IN THE

Clutch of Rome.

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BY "GONZALES."

CHAPTER XIV.—Continued.

WITH GLEAMING EYES AND SCARLET MOUTH.

Mrs. Olney was cowed by the attitude the archbishop had suddenly taken, and by those steely eyes flashing into her own. She dropped sullenly into a chair, saying:

"I will give you my word for nothing, Sir, but I will listen to you as the quickest way to be released from your presence."

"Very good, dear daughter," and the archbishop, his eyes never leaving her face, which she kept partly averted from him in sullen disdain, said:

"By way of introduction to my story, I will tell you that I know the character of young Father St. John, perfectly. I am, and without self flattery I may say it, a good judge of character, either male or female. I do not require to be long in the presence of people, and listen to their conversation, to make a pretty correct summing up of the total. I am, to a certain extent, a mind reader. My calling in life has brought this gift to a high state of cultivation—but to my story:

"There was once a seductively beautiful young woman, the wife of a very rich man, on whose hands time hung very heavy. She was, to all outward appearance, a very devout daughter of the church. She worshiped at a richly endowed and fashionable cathedral. A handsome young priest, with an elegant form, a face like those of the saints Raphael has adorned the altar-pieces of the churches of the old world with, and with a heart as true and pure as ever God placed in a child of man, was appointed to the pastorate of a church, which was an humble though near relative of the great cathedral, and very distant from the home of this fair lady.

"Nevertheless, she suddenly left her richly furnished pew in the church where the majority of her exclusive circle attended mass, and became very devout in her attendance in the humbler church. Fast days and feast days and all holy days, were observed by her as they never were when she worshiped in the cathedral, but for all the lady's religious zeal the saints apparently did not approve of her devotion, for her mind grew ill at ease, and tortures which had known no existence heretofore sprang up in the church where the Raphael-faced young priest said the mass.

"Very often when the evil spirits, which had taken possession of this gentle lady, raged furiously, she would send for the young priest, demanding that he restore peace to her soul; but, strange to say, this pure-minded, zealous young priest, who was devoted to the church and Heavenly things, had not the power to exorcise these demons, and the poor priest, striving faithfully to do his duty always, left the lady in the fuller possession of evil spirits.

"At last there came a night when every good impulse, every pure feeling, of this unhappy lady was killed by the evil in her, and she sent an imperative message to the young priest, under the semblance of honest purpose, beguiling him to her home, and, dressed in a fashion to heighten every seductive feature, in a richly furnished room, filled with maddening perfumes and soft rosy lights, this woman received the priest, who was young, impressionable, and only mortal; and a strong and guilty passion and desire looked out of her beautiful eyes; and her trembling scarlet mouth burned for kisses; and the young priest was sorely tempted.

"Long he resisted, then, at last, drunken and overcome with the subtle incense of her beguiling presence, he fell into her arms, sin-conquered; but the Lord would not permit this chosen one of His to be irresistibly lost for one sinful woman. So, in His wrath and indignation, He shook the earth, and in confusion and dismay the young priest fled from the beautiful woman with the evil eye, who had lost the power forevermore to lead him further on to ruin.

"She was robbed of her prey, but she looked for two nights for the return of the young priest, whom she thought secure in her toils. He, dismayed and remorseful, prostrated himself before the Lord and earnestly besought forgiveness, and when he received a note from this lady, asking for his return, he determined, for his own salvation and the lady's, to ignore the fact that he had been the tempted and not the tempter, and he replied to the lady's note by the delicately-worded letter I have here." And his grace lightly touched his vest.

"A letter worded so as to save the lady's feelings, and to prevent all compromising of her reputation should the letter fall in other hands than her own. The lady, not content with this answer to her note, sent him yet another, demanding that he again visit her. In reply, he wrote her something harsh, I judge, for her guilty love has turned to rank hatred: not for the misdeeds this man had committed, but for the man himself because——"

"Stop! your grace. I will listen to nothing further from you. The low villain has betrayed me, or rather maligned me to cover up his own baseness divining that I would appeal to you. You men are alike, priest or laymen. You all remember well the lesson your father Adam handed down to you, 'The woman did tempt me and I did eat.'"

The archbishop held up his hand.

"Madam, Father St. John has told me nothing. I have not seen him for two days."

"I don't believe your grace. You are protecting the villainy of your colleague. Give me that letter. I promise you, that both he and you shall suffer for this."

Quick as a flash, the archbishop drew the letter from his pocket and slipped it into the globe of the gas jet.

