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A DAUGHTER OF NEW FRANCE.

BY MARY CATHERINE CROWLEY. CHAPTER XXVIII.

SWEET AS THE ARBUTUS BLOSSOM. "Barbe, are you not coming again to herese at Le Detroit?" I queried

Therese at Le Detroit?" I stupidly, at length.
"No, Monsieur Normand." " La Mothe no longer cherishes re sentment toward you for the chagrin you caused him by freeing the Boston-nals," I blundered on.

sentment toward you caused him by freeing the Bostonnals," I blundered on.

"I am not afraid of Monsieur de Cadillac," Madame de Chateauguay made answer with spirit. "Yet I—" Here she shot a sidelong look at me. "In truth, Normand, I may as well tell you—of late I have thought much of the convent again. Myheart has been so oppressed with loneliness that, the last time I was in Quebec, I went to Mere Angelique de St. Jean, at the Ursulines, and prayed her to receive me among her daughters."

"Barbe, Barbe," I cried aghast, and ther supon launched into a torrent of exhortation, begging her to reconsider, to be not over-hasty,—even as I had in the early days of her widow-hood.

hood. She listened most demurely, bent head, and pressing to her lips, her little lace handkerchief as if she would choke back a sob; at times her graceful form even shook with emo-

At length, to my amazement, when I stopped a moment for breath she broke into a peal of merry laughter.

"Spare your eloquence, counin," she counselled, brushing her flushed cheek with the filmy bit of lace. "Spare your eloquence, at least, until you hear the end of my story.

"The Reverend Mother gave no species of the story."

encouragement to my fancy. She said my vocation was to live in the (so the good nuns call our part of God's creation, they who dwell upon the borderland of Heaven) Yes, she was very kind; she said I was meant for the happiness of the world; that I would indeed find thorns among my roses, but at least I should have the

A sensible woman, forsooth !"

"A sensible woman, forsooth!" I ejaculated with satisfaction. And now, Miladi, I presume you will proceed to gather your roses?"

"I do not know," stammered Barbe, spreading out the little lace handkerchief upon her knees.

I have only a hazy recollection of the sort of dress she wore on that day, but I have since been told it was a purple and gold gown of Atlas silk with a peticoat of mauve Atlas edged with gold.

Perchance the worthy lady had of the Bistonnais." I said savheard of the Bistonnais." I said savagely. Roses grow better in the southern provinces than with us! southern provinces than with us! Unless, indeed, you will return to Le Detroit, where, as you know well, the beautiful rose of the prairie twines in gay luxuriance around the door arches, and makes of the roughest stake house a bower of beauty. For me, I have never wished to walk through the rose-gardens of life; its sweetest paths never wished to walk through the rose-gardens of life; its sweetest paths have ever seemed to me, Barbe, those we trod together long ago, when we went across the rocky lplaces and into the woods seeking the fragrant ar-butus. Would you be willing to ex-change your roses for the sweetchange your roses for the breathed May flower, Barbe?"

breathed May Hower, Bailbo ;
Miladi's head sank lower.
"Mere Angelique said nothing about
the arbutus," she answered with
averted face; yet there was a laugh in her voice that emboldened me.

The arbutus has not the thorns of a rose," I went on.
"But it belongs to the May time,

and the May-time is passed," she argued.

"It belongs to all seasons," I insisted. "Have we not found it with its shining green leaves, living and hardy even beneath our Canadian snows, its sweetness stored in its valiant little heart to be one day given forth to those who await the gift with patience?" I had seated myself upon the arm of madame's great chair; but as she per-

sistently kept her face away from me, I had addressed myself to her tower of fair hair which she wore in several rows of close rows about her face—a fashion named (I have since learned) a la Maintenon,' from its adoption by beautiful and virtuous lady at the time the king first noticed her. But, albeit I had indited more than one rondeau to Miladi's bright tresses, they could give me no index of her mini or hunger. Notice were a limited to the contraction of the country of th humor. Neither was I inclined to bend to her even then. No, she must look up to me.

