

## BROTHER CELESTINE

(From the Portfolio of a Tourist.)

Translated by J. H. LEUCK from the German of  
M. VON GREIFFENSTEIN.

Concluded.

For these reasons my friend Aristide was made to change his name. He gave it an Italian form, and went by the name of Bianco. Celestino was his name as a member of the III Order of St. Francis. If I have correctly construed utterances of my friend on different occasions, his motive for acting in a Passion Play was an expiatory one. This son of France wished to make reparation for the sins of his country. . . . Aristide had received an excellent education. His mother wished that he remain away from the stage, and for this reason she had sent him, when still very young, to a college conducted by religious. With his knowledge and education, he might have become a high official or an ambassador."

So he was Passion player against his inclination, I thought. The self-denial that he practiced, as well as the motive for the same, truly deserved admiration. However, this offered no explanation for the masterful way in which he played his part, and I expressed myself to this effect towards Arrigo.

"He was not an actor," replied he, to my surprise, "he was a penitent, a saint."

I bade the narrator to explain.

The young man, whose eyes at his last words had filled with tears, stepped to a corner of the room, and from a pile of costumes drew forth a penitent's iron shirt, on which traces of blood were distinctly perceivable.

"See," he said, "so has Aristide lived the Passion of Christ along with his acting—it never played it—never did he for show distort a single muscle. The people who saw him on the stage never could praise enough the naturalness with which his features gave expression to his every pain. They did not know that every stroke, every jolt, struck the penitent's shirt that was hidden under his tricot. At the Bearing of the Cross the heavy wood rested thereon; when he was hanging at the cross he leaned so firmly against it that the spines penetrated deep into his flesh. With other Passion players the strokes are wielded only for show. Not so with Aristide. He bade his hangmen not to spare him, and well did they fulfill his wish.

"But do not believe, Sir, that he did this in order to make his play appear more true to nature. No; I can assure you that he did it all out of pure love for Christ. On the days when he played he usually fasted so strictly that he would eat nothing until after the first performance, which seldom came off before evening, and then he took only a little bread and diluted wine. And see how he understood his role. For him it was an apostolate, for which he prepared by fervent prayer. He begged of God the grace that by his performance he might contribute to the remembrance of Christ's passion among men. And God heard his prayers. It not unfrequently happened that public sinners were converted while we were performing. When our padrone occasionally unexpectedly gave us orders to play, and we others were unwilling and would complain, my friend never showed or expressed the least sign of dissatisfaction. "Andiamo predicare!" (Let us go and preach), he would say, like unto St. Francis, for whom he practiced a special veneration. I am positive that he even bound himself to perform the Passion Play, to enter a Franciscan monastery as a lay Brother."

Arrigo undoubtedly would have told me of many another good trait of his friend, had I not been impatient to hear something of the latter's death. So I interrupted the narrator by a question as to the assassin.

"That miserable, unhappy man!" exclaimed Arrigo, trembling with pain and indignation. "That man is worse than a devil. . . . But the police have succeeded in getting him, even though he was already out on the ocean."

"Do you know the name of the murderer, and was he in any way connected with his victim?" I asked.

"His name is Lorenzo Cerutti, and he is the son of a wealthy Roman. He received his education at a Parisian college, where he learned to know Aristide and soon became intimately befriended with him. Cerutti must at that time have possessed many a good quality. However, he seems always to have been an exalted head and a passionate character. After he had attained to his baccalaureate, his father sent him travelling. He came to England, Germany, and Russia, and got in with the worst companions. In time he became a perfect infidel and at last a fanatical anarchist.

Returning to Italy and learning of the vocation his friend had chosen, he became exceedingly angry. We happened to be performing at Livorno at the time, when he one evening attended the play. With correct eye he at once perceived the extraordinary performance of Aristide and the powerful impression it produced. Yet that very evening there was a harsh scene between him and his erstwhile friend. He accused Aristide of making propaganda for Christ, whom he always designated as the "Nazarene," and towards whom he felt a most passionate hatred. He pleaded with Aristide, at first in good words, then with threats, to give up the Passion Play, even offering to pay the director a large indemnity. Aristide, however, was bound by his vow, and he would never yield to a demand arising from such motives. He would have looked upon it as a betrayal of Christ, the Lord. Cerutti finally departed with the most terrible curses. . . .

