

AILEY MOORE

SALES OF THE TIMES SHOWING HOW SYMPHONIES, MURDER AND SUICIDES PARTISAN ARMS MANAGED AND JUSTICE ADMINISTERED IN IRELAND TOGETHER WITH MANY STARTLING INCIDENTS IN OTHER LANDS

CHAPTER XXVIII THE SECRET SOCIETIES—ASSASSINATION

Gerald Moore listened to the many discussions of the conspirators, though his blood sometimes chilled at their blasphemy and often boiled at their treachery. "Un cuore che senta, un voto che dissimoli, una mano che agisca!"—a heart that can feel, a conscience that can dissemble, and a hand that can strike, were the whole code of morals. It was impossible to suppose pandemonium worse in design and doctrine. There was no principle of right, no feeling of humanity, no pause or stay in calculations of suffering or rapine or blood—the simple question was, how their end was to be accomplished. It was awful to look on them gathering round the narrow board—the dim light casting their shadows on the walls of the dingy little apartment—their pale faces growing more wan as the night wore away, and their dark eyes lighted with a passion truly diabolical, while they swore the downfall of him whose hands they had bathed in tears, and whose throne they had sworn to build up with the lives of their children if it were necessary. It was a striking phenomenon of reprobation. There was a love of wickedness so purely for the sake of wickedness, excluding so completely everything, unless confusion, confusion, spoliation, and havoc, and accompanied with a great hatred of everything Christian, that no ordinary frenzy or blindness could account for it. Nor were they infidels—at least the majority of these revolutionists here assembled—by no means. They looked, so to speak, in the face of Christ, and knew Him, and smote Him! They took their very enjoyment from their consciousness of the magnitude of their crimes, and like the arch-angel, they looked up and defied the Deity. All this is very awful; but it is very true also. And, moreover, as the history of Exodus may convince us, any man may come to be what they were.

Yet it was no easy task to assail the sovereignty of Pius IX. He had inspired all hearts with a fondness far transcending the love of subjects for a sovereign, and penetrating through all classes and sexes equally enthusiastic in high and low, young and old. His mercy and his benevolence discovered the sorrowful in such extraordinary ways and times, that his knowledge seemed as wonderful as his charity, and filled the people with astonishment as well as gratitude. A poor man in Saint Angelo had long refused to see a clergyman. He thought he had been hardly dealt with, and that he would avenge himself by impudence. One day a humble but a gentle-looking padre found his way to the prisoner's cell and begged a moment's interview. The prisoner arose rudely when he saw the black garb, and told the visitor he did not desire his services. But the good padre would not be easily declined, and he said he had a blessing for the captive—a blessing from one who loved him and whom he loved. The prisoner looked in the padre's face for a moment in surprise, and then bent his eyes towards the ground with a hard scornful expression, which had become habitual. But even he started at a name, the sound of which in that place, made him again look fiercely at the clergyman—the name was that of the poor fellow's mother. And then the padre made him tell his story, and he tore a leaf from his breviary and wrote down his complaint; and although the prisoner said he thanked the padre who brought him news of his poor mother, he knew it was useless to make any application in behalf of his son; he said he would like once again to behold Tio, and to embrace his sisters, whom he had not seen for years. Whereupon the padre kissed the prisoner on the cheek and bade him "hope from Pio Nono," and then departed. Of course the reader need not be told the visitor was the Pope, and that he made an enthusiastic subject out of a man suspected of treason, and a regular propagandist of love out of a creature whose soul had been steeped in bitter hatred. There was a man seen galloping around Rome one evening, who had entered it that morning in despair. He had been the support of a widowed parent and young family, but had lost his only horse by an accident. His domestic attachments had attracted the affection of his sovereign, who had enriched him with a horse and with gold, and half delirious, he ran from street to street, singing "Viva Pio Nono!" If an orphan was hungry, or a young maiden desolate and in danger, by a power which seemed supernatural he discovered their retreat, and his name fell upon their ears like hope from the lips of their guardian angel. And this was daily, hourly, and universally; so that the feeling awakened by the Holy Father was really new and indescribable—more like the supernatural—like that which we may suppose awakened by a vision, than like anything which men had felt in Rome for ages.