Accordingly I straightened myself before her.
"Birbe," I said, "listen to me

Thereupon she turned toward and raised our eyes to mine in the half-rogu'sh, half deprecating manner with which she had often heard me when she was a child.

"Barbe," I went on, "long ago, when we went a Maxing I am awt.

when we went a Maying,—I an awk-ward boy, you a dainty little demoiselle —do you remember that you always searched for the arbutus because I loved it and you would fain give it to

"Yes, yes," she assented readily.
"I will remind you why I loved "I will remind you why I loved it.
One day of the spring time, when I was
a small lad, I stood in this room watch ing my aunt Guyon making croquecig

" Ol a sudden the door yonder burst open, and there in the doorway stood the bronze figure of an Indian. the fairest little child I ever beheld, a baby maid who stretched out her tiny hands to my aunt, as if sent to her by Providence, as indeed was

the truth.
"When the Indian was gone, my aunt set the pretty creature upon her knees, and I knelt at her feet, admiring Rectonalise. knees, and I knelt at her feet, admiring the beauty of the little Bostonnaise, for such Dame Guyon said she was. But to me she was just a May-flower from the dark forest; like the arbutus she was sweet and fair, with its own delicate blush, and her bright hair

minded me of a ray of sunshine failing upon the forest blossoms. "I loved her from that day, al-

"I loved her from that day, although, as the years, slipped away, I know not when in my heart affection for the child changed to devotion to the woman. When I saw her paid court to by many cavaliers, I did not understand that my moroseness at the sight arose from jealousy. I did not know that I loved her with all my soul until I learned that janother had win this exquisite May flower. In the same hour wherein I became conscious of the passionate love which had entwined itself around every fibre of my nature, I was confronted with the realization that in honor I must crush it down, must pluck it out and cast it it down, must pluck it out and cast it away, or it would become a noisome

"After I had struggled with mysel for weeks I came home. For the gallant bridegroom fate had decreed that the beauty of this May-flower should be but as the fair white snow blossom he wore upon his breast; its sweetness but enwreathed his memory.

"At this knowledge, the love which I supposed I had plucked out of my heart grew again; I thought to reveal it, to reach out for the May-flower, to vie with others to win it, like the eager young lover of Alpine lands who, eager young lover of Alpine lands who, outrivalling all competitors, climbs the rocky precipice, to gain the pure and snow-white edelweiss.

"But ah, love abounds in honey and

poison! Those who strove against me had so much more to offer than I; and ever I said to myself. 'Some day! will do some noble deed. Then, when I have attained success and honors and wealth, I will go to Miladi—to Miladi who as a little child went a Maying with me, who as a roung demand. poison! Those who strove against me with me; who as a young demoiselle, unthinking, and as she might have culled the blooms of her garden plot, gathered the best affections of my gathered the best affections of my heart only to cast them aside; to Miladi, who now, as a widow, graces one of the proudest names of New France, and therefore is not to be

"Time passed," I continued, for Barbe's eyes were fixed upon me with a gracious interest. "I have seen many adventures without having gained distinction, since to face darger. many adventures without having gained distinction, since to face dangers unfinchingly is but the usual lot of the man who, taking his life in his hand, plunges into an unknown country. With our Sieur I have wandered far and wide, yet my boyish dreams of achieving fame and fortune have been in no degree attained. I have been in no degree attained. I have been but a wooer of Nature in the wilderness because of her own loveliness and the spell it cast upon me. Perchance the spell it cast upon me. Perchance I lacked the greatness of soul that inclines to brilliant deeds. I am still obscure, unknown, and have little wealth. Parnassus has no gold mines, and I have dwelt too much among the clouds. This being so, I had thought never to say what I have said to day. Dearest Barbe, I thought you betrothed to the Bostonnais. I ever supposed to the Bostonnais. I ever supposed that he won your girlish fancy on the that he won your girlish lancy on the day when first he met you. I surmised that at his coming to Le Detroit the interest he had long ago awakened burst into flame again, since old loves like old brands readily rekind'e.

like old brands readily rekind'e.

