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## Through Thorny Paths.

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### Synopsis of Previous Chapters.

Chapter I.—Edward Daton, of America, while visiting in Ireland, falls in love with Agnes Conlin, a poor Catholic girl. Thomas Conlin, Agnes' cousin, who is soon to be ordained a priest, notices a serpent ring on her finger and when told it is her engagement ring he tries to persuade her not to marry this Protestant stranger. She, however, refuses and is married by the old parish priest after which they depart for the strangers beautiful home in Boston. Chapter II.—Thomas Conlin is ordained and comes to America as a missionary and arrives at his cousin's home. There he learns that while his cousin has wealth and luxury she was not happy. Her husband had selected a circle in which she was to move and as it was strictly Protestant he said that she might give up her superstitions and become a member of his church. He would not even allow her to attend a Catholic church. She would not gratify him however and when Father Conlin arrived she insisted that he hear her confession and baptize her little baby son, who had just been born. Father Conlin goes away with his secret. Agnes dies a week after. Mr. Daton marries again, a rich Protestant woman, and his son is brought up a Protestant. When Edward is eight years old his father dies. Chapter III and IV.—Cecilia O'Kane, an orphan, who lives with her sister Nellie, is engaged by Mrs. Daton as companion. Her step-son, Edward, falls in love with this Catholic girl. Cecilia, and marries her against the wishes of his step-mother. Chapter V.—Cecilia is married eight years and has three children all of whom die and she Mr. Daton are left childless. Chapter VI.—After a lapse of seven and a half years we find Mr. and Mrs. Daton again happy with a daughter, Cecilia, who is about to celebrate her seventh birthday. Chapter VII.—The husband of Nellie O'Kane, now Mrs. Cullen, dies and she is left a widow with one child, Agnes. Mrs. Daton adopts her niece and brings her up with her own daughter. Chapter VIII and IX.—Cecilia and Agnes are sent to a convent school. The grandmother is very much opposed to this and reproaches her daughter-in-law.

(Continued from last week.)  
PART FIRST.

### CHAPTER X.

Mrs. Cullen sat long in this attitude thinking of the girls then she stole softly down stairs to catch a glimpse of them. She dared not go near the parlors, because she did not wish to be seen, so securing a small step-ladder she went outside and climbed to one of the windows, where without being observed she could command a full view of the interior. It was a gayly dressed throng she saw, such as might be found in the court of a queen. Diamonds and other rare jewels sparkled amongst costly silks and laces as well as on the fingers and in the hair of the ladies. There were men of princely appearance and many beautiful women, old and young, but it was plainly evident that none attracted the admiration accorded to the two budding beauties, and the mother's heart swelled with pride as Agnes passed the window leaning on the arm of the son of one of the wealthiest and most aristocratic merchants in the city. She did not notice that while the young man conversed cheerfully with Agnes his eyes often turned jealously toward the corner where Cecilia sat entertaining another male guest. Cecilia's companion was Maurice Carroll, who had recently graduated from the Christian Brother's college, and the girl, happy in the company of any one whose education had been so much like her own, thought of nothing else. Maurice was a sincere and earnest Catholic in every sense of the word, and Cecilia knew it well, for he was a member of her own congregation and she had known and respected him from childhood.

"Truly Agnes was not created to be the daughter of a poor woman like myself," thought Nellie sadly, "and there is no place for me in the circle in which she is fitted to move. The sacrifice is greater than I anticipated years ago when I gave her up, but for her sake I must bear it without complaint. She was born to be a lady while her poor mother was destined to spend her whole life in poverty and hard work.

Her heart still beat high with pride, but a sickening sensation came over her and it seemed for a minute as if she should fall. How long she remained there she did not realize, neither did she feel the effect of the frosty air blowing upon her until the vision vanished and Agnes was led away to the dining-room to partake of some refreshments. Then she slowly

descended from her perch, replaced the ladder and went not to the house, but to the sacred spot where she had found Cecilia. The moon still shone brightly, casting its silvery rays upon the face of the statue, and the woman knelt down to pray not for Cecilia now, but for her own daughter and for strength to bear the cross which was growing heavier than ever before. She had once entertained a hope that Agnes' education might enable her to support them comfortably and that they might live pleasantly together, but such hopes were all gone now.

