

**HONOUR WITHOUT
RENOUN**
BY MRS. INNES-BROWN

Author of "Three Daughters of the United Kingdom"
CHAPTER XIII.

It was after a weary time of anxiety had elapsed for the Sister that Manfred once more opened his eyes, listened strangely for a while, then inquired feebly: "What is the matter? What has happened? Why are you kneeling there, Sister Marguerite, with the crucifix clasped to your breast and the tears dimming your eyes? Are you in danger from without?"

"No!—rising quickly—I am but pouring out my heart in gratitude to God for a great favour that He has granted to one whose hateful pride rendered her unworthy of it."

"Ah, I know now; I remembered it all! And an expression of pain passed over his pallid features. "You—you said that Harold's sin was almost too great to be forgiven!"

"No, no! I was severe, hard, but I did not say that. Believe me, that were poor Harold's sin multiplied ten times over, yet it would not compare with the unlimited mercy of God. Harold has but to seek for pardon, and he will obtain it."

"But," he hesitated, "he must—surely he must make restitution?"

"Hush!—even that he will do, nobly, generously. And she laid her hand upon his brow. Do not talk more now, but I know, I feel that Harold will do his duty. Rest at least for a while; forget your troubles, lay them with confidence at the feet of the Cross; and whilst you sleep I will keep watch and pray for you."

"Pray for me! Do you then pray for me, Sister Marguerite? How beautiful! One thing I have often longed to ask you for, but dared not do so; give me your crucifix, let me kiss it. Often I have scoffed and jeered at the sacred emblem, but now, for the love of Him who hung thereon, let me kiss it once."

She handed it to him, and after pressing his lips reverently to the foot of it, he looked up with a sweeter smile than that she had yet seen him wear, and asked in a pleading voice:

"Do not condemn me to silence. I am feeling better—much better. I have still something to relate—something which must be told; but since hope is once more dawning within me, it will not be so hard a task. Are you too weary to listen longer, or may I ease my heart and tell you?"

"You may do just as you wish, only do not overtax your strength anew."

"It is about the poor wife, Marion. After losing her husband she nursed her father who tended care until he died; and when Harold would have sought for and sided her, like another, she disappeared from his sight, leaving no trace of her whereabouts."

"I fear you are but a sorry searcher," was the smiling reply. "Have you no idea now of her whereabouts?"

"Strange to say, a few months ago I almost miraculously lighted upon what must be her hair."

"You? You did? Oh, tell me where and how."

"It happened thus: (It gave him pleasure to see her so interested.)

"I was a guest at one of England's lordly homes; ah! if only you, who so admired the words of God's creation, had but known what it was to live and breathe in such an atmosphere of refinement and elegance; to ramble at will amidst the luxuriant foliage and artistic beauties of the ancient home and park of which I speak; your poetic nature would have been so enthralled therewith, that not even the excited life you now lead—and to which you appear so devoted—could have had the power to charm you from such an existence."

"Nay," laughing outright, "in that now you surely do me wrong. If choice there must be, who would not willingly barter the fleeting things of time for the lasting goods of eternity! For, listen! The stately castle that ever was reared will assuredly crumble to ruin. Not so the mansions of Heaven, they will flourish and continue for ever. Earth's proudest names—save those of God's saints—are but a faded memory of the past. Scarce are their owners buried ere others usurp their place, and they lie forgotten. Not so the memory of the blessed. Day by day we salute them with loving words, and greet with joy their festivals, pondering deeply the glorious example of virtues they left behind. Nature is beautiful! most glorious indeed! and yet the noblest forest tree must decay, bend, and fall. Earth's fairest flowers wither and fade; not so the mighty standard of the Cross, or the martyr's palm. They will flourish and thrive for all eternity. But, not to weary you, pray tell me where in this dear old world of ours is this beautiful Eden, this garden of Paradise in which the daughters of Eve are to be held captive by its charms, even against their will?"

"You never tire me. I love to hear you talk, but the time of your departure creeps on apace, and I must finish my story. The Eden of which I speak is in one of our Southern counties. It is the beautiful home of the De Woodville family, and known as Baron Court."

Though listening for the name breathlessly, she actually trembled as he pronounced the words. A friend—had he been the dear familiar name uttered in this far off cottage, and by a stranger's lips. A full minute elapsed ere she could so still the beating of her heart, so calm the tall tale quivering of her voice, so to venture a further question. Then, in an indifferent a tone as she could assume, she inquired: "Do you then know this Earl? Are you a friend of his?"

