

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD

An Historical Romance.

BY M. M'D. BOOKIN, Q. C.

CHAPTER XV.—CONTINUED.

There was no escape. To the right towards the wood the bog grew wetter and softer, till it merged into an impassable morass. On the other hand, the deep...

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There was no sign of life at all in this desolate place, only now and again the tall bulrushes, close to the lake's margin, hemmed them in. Further out in the lake a steep, rocky island shut off the levels rays of the rising sun, and enhanced the gloom.

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His muscles were strained, even to cracking, and the oars dipped and rose as swift as a bird's wings, and the boat flew as swift.

The girl, wild with excitement, never heeded the cry, but turned and faced her foes, who were scattered along the lake's edge, with smoking or leveled guns, and waved her hand defiantly. At the sight of her a hoarse cry of rage went up from the bulrushes. A huge rocky shield was stretched between it and the bullets.

The next moment the boat shot round the projecting nose of Stoney Island, from shadow into sunshine. A huge rocky shield was stretched between it and the bullets.

The fugitives were safe! Christy slipped his oars. But the boat still glided forward, smoothly and swiftly, from the tremendous impetus she had received.

His iron nerves were unshaken by the terrible strain. There was a grim smile on his face at the danger, over past. But Peggy, who had been a heroine while the danger lasted, was a weak woman now that it was over.

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with a gun on his shoulder. An Irish red setter, whose silky coat glistened in the sunshine, wheeled round him in short circles, tossing up his gravel with his scampish feet, as eager for the sport as her master.

Mark, leaping up from the table, undraped the window, which opened from the ground, and met "his friend" on the terrace with a cordial greeting.

"Off for a few partridges?" he said. "I know where there are three big coys with only a brace out of each. They will be on the headlands in the thick cover, and get up in two and three. Just wait one moment and I'll join you."

As Lord Dalwich watched them striding away like brothers, under the light blue cloud their cigars made in the still air, his admiration for his friend's versatility and vitality was unbounded. "A wonderful fellow, Mark," he muttered, "he is bound to be a great man—or get hanged. Nothing can stop him except death—his own death. I am glad I am not a life in his way. I should not wonder if there were something else shot besides partridges this afternoon."

But Lord Dalwich's foreboding or anticipation, whichever it may be called, proved false. There was nothing shot except partridges, and of these a goodly quantity. All the evening Mark was loudly in praise of the marvellous skill of his companion.

The next week passed pleasantly and quietly at Cloonlara. Lord Dalwich and Sir Miles were not absent for a few days to Galway, which he had never been, carrying no luggage with him but his chivalry bags.

Christy, for the first time in their companionship, stayed when he went, no need to ask why.

Sir Miles was utterly exhausted by that stormy interview. He had been as pale as marble and as cold. But something in his manner and face told that the spirit that underlay the affectionate gentleness of his nature was roused at last.

The master trait of his character had asserted itself, and Mark Blake's wild reign over the Cloonlara domain was at an end.

Sir Miles retired early to his room, Christy helping his feeble steps up the broad marble staircase.

Mark had gone straight to the stable yard, flung himself on a fast horse, and rode away in the direction of the Yeoman barracks.

Lord Dalwich returned with him, and after a late dinner the two retired, with cards.

Again Christy came softly to the picture gallery, crept through the secret passage, and, with what foul means Mark Blake was suddenly become master of Cloonlara, and Lord Dalwich was to help and share.

When Christy returned to the library there was a grim look on his face that boded ill for the consequence.

For half-an-hour he paced the great room with swift, noiseless strides. Then, sitting down to the table, he wrote all through the night laboriously.

The grey dawn began to flicker in the east, shining coldly through the great windows, when he tied the packet up and sealed and directed it—"United States, America," were the last words.

Before night had yet merged into morning he had saddled the fastest horse in the stable, and, riding as if for his life, he caught the American mail at Ballinascorney with a quarter of an hour to spare.

Next morning early, with no word of leave-taking for his father, Mark Blake left Cloonlara, in company with Lord Dalwich, for Dublin. In the afternoon Maurice Blake arrived from Galway.

Lord Dalwich and Sir Miles much broken in health and spirits, and could not resist his entreaty to remain. So he staid on, one day slipping quietly after another.

