

Family Reading.

The Hidden Treasure.

CHAPTER XI.—CONTINUED.

"I shall feel easier at leaving you, dear uncle, now the good Knight is at home!" said Jack to his uncle, after Master Fleming had taken his departure.

"Have no fears for me!" replied the shepherd. "I have none for myself. My dependence for aid must be upon no arm of flesh, my son, but on one who can as easily save by few as by many, and who will let no harm happen to me!"

The next day Jack finished writing Father John's Latin letter, and copied it out fairly in his best handwriting, all the time wishing in his heart that Master Crabtree could see it. Then he carried it down to the little hamlet of Holford, and called at the priest's house. Father John welcomed him warmly as usual, and admired the appearance of the letter, which though he could not understand more than one word in ten, he would have Jack read aloud to him.

"It sounds very wisely, I'm sure!" said he, when the letter was ended; "and it is much better written than that of the Abbot's secretary. It has just come in time, for I shall have a chance to send it by one of the brethren from the Abbey who has come to the Hall on some business. And now, son, what shall I pay you for your labour?"

"Nothing at all, dear Father!" replied Jack. "The exercise has been good for me, and I should be ashamed to take a penny from you after all your kindness to me. I only wish I could do more for you before I go home. Shall I not set your reverence's books in order?"

"Nay, they are hardly worth the trouble, my son!" replied Father John. "However, you may set them to rights if you like. They are all there in the cupboard, and at least there are none I am ashamed to have seen by a young boy like you; and that is more than every priest could say."

Jack opened the cupboard and began taking out the books, dusting them and smoothing out the dogs' ears with which they were plentifully embellished. They were, as the father had said, of no great value. The collection consisted of a few volumes of divinity in Latin and English, none of them showing marks of any great wear; a volume of Gower's poems and another of Chaucer, both well thumbed, some lives of saints, and a considerable accumulation of penny ballads and cheap books, any one of which would now be worth its weight in gold ten times over. Father John meantime leaned back in his chair, talking on in an easy gossiping tone of various matters.

"You see I am no great book-worm, my son. I like to read a merry tale now and again. I can enjoy a joke even against myself, like those of that fellow Chaucer, whom Father Barnaby thinks was an imp of the bottomless pit sent into the world for the express purpose of abusing monks. What is that big volume?"

"Cicero, your reverence!" said Jack. "The *Orations of Cicero*."

"Ah, that came to me with Horace. Take it home with you if you would like to have it. It is of no use to me, and I daresay you will read it. I wonder how he found time to write so much, and all in Latin, too!"

"I suppose Latin came natural to him, your reverence, as English does to us!" said Jack, greatly amused. "You know all the ancient Romans spoke Latin. It was their native tongue!"

"Was it?" asked the father simply. "Then when they heard the mass they must have understood every word of it, just as the people here would do if it were said in English. I never thought before of Latin's being anybody's native tongue, but it must have been, of course. Mayhap they said mass in Greek!"

"I believe they did not say mass at all!" said Jack. "They were all heathens, you know, and worshipped Jupiter and Mars!"

"Oh, yes, I know, you told me so the other day. Well, poor things, they did not know any better, and doubtless that will be taken into account. Have you finished the books?"

"Yes, your reverence, but here are the papers!"

"Oh, they are of no great consequence. You may leave them as they are. And so you are going home, eh?"

"Yes, I am going to ride to Bridgewater to-morrow with Master Fleming, who is now staying at the Hall."

"Well, I shall be sorry to miss you, that is the truth!" said Father John. "Your fresh, young face comes upon me like sunshine. I almost fear I shall never see you again, for I am an old man—an old man, my dear, and between ourselves," he added, lowering his voice, "this talk about heresy and the new doctrines and all, is wearing me into my grave. Here has been Father Barnaby again, talking to me about my duty—my duty forsooth, who was in orders before he had left off his long coats, if indeed he ever wore them, which is doubtful—and the suspected spread of heresy in this part of the world. It was a good part of the world enough before he came to spoil it. I would he had been born in Germany or some of those outlandish parts where the Lutherans begun. He would have enough to do there. And to say I want discretion! I, that might be his grandfather almost! What do you think of that, my son!"

In his own mind Jack was by no means sure that Father Barnaby was mistaken in this last named article. He did not say so, however, but applied himself to pacifying and comforting the poor old man.

"I am sure, Father, all the people of the parish love you. I never heard anybody say one word against you, and I heard the lady at the Hall say only a few days ago that you were so good to the poor, she was sure you must go beyond your means. I daresay Father Barnaby intends to do his duty."

"Oh, duty!" said Father John, pettishly interrupting him. "Whenever I hear folks talking about their duty, I always know they are going to say or do something disagreeable. But what have you there?" as Jack brought forward a basket which he had left at the door.

"Fresh eggs, sir. Duck's and hen's eggs, and a pair of young fowls which my uncle sent you with his duty—and likewise some mushrooms, which I gathered early this morning."

