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AUTHOR OF "COAINA," "FLEMMINGS," TANGLED PATHS," "MA

CHAPTER XI

A DAY AT THE VILLA.

With her hand nestling among the ivy leaves, her sightless eyes gazing dankly unward, the smile frozen on he Claudia stood motionless or the spot where, as if out of voice which had dispelled the vague mystery of her life had reached her. She had comprehended with swift intuition that her blindness was what had so often oppressed and disturbed her, and that the seal of its darkness would never be removed from her eyes. She remembered many incidents which at the time of their occurrence, had seemed strange—among them the visit of Ben Asa, the Jew, and how tenderly had touched her eyes, and soothed their pain with some precious cintment; and also how the questions which from time to time agitated her mind, had always been evaded by answers that had only silenced without satisfying Her heart cried out against it. Why had they not told her? of tenderness, had they deceived her Why had she been only to bring sorrow to her father, for the love of whom she

would lay down her life?
While these and other thoughts were passing through her mind, the tender, radiant tints of palest green, of faintly-blushing rose, of delicate purples fringed with gold, faded out of the sky; the swallows fluttered into their nests; the bees sought the shelter of their hives : the gray, restful shadows of twilight brought a momentary lull to the unquiet, tired world. The silvery music of the great fountain below pulsed through the silence, but it was all unheeded; even the chill that now touched the air, and the dew glistening among the strands of her golden hair,

unfelt. "Claudia!" called Nemesius, as he stipped out on the balcony, and peered ugh the shadows. He had come in and gone through the rooms looking for the child; but, seeing the casement thrown open, and knowing how she loved to be in the open air, he con-cluded that, lured by the beauty of the evening, she had gone out on the bal-cony—"Claudia! where art thou hid-

It was the voice she loved, and it reached her heart through the torpor that, like a sudden blight, had fallen upon her young life. Nemesius, seeing the faint gleam of her white-robed figure as she came slowly out of the shadows towards him, went to meet her. Her hands were held out before her, as Her hands were held out before her, as if she was groping her way; the grace-ful elasticity of her step was gone, and her movements were timid. Conscious of the darkness that wrapped her life, she was afraid. He grasped her hands: they were like ice; and when father and child reached the light that streamed through the casement, he saw that her face not only looked like marble, but

wore a strange, frightened expression "How wrong of thee, oh, my sweet child! to stay out so long in the night air and dew! Thy pretty curls are air and dew! Thy pretty curls are quite damp," he said, passing his hand caressingly over her head as he led her through the casement. "I fear thou art ill. Why dost thou look so strange

until I fetch thee some wine."
"My father," she said, gently restraining him, "I have something to tell thee. Sit here close by me ; put thy arm around me, and let me lean my head upon thy breast. Oh, my own father! I wished for nothing but to love thee and make thee happy, and l have cost thee only sorrow!

"Thou!-what sorrow hast thou cost me, my innocent dove? Who or what has put such unreal fancies into thy head? Thou art the sole happiness of my life. How, then, art thou my sorrow?" exclaimed Nemesius, rearing that the moment so long dreaded had at last come.

at last come.
"I know thy love, my father; but
the voice said: 'She has been blind
from her birth, and it has cast a shadow over the life of Nemesius.' Then I

ow over the fife of remeats.

"The voice?—whose voice?" he asked, in low tones, striving to hold in check the wild storm of emotion that wrung his heart, lest finding vent it should frighten her. "I heard only the words, and they

answered the strange thoughts that have so often troubled me. I knewoh, so well !- that there was something but Zilla, out of tenderness, would never tell me what it was. She did not know all that was in my mind, and how I wondered when she would tell me of the brightness, the color, and beauty of things, whose forms I knew only by the touch of my fingers. I asked her what was light, and she said it was the smile of the gods. I asked how the poets knew of the light of the sky and the stars, and of the blue sea, and the iled vessels; and she said they dreamed of them, and turned them into verses and songs. But I wondered how it could be; and when she told me that I too would have such dreams when I grew older, I waited; but I know now

But why let it grieve thee, my gentle one? Nothing is changed, and we have been very happy together. Am I not with thee, and are not all the enjoyments thou hast ever known still at thy command ?" he asked, striving comfort her, though at a loss how to

" But the voice said it made thy life How can I be happy, knowing that I have brought thee only sorshe urged, in the same soft tremulous tones.