"Ah, Signor, I heard part of the conversation that time. The aving man yelled so loudly that one must understand it in the adjoining rooms, and that is why I told you that he is a devil. During the first months after this unpleasant scene we heard nothing more of him. But two weeks ago a threatening letter came from him, in which he stated that he would be revenged on the Nazarene for the trick the latter had played him. Presumably, an anarchistic plot had proved unsuccessful to him. Day before yesterday Aristide received a second letter, in which Cerutti expressed himself still more plainly as to his wicked intentions. He wrote that the iconoclasts had destroyed crucifixes of wood and stone; he, however, would destroy the 'living image of the Nazarene.'"

"But," I interrupted, "if your friend had been so plainly forewarned, why did you not make arrangements to have the police aid you? It would have been an easy matter to prevent the crime."

The narrator sighed deeply, and after looking for a while, as in a dream, before himself, said: "Yes, it would have been an easy matter if Aristide had wanted it. Of the last threatening letter, however, no one knew a word. I found the same only to-day after Aristide's death. . . . He has accomplished what he always wished: to give up his life for Jesus Christ. This desire is the one, only correct explanation of his death. You probably had noticed how he remained alone on the stage, when all the others had fled?"

"I did, in fact, and it seemed to me that you tried to persuade him also to leave."

"So I did, Signor, but, as you saw, all in vain." Tears again came into Arrigo's eyes, and after a short pause, he continued: "You see, I am a Christian; and as such I really ought not lament his death. Why, has he not truly died the death of a martyr? When Cerutti seized the pistol he called to Aristide to come down from the cross, as a sign that he would renounce the Nazarene. Aristide heard the request, and his answer was a jubilant prayer of thanksgiving to God for being allowed to die for the Saviour. He seemed to have expected all beforehand. Then he pleaded, just as our Lord had done: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Every other man would have been disarmed by these words. But not so this satan of a Cerutti. He took this as a sign to fire. Still hanging on the cross, the mortally wounded breathed his last. His death could not have been more beautiful. For us, however, it is most bitter."

"Did the departed ever express the desire to you that he wished to die for Christ?" I asked of Arrigo.

"Not once only but innumerable times," was his reply. "He often spoke of it with unbelievable enthusiasm, as none but a saint could do."

For a while we sat in silence.

"Do you wish to see him," finally asked Arrigo.

He had guessed my thought. We entered a small, half-dark apartment, in which a vigil lamp glimmered. On a poor bier lay the earthly remains of Aristide Blanchard, his entire figure wrapped in white cloths, an incomparable picture of the Saviour in the tomb. The long, dark-blond, somewhat curly hair lay like a frame round that face of unforgettable beauty.

This was the man who already as a child had wished to die for Christ. At that time I had doubted the truth of his feelings and had thought that the actor's art had part in them, and now even this art had become with him as true as life itself. The white bud of childhood had developed into a most beautiful "Christ-rose." Involuntarily I sank upon my knees.

On the grave of Aristide Blanchard is erected a simple marble cross bearing the following inscription:

"Here rests Aristide Blanchard, Brother Celestine of the III Order of St. Francis, born at Paris. . . . assassinated at Naples. . . . out of godless hatred against the Person of Jesus Christ, whom he represented in a Passion Play."

When, two years later, I was searching through different portfolios in my photographic atelier, I found an almost life size photo of Lorenzo Cerutti. Filled with surprise, I asked myself how I had come in possession of it, when with it I discovered a group picture of Italian students, with Cerutti in the centre of the group. I remembered now that I had made a model of Brutus for an artist friend of mine who was preparing a sketch for a "Murder of Caesar." For this Brutus I had taken an enlarged picture of the young Italian, Cerutti. The Roman type of the head simply was unmistakable.

Almost prophetic appeared to me now my conception at that time of the face whose bearer, like the murderer of Caesar, had aimed at the heart of a friend, father, and benefactor. For, the shot that pierced the breast of Aristide was meant, solely and alone, for the "living image of the Nazarene."

### Blind Rosa.

BY HENDRICK CONSCIENCE

(CONTINUED.)

A long time silence reigned till John Slaets had regained his calmness; the people of the house observed his emotion, and the husband had considerably resumed his work, only looking up from time to time that he might be ready to run to serve the stranger, if any occasion arose.

The latter had now taken Peerkon on his knee again, and said:

"Mother, has Rosa lived long with you?"