It was not easy to assail the throne of such a sovereign, we repeat.

"Obtain certain reforms," said Mazzini. "By the aid of these, progress further. Take the moderate as far as they will go. Make them leaders as long as they proceed your road. *Lasciategli sostenere la prima parte finche vorra procedere con voi.*" And again: "Speak everywhere," he says, "to the people about their misery and want. The people do not understand themselves." Talk of liberty, the rights of man, progress, equality, fraternity. Learned discussions are neither necessary nor opportune. These were portions of the machinery employed by the man who calls the Son of God "a great philosopher named Christ!" but they were only portions. The love of the people for the Pope was a still more powerful agency. Alarms were constantly spread. "The Holy Father is about to be seized!" was proclaimed one time. "The Holy Father is in danger!" another time. "The Holy Father shall allow his people to form a guard for him!" Then became the lesson; and the population, in their affectionate devotion, were sometimes driven to the verge of frenzy by the dangers said to threaten "Il Santissimo Padre." First, they, the people, should see him in season and out of season; secondly, they should be permitted to guard him; and thousands of the dingly little "partimenti" thus "made a public mind" to the fashion laid down by their employers, the remaining work seemed easy enough. Plenty of money to debauch them was ready for the "civie guard." Legions of immoral works, and, alas! legions of immoral women, were imported to demoralize the youth. The population were to demand "war with Austria" because "the Holy Father wished it"; they were to demand the expulsion of the Jesuits, because "the Holy Father wished it"; they were to demand the secularization of the government, because "the Holy Father was intent upon it, and should be supported against the cardinals"; they should take the Holy Father out of the hands of the enemies of Rome, the cardinals, and give him freedom, because "Pius IX. desired this emancipation!" These were the steps by which the agents of two or three Protestant powers hoped to fill the throne of the Caesars with their malignant spirit, and to end all religious controversy by the "fall of the Pope!" If gold could have created events to suit their purpose, they had prospered and reigned, for no truth or honest principle stayed or directed them; but their folly and fate has been, and is, and will be always to believe in "gold" and always to find there is a God.

Let no one imagine the "Protestant powers" will discontinue this system—they will not. Constantius had an irresistible policy for sweeping away the Catholics; Julian, the philosophic apostate, had his "system" for overthrowing the "Nazarene;" King James I. had specific which no one before his majesty had had the talent to dream about; and Mr. Spooner and Dr. Whately, who have their own plans and devices, who only wait for success in order to insure the inventors a patent of immortality. When, side by side with the pious Lord Shaftesbury, the worthy commoner and zoological prelate shall physically illustrate their religion and philosophy, we shall have more—more on the end. And why? Because every one of them will believe in "the wealth and influence of a great nation," which, being the only article necessary to salvation, has a fair chance of catching the sound Protestantism of every generation, as it has caught the sound Protestantism of the last three centuries. Oh, yes; the Bible might teach others; history might obtain a hearing; God's providence might be seen by any eyes, of any race, or any religion, unless the "Protestant powers;" but the "Protestant powers" hold to the money and the ascendancy of the race, and surely "it is no such difficult thing for the energetic Anglo-Saxon element to get hold of Rome!" Just so; only there is a God, besides money.

