UARY 18, 1898.

OF A PORTRAIT.

ting my professional necessary to secure e. I did not want ous - an offi Il ante chamber d engaged as a clerk amply suit m d served my ar shed firm of nd had been oms filled w d shelves of a laughed to re must be b d in my mind in want. where I had 1 eless I was well all beginnin re for bringi ness and of for I had two or

my tent.

a agent, with whom

recom

a place he reco loor of Parchm

I was so much astonished at the sight of this unexpected visitor that I stood staring at him for a minute or two. He, on his part, stood staring at me. At last I found my tongue. "Are you looking for some one?" ds thereabouts being a likely said I, lamely enough. think you'll find any one in at this Aft ime ng about me.

He shook his head.

"No," he answered. "No-at least I was looking for you." 'For me? Why?"

"Oh," said I, dimly comprehending

that the mysterious tenant stood before

"Will you let me come in for a mo ir," said the agent, ment?" he said. "Only for a moment. ment?" he said. "Only for a moment, if you please. Oh, there's no need to be afraid of me. I'm not dangerous, of the office on the s is a sort of clerk's I room is beyond though I dare say I look so. Parchment Passage, situation this, ain't I hesitated. He looked at me again, and said quietly : "I used to live in these rooms."

"Come in."

wondered why I left so suddenly.

ighed heavily and sat down.

laid it before him.

asked quietly.

ou received it.

"So you fled."

said.

ous ace of hearts, and drawing it forth,

Had that anything to do with it ?

He started to his feet as his eyes fell

"It was found among a heap of orn papers which you, I think, had

hrown into the cupboard yonder. May I inquire what this means?" I

said. "Is it some signal, or a warn-

g, or a secret message? I suppose had a meaning for you at the time

" It had a meaning," he answered.

his head.

nspected both room im. As regarded hey were certainly The outer for my boy l suit me. nt that a good ave to be done tenant either r ad passed sind n the agent's b ms would suit ent was not ex first," said he. "I have been on the stairs outside for more than an hour fell a bargain on terms which wondering whether you would allow me to enter this room. You see, I used to live here, and I left very sudeek later I wa ny office. My desk in the out to work very har denly about three years ago. I dare say," he added, "the other people g desk in my o law. There I quietly opened the drawer of my desk in which I had placed the mysterdo in those d own office app o or three days raight. Wanti to store a quant pers, I had a cup-uantity of rubbish by the last tenant aount of old letters on the card, and I saw great beads of perspiration burst across his forehead s, but these had scraps and thrown omplained a good

caused by these uiries, the woman l be about three ns had been ocaterrogated, she it was something not know how to d not know what He was always d sometimes had him. His name on the door of his down below, and he was no good imself so quiet. ked she was enthe mass of torn om the cupboard. l something from sket and handed

ery day he went For I remember hing his letters all below. The of 'em was that ascinated by his story, and wished to d it down on his ear more. it like as if he That's it, sur t never set eve chucked it away o' letters and

JANUARY 18, 1806.

had no more to tell. With that he bowed, shrugged his anage my way to the door and sudden. Iy flung it open. Then I started with amazement, for there on the landing before me, his face and figure cloud, watched him descend. The watched him descend. Then somebefore me, his face and figure clearly thing prompted me to open the window seen in the lamplight, stood a man, and watch him leave the house by the tattered, sickly looking, and more dis front door. He came out and walked concerted than myself. A man of middle age apparently, and showing up the passage into Holborn. I was about to shut the window and return more than usual signs of wear and to my room, when I saw two men steal tear at that, for his dark hair was out of a neighboring doorway and folplentifully shot with grey, and his pal-lid face was deeply lined and seamed. low my visitor. So swift and stealthy were their movements that I had no My first glance at him showed me two time to cry out before they had vanthings-that he was a foreigner and ished.