Of Mark Blake his father never spoke but once. "He is worth with me," he said, "because facts have come to my knowledge, demanding a great sacrifice on both parts, and I am resolved at any cost to myself or to him that our duty must be done. He has used to me such words as are seldom used by son to a father. God forgive me if I have deserved them. God forgive him if I have not. Let us speak no more on the subject, I entreat you."

Daily the intimacy grew closer and kinder between the two men. Mark, when he left, had entirely abandoned his control of the great estate. Sir Miles took up the tangled reins of management, and strove hard to make things run smoothly again and pleasantly.

Winter came unawares upon the autumn and killed it. The frost arrived before the leaves had fallen, and shrivelled up the last of them with the cold. It caught, and chained, and choked the streams, stilling their restless murmurs, and paved the broad lake with clear crystal.

It was a fine, clear chill morning—that fatal morning when the blow fell. Maurice Blake had been up and out on the lake from early dawn, skimming over the frozen surface swiftly and smoothly as a swallow—gliding like a shadow in and out and round about the distant islands, with great white trees on them.

Sir Miles was breakfasting in the library, in a bright fire, half past and half eycamore logs, roared cheerily in the grate.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Cataract Cured for 25 Cents. I suffered from Cataract for 25 years, and have found Dr. Chase's Cataract Cure the best that I have seen, and gladly recommend it to sufferers.

HARRY STONE, Rainham Centre, Ont. Fagged Out.—None but those who have become fagged out, know the depressed, and despondent feeling it is. All strength is gone, and despondency has taken hold of the sufferers. They feel as though there is nothing to live for. There is a cure—a cure—one box of Parole's Vegetable Pills will do wonders in restoring health and strength. Mandrake and Dandelion are two of the articles entering into the composition of Parole's Pills.

HER VOCATION.

[A variety of "morals" will be drawn from this little sketch, and some people will fall to find a moral. It depends upon the reader.]

She was very tired of waiting. "I have waited so long," she said and the good priest who was the recipient of all confidence, replied: "Wait a little longer still, my child."

She thought almost rebelliously that it was easy for a man to counsel a woman to patience.

Years ago, Kate Mordaunt had wished to be a nun, though this feeling was rather an impression than the deep-seated desire and conviction it should have been to bring a vocation.

She did not know why she wished to enter the convent, at least she thought she did not. There are some things a woman cannot acknowledge even to herself. It is fortunate that confessors can usually read one's soul like an open book and know without the telling the things a penitent would tell if she knew them herself.

Kate Mordaunt failed to understand her own heart and she told him all she knew of herself when she said: "Father, I have often wanted a vocation; I mean a religious one. When I was a child I longed to be a nun. I was an orphan and when my aunt died and left my little cousin all alone I felt I must take care of her. Estelle was ten years younger than I and all I could do, the only talent I had, was to act."

"I put my little cousin with the good Sisters of the Sacred Heart, for I knew she was safe there, and I went on the stage. I loved the work, though there were many things about the roving life I could not well endure, but I had to do for ten years."

Then Estelle joined me. She was a lovely girl, small and graceful with blue eyes and hair like brown silk. I never wanted her to act, but she had far more talent than I, and she would go on the stage. Of course I was always with her, and then came the time when she married. Kate's voice trembled a little and her auditor looked at her keenly, but she went on steadily: "He was an actor, a good man, rising in his profession; much older than Estelle, and he loved her devotedly. Then I thought the time had come for me to leave them. She did not want me. She had been her voice was a little bitter and her proud face flushed. The good priest read all the story of this woman's heart; torn with anguish in seeing the two she loved best, each love the other more than they did her. He saw, but he only said very gently: "Well, my child, what then?"

"Oh! Then I thought perhaps our Lord wanted me, and I told them I meant to leave the company. Estelle cried and begged me to stay with her; and then he spoke, her husband. He asked me to remain. I knew, so well, he said, the dangers and pit falls of a woman's life upon the stage. Estelle was so young; he could not be with her always; he was busy and harassed; who could so well guard her as the one who had been her mother and directed it—"United States, America," were the last words.