"Many thanks—many thanks, my son. Your uncle is a thoughtful man, and you are a good lad to remember me. And there!" added Father John triumphantly. "That is the third pair of young chickens I have had given me in a week. Does that look as if the parish were given to heresy? Do heretics send their chickens to a parish priest? Answer me that now?"

"I should certainly say not!" replied Jack, smiling.

"The parish is a good parish if it were let alone," continued Father John. "But there, I must not keep you. I would you were not going, and yet mayhap it is best. Here, take this medal and hang it round your neck. It hath an image of your patron saint, and is of sovereign virtue to keep off ague, so perhaps it may keep off heresy as well. Go, go, my dear son, be a good lad and say your prayers, and may all the saints bless you."

Jack kissed the old man's hand and promised to wear the medal faithfully, and went away, wondering that he should feel so much at parting from one with whom his acquaintance had commenced so inauspiciously. After leaving Father John, he took his way back to the Hall to hear the hour at which Master Fleming intended to set out in the morning. He found the merchant and his host walking together on the terrace, and standing quietly at one side, he waited to be spoken to. Sir Thomas was the first to notice him, and bade him good-day with his usual kindness. He was a tall, grave, soldierly-looking gentleman, with an expression and air of kindly authority, such as might well be acquired by a man of sense and benevolence in the station of a country gentleman of large estate, who looked on his tenants and dependents not as so much property, or so many means of making money, but as members of a family for the well-being of which he was responsible.

To be continued.

HARD SAUCE—One-half cup of butter well beaten; stir in slowly one cup of fine sugar, and beat to a cream. Pile on a plate and grate over a little nutmeg. Keep cool.

Who are Church Members?

Holy Scripture knows of no Church in any city, country, or in the world, other than the visible community of the baptized. There was one way of making Church members—the rite appointed by our Lord Himself—and there was no other. Those who were baptized, however bad they might be, were members; those who were not baptized, however good they might be, were not members. In other words, the visible Church had, as in fact it must have, its visible form of admission. It has been said of late "The Church consists not of the christened, but of the Christly." Yes, the Church which we evolve from our own imagination, but not that of the Bible. The Apostolic Church consists not of the Christly (of course the members should be Christly), but of the christened. I think it is sometimes forgotten that our Blessed Lord no sooner began to preach than He began to baptize. He formed a visible society to which men were admitted by a visible rite. Not only so, but He declared that there was no other way into the Kingdom of God than the new birth "of water and the Spirit." And so at the close of His ministry, He charged the Apostles to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them," etc. We are now told that "Baptism is allowable, but optional." The Wesleyan "church" contains (or recently did contain) members who declined to be baptized, and its form of admission is to give a printed ticket. It was not thus the New Testament Church was constituted. Men became members of the "one body" by the "Baptism." "In one Spirit" were they all "baptized into the one body." "Repent and be baptized every one of you," was practically the message. "Can any man forbid the water that these should not be baptized?" was the first question asked after the outpourings of the Holy Ghost upon the Gentiles.

The Holy Eucharist in Public Worship.

The Holy Eucharist is of necessity the Church's one act of worship. Nothing can take its place. All other acts of worship are subsidiary to and depend upon it, and by the nature of the case it must be so, for in the Eucharist, and in the Eucharist alone, owing to its relation to our Lord's sacrifice upon the Cross and His present offering in heaven, all the obligations inherent in man's relation to God are satisfied and expressed. Writing upon worship, it was impossible to ignore the foundation of doctrine on which the worship of the Church rests. Doctrine lies at the root of all the Church's practice, and the attempt to discuss the one apart from the other is either wilfully to deceive, or ignorantly to build upon the sand. We hear a great deal at the present time about making the services of the Church attractive, of the necessity of good music, popular hymns and stirring sermons. . . . Man, sooner or later, with a greater or less degree of intensity, dimly at times, more clearly at others, realizes that his heart has wants which nothing which is merely human can satisfy. He is oppressed by the sense of sin and the need of forgiveness. He wants to be brought into relation with God, not merely to be gratified by fine music or a beautiful service. He wants a framework for his own prayers, the outpourings of his own heart. He wants to express his love, to be brought near to a person, to have God for his own, to speak to Him, to hear Him speak as a man speaks to a friend, face to face, to be enabled to plead for himself and those dear to him, to offer a service worthy of God's acceptance—but this is exactly what the Holy Eucharist supplies in a way that nothing else does or can.

It is an action in which each can take his own part, into which each can fit his individual prayers. It is a great act of intercession which each can apply to his own needs. Religion is not a mere series of statements, doctrinal or moral, it is not a mere agency for stirring the emotions; it has, above all things, to do with a Person, and power to bring us into contact with that Person; power over the Lord's Body is the distinctive glory and possession of the Catholic Church. The word spoken in Christ's Name secures His Presence at our altars. He Who is there present is the same Who, throughout all His life and upon the Cross, saw all our needs and discharged all our debts.