"It is bliss, indeed, to find myself mistaken. Once before I told you of my love, Barbe! Now I tell you that I have worshipped and reverenced you from the hour when first I knew what it is to love. Will you be my wife, Babette? Will you share my life, humble as it is?" numble as it is ?"

humble as it is?"

As I spoke these last words, I took
Miladi's hands in mine and drew her

up to me.
But when I would have clasped he in my arms, she held me off, her palms resting against my breast, her rosy

fsce averted.
" Phouff! For one whose pride has rendered him so slow to place the decision with me, you of a hurry to receive your answer, sir," she said. "I will think over what you have told me, and let you know my mind in the course of a year or tw Thereat she nodded her pretty head, and looked me in the eyes with a merry

"Be ger erous, Barbe," I cried. "I glance. I have kept my love for you locked in my own heart, I wronged no one but myself by so doing. Let me hear my myself by so doing. Let me hear my fate, I beg of you! Give me at least a

moiety of hope!"

Perhaps it was the look Miladi vouchsafed me, which resigned me to a small degree of patience, as she forced me to sit down again, this time upon the settle, it being nearest, and then seating herself, piled up between us its cushions of silk patchwork and pillows of fir balsam ere she would say more.

of fir balsam ere she would say more. "Now listen to me, Normand," she began at last, when I had tacitly sub-mitted to endure my suspense with as much fortitude as might be.
"When I was a child, a certain hand

ome youth was kind to me, and took auch trouble for my sake. We were friends in those days. He went away, and I grew to be a tall young maid, much and then a woman. After a while he came back, but he was changed. Nothing I did pleased him. He cared no for me himself, it seemed, yet he wished not to have any one else care; he would not have me speak with or smile

upon any one."
"An audacious wretch he was, in faith," I interposed contritely. But she shook her finger at me in token

that I must be silent. I-I would have been as demure as he wished, if by so doing I could have ne wished, if by so doing I could have gained his approval," she pursued. "Yet when I dismissed my cavallers, he took me to task for that also. He set out for the northwest. After a time he came again. He was more like his old self, but soon he went to France. His every action showed that he was indifferent to me."

Nonsense, Barbe, how could that b ?"

again she checked me.

"There was one," and here her voice shook as even thus indirectly she recalled Le Moyne—"There was one who loved me well, who had loved me long. My mother, good Dame Guyon, urged me much to marry; I had bought my right to live in New France by a promise to Comte Frontenac that I would take a husband in Quebec. My

noble and gallant lover pressed his suit, and I gave my hand and heart to Chateauguay. Yes, Normand, my heart too, honestly and wholly; to have withheld it would have been unworthy, and I willed that he should have it.

"When for the glory of New France, with a bridegroom's tenderness he kissed and left me, I vowed again, as I had done before the altar, to be to him most true.

most true.

"And during the weeks which followed, day and evening I prayed to God, with passionate entreaty, that I might love my husband with all my strength and power of loving. I cried out to the sweet Madonna to obtain for me this favor, only this! It may be, other brides have no need thus to pray; other brides have no need thus to and yet again, perchance many who think themselves the fondest have as much need as had I, since what is called love is so often but another name for selfishness. It may be that in my own pique and pride I was over-hasty, pique and pride I was over-hasty, that my marriage was a mistake; I cannot tell. Nevertheless this I feel and know: had Chateauguay lived, I should have loved him faithfully and well; and if a remembrance of any other lover sought hiding in my heart, the hand of God Himself would have plucked it out." plucked it out."

plucked it out."