Mrs. Cullen recited the fifteen mysteries of the rosary, still heeding not the cold nor the fact that she was growing weak from kneeling so long on the frosty ground. She arose at last, kissed the feet of the Virgin and went to the edge of the lake, where she stood for a time gazing into the waters. The sound of music from within, mingled with the dripping of the fountain gave a still more melancholy turn to her thoughts. The moon was sinking to rest when she went to the house and entered the kitchen, asking one of the servants to give her a cup of the coffee which was steaming on the stove. The women looked first at her, then at each other in amazement, for she was supposed to be in the parlor this evening, but she heeded them not, for she had sunk into a chair. The coffee was poured and handed to her, and she was offered some of the rich cake, of which there was much, but she refused it. Draining the contents of the cup, which made her feel stronger, she thanked the woman and started to leave the room, but tottered with weakness.

"You appear ill, Mrs. Cullen," said one of the women. "Let me get you a glass of wine."

"No, thank you, I have only become a little chilled from being out in the night air. The coffee has warmed me and all I need now is a little rest. I am going to my room."

She was gone and the women looked from one to another.

"That's what it is to be poor," one said. "She is just as good as any of them, and much better than some, and there she is going alone to bed sick, while her daughter in silk and jewels is playing the fine lady in the parlor."

While poor Nellie Cullen had been outdoors her only sister was acting a far different part inside. The once poor little Cecilia O'Kane was enjoying an evening of happy triumph. The tributes to the beauty of her girls made her prouder than she had ever been in her life. "Her girls," she called them both, for she was proud to claim Agnes as her own, and many were present who knew not that the lovely blonde had a poor mother, and not one suspected that that same mother watched outside in the cold to see her child honored in the select circle she herself dared not enter. Both the elder and younger Mrs. Daton had felt relieved when Nellie declined the invitation to attend the reception, because they preferred not to introduce her as the mother of Agnes. It was not because she was not considered good enough or could not appear well enough, for she was every inch a lady, but she had been kept in the back ground so long that they preferred having her remain there; besides, Agnes' matrimonial chances might not be so good if it were known she had a poor mother who was obliged to work to support herself.

The attention Cecilia was receiving from young Mr. Carroll was the subject of some comment among the ladies. Some mothers who would gladly have sought his company for their own daughters, as well as the young ladies themselves, were inclined to be jealous, while some of the gentlemen, who would have been glad of even a few minutes in the company of the lovely brunette, were tempted to share the feelings of the ladies. The younger Mrs. Daton saw it all, and, fully realizing the young man's position, was highly pleased. Grandma Daton saw it, too, and she smiled as she thought that her prophecy in regard to Cecilia being settled in life young might come true, and she wondered if her fate was really to be settled to-night.