The mother prepared herself to give him the beginning and the end, and the short and the long of the whole matter, and moving her spinning-wheel to his side, she sat down, and began:

"I will tell you, sir, how it has come about. You must know that when old Meulinez died, the children divided what he left among themselves; and Rosa, who would not have married for all the money in the world—I need not tell you why—made over her share to her brother, on the condition that he should maintain her during her life. In addition to this, she was a dressmaker, and earned a considerable sum in this way, but did not give it to her brother. She devoted all her earnings to good works, visited the sick, and, when the people were very poor, paid the

doctor to attend them. She had always a word of comfort for everybody, and some reviving cordial in her pocket for those who were very weak. It so happened that my husband—we had been only half a year married then—came home one day with a dreadful cold; listen—he has had that cough ever since. Next to God, we have to thank the good Rosa that my dear Nelis does not lie in his grave. Ah, sir, if you had but seen what she did for us out of pure love and kindness! She brought warm coverings—for it was cold, and we were very poor. She fetched two doctors from other parishes to consult together about our Nelis; she watched by my husband's bedside, she lightened his suffering and my grief with her kind, loving words, and gave us all the money we required to pay for medicine and food—for Rosa was beloved everywhere; and when she went to Mevrouw Hall, or to the wealthy farmers about, a small gift for the poor was never refused her. And, sir, our Nelis lay sick in bed for six long weeks, and all that time Rosa took care of us, and helped us through, till my husband, by degrees, picked up his strength again, and was able to work."

"How you must have loved the poor blind Rosa!" sighed the traveller.

The man raised his head for a moment from his work, and with tears in his eyes, exclaimed with ardour:

### SUITS DRY CLEANED

HAVE YOUR SUITS DRY CLEANED. We Dry-Clean Ladies' and Gents' Garments, sent per parcel post. First Class Workmanship. HUMBOLDT TAILORING CO.

### When looking for LAND

see me. I can sell you land at all prices and on the terms you want. A. J. RIES, ST. GREGOR.

CALL IN TO MY SHOWROOM  
and look over the New

## BRISCOE SPECIAL

the Car with the Half Million Dollar Motor.

The Price is within reach of everybody  
wanting an up-to-date Car.

I WILL GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION ANY TIME

Let me know your requirements

and I can supply your wants in anything for the Farm. FARMERS! I have a Portable Granary on exhibit at my warehouse in Humboldt. Double ply lumber and metal roof. Get my price before buying elsewhere.

## E. D. LELACHEUR

THE HUMBOLDT MACHINE MAN  
Main Street HUMBOLDT, SASK.

### We Have A Full Line Of PAINT

House paint—Implement paint—Floor paint—Wall paint—Kalsomine—Floor Varnish—Linoleum Varnish—Floor Wax and all colours of Automobile Paint and Varnish in fact everything to brighten things up and make them look like new. Call and see, and get colour cards.

A full line of Drugs, Chemicals and Patent Medicines. Marlatt's Gall Stone Cure always on hand, also Ad-ler-i-ka.

School Books and School Supplies in any Quantity.

Large Assortment of Gramophones & Records

Send us a trial order. Mail orders a speciality.

Write us in your own language.

W. F. HARGARTEN  
Pharmac. Chemist ■ Bruno, Sask.

### For Wedding Gifts and Rings

see

## E. Thornberg

Watchmaker and Jeweller

Issuer of Marriage Licenses. Main St., HUMBOLDT, SASK.

Fullness of Tone! Adaptability! Beauty!

Let us explain, why these three outstanding qualities produce new and increased pleasure when you listen to the

## MELOTONE

With the Melotone, the music of any Record is expressed most harmoniously. Delicate upper tones which formerly were lost, are now made audible by the sounding chamber, which is constructed of wood on the principle of the violin. The Melotone is able to play all kinds of Records BETTER than other Phonographs. The Melotone Factory in Winnipeg is the only one in Western Canada. This Instrument is fast taking the lead over all other phonographs and, as to construction, durability and low price, it is now excelled by none. It offers the largest selection of Records in Western Canada, at from 20 cts. upward. All instruments are guaranteed, and you get your money back if not everything is as represented.

M. J. MEYERS Jeweller and Optician HUMBOLDT

You are safe in a threefold way, if you bring your prescription to us: 1) We use for the prescription exactly what the doctor prescribed, every article being of standard strength, fresh and pure; 2) We examine and reexamine the prescription, whereby every error as to drug or quantity is excluded; 3) We are satisfied with a reasonable profit and charge the lowest prices for the best quality. These are three reasons why you should buy from us.

G. R. WATSON, HUMBOLDT, SASK.  
DRUGGIST The Rexall Store STATIONER

Advertise in the St. Peters Bote.