore the image of the bleeding of this one man." came over him, and he raised himself lowing words: hour. The light from the gas jet il- your aid." lips, and the flerce heat from the fire of | in his disgust and anger, he wrote:

fright had passed away, had cursed it; depravity." but the evening had been a triumph. She never for an instant doubted, that her, Mrs. Olney sat for some minutes hood." the victory over the priest was com- with it in her hand, longing yet dreadplete. His caresses had all the warmth | ing to open it. At last, with trembling of the conqueror instead of the con- fingers and quickly-beating heart, she

spection, her husband entered the scorching words. No need to read beroom. She greeted him with a smile tween the lines. She could not underinstead of the usual frown, and pleasant stand, or, if understanding, her dewords, instead of covert sneers, passed depraved and selfish nature could not between this ill-assorted pair, as they appreciate the innate delicacy of the prepared to retire. Ida Olney, for one former letter of the young priest, which night at least, was quietly at peace had spared her all and himself nothing. with herself, her husband, and the But this brutal plainness. She became

CHAPTER XIV. WITH GLEAMING EYES AND SCARLET into the grate.

MOUTH. now thought him, for two consecutive walked up and down the room. Her the matter with you. You are as white nights. Then her confidence gave little lap dog came gamboling after as wax and your flesh is burning hot. place to doubt. Then she sent a note her. A victous kick from her slippered to her feet as was her custom when Go to your room at once and take off to the priest asking him for a visit, foot sent the little creature velping the excited. Father St. John answered her note by length of the room. a letter. Mrs. Olucy grew pale as the "How dared he, wretched priest that warrant of her hopes. Then she care- together? What low bred effrontery to Kate, I am not sick in body, but in fully read between the lines, in the even call to my mind, that such filth hope of finding some covert but unex- exists." pressed desire, that she would again. Then the strained tension broke, and

had worded his letter. It ran thus: My DEAR DAUGHTER: I, your priest, hot tears had left in her face and attire. nificient in His goodness. Are you do most numbly beg your parden for my dire misconduct when last in your young, handsome priest, but ley hatred medicine I want is not for the body, but presence. I forgot my obligation to my and a strong desire for revenge. (Thus, something to strengthen my spiritual God, and to you, my faithful parishioner. women like Ida Olney love). Mrs. Olfaith to enable me the better to conquer That moment of madness has revealed ney resolved to lose no time in seeking archbishop took Father St. John's letsin?" and Father Fabio stood up and to me that I am the weakest of mortals, her vengeance. That very evening the ter from his pocket. though I carry, as it were, the burning self-accusing letter of Father St. John "Let us carefully dissect this letter

you do your duty as priest if ever human from your home, I prayed long to the was out of the city. She ordered her for forgiveness, and that his heart tells did; and it's puffed up with pride, I am, Heavenly Host to root out the evil in carriage for seven o'clock, and sent him that the boly mother interceded when I see you standing before the me. I think the blessed virgin inter- word to the archbishop that business of for him. Cannot you, child of earth, be member that I helped to bring you up most truly do I repent. Will not you demanded that she see him that even assures you, that he never, on any pre-

"I have given myself a penance honor to call at his residence. Poor Fabio winced. The praise his which, believe me, will not be light. Half past seven found Mrs. Olney in you, being unworthy so to do. Can not old nurse had given him tonight Never again will I see you, except in the red reception room of the Episcopal your woman's heart forgive this weak (though she never dreamed it, good the presence of others. Never again residence, and his grace calmly waiting priest, whose passion for you, a beautisoul) reminded him of the bitter pills will I enter your home, unless, bidden his wealthy guest's pleasure to make ful daughter of earth, made him forget she had swathed in syrup and begulied there by the urgencies of extreme sick- known her business with him. After a Heaven, and allow the church to punish him into taking, in his infancy. He ness or death. As a priest, I command little desultory conversation, Mrs. Ol- him? I assure you, she inflicts no light took his hands from her shoulders, and you to make your sacred confessional to ney, with a lady-like blush and a modest punishments on those who sin in her another. I tell you positively that I drooping of her eyes, said: even as you prayed for me when I was cumstances, to listen to, and absolve with you upon a matter which is both bishop was reading the very soul of the feed-saver on account of its nutritious qualities. a child, for I am a weak sinful mortal you from any of your light offences. I painful and delicate. I scarcely know woman before him with his piercing shall cherish your forgiveness in my how to tell you, what I believe it to be eyes, and he knew every word that he Mrs. Gibbs shook her head incredu-lously, but bade her one-time charge forgive—but nothing can change my my duty to lay before you."

