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PEARL OF THE OAKS.

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BY MARY ROWENA COTTER.

PART SECOND.

[Continued from last week.]

XII.

"There were tears in her bright eyes, but Mellissa kissed them away and proceeded to the story, revealing much she would not have told to anyone but this dear young girl who seemed so much like a sister to her, but omitting what might grieve her and softening the sad parts which she must tell. The story complete was:

In the morning James had had no thought of leaving home until after the interview with his father in which he had been informed that he was expected to be ready to accompany him the next day. Being unable to decide how to act he had intended to remain with his mother for a time, but now found that the only course for him was to leave before his father. Fearing that it might be many months, perhaps years, before he could return his thoughts naturally turned toward Melissa, who would certainly have many admirers during his absence. Young as she was he could not go away without telling her of his love and asking her to marry him if he lived to come back. This occurred to him during his drive in the morning and not caring to meet Mrs. Tone he whispered to her as he left her at her own door that he wished to meet her at Dora's Cabin in the evening.

The fore part of the evening he spent on the veranda with the family, but a short time after Marie, who was obliged to retire early, left them he also bade them a pleasant good night and went to his room; but he did not remain there long and on his way out, seized with a sudden desire to bid his darling farewell at any risk, he stepped into her room, but she was asleep. So pale was she that had it not been for the gentle breathing he would have thought her dead, and for a moment his courage failed; then he bent over her and pressed a kiss on the sweet innocent face. The full moon shone across his pathway, making it almost as light as day as he wended his way toward Mr. Tone's negro quarters. Melissa was seated in the low chair as before with Meg's baby in her arms, but instead of watching her through the window as he had done two weeks ago, he boldly entered and taking the little fellow in his arms kissed the brown face for the sake of the father whom he had loved so dearly; then speaking a few cheering words to the mother promised that if the slaves were not freed he would not rest until he found Jack and brought him home.

"God bress you, Mas'r James," exclaimed Dora from her corner, "you always was a gude boy an' you wouldn't had him sold if you'd bin home," James told her that he would have done all in his power to have prevented it and bidding them both to keep up their spirits, trust in God; and asking their prayers in his own behalf, informed them that he was going to join the Federal army. Another heartfelt, "God bress you," went up from the old woman's lips with a promise to say the rosary for him every day until he returned. "It don't make much difference to me, if de niggers are freed, or not, 'cause de Lawd'll soon take me home, but I'd like ter lib to see dese young uns free."

"I hope you will, Dora," he said and live many years more to enjoy your own freedom; but come, Melissa, we must be going now for there is no time for delay."

As he bade them good-bye, the old negress' hand was laid in blessing on both their heads as she said that she would pray for him to return home safely to marry Miss Lissy." Before the blushing girl could answer they were alone on their way homeward.

From the clear blue sky the moon seemed to shed a silvery halo around their heads as they walked alone. Dora had broken the ice so he had found it easier to say what he had to tell her. There were no gushing sentiments of passionate school boy love, no grand compliments as to the loviness of her person and character; none of those silly flatteries which some men are apt to bestow upon one woman to-day and too often, perhaps, be ready to repeat to-morrow to some ansuspecting victim who happens to take their fancy and is willing to give her heart into their keeping; no, there was none of this; but the words he spoke in plain, simple language were far more eloquent, for they came from the depths of a sincere, manly heart. The guileless Marie might have listened to every word without a blush as did the innocent Melissa to whom they were addressed, and who in childlike trustfulness promised that no matter what happened she would remain faithful to him. When they reached the two paths, one leading to the house the other to the chapel, both as if impelled by a secret voice turned on the latter, continuing their pleasant talk until the door was reached. Without a word Melisia took from her pocket the key, opened the door and led him to the altar where he knelt while she lit the candles. She returned and knelt by his side, and with the light of the candles blended with the moon-light which streamed through the stained windows falling in their happy faces they recited the Rosary and Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Before they arose from their knees Melissa took from her neck the gold medal she had worn since her first communion day, and putting the chain around his neck said, "Wear this James, in remembrance of me, and may our Immaculate Mother watch over you and keep you from every danger."

