



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. XXIV.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, JULY 17, 1874.

NO. 48.

D. & J. SADLIER & CO., CATHOLIC PUBLISHERS, 275, NOTRE DAME STREET, MONTREAL.

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JUST PUBLISHED: FINE ENGRAVING OF FATHER MATHEW. We take great pleasure in announcing the publication of a beautiful portrait of the GREAT APOSTLE OF TEMPERANCE. It represents him as he appears giving the TEMPERANCE PLEDGE; and below the Engraving is a facsimile of his handwriting endorsing this likeness of himself as "A CORRECT ONE."

THE WITCH OF OAKDALE; OR, THE WAYS OF PROVIDENCE. (From the Catholic Telegraph.)

CHAPTER XI.—"DE PROFUNDIS." At this moment a blinding flash of lightning darted out from the dark clouds overhead, and took its fiery track towards the castle; a loud report followed immediately. The noise of cracking and falling timber was heard from the roof, and a suffocating, sulphureous smell pervaded the air. The Castle was on fire. Sigismund Gassler fled from the hall as if pursued by demons, and locked the door behind him.

The countess was alone. She lay on her knees, with arms extended, and praying to heaven for deliverance from a dreadful death by fire. Ha, what noise is that in the farthest corner of the hall? She casts her eyes in that direction. Oh, horror! The fire-hell is already at work, consuming the wooden panels and the frame work of the pictures. The flames gain headway and have already reached the picture of the present Lord of Rabenfels. Lucinda's sinking spirits revive again. The desire for life nerves her with new strength. She hastens toward the door to find it locked. She totters to the window to find that the height of the castle precludes all possibility of escape by a leap from the window. No help, no succor!

Calmly and with heroic resignation she again returns to the centre of the hall, and a fervent prayer ascends to the Disposer of all events: "O thou! who thronest above the clouds and the storm, thou hast saved me from the clutches of the destroyer; yet thy will it is that my eyes shall close 'mid the crackling of the flames, surrounded by the fiery element. Be it so. I accept my fate from thy fatherly hand. Take thy child up to thy bosom, there to rest from trouble and sorrow and all earthly woe."

At this instant the large picture of Count Walter fell from its fastenings. Lucinda started, and looked anxiously toward the place. What was her surprise on beholding there a large iron door. A sudden thought flashed through her mind. "If I could find an outlet there. I have the key, which Gertrude of Oakdale gave me a few hours ago. Oh Lord, strengthen my weak powers. I will venture it." Over the burning cinders of the fallen picture she stepped, and placing a chair to the wall she inserted the key in the lock. The iron door swung slowly back, and with as much speed as her weak condition would allow, the Countess mounted up. The flames from the picture gallery enabled her to distinguish a thick rope which was fastened overhead, stretching to the black depths below.

so that Gassler was compelled to turn back, and in chagrin and rage he left the hall. Through the large corridor he took his way towards the grand stairway. Suddenly he heard in a room the pitiful wailing of a child. The door was half-opened. An evil spirit that whispered to him that here he would find an object upon which to sate his vengeance, prompted him to enter. He stood before the cradle of little Otto, who was sobbing pitifully and calling for his mother. With a fiendish laugh the knight snatched the child up in his arms and hastened with him to the open air.

On the middle of the stairway he met Eliza. She was about to pass him, but when she saw the child in his arms, a sweet smile lit up her pale countenance. "Thanks, many thanks, sir knight," she cried. "I had forgotten the poor child while I was hunting all over the castle for the countess. I have not yet discovered her. She must be in one of the apartments. Merciful heaven, what will become of her! Oh, Sir Knight, give me the boy and save her!"

But the coarse man rudely thrust the weak woman aside, and hastened down the stairway with his precious booty in his arms. Eliza mustered all her remaining strength, and wandered through all the rooms which had not been invaded by the grim fire-fiend, calling aloud for her mistress, but no responsive answer greeted her ears. And Eliza also did not return from the burning castle.

In the meantime, Gassler with the child in his arms, took his way through the court-yard, and reached the drawbridge unscathed. But here he met Gertrude of Oakdale. He shuddered when her tall form and strange features loomed up before him like an apparition from spirit-land. The old woman gazed fixedly at him, and asked:

"Whither away with the boy?" "Are you here again, you messenger of ill and misfortune," answered the knight, turning color. "Why do you ask me, old witch?—Nothing can be hidden from your devilish art. Lucinda, who now lies buried under the ruins of Rabenfels, has spurned Knight Gassler's hand. Therefore I will take revenge upon her child; aye, and I will slowly torture it to death, and the last scion of the hated race of the Rabenfels, shall be wiped out from the living."

