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AGENTS for the DOMINION. CATHOLIC PERIODICALS.

Table listing various Catholic periodicals such as 'New York Tablet', 'Boston Pilot', and 'The Tablet' with their respective prices.

JUST RECEIVED, A fine LITHOGRAPH of BISMARCK—'SATAN AND THE CHURCH'—size 19x24 inches, Price, 25 cts.

JUST RECEIVED, SERMONS BY THE LATE REVEREND J. J. MURPHY, who lost his life at the fire at Back River on the night of December 4th, 1875.

THE OLD HOUSE. In silent grandeur, calm and fair The stately building stands,

For Ireland's right no voice resounds Beneath its roof to day, No patriot heart impulsive bounds

WINIFRED, COUNTESS OF NITHSDALE. A TALE OF THE JACOBITE WARS.

By LADY DACRE.

CHAPTER XXIII. Methinks my soul is roused to her last work, Has much to do, and little time to spare.

The Countess of Nithsdale had quitted her husband. She would her solitary way through the dreary purlieus which had become only too familiar to her.

answer would next morning be formally announced to the public, but that, meanwhile, she had hastened to communicate to her friend, thinking she might deem it advisable to adopt some further measures, although she scarcely knew what measures to recommend.

She passed what remained of that evening, and the early part of the following morning, in completing every arrangement in case of either contingency.

The compassionate Mrs. Mills instantly obeyed her summons, though almost dreading to find herself in the presence of one whose grief she feared to witness.

Mrs. Mills, all agitated and confused, promised to assist to the best of her ability, and Lady Nithsdale instantly overwhelmed her with thanks; and having despatched Walter Elliot to Mrs. Morgan, to request she also would instantly visit her, she then occupied herself in ascertaining from Amy Evans the exact situation of the house where they were to meet, when she should have succeeded in placing her husband beyond the precincts of the Tower.

Mrs. Morgan delayed not to wait on the countess, who found little difficulty in gaining her consent to any plan which might serve one whom she had quickly learned to love with all the warmth of her enthusiastic heart.

Lady Nithsdale begged Mrs. Morgan, who was of a peculiarly slender make, to put under her own ridinghood that which she had prepared for Mrs. Mills, who was to leave hers in the prison for the earl.

She then hurried them both into the coach; and repeating her directions, enforcing her counsels, she allowed no pause in the conversation, during which they might have leisure to reflect and to repent.

In their hurry and their astonishment, they thought not of the possible consequence, but submitted to obey Lady Nithsdale in all things, who guided them with the overawing mastery which, at the moment of trial, the stronger mind invariably exercises over those of a more feeble and yielding temperament.

The coach stopped at the Tower. Lady Nithsdale had permission to introduce but one person at a time; and leaving Mrs. Mills in the carriage, she took Mrs. Morgan with her.

She had not seen her husband since the preceding night, and this was the eve of execution! If she failed, the morrow would see her a widow! But she hurried Mrs. Morgan along,—she almost pushed her into the apartment.

Lord Nithsdale rushed to his wife, and pressed her to his bosom. "Oh, Winifred!" he exclaimed, half reproachfully; "this long, long, weary day, and I have not seen you!"

She disengaged herself from him. "I must not look on you," she said; "I must not listen to you—I must not think—we must now act; and not a word must be uttered that is not to the purpose! Here is my good, kind, dear Mrs. Morgan! She is, and has been from the first, a true and faithful friend; and now, dear Mrs. Morgan, we must lose no time in speech or compliment."

watched the waning light. He was impatient for the shades of evening, which he trusted would bring to him the beloved of his soul; and yet, as he dwelt upon the last rays of sunshine, he felt loath to part with them for ever,—to think that he should never again see that glorious luminary fulfil its course in splendor, and shed its brilliancy on all around; hateful to him as was the dreary prospect from his prison windows, he now thought with regret that he should never again see its western beams gild the square turrets of the White Tower.

She came, and all was turmoil and confusion within his bosom. He was pledged to obey her. Indeed, there was no time for argument or remonstrance. She would have listened to none.

Those who stand upon the threshold of the grave—those to whom in a few hours the mysteries of a future existence may all be unfolded, seem as it were a link between the living and the dead, and are ever regarded with a certain awe, as Mrs. Morgan experienced when looking on him of whom she had heard so much—on him for whom, though unknown, she had felt so keenly—on the stranger for whom she was now incurring, what might prove to herself, no inconsiderable peril.

