Florence was aware that from this hour, James always believed that his daughter wished some cruelty to be perpetrated against him, and whilst she pondered over this remark, she thought, and perhaps not incorrectly, that where there was so much evil of natural growth, there could not be much required in the way of prompting by others, but be it as it may, Florence had resolved on finding her way to the presence of Mary, hoping to be able in some way or another, though at present she knew not how, to be of use to the exiles at St. Germains. Then to her amazement, names were mentioned of persons whom she had little deemed were averse to the rule of William and Mary, the Bishop of Ely, Clarendon, the queen's uncle and many other persons of consideration and note, were alluded to as being concerned in the meditated conspiracy. And still conversing, they after a short time, gradually arranged the line of action to be pursued with regard to the journey to France, they had some time meditated, for in Louis XIV. all their hopes were founded, and without him there could be no good effected.

And in the cause of royalty, Florence had her part to play, and it was one beset, too, with difficulties; none other in fact, than to be introduced through the means of Lord Preston and her uncle, to the presence of Mary, and once within the precincts of the court, to watch and note all that passed around her, to be the medium for conveying letters, written in ciphers, to and from the disaffected nobles who dwelt around the court receiving from them in return missives, which would hereafter be conveyed to France as soon as their plans were fully mastered. Not till a late hour of the night did the party break up, Florence being escorted to a sleeping apartment prepared for her reception by Mistress Ashton, who as soon as they were alone, exclaimed, bursting into tears:

"My mind, dear madam, is tormented with fear and anxiety; one constant thought torments me, it is that this rising will be discovered, and my husband fall a victim to the fury of the queen."

With many gentle words Florence strove to allay her apprehensions, but her efforts were for some time in vain, and she felt no small relief when, after Mistress Ashton had insisted on her own maid discharging for her the duties of the toilette, weary and fatigued she laid her head on receiving an assurance from her still weeping friend, that she would not fail to have her aroused in time to insure her return to Kensington, before Sir Charles by missing her from the breakfast should be aware that she had been from home.

We must now look back into the courts of the last two months, taking up the thread of our narrative, from the moment at which Sir. Charles resolved on visiting London in company with his niece.

A wearisome time indeed succeeded that which would elapse ere Florence could hope to return to France, and the days of her sojourn in London promised little else than restraint of spirit, unless her busy and ever active mind could be in any way engaged by taking part in the conspiracy which was being so diligently hatched against the present possessor of the English crown.

Again, too, every effort was made by Florence to prevent a hindrance to any future meetings with St. John, unless she was previously made aware that he had become a convert even to the political opinions of her somewhat imperious self.

Then, too, came a new torment in the person of the once timorous old baronet, who now appeared to the excitable Florence, full of an unholy exultation at the thought of his approaching presentation to William; indeed, had he at once pledged himself to the prince of darkness himself, we question if this enthusiastic adherent of the Stuart race would have been more shocked.

In the village of Kensington, then in the palace of which place William and Mary at that time held their court, the baronet had deputed Sir Reginald to hire for his use, a somewhat handsome residence; and flattered in his old age by the idea of notice even from usurped royalty, though he had never cared to receive or court its favor in the days of his youth and strength, Sir Charles really appeared as if he was meditating undoing the work of his whole life, during which he had lived entirely aloof from any interference with politics.

But the case was altered now, and fluttered about the old baronet a coterie of persons favored at the Court of the Dutch monarch, anxious to make a proselyte, and entangle in their meshes the hitherto inflexible old Papist. Amongst their hangers on at the court, was a favorite page of the king, named Walter Harding. As to personal appearance few men of his time could compete with him; his soubriquet was "the handsome page" and none stood higher in the favor of William than did this youth, who was also well known to and an intimate acquaintance of Reginald St. John; of him we shall have cause to speak later.

It was with feelings of mingled alarm and indignation that Florence beheld the foolish old baronet fall unresistingly and readily into the hands of the court parasites, who all had a keen eye to the influence he possessed as well as to the broad acres in the respective counties of Cumberland and Gloucestershire of which he was the master, and she witnessed the time approaching for his presentation at Kensington with absolute horror; meanwhile, her mind was harrassed at the thought of the distress which her friends at the Court of St. Germains would experience at the lapse of time which must pass before that originally intended for her return. And she well knew the agony of apprehension that Mary of Modena would endure did she not return at the appointed time. However there was nothing to be done but wait with patience, and with this resolve she endeavored to watch calmly the present demeanor of her fickle old uncle and his future behavior, and also to strive by his means to procure admission to the English Court.

TO BE CONTINUED.

FATHER TOM BURKE.