"Now, Madam, you are powerless. I bid you go your way, and repent and sin no more; and remember, as you yourself reminded me, I am an ecclesiastic of high degree and power. If you ever attempt to ruin Father St. John in the estimation of the world, I will excommunicate you from the church. In spite of your wealth and position, no complaint of yours shall ever reach the holy father. You are very proud of that reputation of yours. I am not afraid of you telling your husband, nor any one else what has passed. Mrs. Ida Olney has no wish to have her name in the gutter of public scandal even as trustful innocence injured by a priest."

And his grace moved to the door to bid her depart; but she stood boldly up and defied him still.

"If Father St. John did not come to you with the fabrication you have just unfolded to me, your grace has probably been calling up from memory some little episode of your own sainted life, with a slight variation, for I warrant no earthquake had the power to drag you from a snare, you were only too happy to be drawn into; and let me tell you, I fear neither you nor the church, nor your threats of excommunication. We are in a Protestant country, and the church is not sure enough of her power, besides she has too much love for wealth to excommunicate it from her."

She darted a withering glance at the prelate, who stood by the open door with a look of calm contempt on his handsome face, then once more gathering her cloak around her she stepped haughtily out of the room.

The archbishop looked after her departing form and frowned. Naturally chivalrous, he would have spared the lady's feelings had she made it possible; and had she been content to lay the case before him as an ordinary woman might, he would have severely censured the priest and seemingly have held her blameless, but by her revengeful anger she had brought the humiliation on herself.

Father St. John had been ordained to perform important work for the church, and this woman, rich and influential as she was, must not be allowed to stand in the way; and he knew he had read the lines correctly. He had no fear of Mrs. Olney doing any material injury to Father St. John himself. Women, like her, have a horror of having their names smirched; and the archbishop would have staked much that the handsome young priest was more sinned against than sinning.

Granted that that fiend of a woman had lured him to her arms for an instant, Providence had interposed and saved him from greater sin, or Ida Olney never would have taken the course she had. He had truly repented, or he would have gone again to her presence, instead of trusting to such a fury, the self-accusing letter, which he had burned.

The priest was a young apollo, and it was in the nature of things, the voluptuous women would, losing sight of the priest, fall in love with the man. All young priests had to overcome these temptations.

The archbishop had heard light gossip among the priests of the cathedral, to the effect that the rich and beautiful Mrs. Olney had deserted the cathedral for Father St. John's church, but he paid no attention to it. He knew that Father St. John possessed the often fatal gift of manly beauty. He also knew that the majority of women prefer to be instructed either in good or evil, by one who is entrenched in his doctrines by that powerful attribute. The knowledge that so beautiful a society pet, as Mrs. Olney, had so strong predilection for the priest as to cause her to leave a fashionable church and to neglect society for her devotions, had first brought to his mind that St. John was the proper one to awaken the sleeping conscience of the beautiful wife of Senator Maxwell.

The archbishop, worldly prelate though he was, had all faith in the purity of purpose of Father St. John. If women were weak enough to fall in love with him, they must suffer the consequences of their own madness. He had no fear that the wife of Senator Maxwell would suffer moral injury from the teachings of the young priest. She might fall in love with him with a sort of a saintly worship, that would give him unbounded religious influence over her, and God and the saints grant that this be so, but judging by what he knew of her, and by what he could read in her pure countenance, she was not a woman to lead a man from the path of duty.

But this other woman, with her gleaming eyes and scarlet mouth, (a very flower from the devil's garden asking to be picked) Father St. John should never suffer, if he could help it, for toying in a moment of madness, with her seductive beauty.

CHAPTER XV.

PRESBYTERIANISM VERSUS CATHOLICISM.

Mrs. Maxwell had been transformed from a happy wife and mother into a melancholy semblance of herself. She was tormented by grave doubts of ever being able to convince her husband that their union cemented by ten long years of faithful love and acknowledged to be honorable by the civil law, required sanctifying by a religious ceremony, to enable a dead woman to find rest. All the superstitious teachings of her youth were upon her. She had determined to go to confession and lay bare her heart to God, through the medium of the priest's intercession. Once determined on this, she sent for the governess, who had become her close confident.

"Dora, I do not know what mysterious power was brought to bear upon me that Sunday afternoon so long past, when for very idleness, I went to church with you and Jeanie, but my mind has never been at ease since. I have an unspeakable longing to be in full communion with the church. I want," Mrs. Maxwell blushed, "my next child to be born with all its holy influences impregnated in its being. I am going to confession this afternoon and tell God all there is in my heart, and through the medium of that pious young priest's intercession. I think he will grant me partial absolution for my neglect these long years."

