

THE NUN. An Episode of Convent Life

Translated from the French by Rev. M. J. P. (Thom. A. M.)

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.

The history is founded upon many facts coming to the knowledge of the author during a sojourn of some months which she made in Italy. The interior arrangements of the convent and the manner of living there have been carefully compared with the records that the superior of one of the continental convents has made, and every particular agrees with the descriptions contained in the various books that have been discovered in a Jesuit library in Italy.

The author has desired to avoid all exaggeration; every time that she has been obliged to set forth a special doctrine of the Romish church, she has taken care to cite the church authorities; she has had especial recourse to the Theological Catechism by R. G. F. P., of the Society of Jesus, published at Avignon, in 1775. This catechism was first written at Lyons in 1664, by R. P. Francis Porney, of the Society of Jesus [Jesuits] and afterwards published with the consent of the abbe of St. Just, vicar general of the order.

Some of the points of the narrative have been drawn from the history of St. Patrick, a book published at Avignon, with the approbation of Simon Ximenes, vicar general at Madrid. Of the rest the author is not at liberty to make known many of the means that she has employed to acquaint the reader with what she recounts, but she refers for the truth of her assertions to every person who, having lived upon the continent, has taken the trouble to look into this subject.

If anyone says that the Romish church has not the power to persecute that she had at the time which is indicated by the History of the Nun, he will do well to bear in mind that these facts transpired before the French revolution. If the church's persecution has not the same characteristics, it is because the power of the Romish church is restrained. Semper eadem! Such is her motto; and because the Jesuits have said in their catechism that "since its establishment the church of Rome has always been the same and will be to the end of time," we are able to believe with reason that with each renewal of power, will be renewed the desire to make a bad use of it.

The author has also consulted "Christian Researches Made in Asia," and many other modern writers, some of whom have personally experienced and have offered some facts of such a nature that it is not possible to reproduce them before the youth of a cultivated society.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.

Many accounts relating to the great Roman Catholic apostasy have already been published. Many authors have unveiled its secret practices, and, particularly, its sometime bloody oppression. But nothing approaches, I think, that which I shall relate and which concerns myself.

Born at Turin, I was educated there according to the strictest principles of the Romish church, and I entered into society a short time before the French revolution. I was left an orphan at an early age and in possession of an independent fortune; shortly afterwards the loss of an only and well beloved sister led me to the project of entering a convent.

I did not wish, however, to make this decision without having seen for myself the interior of a religious house. To obtain the intelligence I desired, I selected the convent of the village of St. Siffren at whose door I presented myself.

In the village lived a Mme. Verani, a relative and my companion in school; she invited me to pass some time at her house; I accepted, but I was unable at that time to participate in worldly pleasures as she desired.

St. Siffren is a little village with a very picturesque situation. The surroundings are very pleasant. Above the village, behind a natural terrace bordered with old chestnut trees, were reared the somber walls of the monastery of Notre Dame de Misericorde. The superior of the convent at that time belonged to one of the first families of the country.

Behind the convent was laid out a vast garden, enclosed with high walls and shaded by majestic spruce trees. The enclosure was crossed by a stream of clear water which entered and departed through grated arches.

The appearance of the convent pleased me, and to my request, Father Joachim, confessor of the establishment, replied that the superior would receive me the following week.

On the appointed day, my friend and myself proceeded to the convent. The approach to the walls filled us with a deep religious impression, so much the more profound because this society was one of those that the revolution had not yet troubled; likewise the walls, the sculptures, the paintings and all the ornaments of all sorts had preserved all their first magnificence.

A bigoted servant of the pope, I was

led to venerate even the smallest objects of this system of divine purity for so I considered everything that pertained to the church of Rome. I was thus ignorant that in order to be a religion and a nun, a woman is none the less a sinner and that the bars of a monastery have never replaced, in order to break the passions of the heart, this order of divine wisdom. "Thou shalt walkly tread in the sweat of thy brow."

The main entrance was composed of double doors, heavily ironed and set in an opening in the wall. The frame was of massive granite, polished and surmounted by a niche containing a stone statue of a religious in the custom of the order of St. Augustine, kneeling and stretching out to heaven the clasped hands. Back of the statue were engraved these words: *Miserere deus Dei in aeternum caritas.* "I will sing forever of the divine mercies."

We pulled the entrance bell and after that we looked at the statue. We heard some steps, then the noise of sliding bolts; finally the door opened.