I locked up my office and went home, much excited by the events of the evening. I had never had an advenure of such a startling description before, and had never expected to find that my little shabby office contained within it all the elements of a romance. "I don' went to bed, but could not sleep for thinking of it. I was sorry by that time that I had allowed my strange

visitor to leave the portrait in my room, and I determined to do some thing towards finding him and compelling him to remove it.

Ing him to remove it. I went to my office next day by way of Long Acre. Passing the corner of one of the squalid streets leading to-wards Drury Lanc. I became aware of a small crowd of people gathered came to be solved, it would be in that outside a house and doing their best to obtain an entry thereto, despite the

presence of two or three burly policemen. I went up, and knowing one of the latter, inquired the reason of the commotion

He followed me through the outer a very rum murder it is, too. Foreign chap found here in this empty house, ffice into my own room. When he saw the cheery fire, the comfortable arm-chair by the hearth, and the sup stabbed through the heart. Like t per tray laid on the side table, he sighed. It struck me that perhaps he go in, sir? There's the Coroner's staircase. I had left the private door officer and the Superintendent inside of my office open, and could hear the just now. This way, sir. Now, then, was both cold and hungry, and I in-vited him to eat. But at that he shook make way there ; this here gentleman's an official." "I had better tell you what I want

I followed the man inside into a small room destitute of furniture. They had fetched a bench from somewhere and laid the dead man on it. Somehow I was not surprised when I saw him. I had felt certain from the first that I was going to see my strange visitor of the previous evening. And there he lay before me, dead for many culty. hours, the doctor said ; with a dagger driven into his heart through a card on which the ace of hearts was still recognizable in spite of the blood that

had dyed it. "A foreigner," said the doctor, "This is the work of some of those ccursed secret societies." I went on to my office. My boy met

nder the shock which the sight of the me at the foot of the stairs with a nysterious emblem undoubtedly gave im. He looked from it to me, and rom me to the card again, then he "Where did you get that?" he

Everything was in order there. I went straight to the corner, and tore Everything away the carpet and the loose board, and examined the cavity beneath. My hands met nothing. The portrait was gone ! To say that I felt a strange sense of

alarm on finding that the portrait, to portrait was about to be explained. which recent events had attached such "Was the person you are in sea tragic memories, was gone, is need

" It meant that my life was not worth an hour's purchase—that I had been I thought it best to tell the police all entenced to death-that the execuknew. The officials at Scotland Yard, tioners were on my track. I am a to whom I unbosomed myself, received ssian, and familiar with the doings my story with interest, but not with surprise. They were too well acof conspirators from my youth. What have just told you is true. I was the agent of a secret society here. I offended those in power. I was con-demned ; and that's the warning. customed to the dark methods and deeds of the secret societies, whose members flee to London when the greater continental cities are forbidden