The calm which always dwells on the

untenances of the blind, and which had imparted such ineffable lovelines to hers, was swept from it now by the agitated shadows of her strange sorrow, just as a stone when dropped into clear pool breaks its surface into gray. meaningless ripples, which efface the beautiful images of sky and shore so lately pictured upon it.

"The gods bear me witness that my sorrow was for thee, my loved one without a thought of self," he said ressing her head closer to her heart. I tell thee again that life holds no object so dear to me as thyself; without thee, all would be joyless."

"And yet thou art not blind : thou canst see all that is most beautiful. "I see thy dear face, my child; all else is nothing to me, while I see and

" But I can never see thee, my own father." she murmured, in tones of indescribable sadness.

The man's inmost spirit was shaken

and tears—such tears as can be wrung only from the depths of a strong, noble nature—quenched the angry fire in his eyes by the pain inflicted on his blind, helpless one. Fate had mas-tered him, leaving no remedy; he only

"Perhaps thou wouldst not love me

as now, didst thou see me."
"Why should I not? Oh, my father! nothing, nothing could change that to me which I know and love without seeing—the real, true one!" she ex-claimed, smoothing his face. "But the world is very beautiful; all should be happy who can look upon its bright-"It is not all brightness, nor always

beautiful, my child," answered Neme-sius; "there come storms and tempests that darken and rend it; there are sights which turn the blood cold to see —cruel, horrible spectacles; there are people whose evil faces make one afraid. Oh, one has need to turn his back, or close his eyes, or wish himself blind, to avoid seeing the sickening evils that meet one at every turn! No, all is not

bright and beautiful-The gods be thanked! I have at last found thee!" interrupted Zilla, who entered hastily, her face lighting up with sudden joy when she saw Claudia nietly reclining on her father's breast. I have been so alarmed "—turning to emesius—"I left her only a moment, Nemesius—"I left her only a moment, to fetch a light mantle to throw around her, if the evening grewchill, and when came back she was gone. I looked through the room, and, not finding her went to ask the Princess Vivia's if she had seen her, but she had not; then I feared she had wandered into some of the long corridors, and got lost among the great rooms; and I flew up and down, hoping every instant to see

and ran back. Oh, dear one, when vert thou hiding?' "She was on the balcony, at the farther end," answered Nemesius, with a look so stern and sorrowful that the oman started, and, gazing from him to the child, noticed for the first time the change in her countenance, and its

her, but found no trace—no one had met her; then I thought of the balcony,

"What has happened? O Nemesius! why is she so white and still?"
"Thy tender efforts to keep her in ignorance of her misfortune have not

vailed: she knows all," was the low, quiet reply.
"Hadst thou told me from the first, have got used to it in time; thou didst love me too well, good

mother. But do not grieve thyself," said the child, gently.

"Forgive me!—forgive what was done through love! I but sought to shield thy young life from a sorrow that seemed needless," cried Zilla, kneeling before her; and as Nemesius arose, un-

able to bear the strain any longer, she tolded her arms around the child.
"I know," said Claudia, laying her head on Zilla's shoulder, with a weary igh that was almost a sob.

Nemesius went out on the balcony

leaving them together; he was nearly suffocated by suppressed emotions. Angry surprise, bitter grief, and a pasdesire to strike to death who ever it was that, through malice or accident, had brought this sudden sorrow to his blind child, beat together in wild tumult against his breast, and sent He cursed life, he cursed the fire. gods, he cursed fate. The cool night wind fanned his heated forehead, and, relieved by giving vent to his emo tions, the first fury of his passion began to subside; the purple darkness, through which the fountain whispered, she was standing when he came out on the balcony to look for her; he walked to the spot, and the mystery was ex-plained by the fact that it was nearly in front of the casement of the room

nto which the Princess Vivia usually retired after her visitors had gone.
"Doubtless," he conjectured, "the Princess had invited a friend to remain with her after her reception, for the purpose of enjoying a quiet chat, in the course of which, and naturall enough, my Claudia's blindness was re and naturally ferred to in the words which malign fate wasted to her ears—words sympa-thetic and harmless in themselves, but

quite the reverse in their effect upon er sensitive her sensitive heart."

