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The Catholic Journal.

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Through Whorny Paths.

BY MARY ROWENA COTTER.

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Synopsis of Previous Chapters.

Chapter I. Edward Dutton, 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 of this engagement 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 stranger's beautiful home in Boston. Chapter II. Thomas Conlin is ordained and comes of America as a missionary and arrives at his cousin's home. There he learns that while his cousin has wealth and luxury she is not happy. Her husband had selected a circle in which she was to move and she 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. Mrs. Dutton's companion, her step-son, Edward, falls in love with this Catholic girl, Cecelia, and marries her against the wishes of his step-mother. Chapter III. Cecelia is married eight years and has three children all of whom die and she and Mr. Dutton are left childless. Chapter IV. After a lapse of seven and a half years we find Mr. and Mrs. Dutton again happy with a daughter, Cecelia, who is about to celebrate her seventh birthday. Chapter V. The husband of Nellie O'Keane, now Mrs. Cullen, dies and she is left a widow with one child, Agnes. Mrs. Dutton adopts her niece and brings her up with her own daughter, Chapter VI. and VII. Cecelia and Agnes are sent to a convent school. The grandmother is very much opposed to this and reproaches her daughter-in-law. Chapter VIII. Mr. Dutton is suddenly taken sick and Cecelia is called home from school. Chapter IX and X. Cecelia and Agnes graduate and a grand reception is given them. Mrs. Cullen while at her sister's home takes ill. Cecelia and her grandmother have a dispute over religion. Chapter XI. Mrs. Cullen recovers and remains at Dutton's home. Chapter XII. Cecelia tells her mother that she intends entering the convent and becoming a nun. After a dispute she promises to remain at home one more year. Chapter XIII. Cecelia and her grandmother are visiting in a distant city when a terrible fire breaks out making many homeless. Chapter XIV. Cecelia visits the prisoner, Charles Conlin, who started the fire. Chapter XV. Cecelia is convinced that the Catholic church is the only and true church and Mrs. Dutton becomes a convert. Chapter XVI. Mr. Dutton is in fear of losing all he has and Cecelia goes on the stage.

Part Second. Chapter I. Allyn St. Clair an infidel, meets Cecelia and falls in love with her. Chapter II. Allyn St. Clair accidentally finds a book belonging to Cecelia entitled "Following of Christ." He reads it and becomes interested.

(Continued from last week.)

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER III.

After a frugal lunch in their own room, where no idle critic could take note of their fasting or abstinence, the two ladies started for the church. Allyn St. Clair from his window saw them in the twilight and did not fail to notice that Cecelia carried the box in which he had sent his gift of flowers. It was no more than he expected, and he would have been better pleased had she left them in her own room. But he would have the satisfaction of knowing where they went, so hastily taking up his hat he followed at a safe distance until to his great surprise he saw the ladies enter a grand but dimly-lighted church. At the door he hesitated, undecided whether to go in or not. A boy of about fourteen, who had just come out, looked sharply at him, and he asked:

"Can you tell me, please, what church this is? I am a stranger here."

"It is the Cathedral," was the reply. "Episcopal or Catholic?"

"Catholic," was the reply. "If you are a stranger you might like to see the inside, or perhaps it would be better to wait until the daytime; the priests are in the confessionals this evening and the church is not well lighted. To-morrow morning at 9 they have the blessings of the holy oils and procession of the Blessed Sacrament, which might be interesting to you."

Allyn thanked the boy and asked if there were any objections to strangers going in this evening; the remark about the confessionals, which he had been taught to look upon with horror, had aroused his curiosity, especially as Cecelia Dutton had gone in.

"You may go in if you wish," said the boy, who knew by his remark that he was not a Catholic. "The doors of our churches are always open," and he went his way with a smile on his face, wondering what interest this fashionably dressed stranger could take in surveying the interior of the church in the semi-darkness.

ing in long lines near little alcoves arranged at regular intervals along the walls.