He attempted to pass the witch, but with almost superhuman strength she tore the child from his arms, and with another quick movement she pushed the knight from the bridge down into the deep ditch.

"Miserable," she cried, in tones which startled every drop of blood in the veins of the knight, "your race of wickedness has at last reached its goal. Look up, sinner, and behold the face of your discarded wife! and may the sight of it be life or death to you."

The witch with her crutch traced a circle in the air; then she rubbed her face with a wet handkerchief, and dropped the cloak from her shoulders. At this moment the roof of the castle tottered and fell, and the leaping flames illuminated the figure of a young and beautiful woman standing on the bridge. In the deep mire of the ditch the wicked knight lay; he beheld the figure and heard the voice, which to his fevered brain and restless conscience sounded like a blast from the trumpet of the archangel. "Sigismund! Sigismund!" Your poor, forsaken wife exhorts you for the last time. Pray to the All-merciful for a happy death. Or, if you should live, repent, do penance, and reform."

Gertrude now again wrapped her cloak about her, took up the little child, that cried piteously, in her arms, and casting one more look towards the ill-fated castle, which was now but a mass of burning ruins, she hastened with all possible speed down the hill, and disappeared in the old Oakwood, over which the storm of the night had passed away to the east.

CHAPTER XII.—PEACE. On the morning after the great conflagration, old Simon, the Castellan, stood at the verge of the great oak forest near Rabenfels, leaning tired and careworn upon his knotty staff; a heavy tear escaped his eye as he looked up to the place, which for forty years had given him food and hospitable shelter. His grief uttered itself in the following words: "Not a familiar face have I been able to discover; the place is deserted, a fearful grave-yard. Is it not, in reality, a grave-yard? Does not the noble Countess Lucinda of Rabenfels lie buried under its ruins; and Eliza also? Not a trace of the unfortunates has been discovered. I have heard nothing of Knight Gassler, who was last seen in the court-yard; nor of the Fish Veit of Costnitz, or the magician. What further object have I in remaining on this scene of devastation and misery? Thou ruined castle on the hill, farewell! Old Simon has lost his place of abode, and after a peaceful sojourn of forty years in your walls must wend his way out into the cold world to beg his bread at the door of strangers. But no, now I think

of it, I have some relations in Switzerland. I will go to them, and if they recognize the old warden of Rabenfels castle, they will receive me cordially. Farewell, again, thou abode of misfortune; and all who lie buried under the ruins slumber peacefully and sweetly till the voice of the Almighty Judge shall wake you from your slumbers." Sad and with slow and weary step he took his way into the heart of the forest.

After he had gone on for about an hour he suddenly stopped. It seemed to him that he heard the sound of a human voice wailing in distress. He looked around and perceived the secret outlet of the subterranean vault, which was built from the grand picture gallery in the castle to this spot. What was his surprise and joy when he approached and beheld Countess Lucinda lying fast asleep, a short distance from the entrance of the secret vault.

Reverentially and pitifully the good man drew back, in order to allow the countess her much needed repose. "For," said he, "it is better to let her forget, for a short hour, her care and sorrow in sleep, than to let her behold the stern reality and her terrible misfortune. Oh, just God, send her a ministering angel in slumber, and strengthen her with fortitude and Christiana resignation." He then gathered some dry leaves and brush, and kindled a bright fire in order to shield his poor mistress from undue exposure to the cold atmosphere. After the lapse of an hour the countess began to show signs of returning consciousness; her heavy eyelids opened and her gaze was fastened on the black abyss which had been her means of salvation. With a deep sigh she turned and beheld the worthy castellan.

"Are you here, good old man," the countess exclaimed, and the events of the past night returned to her mind with fearful distinctness. "And is it all true? or have I been dreaming about the fire at midnight and the villainy of the knight? Ah, my senses are all unstrung, and my mind, I fear, is wandering."

"It is reality, gentle lady," answered the castellan, and cast his eyes sorrowfully up to his lady; "Rabenfels is ruined and in ashes."

And hastily the countess asked again, "And my child; Eliza? Are they safe?"

Sad and dejected the venerable man stood before his lady, he could not find words to give utterance to the terrible news. At last the countess said:

"You have no good news for me, I know. But let me hear the worst. In this moment of supreme woe I am prepared for any calamity. Ah, how many more tribulations I shall yet endure heaven only knows."

And the old man in his simple way related the events of the horrid night: "Last evening, a few hours before the conflagration, the magician and the Fish Veit of Costnitz, were holding an animated conversation in the courtyard. Soon after, Gassler approached, and the magician retired."