The battle will always rage, though the actors may be different. We shall have statesmen true to historical antecedents, and devotees crazed by hatred and pride, the former, who will believe to trouble them, will only calculate the most efficient means to give men a thirst for material pleasures; and the latter, mistaking pride and malice for religious zeal, will keep the world in confusion and their country in fetters at the feet of gain, until error has performed its fatal mission and God's ways will be justified in the face of His foes. It will be "our mission" in England to keep Spain in convulsions, Portugal in terror, Piedmont in chains, and Austria in arms, to prevent "Romanism" from combining all its force. Give the whole of them something else to do or to hope for, besides working for the faith or gaining salvation, and keep an eye always on the centre—Rome. In the end, how can this policy fail? It could not fail, and never had failed, only for God. If the philosophers would admit God's providence as an item in their calculations, they would set about the solution of the equation somewhat differently. Whom could Vincenzo Monti have intended by the following: "Ne il diritto e certo la virtu di Sparta, Ma prepotenza e col modesto manto Di liberta. Qual e fra voi costume, Fuggite Potoso se v'innocce, e pronte Al delittovolar quando vi giova; Porre in discordia i popoli vicini, Demembrarne le forse, e poi, divisi, Combatterli repente, e strascinarli, Piu traditi che vinti, a giogo indegno."

"Right is not surely the virtue of Sparta, But the mantle of liberty modestly covers An arrogance unbounded. Hence yours is a policy Flying all principle if it restrain you— Embracing all wickedness if it but aid you!"— And filling with discord the nations around you;— When their force has been weakened, their peoples divided, You suddenly attack them—and drag them your victims Betrayed, but not vanquished, to the yoke of dishonor." The reader will pardon this episode for the sake of the facts regarding the "Roman Revolution." They have been gathered on the spot, and from the lips of many witnesses, who could not have agreed so entirely as they did had they spoken less truly. It is likely that the remarks on the "mission of this great nation," to wit, England, have been anticipated by the convictions of every true born Briton and every one who has not the honor to be a Briton at all; but we hope for the indulgence of the public nevertheless, as it is our first consideration.

"A series of banquets and general meetings," said the conspirator who sat at the end of the table. "Such is the order," replied a man called Angelo, a designing black-looking abomination, whose nose, mouth, and eyes, straggled through a ferocious and filthy beard. "We shall strike the key-note at these," said the man who had introduced Gerald. "And make the Holy Father join the chorus," said the chairman, with a laugh. "Be not so sure of that," remarked a Signor Blondello. "Why?" cried four or five voices. "Driven to the wall," answered the first speaker, "you will find him a man of courage." "But," replied Angelo, "the orders are that he is to be taken step by step, constitutionally." "What means that?" demanded Blondello. "Oh, when he is in the hands of the society—you shall see." "What?" "Why, we'll make him what he cannot be without exciting the hostility of the continent—" "And then?" "Make our terms on his head." "Pshaw!" contemptuously retorted Blondello. "Pio nono is a statesman." "You seem out of your place!" said the chairman, looking at Blondello, fixedly. "Because I seek common reason," answered the latter. "Do not fear," said a thoughtful-looking person, named Bianchi, who had not yet spoken. "The great move is to get the Pope into our hands, and then we can dictate our terms." "And Europe will look on," demanded Blondello. "England will be at our back," said Bianchi. "Although not Christian, she loves Italy!" asked the former. "Because she is not Christian, she hates the Pope," replied Bianchi. "Then we shall be ruled by England?" "No; but Rome lost to the Papacy, the principles of her government will triumph on the continent." "And she will grow rich and powerful while the nations around are paralyzed by commotion," replied Blondello, rather bitterly. "But we shall get rid of popes and priests—" la funesta pianta di Guida—"I frowned the filthy bearded Angelo, quoting Ricciardi; "the destructive plant of Judaea!" (Christianity) he said. "Well, Signor Mori?" said the chairman. Gerald looked at the interrogator, but made no reply. "You now are possessed of our principles and intentions." "No answer." "You will give us the hand of a freeman to secure the independence of Romans." "Still no answer." "We depended on your sympathies and we have allowed you to listen to all our counsils." "Not by my desire." "But you are an Englishman; and every Englishman believes the mission of England to be the liberty of the Continent." "I am not an Englishman; nor does every Englishman think so absurdly." "We shall have in Rome before many months the authorized exponent of England—one of her nobles." "Not of England—not of the English people, signore; you shall have the spirit of a faction that despises you, and hates the Church of Rome." "We shall use the spirit," remarked Angelo. "And sweep faith and love from the face of Italy!" asked Gerald. "We shall have liberty." "Liberty from the laws of reason and right, and free leave to work and starve without a hope of heaven," retorted the young artist. "Oh," said Blondello, "signore does not seem to know that half of us are at war with heaven." "With heaven!" "Certainly," said Angelo, looking like the lowest down devil, so foully sinister was his glance, "certainly; I have given my chance of the future for the overthrow of cardinals, if the d—I can work it." "Well," said Blondello. "This has nothing to do with my proposal," said the president. "Signore," he said looking at Gerald Moore; "signore, we had