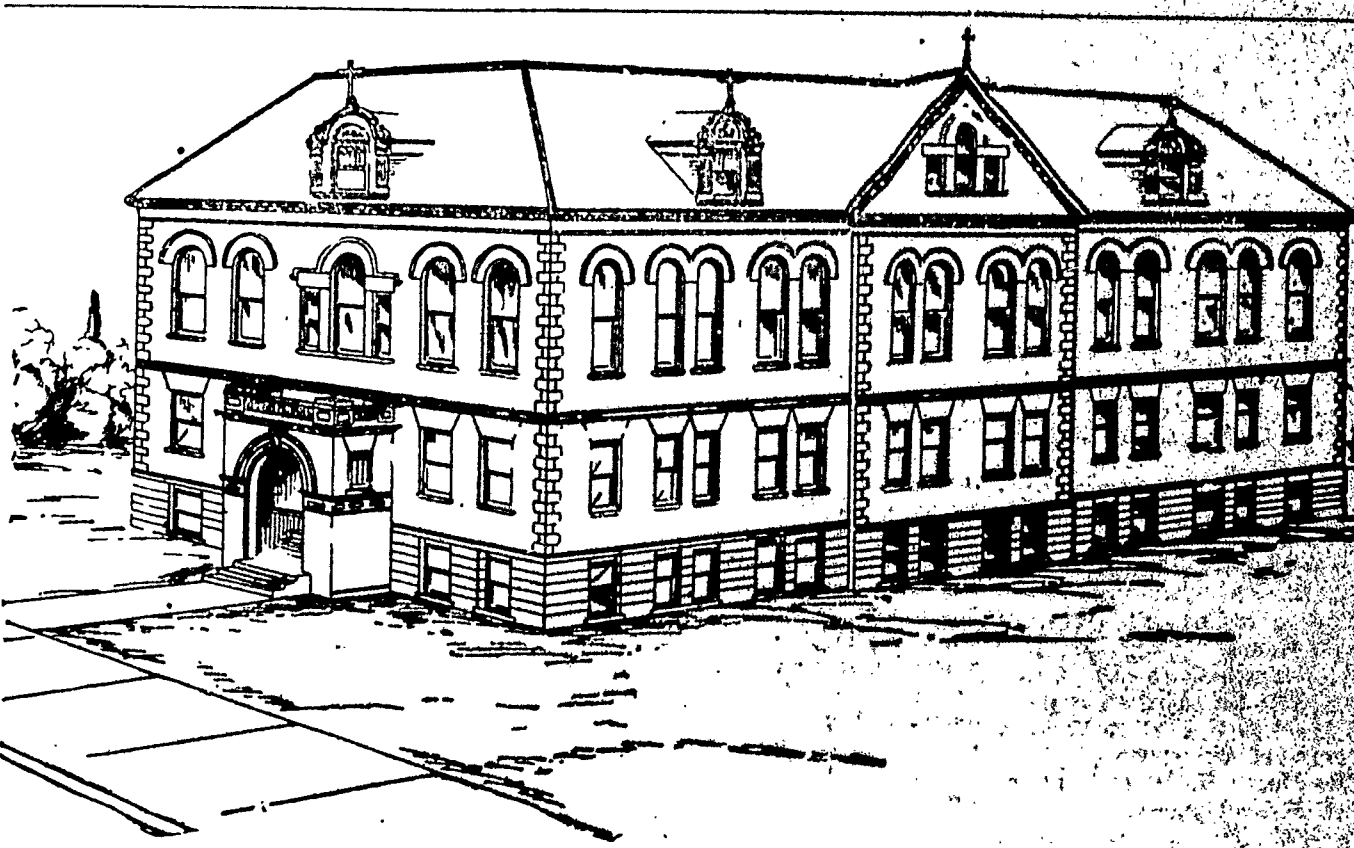
Poor, innocent child that she was, Cecilia knew nothing of this. She only realized that she was in the company of a sincere Catholic gentleman, who, like herself, had been educated

by religious, and she enjoyed being with him because he was wholly free from the light talk and vain flatteries she had heard from others. Much of their conversation was on their recent school days. In a word, it might be said they were like two innocent children, happy in each others company, and they suspected nothing of the remarks they caused when arm in arm they walked to the piano, and while Cecilia played the accompaniment they sang together a song they had learned in school.

It was the first time Cecilia's voice had ever been heard in public, and as the clear, sweet tones floated through the rooms, mingled with his rich tenor, conversations were suspended and all ears were bent to listen.

Agnes threw herself into an easy chair, smiling as she remembered the many attentions she had received from her guests, and she longed for the morning, when she could talk her happiness all over with her cousin and mother. At last, too tired to think of saying a prayer, she quickly undressed and soon fell asleep to dream of many bright things.

With Cecilia it was different; tired of the glitter and glow of the evening and glad to be alone, she cast aside her jewels and rich gown and knelt in prayer for some time before retiring. When she fell asleep it was in a dreamless and refreshing slumber, and a smile not founded upon earthly happiness rested upon her peaceful face.



BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH.

"Surely, Mrs. Daton, your daughter's voice is a fortune itself," remarked one woman who was an ardent lover of music, and another came to whisper that though she had heard many a professional singer, she had never yet found a voice to equal this. Many other such remarks were made, and Mrs. Daton smilingly thanked the admirers, treasuring every word in her heart. Cecilia herself received her share of praises after leaving the piano and was pressed to sing more, but refused. She had become embarrassed and could not be induced to sing another verse. She had not thought of entertaining the public; on the contrary, she had become so deeply interested in the school days to which Maurice had carried her back that she had almost forgotten that the house was full of strangers, to whom she was a centre of attraction.

