

IN THE Clutch of Rome.

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CHAPTER XX. THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY.

The weeks sped on. In the home of Senator Maxwell, perfectly regulated, refined and luxurious in every detail, nothing seemed changed by the meddling fingers of the church.

Miss Martha was much exercised in mind by the non-receipt of a letter from her brother, in reply to the one she had written him.

So Martha wrote her brother to the effect that he had no doubt received her letter of several weeks ago, warning him that things were not going straight in his household.

"In any case," she wrote, "your letter never came to my hand, for the reason that your house is filled with Jesuits and Roman priests.

St. John no longer tried to conceal from himself that the young girl with bright chestnut hair and pensive eyes, with all the attributes of the highest type of woman about her, had come between him and his priesthood.

Why, then, did this half-formed, pale girl, whose beauty compared to Ida Olney's was like that of some pale sunflower of the north, beside a gorgeous flower of the tropics, haunt him so persistently?

Even as the priest watched the love parleying of these free, wild creatures of the air, another bird, with a wild note of warning, lit in the branches of a tree over his head.

Yes, Father St. John acknowledged to himself that, priest though he was, he loved Flora Hume. He could never yield to this love in the slightest degree. It should never interfere with the labor of his life, for his vows were sacred.

So strong in the conceit of the strength of his own character, young Father St. John took to visiting informally the dainty studio, to watch the girl as she painted her pictures, or sat in the dainty parlor and talked to her of the lives of the saints, and the historic legends of the church.

At first, Flora had received the visits

of Father St. John with a painful embarrassment, which his frank, delicate manner soon dispelled, and she had gradually come to regard the visits of the young priest as a part of her life.

Her cheeks had regained their roundness, and a delicate pink came and went in them. She no longer felt ashamed to look the girl in the face, for she no longer carried a guilty secret in her bosom.

And the young priest? He saw the altered appearance of the girl whose welfare was more to him than the eternal salvation of the universe, and he drank deep draughts of self-praise, that his judicious treatment had brought health and happiness to her.

One day, business connected with the church called him a short distance from the city. Having transacted his business, he signified his intention, to those whose duty it was to drive him to the station, on his return, to walk the distance of two miles.

The sweet wild flowers grew in loving clusters, mingling their lines of color and perfume together; a line of butterflies flashed across his path, as he listlessly watched the graceful, undulating line, two of the happy fluttering things suddenly, making love signals with their pale yellow wings, flew away together.

Even as the priest watched the love parleying of these free, wild creatures of the air, another bird, with a wild note of warning, lit in the branches of a tree over his head. Close by, from a tangle of Manzanita bushes, came a fluttering and a twittering reply.

"Come back and finish the building of your home, little bird, and sing your notes of praise to Him who created us both, that you are free to carry out the great law of love He implanted in your tiny being."

And the refrain of the song, high up in the trees, seemed to say: "We love, we love! We are free, we are free!"

Father St. John looked at his watch. He had yet an hour to wait for his train. The little station stood out brown and bare a short distance away; so he sat down on a fallen tree and his thoughts grew dark and bitter.

better how to use the Creator's gift of life than we who are called His noblest work. Everything in nature cries down the vows the Church demanded of me, before she deemed me worthy to proclaim the decrees of holy, infallible Church."

The priest threw back his head and looked up to the deep blue sky above him. "What had the Universal God, the God of man, the God of the birds, the butterflies, the flowers, and the beasts, alike, to do with these vows of mine?"

The priest's soliloquy was interrupted by a sound of voices, and he beheld coming over the green fields a number of boys, with a tall man in the midst of them. The young priest arose and stood, with some curiosity, watching the motley company approaching him.

"Well, boys, you have just three-quarters of an hour to gambol in. When you hear the first whistle of the locomotive make a bee-line for the station. Now scatter."

"No, sir; I am Father St. John, of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, in San Francisco. I have been to the town, some distance back of us, on business. I am awaiting the return train. And you?"

"I am Frank Stafford, sir, also of San Francisco. I have been taking a few friends of mine out to breathe some of God's pure air. As we are both waiting for the same train, shall we walk to yonder station together?"

"With pleasure, sir," said Father St. John; "but will you tell me where you picked up those rather doubtful looking small friends of yours?"

The old gentleman laughed. "You need not be so polite, sir, in your inquiry, for we both know they are not doubtful looking at all. They look what they are—twenty young ragamuffins and vagabonds. You wouldn't care to picnic with them, now, would you?"

Father St. John colored. "Really, Mr. Stafford, besides the fact of my being a priest, I have been taught to scorn none of God's creatures, however humble, but—"

"Come, now, be honest, sir," interrupted the old man, "but you would rather that I would picnic with such as those?" Then, as he quietly slipped his arm in that of the young priest: "No offense, sir. I am what they call a crank, and cranks, like the king's jester of old, think they are privileged to say whatever comes into their heads. But, here we are at the station; let's sit on this bench out here in the sunshine, and I will tell you how I happen to be here with those friends of mine, who are rolling among the brush over there; and let me assure you that I have other friends who are more respectable and congenial, but the crankism in my nature leads me to do some strange things sometimes. So, occasionally, I go down to the wharves, and, picking out the most likely looking specimens, say:

"It's your day; come on!" "They come with a bound, I tell you, for I'm well known among the riffraff; and we walk along the streets and pick up more as we go. I throw money enough into the basket of some wizened urchin, who is selling matches or some other trifle, to buy out his stock, and say: 'Fall in; it's my treat.' In short, I pick up in various ways as many of my boon companions as I can manage at a time. Then I say: 'Boys, I am going to take you out for a little trip. Hands up for water and down for land.' To-day the land had it, and I brought them out here. I took them to a farmhouse and bought all the milk they had on hand, and let each boy drink till he could drink no more.