That is the way he formulated the possibilities, and that was how the accident had really happened; but he did not dream who the speaker was, nor how wickedly she would have ex-ulted had she known how well her words had sped. What, then, was to be done? He could do nothing. Should he speak to the Princess? She

blame for chance words spoken by a guest, which had produced results wide of their intention. Why, then, make her uncomfortable? Plainly there was nothing to be done, and he resolved not to speak of the occurrence except to Fabian; then, concealing their own grief, they would help the child as best they could to bear the in-

evitable with courage. Nemesius walked up and down the long balcony. The ceaseless echo of multitudes tramping up and down Rome's four hundred spacious streets, intent on business and pleasure; the din of traffic, the ceaseless roll of wagons and chariots over the stone flags, and the dull, confused uproar attendant on a centre where nearly two millions of human beings were congre-gated—all had sunk into comparative silence: for the day, with its individual struggles, its crimes, its tears, its

triumphs, its crucial tests, was buried night, leaving only ghosts behind.

Now and then the tramp of soldier relieving guard, scraps of a lover's song under a distant *loggia*, the silvery notes of a mandolin, echoes of laughter and jest from passing groups of young patricians intent on pleasure, were t nly sounds heard in this neighborhood of stately palaces and storied temples; and presently these also drifted away, and absolute silence reigned. Sudden-ly a wild, savage roar reverberated or

the air like thunder.

Nemesius started, and threw back his head to listen; then he remembered that some fierce lions from the Libyan the gate of the Via Latina, outside the walls, were to be drawn in their iron barred cages, at night, to the dens the Flavian Amphitheatre. He knev that the ferocious beasts were for the arena, and was well aware of the pur pose for which they were to be used out why should a dull, sickening horro creep along his veins when anothe hoarse roar, louder because nearer than Would not these savage, tawny animals avenge the honor of the gods by the destruction of those enemies Christians—who threatened their over throw, derided their sanctity, and de fied their power?

"I am not myself to-night," said Nemesius, as he re-entered the room where he had left Claudia in Zilla's

He found them still there woman's face like marble, her eyes aglow with angry fire; the child reclin ing on the pillows of a couch, her eves shaded by the dark fringes of their alf-closed lids; her hands like lilies folded listlessly together on her breast

"Not asleep yet, my dear one? as, hearing his footsteps, she asked, quickly raised her head.

"I was waiting for thee; I could no deep without the good-night kiss," she said, holding up her hands to caress his said, noting up her hands to caress his face as he bent over her. "And I wanted to tell thee, my father," she whispered. "that I have been thinking—oh, so much!—and that I mean to be brave; form a real Perma calling daughter. for a great Roman soldier's daughte should have courage; and then, when I look out of my eyes as others do, be cause they are darkened, I shall not mind it so very much; and for the love of thee, and with thee always near me,

hy should I not be happy?"

Nature had given the child strong powers of inductive reasoning; her faculties of thought, introverted and concentrated by her obscured vision, and cultivated by her daily and hourly association with a matured and intell gent mind like Zilla's, gave her a habit of reflecting and speaking in a manner unusual to children of her age.
"Why, indeed, sweet one?" he an-

caressing her; held almost speechless by her words.

eechless by her words.
"I should like to see, if only to see
ee," she continued; "that would be thee," enough. But I know it can never be, added, with a little, tremulous sigh. 'I am glad to know just how it is. voice said no harm, but only the truth. I must have known some day. And Zilla says that Homer, the great poet, whose verses she reads to me, and which I love to listen to, was blind; and I think it was worse for him than for me, because he had the grief of los-ing that which I never possessed. That must be very hard.'

gentle one, it is best that "Yes, my gentle one, it is best that thou shouldst know; I see it now, al-though I would have guarded thee from forever had it been possible. not know how strong and and wise thou art, or I should not have been in such dread of the truth being discovered to thee, but would have oken it to thee myself. Now kiss me my daughter; it is late-too late for ung bird like thee to be out of its In the morning I will breakfast with thee, and then we will go and

spend the day at the villa."
"Oh, what happiness!" she exlaimed, while a smile dimpled her face; how lovely it will be! Zilla, didst spend the whole day—the whole, happy day!" To-morrow we go home to

