CHRONICLE

OR THE

PONTIFICAL ZOUAVES.

A TALE OF CASTELFIDARDO.

Translated from the Flemish of the Rev. S Daems Qunca Regular of the Order of Premonstratensians. (Abbey of Tongerlor, Belgium.)

CHAPTER XI .- CONTINUED.

At the very moment when his mother was praying for him, Victor was with his companions in the Holy Church of Loretto, where that sa cred dwelling is preserved in which the Eternal Word was Incarnate.

A solemn scene there met bis eye.

It was in the early morning of September 18. the day on which the battle of Castelfidardo was fought.

There was a scene, wrote a French priest who witnessed it, ' worthy of the noblest days of the Crusaders.

At four o'clock, De Lamoriciere, De Pimodan, the whole staff, the guides, the Franco Bel gian and Dutch Regiments, the foreigners, the artillers men, the Italians, received the Sacred Body of the Lord in the Holy Sacrament of the Aliar. I saw the greater number of them pros trate, with their forehead on the floor of that hefore.

. The recollection of the two generals was so calm, so solemn, that I could not overcome my emotion. Moreover, I saw all around me bathed in tears.

Who indeed could restrain his tears at the sight of such courage combined with such piety? Who could help weeping at the sight of these heroes, who, at the feet of their Heavenly Mo ther, were renewing, for the last time, calmly and steadfastly, the sacrifice of their lives before rushing to meet the death which was awaiting them without?

Joseph and Martin were distinguished among all their companions for the air of deep recollection which marked their outward bearing, but Victor was utterly absorbed in his prayer that he looked like a marble statue.

He was praying for his father.

And when at last he crossed the threshold of the Church to hasten to the battle, he turned bis head thither for the last time with the imploring

'My father !'

CHAPTER XIL -- THE GULF OF PERDITION.

Whilst the heroes of De Lamoriciere's little army were streaming into Loretto, the enemy was surrounding them on all sides in overwhelming numbers.

Orsimo, Camerano, Castelfidardo, and all the villages which lay between them, swarmed with Piedmontese, who, like howling wolves, were ready to fall upon the little fold of guiltless

On the same evening when Victor and his companions were purifying their consciences for lons. I became a drunkard and a gambler. the last time in the Holy Sacrament of Penance two Piedmontese soldiers were strolling over the bills above Castelfidardo.

One of them, who seemed between twenty before the invasion, and after a long interview with the commander, he had been incorporated into a company of foot.

'No one knew this new comrade; the mysgeneral curiosity. Who could he be? What was the purpose of his mission?

Some, who wished to appear better informed than the common run of soldiers, affirmed that father of my condition, and indeed how could be baldi, and entrusted with his secret plans.-However this might be, nobody was sure of being right in his suspicions, and the stranger was

To one alone he seemed, from his first arrival, lost. I became desperate, and tried to drown whom he was now walking, and who bore the me. name of Orazio.

The two companions had come to a level spot on the hill, and had thrown themselves down on ter with you, that you look so sorrowful. the grass.

'What a beautiful evening,' said the stranger, out reason.' the eve perhaps of my revenge?

do you not say our revenge? Are we not all matter. about to wreak it on the base enemy of Italy? I have debis.

THE DOUBLE SACRIFICE, or do you lock, moreover, for a personal rev:nge. Gennaro?

> Gennaro, for we recognize our old acquaintance the 'carbonaro.' Gennaro paused for a few moments before he answered. At last he

> 'A personal revenge inded, Occaio. Listen; I will tell you my miserable history, for I have no need to blush in your presence. I know you, Orazio. At the command of the secret society, did you not plunge your dagger in the heart of your own brother?

Orazio shuddered at the piercing glance which Gomaro turned on bim.

Disturb not yourself,' said the latter; 'you have nothing to fear from me. I only wish to show you how well you are known to me.-Orazio, you let your dagger fall the first time, and it was only fear of the 'carbonari's' ven geance which replaced it in your hands. Do I say true, Orazio?

'It is true,' multered be, prostrated by the secret power which his companion exercised over him. 'It is true; but how could you know it? It was in the darkness of night.'

' Enough; you see I do know it. But this has nothing to do with my own history. It will do me good to ease my heart at the approach of my long repressed vengeance.

My family is originally from Naples. I was the second of two children, born to the advocate Bernardo Bianchi by his marciage with Benedetta Carucci.

' Careless and joyous, the years of childhood Church which so many pious brows had touched fl.w by. We had friends; we were prosperous. For my father, who was esteemed the eyes. first barrister in the city, had many a lucrative cause to plead.