reason to think, when you sat at this board, that you would give us your heart." "I sat here by your desire, and without any promise or engagement." "But having been here, our duty to our cause is that you shall belong to us; our safety requires nearly as much." "Hear! hear!" from all. Gerald smiled as he always did when danger threatened; it was the consciousness of a reigning power within. "Signore," continued the chairman, "you will swear an oath." "No," answered Gerald. "No." "No." "We can compel you." Gerald shook his head. "What!" said the former. "What! you are in the midst of men—" "Who dare not touch me," interrupted Gerald, in a low firm, decided tone. There was a general move and some confusion; every hand was raised, and a bare stiletto was seen in every man's grasp. Gerald's face flushed a little, but his calmness rather deepened than wavered. "Stop, gentlemen," said Gerald looking at them fully, and with a serenity which absolutely confounded them. "Listen, I pray you! My death will seriously compromise you both here and elsewhere; you are not foolish enough, thus early in your career of revolution, to commit yourselves and your cause to such hazards. Put by your arms; you have no intention of using them,—and," he added, while he suddenly and majestically rose, "you dare not!" In a moment all were on their feet; loud curses were muttered, and fiery glances directed towards Moore. A simultaneous move was made towards him. "See here," continued Gerald, moving back a pace or two. "See here!" he said, producing a loaded pistol of four barrels; "four of you should fall before you could approach me." He held the pistol in his right hand; and the blood of the assassins froze in their bad hearts, when he slowly added, "You see that powder-flask and fuse!—one hostile step towards me and I can root this house from its foundations. Stir then at your peril!" It is likely enough that the champions of Roman liberty would have looked sufficiently foolish—for they always showed a great horror of firearms—if an accidental circumstance had not concluded the scene which had become so excited. Just at the moment, when Gerald had concluded his brief speech, one of the Roman police walked quietly into the apartment, and looking round him, asked in a voice of authority, "Who is here? Oh," he added, looking round and recognizing the company, "oh, Signor Blondello! and you Signor Galatti, and Bianchi—well, what's to do?" The policeman appeared simply curious to know how his old friends were engaged. "This gentleman?" he demanded, turning to Gerald. "An Englishman," answered Galatti, making a desperate effort to look tranquil—he shook from head to foot; "an Englishman sharing a bottle of wine with us." "A Christian?" continued the policeman. "Yes; a Christian," answered Gerald, calmly. "I thought he was a Protestant," said Angelo, addressing Gerald's companion of the morning. "It seems not," answered the party spoken to. Nothing seemed to escape the policeman. He had seen the stilettoes, or at least some of them. The violent agitation of the conspirators was betrayed in their looks, language, and positions; and Gerald still held his arms in his hands. But the policeman appeared to have had his mind made up, and sufficiently to have fulfilled his duty by presenting his person in the chamber. "Let me not disturb Signor Galatti and his friends," continued the policeman. "You, signore," he said, turning to Gerald, "you are Mori, the painter?" "Yes." "You live in No. 66, Via Felici?" "Yes." "You will please come with me then. Pray, gentlemen, do not inconvenience yourselves. Bianchi, Blondello, good night, good night!" And both took their departure. When the policeman and Gerald had crossed the Ponte Sesto, they simultaneously discovered a man on their track. The policeman returned towards him, and the spy fled as fast as he could run. The officer then returned, and without saying a word, walked side by side with Gerald till they came to the Via Felici. "You have been saved from an imbroglione!" said the policeman. "Yes, truly. To what do I owe it?" "The policeman smiled. "You owe it to almsgiving." "Almsgiving!" "The poor woman in the small cart, near the end of the Corso, to whom you gave a baiocco, now and again saw your companion of the morning, whom she knew, and had her grandson therefore on your track." "Then you know all?" "I heard every word—the door-keeper is a Christian, and in my pay." "And—"

