## GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY. BY T. W. POOLE, M. D., LINDRAY, ONT. CHAPTER I.

The village of Mertonville was a place of some local importance, and could boast the usual appurtenances of a thriving inland village; such as a mill, a post office, a fiourishing public school, several churches, atores, tavers, (called by courtesy hotels) representatives of the several trades and at least one member of the regical

It you ask me for further particulars regarding it, I can only tell you that it resembled hundred, of other villages dotted here and there over the country each of which had no doubt special features of its own; and compared with these in a general way, this par ticular village was neither better not worse in its moral, social or business

That, at least, was my candid opinion of it, at the time this story of But the people of Mert nville the But the people of Mert nyine thought differently. As they saw it, their village had superior claims and advantages to any of its rivals, far or near. It was in the heart of a fine agricultural country. It was a favorite place for yearly "fairs" and autumnal "shows," of farm produce and domestic industry. Here, too, petty instice was industry. Here, too, petty justice wa dispensed to the surrounding district:
but to crown all, the place had been
visited by the promoters of a railroad,
and the very line of way was staked
out. Though truth compels me to add,
that the projected road was never
built, yet the very prospect which
such a proposal seemed to unfold, gave built, yet the very prospect which such a proposal seemed to unfold, gave for a time an impetus to the growth of the place; so that with these advan-tanges, it is not to be wondered that Mertonville offered openings for bus-iness, to men of small capital, and that of these, not a few by steady diligence and pendent management, emerged, in time, from their first dingy shops, into solid structures of brick and stone, with large glass windows, heavy stocks, assured position, and perhaps accumulated wealth.

it is with one of this very class that these pages are most intimately concerned it is necessary to present him, in a few words, to the reader. him, in a few words, to the located Neil McCoy was, at the time referred to, of less than middle age, of medium height, of plain and simple manners, without pride or affectation, Scotchman by descent, and a Presby-terian in religion. His features, if plain, were regular, his aspect thought-ful and intelligent; while his char-acter was that of an honorable man

and a good citizen.

This reputation was in no way dimin-This reputation was in no way diminished, as the years went by, and the young merchant found himself at the head of a prosperous business. Only ene thing was necessary to crown his felicity, and if the goesips were to be believed, this dediciency was in a fair way of being remedied. It was said that he was a frequent visitor at the manse, and that though that might be in part accounted for by his holding the office of Elder, and, in consequence, having business to transact with the minister, yet truth to ay, any such explanation would have met with little faith from the general public, who believe that, not the minister, but his pretty daughter Jennett, was the obpretty daughter Jennett, was the obot of his attention on these occasions. Then rallied on the subject, Mr. was reticent, shook his head displayed a slightly heightened color, and changed the conversation.

As for Jennett, she laughed at the soft impeachment, then denied it, as we know young ladies are apt to do on such occasions, with the effect of confirming the first impression.

Now Miss Jennett was not only handsome, but fairly accomplished, and being an only child, would inherit the proceeds of her father's investments, which for a minister, situated as he

proceeds of her father's investmen which for a minister, situated as which for a ministry, account as no had been, were very considerable. When therefore, the rumor gained credence that these two were "engaged," people said "what a lucky pair!" "how fortunate," with much more to the same effect.

more to the same effect.

The immediate result of this gossip
whether true or false, was to enhance
still further the reputation of the mer chant, whose prospects for the future, to all appearance could not well be brighter or more cheering.

But alas for this man's good repute! As the shadows cast by clouds sweep across the country, darkening the land scape as they pass, so even now, though as yet far off and unseen but ever approaching, a dark shadow was looming up, soon to appear above the horizon of man's life, when he would be arraigned before the bar of public opin ion, not only of Mertonville but of all the adjacent country.

Defrauded his creditors by a sham failure and a dishonest compromise? No! the false ideas which too generally prevail might have caused such a e to be condoned, at least among crime to be condoned, at least among certain classes of society, where fraud passes for "smartness," and the ap-parently successful rogue goes, for a time at least, "unwhipt of justice!"

Let me say, at once, that no trick was laid to his charge, He had betrayed no trust, nor was accused of violating any one of the Ten Commandments. His name was associated with no social or domestic scandal. But in the opinion of the gossips of Mertonville he had probably become guilty of worse than any

of these acts of delinquency.

