

City Directory.

TRICK'S SOCIETY.—Estab- lished March 6th, 1866, incorpor- ated 1868, revised 1846. Meets in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander street, first Monday of the month. Committee meets last Wednesday. Officers: Rev. Director, Callaghan, P.P.; President, Justice C. J. Doherty; Sec., F. E. Devlin, M.D.; 2nd Sec., J. Curran, B.C.L.; Treas- urer, J. Green; correspond- ent, J. Kahala; Re- cording Secretary, T. P. Tansey.

TRICK'S T. A. AND B. SO- CIETY.—Meets on the second Sun- day of every month in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander street, at 8 p.m. Director, Rev. Jas. Kil- leen; Sec., W. P. Doyle; Rec- ording Secretary, P. Gunning, 716 St. street, St. Henri.

S. T. A. & B. SOCIETY, established 1863.—Rev. Director, McPhail; President, D. M.P.; Sec., J. F. Quinn, Dominique street; M. J. Treasurer, 18 St. Augustin. Meets on the second Sun- day of every month, in St. Ann's church, Young and Ottawa street, 3.30 p.m.

YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY, organized 1885.—Meets in its hall, 7 Ottawa street, on the first Sunday of each month, at 8 p.m. Spiritual Adviser, Rev. J. Lynn, C.S.S.R.; President, J. Darcy; Treasurer, Thomas; Rec.-Sec., Robt. J. Hart.

CANADA, BRANCH organized 13th November, 1892. Meets at St. Hall, 92 St. Alexander street, every Monday of the month. The regular meetings for the transaction of business are on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, at 8 p.m. Spiritual Adviser, Rev. M. Callaghan; Chan- cellor, J. Darcy; President, W. Recording Secretary, P. C. Secretary, Jas. J. Cos- grove, 5 St. Urban street; Treas- urer, H. Kelly; Medical Adviser, J. Harrison, E. J. O'Con- nor, H. Merrill.

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# THROUGH THORNY PATHS.

By MARY ROWENA COTTER.

## CHAPTER X.—Continued.

Six months had elapsed, since the girls had graduated with high honors from the convent. Agnes, as might be expected, had gone forth into the world as joyfully as she had retired from it to enter school, for she was tired of the rules and the laborious duties imposed upon her. Some who are religiously inclined might look upon her as being utterly worldly, but such was not true; deep in her heart she was a truly Christian girl who was destined to make a good woman of the world. Her only failing was a too ardent desire for the joys and pleasures of life, and in the naturally innocent heart of the convent bred girl there was no thought of the dangers which might await her outside.

With Cecelia it had been different. She was happy in the prospect of soon being at home with her parents and grandmother, but she had never realized until toward the end of her convent life was to her. Her dear mother had given her a superior insight of the ways of the world, and she secretly dreaded coming in contact with it. As long as she could enjoy the quiet life of her own home and be free from contact with strangers or purely worldly people, she was comparatively happy. Each morning she arose early to attend Mass, and once a week approached the holy table. Agnes followed her example for a while, but soon grew lax, complaining that it put too much restraint upon her, so soon contented herself with the Sunday services, an occasional weekday Mass, and on feast days. This she attended to with the strictest regularity, thus keeping herself in the true path.

Now the evening long looked forward to, not only by themselves, but by the entire family, had come. True to her promise to bring up her niece on a level with her own child, Mrs. Daton was not content with having given Agnes a good education but was resolved to leave nothing undone by which to secure as good a partner for her as she did for her own, and she would not be content until she saw her settled in life where she could always live up to her early training. In the mother's eyes her own child was without fault, but she would have been better pleased had Cecelia possessed more of the pride which she found in Agnes. She deeply deplored the fact that Cecelia would make friends of the poor, and often did she feel it her duty to censure her for frequenting districts where she thought a young lady of her standing ought not to be seen. Could she have heard the blessings showered upon their fair benefactor by the inhabitants of the rickety tenements and known how their burdens were made lighter by the memory of Cecelia's kind words and sweet smiles her heart might have been changed.

Agnes often joined Cecelia in her rounds among the poor and would have spent much of her own allowance on them, but Cecelia, mindful of the fact that the girl's mother, though earning a comfortable support, would welcome a little help from her child, often dropped a timely hint to that effect. Poor Nellie never knew that to her niece was due the many kindnesses received from Agnes, and it was as well for herself that she did not. With a mother's tenderest love she blessed her daughter for her goodness and thanked God for having sent a means by which she could be brought up as she wished. It had been an hour of triumph for her poor saddened heart when she had gone to the convent with the Datons to see the girls graduate and had been publicly acknowledged as the mother of Miss Cullen, who by many had been looked upon as an orphan. The family had tried to prevail upon her to attend the grand reception of the evening, offering to provide a suitable outfit, but she firmly declined on the plea that she would be entirely out of place. Neither Cecelia's persuasions nor Agnes' pleas had power to change her. At length she consented to spend the afternoon and evening with the girls and help Agnes dress, but she would not appear among company.

