

her last shaft about little Silas had pierced the rugged heart to its core. It was a dreary Thanksgiving in the little cottage under the elm—no but cause Dick was down in the depths with a shivering chill, not because there was little in the larder and less in the purse. All these things our plucky little Kitty would have faced with a smile. But this morning had come a letter from Bolle Morris offering a place and a pass to far-away Arizona, where young Morris was working a mine. It told Kitty to sell out the little bird's nest and come to her in the city, where she could find music scholars. It spoke of years of enforced separation, as if love were naught and gold were all. And Dick's eyes had kindled feverishly at the glittering hope. Dick's burning lips had whispered: "It is our only chance, Kitty. We must take it."

And then indeed to the hapless little wife and mother the light seemed to go out of earth. The dim street of gloom, in which even the Star of Faith vanished, it was a hard-eyed little Kitty, too wretched for tears or prayers, who was stirring the broth made from her last chicken for Dick's dinner when a knock came at the door and a grinning negro boy presented a dainty covered basket.

"Mrs. Barbour's compliments and she wishes you a happy Thanksgiving!"

Thanksgiving! Kitty's lips quivered at the mocking word. Thanksgiving! with home and love and happiness melting from her grasp; with a dim waste of desolate years stretching before her; with her young life stripped of all its blooming joys! Thanksgiving! And then suddenly, through the blackness of her own gloom, there flashed the memory of the six little grave-stones in the Barbour lot; of the memorial window over St. Joseph's altar; of the sweet saintly old face of the aunt of silver hair. And yet desolate Mother Barbour still kept Thanksgiving!

"The tears burst from Kitty's eyes in a saving flood, weeping away all hardness, all bitterness, as she uncovered the friendly offering. There was a fat brown turkey reposing on a bed of crisp lettuce, a bakery mince pie, a tumbler of jelly, a bottle of raspberry wine. But it was none of these that made Kitty's eyes open wide, while the tears in their depths sparkled into rainbows. On the top of all was an envelope directed in an old-fashioned business hand to Mrs. Richard Dermen; and, opening it, Kitty read with breathless amazement:

Dear Madam: Enclosed please find cheque for \$225.00, amount of your husband's unclaimed salary up-to-date. It is our custom to pay such sums to family of employees during illness.

Trusting that Mr. Dermen's health will soon permit him to resume the duties of his position. I remain,

Yours truly,

SILAS F. BARBOUR.

And thus had "old Pepper" kept his vow to the letter and broken it in spirit, as his good wife's love had guessed.

"What in thunder does it mean?" said Dick, flashing and paling, as Kitty flew to his side with letter and enclosure.

"It means you have never lost your place!" sobbed his little wife on his breast. It means hope and hope and happiness for us again, Dick. It means that God is too good to part our lives dear husband. And it means," added Kitty, breaking into girlish smiles and rapture "that 'old Pepper' is an angel to match his darling wife. And we will love them and serve them the rest of our lives, and try to make up to them for all they have lost."

And so well did Dick and Kitty keep this pledge that they have become like son and daughter in the childless old couple in their declining years. There is no lack of merry boys and girls to keep Thanksgiving now in the Barbour household, where Dick Junior, now the broad-shouldered centre rush of his college team, comes to triumph after his winning game. A sturdy young Silas Barbour Dermen upholds his namesake's failing strength; and already a baby Elien is playing the name gentle Mother Barbour never hoped to hear—"Grandmother!"—Mary T. Wagaman in Ave Maria.

A TRUE STORY OF THE REIGN OF TERROR.

(COUNTS DE COURSON.)

A little more than a century ago, France was, as our readers know, prey to what has justly been called the Reign of Terror. Throughout the length and breadth of the country thousands of lives were ruthlessly sacrificed, anarchy reigned supreme; the "guillotine" was erected in all the large towns and persons of all rank and age mercilessly put to death, without even the outward forms of justice. Among the cities where this reign of Terror was at its worst was Nantes, the ancient capital of Brittany, which being situated on the borders of Vendee, became the natural refuge of survivors of the royalist and Catholic army, whose heroism had kept at bay, during many months, the trained soldiers of the Republic. The tyrants, who at that time governed France, resolved to crush the revolutionary spirit of a province, where devotion to God and the King was more firmly rooted than elsewhere, and in order to carry out their purpose they sent to Nantes a man whose figure stands out with peculiar horror even among the blood-stained tyrants of that terrible epoch. The amount of the atrocities committed at Nantes by Carrier read like some hideous nightmare; it is difficult to realize that only one hundred and ten years ago cruelties so cold-blooded were openly perpetrated in a civilized country. Other men of the same period: Robespierre in Paris and Lebon at Arras, equalled him in their contempt for human life, but few, if any, displayed the refined barbarity of the "tiger of the west," whose name, even now, is spoken with a shudder in the home-towns of Brittany and Vendee.