Men are many sided characters; and public sentiment in Mertonville, as elsewhere, was exacting in other affairs besides business and social relations. Mertonville was what is called evangel ically religious, to which its four church edifices bore ample testimony.

But what had Neil McCoy done to outrage the religious sentiment of

Mertonville? Gone over to the Baptists, or joined the flourishing Methodist Connexion or become an Unitarian? No! no these would have been quite pardonable offences, and easily forgiven in such as His crime was worse than this. Become a ritualist?

An atheist or infidel ?

An atheist or infidel?
Oh, worse still?
Now I am not saying that Mertonville was not an intelligent, nineteenth
century community, which prided itself
on what is called "freedom of thought,"
and the liberality of independent opinion. This was actually the case. Public opinion in Mertonville, as in many
other places, demanded for every man
the right to "think for himself;" but
it also insisted, under penalty of its
displeasure, that he must think as the
leaders of public opinion thought. Pub
lic opinion in Mertonville had made
the discovery that Neil McCoy's thinking had, some how or another, diverged
from the current of popular opinion, in
religious matters, and it felt this as an
outrage and became incensed accordingly.

ingly.

Thus when it became whispered about that Mr. McCoy was displaying ten-dencies towards "Romanism," a gen dencies towards "Romanism," a general feeling of surprise, disgust, indignation and pity, not unmixed with scorn, took possession of the community. The dark shadow which had been hovering in the distance, till now unseen, closed in around him as a dense cloud, amid the blackness of which were furtive gleams of lightning, and matterings of not distant thunder. In mutterings of not distant thunder. In other words, this man's "freedom of thought" and independence of opinion, seemed not unlikely to bring down upon him the disastrous results of socia stracism and commercial ruin.

ostracism and commercial ruin.

But how came about this primary
change of opinion, which in turn produced such a revulsion of feeling, in an

neither community?

Neil McCoy was about the last person in the world, apparently, of whom such a thing could be predicted. Not only his education and associations, bu only his education and associations, but his worldly interests and even his dearest hopes were wholly antagonistic to such a change of sentiment. None of his family, or friends, for generations at least, had belonged to that despised Faith. There was no Catho lic Church in Mertonville, and the few adherents it could claim in that highly Protestant community were comparatively obscure and uninfluential individuals, who were very unlikely to inocu duals, who were very unlikely to inocu late a thrifty, and intelligent Scotch Presbyterian with their, to him, anti quated and exploded beliefs and prac-

Mr. McCoy, indeed, had rarely, if Mr. McCoy, indeed, had rarely, if ever, entered a Catholic Church. Probably beyond a mere passing salutation of ordinary courtesy, at rare interests, he had never spoken to a Catholic priest. He had no obvious access to Catholic books or to Catholic literature, while everything he had heard, or read, as he grew no from heard, or read, as he grew up from youth to manhood had been prejudicial to the Church of Rome, which indeed, he was accustomed to hear, on cer tain occasions, vigorously denounced, as superstitious," "idolatrious" and "tyrannical," not to mention other phr-zes more vigorous than refined.

These accusations he had believed These accusations ne had believed, religiously, from his youth up. Surely this was very unpromising soil for the implantation and growth of Catholic sentiments and ideas! What subtle influences could have warmed into life a germ so uncongenial and amid surround-

germ so uncongenial and amid surround-ings so unpropitious?

Perhaps the future life may reveal something of the hidden springs which direction to our thoughts, and, unconsciously to ourselves, prepare for us a path which otherwise we never should have trod. Only this we know, that what we call trifling incidents are often agencies effecting momentous results. A timely word, a sentence, a casual conversation, an apparently accidental meeting, may give use to a train of thought, the development of which may influence the whole current of a life and make itself felt even in the great

cean of eternity.

Every human being is subject to such influences. Happy he who is enabled to turn them to good account; to choose the good and to resist the evil—

CHAPPER II.