Shakespeare says, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." But we must remember that the poet did not here include the names of those who were dead and gone. If the subject of our sketch had been called by any other name, that name would have called up the same memories and associations as the well-remembered name he really bore. We all have felt the influence of a much cherished name, and we venture to think that the readers of the *Rosary* will gladly welcome anything however trifling which may help to keep the name of Father Tom Burke fresh in their minds.

It is but a few years since his death, but those of the younger generation to whom his name is a memory and nothing more, in whose hearts it does not call up the echo of his clear, ringing voice, and the sight of his tall figure often bent in pain, require something more than the oft-told tales full of quaint humour which are handed down by those who knew him — tales which always bear repeating, rare proof of the man's versatile genius and ready wit. It is these very anecdotes, which blend so marvellously the grave and gay, which are now bordering on the sublime, now ridiculous in the extreme; anecdotes which have kept his audience in convulsions of laughter for hours together, and which nevertheless proceeded from one who had, perhaps but an hour previously, swayed the minds and hearts of the crowds who hung upon his wonderful and fervid oratory in the pulpit; it is this inexhaustible fund of wit and humor, mingled with profound learning and wisdom, that make us yearn to know more of the nature of the man. We instinctively wish to penetrate beneath that which we can but feel to be a veil hiding the real man.

The biography of such a man must needs be a difficult task; it is hard to depict with perfect fairness the varying phases in the life of one so many-sided as Father Burke. There have been few men who have played such seemingly divergent parts in this world; few but the beatified saints of God who have so wonderfully combined the active life of the public ministry with the quieter and more spiritualised life of the cloistered religious, and few who have at the same time so perfectly fulfilled the requirements and duties of both. It is easy to see that the biographer of such a man has no enviable task before him. He has to please two opposite parties—those who knew him as a Religious, as a master of Novices, and as a superior, and who were consequently more acquainted with his inner life; and those — the majority — who knew Father Tom Burke as the great preacher and orator, as the popular priest, as the man of unflagging energy and ceaseless wit; whose *bons mots* and jokes scintillated from him like sparks from the glowing iron in the hands of the smith.

We are far from asserting that the life of Father Burke, which appeared within two years of his death, is a failure, but still the fact remains that the interior life of this great man has yet to be written. We do not, of course, propose to ourselves any task half so ambitious as that implied in this remark, but we propose instead to set forth in the pages of the *Rosary* a few short articles dealing with that side of Father Burke's career which is least known. The afore mentioned biography is not accessible to all, and inasmuch as it is not written from a purely spiritual standpoint it is hard for the ordinary reader to discover between the lines that wonderful and deep seated humility, and that true priestly character which show themselves at the most unexpected times; which peep out amidst innocent fun and mirth, and serve to make that fun and mirth only the more remarkable. His early life is known to most of our readers and is soon told. He was born in Galway on the 8th September—the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity—in the year 1830, of poor parents. He was Irish born, and Irish to the backbone. In him love of his country was only surpassed by love of his Faith.

His father was a baker, with, like all Irishmen, a passion for music. It was from him that Nicholas—for that was Father Burke's Christian name (the name Thomas he afterwards took on entering religion)—derived his love of music and his natural fund of wit and humour. Hour after hour his father, who seems to have been of an easy-going disposition, would spend in telling him quaint anecdotes, in singing to him the songs and legends of old Ireland, till at length his mother would break in with: "You'll be the ruin of that boy teaching him such nonsense, and insist on his being sent to school. If, however, his father was disinclined to eradicate his son's faults his mother can be accused of no such leniency. Few mothers are such strict disciplinarians as she was. She fulfilled the counsels of Solomon to the letter, and Father Burke himself could relate how often, when he was sound asleep his mother would wake him up and administer condign chastisement, owing to the complaints of the neighbours about his wild tricks, for we must acknowledge that the propensity to mischief early showed itself in Father Burke.

Yet it was to this same mother, who combined the rare piety of Ireland's daughters with the spartan heroism of the disciples of Lycurgus, that Nicholas owed his early piety; from her he imbibed that tender love of the Virgin Mother and that devotion to the Rosary which so distinguished him in after days. He ever esteemed his mother a saint, and, years after, when his fame was well-nigh world-wide, he would go to visit her and humbly kneel for her blessing. She, on her side, never realized her son's greatness, and well-nigh to the end persisted in believing that the Father Tom Burke, of whom she read so much in the papers, was a Franciscan of that name!