"Leave everything to Pio Nono. He is not deceived. He will make his states happy, in spite of conspiracy; or if his states be unworthy, he will have done his duty. Addio!" The policeman vanished, and Gerald of deeply suggestive events was the time which Gerald spent in Rome. Lord Minto had appeared and shouted for the liberty of Italy. His connections and his language emboldened the most timid of the republicans. England they believed exhausted in money and restless in arms; and there was England maddening the passions which every day trampled upon some barrier to the flood of anarchy. Foreign emissaries crowded the cafes and hotels, and crowds of licentious robbers enriched themselves with the spoils of the city. Every day some new cry, and every concession to popular demand followed by some demand more important and dangerous. The Pope's own people became almost a fraction among the fanatical and unprincipled throng, who raised the shout for which they were paid, and taught the honest Roman that the only way to loose the Pope's hands, who wanted only an excuse, they said, to place himself at the head of a republic! Even when he appeared, like an angel of beauty, to forty thousand men upon the Quirinal, pronouncing his final determination to resist pretensions which could not be entertained without sacrificing conscience—"Non posso, non volo, non dovo"—his Holiness was represented as speaking only by the dictation of the cardinals. Every day the difficulties of the Holy See increased, but still was found a mind capable of confronting and mastering them. Nothing seemed too comprehensive to exceed the power nor too minute to evade the observation of Pio Nono. The fifth of March, the French revolution, was hailed as the counterpart of Roman progress, and it was evident that the Holy Father's position became more complicated by the hopes which a successful assault upon Louis Philippe's dynasty had inspired. When the English Government "gentlemen," at Rome waited upon his Holiness to demand the great Church of "All Saints," the "Pantheon," for a "Protestant place of worship!" This was to be the price of "their countenance." Pius IX. thanked them, and they left his presence much more aware of their own insignificance and less confident of their "mission" in Italy. Notwithstanding all the distractions of the time, Gerald pursued his profession bravely. He had even made himself a name, and his studio was the appearance of an artist's who could summon the highest resources of color to realize the most splendid conceptions of fancy. He had the grace and magic idealization of Raphael, and the energy and boldness of Angelo. It had been said of him that he would found a new school of painting at Rome.

TO BE CONTINUED

inheritance in order to obtain the many hundreds of pounds necessary for his new purchase and its upkeep in petrol, new tires and various other expensive and indispensable accessories. "It won't do—it won't do at all," his best friends would say with a head shake, as they watched their handsome young neighbor, whose face had lately begun to take on a bloated and dissipated look, glide away from his home and its easy day in his expensive equipage, in obedience to the insistent call of the world of pleasure and frivolity. "It wasn't by idleness and amusement that old Fergus O'Hara made his money and kept it; and his son isn't going to do it either clever as he is. His father before him was content to trudge to market week after week beside his loads of hay and corn; and it's a poor thing indeed to see young Ned so far forgetting himself, and neglecting the good little wife and that one poor delicate child of his that it ought to be his chief care in life to love and serve. And it's poor looking and drawn enough poor Mrs. O'Hara herself is looking this long time, what between trying to keep an eye to things in the day and sitting up late night after night watching out her poor eyes watching for that foolish man of hers to come home."