I have said that there was no Catho lie Church in Mertonville. But the few Catholic families residing there were not wholly deprived of the con were not wholly assisted of the con-solations of their religion. At certain times, but usually of necessity on a week day, the priest from the village of Hopeton held "a station" at the house of one or other of the Catholic families residing in the neighborhood. It was on such an occasion that Mrs. Maloney, a well to do farmer's wife, re-siding in the adjacent township, after having attended the services, or "been to her duty" as she would have expressed it, called at Mr. McCoy's store for the purchase of certain com modities for her household. She car ried a basket on her arm, in the bot tom of which was deposited her well worn prayer book, concealed beneath the folds of a cotton handkerchief. On completing her purchases and arrange ing her parcels in the now loaded bas ket, she inadvertently omitted he prayer book, which was left behind amid a pile of calico which strewed the counter, where it was soon after found by Mr. McCoy in rearranging the

He slipped the book into his pocket, with a vague idea that perhaps he might meet her before she returned home and restore it to her. No such opportun ity however presented itself, and as the hours of business were on he gave the

subject no further attention. That evening he found his way to the manse, as was his frequent custom found his way to The minister was away, but that did not seem to greatly disappoint the elder, or materially to shorten the dur-

ation of his stay.

Jennett received him with a pleasant smile in response to his own cordial greeting. The parlor door closed upon the pair, but if one might judge from the low music of voices and the coca-sional ripole of laughter passing out through the open window, "the course of true love" in this instance at least

was apparently "running smooth."

I feel a delicacy in intruding upor the privacy of the lovers, or of laying bare to the cold scrutiny of the reader, the tender sentiments and pretty en-dearments which filled up the too fleet-

ing hour on this occasion. The reader may perhaps be able to supply the de deiency from his on her own imaging

tion or experience.
In due time the huge parlor lamp ha sighted, and Neil, happening to place his hand in his pocket, drew forth Mrs. Maloney's forgotten prayer book. He was seated very near to Jennett at the moment; and showing her the treasure-trove he had unintentionally equired, they proceeded to examine

together.

Neither having ever before held in hand a book of Catholic devotion, was to both an object of curiosity, perhaps not unmixed with an ill defined feeling of awe, as of a thing uncanny. The book itself was in a slightly dilapi dated condition, and bore the distinct tive marks of frequen use.
"The Key of Heaven!" cried Jennet

as her eye fell upon the title page
"My! what a name for a mere book
Isn't it awful how these poor Papist
are deluded. 'The Key of Heaven!
as if that shabby book could open

as if that shabby book could open heaven."

"I suppose," said Neil, "that being a prayer book, the title is meant to imply that prayer opens heaven."

Turning over the leaves, one by one, their eyes fell upon "Acts of faith, Hope and Charity," "Daily Prayers" and other devout exercises.

"See here," said Neil, pointing with his finger, "nearly all these prayers end with the words, 'through our Lord Jesus Christ.' You would not have expected that, would you, now? Here it occurs again in the 'Prayers for Mass' 'through our Lord Jesus Christ,' he repeated, slowly. You see all their prayers are not to the virgin and the saints."

"Latin, eh!" he said, turning over another leaf. "I'm sure Mrs. Maloney will not make much of that," and his

will not make much of that," and his face reflected the humor of his thought "Oh! but here it is in English, word for word. Not so bad that. No doubt this service is very ancient, for this is ad mitted to be the oldest Church." "Credo in unum Deum Patrem omni

How grandly these words sound Have they not echoed, in solemn tones through long centuries. Now if the Catholics really believe 'in one God, as they here profess in this ancient creed, how can they worship the Virgin and the saints, or be idolators, as we

know them to be ?" "And here's the Lord's prayer too"
"And the Hail Mary," said Jennett,
as she proceeded to read it."
"Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord

is with thee.

That's scripture," said quickly.
"Blessed art thou amongst women.

" Hat's scripture, too."

"Holy Mary, Mother of God, r for us sinners now and at the hour our death." "Ha!" said Neil, "that's where the Popery comes in."

"Yet you see they only ask ber to pray for them,' said Neil, thought-What a fuss they make about her,

"What a fuss they make about her, as if she was so much better than other women," said his companion.
"I wouldn't mind saying the first part of it myself," said Neil. "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee," Why, it was the angel Gabriel said that! Ah Jennet, was ever woman so highly honored! What a share she bore in the redemption of the world!"