But our quiet bapiness did not last long; it excited envy and enmity, and my father was assailed by slander. The number of his friends gradually diminished, his clients sought other advocates.

'What was to be done? To take legal proceedings against the slanderers? Impossible, the accusations were too vague, the source of the slander too carefully hidden to be reached by any such means. My father wrung his hands man whom we have been seeking. in despair; my mother pined away.

taken from us for ever.

to me! She loved me so tenderly, too tenderly | watching you for a long time past. There, read,' at a secret meeting, where I was to attain a

'All these unexpected shocks had rendered his residence in Naples hateful to my father, and soon after my mother's death he made known to us his intention of removing to Rome.

'He ascribed the slander which destroyed his happiness to the devices of the secret societies, which he had always openly and strongly op posed, and he hoped to have less to fear from their persecution in the conital of Christendom. The wound inflicted by the death of his beloved wife was still bleeding, and induced him to bid farewell to his profession, and cass the remainder

of his days in the tranquility of domestic life. 'So long as my mother's watchful eye had guarded me I had remained true to the precepts of my parents; but now being left more to myself, I soon fell into the society of bad compan-

'Among my new acquaintances there was one named Silvio, who exercised an extraordinary influence over me. He was small in stature, dark and meagre in appearance, his lips were and thirty years of age, was a foreigner, who thin and generally pressed tight together; his arm. had arrived a short time before in the Sardinian nose was crocked, his eyes seemed to pierce camp. He had appeared there a little while right through your soul. He was the devil who led me to perdition.

Bravo, Gennaro,' cried he, when I won at leave this place.' play. 'Drink again, and go on.'

Courage, be whispered in my ear when I lost. tery which seemed to surround him soon excited Drown your loss in wine, and go on. He wins

who perseveres ' 'Alas! I went on, and I lost. I incurred debts-heavy debts. I dared not speak to my

he was a 'carbonaro' of distiction, sent by Gari have belped me. Our fortune had become very narrow; we lived with difficulty on the savings of better days. 1 saw the abyes open before my feet, and yet very reserved and unsociable with his compan I rushed desperately forward. Silvio, my evil of Italy, of the land of freedom, of your only Tyrants.' genius, urged me on. 1 still played. I still true mother.'

to give greater confidence, and he was often my misery in wine, for the moment drew near seen in his company. This was the soldier with when I expected my creditors to come upon disgrace and subscription. 'I was sitting despondingly in a coffee house

Doubtless, he was well acquainted with his in the ' Piazza Navona,' when Silvio came in. mysterious friend, but he was as silent as the As soon as he saw me he came straight up to the son of Bernardo, who had sworn eternal

- Ab, Gennaro ! said he. What is the mat-
- 'Sorrowful, indeed,' I replied, 'and not with-
- 'Come, come,' said he, looking straight into

'Nothing else.'

' Heavy debts.' 'And nothing else."

'And no money.' ' Make it.'

'That's easily said,' I replied, bitterly ; ' but

'Nothing easier,' replied he coolly. 'Geonaro,' he said, after a moment's pause, ' do you want money? Then come with me.'

Whither? What matters that, if you want money, not only now but for the future."

'I followed him mechanically. Must not I head. pay my debis? Must not I avoid disgrace at whatever price.

After we had walked on for a long time, Silvio stopped before a moderate sized house in the 'Via Ripetta,' and k oaked at the door.

A servant soon opened it.

'Oh ! it is you,' said he, when he saw Silvio. ' Is he within,' asked Silvio.

'On a reply in the affirmative, we passed through many passages, and at last knocked at the door of a room.

· Who's there,' was asked within.

'Friends unto death,' was the answer of my comrade; and, as if the words possessed some mysterious power, the door flew open immediately.

'In the middle of the room which we now entered, an old man sat at a long table covered with papers. A grey moustache shaded his upper lip, his head was half bald, he had a mild expression of countenance, but quick glancing

'Ah,' said he, at the first look which he gave me; 'Gennaro Bianchi, welcome. You are come at last ?

'I stood in amazement, for I d'd not understand his words, nor could I guess how he came to know me. 'I'll leave you alone,' said Silvio, going. 'The matter will be settled in a few moments.

'The old man nodded his head in assent. 'Gennaro Bianchi,' he began, when we were lest alore, 'my good friend, you are the very

'I beg you signor, to explain yourself,' said I 'Alas! after a few months' suffering, she was I' I do not understand how you come to know

'My poor mother! What a loss were you Know you,' said he laughing; 'I have been list of names, my own among them.

'I read. Orazio, it was a description of my person, my talents, my faults, even, so full and so just that I was perfectly actouished.

