

THE ROMANCE OF A JESUIT.

From the French of De Beugny d'Hagerne.

CHAPTER XI.

The following year brought about no important event to our hero. On arriving from St. Achoul he had seen his sister and arranged with her to continue her studies at the Convent des Oiseaux and thus capacitate herself for eventually taking some share in their mutual support. As for himself he had employed the leisure left him after the office hours by continuing his law studies and preparing for his degree. Hardly had he time to visit his sister occasionally and to seek for consolation and encouragement from Father d'Aradon, who always received him kindly and guided him in safety along the new path he was treading.

At the end of this time changes took place in the political world and Charles' patron, the Minister, having lost his portfolio, notice had been given to his secretaries that their services were no longer required. It being the custom in such cases to give some compensation to those who thus lose their employment, Charles wrote to the Minister who had succeeded to the portfolio, stating that fresh situations had been found for his colleagues, but that he himself had received no similar mark of favour. It was Mons. Meynaudier who now filled the post of Minister and his reply to Charles was a polite refusal to do anything for him, giving as an excuse that the latter's appointment as under-secretary had been too recent for the holder of the situation to be entitled to compensation on resigning it. He added in a postscript that from that day forward Mlle. Durand's expenses at the convent would not be paid by the Government. Utterly discouraged by this news, and having in his purse but a few hundred francs that he had economised, Charles thought of giving up his law studies and engaging himself as a copying-clerk. Father d'Aradon, however, was by no means of his way of thinking.

God has given you talents, he said to his young friend, and it is your duty to turn them to good account. Therefore, you must make an effort to shake off your despondency and prepare yourself for a brave struggle with adverse circumstances. If some day you should have the happiness of forming part of our Company, you must not enter the religious state as a refuge from an unsuccessful battle with life. The world believes too readily that cloisters are filled principally with the unfortunate and the despairing. Religious life is a renouncement of the world, its joys, its happiness, its hopes. If you aspire to it you should employ all your strength, activity, intelligence and determination to achieve some honourable, independent, even brilliant position so that you may have wherewithal to renounce for God's sake, if you enter religion. Till you attain to a more lucrative position I would advise you to eke out your means by taking young law-students for private study. You might give some two or three of these lessons a day and still have time for your own studies. And now about your sister. For the moment, I can easily prevail on the good Sisters "des Oiseaux" to give her a home till we shall have found some suitable situation for her. This I think we can manage through Mlle Moissac, a lady whose whole life is spent in doing good to others. I know you will not be able to help laughing when you see her. She is an old maid, under-sized, deformed, and dressed in a most preposterous way; but beneath this somewhat unprepossessing exterior are hidden rare intelligence and a noble heart. Though having but very small means, she manages to meet her own personal expenses and also to do an amazing amount of charity. To render service to another, to alleviate the sufferings of some poor, miserable wretch, to snatch a soul from perdition, to serve others in any way, she displays the utmost zeal and talent whilst she carefully hides from all eyes the amount of good she performs. It is to this lady that I have entrusted the delicate mission of finding a suitable situation for your sister and I am certain she will succeed in doing so.

Mlle. Moissac did indeed succeed admirably in her mission and Marguerite could not have fallen into better hands. Strangely enough, too, the lady with whom the young girl was to reside was a relation of her brother's former *belle noire* at St. Achoul, Father de Kerdec.

Mme. de Plelan, for such was the name of the lady with whom Marguerite was to reside, generally passed her summers in Brittany and her winters in Paris, but for this year she had decided on prolonging her stay in the capital, where her daughter, who had very delicate health, was undergoing a course of treatment. Mme. de Plelan herself was a widow of some fifty or fifty-five years of age, an excellent person and a good Christian woman. Having suffered much in her early life she was always ready to compassionate the sufferings of others and strive to alleviate them. Anna Maria, her daughter, was sixteen years old, but appeared much younger on account of the pallor and feebleness caused by her weak state of health. What Mme. de Plelan sought was a young, joyous and ladylike girl who would enliven the daughter's life and assist her in such studies as her precarious health would allow of, and Marguerite certainly seemed eminently fitted for the task offered her. By the intervention of Mlle Moissac, satisfactory arrangements were entered into, and Charles, on conducting his sister to Mme. de Plelan's, felt he was confiding her to the care of one who would watch carefully over her. In fact the Countess took so kindly to the new inmate of her home and made the young girl so happy that Charles, who likewise was welcomed as a constant visitor, was entirely relieved of all immediate anxiety on his sister's account and was at full liberty to devote his whole time and thoughts to his own studies and lessons.

Thus matters went on for a year, at the end of which time Durand passed his examination brilliantly and took his doctor's degree. Shortly afterwards, through the influence of Father d'Aradon, Mons. B., a leading member of the French bar took Charles as his secretary, and the latter so arranged the hours of his work as to be able to continue assisting young law students in their studies. His emoluments therefore sufficed him to meet all his necessary expenses.

(To be continued.)

MR. GLADSTONE ON '98 AND THE ACT OF UNION.

Mr. Gladstone has a powerful article in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century* on the morality of the Union. The following are some passages in which he deals with the events of '98:—The baseness of the Union policy, and the lack of all claim on the conscience of the Irish as a nation, have been shown, but I have still to hand charges of tyranny and cruelty which made part of my "bad history" and violent declaration. Space will only permit me to produce samples of the truth, but I am much mistaken if even samples do not suffice amply to sustain the language which I endeavoured to apportion with accuracy to the merits of the case. It will suffice for my purpose to select only a narrow area of time and place. I shall refer mainly to events connected with the Rebellion of 1798, and shall rely on the evidence, not of Irish Nationalists, but of a benefited Protestant clergyman. Mr. Gordon's "History of the Rebellion of 1798" contains abundant evidence that he was touched with the strong prejudices of his caste, but he was an honest man, incapable of wilful suppression. He carries us to the scene of war in Wexford. It was marked by the massacres of Scullabogue and the Bridge, the most cruel and wicked acts (so far as I know) to which even the dregs of the population were ever driven by maddening, ferocious, and prolonged oppression. In the Killala rising in 1798, we learn, I think, from the narrative of Bishop Stock, that the insurgents injured no man except in the field. Even in the utmost exasperation of the Wexford Rebellion there is no case known where a woman was outraged by the rebels. Gordon says— "Amid all their atrocities the chastity of the fair sex was respected. I have not been able to ascertain one instance to the contrary in the county of Wexford, though many beautiful young women were absolutely in their power." Not so with the King's forces. He speaks of the retreat of the rebels, "Many of whose female relatives promiscuously with others suffered in respect of chastity, some also with respect to health, by their constrained acquaintance with the soldiery." On the 7th June, after the massacres of Scullabogue, Roche, the Roman Catholic priest, so active in arms, issued a proclamation containing the following passages:—