

IN THE Clutch of Rome.

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CHAPTER X X. THIS RAVENOUS CURCH.

In Washington, Senator Maxwell was performing the duties of his position as United States senator. The letters he received from his wife were full of affection and domestic happenings...

A chamber-maid was arranging Senator Maxwell's rooms one morning, when a nurse-maid having the charge of a little girl belonging to some lady in the hotel, came into the room for a social gossip.

"Oh, Mary, whatever shall we do? This horrid child has thrown one of Senator Maxwell's letters into the fire."

The easy going lady of the chambers walked leisurely over to the table, pushed the rest of the letters and papers out of the reach of the child, saying softly:

"Oh, sure, what does the loss of one letter amount to among so many? What's this you were telling me about your madam getting notes from Col. Ganger, unbeknown to her husband?"

Thus perished Martha's note of warning. Cardinal Pizani sat waiting for an expected visitor in the reception room of his archiepiscopal residence. The room was large, square and lofty.

The cardinal felt that the crops so carefully sown and watched, and cultivated, were on the point of yielding a fruitful harvest. The celebration of the centenary of the American hierarchy, and the first Catholic congress ever held in America, was to take place in two days.

Long had it been in the mind of the Italian, and the subtlety of a mind cultivated and enriched by the severe asceticism of the body, was manifest in the planning of this very congress, for it was to be a mingling of priests and laymen. The church must move on with the age.

The Italian, while he saw the policy of the movement did not like it. It was against every principle of the church. Blind and unquestioning obedience to the king and prince, and the nobles of the hierarchy, was the first lesson the church taught its children, but in Protestant and Republican America, the church must stoop a little to conquer.

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Cardinal Pizani had so managed the convention, that it should meet on a presidential year, and while the United States senate was in session. Musing on all these things, his eminence sat patiently awaiting the archbishop of California, for already the visiting prelates and clergy were in the city.

At last, the archbishop carefully unfolded the political plot. The senator, in politely, ironic terms, declined the honor of being made a center for the priestly plot to revolve around. In re-

ply to some remark of the archbishop's, the senator said: "Don't you think you priests rather overrate your power in this country?"

"No, senator, we priests know with tolerable accuracy the distance our cats can jump."

The senator colored. "I decline, sir, as I am not a Catholic to become one of your leaping cats."

The archbishop warmly abjured such an imputation. Then, in his quiet, low monotone, which had often carried conviction to the ears that were deaf to loud thunders of eloquence, he said: "I will tell you, why, in this particular case, at least, we do not overrate our power."

Monday next, a congress composed of Catholic laymen, from every large city in America, will meet in this city. The majority of this great body, of course, will be composed of representatives of the cities of our union. San Francisco will be represented by three delegates.

And he flashed a meaning glance from his steely eyes at the man, he felt sure of winning in the end, as he said: "Let us grant, purely for the sake of argument, that you favor this proposition of mine, and wish to become president of the United States."

Heaven seemed to smile on the morning of the celebration of the centenary. No snow had fallen for a week, and the weather had remained clear and cold, and the sleighs went flashing by, or were drawn up at convenient places for their occupants to watch the procession of prelates and priests, as they marched according to their rank.

Thus, the procession formed a square of brilliant color, as they emerged from the door of the cardinal's residence to the entrance of the cathedral. With the tread of royalty itself, the two princes of the American church, enveloped in dazzling scarlet, and preceded by a cloth of gold-robed cross bearers, with their purple vested court of bishops, stepped from the great portico, down the marble steps, between double lines of guards with the papal colors and banner of America intermingled, and the helmets and sabers of the guards of honor, glittered with the reflection of the winter sun.

So onward, to the temple of the Lord, moved the scarlet-robed cardinals, and the purple-draped bishops, and the white-surplined priests, and the acolytes bearing the trains of the royal vestments, and the golden-robed cross-bearers; for the remembrance of how the poor Saviour marched, foot sore and weary, carrying his heavy, wooden cross, must be kept ever before His royal followers, lest they become puffed up with pride or vain gloriolousness.

Senator Maxwell had been taken by surprise, when the archbishop of San Francisco had called upon him at his rooms in the hotel; for though they were men of prominence in the city of their mutual home, they were far apart in every interest of life, and had only a speaking acquaintance.

Archbishop O'Connor was well informed, and he was an intelligent talker, and the two gentlemen were soon in an animated discussion on the great questions of the day. Very artfully, the prelate led the conversation up to the presidential nomination, so soon to take place, and when the prelate, after a few obscure hints, proposed that the senator should think of himself as a candidate, the senator thought the prelate was pleased to have a little pleasanter at his expense; but when the prelate assured him that he never was more in earnest in his life, he was puzzled to know why this man, supposed to be entirely devoted to the regulation of the spiritual life of the people, should show so great an interest in affairs temporal.

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congress of laymen shows. They have found it a correct thing to pay some deference to their enlightened American adherents."

"I have no sympathy with religious intolerance," said the first speaker, "for, I think, if there is anything a man or woman should have perfect liberty in, it is his or her religious views; and, for that reason, I believe in leaving religion entirely out of the affairs of the government."

"We will grant," said the second gentleman, "that the Catholics are the most dangerous, on account of their allegiance to one poor human being, whom, the moment a body of men, like himself, elect him pope (and by the way, I'll bet there's lots of holy wire-pulling before he gets there) becomes endowed with a power over Heaven and earth."

"But didn't the Methodists send a petition to one of our newly elected presidents, asking him, for the sake of religious decorum and for the good morals of the nation, according to their standpoint, to dispense with the time honored inaugural ball?"