Do I know you,' continued the old man .-Gennaro, you want money, do you not.' And ed in the half light, but when I turned round to be looked sharply into my eyes.

'Indeed I do,' said I in a scarcely audible

Don't be afraid,' said he, 'you shall have it on one single condition. Gennaro, you have but room was already full, and the devilish cereto inscribe your name among the members of the moni s began. secret society which is laboring for the deliverance of Italy.

· I started back in horror; the image of my lost mother seemed to rise before me. I saw her imploring and adjuring me to resist. 'Never ! never !' cried I. 'If these are the

terms on which you are to give me belp, let me depart at once. I had already reached the door when the old

man sprang forward and held me with a powerful Depart !' said he. ' No, Gennaro, you must

and shall be one of us." 'Let me go,' I cried, 'let me go. I will

'His whole countenance changed; he seemed to have turned into a devil." Be still,' said be, 'or else,' and he put the

muzzle of a loaded pistol to my breast, I will send a bullet through your heart.? · Half unconscious, and as if stunned, I sank

into a chair.

'Gezuaro,' he continued, in a calm and even instituating tone, 'why so childish. I seek no thing but your good. Poor youth! you do not know the 'carbonari.' They are the deliverers

I made no answer. 'Gennaro,' be repeated, 'choose between

I still resisted. He implored, he argued, he threatened. To be brief, Orazio, I yielded, and when I left that house I was a 'carbonaro;' I, enmity to the society.

· From that moment an utter change passed over me. I had a younger sister the very image of my deceased mother. So long as I trod in my sister was my darling; her joys were my of perdition. What is it? Tell me what is the joys, her sorrows my sorrows; one grateful smile from her was sufficient to reward me for scious from wine, I returned in the early morn-

one so well as her brother Gennaro.

She was then very young, but exceedingly sharp witted, and courageous, and self-possessed as a man. She soon remarked my alteration .-I did my best to appear ontwardly the same Gennaro as before, but I did not succeed; I was cold and reserved even with her. How could it have been otherwise. I felt hell raging within me : remorse gnawed at my beart. I would fain have retraced my steps. But, no-forwards, does this mean?" still forwards; to retrace my steps was to die, for the avenging dagger was hanging over my

'Forward, therefore, forward! I smothered my remorse. I hardened my heart, but the struggle was long and painful. Ocazio, it is long before hell obtains peaceful possession of the beart of man.

'Munziala at last ventured to ask me the reason of the change which she observed in me I answered her coldly and barshly, that I would suffer no child to interfere with my conduct .-Poor Nunziata! she wept and was silent; and her tears fell like a scorching fire upon my

Perhaps she spoke to my father of her fears, for he questioned me soon afterwards with greater sternness than he had ever shown to me before. I became forious, and answered him that I was my own master, and would no longer suffer any one to dictate to me.

"Orazio, this was a step farther in the way of perdition. I had trampled on my sister's love. I had shaken off my father's authority. What what there now to restrain me. Hitherto iny family had only looked upon me as a libertine. without suspecting my connection with the secret society. I took every po-sible means to preserve my secret. My companions had conjured me to observe the utmost prudence and the most careful precautions; but Bernardo was one day to know that his son was a 'carbonaro.' I had not long entered upon my path of percition when I became less watchful; I acted more freely .--I was accustomed to go to the meetings of the 'carbonari' late in the evening, when all our tousehold were deep in slumber.

'I thought thus to be more secure from observation, yet I believe that I had not escaped Nunziata's watchful eye.

'One night I had left our house to be present higher degree in our society at the cost of a fresh oath, when, as I reached the place of my destination at the entrance of a side street, I into the room. perceived a dark shadow wrapped in a long cloak, which seemed to follow me at a little distance. I soon suspected that I had been track discover who was following my steps the whole street was lonely, and not a trace of the black house. shadow was to be seen.

'I entered by means of the password. The

Orazio, I shall never forget that night.

'I stood in the midst between my two witnesses, Silvio and another 'carbonaro.'

"Do you promise,' said the old man, whom I had met in the house in the Ripetta, do you promise to labor to the ulmost of your power to uproof Christ and His Church and the very name of God from the lace of the earth?

"I promise," was my answer.

"Do you promise to overthrow all that bear the name of kaiser, king, and so forth? 4 I promise.

"Do you promise to break every bond which binds you to kindred, family, people, and fatherland?

"Finally, do you promise to use all your power to make every man his own god, the master of all creation, a blood thirsty wild beast, like the serpent and the lion of the desert?' 'I promise.'

" Swear, then; and drawing aside a curtain which covered a kind of altar, he showed me a dagger between two burning torches. On one side was engraven ' Brotherhood;' on the other

'The old man, after be had placed the dagger in my hand, laid it again upon the altar.