As in her earnestness the clear eyes of Miladi met my own, to me she took on an added dignity and beauty; and I blessed God that the heart of our dear Barbe was as Madonna-like as her per-

"Ay, ay! If women were ever wont to call upon God in their need, there would be fewer broken vows and broken hearts," I murmured meditative-

"Yes, provided men did so as well," "Yes, provided men did so as well," she retorted with a flash of her saucy spirit. "Howbeit"—and again she became pensive—"Le Moyne fell, fighting the English. From the hand of my own people came the blow that seemed to crush out all my youth; the blow that in itself would have separated me from the Bestannels. So you should me from the Bostonnais, so you should have reflected, you foolish Normand! How could I wed an English officer, when the English killed Chateau

guay?"
"The Bostonnais may not have been in that campaign," I felt it incumbent

in that campaign, televite in the upon me to observe.

She heeded not, but went on simply—
"I resolved to devote my life to the memory of Chateauguay; to remain his widow, though I was but in name his wife. I sought the seclusion of his seigneury on the river bank; I wanted to enter the convent of the Ursulines, to enter the convent of the Ursulines, but the good Mother put me off. You came, but I did not care to see you. Merely to think of you seemed a wrong to Chateauguay, as if he still were

living.
"Yet the good Mother of the Ursul-"Yet the good Mother of the Ursulines said, 'wait.' Indifferent as I thought myself, as time went on, your quiet sympathy became a pleasant recollection. Gradually, too, my spirits returned, for, O God, I was still so young to be plunged in sorrow! I grew lonely at the seigneury; Beauport and Quebec had their reminiscences; besides I did had their reminiscences; besides, I did not wish to go yet into the gay world. Therese was about to set out for Le Detroit to join her husband; she pressed me to bear her company. It was the one boon I would have asked—the chance to get away into a new world; to leave, if possible, all sad associations; to teach the little children of the wilder-

"A womanly ideal," I said tenderly. ness. "But—but — there was one thought that deterred me, I must confess," she admitted; "it was the thought of you Normand.

She smiled a little at my start of dis

omfiture. Still, I reasoned mysel! out of this reluctance," she went on. "Chut, Cousin Normand was never my lover," I argued to myself. "It will cure my morbidness to see him. He will scold me and take me to task, as formerly, and our encounters of wit be as the striking of steel upon flint. Here no one ventures to contradict the Lady of Chetenument, but Normand will not Chateauguay, but Normand will not

stand upon any such ceremony."
"What a churl I must have been to have led you to this opinion!" I depre-cated with a laugh, all the while eager cated with a laugh, all the white eager that she would have done with these details and speak the one word Honged to hear, or, if she would not say it, that she would give me leave to plead my cause anew; for it looked to me as if in this long history she did but seek to

p t me off. Now, monsieur, no impatience, she proceeded with most teasing deliberation, again piling up the barricade of pillows, which I had overturned. 'If a woman is ever to be heard out, I should like to know if it is not when a stability is maintained for her account.'

should like to know it is not when a cavalier is waiting for her answer."
"I pray he may not have to wait all his life," I hazarded with a sigh, whereat she was mightly amused, for of a little impresent acquarter I have even all the innocent coquetry I have ever seen, Miladi Barbe had, I think, the greatest share, nor has she lost it to greatest share, nor has she lost it to this day, but continues to coquet with her husband in a most shameless fashion, for a woman of her years, as he has often remarked to me in friendly confi-

" No, Sir Gravity, I promise you he "No, Sir Gravity, I promise you will not have to wait even until his locks turn gray," she rej ined non-chalantly. "When he gets it, I know not if he will like it over well."

At this I caught her hands again, and would have taken the answer I wanted would have taken the answer I wanted from her lips without more ado, but she drew back with dignity, and rising, dropped me a stately curtesy, as if she would leave me altogether.

I took two or three turns about the room than come and stood heaven.

room, then came and stood before her where she had sunk down once more mong the cushions and motioned me to

among the classical areas are my place.

"I will not sit down again until you answer me!" I cried.