Near one of the side altars Mrs. Cullen knelt alone; he looked in vain for Cecelia until he saw her coming through a doorway leading from the sacristy. He drew back into the shadow, as if fearful that she might see him; but the precaution was not needed; she was apparently oblivious of everything as she knelt in deep adoration before the high altar. At the sound of the grand organ she arose and hastened to the choir gallery, passing so near to him that he might have touched her; but she did not see him, and her voice was soon distinguished amongst those of the other singers engaged in practice. The rehearsal lasted nearly an hour, and in the meantime Allyn had ample opportunity to look around. Some of the priests had already taken their places in the confessionals and others soon came out. Cecelia had scarcely closed the sacristy door behind her when it reopened to admit a venerable gray haired father. He knelt in silent prayer before the altar, then arose and walked with tottering steps to one of the alcoves. His example was soon followed by another, a bright-faced young priest in whose eyes shone the happy innocence of boyhood, mingled with deep thought and sincerity. The lesson contained in the striking dissimilarity from a physical standpoint and similarity from a spiritual standpoint to be found in these two men was not lost to the observant watcher.

Once more the door swung open and this time Allyn recognized as his own flowers were brought out by a young lady. They were in two large vases, which she placed in the most conspicuous place near the centre of the altar, and he was proud to see how pretty they looked among the profusion of bloom. But his attention was soon again attracted to the confessionals, where there was an opportunity for his favorite occupation of studying faces. They were surrounded by men and women of all ages and classes. In one place a girl of about sixteen, whose refined look and fashionable dress proved her to be of the wealthier class, knelt close to a woman who wore an old-fashioned hat and thread-bare wrap. So absorbed, however, were they in their devotions that neither seemed to make any note of the appearance of the other. It was hard for him to understand the look of eager anxiety on the faces of some of the penitents. It seemed to him that they must be about to perform a most unpleasant duty; timid human nature was indeed most plainly depicted on the faces of a few who lingered in their seats hesitating to take their places in the line. Then, there was that look of perfect peace when they came out.

The choir had finished their practice, a few inaudible words followed, then the organ was heard again in the saddest tones, accompanied by a voice he knew so well. The selection was the "Stabat Mater." He had never heard this grand hymn before, and though he could not catch the words, it brought tears to his eyes; notwithstanding, he could not help feeling a little disappointed, for never at her very best had Cecelia done as well on the stage, and he wished that the manager could have heard her. But the fair singer was not to be blamed, for now her whole heart was in her words; she was singing now for God and the bright spirits of heaven, regardless of what men might say. On the stage she had sung from a sense of duty, by which she had been obliged to perform an unpleasant task in order to help her father. He did not know until long afterwards from what a saddened heart her songs in public had proceeded, neither did he realize that it could be possible that for one so young and talented as herself not to be overjoyed at the words of praise she received wherever the company went.

The organ was closed and now silence reigned, broken at brief intervals by the confessionals or a faint whisper proceeding from the box near him. Cecelia had come down from the loft with the others, and after pausing to say a short prayer at the altar had taken her place among the penitents, where he could watch her closely. This was more than he had expected, for despite the apparent happiness of those who had been to confession, he dreaded to think of one so fair and beautiful as she entering an enclosure behind which he had been taught was hidden many a dark secret. He was almost tempted to follow her and protest against her occupying so humiliating a position. Besides, of what sin could she possibly be guilty? Never once did he remove his eyes from the purple curtain, which served to screen

the penitent, and, he was surprised that she remained inside much longer than many others. At last she came out, and peace and joy shone in every line of her face. After another few minutes of prayer at the altar Cecelia joined her aunt, and the two passed reverently out of the church. St. Clair followed as soon as he deemed it safe to do so. At the door he met a man, whom he accosted, asking for what occasion the choir had been practicing.

"They are to sing at Mass to-morrow and also on Easter," was the reply.

"And the solo last sung; can you tell me when that is to be rendered?"

"The 'Stabat Mater' is to be sung Friday evening at the Stations of the Cross by a young lady who is a member of the Clinton Opera Troupe. She has also consented to assist us all through the week, for which favor we are most grateful, as she has one of the most beautiful voices ever heard in the city."

"The church is indeed most fortunate to secure her services, but no doubt they had to be well paid for."

"We well understand our good fortune," said the gentleman, who happened to be one of the leaders of the choir, "but her services, which she kindly offered us through our pastor, are given free. She appears to consider it no less an honor to be permitted to sing than we do to have her."

"I am a stranger in the city and will be most pleased to attend the service at which she is to sing if you will inform me of the hour."

The man told him the time, saying that he would be most welcome to the church, and they parted.