" More fool I ! I fled-to come back ing to help them. Indeed, I was told Now that the lamp light fell full on his will find life hard, now that I have no ment in Germany, and I fear that they A beautiful and impressive service a last as you see me. A beggar that the perpetrators of these secret must-starving, homeless." for "the forgotten dead "is held every Sunday afternoon just outside the face, I saw that he was an extraordin-arily handsome man, and that evident murders were seldom found out. aeans of helping them. Church of Notre Dame d'Afrique "Then your estates were confissuffering and privation had not robbed cated ? Algiers. After Vespers the congrega him of his good looks. cares of business were beginning to "Everything I had was confiscated. tion unite in special prayers for th "I shall be very grateful for any in-When 1 finally escaped I was absolutedeparted ; then the clergy go in proormation respecting Alexis," said he. cession to a cliff by the ocean, and ly penniless. 'And I thank you in anticipation. Perhaps I ought to tell you who I am. I am the Prince Z." I went to my safe and took the porthere, with the open sea in front of them, repeat the service ordained by the Church for the burial of the dead. trait from the drawer in which I had placed it on my return from Hull. He mentioned a name which made "Oa the edges of the cliff, " says The ne stare with astonishment. Prince Without saying a word, I handed it to Harvest, "is a permanent catafalque, the Prince, who received it with an expression of the utmost astonishment. Z. was an escaped political prisoner. shaped like a tomb and surmounted vho, after spending many years in the with a cross. Over this symbolic tomb, Siberian mines, had escaped in a sing-See if your money is still there,' and looking toward the greatest of ularly daring fashion, and had recent said I. y published a narrative of his adventhe world's graves-the mighty ocean, "I have no doubt of it," he an swered, as he cut away the stitches from the canvas back. "But how did -the solemn service is intoned ; and, tures and sufferings. I sat down and told Prince Z. all with lighted candles and swinging censers, prayers are offered up for that I knew of Alexis Vitrefsky : how the picture come into your possession ? he had suddenly left the very room in those who have had no other funeral You told me it had been stolen." night in Hull, and as I had never which we were then sitting, and had service." I told him how I had found the por ----returned to it two years later under trait in the shop at Hull, and had re "The Common People," mysterious circumstances. I told him cognized it again. While I talked, he As Abraham Lincoln called them, do not care to argue about their ailments. What they want is a medicine that will cure them. The simple, honest statement, "I know that Hood's Sarsaparilla cured me," is the best argument in favor of this medicine, and this There I came of the events of that night : how two turned back the canvas and discovered men had watched Alexis leave my the bank notes securely wrapped in folds of paper, exactly as he had described. Hisdelight at finding him office, and how the unfortunate man had been murdered during the night. rom the town to the river, I paused to described. and the portrait stolen from its hiding self once more wealthy was wonderfu to witness. "Poor Alexis!" he said what many thousands voluntarily say. He heard we with anxiety and disturbance, and when I told him that HOOD'S PILLS are the best after-dinne ills, assist digestion, cure headache. 25c. suddenly remembering the friend t whom he had trusted his sole resources he portrait was gone, he rose up and paced the floor in evident distress. "I have my own theory as to his death. I have heard that he became closely "Then I am indeed ruined !" said THE PRIZE KANSAS he. "Sir, that portrait meant everyconnected with one of the more deter thing to me. It was indeed the promined secret societies, and had the ill BABY perty of Alexis, but its possession fortune to break with certain of its CITY Ø meant more to me and to my children M0. These most powerful members. than I can tell you. But I see you do ably tracked down to the very last. " "Bat the portrait?" I said. "Why OF not understand, me. With your permission I will narrate to you certain passages in my sad history." should the murderers steal that?" I was half-tempted, on seeing his The Prince shrugged his shoulders. distress, to tell him how strangely I had recovered the portrait ; but I re-"Ah," said he: "probably while Alexia was conversing with you in By the Cured of frained, remembering that he might, here and showing you the portrait and Disfiguring CUTICURA after all, be an impostor, and that it its valuable frame, the two men told would be better for me to hear his off to kill him were watching you. Of course they stole the portrait for \lor ECZEMA REMEDIES story before I told him mine. I there-Our baby when three weeks old was badly at-flicted with Eczema. Her head, arms, neck, limba, and nearly every joint in her body was raw and bleeding when we concluded to try Currerry fore begged him to proceed. the sake of the frame." hat the world calls good; she died all "Nothing particular," I answered. he, "that I have to tell just in "Nothing particular," I answered. he, "that I have to tell just in "i just wish to glance at your stock of know, I am of the new party in "i just wish to glance at your stock of Russia. Since boyhood I have worked, "It is not a pleasant story," said The explanation seemed a likely one. I remembered that there had He restored the frame to its wrap-ings and fastened it up again, and tather against my recommendation in the answered that I was welcome to in the interview of the new party in curiosities. I am rather fond of pick-ing up rare articles." He answered that I was welcome to interview of the new party in Russia. Since boyhood I have worked, plauned, and suffered for my country, and in consequence I have been hated pplication we could see a change. After set them one week some of the sores had infrely, and ceased to spread. In less nonth, she was free from scales and bients orday has as lovely skin and hair as ar old what as shown at the Grange Fair, are the was shown at the Grange Fair, are been nothing to prevent Vitrefsky's assassins from following him up the stairs that night, or from listening at aced it in its old hiding place. He look round, and went on to say that he by those in power. Until some years me. the open door while he conversed with