Before night had yet merged into morning he had saddled the fastest horse in the stable, and, riding as if for his life, he caught the American mail at Ballinascorney with a quarter of an hour to spare.

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You cannot be happy while you have corns. They do not delay in getting a bottle of Holloway's Corn Cure. It removes all kinds of corns without pain. Failure with it is unknown.

THINK about your health. Do not allow serafata taints to develop in your blood. Take Hood's Sarsaparilla now and keep yourself well.

you away if you feel you must go. Wait but a little longer, a month or perhaps the light will come. Pray for my child," and the holy man who had known her all her life blessed her tenderly and sent her away, saying to himself with a sadly sweet smile, "She does not know her heart as yet, and mistakes her vocation utterly."

She was sore at heart. She was fifty and thirty and it seemed to her that she had almost wasted all her life.

She sat in her little dressing room after the play was over, thinking bitterly, what had she ever done in this world, this world which had so long claimed her? Nobody needed her now. She was alone and—but at the moment a voice said:

"May I come in, Kate?" and her cousin's husband entered the room. He was a tall man, with gray in the hair, and serious Irish blue eyes. His was a strong face, and there was nobility in its expression, but sad and too, and the mobile mouth had lines of bitter pain and stern self-mastery.

He looked searchingly at the face of the woman before him. He had ways thought Kate handsome, yet at night he was superb. She was tall and dark, with a fine figure, an aristocratic carriage, and an air of pride and reserve which belied her, for her nature was frank and sweet.

"What is this I hear, Kate?" asked, as he threw himself into a chair beside her. "Are you going away?"

"I think so," she said slowly. "You've had a good offer. Garret wants you for his leading lady, so you said. Forgive me for asking, is it the money, Kate? I would gladly give you the same as he will."

"It is not a question of money," said, almost choked with indignation. Hugh Connor sighed heavily and said: "I suppose it is a better company than mine. I can't make it what I want. I'm selfish, but I'd like to keep with me, Kate. When must you go?"

"I—I don't mean to accept Mr. Garret's offer," she said. "I think of going into the Sacred Heart. It is very hard to talk with those whose blue eyes are fixed upon her, and say such strange things which they never said before."

"Kate!" he cried, incredulously. "Surely you're not going to the nun?"

Then her passion burst through the veil of reserve, and she cried indignantly: "Yes, I am! And why? Years ago I meant to be one, Estelle needed me. Then it was Kate, and now, no one in all the world needs me, and I may go. What I ever do worth the doing in this world? Not a thing. Let me go. Hugh. Nobody needs me now, she burst into tears."

Hugh Connor looked very tenacious at the bowed head, then his rich eyes said gently: "There was once a woman who was very talented, and stately, and beautiful, and sweet, though she seemed to know she was any of things. She was, too, so proud, no one ever reached to the bottom of her great heart. She was ambitious and dreamed of the religious life that she would be another Saint Theresa, and she failed to see that she was an inspiration for purity and love for all around her. She gave her dreams to care for a helpless cousin, and before she died she repented that countless times, when tears came to her, the pure and noble face of this woman had seemed to before her and save her. Wasn't that?"

"This woman lived a staid life amidst the dirt path of stage life, defiled and many a man has made him believe in and respect purity of women, and wish to them as stainless as she."

"A motherless child learned her lessons in truth and obedience woman's knee; a whole company of players, men and women, came for sympathy and help; a lonely heart felt as if an angel presided over her and shed reverence at the thought of the blessing woman's life so near his own."

Deed of week day kindness. Fall from her noiseless as the snow. As she had vowed to keep that she was ever true to her.

"Is all this nothing?" "Ah, Kate!" he reached and her fingers, and held them tight, as if they trembled and fluttered. "Kate, I want you," he eagerly.

She looked at him with great startled eyes; then rose and drew away from him, unconscious that her eyes had been fast.

"Kate," he said tenderly, "you. Will you stay with me, my wife, my Kate?"

She closed her eyes. His words she thought, and in a flash she had loved him unknowingly years.

"Estelle!" she murmured, trying to free herself from his hand. He released her, but still held in that firm grip.

"I loved my sweet little very dearly," he said, stately this was her wish, too, Kate