"Thank you, Melissa," he said, pressing the sacred treasure to his lips, "and may this be a talisman which shall keep me in remembrance of our home in Heaven where there will be no more parting and no more war."

"God grant we may both reach that Home in safety," murmured Melissa as she proceeded to extinguish the lights.

They were at the door now and James looking sadly back at the altar where he had had so often knelt to receive the Bread of Angels said, "I am sorry, Melissa that we cannot kneel there together to receive Holy Communion and the blessing of the priest before I go, but you will remember me in your next communion, won't you, dear?"

"Yes, James, I hope the time will come when we can have Mass here often. How happy the people must have been when your saintly old grand-uncle was here."

I was not old enough at the time to remember much about it; but I know our people were very happy in having the sacred privilege of attending the Holy Sacrifice every day and receiving the Sacraments often; but things have changed since then."

"How I would like to have lived here when Lucy Tone and little Marie of whom I have so often heard were living How happy papa must have been with them," and she sighed as she thought of the sad man whose life seemed a burden.

"He was very happy then, but those good old times may return for some of us yet, and if his youth cannot be recalled we will do all in our power to brighten his life; he paused and looked sadly around, for he knew that Melissa agreed with him in being unwilling to throw any censure on the woman who had cast so dark a shadow over his friends life. When he spoke again he said: "I often feel, Melissa, that this little chapel, which the saintly Lucy Tone has left as a monument, is the embryo of what will sometime be a flourishing parish church with a resident priest."

"I hope so, but if I have any control here, Lucy's chapel may be enlarged, but I shall never have it removed."

James consulted his watch and finding it later than he had thought said: "There is little time to delay, Melissa, as I must catch the midnight train, so good-bye, dear, and do not forget to pray for me" He held her hand only for a minute, pressed a loving farewell kiss on her lips and was gone.

She had kept up until the last, smiling on him as he looked in her bright blue eyes; but when he on whom she had always looked as a brother but now as something dearer, had turned away, she stood weaping for the uncertain fate to which he was going. With her tears was mingled deep admiration for the fine broad shouldered manly figure which walked so proudly away. It was well for her that there was no foreshadowing of what he would be when she saw him again.

XIII.

"What, my boy, back so soon," and Mr. Perkins arose with a smile of welcome to greet James as he entered the office on his return from home.

"Yes, sir; I told you when I left that I would return in a few days and did you think I would break my word?"

"I have never had a reason to doubt you James, but during these troubled times people are not always able to do as they agree."

"But I would have returned to Washington at the risk of my life."

"Which I hope you were not called upon to do, but did you encounter any dangers on the road?"

"None on the road; but,—he hesitated.

"What is the trouble, my boy? I know there is something, and as an old friend of your father can you not trust me?"

James hesitated for he doubted whether it would be safe to speak what was on his mind. "An old friend of your father." These words at any time would have been a reasurance by which his confidence could have been most easily won; but now it was different and more unfortunate words could not have been spoken; for might not the course he had persued cause trouble between himself and this Southern gentleman who on his father's account had taken such an interest in him?

"Why do you hesitate?" Do you not know that I am deeply interested in the son of my old friend and if it is in my power to assist you I will be only too willing?"

He spoke so kindly that James resolved at all hazzards to tell him the truth and then if called upon to do so to sacrifice even the friendship of this good man for his country. "You are willing to help the son of your old friend, but would you still be my friend if you knew that I had turned my back on my own father and disregarding his advice had run away from home?"

"It depends upon your motives if they are just I might; but I hope it has not been so bad as that."

"Unfortunately, it has."

"Please explain, for I can see but one just reason for the son of Peter Levimore to leave his good father's home.

"In unfaltering tones James told all that had happened, shielding as much as he could and telling what a severe trial it had been to leave home as he did, but for the sake of his own honor he could not have done otherwise.