"But you could never think of calling her 'Mother of God,' she asked, involuntarily drawing a little away from him. "That's blasphemous."
"It's all so new to us." he said.
"Let us look into it a little."

'Oh, I don't want to look into it," Do you know Jennett, there are great many times more Romanists than Presbyterians in the world?"

Well what of it?' "Many thousands of them must be

" Well ?" "Only recently some of the keenest intellects in England embraced the Catholic Faith."

They were Puseyites, I suppos "Call them what you like, they were certainly no fools, and had everything to lose, and rothing to gain by it. Can you iwagine really sensible men believing nonsense? After all, there is something curious about this old hurch, which perhaps we do not under tand. For my part, I really know no

thing about it."
"Now, Mr. McCoy!"
"Fact," said Neil. They were silent a few minutes, and hen Neil asked suddenly. "Was she the mother of Jesus

Christ?" " And was Jesus Christ God?"

"Well, isn't that equivalent to say ing she was "Mother of God?"
"There's some quibble about that,"

said Jennett. " Just let us think it over a little. he said. "Oh, don't bother about it," she answered impatiently and so he was

silent. At length, leaf after leaf had been turned our with various comments, till the book was closed, and Neil rose with

the book was closed, and Neil rose with a sigh to take his leave.

"Why do you sigh?" she asked.

"At having to leave you, of course Ah Jennett, how pleasant it will be to have you at my fireside, but you keep putting me off."

"I'm over young," she said, gaily, "and besides my father would miss me so."

What more was said, and how h threatened, gallantly, to carry her off, there and then, and how prettily she resisted his seeming threats, and how fondly they parted at last, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the lives of all lovers, as a part of the old old story,—which was, and is to be, in secula seculorum.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Nothing is more delightful than the repaying of good will, nothing sweeter than the interchange of personal affec-tion and good offices—Cicero.

IS IT WELL WITH THE CHILD!"

" Yes, I had a letter from Father Byrne, telling me of her death, thought you would have written." There was a question in the voice

and Cyril Ransome answered hastily:
"I had so much to see to, both at home and here at the office, and then I thought Father Byrne could do it bet than I."

er than I."
"But he was under the impression

"But he was under the impression that you were writing also, and he mentioned a message that you had for me, therefore I waited—I wrote—but no answer came."

The wealthy merchant moved uneasily in his chair. There was a look of inquiry, almost stern, in the keen bine eyes of the young priest who sat facing him at the other side of the paper-laden table. They stirred his heart, too, those dark fringed eyes, like, and yet so unlike, those of the wife he heart, too, those dark fringed eyes, like, and yet so unlike, those of the wife he had loved so dearly, so passionately, and yet, alas! for human constancy, over the grave where he had laid her six years ago the weeds ran riot. He had never thought to hear of her again, for the was not of his world, the sweet. for she was not of his world, the sweet shy Irish girl he had transplanted from a home of peace and piety to wither in the worldly atmosphere of his surround-ings. Yet here, after six years, was her brother, come from the other side of the world, and asking questions to which he knew he could give no satisfactory answer. And he did not look lactory answer. And ne did not look like a man to be put off by evasions and half replies, for all that he was so young. He stole a glance at the firm lips and steady eyes, and decided to take a high tone if necessary; but the silence was irksome, and he broke it abruptly.

"I am very pleased to have seen you, Father Doyle, and should have liked to have welcomed you at 'Greenlauds,' but my wife, unfortunately, is—is indisposed." disposed."
"To receive a priest, I suppose."
a flush

"To receive a priest, I suppose."
Mr. Ransome started; a flush of anger rose to his brow. He was not accustomed to being spoken to so curt ly, and he answered haughtly:
My wife knows how to comport herself to her guests. Still, I admit that she would rather not receive a Catholic clergyman. Many Protestants share the same prejudice."
"Does the prejudice extend to all Catholics or only to the priests? Why did she then become your wife?"
The flush of anger faded: It was evi-