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

lagger for one guinea. with. Fortunat When I reached the hotel I went up what prepared.

carefully. tretched on a frame twelve inches by There was nothing to show that any extraordinary history attached to the be stripped of land and goods and re-

picture. I returned to London and locked up the portrait in my office safe. "I hurriedly consulted with Alexis Time went on, and as my practice increased, I took more rooms in the house in Parchment Passage. Some of them were much more suitable for a private office than the one in which the portrait had been hidden, but I determined to remain in the latter and de vote the others to my clerks. I had a half superstitious feeling that if ever

the mystery of the previous tenant '00m. It was about two years after the murder, and circumstances then re-quired that I should stay late at the ffice. I was engaged in settling some difficult business with a client, and he "It's a murder, sir," said he. "And remained with me until half past 9 o'clock. As I was about to turn out the amp which burned on my table, I heard some one coming slowly up the again, and waited. At first I thought the steps were those of my client, who

had possibly forgotten something and was returning, but another moment told me they were not. He was a young, active man, likely to come up three steps at a bound ; the man now climbing the stairs was evidently neither young nor active, for he came slowly and apparently with some diffi-I went to the door and looked down at the landing. The gas still burned

there, and it shone on the figure of a man who was climbing the last flight of stairs. He was a tall, well-built man of fine proportion, but something about the stoop of his shoulders sug-gested hardship and privation. I could

see very little of his face, but I noticed me at the foot of the stars with scared look on his face. "If you please, sir," said he, "I think there's been thieves in. The door was burst open when I came with has here this morning." that his beard, which was of unusual length, was gray almost to whiteness. He seemed to be well dressed, and I made up my mind that his intentions

good English. Somehow I had made up my mind that he was a foreigner. After he had explained his business which was to find Alexis Vitrefsky, o No. 3 Parchment Passage, a light be gan to break in upon me. The man he was in search of was the previou The man tenant ! Perhaps the mystery of the Was the person you are in search

of a Russian ?" I asked. "Yes, yes," he answered eagerly "Certainly, a Russian. A man of about my own age, but perhaps younger in appearance. I have had

things to make me look old." "Will you come in a moment? I said, and led the way into my office.

'Perhaps I can give you some inform ation.' I gave him a chair, and he sat down.

clock, which indicated a late hour of refused my offer of supper and said he had some beautiful things in the way ago, however, I was allowed to pursue Prince Z. carried his bank notes had some beautiful things in the way of binocular glasses and chronometers if I was alowed to pursue ge. While he chattered volubly about his goods I was leaning over the little partition which senarated the little partition which separated the shop from the window, examining the portrait from a better point of vantage. practically allowed to go my own way. what I think a remarkable romance. portrait from a better point of vantage. I had now no doubt whatever as to its identity, and determined to buy it at whatever cost. After some haggling, I purchased the picture and a Turkish lagger for one guinea. When I reached the lifet in London, prematurely aged by the with. Fortunately I had the lifet in London, prematurely aged by the so far as I know by Germandisturbed, with. Fortunately I had been some what prepared. My wife was in Paris.

my room and examined the portrait my two young sons were at school in It was a small canvas, Germany. I had secured to them a mod erate sum in case anything happened nine, and across the back, probably to me. I had never dreamed that all with the idea of keeping out dust and I had would be confiscated. Such, dirt, a stout piece of rough canvas had however, was to be the case, according been tightly stretched and stitched. to my informant's news, which had come from the highest source. I was to