That pensive countenance, that noble brow, those lofty features, all spoke a soul within, which might well justify his wife's devotion; and she felt that such a creature must not perish. She repented not of her consent; but gladly, willingly, incurred the present risk.

When the change in her dress was effected, Lady Nithsdale conducted her back to the staircase; begging her, in the hearing of the guards, to lose no time in sending her maid to dress her, and expressing the greatest fear lest, if she did not come immediately, she should be too late to present the last petition that night.

She presently afterward descended the stairs to meet Mrs. Mills, who, according to their previous arrangement, concealed her face with her handkerchief, as if in tears. When the door was closed, she made her take off her own hood, and put on that which Mrs. Morgan had left for her; and then bidding her assume a more cheerful countenance (in order that when her lord appeared in her dress he might the more easily personate the lady who had entered weeping and afflicted), she took her by the hand, and led her out of the earl's chamber.

In passing through the next room, she said, with all the concern imaginable,— "My dear Mrs. Catharine, go in all haste, and send me my waiting-maid. She certainly cannot reflect how late it is. I am to present my petition to-night; and if I let slip this opportunity, I am undone, for to-morrow will be too late; hasten her as much as possible, for I shall be on thorns till she come."

The guards, to whom the countess's liberality the preceding day had endeared her, disturbed her not, but allowed her to pass and re-pass with her company; the more freely also, as, having been told by her that the imprisoned lords were likely to obtain their liberty, they were not so strictly on the watch as they had hitherto been. All in the outer room, who were chiefly the guards' wives and daughters, seemed to sympathize her exceedingly; and the sentinel himself opened the door for them. There was nothing in the appearance of the fair and florid Mrs. Mills which could excite the slightest suspicion.

Having seen her safe out, Lady Nithsdale returned to finish dressing her lord. She had prepared false hair of a fair color, the more to resemble Mrs. Mills, whose hair was inclined to be flaxen. She colored his dark eyebrows with light paint; and she also painted his face with red and white, for there was no time to shave dark beard. She dressed him in some of her own petticoats, and in the hood Mrs. Mills had worn. As the evening had by this time closed in, and she feared that the light of candles might betray them, she hastened him from the apartment. She led him by the hand, while he held his handkerchief to his eyes; and being dressed in the same dress, and his hair and complexion being made somewhat to resemble those of Mrs. Mills, he easily passed for the weeping young lady whose affliction at having parted for the last time from a dear friend might very naturally be even more overwhelming than when she entered a short time before.

Lady Nithsdale spoke to him in the most piteous tone of voice, bitterly bewailing the negligence of her maid Evans, who had ruined her by her delay. Yet, while she spoke, it almost went against her to accuse of negligence the devoted Amy! Still addressing the earl, she continued,— "My dear Mrs. Betty, for the love of God run quickly, and bring her with you. You know my lodging, and if ever you made despatch in your life, do it at present. I am almost distracted with this disappointment."

The guards opened the door. She was permitted to pass with one friend at a time: they had not kept an exact account of the number who had entered, satisfied that all was right while she was accompanied by only one female, and one also whom they believed to have seen so lately enter the chamber within. She went down with him, still conjuring him to make all possible haste.

As soon as he had cleared the door, she made him walk before, lest the sentinel should take notice of his walk; and she still continued to press him to make despatch. At the bottom of the last outer step she met the faithful Amy Evans, and into her hands she committed him.

She had before engaged Mr. Mills to be in readiness before the Tower to conduct him to a place of safety, which at that period might be the more easily effected, as instead of a clear and open space without the walls, the purlieus were choked with mean habitations, with close and narrow alleys. The gates were no sooner passed, than they found themselves in the throng of the most dense and busy part of the London population; but Mr. Mills had looked upon the affair as so very unlikely to succeed, and his astonishment threw him into such a consternation when he actually beheld them that he was bewildered and quite out of himself.

Amy Evans perceived his confusion, and, with that presence of mind which had so justly entitled her to her lady's confidence, instantly decided on her own line of conduct. She took no notice of his agitation, lest she might attract the attention of the passers-by; she feared that possibly the earl might distrust them, if he should perceive wavering and uncertainty in those to whom he was confided. She therefore took him to some friends of her own, on whom she felt certain she might rely; and leaving him with them, immediately returned in search of Mr. Mills.

Meanwhile, the Lady Nithsdale had in safety regained her lord's apartment. As she passed, all sympathized in her distress, and pitied her for the disappointment she had met with.

