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EDWARD LYNN.

(From the Catholic Telegraph.)

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

Captain Lynn sat like one petrified, with the open letter in his hand. How different was this from the warm-hearted ones which had beguiled the monotony of camp-life, and the tedious hours of sickness! There was a lack of tenderness, almost amounting to coldness, coming from her; a want of that friendly familiarity which characterized their former intercourse. Not once did she use the diminutive 'Ed,' as of old; not once a more endearing expression than 'dear Edward,' which might have been an index to the heart of a less enthusiastic and demonstrative person than Anna Craft. But he had known her for years, and she had long been his betrothed wife; they were to have been married as soon as he should begin the practice of his profession, when the call to arms summoned him to lay the dearest wish of his heart, for awhile, upon the altar of his country. There was a weight, as if of ice, upon his spirit, and a firm compression of the lips, though a paleness overspread his features as he placed the little sheet in its snowy envelope, and laid it away. It required no second reading, though many of Anna's letters had been perused half a dozen times. Every word of this froze into his soul at the first glance. He wondered that he had not been prepared for such a letter, knowing the religious education of his betrothed, and her almost idolatrous love for her father.—He took a tiny sheet from another envelope, that bore the marks of having been often read, and glanced over it, as if to assure himself that such tenderness had really once been bestowed upon him: 'Dearest, how slowly must the hours pass to you, how you must long to be able to come to us—to all you love; especially to her who waits and watches with such anxiety for your coming, and who will be almost wild with joy at meeting you once again. Sometimes, dear Ed, the thought presents itself that I may be destined to see you no more, that death may place his signet-seal upon your lips, and your form be lying in a soldier's grave while I write. The thought brings agony unexpressible. Oh! (I plead in my suspense) canst thou be so cruel, most merciful God, as to take from me my only earthly treasure, save my father; to leave me upon the earth without him to whom I have given my heart? I sometimes fear He will take you from me, because I have given you, perhaps, that very love which is His due; I try not to bestow upon the creature that which belongs to the Creator, and I think I do not; but we are so frail, I fear lest I do—sometimes.' Captain Lynn read no farther. Crushing the letter back into his drawer, he sank again upon the sofa and buried his face in the cushions; yet not a sound escaped the firmly closed lips, not a tear dimmed his eye, though it would have been a relief to have let open the flood-gates of his soul, and have given vent to the wild torrent of conflicting passions in tears.

Mr. Craft was a minister in high standing in his native city; he had but one living child, a beautiful and accomplished daughter, of nineteen years, who was his idol. Her mother, a gentle being, died when Anna was a child, and her father had spared no pains to render her life so happy that she should not feel the need of a mother's care; while he strove to educate her in such a manner as to fit her for any station, however exalted, within the sphere of woman. Added to a face of rare intellectual beauty, she possessed a form and carriage of mingled grace and dignity, and it puzzled all who knew her to tell which was her greatest charm, her beauty in repose, or when shown in conversation, of which she was perfect mistress. Carrie Lynn and Anna Craft had been school-mates in one of our best institutions of learning in the West; and the intimacy there formed had continued when, after leaving the Seminary halls, the two young ladies were launched upon the tide of 'society.' Ed. Lynn had often heard his sister speak of her lovely friend, and was prepared to see her through Carrie's eyes, but when he met her was more pleased with her society than even his sister had expected. Their acquaintance, begun during a vacation which Anna spent at 'Lynn Grove' with her school-mate, soon ripened into friendship, and before the year closed both felt that a warmer feeling had taken its place. Mr. Craft was an old man, though possessing all his faculties in a remarkable degree; but his failing health warned him that at any hour he might be called away from his child. So with unusual solicitude he watched the growing intimacy between the young man and his daughter, and soon fully satisfied himself that he was worthy of her hand. His inquiries were made unknown to her, and while he ascertained that in a moral point of view he could not choose one likely to prove a better husband, he did not forget that a fine estate would be considerable of an inducement—feeling, of course, a parent's anxiety in regard to the welfare of his child. If young Lynn had