The flush of anger faded ; It was evi

dently an embarrassing question Whatever illusions he might have had on the subject had long sines been dispelled, and he knew only too well that it had been his wealth and position that had induced the handsome and accomplished widow to listen to his suit. He was not allowed time for any misgivings, bitter or sweet, for Father Doyle leaning across the table and fixing on him a steady, keen glance, as thoughe would read his inmost soul, said

slow, deliberate accents:
"My sister left a child. Did it live?" The other bowed his head in assent

the dreaded question had come.
"I do not want to intrude on you your home in any way. Give me a straight answer to a straight question and I shall go my way and leave you in peace. In the name of Almighty God, in the name of the Bl-ssed Lord Who died for you and me, in the name of our Empanylate Mother at These of our Immaculate Mother, at whose feet we hope to meet in heaven, in the name of the Holy Mother Church, whose unworthy children we are, I ask as Eliseus asked the Shuoammite of old, 'Is it well with the child?' Can you give me the answer she gave the pr

Twice the unhappy man assayed to speak, but each time the false words died on his lips as he met the steady gaze of those eyes, which, darkened now by intensity of feeling, were more than ever like those of the dead woman, whose dying injunction he had set aside to please his vain, worldly

"Your silence tells me all, and it is child of Catholic parents who is being brought up either as a Protestant or in utter indifference. Ah! that last shatt told; it is in indifference. In the name of the dead mother, since you admit no other claim, I call on you to give that child her birthright. If you will not, give her to me and I shall see that she is brought up as Eileen's child should be. You may have other children now; keep those and give me this one. It you like to contribute to her support, you may: if not my scanty means must suffice, but my poverty will give her what your wealth denies—the knowledge which leads to life eternal."

But Mr. Ransome had recovered his self possession. He rose and walked to the door. Before opening it, he said in a voice vibrant with repressed passion: "My child remains in her father's Your zeal has made you forget house

yourself. I must beg you to leave my affairs alone in the future. I have the bonor to wish you good morning. The door was wide open now, and the clerks in the outer office could hear any further converse. Father Doyle was defeated; he could but go, but he said in a low voice: "You will not hear me, but there is a voice to which you can-not close your ears. Man, you may defy with impunity, but not God—to Him

you must answer."

He was gone, and Mr. Ransome, con scious of the curious looks of his em ployees, summoned his head clerk and plunged into matters of business.

But try as he would, he could not dismiss the thought of the unpleasant interview of the morning, and vague misgivings crossed his mind as to his carelessness to his motherless child. Thus in the evening, after dressing

for dinner, he paused at the head o the grand staircase, hesitating as to whether he should go to the drawing room or to the nursery. With a half laugh he turned and passed down the long corridor to the children's quarter. It was so seldom he went that way that he was not sure of the rooms, when the sound of a low sob fell on his ear. the sound of a low sob fell on his ear.
The corridor ended in a large bay window overlooking the garden, and there, on the window seat, he could dimly discern a little form. Something in the pathetic droop of the head stirred his heart strangely; he knew it was Eileen

before he reached her. She looked up at his coming, tears giving place to amiles; but when he drew her on his knee she laid her head on his shoulder

and wept bitterly. "Why, what's the matter with my rirlie? You're not a sunbeam to-night. girlie?

And by degrees he drew from her all her woes. She was lonely, and Hilda had laughed at her and called her names, and then nurse slapped her.

" But you must be a brave girlie and not cry for every little thing. You are getting a big girl now, nearly ten, and you must try and bear with Hilda: she loves you, though she is cross sometimes."

sometimes."
"Oh, no, father," she said, looking
up earnestly into the loving face so
close to hers; "she doesn't love me, and no one does except you. Why haven't I uncles and aunts, like Hilda and Joyce? If only dear Uncle Bernard hadn't

died I''
Uncle Bernard! Cyril Ransome
gasped. Where had this child heard of
her Uncle Bernard, and dead? her Uncle Bernard, and dead?
"Did he die a long time ago, father?
I am sure he would have loved me, be

cause he loved mother so much."
"How do you know that, pet?" "You gave me dear mother's deak "You gave me dear mother's dewr, you know, last birthday, and I found the letters in it he wrote to her. He was at some big school, I think, and I couldn't understand all, so I put it away t, ask you when we were quite alone together," and she tightened he

alone together," and she tightened her clasp on her father—" like we are He understood the meaning of the He understood the meaning of the caress. Young as she was, she had found out that any demonstration of love between her father and herself was unwelcome to her step-mother, and with a wisdom beyond her years she always retrained from any until such time as when they were alone. How seldom that was he acknowledged to himself now with a swift pang of re

morse.
"What coulin't you understand, girlie?" he asked, stroking the glossy curls back from the flushed brow.