Shortly after refreshments were to be served, and Cecilia permitted herself to be led away on his arm to the dining-room, receiving like a child all the attentions he offered her and secretly admiring him when she noticed that the wine in his glass remained untasted.

It was over at last, like all things in this world, and the two cousins had retired, each to her own room.

CHAPTER XI.  
Tired out after the long evening spent in mirth, the Daton family slept late, and the sun was far above the horizon ere any of them were awake. Agnes was the first to open her eyes, and almost the first object they rested on was the dress she had worn the evening before.

"How fortunate I am," she thought "to be in society! I intend making the best of every opportunity offered me to enjoy myself. Truly this is the happiest time of life."

After a time, thinking of her mother, who might be pleased to hear something of her enjoyments, she hastily donned a loose dressing gown and stole softly to her room. Mrs. Cullen was sleeping soundly, but her heavy breathing was quite unusual. Agnes approached and laid her hand on her head. It was burning hot, and though the woman stirred uneasily, she did not wake. A little frightened, but undecided what to do, the daughter sat down by her mother's bedside and watched her for fully half an hour, then moved to awaken her. She opened her eyes, looked around until her gaze fell upon Agnes, then said: "Good-morning, Agnes; how kind of you to come and wake me when I might have slept until noon and my

work awaiting me."  
"I hardly think you will go to work this morning, mother, for it is nearly 11 now."  
"How could I have slept in late when I am always such an early riser?"  
"I don't know, mother, unless you sat up too late last evening; but I do not think the rest will harm you."  
"Probably not, Agnes; but what will my employer think of my absence?"  
"One-half day can make no difference, mother," said Agnes.

TO BE DEDICATED  
CHURCH OF BLESSED SACRAMENT  
NOW COMPLETE  
Bishop McQuaid Will Celebrate  
Dedication Ceremony  
Assisted by Most Reverend  
Thomas F. Conners  
The nineteenth Catholic church in this city, the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, which has been in of erection since last fall, is now



REV. THOMAS F. CONNERS, Rector of the New Church.

"If you had to work you would know that it does. I should have gone home last evening, so as to have been up in time this morning. I am glad, however, I had a chance to see how lovely my own darling child looked." All this had been spoken in a whisper. Agnes, not knowing that her mother was really unable to speak aloud, thought it was because she did not wish to disturb grandmother, who occupied the adjoining room. Mrs. Cullen tried now to arise, but fell heavily back on the bed. She made a second effort, but with the same

completed that it will hold the dedication ceremony. The ceremony will be held in the church building, corner of Monroe and Main streets, at 10:30 a. m. Rev. McQuaid, Bishop of the diocese, will conduct the ceremony, which will be assisted by Rev. F. Hickey, V. G., rector of the city and vicar of the church. The church is now celebrating its first anniversary. Rev. McQuaid will preside at the evening session, which will be held at 8 o'clock. The Polyphonia will sing at both services.

The new church will include a considerable territory now within the limits of St. Mary's parish, which will relieve the latter church of its overcrowded condition. The church of the Blessed Sacrament will be under the jurisdiction of Rev. Thomas F. Conners, who has been the assistant pastor of the church for the last few years. He was rector when Father Conners and Leary died until Bishop McQuaid appointed their successors. He was then appointed rector of the church, which he has since held.

When the church is dedicated, handsome statues representing the virtues of the new church will be placed in position. They represent the Sacred Heart, the Immaculate Conception, and the Holy Eucharist. Mrs. George Egan, in charge of the altar, will have charge of the altar.

Rev. Thomas F. Conners, in this city and vicar of the church, is a native of Ireland and was educated in the Catholic schools of his native land. He was ordained a priest in 1878 and has since been in the service of the church. He was rector of the church of the Sacred Heart, which he presided over for many years. He was then appointed rector of the church of the Blessed Sacrament, which he has since held.

We hope that the church will be a source of great blessing to the community. We hope that the church will be a source of great blessing to the community. We hope that the church will be a source of great blessing to the community.



V. REV. THOS. F. HICKEY, V. G.  
Who Will Celebrate the Solemn High Mass at the New Church.

Failure while beads of cold perspiration stood on her forehead. "What is the trouble, mother?" asked Agnes, in alarm.  
(To be continued.)