An aged female, clothed a little like the statue, received us. She had surely been apprised of our arrival because she ushered us within without speaking; while she replaced the bolts of the door, I examined the place where we were.

It was an arched passage into which opened many doors on each side. The one nearest to us, as I learned later, led to the chapel and was used only by the priests. Beyond these doors a double grate provided with shutters, intercepted the view of the interior. But as one of the shutters was open, I saw that the passage was enlarged and became a spacious court, in the middle of which was standing a white marble cross surrounded with a railing. Finally, the portress, passing before us, opened a door which led into a little hall paved, without matting or carpet, with marbles of various patterns and ornamented with a grand painting representing a religious similar to the statue at the entrance. Under the painting we read these words: *"Santa Mater Theresa a Jesu, fontadrix, Ordinis sanctae Mariae, a Monte Carmeli."*

We seated ourselves—my friend and myself—before the grate which was covered with a curtain; it was soon drawn aside and the superior entered. At her sight my agitation was such that I was incapable of speaking; I bowed very low and it was only when she formally commanded it that I consented to be seated.

The abbess was a little woman of forty years with very dignified manners. Her black eyes surrounded with slender and arched eyebrows gave to her otherwise dull white countenance an agreeable air. Her welcome was so caressing, so attractive, that she pleased me, charming me and scattering my former fears.

"My daughter," said she to me with kindness, "you are an orphan and you desire to find in me a mother; be assured that my arms and my heart are open to you. Would that the feeble doves fleeing from a cruel and dangerous world might find their refuge in this enclosure where they might enjoy the peace which the world does not give! Here, in the celestial ark they are carried beyond the storms of life, even to that port of peace here all things will be made new."

"The church," said she, addressing my friend, "is like the ark on the bosom of the deluge. Outside is a world which perishes; within all is peace and surety. Perhaps, you may think," she continued with animation, "that we are unhappy here! Do not be deceived. Some imagine that our life is monotonous; that the hours drag heavily and that we are oppressed with *ennui*. . . . But does not the service of the world weary? Do they not suffer there privation and sadness only to find at length anguish and remorse? We watch, it is true, and we labor. But what a rich reward is that of our service! It renders us pleasing to God; it procures for us the benedictions of our holy mother, while it is the master of the world, the evil one, who gives to his worshippers his reward. What difference for us who seek the unfading crown in paying our debt of sins by our prayers, and our fastings amass for us this treasure of which the angel Raphael spoke when he said to Tobit: 'Prayer accompanied with fasting and alms is more precious than the richest treasures.'"

During this discourse, Mme. Verani scarcely dared to lift her eyes to the abbess who was expatiating at length upon the holy joys of a life devoted to works with prayers and celestial meditations. Finally, addressing herself to me with tenderness, she asked me what had led me to desire this interview. I opened to her my heart fully, even to its most hidden sentiments and in particular my desire to be for some time a boarder in her house; she refused, unless said she, I would positively express my resolution of taking the veil.

"The taking of the veil," said the abbess, "without binding you definitely to the establishment, would permit you to live with the sisters, a favor that would not be granted you in your quality of a simple boarder." "I ought to give the reason for this action," said she then to Mme. Verani; "it is necessary to preserve for this house its character of sanctity. I blame myself very much for having received, because of feebleness rather than charity, for several months, a young lady who, after having been treated here as one of my favorite daughters, has left us in an unworthy manner."

(To be Continued.)

DINED WITH BISMARCK.

Emperor William Visits the Iron Chancellor.

ONLY TWELVE COVERS WERE LAID

Bismarck's house in the city of Berlin has been the scene of the most remarkable event in the history of the world since the death of Napoleon. The visit of Emperor William to the Iron Chancellor was a most remarkable event.

Princess Bismarck, Feb. 21.—Another link has been forged in the chain of reconciliation between the emperor and the iron chancellor. The visit of Emperor William to the Iron Chancellor was a most remarkable event.

Emperor William left Berlin at 2:29 Friday afternoon and arrived about 3 o'clock. In spite of the request of the emperor that there be no demonstration, the railway station and the village were decorated with flags, bunting and flowers.

They were enthusiastically greeted. Prince Bismarck, upon leaving the castle for the railroad station to meet Emperor William, was greeted with loud applause by the crowds of people assembled. The emperor, who wore a naval uniform, stepped briskly out of the carriage when the train drew up at the platform and approached Prince Bismarck, who wore the cuirassier uniform with helmet and the gray military cloak recently presented to him by the emperor.