It was with her mother's assistance Agnes had just completed her toilette when she entered her cousin's room. She made no remark, but Agnes, getting ready, advancing toward the dresser she said:

"Upon my word, Cecelia, here is the 'Following of Christ,' lying open on your jewel case. I suppose you think more of that than of the beautiful set of rubies grandma gave you?"

"Why shouldn't I, Agnes, when it contains words of far more worth than all the rubies in the world?"

Agnes made no reply. The incident impressed her for the moment, and as a diversion she picked up the costly gems which, with her own, had been grandma's present on their graduation day. They had never been worn. Cecelia's mother having wisely ruled that they had better be kept for this occasion. At this juncture Mrs. Cullen entered, and Agnes began complaining to her of her cousin's tardiness in dressing.

"She will be ready soon enough," answered Mrs. Cullen, who was ever ready to defend her niece; "Cecelia probably feels better as she is and does not wish to be dressed up until it is really necessary."

"Yes, auntie, I do; but I suppose I haven't much time now." So saying, she commenced putting on a dainty pair of garnet velvet slippers, fastened with silver buckles, much like the pale blue ones her cousin wore.

"That is right, Cecelia," laughed her aunt; "always ready to wait on yourself instead of waiting for your mother to dress you, as my big girl did. But I have come to claim the honor of assisting you."

"Thank you, Aunt Nellie, and I think you will find me almost as dependent as your own girl."

Cecelia commenced to prove the contrary by loosening the braids of her hair, which reached below her waist.

"Auntie, I am really afraid you have a difficult task here, for I hardly know what you will be able to do with all this hair. It was hard enough to braid it, but when it comes to doing it up I am half tempted to cut off part of it."

"Cecelia, you should never think of such a thing. Much of your beauty is in your hair. I wish Agnes had such hair as yours."

"I wish so, too, mamma," said Agnes, "or at least I should love to have it thick, if not the same color, for I quite like my own blonde locks."

The hair in question was soon most becomingly arranged and held in place by a comb set with rubies. Next came the dress of garnet velvet and white watered silk, in less than half an hour Cecelia's toilette was complete and the girls went to the room of their grandmother, who wished to look them over before they went down to be presented to the guests. The lady was arrayed in a gown of heavy violet silk, trimmed with black lace, and was just adding her jets and diamonds when the girls entered. She looked admiringly at them and smiled proudly.

"What do you think of us, grandma," asked Cecelia. "Do we look well enough to appear in the parlor and meet our guests?"

"Do you!" said the proud lady, "you are a pair of beauties, and the striking contrast between you makes each appear the prettier."

der if there is any chance of our fate being settled this evening. Wouldn't it be fun?"

"Agnes Cullen, how can you talk so," said Cecelia, and you only a girl just out of school?"

"I suppose I dare to because I am older than you and find the ways of the world more pleasant."

"Cecelia looked at her cousin, but was silent.

"I mean no harm, Cecelia; but I was thinking how you clung to school while I was eager to be out."

Mrs. Daton was looking intently at Cecelia in the meantime.

"I think, Cecelia," she remarked, "if there were a little more color in your face you would look better," and she turned to get her own rouge pot.

"Don't grandma; please don't," said Cecelia; "I prefer leaving my face just as it is and hope I shall not be obliged to make use of any artificial beautifier."

"Very well, do as you wish, but when you are old and wrinkled as I am you will be glad to use it. I was once young and fair myself, though never half as pretty as you, but I felt then that I would never be faded as I am now."

"I have great respect for old age," said Cecelia, "and I have no dread of the time when it may overtake me."

"You do not talk like most young girls of your age, Cecelia; but why should I expect it, when your ways were always far too old for your years. Indeed, child, in spite of what Agnes says, I would not be surprised to see you soon settled in a home of your own as a good, sensible wife."

"No, grandma, no; do not say that." She might have said that she had other plans in view, but her grandmother might demand an explanation, which she was not prepared to give. "I am far too young to think of that," she said, instead.

"There is time enough, Cecelia, and no one would regret more than your grandmother to see you tied down to the duties of a married woman for at least five or ten years. Enjoy your liberty and take all the pleasure you can while you are young."

"That is just what I intend to do," exclaimed Agnes.

"I have no fear but that you will, Agnes," said Mrs. Daton, "and I am glad to see you enjoy the pleasures of youth; but Cecelia here has always been so old-fashioned in her ways that I would not be surprised to see her settled down in a home of her own before long."