Such was the boyhood of Nicholas, full of fun and mischief: often in dire straits because of some unusually daring freak for which castigation was impending, and yet full of genuine and earnest piety, the foremost of his school-fellows in games as in all their studies. The time was soon coming, however, when the call of God would sound in his ears, and he must leave all to follow that call. That this must have have been a wrench to his affectionate heart, we gather from his words in America when speaking of O'Toole: "I have seen in other lands young men asking to be admitted to the priesthood, and the father and mother saying, 'How can we give him up? When I witnessed that, I thought of the old woman in Galway, who had no one but me, her only son: I thought of the old man, bending down towards the grave; and I thought of the poverty that might stare them in the face when I, their only boy, was gone; and yet no tear was shed, no word of sorrow was uttered; but with joy and pride the Irish father and Irish mother knew how to give up their son to the God that made him."

The Dominicans have always been a numerous and influential body in Ireland; and there were nearly a thousand priests in the country when Henry VIII. began his persecution. Of this number only four survived when Elizabeth came to the throne thirty years later! They had furnished a glorious band of martyrs. "They feared not the executioner's sword, they died for Christ that they might become heirs in the house of the Lord." Such were the men in whose footsteps Nicholas burned to follow; and in the year 1847 we find him applying to be admitted to the order. He was sent to Rome to go through his novitiate, which was passed at Perugia, and afterwards went to St. Sabina at Rome, and from there he was sent by the Father-General, while still a novice and a sub-deacon, to Woodchester, in order to assist in the resuscitation of the struggling English Province.

At the time of the Reformation, the English Province of Dominicans possessed fifty-four Priories in England and Wales, but persecution drove them out, and the Province became utterly disorganized. For a time indeed it was extinguished, but revived at length, and the names of Fathers Blagrave, Molineux, Norton, Woods and Proctor, who kept up the tradition down to our own time, often in peril of their lives — *the first-named indeed, shed his blood for the good cause*—are held in undying remembrance by the members of the English Province. Through the munificence of Mr. Leigh, of Woodchester Park, Gloucester, Father Procter and the few Fathers with him, had been enabled to found a house of regular observance, and it was to assist in this good work that Nicholas, then Father Thomas Burke, was despatched by the Father-General, in 1851, as pro-novice-master —a position involving grave responsibilities, more especially under the existing circumstances. So high a trust speaks volumes for the confidence placed in Father Burke as a religious. This lasted for four years. In 1855 he was summoned back to Ireland. From this time his public career as a great preacher and orator must date. His first great sermon was at Sandymount in Ireland in the year 1859, and from that time his success was assured.

Another change, however, awaited him in 1864. The General, Pere Jandel, appointed him Regent of Studies in the Convent of San Clemente, in Rome, the house of studies of the Irish Province. Of this house he was soon after elected Prior. He returned to Ireland in 1867, but in 1870 we find him again at Rome, this time as theologian to the Bishop of Dromore during the Vatican Council. He returned to Ireland to enter on that career of hard world and toil which ceased only with his death.

Meanwhile his truly Irish love of fun and keen sense of humor were not idle, and he would keep his brethren in religion in convulsions of laughter during recreation by his comic stories and wonderful power of mimicry. Father Burke indeed felt that

A little nonsense now and then
Is useful to the wisest men;

and those who knew him have assured us that they can never recall anything which tended to his discredit. He held with Max Adeler that "laughter is an enemy to malice, a foe to scandal, and a friend to every virtue. It promotes good temper, enlivens the heart, and brightens the intellect." It was no trouble either for him to become serious in a moment, as his mirth was only too often assumed, either to enliven others who seemed to need it, or, strange to say, to shake off from himself those fits of depression to which for one of his lively temperament he was so unusually subject. It was this love of fun that gave Father Burke his wonderful influence with children; he became, when among them the veriest child of them all; and a remark not unfrequently made about him was, that few men had scattered so much harmless enjoyment among their fellow-mortals as he had done.

As we have, however, hinted above, his mirth was often assumed for a purpose. He feared the Bishopric which had been offered him more than once. It is said that the Bishop of Dromore once told him that were it not for this one blemish of his excessive love of a joke, there was no honor to which he would not be entitled; to which Father Tom replied that if His Lordship had been himself a bit more fond of a joke he would have probably been able to avoid the burden of the episcopate under which he groaned. He seems indeed to have succeeded in his purpose, for on one occasion when his name was proposed for a Bishopric which was likely to fall vacant, his comic tendencies were put forward as an obstacle to his elevation, as not tending to support episcopal instincts. His sense of humor too it was that enabled him to support his intense physical sufferings in his later years, and which carried him through an amount of work which none but men of his unflagging energy could have borne.

Many have looked askance upon Father Burke because of his jokes; many have been inclined to think him but a poor religious and a disedifying priest, but none can say with fairness in the face of two such examples as Father Burke and Pere Monsabre, both Dominicans, that a sense of the ludicrous is incompatible with very high attributes. Nor, again, is it incompatible with great holiness of life, as Father Burke's well known saying shows: "There is no law that good people should be stupid, they may be Sankeymonious without being Moody."