Upon arriving at the castle, Emperor William greeted Princess Bismarck and with the princess upon his arm the emperor proceeded to the salon. The emperor congratulated Prince Bismarck on his hearty appearance and then introduced the prince to his suite. The emperor also shook hands with Secretary Chrysler and Dr. Schweininger.

The dinner to his majesty was in private and only 12 covers were laid, neither Count Herbert nor William Bismarck being present. The emperor sat between Prince and Princess Bismarck. After dinner all conversed cordially the prince and emperor smoking. At 9 o'clock his majesty departed.

His farewell with the ex-chancellor was of the most cordial character. The prince accompanied him to his car and, before entering it, the emperor said a few final parting words. Several attempts were made by some of the on-lookers to sing the national anthem, but they were drowned by the incessant cheering of the rest of the multitude. Returning home, Prince Bismarck was almost carried off by his excited admirers, who crowded around him. A thousand persons were present at the prince's residence. All the residences in the city were splendidly illuminated.

Prince Bismarck seems to be in much better health since his reconciliation with the emperor than for a long time past. Gladstone Will Take the Field. LONDON, Feb. 21.—The Chronicle says: Mr. Gladstone will take the field against the house of lords, when he will move in a comprehensive form the total rejection of the amendments to the employers' liability bill, and adding that the measure is ended and that the lords will hardly care to carry the contest further. A great speech is expected from the premier.

Sixty Deaths Daily. RIO DE JANEIRO, Feb. 21.—The deaths from yellow fever now average 60 daily. The government cruiser Nitherooy, which was reported outside, has sailed south. The Detroit returned to the harbor. The Charleston and New York are cruising outside the harbor.

For Suppressing Anarchy. PARIS, Feb. 21.—The Gaulois asserts the British government has decided to propose to the powers the passage of international legislation in regard to the police supervision, etc., with the view of suppressing anarchy.

Attempted Assassination. LONDON, Feb. 21.—A dispatch from Vienna says: It is rumored from Belgrade that an attempt has been made on the life of the Serbian home minister, and six persons were arrested.

Drowned Accidently. COLFAX, Cal., Feb. 21.—An accident occurred here resulting in the drowning of Mrs. F. J. Adge and Mr. McDonaldson. They were fording a swollen stream on the Iowa Hill road and as they were crossing their wagon was overturned and they drowned.

FIFTY MILLIONS INVOLVED.

St. Louis, Feb. 21.—A suit filed in the circuit court is the greatest sensation in legal and real estate circles that St. Louis has experienced for years. The action is brought by the Besque Property company against Mary E. Patterson and is the first of a series of suits which will involve the titles to all the property on one side of Olive street for 20 blocks through the heart of the city, aggregating in value nearly \$50,000,000. Over 40 hours are interested and in all 80 suits will be brought. The suit arises from a dispute over the legality of a title given to a farm tract owned by and granted to Loan Baptiste Besque.

At the time of the Louisiana purchase Besque left the land to his two daughters, Marie and Marguerite, and in disposing of it but one of the heirs, Marguerite, took part, the other neither signing the deeds nor receiving any money. That purchaser afterward sold the land to various persons and it is now cut into 60 different holdings, of which Marie Patterson has one. The other holders will be sued in due time. The suit is brought by descendants of the sister Marie, whose undivided half interest was sold without her knowledge. Some of the most prominent buildings and valuable improvements in the city are on the ground in litigation.

Granted a Change of Venue.

KANSAS CITY, Feb. 21.—H. S. Lynn, against whom 15 indictments have been returned charging grand larceny in connection with the failure of the Continental Loan and Trust company, was granted a change of venue to Cass county and he has given bail for his appearance for trial there June 18. George W. Toulmin, indicted with him, and W. P. Holmes, indicted for grand larceny in connection with the failure of the Security Savings Trust company, have each given notice that they will ask for a change of venue, so that none of the bank cases will be tried in Kansas City. Darragh and Sattley will be tried in Independence March 29, the others outside the county.

Her Indian Husband Eloped.

YANKTON, S. D., Feb. 21.—Mrs. Chaska, nee Cora Flower, who was married at Cheyenne agency three years ago to a Santee Sioux named Chaska, or Samuel Campbell, is now living apart from him in a small town in southern Nebraska. Chaska, it appears, disappeared some months since and it was discovered that he had eloped with a young, buxom squaw. Mrs. Chaska, after waiting for his return for weeks, left the reservation with her half-breed children, vowing she would never live with Chaska again.