"While I am an old maid looking for a partner in life," said Agnes, in mock dismay. "It would be just my luck to have her ahead of me in everything, even if she is the younger, but I cannot help being as the Lord made me."

"None of us can," said Cecelia, "though I believe that, being endowed with a free will, we have much of our destiny in our own hands."

"Right, my girl," said grandmother, "and I believe that your destiny is to be the wife of some good man who will be proud of you. When you get as old as I it is my earnest prayer that you will be blessed with two beautiful granddaughters, as I am."

chandeliers glittered as so many diamonds; the white marble columns dividing the rooms were entwined with smilax and pink and white roses, while the openings were filled with portieres of the same delicate vines gracefully caught back with pink and white ribbons. Half concealed behind a bank of palms and rose bushes were the musicians, engaged now in tuning their instruments. The scene was like fairyland, and Mrs. Daton smiled a proud triumphant smile as she swept the long train of her lavender satin dress across the highly polished floors. There was not a single feature of the furnishings or decorations that she did not closely survey, and she was pleased to find them without fault. The guests would soon begin to arrive and it was time for the young debutantes to be in their places, so she hastened to summon them. Going first to Cecelia's room, she found she was not there and supposed her to be with her cousin. Agnes, however, said that she had left her at the door of her own room and knew nothing of her whereabouts.

"Where is Cecelia?" was the question passed from one to another, but no one had seen her since she had parted with Agnes. Mrs. Cullen volunteered to find her, as she certainly could not have left the house. From room to room Mrs. Cullen went but no Cecelia. As the minutes flew Mrs. Daton began to get nervous, and to make matters worse the ringing of the door bell announced that some of the guests had arrived.

"What shall I do?" asked Mrs. Daton of Agnes, who sat fanning herself. She, too, had been engaged in the fruitless search.

"Oh, dear, auntie, I hardly know. I cannot imagine where she could have gone, and I am really getting worried. I do hope mother will soon find her."

After visiting every room in the house, Mrs. Cullen went outdoors. It was a clear, bright November evening, and as she reached the little lake she stopped to admire the spray from the fountain, which sparkled in the moonlight. Myriads of stars were reflected in the water, and she could not help pausing to admire the scene. Then she started for the one place she had in mind in coming outside, but had proceeded only a short distance when she was halted by what looked like a holy apparition. There was Cecelia, kneeling in fervent prayer at the feet of Our Lady of Lourdes. Her shoulders were protected from the night air by a white shawl, but her head was uncovered and the jewels in her hair glittered in the moonlight. She held a pearl rosary and her aunt watched her in silence as bead after bead passed through her fingers; but what impressed the watcher most was the sad expression in the kneeling girl's dark eyes, and on closer observation she saw they were filled with tears. The rosary finished, Cecelia reverently kissed the crucifix and made the sign of the cross, but did not move. It seemed almost a sacrifice. Mrs. Cullen thought, to disturb such tender devotion, but she must do it, for Cecelia could not delay longer.

"Cecelia," she said, gently laying her hand on her arm.

The girl started as if in a fright and looked around. "Oh, it is only you, Aunt Nellie," she said. "So you followed me."

"No, Cecelia, I did not follow you, but they are all looking for you in the house, and when the search failed, I thought perhaps you might be somewhere in the grounds, so came out to look."

"And I suppose I must go in," said Cecelia, sadly.

"Yes, dear, the guests are arriving even now."

"So soon, Aunt Nellie?"

"Yes; the hour is later than you imagine."

"How I dread it! I do not like to meet so many strangers and be stared at, as I know I must this evening. I wish I were back in the convent. Everything was so quiet there, and I was so happy."

"Inexperience in the world, and the seclusion in which your studies kept you have made you feel thus, child. Many a young girl who has been educated in the convent feels the same, but you will soon get over it."

"I fear not, Aunt Nellie, I feel that I am about to enter upon a life wholly ununsuited to me, and that is why I dread it so much."

this cross and bear it patiently and perhaps it may be lightened sooner than you expect. I can almost understand how you feel, and I hope you may never have any heavier cross to bear, but if you do, I have perfect confidence that you have Christian fortitude enough to support them."

"I hope so, auntie, it is hard to think now of trials coming."

"Do not think of them; they will come of themselves soon enough, and we never make them lighter by worrying about them beforehand."

Cecelia had arisen and stood looking into the clear sky above her.

"I suppose I must go," she said, absently, at length.

"Yes, Cecelia, we must make haste, for they will be impatiently waiting for you. You really should not have remained out so long; but I cannot blame you for having come to ask help of your Heavenly Mother, especially since you feel as you do. You may rest assured that she, above all others, will never forsake you."

