By arrangement with Longmans Green & Co. THE BLINDNESS OF DR. GRAY

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CHAPTER I

AN AMERICAN LETTER

AN AMERICAN LETER The Very Reverend William Gray, D. D., Parish Priest of the united parishes of Doonvarragh, Lackagh, and Athboy, came down to breakfast one dark, gloomy December morning in the year of our Lord 18—He had risen early. year of our Lord IS - He had risen early, like all the old priests of his generation, made his half-hour's meditation accord-ing to his rigorous rule and habit, made his quarter-hour's preparation for Mass, celebrated the Holy Sacrifice, and with the burden of years and the cares which the corner will bring came slowly down years will bring, came slowly down softly-carpeted stairs, and glancing the softly-carpeted stars, and gradening with an ominous shrug of the shoulders at the pile of letters which lay on his writing desk, he sat down to table, broke his egg, looked out on the gloomy wintry landscape, shuddered a little, pushed aside the egg, ate a crust of toast rather meditatively than with auy ancatite for such things, drank a cuo of wintry landscape, shuddered a little, pushed aside the egg, ate a crust of toast rather meditatively than with auy appetite for such things, drank a cup of tea, and pulled the bell. His aged domestic made her appearance. "Has the paper come?"

waste-paper basket, muttering : "What a lot of idle people there are

in this world !" Then he took up what may be called his personal correspondence. [Some of these shared the fate of the circulars. He put three aside for further consider-

tion or possible reply. The first was an anonymous letter The first was an anonymous letter written in lead pencil and very imper-fect in its orthography, informing him that, unless he promptly dismissed an assistant teacher from his school at Athboy the parishioners would know the reason why; and teach him that "they might be led, but would not be driven." The gravamen in this case The gravamen in this case the young teacher, who had was that the

still stands guarding the old place where the Grays had lived for genera-tions? Did he think of her sweet looks, her bright, girlish face, half-gypsy, half saintlike in its perfect contour, and the dark from the boarding-school in Dub-blin, and her fourneed American letter. The wars without restraint of net or bodkin? And her homecomings, when she came back from the boarding-school in Dub-blin, and he returned around on Sunday morn-ing and riveted their eyes upon her Perhaps o1 But if the tear fell, and the thin, bony hand trembled—and I do not aver that they did—it might bave been from another recollection, when on a certain day he had said, when others ware of the fact, that should never be still stands guardiog the old place where the Grays had lived for genera-tions? Did he think of her sweet looks, her bright, girlish face, half-gypsy, half saintlike in its perfect contour, and the dark hair that framed it irregularly and the dark hair that framed it irregularly and the dark bair that framed it irregularly been from another recollection, when on a certain day he had said, when others' opinions were wavering for and against

"Yes! She must go. It is the law!" And it was no great crime that Helena Gray was guilty of --no violent rupture of divine or human law that de-manded the ostracism of her kind. Only And it was no great crime that Helena Gray was guilty of—no violent rupture of divine or human law that de-manded the ostractism of her kind. Only isome youthful indiscretion—some silly letters that had been found in her trunk, revealing a little grilish fivolity, but he had grown into the habit of neither nothing more. Yet, the honour of the

appetite for such things, drank a cup of tea, and pulled the bell. His aged domestic made her appearance.
" Has the paper come?"
" No, "she said. " The boy is always intoite and feed and the determinance of the second team o

udgment. He did so with all the calm indiffer-

He did so with all the calm indiffer-ence of one accustomed to legislate or act under a criminal code. The letters were placed in his hands. He read them over carefully, a certain contempt for the girlish frivolity show-ing itself in his stern iace. When he came to the expressions that had chal-lenged criticism, his thin lips drew to-gether; his nose drew down like a beak; and two deep furrows gathered between his eyes.

and two deep furrows gathered between his eyes. When he had finished reading, he folded the incriminating letters slowly and carefully, and without handing them back to his mother, he said quietly:

"Helena wishes to go abroad ?" "She says so," said his mother. "But

each with its own deadly blow; and the strong man trembled beneath their sug-gestions, as a lordly oak trembles be-neath the strokes of an axe swung by a pigmy beneath its branches. Sad re-miniscences woke up that had been hidden away and buried beneath the dóbris of the years; and he became aware of the fact, that should never be foregetien, that the human heart, how-

forgotten, that the human heart, how-ever seared and shrunk, holds a terrible vitality unto the last.