shall chertsh your lorgiveness in my now to tell you, what I believe it to be eyes, and he knew every word that he my duty to lay before you."

where the head incredu-lously, but bade her one-time charge forgive—but nothing can change my "Speak freely to me, my daughter, of fire. He knew, priest as he was, that good night, with a hope that the saints determination to punish myself by in- whatever your conscience prompts you of all the sins of man, a woman finds would send him sweet sleep. This structing your spiritual guidance to to speak."

Fabio St. John " would be a presumption against the few words she had used that had and worse.' brought her this letter instead of the Father St. John went to the coldness priest. No one could injure her by ward. and privacy of his sleeping room. It reading them. Even in her love-sick "You are making a grave charge, my day in and year out; and if you, an ecwas characteristic of the man that longing for the priest's love, caution daughter; take care that it is well clesiastic of high degree, think him fit,

fair, forbidden fruit, that his sense of ruin you with your sauctified self-ab about to relate to you, sir. The fact the vestments of a priest, and to addeepest disgust was for his own weak- negating letter, whose tone, all things that I am a wife and he a priest, has minister the sacrament, f, sinful, weak the morning of the day of which the ness. No moral promptings of his own considered, is a vile insult to me," and not protected me from gross insults. I woman as I am, do not But I will funeral of the late Roman Catholic conscience, no remembrance of his ida Olney placed the letter in the shall keep nothing back from your yield this far. Send him to some re- Bishop Monogue was to take place at priestly yows, no thought of an oct- bosom of her gown and resolved in her grace. I waive all false modesty. I mote pastorate in a foreign country, I Sacramento, Mr. Martin arose and, reraged God, had prevented him from mind how she should proceed to ruin, have been troubled with grave doubts know the church is ever in need of gardless of the immense amount of ancommitting a dark crime. Miserable irretrievably, the man who had scorned of things divine for some time. I have money. I will give to her without finished business on hand, and the very expounder of truth was he, who had her love. She would go that evening striven in every way that the church stint, if you will remove this man from little time left in which to dispose of it proved himself unable to withstand the so the archbishop. Like Potiphar's prescribes to overcome these heretical my sight, and I know, your churchmen woved that the senate take a recess ungreat temptation. He fell prostrate wife, she would show the garment this tendencies. I have bared my heart to can accomplish what you will."

Then, in the midst of these dreams of confessional.

ered monk, his was the nature to have one more appeal. Here I am with denly, while I was beseeching him to for the sake of argument, that I have true American could of course vote for inflicted the most terrible tortures on beauty and youth and great wealth of help me, he sprang from his chair like the power to remove him without public the proposition, and so it was defeated, his body to kill the evil in the mind. my own, and it won't bring me the a madman, and fell on his knees before licity entirely from your path, do you as was also a motion that when the For nearly an hour, he lay on the floor thing I most desire on earth; the love me, and overwhelmed me with confes think him worthy to perform his holy senate adjourn it do so out of respect

the night; and then a sense of that moon hour. Father St. John would be pushed him violently from me and hold you sacred, do you not fear for not a member of either the Catholic peace which passeth all understanding, at home. She hurrledly wrote the fol- sprang from my chair to leave the some young and ignorant girl, who may church or the A. P. A., and I don't

given him as He forgave the thief on for I am surely in need of your counsel. he held me in a grasp of iron, and signately, "I care nothing for his is another of the frequently occurring the cross beside Him, at the eleventh It is your duty to visit those who ask still d me with his polluting kisses.