"No. For entirely private reasons—in fact, to seek a lost trail—I procured an invitation to make one of a shooting party through a friend of mine who is his cousin. We were to have spent some weeks at the Court, but, unfortunately, I was compelled to leave suddenly."

"Doubtless Lord De Woodville is married? Did you see his wife?" she asked in a strange, unnatural voice.

"No, they were both away from home at the time, but I heard her spoken of as a sweet little woman; and if she resembles her mother, which hangs side by side with her mother in the gallery, she is as pretty as she is sweet. Of Irish extraction I believe she is." It amused him to discover this trait of feminine curiosity in the nun's character. He smiled a superior smile.

"Of the pictures one riveted my attention even to fascination, and aroused my envy. It was of three girls. There was something in the face of each subject—a simple purity, a look of innocence, and yet a depth of soul—that suggested a likeness between them. It bore the title, 'The United Kingdom.' The centre figure, which represented England, was that of a lovely girl, graceful as a nymph, attired in white; a single rose decked her gold-brown hair; lilies lay upon her youthful breast, and grew about her feet. A sweet emblem of purity thus she stood, but from her eyes there gleamed a lofty spirit, as pure as it was bold. On her right, her little hand fast locked in England's, seated on an ivy stump, rested Ireland's gentle daughter, dressed in emerald green. The thimble wreath crowned her dark and wavy locks; modesty, peace, and beauty dwelt in the drooping eyes and on the broad white brow. On the mossy grass beside these two, the hand of England resting lovingly on her neck, knelt Scotland's child, attired in richest plaid. The purple thistle decked her chestnut hair; steadfast and true the light that shone from her brave eyes."

The blood had rushed to Sister Marguerite's face, and suffused in with a rich crimson glow; for well did she remember how her brother had insisted upon having the picture painted before she left her home for ever. How clearly had her patient suggested the portraits of dear Marie and Madge; the thought of them was dearer to her now almost than ever.

"Surely you are not well?" inquired Manfred, noting her flushed and downcast face.

"Oh, yes, but perhaps the room is a little close," she answered, rising and moving towards the window, which she threw more widely open. "The air will soon revive me."

There was a slight pause, during which the cool fresh air played gratefully upon her burning cheek, and helped to calm her mind.

"At the Baron Court of which you speak, saw you aught of an old dog—or servants—retainers grown old in their master's service. Oftentimes such places possess these faithful treasures."

"And true enough this one lacked not its due in that respect. Few young faces were there to grace the servants' hall; whilst one huge St. Bernard peered with stately tread the most private garden walk. There was one old man especially, who loved the dog, and seldom lost him from his sight; this was John the aged coachman, quick-witted, but too presumptuous and bold; to speak the truth, I cared little for either man or dog, nor did I trust them either."

The friendly *cornetto* hid her face; it was well her back was turned, for a look of triumph lit her eyes as she thought within herself, "Dear old Leo! you never failed to close the brave and true!"

"Was the dog very old and infirm, or likely, do you think, to live a few years longer? Being fond of animals I like to hear all about them."

"Really, I bestowed very little attention upon the animal. We took a mutual dislike to each other. But why do you take such interest in unnecessary things? It is not of dogs or men I wish to speak, but of Marion, poor Edmund's wife. The rest has no concern for us."

"Well, I am once more all attention," she said presently, as she turned from the window and patiently repeated herself. "What of Marion? Did you see her?"

"No, I did not; but chance threw me across the Western Lodge, into which, with the coachman's aid, we entered, the owner being from home. Curiosity persuaded me to explore the dainty cottage, and there hidden in a private room, I saw poor Edmund's portrait, and hanging on the walls were pictures of Scottish scenery, in which I recognized his touch. His violin—a Strad—was there also; everything spoke of him. I fairly gasped for breath. Never had I felt so near to him as then. Scarce dare I move or breathe lest I should offend; I feigned sudden illness and rushed out from the door, thankful to make my escape at any cost. Nothing could have induced me to linger near the spot; so you see that even this beautiful Eden held for me its avenging angel, and in dread of it I fled."

"It would surely have been more dignified and manly—had Harold's friends—not you remained to aid poor Edmund's wife?"

"Yes; now by the new light which is gradually penetrating my mind, I see how insane and cowardly was my flight. But since my panic drove me here, the hand of Providence may have been the motive power; for some little time ago a secret impulse seemed to promise me peace of heart once more, could I but unburden my soul to you."

"And have you been true to that impulse by unfolding to me all, simply and plainly—every fact?"

