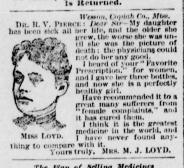
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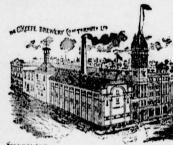
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ARMINE.

CHRISTIAN REID.

CHAPTER XIX.

The church proved to be old within as well as without, and, like many French parish churches, much in need of repair; butit was not unpicturesque and was full of that solemn repose which pervades the humblest of these ancient temples of faith. High, narrow win dows let down a dim light on the altar and the faded fresco above it; while in the gloom the massive antique lamp before the tabornacle burned with its red light steady as a star.

Armine knelt down on one of the

ow chairs with a singular sense of having reached a spot toward which she had been journeying. The feeling which had so suddenly laid hold of her in the churchyard was still strongly present with her, like the close, firm pressure of a hand. She could under-stand that, for she had known it before; but why should she feel as if this place, into which she had entered as a stranger, had some claim upon her life which was not strange? She looked up at the dark old walls, at the dusky roof, at the altar with its candles and crucifix. Why should this spot seem ore to her than many another where she had knelt before the same sacramental Presence?

There was no answer-naturally she could expect none — but in a time which came after she looked back with sense of awe to this strange feeling which signalized her first entrance into

At present, however, it was a feeling which passed, absorbed by deeper and stronger ones. The sight of M. de Marigny had recalled to her memory the impending conflict, which was but part of a greater and wider conflict fraught with tremendous issues. How tremendous, indeed, these issues were no one knew better than the girl in whose ears from infancy the revolutionary gospel had sounded, preached by many men in many tongues, but ever with the same burden. Young as she was, she had seen triumphs of which the revolutionary apostles themselves had hardly dared to dream; and she was well aware what their aims now were. Was it not coming again, the day when shrines such as this would be closed by those who shamed and belied France by denying God in her name? She knew that it might be so; that the earth was hollow underneath, and that while those who should defend religion halted, delayed, wasted their strength in differences, the great attacking army was marching on, led by hearts like that of her father, strong in singleness of purpose and devotion. As she thought of these things her own heart sank within her. She was like one torn in two, hardly knowing how It was, as Egerton had felt, a hard fate which arrayed this loving soul against one whom it was her natural impulse to follow and to honor narder still that she could not desire his success, though knowing how ardently he longed for it. She thought of all his toil and sacrifice with a great pang of pain and pity. At this moment, as in many, many moments before, the riddle of life pressed heavily upon her. Honest, misguided souls, working with heroic fervor for an end full of evil who that looks out on the world to-day does not feel the pity of this? And there are some to whom, as to Armine, it comes with the added force of per-sonal feeling and knowledge. These

ular prayer was necessary to enable a voice from the still depths of the tabernacle seemed to say, "canst thou not trust for others, for a great cause, for France, as well as for thyself

knowing that neither formal nor artic

sonal feeling and knowledge.

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hend their full degree of intent or of blindness? And for the rest, is my power less because men deny it, or be cause I suffer them to taste the full consequences of such denial?" And then again she felt that all things were easy to bear, as, indeed, all things must be to one who realizes that God's arm is not shortened; that in the present and future, as in the past, He will most surely govern with omniscient wisdom the world which He has created; and that the Church is never stronger than in the hour when al human aid is withdrawn from her nay, when all human power is arrayed against her—and she leans for support on His promise alone. Half an hour later Armine was still neeling, with her head bent forward

and tenderest mercy with which I read

the hearts of erring men and compre-

in her hands, when a step entered be hind her, rang on the paved aisle as it advanced, then paused, and after an interval receded again. She hardly noticed it until she heard the baize door swing shut as it passed out; and then she lifted her head with a start, for she thought of her father, and remembered that he had promised to come to the church for her. Knowing his aversion to churches, however, she felt that she would prefer to go to meet She rose, therefore, gave a las look at the quaint old altar, the dim picture and the shining lamp—feeling again as if some strange tie bound her to this place—and then walked slowly

The brightness of the day dazzled her eyes as she emerged from the obscurity of the church and paused a moment in the picturesque old porch. shading them with her hand until they became accustomed to the change Inleed, the scene was enough to dazzle any eyes, flooded as it was just now The green sunlight. stretching inland, the golden starred heath stretching seaward, the flashing, distant water, and the blue sky bending down to meet it-all were strong in vivid color, and so also were the glis tening gables of the village and its stone tiled roofs.