been found to be entirely dependent upon his profession, it is needless to say he would have also been seen to be uncommonly deficient in either mind or morals, and entirely incapable of filling the place of son-in-law. But the minister was satisfied, though he wished to know, that in the event of his sudden decease she could call upon her lover to be her protector; and so urged them to come to a definite engagement while yet Edward was a student of medicine in the office of Dr. White. Mr. Craft was a man of strong prejudices, and would not favor the suit of one not belonging to his particular sect; but there was no such hindrance, as Mr. Lynn's family were all members of the same denomination, a fact which very much pleased the revered gentleman. Anna's heart was a warm one, much warmer than her letter with its ill-concealed vexation would seem to indicate, and she loved Edward with a devotion equalled only by the intensity of his affection for the fair girl whose only comfort and support he knew he would soon be. But her father had early instilled into her mind a feeling of horror for Catholics, and every thing pertaining to their faith, and had been careful that she should not be deceived after imbibing all the falsehoods which he believed, or pretended to believe; very probably because he did not wish to investigate the subject.

'I would rather follow you to the grave Anna Craft,' her father had said, when she gave him the letter written by her lover, as soon as he had become able to write, after his long delirium.—'Yes, would rather now, in my old age, lose my last earthly hope and comfort than see you wed a Catholic. Much as I have respected Dr. Lynn, my feelings must change to utter aversion when he becomes so debased as to enter that foul structure of corruption. A Roman Catholic!—Anna, I detest the name of Roman Catholic!' And Mr. Craft strode rapidly up and down the room; becoming a little more calm: 'I sympathize with you, my child,' he said, 'for it is a sad blow to you to know that one we have trusted and deemed so worthy our trust, can be now only an object of the bitterest scorn. I would say of my most unmitigated contempt—yes, hatred, if that were not a sin. But I pity him after all. Poor deluded creature of erring mortality! We are taught that we must forgive—yes, even forgive him who has betrayed our sacred trust, and repaid our love by such baseness. I, of course, shall never harbor malice towards him, individually; but as one of the filthy, money-loving, soul-stirring—'

'But, father,' interrupted Anna, with tears running down her cheeks, for she had never before seen him so excited. Edward did not say certainly that he should join the Romish Church; he only said that he felt it his duty to investigate the matter, and if he found he was in error should seek the path of rectitude. Perhaps he will see that he has been rightly taught, and will not leave the faith of his fathers.'

'Oh, my poor child!' said Mr. Craft, lowering his voice until it partook of an almost unearthly sadness: 'You are so unsophisticated, so guileless, that you know nothing less pure than yourself. But I know the snares laid in that accursed nest of pollution, that den of superstition and idolatry—the snares laid by wicked priestcraft to ruin souls. No, if he has so far yielded to their power as to wish to look farther into their secret wickedness, you may as well give him up at once.'

'But, father,' pleaded Anna, I have known him so long. I do not fear he will try to restrain my liberty. And we are dearer to each other than you may imagine.' Her voice trembled, tears gushed forth afresh, and she sought the silence of her own room. Though seriously troubled in mind upon reading her lover's affectionate letter, in which he alluded to the kindness shown him by the good Sisters, of his new acquaintance the Rev. Daly, and of his recent conviction—yet she had not thought of breaking the bonds that so closely bound them, until the subject was so unduly and cruelly suggested. Her father had always been an indulgent one, he had never had reason to be otherwise, for Anna was not the self-willed, petulant girl that we often see an only daughter to be. Proud-spirited, however, she certainly was, and now, for the first time, she considered her father too severe, and demurred at rearing implicit obedience to his exacting demand. Mr. Craft was not at all satisfied on reading the letter written by Anna, which jarred so harshly on the heart strings of the convalescent officer, and which made her own heart ache when she rapidly glanced over it, before sending it towards the destination. She could not suddenly break all the tender ties which were so closely interwoven with her very life, that to sever them seemed to threaten destruction to it. But her father's request—for he would call it by no harsher name—was that the correspondence should proceed no farther than was strictly necessary for a termination to their engagement. It was in accordance with his wishes that the