"I shall take them back to the city this afternoon, with a more lasting moral lesson impressed upon their young hearts than if I had taken them into a Sunday-school and read twenty pages of the Bible to them, and then preached hell-fire to them and told them that the devil was in their hearts, as a sequel.

"Whenever I go with these ragged little friends of mine I read them a lesson from God, and illustrate it by calling their attention to the green fields, the flowers, the birds, the tiny squirrels that dart across their path, and the grand blue sky over their heads, that I trust they will never quite forget, no matter how dark their path through life may be. Not that I

wish to disparage the Sunday-schools. God forbid! There is a class of children that are the better and no doubt happier for going to them regularly, but not that class; and he waved his hand in the direction of the boys.

"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.

MARIA MONK. The Nun Who Escaped From the Hotel Dieu, Montreal, Canada. Fresh Developments.

In the winter of 1890 and 1891 the celebrated Chas. Chiniquy, commonly called Father Chiniquy, and now probably the most famous ex-priest in the world was in Washington, D. C. Here he delivered a course of nineteen lectures on Romanism. He was then in his 82nd year, being now 1895, he would be 86 years old.

It fell to my lot to serve as his assistant and I was with him daily for about three weeks. Being one day alone with him in his room, I asked whether he knew anything about the story of Maria Monk and her famous book, Awful Disclosures. Chiniquy was about 26 years old at the time of Miss Monk's escape, in 1835; and I knew that he had been much in Montreal where the Hotel Dieu is situated. He replied that he did, and that one occasion, when he had become too ill to continue his arduous labors as a priest and "Apostle of Temperance," as he was often called, his bishop sent him to that very hotel to take some needed rest, saying to him: "The sisters will give you a room, and nurse you tenderly, and you will soon recover your usual health."

Upon this question, the old nun was greatly agitated and begged to be excused from answering; but on being pressed for an answer, consented, provided he would promise never to reveal anything she said until after her death. He promised, and she then stated that Miss Monk's statements in that book were true; and says she, "I have seen worse things done here than anything that she has told."

My attention was again turned to the Maria Monk affair, by seeing a little pamphlet recently published in London, Eng., by a Catholic house, endeavoring to prove that Miss Monk's Awful Disclosures were a fraud. I read the pamphlet through; but it does not seem to me to disprove any part of her story. Besides, this statement of the Rev. Chiniquy is a direct confirmation of the truth of Miss Monk's story, new evidence, which I have never before seen published.

But I have just received, most unexpectedly, some very interesting and very reliable statements from another source. While Friend Traynor, State President of the A. P. A., was in this city recently, he gave me the name of a Rev. gentleman now living in New York City, from whom valuable information concerning Miss Monk might be obtained. I wrote to him, and received substantially the following: That it was his mother, who first protected Miss Monk, when she arrived in that city after her escape from Montreal in the year 1835.

He says: "It was extremely difficult to select a refuge with any promise of safety, as spies were alert and numerous, and danger of discovery was increasing." The name of this protectrix was Mrs. Sarah W. Reeves, famous for her beauty, breadth of mind, dauntless courage, and sublimity of character, combined with such lovable traits and womanly graces as commended her for this charge in a time of great peril. Her love of justice, hatred of wrong and unflinching devotion to humanity decided the question, and watchman Hogan seized a favorable opportunity, and secretly hurried Maria Monk to Mrs. Reeve's residence where she and Mrs. Hogan welcomed her at midnight. She was immediately secreted on the top floor, previously prepared for her, which she occupied for months, where when restored to health and strength, she wrote her famous book, Awful Disclosures.

"The truths it contained were terribly emphasized by the subsequent excitement, and flood of vituperation with malignant persecution, coupled with threats of assassination."

"It is idle folly to attempt to discredit her book in the face of the venomous fury aroused, and the consternation which forced the leading minds of the Roman Catholic church into the controversy."

"Maria Monk at length tired of her captivity, and one day incautiously approached a window, and was recognized."

"That night a mob besieged the house, demanding her immediate surrender." "They were dispersed, and another mob appeared the next day."

"The third day, Fifth street from Avenue D to Avenue C was filled by a frenzied mob of howling fanatics (Roman Catholics), who threatened to raise the house to the ground, unless Miss Monk was surrendered at once. Mrs. Reeve preferred to take chances rather than surrender. So the neighbors rallied and guarded the house until Miss Monk was safely conducted to other quarters three days later. My mother often repeated this story, but had I received your inquiry five weeks sooner, I could have given some startling details," for his mother died just five weeks ago.

"Why is it that all escaped nuns tell the same story of those prisons? For my part, I should deem it truly wonderful that these escaped women should all agree so well, though wholly unknown to each other, and living in widely different times and far remote from one another. Every lawyer accustomed to sift and weigh evidence, knows well that witnesses cannot so agree in all the essentials of a story as these escaped nuns do, unless they are telling the truth."

This book should be in every family in the world. The boy or girl who has read it, will not be likely to be beguiled into the dens of Romanism. Yours truly, CHASE ROVS, 631 F St N. W., Washington, D. C.

Maria Monk's Book can be had by sending a postal or express order for 50 cents to the AMERICAN PUBLISHING CO., Omaha, Neb., or, Chicago, Ill., or, Kansas City, Mo. Order from the office nearest your place of residence.

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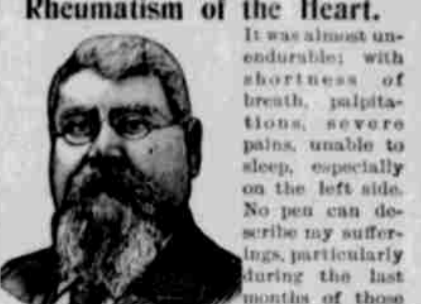
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