"The conversation between the two was continued for some time; afterwards Veit went into the warden's room to drink and carouse. Soon after Smoke appeared again and repaired to the castle with the knight. I had intended to hunt up your ladyship, and report to you the mysterious conference. But I remembered in time the manner in which Gassler slandered all the servants, and I felt that I would only draw upon my head the vengeance of the knight. Silently and fervently I breathed a prayer to the Almighty, begging to protect you and yours, and then I concluded to await the course of events, and God has interposed in your behalf. One of his forked lightnings alighted on the castle and ignited it. In confusion and despair we all ran around, calling to the beloved inhabitants of the castle. I ascended the large stairway as fast as my old feet would carry me. The others followed. We hunted and cried, 'Where is Countess Lucinda and her child? Where is Eliza? But the suffocating smoke and the scorching flames drove us back into the court-yard. Then we saw Lady Eliza who had been on the same fruitless errand. Once more she penetrated into the interior of the burning castle, and was never seen again. Immediately after came the knight, cursing and swearing with his face livid and distorted by angry passions. The poor child, Otto, lay in his arms, crying piteously, and with a demoniacal laugh the wicked man escaped through the door to the outside. At last the few remaining servants left, taking with them the few articles which they had been able to snatch from the devouring element. Early this morning I wandered through the silent ruins like an outcast. Neither the magician nor the fisherman were to be seen. Tired and forlorn, and certain that all the good tenants of the household had been buried under the ruins, I left the place. But you have been saved, noble lady, and may the Almighty further preserve you from all harm."

In silent meditation the countess had listened to the narration. But now she arose from her reclining position; even her sorrow

for the loss of the beloved ones was, for a time, crowded into the back ground by the sudden discovery of the treachery of the man who had been given her as protector in the absence of Count Walter.

"Now all is clear to me," she exclaimed, "I have harbored a monster in my house. The horrible news which was communicated to me before the fire, together with your revelation, have enlightened me upon some things, which, until now, I had no idea of. But the disgraceful occurrence shall be locked in my own breast until I shall be re-united, may it be soon, with my beloved Lord and husband in the peaceful mansions beyond the grave, where a just and merciful God will reward me for my manifold and heavy woes."

A flood of tears relieved her overcharged heart. But the warden looked at her in astonishment, saying:

"How am I to understand your words? Is Count Walter then, dead?"

"You have said it," answered the countess, and exhibited to him the scarf which she had given to her husband before his departure. "Count Walter is dead, and his wife without home, shelter or friends; Eliza is buried under the ashes of the castle; my darling child, the last descendant of an old and noble race in the hands of his deadly enemy, who, in order to inherit his estates, will kill him. In this moment I perceive the whole, devilish plan, as I never saw it before. Merciful heaven, all hope is gone!"

"What are your intentions for the future?" the old man asked after a long and painful silence. And the countess, with a sad but resigned smile answered:

"I will trust to the Lord, who will not desert his creatures, if they throw themselves upon his mercy with faith and resignation. Shall I return and by force of arms try to wrest from the robber his spoil? That would expose me to further persecution. There is but one thing remaining—the peaceful cell of a nunnery. There I will pray for my orphaned child; I will supplicate the Lord to take it from this vale of tears rather than to let it grow up with the wicked knight in sin and crime; I will pray for Walter and Eliza, for myself that I may have strength to the last; and I will pray no less fervently and often for him, who has brought all this misfortune upon my head; I will pray for the soul of my enemy for its delivery from its evil way."

The poor lady was about to give way again to her weakness. The old man led her gently to the fire, and after partaking of some refreshments, she revived again.

"Trusty old Simon," Lucinda resumed after a short interval, "whom God in His mercy sent to me in this hour of sorrow; your unfortunate mistress asks of you a last service. I have often heard that there are in St. Gallen many neat little cells, where helpless and unfortunate women who have bid this world farewell, find a quiet and secluded life. For you, silent recluses yearns my soul; they are my only wish. Under your protection I will endeavor to reach that haven of tranquility. Lead me there, Simon, in remembrance of the many benefits you have received at the hands of Count Walter, and in hope of the great rewards which God promises for every deed of Christian mercy and love."

The old castellan could not restrain a flood of tears, and offering her his trembling hand, he replied:

"The hard misfortune that befell my good master and mistress does not unbind me from the duties I owe them. I am at your will and service, and I thank most fervently that He guided my old feet in this direction."

Then he prepared a small luncheon, and after partaking of the poor meal they started out upon their far and dangerous journey, trusting to the guidance of Him who rules all, and sees that no hair on our head is harmed, without His consent. Before they had advanced many steps, the terrible fate of her beloved child was recalled to the lady's mind; and the fierce battle of her feelings would allow her feet to advance no further. It appeared to her at the moment, that it was her solemn duty as a mother and a Christian to remain and search for the wild Gassler, beg the boy of him, or, pierced to the heart by his bloody dagger, to offer her life in its behalf.