Suddenly — was it a sound or an in-stinct that made Armine look round? She scarcely knew; but look she did. to see a tall figure coming toward her irom the direction of the presbytery, which adjoined the church. It needed an instant's glance only to assure her that it was the Vicomte de Marigny, and with a beating heart she turned quickly to go. But the vicomte was very near at hand, and as she was about to step out of the shadow of the porch he stood before her, uncovering and speaking with the same air of gracious courtesy as when they met last in Paris.

"I am happy to see you at Marigny, mademoiselle. I hope that you are well? "Quite well, M. le Vicomte, je vous

remercie," she answered in a low tone. while her eyes regarded him with an expression half-startled, half-wistful. "And you will let me inquire how you left our friend, M. d'Antignac-for it is likely that you have seen him since I have?"

"I have seen him only once since the day I left you with him," she re-"and that was the next day. plied; bade him good by then, for I was leaving Paris.

"Ah!" said the vicomte. He remembered now that he had heard of Duchesne's arrival in Brittany as will understand how she could only lay almost immediately following his own. and of course his daughter was with her heart at the foot of the crucifix, him. Poor girl! It was a sad fate for her to be tossed hither and thither God to read its hopes and fears. by every wave of political agitation.

But at length peace came like gentle He understood perfectly the look in her appealing eyes at present, and all the chivalry of his nature was stirred to show her that he did not regard her as identified in the least with her father

"Then you have been some time in Brittany," he said. "I hope that it has pleased you? We are, perhaps, inordinately proud of our country, we

Bretons.' "It seems to me that it would not be possible for any one not to be proud of such a country," she answered in a voice which had in it a thrill of pathe tic music. "It is so beautiful, so interesting, and so full of the most touch ing traditions of the past : but, more than that, the people seem to be so strong in faith and so simple in virtue think you need only pray, M. le

vicomte, that it may not change." He understood the sympathy which the words expressed, the look in the clear, golden eyes with their wistful More and more he was touched, interested, charmed by this sensitive ace, which, with its quick and transparent changes of feeling, was, as Egerton had once said, "like a poem.

You are very kind," he answered. "I am glad that you have felt the charm of Brittany, for it is as much a spiritual as a material charm. And he longer you remained the more you would feel it. For my part, when I get down into my old chateau by the sea I feel as if I never cared to leave it and go back into the mad whirl of the Paris world. You wonder, then, why I go?" with a slight smile, as he caught a look in her eyes. "Well, it is only because the humblest soldier in the ranks of a great army must not to do. throw away his gun as long as he can ire a shot, and perhaps because I have a little pleasure in fighting, too

the porch and walked toward the gate. She reached it before she perceived

once to be that of her father. Know-iug his long sight, her mind misgave her a little. If he had seen her speaking to the Vicomte de Marigny what would he think, and how could she ex plain the true significance of their short interview? She waved her hand and hurried forward to meet him. be well founded.

"Who was that man with whom you were talking in the porch?" he asked as soon as they met.

Now, perhaps it is impossible for any one not to look a little guilty whe accosted in this manner, and when that the name to be pro nounced will have an obnoxious sound in the ears of the person addressed Armine certainly colored a little, but her eyes met her father's full and

"It was the Vicomte de Marigny,

she replied.
"The Vicomte de Marigny," repeated Duchesne. They had paused as they met, and were now standing face to face. He looked at his daughter for a moment in amazement too deep for expression, but not too deep His face flushed . ther for wrath. came a flash like lightning into the eyes, above which the dark brown knitted, as he said sternly: "And how is it that the Vicomte Marigny ventured to address you?"