> Vitrefsky, an old student friend of mine, as to what should be done. He was then unknown to the authorities, and was about to start for a tour in England. We went to an English banker in St. Petersburg, and by his advice I turned all my negotiable securities into English notes. The good banker gave me fifty English notes of a thousand pounds each for my papers. These I handed to Alexis. He was to carry them to England and preserve

them until I could join him. I was watched, but I hoped to escape. "Alexis was puzzled how to carry

the notes. If he had them about his person he might be searched, and awkward questions as to his right to them put to him. People bound on a onths' European tour do not three m usually carry fifty thousand pounds worth English notes with them. Alexis, however, quickly solved the difficulty. It was his practice to carry with him wherever he went the portrait of his dead sister, whom he regarded with feelings of absolute veneration. She, like myself had engaged in the new movement, and she had suffered. Alexis brought his cherished portrait, handsomely mounted in gold, to my house. We placed the notes behind the canvas, and stitched a strong piece of coarse cloth across the frame, so that none could see where the notes lay hid. Knowing that Vitrefsky was my true friend, and that he would take care of the portrait, I felt my little fortune to be safe.

"Alexis left for England, and within a few days of his departure I was ar rested. I spent some weary years in the fortress of Sts. Peter and Paul subsequently I was sent to the mines. But before I left the fortress I had news of Alexis - By means of those trusted messengers who are to be met with even among the government officials. he contrived to send me a cipher letter elling me that he was living in Lon lon, and giving this house as his adfress. Whenever I was free I was to come here to receive the sum I had inrusted to him. "I have now told you all. I am free

and I have come here, only to find that Alexis is murdered and the portrait gone.

I was so convinced that the Prince was telling me the truth that I no onger hesitated about handing the portrait over to him. Before doing so. nowever, I asked him one more ques tion. "Pardon me," I said, "but what of

your wife and boys?' He shook his head.

" My wife died during my imprison nent," he answered. "My boys are iving here in London. Poor lads! they had met with indifferent treat

so far as I know, by Government spies or the emissaries of secret societies.— Chambers' Journal.

Scandal-Giving Catholics.

Cardinal Manniug, in reference to the malign influence of inconsistent, worldly Catholics, once said with searching irony: "Such, as are so pious that they can be at the opera till

midnight and go to Communion in the morning ; who wear scapulars under ball dresses, who mix fasts with grea wordly feastings; novels with great wordly feastings; novels with books of devotion. People of the world," ne goes on, "look on you Catholics and they say, 'Oh, they are Catholics : they are stricter than we are; their religion is a strict on where their religion is a strict one; their priests won't let them do this or that; and when they find one of us doing the same as they do they are not only scandalized but disappointed. They had looked and hoped for and believed bet They had ter things of us, and they find we are on the same level with themselves."

What intelligent Catholic who

mixes at all with the world has no been embarrassed by such questions as: "How is this, we thought the Catholic Church was opposed to round dances?" or, "Is it true or not that your Church approves of its members attending the theatre, the opera of balls during Lent and Advent?" We have reason to know that in spite of the prevailing ignorance and preju dice among outsiders, there is a grow ing impression that the Catholic Church is somehow far ahead of all other pro fessedly Christian bodies, in the per fection of its organization, its high standard of morality, it strictness of discipline ; and they naturally look for greater strictness of life and consistency of Christian conduct among Catholics than among others. Many of them are thoughtful and intelligent and even religiously inclined, and seem to know what a true Christian ought to be, and really have a lesire to find something better, something more consistent reliable, something more faith ful and loyal than what they have been accustomed to. And, somehow, they seem to know, as if by intuition. that they ought to find it in the Catho lic Church. And when they are brought in contact with men and women who are perhaps looked upon as leading, if not representative, Catholics, doing pretty much as Pro estants do ; manifesting the same dis position to compromise with the world the same greed for gold; the same passionate pursuit of pleasure and worldliness; of gain and godliness the same disposition to cry in one breath good Lord, good devil, is it any wonder if they should be not only seandalized but disappointed ?