The girl laid her arm in that of her aunt, but did not speak until they had reached the house. At the door she whispered softly:

"Please Aunt Nellie, do not tell where you found me, and pray for me this evening."

"I shall do as you wish, dear child and may God bless and keep you safe from all harm."

"Cecelia, where in the world have you been?" It was her grandmother who spoke. The old lady had worked herself into a state of excitement and was now standing in the door to get a breath of fresh air.

"You did not look in the right place and Aunt Nellie did," answered Cecelia, with a smile.

"And where, pray, was that?"

"She was out trying to get a breath of fresh air, as I see you are doing now, Mrs. Daton," said Mrs. Cullen, "and you can hardly blame her for that on such a glorious evening as this."

"Out enjoying the moonlight and studying astronomy, I suppose, when her proper place was in the parlor. Well, hurry now, and you may be in time to meet the early guests, though we had almost commenced to fear that we would have only one young lady to present instead of two. You will find Agnes in her proper place in the parlor, where she has been waiting for you at least ten minutes."

Mrs. Daton proudly led Cecelia away to the parlor, while her aunt, like a humble maid, went to her room. When she had seen her own darling Agnes dressed for the reception she had almost regretted that she herself had declined to attend, but she was not sorry now. On the contrary, she was glad to be alone, and she buried her face in her hands and sank in deep thought, made all the more sad by the sound of music coming from below. She was thinking of the two girls and praying for them, too, but try as she would, her own would not keep the place in her mind her niece held.

"It seems to be all one great mistake," she thought, "for every day Cecelia seems more and more like what I would wish my own child to be, while Agnes seems to have been born for my sister. Poor little Cecelia, God help her, for something makes me fear that she has many a bitter cross to bear. It seems almost too bad that she had to be brought out to face a cold world, when I really believe her place is within the convent walls. But God knows best, and He will protect His own. If Agnes were only like her, how happy I should be."

wealthiest and most aristocratic merchants in the city. She did not notice that while the young man conversed cheerfully with Agnes, his eyes often turned jealously toward the corner where Cecelia sat entertaining another male guest. Cecelia's companion was Maurice Carroll, who had recently graduated from the Christian Brothers' college, and the girl, happy in the company of any one whose education had been so much like her own, thought of nothing else. Maurice was a sincere and earnest Catholic in every sense of the word, and Cecelia knew it well, for he was a member of her own congregation, and she had known and respected him from childhood.

"Truly Agnes was not created to be the daughter of a poor woman like myself," thought Nellie, sadly, "and there is no place for me in the circle in which she is fitted to move. The sacrifice is greater than I anticipated years ago when I gave her up, but for her sake I must bear it without complaint. She was born to be a lady, while her poor mother was, destined to spend her whole life in poverty and hard work."

Her heart still beat high with pride, but a sickening sensation came over her, and it seemed for a minute as if she should fall. How long she remained there she did not realize, neither did she feel the effect of the frosty air blowing upon her until the vision vanished and Agnes was led away to the dining room to partake of some refreshments. Then she slowly descended from her perch, replaced the ladder, and went not to the house but to the sacred spot where she had found Cecelia. The moon still shone brightly, casting its silvery rays upon the face of the statue, and the woman knelt down to pray, not for Cecelia now, but for her own daughter and for strength to bear the cross which was growing heavier than ever before. She had once entertained a hope that Agnes' education might enable her to support them both comfortably and that they might live pleasantly together, but such hopes were all gone now.

Mrs. Cullen recited the fifteen mysteries of the rosary, still heeding not the cold nor the fact that she was growing weak from kneeling so long on the frosty ground. She arose at last, kissed the feet of the Virgin, and went to the edge of the lake, where she stood for a time gazing into the waters. The sound of music from within, mingled with the dripping of the fountain, gave a still more melancholy turn to her thoughts. The moon was sinking to rest when she went to the house and entered the kitchen, asking one of the servants to give her a cup of coffee which was steaming on the stove. The women looked first at her, then at each other in amazement, for she was supposed to be in the parlor this evening, but she heeded them not, for she had sunk into a chair. The coffee was poured and handed to her, and she was offered some of the rich cake of which there was much, but she refused it. DRAINING THE CONTENTS OF THE cup, which made her feel stronger, she thanked the woman and started to leave the room, but tottered with weakness.

"You appear ill, Mrs. Cullen, said one of the women. "Let me get you a glass of wine."

"No, thank you. I have only become a little chilled from being out in the night air. The coffee has warmed me, and all I need now is a little rest. I am going to my room."

She was gone and the women looked from one to another.

"That's what it is to be poor," said one. "She is just as good as any of them, and much better than some, and there she is going alone to bed sick, with her daughter in silk and jewels playing the fine lady in the parlor."

To be Continued.)

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