"Because I have met him before, she answered, "and I knew no reason why I should not acknowledge the acquaintance."
"You have met him before

Where? "At M. d'Antignac's, in Paris.

"And why have I never heard of such a meeting?"

"I only met him once or twice," she said, "and it never occurred to me to mention what seemed to me a matter of no importance."

There was a moment's silence, while her father regarded her with eyes that seemed to look her through and Never before had Armine seen such an expression on his face. upon to endure that hardest of all things to one conscious of integrityundeserved suspicion. Her father had always trusted her implicitly and treated her with a kindness that never varied. But now-was it to be her fate now to stand like a culprit, tremb ling before a suspicion which she could not disprove?

If she trembled, however, it was at east not perceptibly. Having uttered her few words of explanation, she stood with perfect composure and eyes as clear as noonday, meeting the glance bent on her. But it was evident that she had not disarmed her father's anger.

"So," he said at length in a bitter tone, "this explains why I have an enemy at my own hearth; this explains why your sympathies are with priests and nobles, and why you seek the society of such friends as the D'Antignacs! It also explains why you did not wish to accompany me to Marigny. Well, he is a fool who looks for anything but folly and deceit in a woman!

"It is likely that I might be guilty of folly," said Armine in a slightly trembling voice, "but deceit—if I have ever deceived or spoken falsely to you it would be just to charge me with that. But you know that I have

never done so. "How should I know it?" asked her father in the same bitter tone. "Because I have not discovered the decep-I have been blind through too much -all your reactionary sympathies, your fondness for such places as that ! He made a fierce gesture toward the church. "It is only an old story that a man should be betrayed by the one nearest to him."

Then it was that tears came into the clear, dark eyes, forced there by wounded feeling rather than by indig-

"But what is it that you suspect e of?" she asked. "How do you me of?" she asked. think that I am deceiving you? I have told you the simple truth. I met M de Marigny once or twice at the D'Antignacs'. But our acquaintance was so slight that I could not have expected him to recognize me when he met me elsewhere. I was surprised when he came up to speak to me yonder; but I am sure that it was only an instinct of courtesy and kindness

which made him do so. "You are sure!" said her father, with biting irony. "And what, pray, do you know of this man or of the order to which he belongs? If you knew anything you would not talk of his acting from 'courtesy and kind-ness.' His motive is plain enough to me. If your acquaintance with him is really what you represent, then he must suspect — Come!" he broke off harshly, "we will go. This is no place in which to linger. Whether by weakness or by intent, you have played into the hands of my enemy and made more difficult what is before me

He turned as he spoke and began to walk rapidly in the direction of the But village--so rapidly that Armine found you must not suffer me to detain you, it difficult to keep pace with him. To mademoiselle. Being in the presby- walk very fast and to talk at the same tery, when I saw you emerge from the time is next to impossible; so she made church I could not refrain from coming no attempt to answer his last speechto pay my respects. I have now the bonor to bid you good day." which, indeed, was incomprehensible to her. How did he suspect her of He bowed and turned again toward having played into the hands of his think I can wait for dinner. the presbytery, where the cure could be seen through the window, breviary could she have made more difficult the servant entered with the soup.

What is thy pity to mine? What is in hand, while Armine stepped from what he had to do? Were his words thy knowledge to that exactest justice the porch and walked toward the gate. I dictated merely by the unreason of dictated merely by the unreason of anger? If so, what was the good of a figure on the road advancing toward the church, which she recognized at already told the "simple truth." There was nothing else to tell. Her word was all that she could oppose to his suspicion, and it seemed that her word had lost its value : so she could only walk on silently and sadly.

CHAPTER XX.