It only remains to speak of Father Burke in that phase of his career which is the best known—we mean as a great preacher and orator. Possessed of vast stores of learning and an exceedingly retentive memory, Burke had every qualification necessary for a great speaker. In addition to the above he was gifted with a rich musical voice, a rare command of languages, and a knowledge of the dramatic art which made more than one of his less spiritual hearers, exclaim, "What a loss for the stage!" The following account of the effects of his preaching has been often quoted, but will bear repetition. The writer, giving an account of the profession of some nuns, which he witnessed, thus describes the effect of the sermon: "The preacher spoke. The subject of his discource was the religious life. The chapel was small, and his voice never rose above a whisper. All were fascinated. He spoke of the beauty and purity and perfection of the religious life; he showed how it tended to raise man, even in the life below, almost to a level with the angels; he expounded with marvellous lucidity the meaning of the vows religous take, and explained their bearings on the holy state; and with a fervid peroration that carried his hearers away from earthly things left them in earnest contemplation of a glorious future. It was no mere effort of polished rhetoric we heard on that occasion; no skilful weaving of brilliant phrases into rounded sentences such as may gratify the ear without reaching the heart. It was the full flow of an apostolic soul that came down on the congregation then assembled, and swept everything away on its irresistible tide. There were worldly men present, but the worldiest among them went along in silence, pondering upon the nothingness of his own pursuits."

He attained perfect mastery over the human heart, and played on the passions as on a musical instrument. He possessed, too, as Cardinal Manning said, "the grandest talent that man can possess," that of popularising theology. Those only who have heard him can appreciate the truth of this remark, which gains additional weight from the fact that Father Burke's sermon, on the occasion of its utterance, was very long and abstruse; but, instead of being fatigued, the Cardinal declared that he would willingly have listened to him for two hours longer, and then added the above remark.

In the commencement of his career he addressed his sermon chiefly to the intellect; but in after life, when more spiritualized—when he had passed through the crucible of suffering—his power of moving the hearts of his audience was unequalled. "I only meant to give one pound," said one of Fr. Burke's hearers to the priest in whose church he had preached, "but that sermon has pulled five out of me." We might well apply to him Goldsmith's words,

"Truth prevailed from his lips with redoubled sway
And fools who came to laugh remained to pray."

But Goldsmith's village preacher would never have won universal fame. The popular preacher, in the strict sense of the word, cannot please the more cultured classes, least of all a class which is opposed to his race and mode of oratory. Father Burke, however, was popular everywhere; he was hailed with acclamation in Ireland and America, in Rome as well as in London. As the late Provincial of the Jesuits, Father Purbrick, says: "I fear not to say that we have record of no illustrious preacher who preached so constantly, for so many years, to the same audiences and to such varied audiences, and possessed all through to the end such an attractive fascination and power."

We have, we fear, made a somewhat lengthy digression from the life of Father Burke; but little remains to be told. After years of hard work, as Novice Master in Ireland, Father Burke was sent by the Father General as visitor to the American Province of the Order. During his sojourn here for close upon eighteen months, besides his other duties, he gave four-hundred lectures, not including sermons, and the proceeds of the lectures, which went to relieve many churches and convents from debt, and to endow many charities and hospitals, amounted to nearly £80,000. His work in America, however, proved too much for him, and undermined his strength. He returned to Ireland in 1873, and from that time forward he became more and more of an invalid. Yet, invalid though he was and in almost continual pain, he never accorded himself any alleviation; he cheerfully toiled on to the end in an unceasing round of sermons and retreats, ever ready to lend the aid of his golden tongue to the needy and afflicted. Almost the last series of sermons he preached was at the opening of the Dominican Church at Haverstock Hill in London, in the year 1883, and his very last, at Liverpool, was a charity sermon. He gradually sank—every sermon was more painful and cost more superhuman efforts than its immediate predecessor. He took to his bed in June, 1883, and never rose from it but once. For many days he lingered, but the end came at length, when, to use his own word, "Faith was lost in vision and Hope was absorbed in fruition." He went to hear those words which we all hope to hear: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . . enter then into the joy of thy Lord."—The Rosary.

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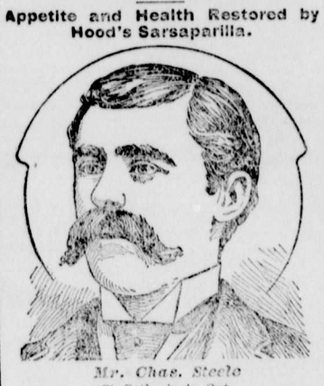

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