"Not quite all; one thing of importance alone remains. I am afraid and ashamed to tell you that tonight; tomorrow, on your return, I will humble myself still further, and you, dear kind Sister, will then talk to me and teach me how to act."

And thus, like many a better man, Manfred deferred the essential and, to his mind, most humiliating act. Tomorrow would be soon enough to tell her who he was; he could not force himself to act today. He could not foresee all that was to happen—all the terrible atrocities that were to be perpetrated between the setting and the rising of the sun. He knew not that the next time he should gaze upon the sweet features of his gentle nurse his own would be so distorted with fear as to be scarcely recognizable. Few of the inhabitants of the city of Paris could tell, during the hours of that awful night, when the Communists had taken that where they could not conquer they would destroy and reduce to ashes.

"Only one question more ere I bid you farewell," said Sister Marguerite. You have never told me Edmund's family name. His poor little wife, you say, still bears her maiden name of MacDermot; what is that to which she has a right? I mean the name of her ill-used husband; for, indeed, so I may call him, seeing all he has endured."

"Tomorrow, dear kind Sister, I will tell you all; but you must promise not to be too severe, or you will kill me outright."

"I do promise!," she said, with her sweetest smile, "for today I have received a lesson which I trust never to forget. A few more such, she added brightly, "and the proud spirit of Sister Marguerite will be subdued, please God, at last."

"Must you really go?" he cried nervously, as he listened to her rehearsing her last instructions for the night to Joanne, who had already been waiting ten minutes to take her place. "I feel trusting tonight; the noises outside alarm me; you must not face it alone. Stay with us—do stay, Sister Marguerite, I entreat you."

"Now I am ashamed of my patient," she said merrily, in feigned anger. "Why should you fear for my safety more tonight than at any other time? He who protects the birds of the air will surely cast His loving care o'er His little spouse; and if a stray shot should hit her, well it would only be one Sister of Charity less; that to many would appear a boon and no loss, you know! Only one of those horrid white *cornettes* the less, she laughed mischievously. But seeing a look of pain and self-reproach upon Manfred's face, she stepped quickly to his side and, handing him her crucifix, knelt beside his couch, saying:

"Take this in your hand, and repeat after me what I say; you will feel better for doing so: My God, I believe in Thee, I hope in Thee, and I love Thee, and from the bottom of my heart I grieve for all my offences against Thee. There—rising—"now if you are kept awake by fear and terror, repeat that little prayer, and all will be well." And with a kindly "God bless you all," she was gone.

Manfred heard the cottage door close after her; then with a heavy sigh he buried his head on his pillow and wept tears of sorrow—sorrow for the miserable and sinful life he had led, sorrow for the grief he had caused others; and, most of all, he wept for very shame as he realized the almost immeasurable distance that existed between him and the once despised little Sister of Charity to whom, under God, he owed his life.

"Manfred," said Sister Marguerite, "I entreat you."

CHAPTER XIV.

It is an acknowledged fact that to authors are accorded privileges which assuredly are denied to ordinary mortals, and amongst the most startling of them is the marvellous power and speed wherewith they whirl their kind and patient readers from one half of the hemisphere to the other. No sooner have they secured our sympathy and impressed us with the surroundings of a fellow-creature dwelling in the heart of a crowded city, than with a dexterous twist of the pen they have landed us in the centre of the most distant and silent solitude of the desert. Or, from the summit of some snow-capped mountain peak, they alight with ease and grace upon the white deck of some proud steamer battling hopelessly with the cruel breakers. There appears to be no limit to the magic power of the pen. A few inspired words culled from the mind of a saint, are able to fill our hearts with peace and joy and raise our souls to nigher and better things, just as those drawn from the opposite source may pollute and defile us, almost to the level of the brute beast. No motive power will ever be discovered, able to stir and urge our bodies forward with anything like the velocity of speed wherewith

the magic pen can force our minds hither and thither, above and below, through the past into the future, until we are almost lost to the things of the present. And now with quiet roiseless tread and reverent mien, I too would be bold and lead my readers—even as the angelic guide did the great St. Peter—through bolts and bars and prison walls, nor pause for breath or speech until I land them safely within the narrow confines of a dim and dreary cell.