concluding sentences of the letter were penned, though he wished her to erase the expression of the desire to see him again. This Anna did not wish, and was determined she would not do; but her father gave her to understand that he could not again visit her under the parental roof.—Little did he know the proud spirit so cruelly insulted by that letter, or he would not have imagined that he would seek even one parting interview contrary to their wishes. Anna, afraid to link her destiny with one of the dreadful faith, especially without her parent's blessing on their union, assured that the step her lover was about to take would be a decisive one, and afraid as well to displease her father—whose vehement passion she had now seen—yielded to what she tried to believe to be the decree of Providence, and one of the trials through which she was 'predestined' to pass; and endeavored to feel thankful that she had escaped such a marriage. Mr. Craft lost no opportunity to impress upon his daughter's mind the necessity of obedience to the divine will, and the next Sunday he preached to the elegant and fastidious congregation, that filled the church, on the 'government of daughters,' feeling that he had now done his duty in every sense of the word, and secure in the hope that the 'graceless reprobate' would no longer possess a thought of his child's mind.

'Well, Doctor, what do you think of Ed's new notions?' asked Mr. Lynn, as Dr. White came from his son's room one morning. 'Have you noticed any symptoms of a diseased brain?' 'Nonsense, Mr. Lynn; Edward's brain is as clear as yours or mine this minute. I suppose you allude to his religious views. I see no reason to think his sense is not as sound as ever, because he has a few peculiar ideas upon the subject. Every body, now-a-days, is changing some belief—political or religious, or some other. There's no occasion for alarm, my friends; he'll do nothing to disgrace you, I warrant.'

'But, doctor,' said Mrs. Lynn, 'we could bear it, if he was only going to join the Methodists, or Baptists, or—'

'But the Roman Catholics!' interrupted her husband; 'why, Dr. White, what was his early education? Certainly not what one would suppose, to see this singular change; I never was, in my life, afraid of such a catastrophe. Indeed, I have serious doubts about the boy's head.—He was so under the influence of those Sisters, as they call them, at the hospital.'

'Did you notice them talking to him, Mr. Lynn,' asked the doctor. 'I did not, and I thought I observed them pretty closely.'

'No, to do them justice, I did not,' was the answer: 'but, then, I've no doubt they did talk with him sometimes. And then he was so very delirious, I fear he has not recovered the full use of his faculties.'

'Then,' said the doctor, as he took up his hat, 'he will, no doubt, soon regain them, and you can use your influence to counteract the effects of theirs. However, I consider: Ed a very sensible young man, competent to be his own judge; and if he was my son, I would not meddle with the affair.' And the doctor bid them good morning.

To tell the truth, he had been much pleased, during his stay at the hospital, with the deportment of the Sisters, and their kind attention to the sick and wounded; he had kept his little grey eyes wide open, and taken every favorable opportunity of conversing with them. Capt. Lynn had introduced his new acquaintance, the priest; and the doctor was also well pleased with him, though he had but a few minutes conversation with him, and that on common, everyday topics. But he professed to be something of a physiognomist, and was very apt to be governed in his likes and dislikes by first impressions. He had, at this time, a book in his pocket, which he had borrowed for examination—one of those given to the Captain by the Rev. Father Daly. He had seen the title, looked over its pages with evident satisfaction, and requested it for closer inspection.

'All that is necessary to test a man's sincerity, is to place before him those first principles which, like the sun in heaven, are evident by their own light. To him who closes his eyes against such evidence whole libraries of controversial works would prove insufficient; he deliberately adheres to error because he is unwilling to make the sacrifices which conversion to the Catholic faith would impose upon him. The mists that arise from sin exclude the sunbeams of truth. I fear that not a few, indeed, are guilty of rejecting the well-known truth; particularly among those who find it for their worldly interest and convenience to remain Protestants. It is not for such men these pages are written, but for that larger class who are Protestants only because they are born and brought up in Protestantism; who are sincere, willing to examine, and determined to follow their convictions.'—Thus read Dr. White, as he sat down in his office after supper—after his daily round of

duties were completed—and began the perusal of the 'Appeal.' To the latter class mentioned by the author both he and young Dr. Lynn belonged. And he sat up until a late hour, deeply interested in the truths so clearly pointed out in that volume. A book which we sincerely wish might be thrown broadcast among our people, and read wherever it might fall—for it is worth its weight in gold.