"I pray you may not grow overweary of standing, monsieur," she re-

we not a practical people, we French? We not a practical people, we french?
We may neglect to return to our loves,
our homes, our friends, but we never
forget to go back to our dinners."
"Barbe, this levity—"I began, in a
deeply offended tone.
"Well, Normand, as I was saying,"
she pured seronely "mith that scort

she pursued serenely, "with that soowl upon your brow, your appearance is quite natural; but when we met at Le Detroit, as I told you there one day, I scarce recognized you there one day, I scarce recognized you. When you spoke to me it was as if your wards had been steeped in a honey wrought by stingless bees, if perchance that might be sweeter than the common kind. The mentor whom I expected to meet was become anny a flatterer and again diffi. become anon a flatterer and again diffident and distant toward me, though bold and brave ever when there was

cause for action."
"It was because I loved you so much "It was because I loved you so much, Barbe," I broke out. "I was proud, it is true, I had no mind to be numbered among your discarded suitors, yet often too I laughed at my presumption, in that I sometimes hoped you would leave your manor on the St. Lawrence for a home builded of mud and cedar bark upon the banks of Le Detroit. But now I see that my very love gave me upon the banks of Le Detroit. But now I see that my very love gave me the right to speak, gave you the right to know and to decide. Therefore, although but the clerk of the Chevalier de la Mothe, I ask you to be my wife."

"As I have said, I will think the matter over," rejoined Madame de Chateauguay, with equanimity.

"In God's name, Barbe, torture me no longer," I cried. "Is it 'Yes,' or 'No'? Tell me, that I may either go or stay."

or stay.

Seeing that I was veritably at the end of my stock of patience, and really angered, she dropped her bantering in a trice, and demolished the barricade of

I feigned to take no notice of th ruse, however. Thereupon she sprang to her feet, and coming to me with the decility of a child, laid a hand upon my

arm, and looked up into my face.
"Ah, Normand, mon ami!" she said
in a voice of captivating tenderness. in a voice of captivating tenderness.

"I have teased you beyond all endurance, but it was only that in the end I might tell you this. When I was a child, and we went a Maying together, often, after I had gone skipping on before I came running back to you, my fore, I came running back to you, my arms laden with arbutus blossoms, and stretched the sweet flowers out to you, that you might take them. But you paid no heed; you were lost in a day-dream, and did not see that they were for you. And thus I waited in vain until with childish impatience I was fain to fling the drooping buds away."
"I was ever a stupid fellow, of

'No, no, only blind," she corrected "You longed for my love, you say, yet you did not see that it was yours for the taking. My heart was yours always, save only during the few weeks when it

belonged of right to another."

Thereat, in her impulsive and impetu ous fashion, she reached up to me, as I bent my head, and taking my bearded cheeks between her pretty hands, of herself kissed me squarely upon the

Then, alarmed at what she had done she sought to hide her blushes by flight;

but I caught her in my arms.

Barbe!" I cried, with a rapturous laugh, giving back the kiss, and this time being unrebuffed and unchastised.

Perhaps I was a fool that I took not more than one or two at the worst, but more than one, or two at the most; but in truth, I did not dare, and could scarce yet believe in my own good fortune. Nathless Miladi has told me

since that in this instance she liked m all the better for my diffidence.

Presently we were again sedately seated upon the settle, but now the cushions of balsam and the down of the wild swan were fallen to the floor, and I hastily shoved them away with my learners. foot, lest it might enter into Barbe's head to straightway build a wall be tween us again; since she had then, and has still, as many bewitching moods

when we began to look our happiness quietly in the face and to plan for the future, I said half jestingly, yet

with an undertone of earnestness Well, well, Miladi, this is, after all, but a sorry match for you. Were you minded to marry again, you should have had a noble of New France for your husband." I shall have a noble husband, never

fear," she answered with archness.
"Ah, my dear," I went on gravely,
"now, more than ever, I wish for your
sake that the prizes of ambition were
mine. I would fain be a dashing soldier, reputed for my progress. dier, reputed for my prowess, my as a swordsman; a leader of the t