Terrible Storm in California.

SACRAMENTO, Feb. 21.—A terrible storm raged in the Sierramountains Monday night. Snow came down in great quantities accompanied by a wind of the hurricane order. Railway cuts were drifted full and traffic badly blocked. A serious accident occurred at Goldstream, where a heavy plow backed by seven large engines when running at a high rate of speed plunged into a snowbank and jumped the track at least 50 feet from the rails. Three men are missing.

Accepted a Temporary Reduction.

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Feb. 21.—The representatives of the four railroad organizations, trainmen, conductors, firemen and switchmen, affected by the abrogation of the wage agreement by President Thomas, of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis railway, finished their conference here and the old agreement was practically renewed. The men, however, agreed to accept a temporary reduction of 10 per cent until times improved so as to justify the payment of agreed wages.

Indian Killed by Officers.

LAS VEGAS, N. M., Feb. 21.—Juan Antonio Rael, an Indian suspected of having murdered John Doherty, ex-sheriff of Nora county, was shot and killed at La Cueva. Stanislaus Sandoval made oath that Rael wanted him to assist in killing Doherty. On this a warrant was issued for Rael's arrest. He fired on the officers who fired in return and killed him. He had killed two men before the Doherty murder.

Purvis to Be Resentenced.

JACKSON, Miss., Feb. 21.—The supreme court denied the motion of Attorney General Johnson to resentence the white cap, Will Purvis, who failed of execution in Marion county on the 7th of this month. Under the law Purvis can not be resentenced until the June term of the circuit court at Columbus, unless Judge Terrell sees fit to call a special term of court.

Gulf and Interstate Sued.

TOPEKA, Feb. 21.—Miss Carrie Maud Smith, who has been employed as stenographer and typewriter in the office of Auditor E. E. Carpenter, of the Gulf and Interstate Railway company, has brought suit in Justice Furry's court against this corporation and Auditor Carpenter for \$16, the balance of her last month's salary.

Paper House Closed.

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M., Feb. 21.—The book and paper house of Bullock, Brighton & Co., the largest of its kind in New Mexico, was closed under attachments served by the receivers of the suspended Albuquerque National and New Mexico Savings bank, amounting in all to \$29,000.

Two Lucky Iowa Boys.

SPIRIT LAKE, Ia., Feb. 21.—Ole and Knud Skattabo, a couple of poor boys who were raised in this county, have received notice that an uncle residing in Idaho has died and left them an estate worth about \$2,000,000.

Berlin Coming Back.

QUEENSTOWN, Feb. 21.—The steamer Berlin, having on board a number of the delayed steamship passengers, sailed for New York.

Clearly Chosen President.

NEW YORK, Feb. 21.—The American Foot Ball league met here. Joseph Cleary was chosen president.

A FUNERAL IN CHINA.

IT IS SAID TO BE THE MOST GORGEOUS SIGHT IN ASIA.

A Well Conducted and Highly Splendid Affair—The First of Its Kind in China—A Land of Ceremonials.

The most important event in a Chinaman's life is his funeral. A Chinaman's funeral is the culmination of human noise, and the Chinese are never so noisy as at a funeral. They have hearty appetites at all times, but they never eat so much as at a funeral feast. When I first lived in China, I used to find it almost impossible to distinguish between a funeral procession and a marriage procession. In the center of one the coffin and the bier are borne on the shoulders of men. In the center of the other similar men bear upon their shoulders the bride, who is in an inclosed sedan chair, and she is followed by her bridesmaids. But to the casual observer the two ends of the two processions are quite alike in every other respect. Tom-toms, red clothed coolies carrying roasted pigs and other dainties, smaller coolies carrying cheap paper ornaments of a Mongolian theatrical type—these are the invaluable elements of both processions.

The Chinese are today the most unique, the most ancient and the most misanderstood people on the earth. I say the most ancient because they are the least changed from what they were long centuries ago. The least changed? They are not changed at all. The China of today is the China of China. I am not speaking of the material, I regard them as a people apart. What have we gained in China? A strange experience—to me a pleasant one—a pound of perfumed tea, and a bale of flowered crape, for all of which we have paid right handsomely. We have been treated in the main politely, but sooner or later most of us are lured out of China, if not by the emperor, why, then by the climate.