The doctor's parents had been, and he and his family now were, members of that denomination, which, to escape the uncertainty inevitably attending all purely human opinions, have set up the doctrine of private inspiration; and for years he had tried to persuade that this imaginary guidance was a safe one, as safe 'as the infallible authority of a divinely commissioned Church.' But he had failed in the attempt, and was still struggling in the uncertainty attending so doubtful a doctrine. Now somewhat elated by hope, and now plunged into a state bordering on despair, and never attaining to the calm certainty of feeling to which he aspired. His was, at best, a very insecure state of mind, and he had for years felt it to be so; he hoped that he should be able to fulfill the mission assigned him by Providence, and knew that if he did his duty, a merciful God would most assuredly save; but—his duty—ah! there was the block of stumbling. 'The consoling security' of the Catholic had been manifested to him, not only by the Sisters at the hospital, but often among his patients who were, not unfrequently, members of that Church, though too often (thanks to unjust and rigid English laws—for they were mostly Irish)—poor and uneducated; and many of them giving, by a bad example, an improper estimate of their faith. However, he had sometimes contrasted their apparent security of feeling with the 'distressing insecurity' of his own. He now understood, for the first time, the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church, and felt that confidence once gained in that, all else would be easy. He began to comprehend how the Catholic sails securely in the imperishable bark of Peter—how the 'Protestant clings to a broken plank thrown out upon a raging sea,' how the Catholic Church can confidently say to her children—'Trust to my guidance, I am of God; let your lives correspond to your faith, and you will be saved'; how Protestantism, 'throwing into the hands of its adherents a venerable book, dishonored by a thousand conflicting interpretations, says to them—'Read for yourselves, and discern the truth, if you can; make out your own faith and hold fast to it, if you are able; perhaps it will save you.' And he felt more and more convinced, as he read page after page, of the distressing insecurity of a religion which cannot, and does not, attempt to prove its infallibility. Thus read Dr. White through nearly all the silent hours of that, to him, memorable night; reading and pondering the forcible truths, each, in his mind. He was a man of learning and research; and before he laid his head upon his pillow he had determined never to give up the search, until he found consolation in the Catholic Church, if it that was to be found.—We will not follow him through the length of his investigations, or intrude upon the interesting conversations with his wife—a woman of a good, well balanced intellect, and of much amiability of character; very much attached to their particular denomination, and looked upon as a most exemplary Christian; both her husband and herself being leading members.

CHAPTER III.—FAMILY DISCORD.

'Well, Carrie, I must start for the regiment next week, if my health continues to improve,' said Captain Lynn, as he and his sister sat upon the vine-sheltered piazza, in the deepening twilight of a Jude evening.

'What! Ed, I thought you were going next week to see Anna. She, no doubt, expects to see you again.'

'No: she does not expect me, and it is better for both that we do not meet,' he said sadly.—'I wrote to her, withdrawing all claims to her hand and affections. Her father will, I suppose, marry her to some wealthy and influential member of his congregation; and then he will have an opportunity of watching, lest he turn Catholic or join some other sect.' He spoke with bitterness, and for the first time said so much upon the subject naturally engrossing much of his thought; indeed, so strangely silent had he been upon what was supposed to interest him most, that not even his parents knew of the change that had come over his day dreams. 'The course of true love' had, for three years, run 'so smooth,' that he had doubted the truth of the old Shaksperian adage; but heavy clouds now hung over the stream, the waters had suddenly grown turbid, and were sweeping or into an unknown channel, its true one obstructed by rocks, which he believed to be insurmountable. And then he looked above, away from the dark present, and beheld the clouds parted, and rays of light celestial radiating from the 'great white throne.'