'Lay the palm of your hand on the point of this dagger, and say, I swear faithfully to fulfil outh, may the point of that dagger enter my the name of Bianchi may remain untainted, at heart. From this moment I give power to each least before the eye of the world. Do you agree member of the society who shall judge me unfuithful, to pier e my heart, as I will pierce his whom I shall find to be faithless to the society."

'I swore, and the old man kissed me on the the paths wherein my parents had trained me, dite,' c. viii., 'Il Giuramento.') It was the gulf day behold you penitent. Then, Gennaro, but

'In a fervor of excitement, and almost unconany trouble. I would have gone through fire ing to my home. I went softly to my room, his narrative. The remembrance of those ter-

The second secon and water for Nunziata, and Nunziata loved no hoping to conceal my absence from the family. When I opened my door, I felt as if a lightning flash had blasted me.

· There, by the empty bed, sat my father, immoveable, pale as death, with his eyes fixed upon the door. I drew back in terror.

"Do not draw back, Gennaro, said he, to a bollow voice. Do you not know your father ? "What do these words mean, father?" stammered I. Do I not know my father? What

"Genoaro,' said he, without directly answering my question; from whence do you come, Gennaro?

' From a walk, father,' answered I, assuming a tone of indifference. 'I did not feel vary well in the night, and I went out to breathe the fresh

"You have been nowhere?"

" Nowhere," was my answer. "It is talse," answered he, in a voice of thunder. 'Gennaro, you come from a meeting of the carbonari. Gennaro, you are a member of

the secret society. Shame, shame ! a Bianche a carbonaro. " You lie, father,' cried I furiously, the blood

boiling in my veins with shame and anger. "Ah, ah! I he ?' replied be, with bitter derision, 'I lie? My son is no carbonaro; he bas not stained the name of Brancht with that indellible disgrace; he has not leagued with the enemies of the Church, with the enemies of his country, with the exemies of our family. I lie. but Gennaro,' continued he, producing a roll of papers, 'these papers do not lie. Ab! there is

no Branchi a carbonaro." 'I glanced for a moment at the roll. It contained various papers and secret plans entrusted to me by the society, which, when I went out, f had thoughtlessly left lying on the table.

I sprang forward like a chafed lion. "Give me the papers," I cried in a hoarse

. He looked at me in mockery. "I tried to take them from him by force! 'The devil's hour was at hand. I fell upon

my old lather's body. He tried hard to keep possession of the papers.

"Let them go,' I thundered furiously. 'And I had dealt him so dreadful a blow on breast with my fist, that he fell backwards on the ground, while a stream of blood flowed from

his mouth. same moment Nunziata, who has 'At the been aroused by the noise of the struggle, rushed

"Gennaro, Gennaro,' she screamed with a

beart-rending cry. 'Father, father.' 'And she fell insensible on the old man's body. 'I had become a devil. I wrenched the papers out of his hand and rushed out of the

'I wandered like a lost spirit about Rome the whole of that day, and when evening came I stood once more at the door of our house. It seemed as if an avenging spirit drove me thither to see whether my crime had been fully accompliehed.

. When the door opened my brother Stefanc stood before me. Stefano-whom I had always feared; be was brave as a lion, prudent as a serpent, firm as a rock. "Gennaro," said he in a suppressed voice. my father died this day, and this was his last

'Ab, it was even so.

message-Genuaro, will you say farewell to the secret society ?

'I flatly refused. He pressed me to no purpose; what could make any impression upon a parricide?

"Well, then, replied my brother, since you feel no sorrow for your horrible crime, leave your country, break all the bonds which unite you to the family which you have disgraced for ever, or I will deliver you to the hands of justice; and mark what I say, Gennaro, it is beheved by all that Bernardo Bianchi died in a fit of apoplexy. If you were to depart immediately, it might arouse suspicion. I require you, therefore to remain a few days with us; the bonor of the family requires it. Ab,2 he con-Death to Traitors; on the third Death to linued with a bitter laugh, I know well that we are fostering a serpent, but woe to you if you harm us. I have taken precautions, Gepparo : my blood, or the blood of my sister, will immediately be avenged on your own head. Meanwhile, if after a few days you leave your country, my promise. When I become faithless to my our lips shall remain as silent as the grave, that to this, Gennaro?"

"'I do,' answered 1, too glad to leave this

accursed place. "Be it so,' answered Stefano. 'Your heart forehead. (See 'Lionello,' c. vii., 'Le Ven- is hard as stone, yet God grant that I may some never till then, will I give you the hand of a brother.

The carbonaro paused for some moments in