And so they parted—Nemesius to try insensibly soothed him to a calmer mood, until only his grief was left to wrestle with. He remembered where

would bring.
The Princess Vivia did not accompany them to the villa; she had an engage-ment with Laodice to drive, by way of the superb arched bridge just completed across the Tiber, to visit Casar's Gardens, where some fine ruins stood against the sky, and where beautiful things ran riot things ran riot in such a wild luxuri-ance of neglect, that nature had almost reclaimed her heritage from art.

Fabian called early at the palace with flowers for Claudia, only to learn that, accompanied by her father and nurse, she had started at sunrise for the villa on the Aventine. It was the very weather for such an expedition. The man pined to get out of the great, noisy city; to satisfy his desire, and at the same time enjoy the felicity of spending the day with Nemesius and Claudia, was an opportunity certainly presented by the gods, and must not be

neglected. Returning to his house, Fabian ordered his horse, and lost no time in making his way to the villa. He walked the animal leisurely up the chestnut avenue, enjoying the refreshing shade and the perfumed air; then on to the portice; but saw no one until, looking around, he observed Zilla sitting alone weaving garlands under a wide-spreading acacia tree, whose blossoms, gently stirred by the wind, scattered their white, fragrant petals upon her like snowflakes. She was lost in thought, and did not observe Fabian's presence was quite near her; then his shadow falling across her flowers made her look quickly up, and he instantly saw something in the expression of her

face which arrested his attention. "I salute thee," he said, in his kind courteous way; "but why alone? Our little lady is well, I hope?"

She is with her father -mounted on Grillo-somewhere in the She is happy to be here once again,

out I doubt if it will make her better satisfied with Rome. What has hap-pened, Zilla?" he asked quietly, observing that her eyes, always sad, now wore a stern, troubled expression.

"She knows all. By a most unfortunate accident she has learned that she is blind," was the low-voiced reply. An energetic malediction, and a lerce invocation to the Furies to devour the one who had destroyed the illusion of the child's life, escaped Fabian's lipr; the hot, passion ate blood of the South asserted itself, surprising his usual self-command into a momentary surrender. Then he would near all, and by the time she had finshed telling him how it had happened,

his passion had subsided.
"It was plainly an accident, but, by the gods! a most unfortunate one! was his comment. "It may be so; I am not sure," she

answered. "May I hear thy reasons, or the "I have spoken to the commander

emesius," she replied, with reserve. Fabian's face flushed; in questioning her, he had for once forgotten himself but various motives and quick suspici-ons, no less than his love for the blind child, had urged him. He turned away into the avenue, that led by many bosky turn and flower-draped alley t the cascade, where he presently found them—Claudia throned on the back of Grillo, who was contentedly cropping feast of violets and grass; Nemesius seated on a moss-grown rock near by, cheerful words upon his lips, but a shadow of sorrow in his face, as gazed into his child's sightless eyes. in his face, as he Fabian kissed her hand, greeted Nemesius, then with high sounding words saluted Grillo, which made Claudia laugh, as he intended; then, as usual, he won her to a merry mood by his absurd extravagances of speech, and the ridiculous things he related, until even the grave commander, accus-tomed as he was to his kinsman's versapeculiarities, wondered while he

"Fabian," she said, suddenly breaking in between something that he had finished telling, and another story that his lips were open to begin, "I have something to tell thee."
"Of Grillo? Has he been misbe-

having? or have the doves been fight-ing?" he laughingly asked, but knowing?' ing full well what was coming.
"I am blind, Fabian," she said quietly.

am I, by the gods !--stone blind; but I have not three pairs of eyes to see for me, and look after my ways, as thou hast," he quickly answered. "O Fabian !-blind? How can that

be? Is it dark?"

"As Erebus, except when things as horrible as Chimeras, Furies, and the Harpies are to be met with; then I when it is the wish of my soul to

see, when it is the wish of my be blind," said the artful Fabian.

"O Fabian! is it true?"