The drive from Marigny was both for Armine and her father a silent and constrained one. The first serious estrangement of their lives had arisen tween them and was deeply felt by both, but naturally most by the girl who tasted for the first time the bitter ness of an alienated trust. It seemed to her as incredible as it was wound ing that such a thing should be pos sible, that the father who had known her in the closest and most intimate manner all her life could doubt her truth, could believe her capable of deceiving him.

And this is indeed the sharpest sting of suspicion where suspicion is undeserved-that one is so little known as to be held capable of that which is suspected. The sense of outrage is mingled with amazement and the keen realization that, however well we may think that we know or are known, we are but strangers to each other after all. "If I could show you my heart!" many a misjudged soul has passionately cried; but hearts are not o be shown in this mortal order, where we see many things besides the truths of God 'as through a glass darkly," and have occasion for the exercise of faith in the human as in he divine Occasion for the exercise of much

patience, too, poor Armine felt, realizing keenly how unjustly she was udged and how little she had done to bring this trial upon herself. She glanced now and then at her father as he lay back in a corner of the carriage with lowered eyes and a darkly clouded brow. Here was a manifestation of character which she had never seen before, of some secret force of feeling found it almost impossible to believe that he could entertain such bitter animosity toward the Vicomte de Marigny simply because the latter belonged to a detested order and was his opponent in politics; or if his intensity teeling did rest on these grounds, i proved a narrowness of mind which he could with difficulty credit. For she had often said to herself-recog-nizing clearly in those with whom she came in contact the envy which is the moving spring of democratic sentiments-that her father was at least free of this; that he was blinded by a high ideal, not filled with mere hatred of all who were above him in the world. But now what other explanation was possible of his feeling toward M. de Marigny, unless there was some personal question involved, which seemed too improbable to be considered? And whatever was the cause of the feeling, to object to meet even a foe on the neutral ground of courtesy shocked the girl, who had never before seen in her father anything petty.

In thoughts like these mile after mile of the way passed, and it was no wonder that her face was pale when they drove at sunset into the town which they had left in the morning. Her father observed this paleness as they alighted, and said in something

of his usual tone: 'You look tired. The drive has been too long for you. It would have been better if I had left you at home." "Much better," she answered in a

add, "You know I did not wish to go, trust. Oh! yes, it grows very plain when she remembered that this disinclination had been charged against her; so she turned without saving anything more and entered the house Duchesne, after paying the coach-man, followed, but found the salon of the apartment which they occupied empty. He glanced around it, took a

step toward his daughter's room, then paused, as if on second thought, and went to a table which stood two windows, where a pile of letters and papers brought by the day's mail He was soon absorbed in there, and did not glance around when a servant

came in, who laid a dinner-table with covers for two. But when Armine presently entered he turned, saying, n a manner which showed that, for the present at least, all that had lately passed was absent from ms minu.
"I find that I must return to Paris

to morrow. I have just received an imperative summons. I am needed, they tell me, for more important work than what I am about here. It is very plain that they do not realize how important this work is. But nevertheless the summons cannot be disre garded; and, fortunately, I have done You must be nearly all that I can do. ready to leave to-morrow by an early train, Armine."
"Very well," answered Armine,

with a great sense of relief and of positive gratitude toward the revolu-tionary authorities, whoever they might be, who thus opportunely might be, who thus off the changed the position for her. "I will pack everything to night," she said the changel readiness. "At what hour to morrow shall we start?'

"The earliest train goes at 5, I think," said her father. "We must leave by that. Meanwhile"—he began gathering together his papers hastily -" I shall have much to do to night I have many persons to see. I do not

"Pray do not go out without taking omething after our long drive.'

"The drive was nothing," he said . But he sat down to table nevertheless, and, although he ate little and wa silent and abstracted, Armine saw th the cloud of the afternoon had pass He was painly thinking away. He was painly thinking of other things; and it was only when dinner was over, when his crap of coffee had been placed before hi m and the servant had left the room, that his thoughts came back to the occurrences of the day, and, glancing at his away.

thoughts came back to the occurrences of the day, and, glancing at his daughter, he was touched by the look of her wistful, pathetic eyes.