She closed the door, and then kept up a conversation as if her lord had been really present. She answered her own questions in his voice, nearly as she could imitate. She walked up and down the room, as though they had been conversing together, till at length she imagined the earl and Amy must have thoroughly cleared themselves of the guards.

During all this time she had not allowed herself once to pause or reflect. She had contemplated nothing but success—she had not permitted herself to anticipate failure—she had not suffered her mind to glance towards the fatal morrow. Still calm and collected, she now calculated that she might with safety depart herself. She neglected no possible precaution: she opened the door, and standing half within it, so that those without might not have an opportunity of commanding a view of the interior, she bade her lord a formal farewell for the night, saying, "That something more than usual must have occurred to make Evans negligent on this important occasion, who had always been so punctual in the smallest trifles;"—she added, "there was no remedy; but that she should go in person; that if the Tower was still open when she finished her business, she would return that night; but bade him be assured she would be with him as early in the morning as she could gain admittance, and, as she flattered herself, should bring him favorable news."

Then, before she shut the door, she pulled through the string of the latch, so that it could only be opened from within; it was well fastened; and as she passed she told the servant he need not carry candles to his master till his lord sent for them, as he desired to finish some prayers.

She descended the stairs; she found herself in the open air: for a moment all seemed to reel around her: she scarcely dared trust her senses that she was really free. She trembled as she passed on. She thought each sight, each sound, might be that she had been discovered, overtaken and that they were now leading him back to captivity and certain death.

She feared to excite suspicion by looking too eagerly and curiously about her, and yet she fancied every moment she heard hurrying footsteps in pursuit of her. She reached the outer gates at last—she passed them! There were several coaches on the stand; she called one, she threw herself into it, and drove her to her own lodging.

It was all true! He was free! She had saved him! The joy seemed too great for endurance—her heart felt bursting! But there was still much to be done, she must not yet relax.

CHAPTER XXIV.

And all extremes how linked! Do we not weep For joy? and laugh, ay, laugh for anguish?— A hideous laugh, that tells of sorrow more Than tears and sighs. MS. Play.

When Lady Nithsdale arrived at her lodging, she found poor Mr. McKenzie in waiting to accompany her to present her last hopeless petition, had the attempt, in the success of which she had so confidently, and, as it proved, so justly relied, proved ineffectual.

She told him, with exultation, there was no need now of any petition, as her husband was safe out of the Tower and out of the hands of his enemies, as she supposed; although, she added with truth, she knew not where he was.

It was also necessary to inform the Duchess of Buccleugh that she should not require her good offices that evening, but at the same time she was unwilling to spread the news of her lord's escape. She had discharged the coach which had conveyed her from the Tower; but, sending for a sedan chair, she resolved to go immediately to the Duchess of Buccleugh's. She inquired if she was at home; and being answered in the affirmative, and that she was at that moment engaged with another duchess, Lady Nithsdale declined going up-stairs, but desired to be shown into a chamber below, begging at the same time that the duchess's maid might be sent for.

She was glad to escape being questioned by the duchess herself, and bade the maid acquaint her grace that her only reason for not waiting upon her was her having been informed she was engaged with company. She charged the maid with her most sincere thanks for her grace's kind offer of accompanying her to court, but desired her to say, she might spare herself any further trouble, as it was judged more advisable to present one general petition in the name of all: still, she should never be unmindful of her particular obligation to her grace, which she hoped soon to acknowledge in person.

She had dismissed the chair which brought her to the Duchess of Buccleugh's, lest she should be pursued and watched; and she therefore now desired one of the servants to call another, in which she proceeded to the Duchess of Montrose's.

Upon hearing of Lady Nithsdale's arrival, the duchess was seized with such a panic,—she so dreaded the notion of witnessing her despair,—that she suddenly quitted the apartment, and hastened to deny herself. Her husband, seeing her abruptly break from her company, anxiously followed to inquire the cause of her evident agitation.

"I cannot see her," she exclaimed. "I could not bear to behold my poor cousin of Nithsdale's anguish. I have no power to save her, and I have not courage to contemplate the agony I cannot alleviate. Oh! make some excuse for me! I am

weak and helpless; I cannot preach resignation.— Alas! alas!" she continued, wringing her hands, "I know too well what must be her feelings: I am too well aware of what a nature is her devotion to her lord; it would be mockery in me to bid her be patient, to tell her time will temper her despair, I know it will not: I could but feed her grief! It must be some stronger, firmer mind than mine that dare face such agony as hers!"