"As true as life! Thank the gods, beautiful one, that sights like these can never blast thy eyes "—a day came when Fabian thought of his foolish words—"And dost thou know, sweetest little lady," he went on, "that I am perishing for some honey cakes and a described of the second of th

draught of wine? And, per Bacco 's ears threaten a laugh!' Let us go, my father ; poor Fabian has had no breakfast," she said, sweet "But, Grillo, thou must not

ly. "But, Grillo, thou must laugh; it frightens me." Fabian had breakfasted, but wanted to talk with Nemesius; his heart was full, and the sparkle of his

onsense was flickering. After the light repast, which he made a pretense of eating, jesting the while, and inventing pretty myths to amuse Claudia, she went away with Zilla to the dove-cote, and he was left

alone with Nemesius, who, after relating what had happened, said:

"Zilla firmly believes that the words heard by the child on the balcony, did not reach her accident; for, having gone to the Princess Vivia's apartment, hoping to find highest ranks of the army, as well as Claudia there, the door suddenly opened as she approached, and Laodice came out. She thinks that Laodice caught sight of the child through the warn him of approaching danger open casement, and intended that what he said should be heard by her. unexplained reason, Zilla hates

"I can not see what end Laodice could serve by acting as Zilla suspects. If she could thereby have advanced any special design, she would not have hesitated a moment to consider conse-quences. Under all the indolent softness of her beauty, she has a cruel nature; still, in this case I think Zilla misjudges her." observed Fabian. Thou has told me of the sweet child's burage—worthy of the blood that courage-worthy of flows in her veins-but has thou noted

any change Yes, my Fabian. I observed to-day omething which convinces me that in the realization of her misfortune she has yet to find her worst pain. After we reached the villa this morning, we came in here, that she might rest while Grillo was being caparisoned for her. She has always moved fearlessly about the atrium, so familiar is she with every part of it; but to-day she seemed at fault and uncertain as to her way, holding out her hand before her as sh stepped timidly here and there, while a look of apprehension shadowed her countenance. I watched her closely as she groped about, then took her tremb-ling hand, and she said, trying to laugh: 'I am a little coward, after all: I was afraid.' 'Afraid! Why afraid, my child?'' I asked. 'It is so dark, she answered. Then I knew that she was, for the first time, consciou Then I knew of the darkness, which no glimmer of light can penetrate. How will she bear it? asked Nemesius, his stern, sad face overspread with gloom. "Something must be done to divert and occupy her mind; and in a few days I shall take her away to the sea—to Salesymm and Carren—and return here Salernum and Capree—and return here in August; I know she will be happier

he added. "Nothing could be better. I have

"We can do nothing, but must try our best to make her happy; and do thou, my Nemesius, be the first to appear my Nemesius, be the first to appear cheerful under this blow of Fate. If she suspects thy sorrow, her sensitive heart will divine the cause, and results will follow that will pass all human efforts to undo. Will the Princess Vivia accompany us ?-for I too wish to visit Salernum and Capreze for continued Fabian, resuming health," continued Fabian, resuming his usual tone.
"I shall invite her. To know of thy

intention to join us has already light ened the weight on my mind. I cannot thank thee sufficiently, my Fabian, id Nemesius.
"Am I not seeking my own pleasure said

by going? Thou wilt yet find out what a selfish egotist I am," replied

Fabian, smiling.

"But I have something to tell thee which may either amuse or anger thee; only let it be understood that I will not be questioned. I have discovered that be questioned. I have discovered that Laodice has captivated our Princess, who receives her daily on terms of most friendly intimacy; and the Bona Dea herself presides over their secret con-But the Princess is the most guileless of women, and when she thinks herself most impenetrable then she becomes transparent, betraying, in the most amusing way, all she conceal. She has given me to under-stand that we should both marry—thou for Claudia's sake, I for my own.

"I hope she will leave me out of the question," said Nemesius, his dark face in a glow of indignation.