'I did not show you Anna's letter to me,' said his sister, after a pause. 'Don't you want to see it; it's rather a singular letter,' and her brother mechanically took the paper from her hand.

'Ma chere amie; don't think I have forgotten you, or that, because he and I have broken off, that our love must cease. I, at least, have no idea of such a thing; for a broken engagement of marriage need not affect the friendship existing between you and I, that I know of.—En passant—Pa says he hopes the rest of the family are still in possession of their usual sound sense; you know what that means, so please relieve our minds on the subject. So I suppose I must give up seeing you this summer; for I presume if there was any occasion for your services you would now decline the honor of being bridesmaid; and then, as one of the principle actors has stepped off the stage, we will drop the curtain over the drama—that was to be—perhaps I should say over that particular act, for is not the drama still being enacted, with some variations that were not mentioned in the programme.—Now, Carrie, I might possibly choose another actor, but my conscience tells me that the whole play would be a farce. There is a stranger in town, Mr. Walters, with whom Pa is quite anxious I should become acquainted, as his father and Pa were boys together, and studied together for the ministry—though I believe Mr. W. never finished. All the girls are falling in love with him, but I have not seen him, and have no desire to; is it not quite strange, considering that I am free again? He dined here yesterday, and what do you think, I had such a terrible nervous headache, that I could not possibly go into the parlor, though I half promised to appear at dinner, trusting that my head would prevent me; when the dinner hour came, and Aunt Betty came to help me dress, I was so indisposed that she took back word that I was sick enough to have the doctor sent for, and should not be disturbed. Good old soul! she is the best friend I've got, I almost believe sometimes. Pa was very much disappointed; and as for Mr. Walters—if I hadn't a goodly share of spite in my composition—I should have been quite pleased to make the acquaintance of the gentleman. (He has, Pa says, two splendid plantations, well stocked, &c.) It was wicked in me, wasn't it, to vent my ill-feelings on that innocent man? Pa had to write my aunt and her two daughters to entertain the gentleman, who was, no doubt, more pleased than otherwise at my non-appearance. I intend to resolutely decline the honor of any more new acquaintances—unless Mr. Walters and I should meet by chance, for Aunt Betty said he was mighty handsome, and mighty smart too, and could beat cousin Mary singing—I heard a rich bass voice, that most tempted me to go down, floating through the halls. Pa is displeased with me, I see, still; so I'm in disgrace everywhere, I mean with all those I care a straw for, (except you, Carrie, mon amie; and you, too, may have taken sides with him.) Well, you don't know, dear, how I have passed the last two months, walking with a haughty head, and careless, proud exterior, through the terrible ordeal; I hope you will never have to go through the same, Carrie dear. But my heart will not break. I feel that Pa is right; and if he were not, I have too long yielded obedience to think of rebelling now. In his delicate health it would kill him, and what would I be without my dearest treasure, my idolized and indulgent father.—Tell me, Carrie, how does he bear it? (I have not yet schooled myself to write his name.) His heart won't break either, but he would rather it would than yield a single cherished idea, or step one inch lower than his pedestal of pride.—Well, I hope 'there's as good fish in the sea,' &c. Write soon to your miserable

'ANNA.'

Captain Lynn gave back the letter with a smile; he could not but smile at the half careless half sad tone in which it was written. He might have supposed the writer really indifferent, from some of her expressions, had he not read the tender woman's heart long before, and could now see through the flimsy veil with which she sought to hide her real feelings. She could hardly write other than the frank, cordial letters she had been accustomed to pen to friend Carrie, so that she most signally failed in trying to disguise her heart, and seemed at last to have given up the attempt. Edward was right in supposing there would henceforth be a barrier that neither would care to overleap, to that free exchange of thought and feeling which had hitherto existed between the friends.

'When you write, don't mention me, Carrie,' he said: 'remember, will you?'

'No doubt it will be better,' replied his sister, 'for I could not well say anything without blame to either one or the other. Do you know, Ed, that I blame Mr. Craft more than Anna, poor girl.'

'More than Anna, Carrie, she is not at all to blame. I would not ask her to marry me