It is all very well to say that such ersons ought to distinguish between he principles, the general spirit and tendency of the Church and the incon sistencies and scandals of its unworthy members. No doubt they ought, but that is a very poor excuse for those who give the scandal.

Customs Worthy of Imitation.

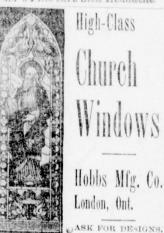


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her and looked pack of cards, would have at om anybody but rough the crim re of the white lrawn a stilette . I had to look e sure that the graved with the however, it had the artist's pen-

he card and put somewhat lazy often looked at at it signified. ing that it had message to the ed my Certainly he hurriedly imceipt of it. that my prein Parchmer aged in some of a not alto nd had been

I entered into and the year intil winter set en remarkably s the months n increase of e to spend in volumes. The prought me a produce some I remained until a slight tside made me sight of the

by the trans

Again I pressed him to eat I was

Several months passed away. The

press on me, and I had little time in "Not till I have told you why I came which to speculate on the late mysteri here to night. I came to recover some-thing that I left here when I fled. Ious events. I had my first important case in hand, and it required every mo eft it because I knew it was safe in ment and every thought. I was glad the hiding place I had contrived for it. when the courts rose and the long vaca was going I knew not whither - postion came to bring me a brief holiday sibly into rough places and among I had won my case, and had gained no esperate men. I come back here to small amount of present fame and ondon at last, and a great longing future gain by doing so. About the came over me to see it once more. second week in August I travelled That is why I came to your door todown to Hull; and thence took night, resolved to ask you to admit me.

steamer to Stavanger for a month in The picture is here, and I shall find Norway. Coming back by the same route, I found it necessary to stay a

He rose, and crossing the room apcoached a corner of the floor and been there before, I spent the evening carefully removed the carpet which I in looking round the docks and quay had laid down. Lifting a loose board of that ancient port. There I cam across a further link in this remark iderneath, he presently withdrew aderneath, he presently withdrew across a future find and the com the cavity a parcel wrapped in able story. Wandering along the nany sheets of strong paper, and came pavement of the quay which runs rward to the light again.

"You did not know that you had look in at the window of one of those is so near you," he said, blowing the little dirty shops where marine store ust away from the parcel and prodealers gather together all manner of beding to unwind the various wrap-ings. "And now, look !" odds and ends, and what was my sur prise to see the portrait which had once An exclamation of wonder and debeen hidden in my office !

ght burst from my lips. He held I paused and looked again before me the portrait of a young and ovely woman, evidently the work of some great miniature painter, and framed heavily in gold and jewels. The frame must have been worth a mall fortune in itself, and years and looked again through the dirty window. No, there was no doubt about it : that was gone, and there were marks on the edges of the picture which seemed to the dirty window. No, there was no doubt about it : that was gone, and there were marks on the edges of the picture which seemed to the dirty window. No, there was no doubt about it is that was gone, and there were marks on the edges of the picture which seemed to the dirty with the dirty window. No, there was no doubt about it is that was gone, and there were marks on the mall fortune in itself, and yet I indicate that it had been roughly rescarcely noticed it, so beautiful was moved. The face, however, was un-the face it contained. mistakable. I had been too much

The stranger held the picture from struck by it at first sight to forget its m and looked steadily at it in the wonderful beauty. amp-light. Then he drew it nearer On entering the shop a dirty-looking d kissed the face reverently. man, evidently a foreigner, came for-"She is dead," he said. "And she ward from some den in the rear, rubbled a martyr. She was born to all ing his hands and asking what he

that the world calls good : she died an could do for me. exile and in poverty. She was my "Nothing particular," I answered.



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