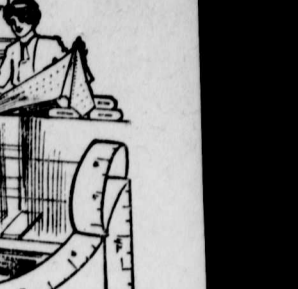
Indeed, as the months and years went on Sheila O'Hara had need to be more and more anxious concerning her husband's ways, and her own and her young son's future. For already she had begun to suspect that Ned was living at a rate far beyond his income, gambling recklessly and with almost invariable ill luck on horses and cards, and spending far more money than even he could afford on the crowd of dissipated loafers and ne'er-do-wells who sponged so shamelessly on his well known good nature. Once she had ventured to speak a little more earnestly than usual to her husband on the growing folly and irregularity of his ways. "You know, Ned," she protested, with tears in her beautiful eyes, "you are really bound to take far greater care of yourself and of your health as well as your money—for the child's sake as well as your own and mine. He has never been a strong boy, and I tremble to think what might become of him if he had to face the world in poverty and hardship by himself and by and by. He is not strong enough for any kind of hard work—"

"Who wants him to work and why should you talk of his facing poverty and hardship!" her husband retorted almost angrily. "That boy is strong enough, if you would not insist on pampering him and molly-coddling him as you do." "I wish I could really believe that," his wife said with a sigh. "But I cannot imagine that clever Dr. Forbes is mistaken, and he tells me that our little Dermot is extremely delicate, and will need all the care and nourishment I can give him if he is to live and grow strong. And really, Ned, dear"—her voice broke on a sob—"I cannot think it is right for you to neglect your religious duties or to squander your money, and stay away day after day and night after night as you do from Dermot and me. The boy is clever, now, and of an age to notice things. I don't want him to think that you neglect your religion as well as your wife and your home." "But I don't neglect you," her husband broke out almost roughly. "I have asked you again and again, until I grew tired of asking, to come with me to the races and elsewhere, but you always had some wretched excuse of having neuralgia or wanting to look after something or other about the place." "But surely," said his wife quietly, "it is necessary that someone should remain here. Why, only last week, if I hadn't caught him just in time, that dishonest fellow, John, whom you had just engaged, would have carted off half a ton of your best potatoes as well as a couple of sacks of oats. It is much better that I should remain here—besides, I never cared for races, as you know."

"Very well, I'll take Dermot with me to-morrow to the point-to-point races at Kilmacree; I won't let you to say I neglect him, at any rate," resolutely. Oh, but Ned—you'll be very careful of him, won't you?" asked his wife, suddenly filled with a new dread. Lately her husband had come home very often not altogether sober. What if he met with an accident driving the car? "Oh, of course; if I'm able to mind myself I'm able to mind him, I suppose?" her husband answered resentfully, and lunged angrily from the room. True to his word he took little Dermot off with him next day to the races. And late that same night Mrs. O'Hara sat lonely at home, listening with a beating heart for the humming and hooting of the motor that should announce the belated return of her husband and son. Ten o'clock, eleven, half past eleven, twelve—and still no sign! At last, at nearly a quarter of one, a sound fell on her ears—not the whirring hum of the motor, but the unexpected sound of horse's hoofs, and of car wheels crunching on the gravel drive that led to the front of the house. Running to the door, she threw it open and ran with outstretched arms down the steps to greet the little son, who for all the length of his short life had never been so long absent from her before. But instead of little Dermot's glad cry of greeting

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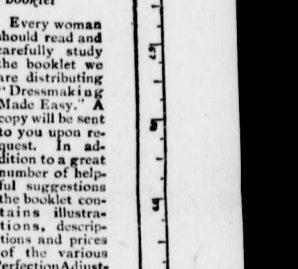


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