You look very serious."
"How old was I when mother died father ?' " Just four, Elleen. Why do you ask ?"

" Because so many times I seem to remember and then forget again.
Things in Uncle Bernard's letters make me think of them again. Pretty flowers and bright lights, and such a dear, deal lad. Was it a dream, father, or do really remember?"

"But her father made no reply.

How could he answer?
"Sometimes when Hilds is out driv ing with—you know—and I am s lonely and no one seems to care, write letters.' You funny girlie, and to whom

"It used to be to make believe people but now I know I used to have an uncle I write to him. I wish he was alive How long ago did he die?"
"Who told you he was dead?"

"Of course, I know. You would have told me about him if he were alive, and then he loved me so he would come to "Yes, he did; he always said it in hi

letters, and I learnt one bit because it made me feel—oh so—I can't tell you— but as if I must have my own dear mother again."
"Tell me, tell me. Ah, there sounds
the dinner gong. We have guests to
night, as always. I must go, pet; but

tell me first. "I can't understand, but I want to ask you. He said he was going to be
-oh. I can't remember, a strange word
-and then, 'my dear I should love you to be here with your darling babe, and my first blessing, Eileen, would be for you two.' I'll show you the letter. Must you go now."

"Yes, pet; but I'll come to morrow night, and we'll sithere and talk. And you'll be brave?'

"Yes, yes," but the tears gathered as she watched him hurry away; the little heart yearned for love, and it had only him.

And through all the sumptuous din-

ner with its endless courses of dainty viands, through all the idle talk acc meaningless chatter, the words of his neglected child haunted him, and those other words also, stern yet pleading, 'Is it well with the child?' ould she have said had he told her that this same Uncle Bernard had been with him that day, and had even wanted to take her away from him? As if he would let her go, the only thing he had to love, or that loved him And yet, "Is it well with the child?" Ah, it was not well, he knew that. She was certainly lonely and unloved, and, worst of all, the blessings of the faith were denied her. But he would make up for it—yes, he and she would be much to one another; he would look after her more. It would all be right

in the years to come. Alas! for human plans: he was de tained by business the next day, and did not reach home until very late; and the day after a telegram summined him to attend an important meeting in another State. It was only ten days later that he reached home, determining to go straigt up to his li tle daughter. He had felt for her disappoint ment, and had written to her whilst absent. In the hall he met his wife, who was going to a reception. Her beauty, enhanced though it was by her costly robes, woke no admiration in him. He had sounded the shallow, cold heart, and knew its worthlessness. He was passing on, after greeting her, when she stayed him.
"I think you had better see to

Eileen. Of course, I got a trained nurse in, and Dr. Ashton is very clever; but she is such a sickly child no stamina, and-"

But he was speeding up the stairs, and soon was in conference with the nurse, who was greatly relieved at his

here, a week. Yes, of course, you may come in and see her."

But she did not know him; her shorn head tossed restlessly on the pillow, and she babbled unceasingly. He drew back from the bed, appalled, bewildered, when a name, falling from the fevered lips, went like a knife to his heart — "Mother!" He turned away, sick at heart. The nurse touched his arm. touched his arm.
"She was writing to you, I think, be.

fore she was so bad, and to her uncle, I wanted to post the letters, but I could get no address."

Her uncle! Oh, accusing words—

"is it well with the child?" He moved suddenly to the door, the light of reso-lution in his eyes. Her uncle should

come to her.

He rang up the priest with whom his brother in law had said he was staying. Yes, Father Doyle was still there. Who wanted him? "Stay, he will come

and speak to you."
"No. no! Give him the message only. Eileen is dying, I fear. Ask him to forgive all and come at once."

Then he went back to the dimlylighted room and sat where he could see the fever flushed face. The slow winutes lengthened into an hour, and yet he had not come. Perhaps he would not, or perchance they had mistaken the address.