He had grown into the habit of neither giving nor accepting invitations to dinner, except with his own curates; and the idea of having a visitor in the house to be watched, and tended and fed and entertained was always intolerable. He had to put up with such things on the occasion of a visitation; and once ot wise when he had a mission in his

the other. He stopped suddenly in his walk, and touched the bell. When the house-keeper appeared, he ordered his horse to be brought around. It was his refuge in all cases of perplexity. The exer-cise that drove the stagnant blood of old age bounding to the brain, cleared his faculties, and enabled him to think with calances, judgment, and force. His may be close a parson but per-

His way lay along a narrow but per-fectly level road, bordered on both sides by deep bogs or marshes, where some attempts had been made at drainage, for there were deep cuttings filled with water, and edged with rushes and sedge, their sides lined with the black sedge, their sides lined with the black peat that gave fire to the villagers. The sea had conquered all human efforts to restrain it; and there far out were black pools of seawater left by the re-ceding tide, and bordered with dreary read-news, where a coarse and thirty

sand heaps, where a coarse and tufty grass was waving in the wind. And just beyond was a wider reach of sand,

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

ready." "Very good!" he said. "I'll have the basket sent over to-night." He cantered away; and after dinner he sat down to his desk and wrote a very emphatic letter to the priest in Chicago to the effect that, although he regretted deeply the demise of his sister, and was gratified to learn that she had received all the rites of the Church, Canon Law and all other laws forbade him perempt-orily from entertaining even for a mo-ment the idea of opening bis house to his orphan niece. It was against all precedent. He would be happy, although poor, to subscribe some-thing toward her maintenance and edu-cation in America, if her own means were not sufficient. But on no account whatsoever was she to be deported to Ireland. He added a brief but pregnant porstseript to the effect that sometimes postscript to the effect that son postscript to the effect that sometimes priests suffer from overzeal; and that it would always be wise to consider a little and take into account the feelings and circumstances of others before presum-ing to trespass on their domestic affairs. This letter he posted, and dismissed that subject as one with which he had no further concern. Here Henry Liston bridled up. "The statutes give permission to a curate to be absent 24 hours by merely notifying his parish priest," he said.

"Statutes ?" shouted Dr. William Gray. "Yes! but remember, young man, that it is quite competent for a parish priest to make his own parochial arrangements, independent of, or an-ciliary to, the statutes of the diocese ; and their is no resultion." no further concern. CHAPTER II and that is my regulation.

A CHANE OF CURATES A CHANE OF CURATES If the good pastor of Doonvarragh, Lackagh, and Athboy was much dis-turbed on that gray December morning in the year of our Lord 18-, his future in the year of our Lord 18—, his tuture curate, Father Henry, or Harry, Liston (as every one called him) cannot be said to have been much elated on his pro-motion, of course it was promotion inasmuch as the passed thereby from the condition of a chaplain to that of curate; and it was ranid and there very Sunday without fail. of curate; and it was rapid, and there fore honourable promotion, for he had been but a few years ordained. Yet he been but a few years ordained. Yet he was not happy. The change meant for him the translation from town-life, to which he had been born, to country-life, with which he was quite unacquainted. But that would have been but a slight cause for depression. The major cause, that which drove his spirits below zero, was the reduction that he was now to he was the reflection that he was now to b

was the reflection that he was now to be brought into intimate relationship with a parish priest to whom he had always looked up with a certain kind of rever-ential dread. As he poised the episcopal letter in his fingers and wondered what strange episcopal minds to more them to such singular actions, he remembered with a construction of the set of the set of the set of the set of the operations must pass through episcopal minds to more them to such indicate the set of the construction of the set of the set of the set of the set of the operations must pass through episcopal minds to more them to such indicate the set of the operations when the set of t