No sound was here save the dull, monotonous tread of the jailer, as he paced the silent passages, peering every now and again through the small iron grid into each prison door. Yet the same sun which rode high over restless Paris, dazzling the eyes of Sister Marguerite as she listened to her patient's tale, shone also upon the egypt roof and bare walls of a convict prison, and pierced the iron bars let into the cold grey twilight, most humiliating act. Tomorrow would be soon enough to tell her who he was; he could not force himself to act today. He could not foresee all that was to happen—all the terrible atrocities that were to be perpetrated between the setting and the rising of the sun. He knew not that the next time he should gaze upon the sweet features of his gentle nurse his own would be so distorted with fear as to be scarcely recognizable. Few of the inhabitants of the city of Paris could tell, during the hours of that awful night, when the Communists had taken that where they could not conquer they would destroy and reduce to ashes.

It would have been difficult to guess his age just then, for he was seated upon the regulation stool, one foot stained hand hanging listlessly by his side, the other resting upon his knee and supporting his handsome head, with its clearly lined forehead, as though a longing to distinguish this cell from the others; the hard mattress and the blanket lay tightly rolled up in one corner, whilst the rough wooden stand which supported the tin jug and basin added but little comfort to the place. But no visitor gazing upon its occupant could fall to be impressed by a sensation of wonder. Some there were amongst them who, animated by kinder feelings than curiosity, crossed the threshold of the strong iron-bound door to examine more closely the surroundings of so interesting a prisoner. And such as these of times left that cell more deeply moved than they could well have explained; a halo of romance and mystery hung over the lonely silent man.

"Like the illustrations but ill-fated Philip Howard, Edmund Leadbitter, had, by the aid of an old rusty nail, traced in the stone of his prison wall words which proved the height and depth of an exalted nature, and accounted in some measure for the steady eyes which were never bent or lowered in shame before his fellow-creatures. In one corner of this darksome abode—a cell in which the light fell least, as though a longing for privacy had guided the artist's hand—was traced with no little skill the outline of a crucifix, and beneath it the words: 'Even should He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' Then, as though the mind had wandered to familiar scenes fast burnt into the brain, and guided and given strength and nerve to the powerful hand, the nail had traversed the wall once more, leaving in its masterful trail the graceful outlines of a ruined abbey.

A harder month's labor than usual had just been accomplished by the convict; but the health of several of them, notably that of Edmund Leadbitter, or of "No. 75," had gradually succumbed under the extra strain, and after having fainted twice in the forenoon, he had been conducted back to his cell to rest a little, in order to be ready for the next day, when the services of every available man would be required to assist at some important work in the quarries. But No. 75 was not alone. One who sympathized with him much more than he dared express was near him, endeavoring to comfort and aid the unfortunate man. Leaning against the wall opposite, looking upon the convict with eyes in which pity and admiration strove for mastery, stood a Capuchin Father, dressed in the familiar brown habit and white cord of St. Francis: he was one of the chaplains to the prison. Apparently they had been conversing for some time, for No. 75, looking up with a pleasant smile, remarked in a resigned voice:

"It is discourteous of me, Father, to permit you to stand whilst I sit here resting all the while."

"You know well enough that I shall never permit you to stand in any instant longer than you need. The state of your health troubles me. Why do you object to my calling attention of the doctor to your case? Why will you persist in making so light of your sufferings, when with a little trouble on my part I could obtain an order for your admittance into the infirmary at once?"

"After tomorrow, dear Father—after tomorrow. Grant me yet one day more ere I give in; then you may do as you will. Only one day more—surely I can stand that! and the honest eyes locked up at the priest with a strange entreaty.

TO BE CONTINUED

"THE MOUNTAIN ROSE"
REV. C. D. McEMERY, C. SS. R. in "The Ligonian"

It was a dark, rainy night, and the two priests were sitting before the open fireplace with a collection of old cards between them. Father Casey had taken out the bottom drawer of his cabinet and was exhibiting the souvenirs he had picked up here and there on his continents.

"It's nothing but an empty leather wallet!" exclaimed Father Kerwin, tossing back the article he had been examining.

"Ah," said the elder priest, taking it up with a sigh, "it's nothing but an empty leather wallet, but it represents a history, or more properly, a tragedy—a double tragedy."

Father Kerwin settled back in his chair for the story which he knew was coming. Father Casey sat for some minutes looking sadly into the fire, as length he began:

"It was a night like this at my first mission down in the land country. Kevin O'Donnell and I buttoned up snug in our raincoats, on our tough Texan ponies were on our way—at least, so we thought, God help us—to his wedding with Rose Blanchard, which was to take place on the morrow at the Blanchard home up in the foothills."