of the province; the founder of colony, like Monsieur de Cadillac." My sweet Barbs laughed-a merry happy laugh. ... And will you find it hard to be lieve, Normand," she declared with a shake of the head—" will you find it hard to believe that I love you just b cause you are not the swashbuckling cavalier you would forsooth have me wed, monsieur? I have seen you ready

enough with your blade upon occasion; but I scarce think it would add to my happiness to knew that you were pron-to run your friends through the bod upon the lightest provocation. I have seen you brave, prompt to fight for and defend the helpless and those who claimed your love and duty. I do not know that I should admire you more were you ever eager to dash more were you ever eager to dash into broils and quarrels—if you chafed always for wars and slaughter, as do some. You have not wealth, but would I respect you more if you had gained it, as do many, by cheating the King, by oppressing the people, by tricking the poor Indians out of their peltries and luring them to their ruin with eau de vie? As for the prizes of ambition, Normand, look you, Monsleur de Cadillac is an honest man and an able one; in ability, foresight, and plans for the were you ever eager to broils and quarrels — if n ability, foresight, and plans for the development of New France, far in advance of these times, I am told. He advance of these times, I am told. He has received honors, emoluments, gifts from his Majesty, and yet what has been his life? One of disappointment, of bitterness, of fierce antaganisms, of enmittes. Have the prizes of ambition in his case been worth what they have enmittles. Have the prizes of ambition in his case been worth what they have kept me herself instead. She felt it cost him? If a man loves place and

power, it becomes the duty of a good wife to aid him to attain it, if she can. But, ah me! I would not have you like to Cadillac! A restiveness such like to Cadillac! A restiveness such as his, as fiery a spirit would weary out my heart. I have not the sweet patience of Therese, nor yet the calm ness that could soothe so imperious at the could soothe so imperious as ness that could scothe so imperious a nature. No, Normand, I would not have you other than you are. I have seen you, a faithful friend, serving the interests of De la Mothe better than your own, because of the boyish pledge of fealty you gave him. I have seen you a tender brother to Therese; a man gentle to beast and bird; as just to the red man as to his white brother; a student, preferring white brother; a student, preferring your few books and your quill to the your lew books and your quill to the pleasures of the wine-cup and the beauty of women—albeit indeed, sir, in other days your liking for the society of Madeleine de Versheres and one or two other of my friends caused me no small uneasiness."

What folly, Barbe!" I interposed Never did I give a vehemently. "Never did I give a second thought to any woman save

"Oh, oh, that is all very well to say now, monsieur," she protested. "I am told that every man save Adam has am told that every man save Adam has said the same to his fiancee, and, if one chose to consider the fable of Lilith, perhaps one might imagine Adam him-self no more of an exception in this re sen no more of an exception in this re spect than those who have come after him. However, we will let this pass, sir; I would not have you think me jealous now, nor like to be jealous of any woman in the world. And—and any woman in the world. And—and— I care not to see you a cavalier of courts and camps, Normand, though La Mothe says you made a most excellent appearance even at Versailles on appearance even at versaines on account of your gentle manners. Once I saw you plunge into the jaws of a fiery death to rescue a poor little Pani slave, and Therese wrote me in much more glowing terms than you have described the circumstance, telling me how you faced alone the horde of infuriated faced alone the horde of infuriated savages in your endeavor to save our dear Frere Constantin. Never fear, Normand," she repeated, slipping her hand into mine with simple content, "I shall have as good reason to be proud of my husband as has any woman of New

I bent my head and touched her white fingers with my lips.

Is there anything in all the world sweeter to a man than to hear even his failures lauded as if they were victories by the tender voice of the woman he

In the peacefulness of the September

evening, as I rode back to Quebec, the earth seemed to me a paradise as my mind dwelt upon the incidents of the The dream of my life had come true

Barbe was my promised wife. Of her own accord she had kissed me—as artlessly and with the same innocent frankness that she had been wont to come and kiss me when she was a child.
I had looked into her heart and with half awed delight found myself mirrored there, as one sees his own reflection in the depths of a pure forest spring. Barbe had laid her hand in mine free-

ly and with confidence. She had called me by that term of endearment—the sweetest of all, to my thinking—"mon ami" (my friend), she had said; choosing the name that the good dame New France gives to her husband, as it is, in turn, the title of honor and affection he bestows upon her.