"I know it was hard for you; I know it when your father has always been so kind to you," said Mr. Perkins warmly grasping the young man's hand while his own trembled with weakness caused by emotion," but you are a brave boy, and may God bless you." It was more than James had expected and it was several moments before he could find voice to say, "Thank you Mr. Perkins, then you will not withdraw your friendship from me?"

"No for I believe you did what was right and you will have my support."

"Thank you, I did not dare expect so much from a Southern gentleman."

"Though I belong to the South I have seen too much of the curses of slavery to approve of it and from the beginning of this war my heart has been with the North."

"Strange, I never heard you say anything about it."

"Good reason why. When an old friend entrusted his son to my care I would not betray his confidence by trying to instill in the mind of that young man ideas which I knew would displease his father."

"You were right; but now that there is an understanding between us I hope that it will not be long ere you can let me go to enlist in the Federal army."

"Do you really wish to go?"

"Yes, it is my greatest ambition."

"Go then at once, and if you cannot have your father's blessing I give you mine."

"Can you spare me?"

"Yes, for such a noble cause."

"I would deem it almost a treason to keep a young man in my office when his country needed his service as it does now."

Three weeks later Mr. Levimore, who not without some difficulty, had succeeded in leaving his comrades to go to Washington, entered Mr. Perkin's office and asked for his son, but was surprised to learn that he had gone with Gen. Grant's troops several days before. Had death robbed him of the pride of his heart he could not have been more grieved than to learn that his boy had indeed turned traitor; and this made him more hostile than ever toward the North.

(To be continued.)

TWENTIETH CENTURY PARTY.

On Wednesday evening last Council 23, C R. & B A., held a successful Twentieth Century party. Progressive pedro occupied the attention of the guests until 10 o'clock, when the dancing began. Koesterer's orchestra furnished the music.

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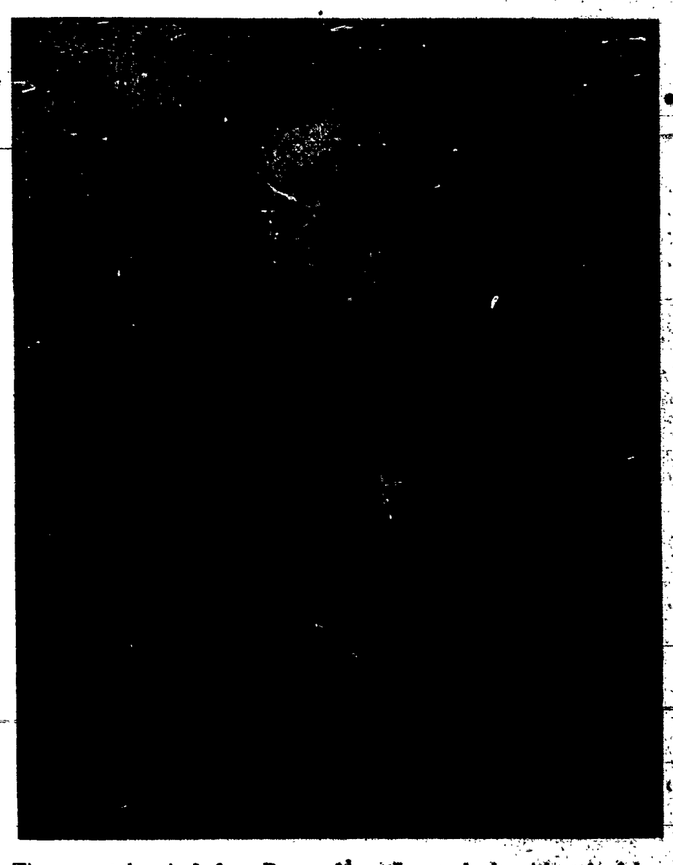
Welcome Home.

Bishop McQuaid Given an Enthusiastic Reception.