"Cecelia Dutton, then, is not only a Christian, but a Catholic," Allyn St. Clair said to himself as he reached his own room. "I would not have believed it, even when I saw her in the church, had I not seen her go into the confession box and pray at the altar."

All that he had witnessed during the evening gave him food for deep thought. Cecelia's devotion, while he bitterly disapproved it as something utterly illogical, was so sincere that it caused him to admire her even more than before. But at the same time the gulf between them seemed to be widening. He wished for some one to talk with, to whom he could give his whole confidence, but there was no one, not even among his closest friends in the company, for he would not have it known by one of them that he was in love with Cecelia. Much less did he care to have any one know how his discovery that she was a Catholic had affected him. Once he thought of the confessional, behind whose curtains there must be perfect confidence in order to give such expressions of perfect peace to the faces of those who had been there, but that was quickly banished as the product of an overwrought mind. For the sake of diversion he went to the manager's room.

"I have something to tell you," Allyn said, after a few casual remarks.

"What is it? Some interesting news, I should judge from your face."

"Well, yes. One of our company at least has decided not to remain idle this week." He laughed. "But perhaps you know all about it."

"I do not comprehend your meaning. No one has left us, I hope."

"No, but Miss Dutton is to sing to-morrow and every day during the remainder of the week, Sunday as well, at the Catholic Cathedral."

"That is certainly news to me; but do you know it to be so?"

"I do, for I was not only informed so this evening, but heard her practicing with the choir at the church, and if she would only do as well for us as she did there, she might bring us a fortune, besides winning great fame for herself."

"This is indeed a surprise, but it hardly seems possible that without much training her voice could be improved upon. You are yourself aware that she is considered by many our best singer."

"I know, but you should have heard her do a Latin solo this evening. I never heard anything like it. Her whole heart was in the words and she seemed to be entirely carried away. I then discovered for the first time that there has been something lacking, a want of proper spirit in the manner in which she sings on the stage."

The manager could scarce restrain a smile. Knowing that love is apt to make fools of even the wisest of men, he believed that Allyn's impressions were not well founded. But he would not offend one who held so high a place in his esteem.

"I would really like to hear Miss Dutton if in the church she so far exceeds her singing on the stage, but I

am a little surprised that she should take upon herself to sing in public without my knowledge."

"You have no objections, I hope?"

"No; I never object to any of my people assisting in a church, but she should have first consulted me."

"No doubt she would have thought you wished it," said the valiant lover. "I trust you will not speak unkindly to her on account of her oversight."

"I shall not mention the matter, at least not until it is all over; but if she does as well as you say, I intend to hear her. It will be a big advertisement for us in any event."

"We shall go together," said Allyn, and the two men attended the service, where, to the manager's surprise, he learned that he had never heard Cecelia Dutton at her best."

CHAPTER IV.

To endeavor to give even a short description of the grand ceremonies of Holy Thursday as carried out in their fullness in the cathedral, where the Bishop gathers around him many of the priests of his diocese to assist him, or the effect on the two strangers would be too lengthy in this place. They entered the church just before the long procession filed through the sacristy door, and although the vast edifice was filled they were shown to seats near the altar, where they were afforded an excellent view. In spite of themselves they were soon deeply interested, and secretly both were more impressed than they would have been willing to admit. Speaking afterwards of the ceremonies, the manager, who was accustomed to look at everything from his own point of view, declared it all to be a grand piece of acting. What was uppermost in the minds of both seemed about to bring disappointment, for the voice they had come to hear was silent. For a moment at the beginning of the offertory not a sound was heard, not even the great organ, until in soul stirring accents, as if intended only for the ears of the angels, Cecelia sang alone that beautiful hymn:

"O Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come to me, But speak the words of comfort, my spirit healed shall be, But speak the words of comfort, my spirit healed shall be, And humbly I'll receive Thee, the bridegroom of my soul, No more by sin to grieve Thee or fly Thy sweet control, No more by sin to grieve Thee or fly Thy sweet control."