"Limekiln !" echoed Dr. William Gray, "I never heard of such a writer." "Oh I he is well known, "said Henry airily, "everybody knows the distin-guished Gorman Jesuit. He has put your Gury's and Ballerini's on the shelf." The pastor glowered at him for a moment, then took a pinch of snuff and smiled. episcopal minds to move them to such singular actions, he remembered with a cold shudder the day when the tall, gaunt, black figure of his future superior suddenly stood by him, as he waded through some proposition in the Sixth Book of Euclid; he remembered the hard rasping voice, demanding abruptly mby the angle ACB was equivalent in value to DEF and GHO even though they elubbed their forces together: and the

" By Jove, that's the best joke I have heard for many a long day. Look here, Liston, I'll send that on the wings of the wind far and away across the diocese. It won't extinguish him, though. You can't extinguish him !"

His voice dropped from a tone of exul-tation to one of sadness and despair. tation to one of sadness and despair. "When I came here," he continued, taking down book after book from the shelves, but talking over his shoulders at Henry Liston, "I managed for a time, too, to shut him up. I found he knew all about Lugo and Snarez and Petavius —every line of them and every opinion they ever expressed. He had the great-est contempt for the Salmanticenses, and I flung them at him on every occa-sion, although I never saw a volume of these interesting novelists in my life. He used to get awfully mad; but these little fits were only moonlight unto sun-He used to get awfully mad; but these little fits were only moonlight unto sun-light, when I quoted Sa. The first time I mentioned Sa, I thought he'd go for me. He glared and glowered at me without a word for fully five minutes; and then he said with his rasping, contemptuous voice: Sa I Sa I Who's Sa ? And what do you know of Sa ? 'Why,' I said, 'every one knows Sa—Emmanuel Sa, the greatest theologian that ever lived?

greatest theologian that ever lived?

ight."" "You had tremendous courage," said Longy Liston admiringly. "Did he say

Henry Liston admiringly.

and that is my regulation." Henry Listo He took a pinch of snuff, half of which fell down on his waistcoat, already dyed brown, and then he concluded : "You will dine with me at 5 o'clock oracer Sundar without fail." curate statu no more, sand tee torming curate, stopping in his work, and turn-ing round, "but a few days afterwards he came up here on some pretext or an-other, and, after a little while, he came

SEPTEMBER 24, 1910

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She draws her

She draws her up to the toyshop they look throug ladies, nodding trains, and dolls "Look!" says. service! Oh, ar the mugs lovely ! In Mrs. Girdwo or by for pers

In Mrs. Girdwo put by for pers-are past merding a decent pair. E Jeannie is so he The old gloves w pend the shilling cle, and save at the small Old Wo clerk kindly to r

clerk kindly to r set for her little

the pair walk Jeannie's slipper

Jeannie's supper the pavement. All at once caught and held the Guildhall. Thorold will leet Its Needs.'" T

to the lips. In Boston, is in A the "Garden Ci

tire, her trock plumage, with her sunny hair.

seven churches ming down the Cathedral close waits for her, and

one word, "Li walk together in The scene sh love and protect merciless things words. He sees ing fancy and u

ustomers and with which he

and yet he ca harshly. Then a farewell lette

a farewell letter you, Lila. If y

Yes she will

and will go to l tell him all, and

the thought of the fair face f She is n rose. She is n guardian ange Jeannie hears steals a small h "Mother, a

you !" "I love you !

to the tempted sweet, small fa resolutely abst Guildhall unti quits " Pilgrin

The famous

The famous are calling ci old English ci Ville Sonnan Through the before the G

friars and blac

n stately long

robed choirste

robed choirste bearers sendin the clear blu written on pillaged conve holds her own hand; there i

on the "Rise" and St. Mary

and St. Mary chapel for the It is Sund: been celebra chapel is emp pers who ha give thanks. Girdwood, who

net of the l strange happ streets of old

Fortune si a time and But Jasper 4 temper, thou there, as was woman who, l ladder. Wh of it was gain of all. Jasp children, and Lila and h nouse, in a with a field : happy, for mother and faith. On th

"Two front bedrooms," continued his frie d. "First to be papered in French gray, woodwork to be painted in same color; panels and architraves in laven, der. He'll like that ! Second room to be papered in sage-green, all woodword to be painted white ; panels, sea-green

l down ?" " All down !" said Henry. " All down !" said bedrooms, All do

"Now, write : Back bedrooms, halls and staircase-to be left to the option

of pastor !" "Look here !" said Henry Liston, despairingly. "This would never do.