Carrier, who had already given proofs of his revolutionary fanaticism,

arrived at Nantes in the autumn of 1793; he was armed with full powers to exercise his authority as he pleased, and his first proceeding was to clear out in a summary manner, the over-crowded prisons of the city. These were filled with men, women and children, chiefly nobles, peasants and priests from La Vendee. Some were guillotined, others, and among them a large number of children, were shot, but Carrier found that these modes of execution were too slow, and he invented the famous "noyades," by which over a hundred persons could be made away with in the space of a few minutes.

The first of these executions took place on the seventeenth of November, 1793, the second a few days later; over one hundred and fifty priests perished on those two occasions, but Carrier, who dreaded the impression that might be produced on public opinion by his barbarous invention, surrounded the first "noyades" with a certain amount of mystery. They took place at night, and only a few persons were informed of the execution. Later on, having crushed all spirit of resistance out of the terror-stricken people, he grew bolder, the "noyades" were organized with a hideous display of pomp and parade and in broad daylight, men, women and even little children were indiscriminately consigned to a watery grave. Carrier's latest historians assert that at least 2,800 persons perished in the "noyades," alone and that altogether nearly 5,000 victims, including a large proportion of women were executed in different ways during the reign of the "tiger of the west" at Nantes.

It is satisfactory to know that, like his friend and patron, Robespierre, Carrier was brought to trial and "guillotined" during the reaction that followed the Reign of Terror. It is reported that when he was taken from his prison to the scaffold the people of Paris pursued him with yells of execration, a fitting retribution when we remember the brutal jests and mockeries that he and his satellites levelled at the martyred priests.

The "noyades" were carried out with such fiendish care and foresight that there are few instances of any of the victims making their escape. The priests did, on one occasion, succeed in swimming to the shore, but they were captured and sent to the "guillotine," a third, the Abbe Ludeau, of the Care of St. Liphard, was more fortunate; not only was he saved from a watery grave, but he lived to see happier days and the circumstances of his death are so touching as to deserve to be remembered.

In the winter of 1793-1794, the Abbe Ludeau, then a man in the prime of life, was confined with many other priests in a former Carmelite convent at Nantes. Thence they were taken on board a ship that served as a prison and where they suffered cruelly from filth and want of space; then brought back to the town and removed to a Capuchin convent which seemed to them a paradise after the horror of their prison life. Finally Carrier determined upon a wholesale execution and measures were taken for the purpose. A boat was selected, large holes through which two men could pass were made in its sides and these were closed with planks so roughly nailed together that they could be removed at a moment's notice. One night, after they had retired to rest the imprisoned priests were roughly roused and informed that they were to be put on board ship immediately. They were told, moreover, that they must observe strict silence on the way from the prison to the port as it would be the worse for them if they attracted attention. Some evidently were far from realizing the fate that awaited them and inquired whether they were to be transported to Cayenne; a shrug of the shoulders was the jailer's only answer. Others, more clear sighted, felt that they were going to their death and they were during the weary week that they spent in prison he had formed a close friendship with a venerable religious, whose long career had been devoted to apostolic labor and who, being now bowed down by age and infirmity, was assisted in the minor difficulties of his prison life by his younger and more robust companion.

When the summons came to meet death, each one took to his side, into the silent streets. The prisoners were over ninety in number, all of whom were priests. Their jailers once more commanded them to make as little noise as possible and marched them, at a quick pace, through the deserted thoroughfares of the sleeping city.