"The holy saints be praised"—and Miss Dillon crossed herself—"my prayer is answered. Many hours of the silent night have I passed on my knees, praying to the virgin—for she is our sex's refuge—to awaken your sleeping soul. I passed hours in supplication to her on the eve that blessed Sunday followed, and you can imagine what wave of rapture passed through me, when you signified your intention to accompany me to church. I felt that my prayer had found grace in the virgin's ears, and I felt sure she would awaken your sleeping soul, when once you entered the blessed church."

Dora Dillon hastened to order the carriage. She was exultant. She lived for the church. She had faithfully performed many offices at its command, but none so important as the present one.

Miss Martha heard Miss Dillon order the carriage, at which order she was surprised, for she herself had only a short time before suggested to her sister-in-law that she ride out with herself and children, but Mrs. Maxwell had declared herself indisposed to ride out. She had not even suggested to Martha that she take the children and go, as she had often done before.

Miss Dillon knew that Mrs. Maxwell was an authority in her own house, and accounted to no one for her actions in her husband's absence; still, she did not want Martha to know where they were going, so she said:

"Mrs. Maxwell and I are going to visit some poor, I have been telling her about."

Miss Martha made no reply, and she was suspicious that some underhanded work connected with Catholicism was the object of their outgoing, when she saw the closed carriage drive away. If visiting the poor was their object, there was no reason the children should not have gone for an airing. The rainy weather kept them in so much that they ought to have the benefit of the sunshine when it came. She sought Anna.

"Yes, ma'am, the evil one has drawn them away. I happened in the dressing room in time to hear some of their conversation, and I heard Mrs. Maxwell say she was going to confess her sins. I don't think we can do anything, Miss Martha; Mrs. Maxwell is her own mistress, and that female papist is her companion."

"Surely, the hand of the Lord is resting heavily upon us," said Martha.

"It may be the hand of the Lord, Miss, but it's my opinion that it is the opposition at work. The question is, what is to be done?"

"I don't see my way clear to anything, Anna, but I am going to speak my mind to my sister-in-law today, by way of a beginning," and Martha sighed, and went to the privacy of her own rooms to think.

She had a vague idea of consulting Dr. Wood about the trouble. His cynical unbelief was a shade better, in her estimation, than the doctrines of the priests; for she gave the bluff doctor credit for being honest in his unbelief, while the priests, she boldly asserted, were the reverse; for she argued that no educated, right-minded man could believe the mummery they taught, and of all their abominations, that of the confession was the greatest. She watched for the return of the carriage and intercepted her sister-in-law and her companion in the hall.

"Carmen, I wish to speak with you in private, so I will go with you to your room."

"Mrs. Maxwell is much fatigued, Miss Martha, and I think it would be advisable for her to have the services of her maid, and then lie down for a time."

Miss Martha turned around as stiff as if she revolved on a pivot, and said, grimly:

"Miss Dillon, you will find the children in the school room, I presume, your suggestions will be of value there," and she slipped her arm through that of her sister-in-law's and walked away with her.

Miss Dillon encountered Anna in the upper hall. She said:

"Go at once to your mistress, Anna; we have been out among the poor, and I know your mistress is tired, and needs you."

"And pray, Miss Governess, did your mistress give you orders to see that I attended her?" said Anna, her hands on her hips and her chin in the air.

"What do you mean, you impudent creature, by speaking to me in that manner?" said the governess, angrily.

"Impudent creature yourself, and my manner is as good as yours is, any day. Aren't you paid for staying here, as well as myself? and isn't Mrs. Maxwell your mistress, as much as she's mine? You tend to what you're paid to do, and I'll do the same."

"Anna, I shall report you at once to Mrs. Maxwell."

"Very good, Miss Papist. There's two of us to report: I, to Senator Maxwell that you have been teaching his daughter to say prayers to the devil, on beads, and have been smuggling Roman priests into the house to bewitch his wife, and beguiling her to sneak out in her own carriage pretending to visit poor folks, and then to go and tell all she ought to keep to herself and to her God, to a beggarly spy of a priest. I heard you planning it, and I told Miss Martha. Did you think you could fool me with your yarns, even if I had not overheard you talk? I know your mistress's way of visiting the poor too well. The children go with her and they carry big baskets of good things with them, and Mrs. Maxwell doesn't come home all tired out, but the better for serving the Lord. It's only folks that go out to serve the devil, that come back tired out."

"Anna," said the governess in a patronizing tone, "I shall tell the butler to take better care of the wine bottles in the future, and I excuse you, for I honestly believe you have been drinking."