I assure thee. The toils are being woven; the Bona Dea's aid is invoked, and sacrifices not spared upon her altars. Thou art the first choice, and Laodice is to the bride o thy destiny! Neither thou nor I can match two women single-handedthem simple and obstinate, the other as wily as a serpent. I can only suggest one remedy. Let the Princess go back to her vineyards and peasants on the Alban slope ; do not press her to pro long her stay if she proposes going home—for as surely as thy dost, there

will be no escape for thee.' " Fabian, if I did not know thee to b full of eccentric fancies, and possessed of a prolific imagination, I should fear brain was slightly turned. The gods have no such evil fortune in store for me as that of which thou speakest must beg thee by our life-los ship never to refer again to the possibility of a second espousal for me, Nemesius, gravely. said

"I braved thy displeasure, presuming on thy affection, my Achates; but let me finish, as the rest concerns my elf," said the irrepressible Fabian. 'Having disposed of thee, I am destined to a maturer fate-no less, beieve me, than to espouse the Princess

Vivia!' His gravity overset by this unexpected climax, Nemesius laughed as he had not done for years, which warmed Fabian's heart to the core.
"I have still other news," he went

on. "It is rumored this morning that the rich edile, Æmilianus, has liber-ated his three hundred slaves, and that the Christian Pope, Stephen by name, has been tracked."

Fabian knew that, as a Roman citizen, the edile had a right to dispose of his slaves as he saw fit; as his property, he had absolute power to work his will upon them, whether it was to slay or liberate; but while it was not an unusual occurrence for a master to torture and destroy his slaves, he seldom gave them freedom, unless-he became a Christian. It was this which attached significance to the event just related.

'So I have been informed," answered Nemesius. "Such occurences are be-coming frequent, and have but one meaning. As to the Pope, there's a wide difference tracking and catching him, so long as he has a subterranean kingdom, whose secret ways are known only to the initiated, in which to conceal himself. Besides that, he has thousands of followers in every class of ears by life—in the palace of Valerian, in the among the inferior soldiery, in the Senate, the Forum, the magistracy—all of whom watch over his safety, and know all about the vast system of sand-pits which honey-comb the Campagna, into which entrance is gained through pozzuolana caves, found under the weed grown hillocks in every direction; but it is only the Christians who hold the due to their mysterious labyrinths. and none else can be found, however fearless they may be, brave enough to venture into those unexplored galleries, whose intricate tortuous windings be wilder and shut off all hope of return Ever since the days of Nero, the

Christians have found refuge and con-cealment in these dismal abodes, whenever for the good of the State an edict of extermination has been issued against them; the clue to which. transmitted by their traditions from one generation to another, provides them with a place of safety, where they practice the unholy rites of their false religion, hatch treason, and where numbers of them live, die and are deposited in the countless columbaria provided for them. This is the eighth attempt made by Rome to destroy the conspirators against her gods and her empire; and now, as in former times, these old places of refuge swarm with them. To a thoughtful mind, this underground world affords a symbol, sometimes fear, of how the Roman sometimes fear, of how power, invincible to open foes, is being undermined by the despised followers the Christus, unless by a supreme effort we can exterminate them.

"There is no lack of such auguries.
I have been informed," answered
Fabian, dryly. "Time only can solve questions which to the present are in

'Let us go into the air." said Nemesius, as he offered a libation in honor of the gods, and stood a moment silent; Fabian did the same, then they left the atrium and went down into the beautiful gardens in search of Claudia. They found her with Zilla under the ilex trees, near the Grotto of Silenus; she had Zilla's lute, and was touching great faith in the remedial powers of the salt air," said Fabian, strangely touched by what he had just heard. she had Zilla's lute, and was touching the strings, trying to form the musical notes into an air, which evaded her

just when she thought she had caught It was like chasing a bu and almost as alluring. their footsteps, but did not lay aside the lute, and when her father and Fabian stopped near her, she said in

her sweet, childish way:
"I am learning to play, and when I know how it will not se eem so dark. TO BE CONTINUED.

THE REAL PRESENCE.

I. Catholic Standard and Times. In the Church of Our Lady of Mercy recently Very Rev. D. I. McDermott preached the following sermon which is the first of the course on the Real Presence which he delivered on suc-

cessive Sunday evenings. Following is the full text of the discourse: the full text of the discourse:

'And I, John, saw the Holy City,
the New Jerusalem, coming down out
heaven, from God, prepared as a bride
adorned for her husband.

dorned for her husband.