seemed to bear upon it a smile of pa- it to St. John's residence with instruct the implous wretch with fright that he and influence—that you remove this on the alert, and if they do not bestire tient forgiveness. The young priest tions to wait for an answer. An angry flung me from him and rushed out of priest from the city, or, if you fear for themselves with something like the inarose from his devotions, calm, but flush dyed the young priest's face as he the house. The next morning, I re- young innocence, your grace, from the dustry their enemies are practicing.filled with an ineffable sadness. Alasi rend this second message of Ida Olney's, ceived this. I give it to you, for I know priesthood, or I appeal to his hollness. be knew that never again would be be Truly this woman was lost to all deli- it will be difficult for you to believe In that case, you may find your own quite the same. The taste of that for eacy. Some barsh measure must be that one of such seeming purity can seat totter under you. Good night, bidden fruit would linger forever on his employed to recall her to herself. So, conceal so much baseness."

for your troubles. I cannot help you, the letter Mrs. Olney held out to him. Very different were the feelings of I will confess your image haunts me; so He read it through carefully twice, archbishop had intercepted her, locked Ida Olney that night when quiet had does that of another. When I left you, folded it and placed it in his pocket. been restored in her household, and she that now hated night, I saw a brazen, was in the privacy of her sleeping painted parody on womankind, who, room. Half undressed, she sat before scorning all gilded veiling, stood boldly the fire living over again in keen imag- under the blaze of a street lamp and ter for your grace to settle. Do you ination, the bliss of the moments before spoke to me as I hurried by. I have a that horrid and untimely shaking up of certain respect for this image which this affair, as it would be if my husband once, or I shall scream for assistance." the earth. Father St. John had blessed comes to me side by side with your the earthquake; Ida Olney, when her own, for she at least was honest in her shoot him? No; I want revenge of an-

broke the seal. Like a flash she read In the midst of her voluptuous retro- and understood the import of those fairly insane in her anger. She tore the note into fragments and threw them

"I wish I could throw him after Ida Olney waited in impatient ecs- them," she said, between her clenched

dued rose light for her lover, as she Then, like an angry tigress, she

paper on which it was written, as she he is, tell me, one of the first in the read. For some moments she sat in state, that my image and that of a comdazed despair looking at the death monstree | walker occupied his thoughts

bring him, in spite of himself, under she flung herself down on the couch the magic of her beauty. Her reading and hysterical sobs and floods of tears was in vain. A baleful light came into burst from her. Sobs and tears of anger her eyes and the angry scarlet in her and humiliation. Gradually she grew cheeks. There was absolutely nothing calmer and there were long intervals in the letter that would compromise between the convulsive shudderings, her. With great delicacy the priest till, with a final gasp, she arose to efface the ravages her fierce anger and

She had now no feeling for the

torch which lights others to places of should be in the hands of the arch- of Father St. John's. He assures you bishop. She was entire mistress of her that he is truly repentant; that he ing, and that she would do herself the text, will intrude on your presence

say it, young Father Fabio, whom we drew his own conclusions. all-I more than any-thought so pure Well Mrs. Olney remembered the and above all sin, is a base imposter, love-God forgive the word-is a vite

"You foolish priest," she mused, "I'll "I have good proof of what I am lance, to stand before the holy altar, in this serpent in the sacredness of the His grace acknowledged the compil. bishop, and to give the senators an op-