The Chinese have at least three religions—Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. But the funeral rites of the three sects are identical. There are several reasons for this. The three religions are much alike and are all largely founded upon Indian Buddhism. Moreover, religion is a very second class affair in China. The priests of two sects often live together in the chummei way. Filial devotion is the real religion of China. All China is one huge family, and the emperor is the great father. By the way, Great Father is what the North American Indians call God. And the Chinese consider their emperor a god. There is one more reason why all Chinese funerals are greatly alike. China is a land of ceremonials, and the smallest details of these ceremonials are prescribed by the "Leke," or book of rites.

To disobey the least rule of this great national manual is a crime and a severely punished one. In two respects only does one Chinese funeral differ from another. The first is in the amount of money spent, and the second is in the period after death at which burial takes place.

The first ambition of every Chinaman is to have a splendid coffin. A poor Chinaman will half starve himself and his family for years that he may daily board a little cash toward the sum needed for the purchase of the coveted casket. When the coffin is really bought, it is brought home with great ceremony. It is given the place of honor in the house and is regarded as the most valuable piece of furniture in the establishment. Among the poorer classes it is customary to buy a very thick coffin. No self respecting Chinese family—and the Chinese are the most self respecting of all the nations—will bury a parent until they can do it with more or less Mongolian magnificence. Hence in China death by no means implies immediate burial. When a Chinaman dies, his neighbors come in and help the women of the family to make the shroud. The body is put in its coffin. Then the funeral ceremonies begin, if there is money enough. If there is not, the coffin is put back in its place of honor until the family finances look up.

The day of the death, or the day after, the relatives not living in the house and the friends come to pay the last duties of respect to the deceased. When the visitors arrive, they are shown into a room in which are all the women and children of the establishment. These latter set up a dismal howl, in which the visitors join, or to which they listen sympathetically. When the tumult of even a Chinese funeral begins to subside, the guests are ushered into another apartment, where the men of the house give them tea and refreshment. The refreshment varies according to the means of the family. In the house of the rich it is a dinner. After the visitors have drunk and eaten, they are bowed out by one of the kinsmen of the dead.

A well conducted Chinese funeral is the most gorgeous sight in Asia. It may seem to us a little costly, but that is a mere matter of taste. And I, who make bold to like the Chinese, cannot claim that they have a superabundance of taste. At the front of the funeral procession walk the noisy musicless musicians. Then come coolies—bearing the insignia of the dignity of the dead, if he had any. Next walk more men carrying figures of animals, idols, umbrellas and blue and white streamers. After them come men carrying pairs of perfume. Just before the coffin walk honzas—Chinese priests. Over the coffin a canopy is usually carried. The casket is borne by about a score of men. Immediately behind the coffin walk the children of the deceased. The eldest son comes first. He is dressed in canvas and leans heavily upon a stout stick. He is supposed to be too exhausted by grief and fasting to walk without the aid of this staff. The other children and relatives follow this chief mourner. They are clothed in white linen garments. White is the mourning color of the Danes, of the Burmese and of the Chinese. The women are carried in chairs in the Chinese funeral procession. They sob and wail at intervals and in unison.

When the burying place is reached, the honzas begin chanting a mass for the dead, and the coffin is put into the tomb. When the coffin is laid in its final position, a large oblong white marble table is placed before the tomb. On the middle of it is set a censer and two vases and two candlesticks, all of an exquisite workmanship as possible. Then they have a paper cremation! Paper figures of men, horses, garments and a score of other things are burned. They are supposed to undergo a material resurrection and to be useful to the dead in the Chinese heaven. The tomb is sealed up or closed, and an entertainment concludes the ceremony at the grave. The forms of Chinese tombs vary somewhat according to the province in which they are built, and very much according to the means of the relative who undertakes the expense.—Pall Mall Gazette.

PAUL MORPHY'S CHESSMEN.

Wrought of Gold and Silver, Exquisitely Carved, and Cost \$25,000.

A set of chessmen is usually an inexpensive thing, but it may cost as much as a grand piano. Of course you can get a small set of ordinary boxwood chessmen for a few dollars, a fine set of boxwood and ebony for \$12 or \$15, and a set of Statton chessmen of the best African ivory, large size, for \$75. And these are all plain sets.

If you indulge in fancy carving and have your set made to order from a special design and finely mounted, it may cost anywhere from \$100 to \$200. For a really expensive set, however, you will probably choose precious metals, and then there is absolutely no limit to the cost.

Probably one of the finest sets ever made was the set presented to Paul Morphy in 1859 by friends in this city and Brooklyn, which is now owned by a New York merchant. The pieces are of solid gold and silver, carved and chased in exquisite designs. They are mounted on bases of red coral, the gold pieces representing civilization, the silver ones barbarism. The gold king is a statuette 4 inches high, wearing three crowns. He is in royal robes, bears an imperial globe upon his head, a sword and shield in his hand, while a crown and scepter lie at his feet.