"We had been jogging along steadily ever since 2 o'clock and now slowed down to a walk as we neared the river and got into the heavy rain. Kevin O'Donnell and I buttoned up snug in our raincoats, on our tough Texan ponies were on our way—at least, so we thought, God help us—to his wedding with Rose Blanchard, which was to take place on the morrow at the Blanchard home up in the foothills."

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"I kind thought maybe they'd a told Old Bill to be on this side waitin' for us," he said.

"The words were few and simple—the words of our pioneers always as so when they speak of their strongest interior emotions—but I perceived from his tone how bitterly he was disappointed. He had not doubted that the ferry would be waiting for us and that 'The Mountain Rose' would be one of its passengers.

"Young O'Donnell's signal whistle had apparently failed to reach the ears of the boatman. We waited a tense minute but could perceive nothing except the swish of the black waters and the faint glimmer of the light in the boatman's shanty. At length, with a muttered exclamation of impatience, my companion drew his revolver and fired two quick shots. As the reports reverberated among the hills a hoarse answering shout came faintly from the opposite shore, and it was good to hear, but simultaneously there rang out another shout which sent a chill of horror through our bones. It was a woman's piercing shriek rising from the river; it could scarcely have been more than twenty feet away.

"Good God!" cried Kevin, snatching up the reins. I heard his Texan's forehead splash into the water, when suddenly he stopped, wheeled and came back to my side.

"Take this Father," he said, handing me this leather wallet, "and give it to the Mountain Rose as soon as you have tied the knot tomorrow. It is the wedding gift I have prepared for her. If anything happens, tell her—"

The rest of the sentence was drowned by the splashing of his pony as it breasted the current. Scream on scream rose from the helpless woman. Strain as I would, I could get no glimpse of her in the darkness, but the sound clearly showed that she was being rapidly carried towards the middle of the stream. The few sad moments Kevin had consumed in placing in safe-keeping his gift to 'The Mountain Rose' had made the work of rescue doubly difficult and hazardous. In fact to this day I am convinced that it was the delay caused by this act of thoughtfulness for the girl that cost him his life. How utterly unworthy was Rose Blanchard of the devotion of this great manly heart! But I am getting ahead of my story.

"Kevin's pony made a landing on the opposite bank at a slight of mile down stream. The drenched woman half dead from exposure and fright, was in the saddle. She told how her cabin had been destroyed by the rising water, how, while clinging to the wreckage she had heard the shots and had screamed for help, how O'Donnell, guided by her cries, had reached her, helped her into the saddle, and then struck out himself for the nearest shore.

"Early next morning we found his lifeless body tangled in the debris further down the river. Our men pointed with pride to a deep wound just beside his right temple.

"He was knocked senseless by a floating beam. That's what got him, 'once there ain't no river in the world Kevin O'Donnell couldn't swim!'" they said.

"During the long hours I sat by the corpse of my truest and staunchest friend, I thanked Providence for the merciful death which had spared his loyal heart the knowledge of the perfidy of Rose Blanchard."

"Why, what had she done?" asked Father Kerwin.

"The very day before the wedding she had eloped with an oily tongued adventurer who appealed to her vain and selfish nature by lying boasts of his great riches. That is why there was no one to meet us at the ferry."

"And the leather wallet—what did it contain?"

"The deed to a prospect claim which O'Donnell had named 'The Mountain Rose.' He knew he had struck 'pay dirt,' and, in fact, it developed into the richest lead mine in all that country. When Kevin's relatives heard the story they refused to touch a cent of the price. By mutual agreement the proceeds were devoted to the building and endowment of an institution where grateful orphan children learn to know and bless the name of one of nature's truest noblemen—Kevin O'Donnell."

"Thus ends the tragedy of the black leather wallet," said Father Casey.

THE MONTH OF THE SACRED HEART

The month of June being devoted to the honor of the Sacred Heart of Our Blessed Lord, is now called the month of the Sacred Heart as Mary is called the month of Mary.

Love for the Sacred Heart and for our blessed Lord spring from the incarnation. This devotion causes the soul to advance rapidly in humility, generosity and patience.

The love of the Sacred Heart has always been prominent among chosen souls in the Church. St. Lutgarde had a great desire to consecrate herself in her childhood to the service of God in religion. Loss of her fortune through the financial failure of her father facilitated the accomplishment of her object. She too, was a client of the Sacred Heart.

One day, it is related that the Lord Himself appeared to her. Pointing to His still bleeding heart, He bade her seek in Him alone the joy of divine love. During the bloody struggle with the Albigenses, she offered herself up and suffered the most fearful tortures of mind

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LOUIS SANDY

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