"See, petite," he stand not unkindly, "I spoke to day harshly, and perhaps not quite justly believe that you mere you were guilty only think no more of it.

This: I can tolerate with the Vicomte de with the Vicomte de with the vicomte de with the hous of those friends meet him at the hous of those friends meet him at the hous' spoke, you must in Paris of whom you Apart from that go to them no more. Apart from that I am sure that you obtain no good from them.'

"I obtain only good!" cried Armine quickly, al mingled on her face. "Oh! do not say that I must give the up. They You know the length of my quaint ance with them, yet I have aly met M. de Marigny in their hou twice. If I ever meet him again I wilromise not to speak to him, since yodo not wish me to do so; but oh! do t say that I must give up M. and Mrhl'An

"And why," said her falds regarding her keenly and suspre 'are you so much attached t M and Mlle. d'Antignac?"

"Ah! it would take me lorest tell that. she answered, clasp hands in the energy of her hong. "I only know that I have few That -very few-and, after yourse orere are none whom I love like ther

"So much the worse," pe aid sternly, "for they have taught to array yourself in feeling aga sine and the ends of my life. Do younk I have been blind to that? Id to myself, 'It is a girl's fancy; whloes it matter?' But I have learned jay that it does matter, and I blame lelf for allowing associations which ve resulted in such an end. may be power in your hand for eor for good—"

He broke off abruptly, and, seng down his cup of coffee, rose, vile Armine watched him with a gazed of surprise and apprehension. Por for evil or for good in her hand! W a vague sense of amazement she look at it as it lay before her. Could the be conceived a weaker, a more emp That was the thought which flitted through her mind. Had he father lost his senses, or what did t mean :

He had evidently no intention of ex plaining. After a moment's silence h said in an altered tone : Eh bien, thou ert but a child, and it may not matter It is likely that we may not be much onger in Paris, and new associations will bring new ideas. Now I must go Be ready for our early start in the morning; and, in order to be ready, go to bed as soon as possible.'

He nodded and went out, while Armine proceeded to set about the duty of preparing for departure. It was a duty with which she was very familiar through long practice; but as she moved about the apartment, gathering up all their belongings with quick, deft fingers, her heart was heavy, for her father's words echoed in her ears. "We may not be much longer in Paris," and she knew all that this sent ence of banishment meant for her-the tion? That is poor proof. I begin to low voice, while the tears sprang lonely days, in some strange place, the understand many thing now to which quickly to her eyes. She was about to absence from those whom she loved and absence from those whom she loved and to whom she had grown accustomed to look for guidance, and the companionship of those from whom she was to receive "new ideas." And what was to be the end? She dared not ask herself, dared not attempt to look forward into the future; but after her work was done, weary and exhausted by the exertions of the day, she commended her present and her future to God, and, lying down, fell immediately asleep.

It seemed to her that she had been asleep a long time, but in reality it was not more than an hour or two, when she was waked by the sound of roices near at hand—waked suddenly. abruptly, and with that sense of sharp ened and acute hearing which people often feel when they are roused by some unusual sound at night. Armine, no doubt, was more readily startled from having gone to sleep with a weight of anxiety upon her mind; but certainly when she came fully to herself she was sitting on the side of her bed, listening with strained attention to the voices murmuring in the next room. And these were the first words which she heard with en tirely awakened attention:

"You may be sure," said a deep, harsh tone, "that if the election goes against us—as I am beginning to fear that it certainly will-the clerical shall not take his seat. We have sworn that.

"And how will you prevent it?" asked Duchesne's voice-doubly clear and musical by contrast with the one which had spoken before.

"It will not be difficult to prevent," said the other. "A little dynamite will settle the matter; and if the chateau goes as well as its owner, why, so much the better! The next revolution will not leave one of those relics of the oppression of the people standing.

"Perhaps not," said Duchesne "but it will be well to wait for the revolution before beginning to demelish them. We must go slowly, mon cher; and above all, we must avoid

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