"Look here !" said Henry Liston, despairingly. "This would never do. He'd murder me !" "Never fear !" said his friend. "That last hint will fetch him completely. 'Left to option of pastor !" By Jove ! won't he stare? But, mark me, young man, 'tis your first and greatest victory. Come along now, and eat something. Oh, by the way, I was near forgetting. Write down : New range, and floors of stables to be tiled in small pattern, and chamfered, with channels, drains, etc. chamfered, with channels, drains, etc That's all, I think. But we may remem mething else as we get al When they parted, Henry

curate : "You said you were going to give Sa to the pastor, and that you'd tell me the

revery one knows Sa—Emmanuel Sa the greatest theologian that ever lived?
The greatest theologian that ever lived?
The greatest theologian that ever lived?
"Yes, I will," said his friend, laying isolar than Lugo?
"Certainly, I replied, 'a Greater than Suarez, greater than Vasquez, greater than a lugo?
'Certainly, I replied, 'a Greater than lugo?' Certainly, I replied, 'a solar that the solar that the solar that the solar that the solar that the solar that solar that the solar that the solar that the solar that the solar that solar that the solar that solar that the solar t

"I'm better pleased than if I got a five-pound note to hear you say that," broke in Henry. "Do you know that is the opinion I always had of the pastor." "And you were right," said his friend, "Now, for example, you have often heard

how hard he is about money ?" "Yes! he certainly has that reputa-

ny more ?"
"He said no more," said the toiling urate, stopping in his work, and turn-ag round, "but a few days afterwards he came up here on some pretext or an-other, and, after a little while, be came a mount of Canon Law can interfere with the personal liberty of a man-"
b "Bit down !" ordered his pastor peremptorily.
c "What rubbish have you been reading? Not your Theology evidently, still less your 'Selva' or 'Challoner."
c "I don't fail to study Theology at propertimes and places, 'said the pastor, looking at him admiringly, "but," he drawled, as if in mockery of his curate, "at proper times and places. Now, what author are you reading—say in Moral Theology?" "Lehmkuhl !" said nis curate, confident times and places. Now, what author are you reading—say in Moral Theology?" "Liencking !" subtle to the same and places. "Said he curate times and places. Now, what author are you reading—say in Moral Theology?" "Lehmkuhl !" said nis curate, confident times and places. Now, what author are you reading—say in Moral Theology?" "Liencking to provide the your and said nis curate, confident times and places. Now, what author are you reading—say in Moral Theology?" "Liencking to provide the your and said nis curate, confident times and places. Now, what author are you reading—say in Moral Theology?" "Liencking to provide the your haven't Sa ?" said Heury ! you find a man whom you is the sub to provide the your haven't Sa ?" said his comrade, "Oh, yes, I have," said his comrade, "Oh, yes, I have," said his comrade, "Diston. ston. "Oh, yes, I have," said his comrade, That's why I am leaving him with regret

" Oh, yes, I have," said his comrade, producing a thick ancient volume, red-edged, and bound in boards, or stamped leather that had the consistency of boards, "here you are!" " By Jove! you and I agree there," "By Jove! you and I agree there," said Henry Liston enthusiastically. "Do you know that although I grew up in fear and trembling before him, somehow I felt I had a warm corner in my heart for him; and do you know, I think he has some interest in me." " Well, all's for the best, I suppose," said his friend. "You never saw such constern-ation in your life as was denieted on his sid here you are you are you have you have

a statue of ented to Li If one mu the French is, in trut There are s brown hair more tender softer curve solter curv-ity she has poor, the f exile of Er desolate v broken-hea found a bee husband's d heroism; a forward an manufactur lines. And has nobly i herself pl herself pl mercial. On that reached th priest wall place at o seeing an garb at the over and the woma whispered "God b "I do 1 plied gent "Sure John's mo Then L whom she perity, an "Mistre "sure it's found a p Johnnie, I've neve and I ask for you w The tre the pair prayed si