"Yes, I believe they did," said the other, "but the ball rolled on, and I warrant you now, if the procrandists had full swing, they would never put a man in office till a solemn body of pre-ordained had sat upon him and determined whether his seat in the next world was assured; and the Baptists would immerse him from head to heel, and so on, it would go through all the catalogues of religion. By the way, did it ever occur to you, that religion and christianity are two widely different things?"

"Yes," said the other, as they left the room. Senator Maxwell was conscious that he could have told the gentlemen something that would have strengthened their convictions regarding the danger of allowing any religious power to handle the reins of government. That evening, impelled by an impulse he could not resist, he joined the immense throng of people pouring into the cathedral. It was with some difficulty, he found a seat in the crowded gallery. The senator was like the rest of the world, impressed with the grand scenic effect produced by this religious display.

The high altar with its jeweled symbols was ablaze with lighted candles, and on either side, on a richly canopied dais sat the cardinals in their vivid, scarlet robes, and a purple robed bishop, with a jeweled mitre on his head, and a richly gilded crozier in his hand, was chanting the pontifical vespers. The dark clothed congregation brought into strong relief the purple ranks of the bishops, and the white-surplined priests, who lined the front and sides and filled the aisles of the vast cathedral; and over all the white and gold of the dome resplendent with incandescent electric lights.

As Senator Maxwell watched the studied gestures of the richly vested priests and acolytes at the altar, the significant words of the prelate, who formed a part of the spoken mass of color far down below him, came floating to him in the subtle fumes of the burning incense, and were wafted to him in the peals of melody from the organ. The vesper service came to an end, and with the conferring of the papal blessing, the centenary of the Catholic hierarchy was over in America.

As Senator Maxwell walked back to his hotel, he instinctively went out of his way to pass the White House. Long rays of light from the windows glistened on the frozen snow. He looked long upon the gleaming white mansion, and began to imagine himself its master; to have his name indelibly engraved on the register of its tenants, for after ages to read, to have his descendants point to his name engraved on this national roll of honor, with as much pride of ancestry as the proudest scion of royalty.

"All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

And what worship, after all, had that crafty envoy demanded of him? In effect, his words had been: "We are ready to confer upon you the highest gift the nation has to give. All the return we ask is that you will allow your wife, who is already a Catholic, to come back in full communion with us, and to pledge yourself to us in secret, that once in the presidential chair, you will use the power with which we have invested you, to advance in every way our Catholic interests."

Ah, but his beloved wife! Well he knew what a tyrant her religion was. Would it ever come between their hitherto undivided lives? Horrible thought. Once in the power of this ravenous church, would she not demand that he give his children to her? Would not his wife, once more under the influence of the crafty priesthood, herself demand that these children be given to her? No; his wife, for love of him, had defied the curse of the church, her priests and her own mother. What had he to fear now, for the years had added to, and not taken away from their love. He could afford to risk something to be president of the United States, and why not meet craftiness and subtlety with its own weapons? After all, one form of christian piety was as good in the sight of God as another, and once in the presidential chair, he knew

he had stamina enough to keep in check any injudicious meddling of this particular one, in the affairs of the nation, or in his own domestic circle.

Senator Maxwell felt very confident that with the united strength of this political church he stood a greater chance of receiving this gift from the people than any eligible man of his party, for he was no figure head in the senate chamber, and his speeches were listened to with flattering attention by his audiences, and commented on freely and favorably by the press, and if he used his wife's religion as an agent to reach the highest pinnacle in the United States, it would not be the first time in the history of the world that religion and ambition stood shoulder to shoulder. So on through the long hours of the night he lay sleepless on his bed, arguing to himself for and against the great question of his life. The eyes won the day. He would announce himself a candidate for the nomination, and as Archbishop O'Connor boarded the train en route for San Francisco, when the congress was over, he thought he saw the assured future of the church shining blindingly bright in the clear distance.

Cardinal Pizani was more than satisfied with the results of the congress, and he plainly saw the papal throne standing beside the presidential chair. "Ah, yes," mused the cardinal, when the last of his guests had left his home, and the quiet routine of his life began again, "this congress has shown our great strength, and given us more, and when we have quite pushed this Protestant president into the chair, who shall say nay to anything we may wish to undertake? Not he, or— and the descendant of the Borgias if the thought half formed in his fiery brain, and picked up a paper from a table near him, which had been placed before him by one of the priests of the household.

(To be Continued.)

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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 on 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." While he was there a very old nun often came into his room to minister to his wants; and one day he asked her whether she knew anything of the story of Maria Monk. She replied that she was well informed on that subject, and had read her book, "Awful Disclosures." "Well now," says Chiniquy "were you here during the time when she claims to have been here?" "Yes," she said, "I was here and I knew her well." "Then," says he, "I wish you would tell me whether the awful statements she has made of deeds done in this nunnery were true."

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. Reeves'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 raze the house to the ground, unless Miss Monk was surrendered at once. Mrs. Reeves 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.

"The words quoted are as I received them from the son of this heroic mother. If Miss Monk was not an escaped nun, why did the priests stir up Romish mobs to recapture her? And if those convents are not places of lewdness and wickedness, why did Pope Innocent VIII. publish a bull demanding reformation in monasteries and other religious places, and declare that 'members of monasteries and other religious houses lead a lascivious and truly dissolute life.'"

Why is it that all escaped nuns tell the same story of those prisons? For my part, I should deem it truly wonderful that those 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, CHAS. ROY, 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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