"There you lie again, Miss, for you know I have not been drinking," and drawing a step nearer and looking like a virago in her anger at Miss Dillon's accusation. "It will go hard with you, if you ever make a like excuse for my plain speaking, again," and without giving Miss Dillon time to reply, Anna stalked down the hall.

Today Miss Dillon had received the first rebuff of any kind in the home of her employer. "Those two old maids have put their heads together to insult me," she thought to herself as she removed her wraps, "because they hate my religion, poor old geese, literally hissing against a church."

Martha assisted her sister-in-law to exchange her out of door attire, then said:

"Come into your sitting room, and I will order some tea, and we will have a good long talk. Somehow, I feel as if James was thinking of us this very minute."

Mrs. Maxwell made no demur, and the two ladies were soon seated in the ivory white and azure buodoir, where Mrs. Maxwell had first received the young priest. Martha, by way of opening her battery, said:

"You are not looking as well as usual, Carmen. Your ride seemingly did not agree with you."

Mrs. Maxwell sipped her tea a few minutes, then said, "O, yes; I am sure I am the better for it."

"Carmen, excuse me, but I am sure you are the worse for it. I am going to speak plainly to you: When my brother went away, he said to me, 'Martha, stand by my wife and children should any danger come to them.' The danger has come," and Martha sitting bolt upright as was her wont, put the dainty tea cup on the table with a force that threatened to shatter it.

"Yes, the danger has come in the shape of a priest of Baal. Do you think James, there," and she pointed to the portrait of the senator, "would approve of your telling all the secret thoughts of your mind to another man? Do you think my brotner would ever forgive me for sitting quietly by and letting those imps of priests come into his house and destroy his peace? No; and the spirits of our Presbyterian ancestors would cry out against it. Knowing that I was doing as my brother would have me, I have forbidden that priest to put his cloven hoof inside these doors again till James returns to take charge of his own."

"Do you mean to tell me, Martha, that you have taken it upon yourself to insult a person whom I saw fit to receive into my house? You must know that you are insulting me by such conduct."

"Should I be insulting you, Carmen, if I saw a hungry wolf trying to destroy you, and I put it out of your path?"

"Martha, you are my guest and my husband's sister, but I will not have you interfering with my religion in any way. Did you not know that your brother married a Roman Catholic, and he has never interfered with my religion?"

"Probably, because he thought it did not interfere with you. Let me ask you if his house was ever defiled by a priest till——"

"Stop! Martha. I will not listen to you," but Martha was not ready to be silent.

"Did you ever, till today, in the ten years of your married life go into the confessional? Would you have gone there today, if James had been at home? Tell me that?"

Mrs. Maxwell was angry, and withal astonished that Martha should know of her visit to the confessional.

"Who is playing the spy upon me?" she asked indignantly. "If it is a servant, I will turn him or her out of the house."

Miss Martha fearful her plain speaking would be the means of losing Anna her place, said:

"Carmen, at my request, Anna, your maid, agreed to help me save you from Rome, so when she accidentally overheard your conversation with your companion, she reported it to me believing she was doing her duty. As for turning people out of your house, you had better commence with that miserable female who is teaching my brother's daughter to pray on beads and to do all sorts of abominations, I make no doubt."

At this instant, Miss Dillon with a little premonitory tap at the door, entered the room.

"Excuse me for intruding, Mrs. Maxwell, but I was so anxious about you. You seemed so worn out with your ride. Your face is flushed and I am sure you need rest," and Miss Dillon, robed in soft trailing draperies of blue, bringing an atmosphere of repose with her, laid her cool, white hand on Mrs. Maxwell's hot forehead.

"Come and lie on the couch, and I will bathe your head with lavender water."

Mrs. Maxwell, nervous and excited by Martha's discourse, willingly yielded herself to the soothing influence of Miss Dillon, whose coming was a great relief to her. Miss Martha, hard and forbidding in person and manner, was as unfit to reason with her sister-in-law, on her religious belief, as a piece of sand paper would be to wipe the dust from a polished gem. She arose, and grimly pointing with a lean, long finger to the portrait of her brother, said in a hollow voice:

"Woe to your house, and woe to your household gods, Jamie, for the Philistines are descended upon it; and woe, to him always, who goes among strange nations and heathens, for a wife, and makes her the mother of his children," and she left the room without taking further notice of her sister-in-law and her companion.

The former indignant at her words, and the governess, even while she soothed Mrs. Maxwell and told her that the words of the spinster were not worth a thought, and that her religion was as unlovely and as hard as herself, was ready to go into convulsions of laughter as she recalled the tall gaunt figure, with short, scant skirts apostrophizing the handsome, smiling likeness of her brother.