That was all; her voice was heard no more, but it was enough. The vast congregation was deeply touched and made to realize more vividly the holy presence of Him who on this day gave himself to His children in the blessed sacrament of His love. The two men who had come only to hear Cecelia sing were far differently impressed. He who professed to be a Christian was jealous because the voice for which he paid an extravagant price never sounded half so sweet in his productions; the other, while fully conscious of the same fact, was engaged with other thoughts. Unlike his companion he had taken note of the words and remembered them ever afterwards, revolving them in his own mind until the time came when to him was given the inestimable blessing of fully understanding their meaning.

"As they walked towards the hotel Allyn inquired: 'What think you now of our singer? Have you ever heard her to equal advantage?'"

"Never," was the reply. "Although her grand, voice has won for her much fame, I never before fully realized the beauty of it. I wish she would try to sing like that for us."

"I wish so, too, but I fear it is a vain hope, for I have been forcibly impressed to-day that there has ever been something lacking in her singing on the stage."

"What do you suppose it can be?"

"I cannot fully understand it myself. At first I suspected it to be the result of a sort of homesickness, but the ardor with which she sang to-day seems to show that it was not that alone."

"I believe you, for I am not blind to the fact that she appears not to be happy in following up our profession, and I would not try to retain her were it not for her beautiful voice and still more beautiful face, which have been of such invaluable assistance to us. Her very reserve, which has made her so unpopular among some of our members, would be a just cause for letting her go."

"You have not thought of releasing her?"

"No, indeed; she is so valuable, and I intend not only to gratify all of her whims which may be in any way reasonable, but I shall retain her as long as she will remain in our service."

"The best thing you can do," said the other.

That afternoon the manager had a long conversation with Cecelia in regard to some new music just received and he noticed that her face and the tone of her voice were a little brighter than usual, but no mention was made of the morning, for he intended to reserve that for another time, after he had heard the last of her singing in church.

Friday evening the men attended the Stations of the Cross together, and if the beautiful hymn of the day before had impressed them, the "Stabat Mater" made a far deeper mark. By special request she sang that without musical accompaniment. The infidel, who had been so proud to deny his Christ, bowed his head, unable to keep the moisture from his eyes, and the other struggled hard to appear unmoved. When she had finished there were few dry eyes in the church and the heads of the people bowed in deeper prayer and adoration of the crucified Saviour. As they were leaving the church the two men paused to listen to the high compliments paid the singer, who was to be heard again at the church on Easter and in the Grand Opera House the following week.

"What is your opinion now?" asked Allyn, half bent on teasing the man whom he knew had doubted him when he had tried to tell how well Cecelia had done in the church. "Are you willing to agree that Miss Dutton's voice is better than yours?"

"Who could deny it after having heard her sing this evening? The change is wonderful. What do you suppose can be the cause of it?"

"I can attribute it to only one thing."

"And what is that? To no fault on our part, I hope?"

"No, not as far as I can see. That young woman's whole heart is taken up with her religion. If ever a mortal was sincere in religion belief, she is."

"And you, no doubt, are deeply grieved to see her so deluded by such a foolish creed?"

"That is a hard question to answer. True, I would like to see her free from all such nonsense and have her fully appreciate and make the best of the pleasures of life, but I regret that such seems not to be in her nature. I should not like to be the one to try to interfere with such strong faith as hers appears to be."

"Allyn St. Clair," said his friend, in a tone of surprise, "you appear to be altering your mind in regard to some of the principles I have heard you express in the beginning of our acquaintance."

"How so?"

"You strongly professed to be an infidel and appeared anxious to do all in your power to convert others to your way of thinking."

"In that I am still unchanged. Would that I could put down religion in every form, trample it under foot and free the minds of our people who are deluded by ministers and priests whose sole object seems to be to win power and money."

"And still you have just declared that much as you esteem Miss Dutton, you would not like to be the one to interfere, or in other words, try to snatch her from what you consider a very bad influence."

"You are unjust in your judgment of my motives. I would gladly save her if I could, but that young lady is possessed of a strong will and a strong nature, which I believe had better be left alone. And, as proved by what we have heard, it would hardly seem just to try to rob her of the beauty her religion adds to her voice."

"Perhaps you are right," said the other, and then laughingly added; "I wonder if there could be any chance of her ever winning you over to her belief?"

(To be continued.)

Spring Suits.