"Is he not human?" she exclaimed in the midst of her pain. "Should his heart, then, be so hardened by innumerable bad deeds that he will not listen to the voice of a despairing mother? I will run after him, the faithless knight; wherever he may hide himself he shall find me at his feet. Crawling in the dust,—home and wealth, I will leave him possessor of, and will ask nothing of him but my child."—But hardly had this heroic resolve gained hold in her heart when she shuddered at the thought of meeting again the bad man; the terrible reality of her last meeting with him filled her soul with horror.

coursed down her haggard cheeks; "no, I cannot, I dare not! The way to him is the serpent's path into the net of temptation. Not wealth, but my honor he will ask, for the restoration of my boy. Lucinda, in the name of God, turn thy heart and thy look towards the abode of peace, in St. Gallen! Guardian angel of my child, protect my darling till we are reunited either in this or the next world."

Then she knelt down and offered a short and fervent prayer, and becoming more calm and refreshed, she arose, took the pilgrim's staff Simon had cut for her from the bushes, and with her trusty companion she walked away.

Many a hard hour and sorrowful day passed before they reached the end of their journey, the peaceful walls of the Convent of St. Gallen. Lucinda was very cordially received, and even on the first day she took the veil, that flowed down to her feet.

The day following Simon took leave of the countess and found her dressed in the black gown of the pious nuns. He approached her, his cap under his arm, and addressed her thus:

"Have you, dear lady, no further commands for the former castellan of Rabenfels?"

Lucinda replied, a tear pressing through her veil:

"Simon, I pray you to make one more errand for the poor nun. I cannot forget my child. Perhaps you might gain some information of it. Whether it is alive, or what its fate has been. When you know it, hurry back, to bring comfort and consolation to a sorrowing mother's heart. If you should not gain any information come and visit me. It soothes a wounded heart to know that another trusty heart is trying to heal it with the balm of friendly pity. Farewell. Go with my blessing, in memory of my silent tears. The merciful heaven may guide you."

After these words she entered the chapel and was lost to his view. But the old castellan knelt down at the church door, while the hymns of the nuns rang solemnly and mournfully through the arched space of the chapel. At last he arose; the divine service was at an end, and following the advice of the lady-nun he left the cells and convent of St. Gallen.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE WITCH AT ROME. In front of her hut of green bushes sat Old Trude, busily at work with her needle, and cast, from time to time a smiling glance upon the mossy bed under the young fir-tree, where little Otto, of Rabenfels slumbered.

"Poor boy," she murmured, and dried a tear from her brown cheek, "how gladly would I have returned thee to thy mother; but the will of God so ordered it. Countess Lucinda has disappeared; none know whereto. And yet—do I remember right? Ha, that wild Knight Gassler—be quiet, quiet, old Trude, and tear not so unmercifully thy own sick heart.—And Eliza has never been seen again. Hundreds of times I have crept through the dismal walls of burnt-down Rabenfels. People took to flight on beholding Trude among the ruins. I have not found a trace of the female inhabitants of the castle; and none are able to give the desired information. The pious souls have found in the terrible conflagration an early grave; and God Almighty, who sent the flash of lightning on its destructive errand, may he prove merciful to them.—But I will educate this offspring of that noble race and raise him to a more happy future.—God, bear my powerful resolve that I make in the face of thy clear blue heaven:—the boy shall receive a good education, mentally as well as bodily; he shall grow up to become a good and handsome knight, that he may follow worthily in the footsteps of his illustrious father, who, perhaps, now sheds his blood in the Orient, for a sublime and holy cause."

With these words she arose, broke off some celadine, that was growing beside her hut, and with its brown juice she painted the face and hands of the slumbering boy.

"God," she sighed, "may forgive me this little deception; but I must eradicate from the memory of the child all remembrance of home, if I intend to educate him in motherly authority. The brown color shall also disguise the fine features, so that no man may detect the young count."

The effect of the narcotic draught that she had given to the child while on the way from the burning castle, was over. He commenced to move his hands and feet, while he tried to open his heavy eye-lids, the little lips commenced:

"Where am I? Mother, dear.—Our Father!—Oh those were wild horrible forms!—Deliver us from evil!—Aunt Eliza, did you not see them?—To the skies blazed the flames! Then a wild knight came, and bore me away in his arms; and when I cried an old witch laughed at me.—At once all became quiet and pleasant—A bed of moss bade me welcome—and here I took a hearty sleep?"

"Otto," said old Trude, and bowed smilingly over the young dreamer; but no sooner