With some difficulty the old religious kept up with the rest; he leaned heavily on the arm of his friend and in a low voice he repeated the prayers of the dying—prayers that in more peaceful days they had often recited by many a Christian death bed. At last the port was reached and the priests were hustled on board a boat that lay ready to receive them. It immediately weighed anchor and silently glided down the river until it reached a spot where the Loire extended on both sides almost as far as the eye could reach.

Those who have seen the noble river, when swollen by the autumn rains can easily picture to themselves the aspect it presented on that winter night. Suddenly a harsh word of command broke the silence; the executioners laid violent hands on their victims, took from them their money, watches and other valuables; then they proceeded to tie them together in couples, while the carpenters who had come on board for the purpose, took away the planks that closed the holes in the sides of the boat. Through these apertures the unfortunate priests were roughly pushed into the deep and rapid river. Being tied to each other, they could not, even those who were good swimmers, save themselves; some clung to the boat, but were ruthlessly beaten off with sticks and even swords, the rest struggled helplessly in the water and were a sound of splashing, of smothered exclamations, of cries of distress; devout invocations mingling with the oaths and blasphemies of Carrier's satellites. For about twenty minutes over a hundred human beings fought with death in the

waters of the Loire, then, by degrees, voices were no longer heard, and dark bodies floated by carried seaward by the current.

The "Cure" of St. Liphard had been tied to his friend and prison companion, the old monk, and, like the others, the two were thrust into the seething waters. The younger man was an stout and vigorous swimmer; few bold strokes carried him out of the boat, and he discovered, with some surprise, that the rope binding him to his companion was so loosely tied, that, although considerably hampered in his movements, he was able to keep above water. When the sacrifice of his life had been demanded of him he had eagerly made it; now with the knowledge that it might be possible to save himself and his friend, he had sufficient presence of mind to instruct his companion how to untie the rope that bound them together. This having been successfully accomplished, he succeeded in making some progress, although the current was swift and strong; and moreover his movements were impeded by his helpless companion. The old monk realized this and generously urged him to escape by himself. "I am preventing you from saving yourself," he whispered. "My life in any case cannot be a long one; I am ready and resigned to die. Do not think of me, let us, part we will meet hereafter."

"No, indeed," retorted the priest. "I will never desert you, we will live or die together. Hold on to me as lightly as you can, have good courage and the old man obeyed, and the "Cure" continued to battle with the current, but the night was cold, the shadowy shore far away and it became evident that the struggle could not last much longer. The swimmer's strength began to fail, his companion's limbs were stiffening with the cold and at last, after gently whispering the word "adieu" into the "Cure's" ear, the monk loosened his hold and glided into the depths below. The Abbe's first sensation was one, not of relief, but of keen disappointment. The thought of saving another life had stimulated his efforts; now he felt as if it was no longer worth his while to keep up the struggle!

Suddenly the sounds of oars struck his ears. At first he thought that his enemies were after him, but the small boat that was coming towards him through the darkness hailed from an opposite direction to that where the "noyade" took place and, with a tremendous effort he succeeded in reaching the little craft. As far as he could judge in the dim light, there was but one man on board. "Have pity on me," whispered the swimmer. "I shall sink if you do not let me in; I can hold out no more." But quickly recovering himself, he replied in a low voice: "I have two passengers on board whom I do not know. Are you a priest?"

"Yes," said the other. "My companions are dead and I am swimming for my life."

"Hold on to the boat," was the answer, "and wait for me."

The boatman rose and cautiously went to the other end of the craft, when the priest now perceived two shadowy forms. He soon returned: "My passengers are asleep," he observed, much relieved. "I can take you in safely; make haste," and stretching out his hands he drew the priest into the boat, made him lie down and concealed him carefully under a heap of articles, provisions and miscellaneous cargoes. Towards morning the two passengers landed, and the boatman handed to his unexpected guest:

"Now we are safe," he exclaimed, "at any rate for the time being," and, with kind-hearted zeal, he proceeded to wrap the fugitive in a warm cloak and to give him food and drink. While thus ministering to his wants he expatiated at length on the calamities of the time: "We live in evil days," he said: "God knows how all this will end. I go to my heart to see good and innocent people perish daily. My wife will be glad when she hears that I have saved a priest. We have friends at Nantes who feel as we do and who sometimes are able to let us know when a "noyade" is to take place. On these occasions my wife and I have sought to escape by one means or another. I have spent the night on the river in hopes of saving some of the poor victims. Alas, it is not so easy a work. We cannot get near enough the spot where, poor as they are, they are struggling with the current. Once, however, we picked up a lady, evidently an "aristocrate"; her rosary was wound around her arm. We brought her back to life with much trouble, but her first words, when she opened her big, blue eyes, were to ask, 'where is my baby?' Is my baby safe?' My wife seeing her so badly, was afraid of hurting her so she was safe in our cottage. The poor thing began to praise God for having preserved her child and to thank us for saving it. It made us weep to hear her. However in spite of all we could do she died at the end of a few hours; it was perhaps better so. Only in heaven did she find out that we had deceived her. Another 'Vendean' child heard that a number of 'Vendeans' children were in prison. Their parents had given out that citizens whose Republican opinions were above suspicion might if they liked, adopt some of these poor orphans. My wife put on a tricolor bow and made a loud profession of revolutionary principles; owing to which she was allowed to bring back from the Nantes prison a poor mite of two years old, a little girl, whose mother had just seemed, been executed only a few days before. Happily we found a paper sewn inside the child's dress that told us her name and where she was born. If ever better times return we will restore her to her family. If we cannot find her relatives she shall be brought up like a Christian."

A true incident. We met, some years ago, the grand-daughter of one who, when a child, had been adopted and educated by a Nantes fish wife. When more peaceful times returned the child was given back to her relations by

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her foster mother, who remained on affectionate and intimate terms with her grateful charge.

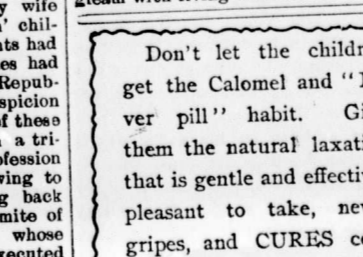
The whole of the next day the Abbe remained concealed in the boat; only towards nightfall did his kind host consent to part from him. Having dressed him in peasant's costume, he put him ashore in a lonely spot within reach of a village where the "Cure" had friends able to receive him. He walked all night, steering clear of the high roads and making his way to his friend's house by unfrequented paths where he was safe to meet no one.

He remained for two years under the hospitable roof, where in those evil days more than one outlawed priest found a generous welcome. At night he would steal out to assist the Mass either in the depths of the woods or in some lonely barn where the faithful Breton peasants assembled at the peril of their lives. Although he had many narrow escapes he succeeded in defeating the vigilance of the priest hunters of the district and he rejoiced to think that he was allowed to devote to God's service a life that had been so miraculously preserved.

When after the execution of both Carrier and Robespierre, better days dawned for France, the parishioners of St. Liphard heard that the pastor, whom they had wept over as dead, was living in a village close to the Loire, they flocked to visit him and begged him to lose no time in returning to his former parish. Nothing told, the Abbe Laudeau promised to do so, and on the day appointed for his arrival the village of St. Liphard put on its festive garb. Garlands of leaves and flowers adorned the cottages, triumphal arches were erected along the high road. The poor little church that had only lately been restored to divine worship, was filled with lights and flowers and the peasants, attired in their Sunday clothes, stood at the entrance of the village to welcome their beloved pastor. At last the good priest appeared, somewhat aged by the perils and fatigues of the last few years and with the solemn look in his eyes of one who has been faced to face with death. Surrounded by his parishioners he walked slowly towards the church. His doors were opened wide and it was noticed that on the threshold the "Cure" stood motionless and silent, while his people pressed around him, impatient for him to intone the Te Deum, which with all they were prepared to take up with all the enthusiasm of their grateful hearts. His eyes were beaming with a strange light, his lips trembling, his countenance pale from strong emotion. In front of him stood the altar blazing with lights; he looked straight at it but before his mind's eye rose another vision; that of a rushing grey being, in which a voice rose strong and feelings and his own masterly struggling for life! At last he mastered the fear: "Te Deum laudamus Domine," they came a heavy fall, a sudden rush forward of the crowd, stifled cries of horror, as a dead priest with a smile upon his lips was raised from the ground. "The 'Cure' of St. Liphard had died of joy on the threshold of his church.—Holy Rosary Magazine.

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