The expected arrival from Rome of Right Rev. Bishop McQuaid, who has just paid his ad limina visit to the vatican, brought a large crowd to the Central depot last Tuesday evening. The train, which arrived on time, was met by the Knights of St. John regiment, Col. Schlick commanding, who acted as a guard of honor to the bishop, priests and trustees of the various churches. The procession then proceeded to the Cathedral. The church was full of people, young and old, rich and poor, all moved by the desire to see their Bishop, and to do him reverence. The organ pealed forth glorious music; the Stars and Stripes and the Papal flag were resplendent in the blaze of many lights; the whole atmosphere was that of high festival The bishop took his place on the throne on the Gospelside of the altar. In the mitre and cope upright under the weight of his well nigh four score years, he looked like a patriarch prince. The long journey twice across the ocean has not bowed his head or deepened a line in his benignant face.

Father Hickey stood up within the altar rails and, facing the Bishop addressed him in the following words:

"Right Reverend Bishop: Since you last stood in this sanctuary your travels have extended over many thousand miles, a voyage liable to the usual calamities and changes incident to travel. Realizing these truths, we feel that we must indeed send up a "Te Deum" and thank God that He has brought you back to the diocese, strong and full of health, to take up your work.

"It would ill become me to speak in your presence words which would seem to be praise. Before your priests and people, thank God, looking over the 33 years of your episcopate of the diocese of Rochester, that He has blessed this diocese in its infancy, growth and developement with the paternal care of one who has always given a strong example of unswerving devotion, steadfastness and loyalty to all that belongs to God's house. To-night, we, your priests and people, stand before you to say that where you lead we will follow.

"You will go forward as the father and pastor of this whole diocese and we, your children, will be always ready to listen to your words. We will follow the noble example you have set us during these years and hope that God may bless your work for many years to come. We pray that He will give you the strength and vigor with which He has blessed you in the past, so that the diocese of Rochester may know for many years to come what it is to have the same true, devoted father."

Bishop McQuaid rose and took his stand at the side of the sanctuary nearest the throne and in a clear deliberate voice spoke to his people:

"Reverend Fathers and Beloved Children.

"I come back with a joyful and a proud heart. I come back full of thankfulness and gratitude to the good Lord whose care has followed me everywhere. I did not look for this demonstration of your kindly regard and affection. I thought to enter my home as of old and there take up the work that was never laid down. For in all my journeyings and in those days when I was far from you, my mind and my heart were still near you.

"I cannot express the feelings of my soul as you come forward with the affection of children to welcome the old bishop home. God has blessed my work during the 33 years I have lived in your midst. I know that His blessing has come from the prayers and genial co-operation of all my people, priests and people alike, without whose glad helpfulness, in vain would have been my struggles and endeavors.

"I dare not speak of what this diocese is, lest I should seem to be praising myself. But go where I would, I saw nothing to exalt me and make my soul glad, so much as what I know to be here in Rochester—work that is being done; the steady and sure progress that is going on, not alone in this cathedral parish but in all the parishes of this diocese. We have indeed a united priesthood and a united people. If the priests lead, why, you, the dutiful people of the diocese of Rochester, all who have heard the name of religion, have followed their guidance. If God has chosen to make me the humble instrument of His will; if He has chosen to give me length of days, His will be done.

"I thank you with a grateful heart for this testimony of your love and appreciation of my work. I come back to go away no more. I come back to lay my old bones down among you and yours, when the good Lord chooses to call me as I hope He will one day to Himself.

"In my travels there was one occasion when you were all with me. It was that day when, in the Vatican, I approached the presence of the supreme head of our church, Christ's vicegerent upon earth, the infallible guide to bishops and priests and people. I poured fourth my sentiments of veneration and love and before I would rise from my knees I made my petitions, only a few. 'Bless,' I said, 'Holy Father, my diocese of Rochester; bless my fathers; bless the good nuns, who give their lives for the honor and glory of Christ; bless my children and bless my people.' And the holy old man, reaching out his hand, with bright intelligence flashing from his eyes, gave these blessings and spoke words of consolation and gave me messages to bring back to you.