"Mon ami"—"Ma mie," so it

should be between us evermore. Under the stars, as I rode on, owed to God that as I would be ev er lover, her faithful husband, so also I would be to her the friend she had named me, as she would, I knew, be mine. For had ever man a truer friend than is a devoted wife? And I set down here as my experience of some twenty eight years, that a firm and tender friendship is the tie of wedded love which best stands the strain of

TO BE CONTINUED.

MISS HETTY'S TRAMP.

Miss Hetty Bonsall lived alone in the house that had belonged to her fore fathers for generations. Not quite alone, either, for she had one servant, Nora, who had been in the family since before Miss Hetty was born, and who remained with her, faithful and cap-able, when the last of her kindred was beneath the sod.

Miss Hetty had never married, but she was not at all a blighted flower. Quick, reserved, gentle and refined, as it was in her blood to be, she had mingled more or less with her friends and neighbors, until the great event happened in her life which made things different. Not suddenly, sharply or cruelly so, yet decidedly and unwistak. cruelly so, yet decidedly cruelly so, yet declary and the ably different. Miss Hetty had become a Catholic. The only Catholic in Mapleton were servants, laborers and factory hands, and when "it" happened, people shook their heads, and touched their foreheads oracularly but sadly their forebeads oracularly but sadly—needing no spoken word to express the thought that was in them. A time passed, and Miss Hetty—save in this one particular—continued to be exactly her old self and the scarcely breathed theory as to her sanity fell to pieces, her neighbors still at a loss to account for her strange idiosyncrasy, endeavoyed to resume their old cordiality. But things were changed, and ity. But things were changed, and their mutual relations were never quite

the same again.
But if Miss Hetty noticed it—and she must have done so—she never made a sign. Her religion was so comforting and consoling that it made up for everything.

Her conversion had come about in a peculiar way. One evening as she sat watching Nora peeling apples for pies, she asked:
"Nora, how is it that you have

always been a Catholic ? "I was born one, Miss Hetty."
"Nobody is ever born into a relig-

ion, Nora."
"Well, my people were Catholics,
"Well, my people word mother made and when she was dying mother made your mother promise to send me to the Sister's Orphan Asylum. But she

ion of my parents, and sent me over to Four Rivers to Mass every Sunday, be-sides having me instructed in my cate-chism. She was a fine, good woman, Miss Hetty."
"Indeed she was. And you have

Miss Hetty."

"Indeed she was. And you have clung nobly to your faith, Nora. For a long time you were the only Catholic in Mapleton, were't you?"

"Yes, Miss Hetty."

"And now you have a nice church, and a good priest, haven't you?"

"Yes, Miss Hetty."
"Nora, I am going to tell you something. I have never before breathed it to a living soul. You remember that year I went to the Conservatory at

Boston?"
"Yes, I remember it well." "I met a young gentleman there whom—I liked very much. He was studying music. He was a Catholic. When I discovered it I couldn't—Well, I had a wrong idea of things then, and o it was ended.

"And that is why you never married,

Miss Hetty?"
"I think it is," rejoined Miss
Hetty, with a little sigh. "After a
while I was not unhappy, but I could never see any one else whom I liked as well. Now you have my little secret. Something in the appearance of your new priest suggests him. Do you think I might call, Nora?"

I might call, Nora?"
They were simple souls, both—the servant as simple as the mistress.
"I think you might," said Nora, and

"I think you might," said Nora, and Miss Hetty did.
Something had stirred the slumbering past in the spinster's heart. She did not know, she could not know, what had become of her youthful lover, but she found herself longing to learn something of the religion he had professed. The result was that the close of the year found her a Catholic. of the year found her a Catholic. Nora declared that it was a reward for the kindly act of her conscientious mother. Miss Hetty rather leaned toward the same opinion, and Father Furlong said that God not seldom

acted vicariously.