Even while she spoke, the servants, who had not understood the order to deny their mistress, and who were accustomed at all hours to admit Lady Nithsdale, entered the apartment to inform her grace that the countess was below.

"What shall I do?" exclaimed the duchess in dismay.

"Go to her, dear Christian," answered the duke; "though you may not be able to inspire her with firmness to bear such affliction, your sympathy must soothe."

"Oh, that is true! Yes, I will go to her, poor soul! Assuredly, I would rather die than be unkind; and have I not promised she should always find a friend in Christian Montrose? But if you know how fearful her grief is when she is so resolutely calm, you would not wonder that I should shrink from seeing her under her present circumstances."

The duchess, slowly, hesitatingly descended, and fearfully entered the apartment where Lady Nithsdale awaited her.

Instead of the harrowing image of despair which the duchess had pictured to herself, she saw the countess with glowing cheeks and a countenance brilliant with joy, who rushed into her arms in her ecstasy of delight. The duchess stood appalled. She apprehended that her cousin's troubles had indeed unsettled her reason, and that it was the light of madness which flashed from her eye.—She shrank in fear and amazement.

"He is safe!" exclaimed the countess. "My husband is in freedom—he is restored to me!"

"My gentle cousin, my sweet Winifred! Alas! you are not well; be seated, and let me entreat you to compose yourself!"

"You do not rejoice with me!" she cried, seizing both the duchess's hands. "Why do you not congratulate me? I am the happiest creature in the whole world!" she exclaimed, bursting into a flood of tears. The duchess's alarm increased every moment. "I tell you, Christian, he is out of prison!—he has escaped them all!—he is, I trust, safe from all discovery. Oh! Heaven has been very merciful to me!" she continued, bowing her head with a meek fervor, which somewhat reassured her friend, and made her hope the countess's words were not the hallucinations of a maniac.

By degrees she became more composed, and gave some account how her lord's escape had been effected: then indeed, did the duchess mingle tears of joy with hers, and smile to think how she had misconstrued her friend's expression of happiness.

When they had sufficiently recovered themselves to converse with some composure, the duchess informed Lady Nithsdale that the king was so much incensed against her for attempting to force her petition upon him, that she advised her to keep herself as closely concealed as possible. She told her she would herself go to court that evening, and that she might the better judge how the intelligence of the Earl of Nithsdale's evasion was there received; and the friends once more parted.

The countess, as before, had discharged her chair, and now procured another, in which she proceeded to the house at which she had appointed to meet Amy Evans.

The duchess repaired to St. James's, where she found the king much irritated, and declared that such a thing could not have been effected without a conspiracy; he that night despatched two persons to the Tower to ascertain that the other prisoners were well secured; and on all sides the duchess heard different surmises as to the mode in which the earl's evasion could have been accomplished.—Some threw the blame in one, some in another quarter,—none glanced at the true mode.

The duchess alone was acquainted with the countess's part in it; and if she had not still felt a deep anxiety for the ultimate fate of such dear friends, she could almost have smiled at the confident observations, the contradictory reports, the consequential hints, which were either loudly spoken or mysteriously whispered in all directions.

Indeed, it has been a singular circumstance that an event of considerable importance, and one of such recent occurrence, should, for many years have been enveloped in such mystery!

Meanwhile, Lady Nithsdale had been the first to reach the appointed spot; but Amy Evans soon joined her. She told her how, after having placed the earl in temporary security, she had returned in search of Mr. Mills; how she had traced him to his own home, which he had regained when he recovered from his astonishment; and how they had then removed her lord to the house of a poor woman, directly opposite the guard-house. They imagined that, having changed the disguise in which he had made his escape, all means of tracing him would become difficult; and that the last place which would be searched would be one so near the Tower itself.

The poor woman had but a single small room to spare, up one pair of stairs, which was almost destitute of furniture. Guided by Amy, the countess hastened to this humble abode; and there she had the inexpressible happiness of finding herself reunited to her husband.

There are moments of agony too intense to bear description; there are also moments of bliss which baffle the power of language to paint. And if it is sometimes a relief to think the woes that excite our sympathies, too acutely are, fictitious woes; there ought to be pleasure in reflecting that the happiness which these two devoted spirits then enjoyed was real—that this is no fiction, but a plain and simple narrative of what has actually occurred.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.)

\* These details are from Lady Nithsdale's letter.