"On my second visit when I was about to leave Rome, I said: 'Holy Father, now I am to leave Rome, I ask this favor, that [illegible] your name and by your authority give the apostolic benediction to my people. He questioned me [illegible] my people, about my schools, [illegible] inquiries and seemed interested [illegible] everything that concerned the [illegible] Then, when I brought in some [illegible] and two countrymen from [illegible] he poured out his soul to us. O[illegible] the priests was an invalid and [illegible] Holy Father laid his hands upon [illegible] The poor priest, who had come in [illegible] a magnificent Latin speech, was [illegible] amazed that he was not able to [illegible] a word.

"All my work in Rome was most satisfactory. Every Cardinal I called upon received me with the greatest affability, and the head of the College of the Propaganda complimented me on the magnificent showing he was able to make of the state of religion in the diocese of Rochester.

"To-day what shall I say of the work that is yet to be done? I would rather die in hard work than sit down in ease and comfort. I hope the day of my departure cannot be far off; but with your generous help the close of my days shall be as bright as the midday of my administration. The joy and pride of my life are the 10,000 children in the Catholic parochial schools of Rochester and the 16,000 in the schools of the whole diocese. That was the aim of my life.

"I thank you with my whole heart for your welcome. When the day of separation comes it will not be in sorrow. When a soldier dies on the battlefield it is a cry of joy that goes up."

The vast congregation was deeply moved by the bishop's words, which were spoken with the simplicity of absolute earnestness. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was then given. The choir, assisted by a number of Polyhymnians and some lady singers sang Gounod's beautiful "Salve Rerum" and an impressive "Pange Lingua," from the pen of Prof. [illegible] who conducted, Miss [illegible] O'Loughlin presiding at the organ. The people all knelt to receive the bishop's blessing and afterwards joined heartily in singing Haydn's [illegible] hymn, "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name."

TWO PRIESTS INJURED.

On Their Way to Attend a Reception to Bishop McQuaid.

Passenger train 103 on the [illegible] road was derailed near Atlanta last Tuesday. Rev. Father [illegible] Bath is reported to have been injured internally, and Rev. [illegible] Kennedy of Hammondsport slightly injured. They were on their way to Syracuse to attend a reception to Bishop McQuaid upon his return from Rome. The accident was caused by a switch bolt falling out and the train was half way across the [illegible]

COMUS CLUB.

The annual reception of the Comus Club will be held Wednesday [illegible] Powers hall. The committee, [illegible] Hunted, have all been busy [illegible] receptive gathering. [illegible] Lambach's orchestra [illegible] will supply the music, [illegible] will be served at the [illegible] The patronesses of the ball are [illegible] William T. Bennett, Mrs. [illegible] Finucane, Mrs. John P. [illegible] James F. McCauley, Mrs. [illegible] Nersey, Mrs. Daniel [illegible] Mrs. M. A. Stupp, Mrs. [illegible] Cunningham, Mrs. [illegible] Mrs. K. C. Mahon, Mrs. [illegible] McIntyre, Mrs. Fred S. [illegible] Charles J. Stand, Mrs. [illegible] White.

The Comus club is [illegible] twenty-five young Catholics with the following officers: [illegible] John J. Carey; vice president, [illegible] Burns; secretary, James [illegible] treasurer, Frank J. [illegible]

ANNUAL REVERY.

The annual concert, social and banquet of Branch [illegible] A., was held Tuesday [illegible] New Orleans hall. [illegible] bers and invited guests [illegible] The Fifty-fourth Regiment furnished music. The [illegible] the programme of [illegible] were read and [illegible] roll "brothers," [illegible] Bandolero," Rodney [illegible] tion, "The Irish [illegible] Day Parade," [illegible] address, [illegible] Hymn, [illegible] of Patrick [illegible] "Glorious [illegible] Praise [illegible]