If Miss Hetty had not had the con solation of religion to sustain her, it is doubtful if she could have borne her subsequent misfortune. In less than a year after her conversion she became

year after her conversion she became blind. She could no longer sew, but she could knit; she could not read, but many times during the day the beads passed through her long, slim fingers, and no one ever heard her murmur.

Deep down in her virgin heart Miss Hetty had always treasured the memory of that youthful fancy, which if it had not been peremptorily and somewhat rudely nipped in the bud, would later, in all probability, have died a natural death. There were various natural death. There were reasons why it should have There were various been so. There had never been the slightest declaration of love on either side, not even so much as the pressure of a hand. But the timid admiration pictured in a certhe timid admiration pictured in a certain pair of Irish eyes had more than once brought a faint blush to the girlish cheek, and though the terrible discovery made, one Sunday morning on her way from the Congregational church, had caused her, as she thought it her bounden duty, to crush the sweet blossom of Love beneath the heel of Renunciation, she had never actually known those agonies which are known known those agonies which are known in romance as the pangs of disappointed in romance as the pangs of disappointed love. There is hardly a doubt that Miss Hetty was what is vulgarly, but expressively, called "a born old maid." Nevertheless, she had cherished a tender recollection, enjoying rather than affecting county so even is the content of the county suffering a gentle sorrow so exquisitely fanciful that it was not in any sense allied to pain. She had had her one little hour, and it had set her apart, in her own imagination, for sweet remembrance that could hardly be called re-

gret. Since she had been blind Miss Hetty always sat on the piazza overlooking the side garden, where Nora could see her from the kitchen and attend to any One evening as she sat busily knitting, the fleecy clouds ssamer wool dropping lightly and

of gossamer wool dropping figury and swiftly through her fingers, a shuffling step sounded on the gravel walk.

Good morning, madam," said a voice that had once been musical, and was still not unpleasant in its intona-tions; "is there any job that a man tions; "is there any job that a man might do about here to earn his dinner?" "What can you do?" replied Miss Hetty, letting her work drop into her lap, and glancing nervously about her while a slight pink flush mounted to her

"Do not be alarmed, madam," con-

"Do not be alarmed, madam," continued the man, noticing her perturbation, and attributing it to the dread
which many nervous women feel at the
sight of an unknown wayfarer.
"I am not—alarmed," faltered Miss
Hetty as her hands fluttered quickly
above her work, "I am blind."
"Blind?" echoed the stranger in a
sympathetic tone. "What a pity!"
Then Miss Hetty called to Nora, who
was broiling steak, the appetizing odor

was broiling steak, the appetizing odor of which must have been grateful to a hungry man.
"Nora," said Miss Hetty when the

"Nora," said Miss Hetty when the old woman appeared, "here is a—man, to whom I would like you to give a good, satisfying meal. He is anxious to do some work in return for it. Have we anything—is there—any odd job Nora?"

"He might chop some kindling," answered Nora. "But I can't let my steak burn. "Go to the kitchen steps, my good man," she continued, "and wait there till I dish up Miss Hetty's dinner."

dinner. But the tramp, for such he was in

But the tramp, for such he was in every line and furrow of his dissipated face and slouchy figure, had already taken off his cap and seated himself at Miss Hetty's feet. Resting both hands on his knees, and leaning his curly, grizzled head upon them, he looked long and earnestly at the faded, flower-ike face, from which beamed forth the pure white soul within. And as he gazed, his brows contracted in a frown, gazed, his brows contracted in a frown, he compressed his loose, vacillating lips together, and his bleared, bloodshot eyes grew moist. He must have had an usually tender heart for a tramp, for he shook his head compassionately once or twice blinked his sionately once or twice, blinked his bleary eyes and rose to his feet. "I can weed a little just here while I wait," he said. "Do so," replied Miss Hetty, who