(To be Continued.)

"IN THE CLUTCH OF ROME," is published in book form, paper cover, and can be had by sending 25 cents in cash to the AMERICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY.

POINTS FROM GUARD HILL.

They must be down pretty low. Satolli says "he looks down on the A. P. A."

The Roman Catholic church is a shrewd business firm. They always choose the grind-stone which will grind the biggest ax. If the grind-stone belongs to an "American" corporation and a semi-Roman corporation, they will choose the latter even if it does cost the public a thousand dollars more, and if the decision is between a semi-Roman and a Roman corporation they will choose the latter again and pay the extra thousand dollars of the public money all the same. They are in the race to win and there are some people who are nominal Protestants who, to grind their pocket knife (book) hope they will win.

If the Republicans cannot be "Americans," they are not too good to be dropped, there will be some Democrats who will have enough Americanism in them to fill their places. The Roman Catholic has no use for parties only as tools, and the "American movement" should not be a tool for any party.

Why did the state of New York take a stand "against the floating of foreign flags?" Simply because she was driven to it. And we may ask, why does the United States harbor an A. P. A.? Simply because they are driven to it. And it may also be asked at some time, why are the Jesuits banished from the United States? and the answer may be, "They are driven to it."

The Rt. Rev. John A. Watterson, the Roman Catholic bishop, who addressed the meeting in the Y. M. C. A., must be very careful as to his utterances at such places as these, because his words will be watched by the pope's dog-catchers, and he might slip his head into a noose, and then all he would have would be Protestant sympathy.

To the Roman Catholic pope: If you want a man who will give you no flattery, send for the Savannah man, ex-Priest Slattery.

Some more of the wealthy Protestant families have daughters to marry Roman Catholics and promise to bring up the children in the Roman Catholic faith. These families should read Aimee's Marriage, which is said to be a true story with the names changed. If it were a novel the author would have shown a great knowledge of Roman Catholic Jesuitical methods.

The A. P. A. which is being formed in Savannah, Ga., will undoubtedly be a large one and an enthusiastic one. Its great strength will be due to the Roman Catholic intolerance regarding free speech. If the Roman Catholic church wants any more vigorous A. P. A's let them copy the example set by their people in Savannah and they will have one every time. It will not be long before they will thoroughly organize the whole United States. Then I would advise them to try South America, Spain and Italy.

According to the papers "Father Metcalf" was at one time a priest in the Roman Catholic church, called "Gate of Heaven." This same Metcalf priest is associated with the Swinton History notoriety. The church now goes to ashes. Now, let all the Roman Catholic priests take this as a warning against fighting our public schools. If you want your churches to go to ashes, try to break down our school system and substitute a semi-pagan system and if a kind providence will not stop you by burning your churches I am mistaken. It is enough to cause it to lightning during a snow storm.

The Roman Catholics have a poor showing when they boast of a man's loyalty to Abraham Lincoln and the country, when immediately after the man enlisted, deserted and went to Canada. But the Irish Roman Catholics are, or seem to be, too dumb or too bigoted to consider this anything but bravery and patriotism.

The Baptists of Boston have offered their church building to the Roman Catholics because of the distruction of the Catholic house of worship by fire. Do the Baptists expect to do some active work here?

Massachusetts is ablaze with patriotic camp fires. It is surprising how many D. D. S are among the speakers. Are they all turned loose? What does it mean? I tell you the big dailies will soon be compelled to fall into line, because the Roman Catholic "soup-bowl is growing low, and the papers must live you know.

Oh, for a man that has a quill,
That is not pushed by some newspaper "pill

GUARD HILL.

CREDITORS ATTACKING PURCELL.

Members of the A. P. A. Meet With Creditors of the Late Prelate.

CINCINNATI, March 25.—There were about 300 people present at the small hall, Arbeiter building yesterday, pursuant to a call of some of the creditors of the late Archbishop Purcell, inviting members of the A. P. A. to meet and co operate with them. William List, of Hamilton, presided, and spoke. Other speakers were Mrs. Helen Trompe, of Hamilton, and Rev. J. A. Lowe, pastor of the A. P. A. congregation of this city. The tenor of the speeches was a denunciatory recital of the history of the celebrated Archbishop Purcell failure from its start up to the present moment. The result of the meeting was a memorial to Governor McKinley to use his influence to have a law passed prohibiting unincorporated banking; also the issuing of a circular to members of the Catholic church, giving a complete history of the Purcell failure to date, which the A. P. A. agrees to print and circulate broadcast all over the United States.

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