The bishops are in full panoply, while the knights are represented as prancing horses, with eyes of rubies. The castle follows the Chinese design, being an elephant bearing a howdah, on which is perched an eagle with outspread wings. Both elephant and bird have eyes of brilliant rubies. The pawns weigh five ounces, or as much as 50 gold dollars. The pawns are statuettes 2 1/2 inches high, representing Roman soldiers.

The silver pieces are equally ornate in design. The king is represented as a leader like Almir, wearing a bull's hide and winged helmet, while his shield bears the inscription, "Liberty." The other pieces are similar in design to the gold, except that the pawns are rude warriors armed with clubs.

The board has a body of rosewood, inlaid with silver. The squares are of mother of pearl and ebony. In each corner is a laurel wreath of gold encircling the letters P. M. An inscription on one side reads as follows:

To Paul Morphy, A Recognition of His Genius and a Testimony of Regard From His Friends and Admirers In New York and Brooklyn, New York, 1859.

On the other side of the board is a list of the 14 champions, all from different countries, whom Morphy had defeated. In every detail the set is finished as finely as possible, the figures being chased under a microscope. It was made by a New York firm of silversmiths and cost \$2,500. It was presented to Morphy, fresh from his European triumphs, in the chapel of the University of the City of New York, Hon. John Van Buren, son of the president, making the presentation speech. After Morphy's death it was sold with his effects in New Orleans and so came back to this city.—New York Mail and Express.

The Higher Education.

She was a young woman of many lovable qualities and, withal, something of a society favorite. She had a beautiful face, a splendid figure, a majestic carriage and a captivating way with men. Moreover, she was said to be exceedingly wise, in proof whereof she was wont to exhibit a parchment document, written in Latin and tied in a mass of many colored ribbons, which, as the only one who could do so, she was in the habit of translating into English sentences, setting forth the social, economic, mathematical, medicinal, legal and other questions. Wherefore this young woman was much sought after by men, for they argued, "Truly, she must be a woman of unbounded wisdom and common sense."

Now, it came to pass that a celebrated actor came to town, and this young woman, no more eager than a thousand other young women, toggled herself out in a dress of many yards in extent, which began at the waist, after the manner of the modern fashion, and with her very hairy poodle, tied up in a huge woolen rug, went to the theater. She wore a handkerchief over her head in the carriage which took her to the play, and with a rare exhibition of her great common sense, which all admired, she threw a silk shawl over her shoulders, so that if she must shiver she could at least do it in a becoming way.

She rode back from the theater in the same manner. That night she proved that Pido might not have taken cold, and four days later they buried her—a victim of pneumonia.—Donahoe's Magazine.

Samaritan Gulfs.

"One bitterly cold day," said an old traveler, "was a shipload of us—were lying at the wharf at Astoria. The river was frozen, and we were waiting for the ice to break. We were peering with great interest at the water. There is now we got to watching the crows. These poor things were dying of starvation, and they could not resist the temptation to hover about the ship. They could not get the food out of the water, but stood on the blocks of ice and looked enviously down into the waves at the drifting bits of refuse. The poor black wretches could not stand still on the ice, for their feet would have frozen fast, so they shifted from one leg to another in a manner which gave them the appearance of dancing. All about, with screams and flapping of wings, flew a flock of gulls, snatching the food from the water and fighting in fierce good fellowship. Soon we noticed a sort of understanding between the black birds and the white ones, for while the sable birds pranced and danced the sea gulls surrounding them picked up bits of food and deposited them within reach of their starving neighbors."—New York Ledger.

The Horseshoe as a Mascot.

The superstition that associates the horseshoe with good luck is very old. It is said to prevail not only among English speaking people, but in all races of Europe and Asia. Antiquarians are undecided whether its origin has to do with the material from which the horseshoe is made or with its shape. Some writers on this subject have surmised that the lucky qualities attributed to the horseshoe were derived from its fancied resemblance to the halo pictured about the heads of saints, but it is known that the superstition certainly antedates Christianity.—St. Louis Republic.

The Test of His Sincerity.

She—Do you really and truly love me, Harry? He—Love you? Why, I even have a fondness for that nuisance of a brother of yours. She—Oh, Harry! You have made me so happy!—Boston Transcript.