White he thus sat in sorrowful

thought he felt a hand on his shoulder, and, looking up, saw Father Doyle. In silence he clasped his hand and led him to the bed where the little sufferer lay. the letters in her mother's old desk and the longing for the unknown uncle.

"I have been weak, foolish, wicked, but, please God, I'll turn over a new leaf, Stay with me, Bernard, and help me."

"I will, and, if God so please, we'll have the little maid up and about very

But though he spoke hopefully, he was far from feeling at all sanguine. Still, the child had youth on her side; it was possible she might recover.

Mrs. Ransome shrugged her white shoulders disdainfully when she heard of the new inmate of the house, but her husbaud's stern glance checked the jeering words that rose to her lips, After all it made little difference to her, for Father Doyle spent his time in the sick room or in the garden, and she

scarcely ever met him.

When the fever left her, Eileen's de-When the lever lett ner, raiseus ac-light was unbounded to find the dear uncle she had longed for was indeed alive, and loved her more even than she had thought. With his gentle words long forgotten prayers came back to her mind, and the remembrance of her her wants mother, whose name her heavenly mother, whose name her mother had taught her baby lips to say. So it was a happy child that lay so white and weak on the bed, where she had so often shed the bitter tears of loneliness. Her father with her so often, and the dear uncle nearly always, it only she had not felt so tired, so dreadfully tired, how happy, she would be! And the father, what anguish was his to see her slipping from

guish was his to see her stapping from him, though at times she grew so bright ne almost hoped.

But there came one night when the rain beat on the window pane, and the wild winds shrieked about the stately building. Eileen had always dreaded those nights before, but not to night, when lying in her dear unjet's engirely. when, lying in her dear uncle's encircling arm, she had in a weak, fluttering voice made her first confession and her last, and waited now for the solemn sacraments. She had no pain, only the weariness of exhaustion. She was so tired, and, clasping the crucifix in her wasted hands, she closed her eyes on

earth forever. Father Doyle expected a terrible outburst of grief from the father; but none came, only, in a strange voice, he

"You asked me a question once that I could not answer."
"I did. 'Is it well with the child?"

"I answer now. 'It is well.'"—
C. M. in the Annals of Our Lady of the
Sacred Heart.

## PROTESTANT CONFESSIONALS.

The sensation caused two or three weeks ago in Allegheny, Pa, by the Rev. Dr. Stocking, of the Universalist Church, is unabated. In his regular Sunday sermon the reverend gentleman defended auricular confession, and advocated the establishment of the confessional in Protestant churches ! Dr. Stocking was outspoken, to say the least; indeed he stated plainly that his remarks were prompted by the recent elopement of a minister with a deaconess. After rehearsing this scandal, Dr. Stocking briefly reviewed the history of auricular contession, and concluded by saying:

"I am persuaded that if this practice was taught and observed in our Protestant churches, there would be less immorality among the ministers and church members. There would be fewer instances of ministers alienating the affections of some parishioner's less contention among cource members concerning administration and discip-line, etc. If all were under solemn obline, etc. ligation to confess their faults, there would be less wickedness in our Protestant churches. I know of nothing that would tend to produce a better state of moral purity than the obligation to make confession of individual raults among the ministers and the brethren, unless it be to emphasize the great fact that there is no escape from the consequences of one's sins, either in this world or in the world to come."

Which is all very well in theory.

The deficulty would be to find ministers that Protestant penitents could confide in. Their apprehension would be twofold—of the minister and the minister's wife. Besides, it is too much to expect people to go to con-fession when there is no hope of absolu-But he was speeding up the stairs, and soon was in conference with the nurse, who was greatly relieved at his coming.

"I was wondering," she said, "whether there was any one at all who cared for the poor child. She is very low, and it is doubtful whether she will pull through. What? You did not know of her illness? Why, it is more than a week ago. Yes, I have been seen that the possession when there is no hope of absolution. We can assure Dr. Stocking that very few Catholics would contess their sins to a priest unless they were persuaded that he possessed through Christ, the power to absolve them. Our separated brethren would do better to jemphasize the great truth that there is no escape from the consequences of sin than to advocate the practice of confession—Ave Maria.