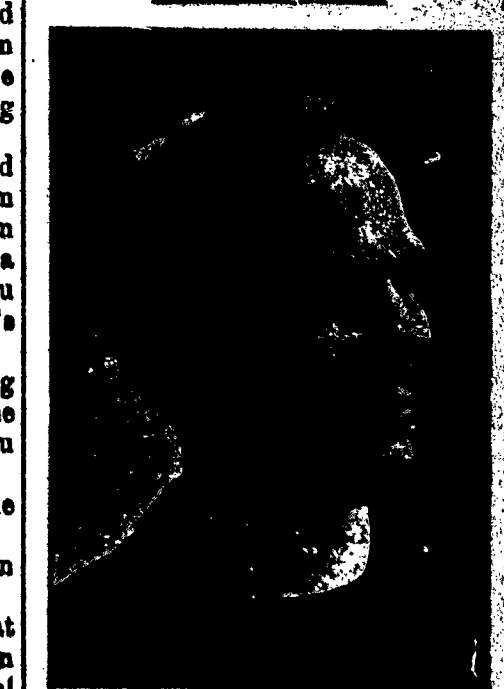
Assemblyman Gardiner of 232 State street, has one the most complete stocks of cloths for the spring trade in the city. All the new shades in Scotch and English suiting and the new weaves for spring overcoatings are on his counters. Mr. Chris. Karpigian who has charge of the cutting is turning out work that gives complete satisfaction. The prices are the lowest in the city for the class of work.

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The Land of Happiness.

[Written for The Catholic Journal.] Here there's sorrow, pain and sadness. Sickness, want and bitter weeping. There, there's happiness and gladness. More than mortals here can know. Here in darkness we are straying. Often from the narrow way. There the brightest sunlight playing. Shines through an eternal day. Here misfortune's hand may render Desolation deep and wide; There will Father's hand so tender Lift us gently to His side. Here our fondest hopes are blighted. Here our choicest plans all fail. There shall every wrong be righted. Right alone will there prevail. Here farewells are often spoken. Parting tears are often shed; There no friendly circle's broken. There "good-byes" are never said. Here a little while we're roaming. Waiting for the end to come; There our Father waits our coming. To our everlasting home. Here we see our loved ones dying. Here we weep beside our dead; There no weeping, mourning, sighing. There no parting tears are shed. Mrs. Geo. Gash.



HIS FIRST MASS.

Rev. B. F. Hanna Celebrates His First Mass at Holy Apostles' Church.

Rev. B. F. Hanna, a cousin of Rev. Dr. Hanna, of St. Bernard's Seminary, celebrated his first mass at Holy Apostles' church, last Sunday morning. Assisting Father Hanna were Rev. P. E. Golding, who acted as deacon, and Rev. G. J. Elder, as sub-deacon. W. Timmons and W. McCarthy, of St. Bernard's Seminary, were present in the sanctuary. Rev. J. A. Hickey, pastor of the Holy Apostles' church, preached the sermon. He took for his subject "Thou Art a Priest Forever" and delivered an eloquent and masterly address on the duties of the priesthood.

At the conclusion of the mass a number of friends attended a dinner given in honor of the young priest by Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Lightbown Jr., at 805 Clinton Avenue North.

Rev. B. J. Hanna completed his studies at Mt. St. Mary's Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio, and was ordained at St. Joseph's church, Columbus, Ohio, on June 28th, by the Rt. Rev. Henry Moeller. Father Hanna leaves this city on Thursday for Columbus to take charge of a church there.

G. B. A. A.

The annual reunion and bazaar picnic of the G. B. A. A. of the C. B. & A. A., will be held at the Breese Park on July 20th, under the auspices of the Central Council. An excellent program of sports is being arranged and a good time is anticipated by the various councils. The Military Band will supply music during the day, and an orchestra will furnish music for dancing. Supreme President O'Neill, of Auburn, N. Y., will be present and deliver an address during the afternoon. One thousand badges have been issued for those who desire to enter the sports or dancing and it will be necessary to have one in order to participate in these times. They can be procured at any of the committees. The C. B. & A. A. Picnic last year was one of the largest of the season and it is the wish of the committee that all members and friends turn out in larger numbers this year.

BAKED THEATRE.

Wm. Gillet's thrilling new play, "Red By The Sea," will be presented by the Baked Theatre Company at the Grand Stock Company all next week, usual matinees on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday, and on the fourth week. "Red By The Sea" is a play of thrilling interest, and is one of the best of the season.