"And I heart a great voice from the brone, saying: Behold the Taberthrone, saying: 'Behold the Tabernacle of God with men; and He will dwell with them; and they shall be His people; and God Himself with them shall be their God.'" (Apocalypse xxi., 23.)
Lack of, want of information concern-

ing the Catholic religion often leads our separated brethren to regard our religious rites as unmeaning as empty show: leads them to regard our rites as something unworthy of the serious attention of reasonable men, as fit only to attract and impress the ignoront and the superstitious

Non-Catholics regard our ust as those who do not understand it regard a foreign language. As the sound of a strange tongue often excites amusement, even a titter of ridicule those who hear, but do not un so the sight of our worship often pro vokes in Protestants, if not a sn contempt, at least a look of pity for us poor benighted Catholies who, our dis-senting brethren think, are laboring under the delusion that we are, through our ceremonies, offering a reason rvice unto God.

As ignorance cannot make ridiculous a language which to those who under-stand it is the strongest, clearest, most elegant vehicle of human thought neither the sincere pity on the one hand nor the supercilious contempt on the other of those who do not under-stand our religion can rob our worship of its intrinsic worth, of its deep sign ficance to us : can divest it of the to excite in us the profoundest acts of faith and adoration while it offers to God, in a becoming manner, the most sacred affections of the heart in unison with that clean oblation which is alone

worthy of God, The reason non-Catholics are persuaded that our religious rites have no other object and value than to attract and impress a too credulous people is own; because they fail to perceive that almost everything in our religion is essentially different from what it is in theirs. In Protestant worship, cere monies are mere empty signs of sacred things; their ceremonies of themselves confer no grace, but are simply em-ployed to excite the faith and devotion f them who witness them. Hence their boast that everything in the Protestant Church is done and said that it may be seen and heard, and above all understood by the people. All things are so devised as to attract, instruct and influence the people. In doing this, their ceremonies serve a commendable purpose. No fault, therefore, is found with the object of their ceremonies, the only objection to th

not that they go this far, but that they go no further.

This constant study, however, to catch the eye and ear and to touch the heart of Protestant worshippers often leads them to make ludicrous mistakes in describing their religious functions. For example, not so minister was described "as having made the most eloquent prayer ever addressed "-to whom, think you? To God Almighty? No! But "as having made the most eloquent prayer eve addressed to a Boston audience! this slip of the tongue or rather of the pen is not quoted to cast any reflection on their piety or to insinuate that their prayers are not offered to God; for we well know that the minister's praye was addressed to a Boston audience in order to incite all who heard him to pray to God, and, moreover, we de voutly wish that the prayer of every sincere heart, whether Protestant, Jew or pagan, may receive a favorable hear-ing before the Throne of Grace while then this slip is not quoted to reflect on their religion, it is quoted to fix at-tention on the fact that their ceremonies concern the people alone, and that they have no value apart from the effect they produce in the people.

such mistake as that just quoted would ever be made in describing Catholic worship, for the people play no such important part in it as they do in the Protestant. Our prayers are offered directly to God, and they lose none of their efficacy when the peeple do not understand the language in which they are uttered, when the people do not even hear them. In Catholic worship our religious

rites have an essential value apart from any faith or devotion they arose in the people. They would have this essential value if our churches were shrouded in darkness so that the people could not see or if all the people assisting at them were blind and deaf or if there were no people in the church.
Our worship not only symbolizes spir-

itual things and graces, but is very embodiment of them. The sacrament confer the very graces which their ceremonies signify and explain. In Baptism, for example, the outward washing with water shows forth the cleansing from sin which the grace of baptism effects in the soul of the worthy recipient of that sacrament. In the Sacrafice of the Mass, to whose ceremonies non-Catho-lies take such exception, is offered the very Victim whose death on the Cross is commemorated in that august rite.
Thus the ceremonies of the Mass in which is concentrated a people's loving

and glory as the towards God becar elf to the people As well, then, m holds men entrar buted to the rai colors of living talk of the daz gorgeous ritual at to our churches, during our wors ignore the Pres gives to those rit meaning and lend KEY TO UNLOCK CER The doctrine worship is more t which serves as

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