ins or even formed in his mind. He revenge a vision of the young, hand "Two nights ago, your grace, I sent felt his humiliation too deep for words. some priest came to her and she lived for this priest and, I supposed, holy complaint, and his own written admis- speech in which he menacingly declared The Lord Jesus, who was more prone to over again these voluptuous moments, man, to bring me that spiritual food sion, Father St. John has been guilty of that the action of the senate in the case forgive than to punish, could see the so rudely interrupted. Then, in a my soul longed for, and to strengthen breaking his most sacred obligations as would show whether or not it was under frenzy of desire, she exclaimed aloud: my unbelief by the power of God, with a priest. He shall be most severe rep A. P. A. domination. After such an "I cannot give him up. I will make which I believed him invested. Sud- rimanded, I promise you, but granting, insulting attempt at intimidation no stons of love. For a few minutes I was offices in some remote parish, among to the late bishop. Senator Seymour, Saviour, in the coldness and stience of She glanced at the clock. It was the too dumbfounded to speak. Then, I the poor and lowly? If he could not in speaking of the motion, said, "I am room, but he was on his feet in an in- come under his teaching?" to his knees. Surely, the Lord had for "Come to me before I sleep, Father, stant and throwing his arms around me, "No," interrupted Mrs. Olney, past troduced into legislative affairs." This

"But the great God made His wrath

passion had left sears that time could "You must find a balin of your own ance portrayed disgust and anger, took lly towards the door.

your husband, Mrs. Oiney?"

"Certainly not. I think this a mat- found voice: suppose I want my name mixed up in should take a husband's revenge and other kind. I want this would-be-When the answer to her note came to thought saint expelled from the priest- Mrs. Olney, as I shail pardon you, for

"Pardon me, Madam, but the church indignant at the cool way the prelate that door." was treating the matter.

"Your grace, I am surprised to find that you are apparently so little abashed by what I thought was an unpardonable offense in a priest of our holy church. Perhaps you are accustomed to complaints of this kind."

"Madam," said the archbishop, very salmly, "you have the honor, or the misfortune, to bring me the only complaint of the kind, and I have been in the church for many years. I must repeat, the matter demands a thorough nvestigation "

Mrs. Olney, flushed and angry, arose

What do you mean, sir, by an inrestigation? Have I not told you that he offered me a daughter of his church, looking to him for light and guidance, the vilest insult a man can offer to a woman? Have I not given into your hands his own self-condemnation? I tell you if that man is not quietly expelled from the priesthood, I will appeal to the pope himself, and I will tell him that you, archbishop of California, condone and excuse the breaking of

priestly vows." "My dear Madam, I must beg you to emember that I have neither condoned nor ex used the sin of this priest; and I must also beg you to remember that a centleman cannot remain seated while a lady is standing, and I am fatigued with the labors of the day."

Ida Olney gianced angrily at his grace, and resumed her seat. The

again. That he will not even confess sacred name, as may seem good to her."

that of guilty love for herself the

"I am a wife, your grace. This man't insuit to me, even if he were not a The archbishop leaned anxiously for- priest; and I will not consent to live in the same city with him, and meet him lafter performing some beggarly pen

ment with a bow. Then said:

worthiness or unworthiness, so I never episodes showing the persistence of see him again. I demand-and I may Rome, and indicating what will yet be uminated the face of the Christ, which Then she dispatched a servant with manifest. The earthquake so filled remind you that I have great wealth the consequences if Americans are not your grace." And Ida Olney gathered Archbishop O'Conor, whose counten- her closk about her and swept haught-

But before she could reach it, the the door and put the key in his pocket. "Have you mentioned this matter to Ida Olney stood staring at him in astonishment and rage. Then, when she

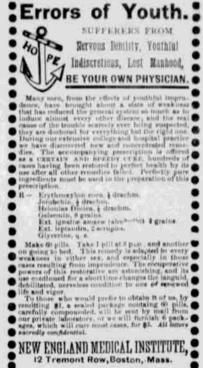
> "What do you mean, Sir, by such ruffianly conduct? Unlock that door at

The archbishop came close to her and looked her straight in the eyes.

"Pardon me, for locking the door, calling me a ruffian; and now, as an archbishop of the infallible church to must be the judge to sentence this ac- which you belong, I command you to be cused man. This grave charge shall seated and listen to me, and if you will be fully investigated;" and his grace give me your word as a lady not to atshot a peculiar look from his expressive tempt to leave the room till I think you graf eyes full at Ida Olney, who was are in a fit state so to do, I will unlock

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