

OCTOBER 19, 1901.

appointment as school officer, and his relations with her never would be again what they were.

A THREAD OF PURE GOLD.

Uncle Richard is sitting near the window, with his white hair, illumined by the old face bent over his children, old, clustering around his knees, and begging for a story.

"Let it be a story of the war, Uncle," cries my boy-soldier, brandishing an imaginary sword. But Julia objects.

"Tell us a ghost story, Uncle," she pleads, in an awed little voice. "What does Mary want?" asks Uncle Richard, lifting his five-year-old baby to his knee.

"Pardon me, she says, 'a story about the Blessed Virgin,' she answers, raising her eyes not unlike those of the pictured Madonna hanging on the wall.

"Once upon a time," he begins, "there was a big brick schoolhouse where two boys, Dick and Harry, went to school."

"Why, yes, yes, number of them; but you are going to hear about those two only. They were taught by a Sister of Nazareth. Those Sisters wore white caps with pretty frills, and under them their faces look like angels."

"As soon as he was at liberty, Harry went to the tree. The arrow had missed the white edge by half an inch and was fastened in the breast of the Madonna in the picture."

"And once she sent him another to love, and another who bore her name, and she loved Dick very dearly. She who loved Dick very dearly, she who loved him better than all the world besides, he would not yield to entreaties, and she died heart-broken."

one of the beds. Dick was no longer a practical Catholic, but the sight of the priest's esocock awakened memory. He saw again the little altar, with its lights and flowers, the good old priest, the crowd of school boys, and Sister Agnita's beautiful face.

"You, Harry?" cried Dick. "Yes, Dick, it is I," he answered. After a while when Dick asked Harry how it happened that he had thought of becoming a priest, he replied:

"You first gave me the thought, Dick," and he took from his bosom the little picture of Our Lady, into which years ago he had shot the arrow, which years ago he had shot the arrow, which years ago he had shot the arrow."

"A favorite game with the boys one term was archery. For a time it interested Dick, so much so that he insisted on his uncle's sending to the city for a bow and arrows. Those of the other boys were made by their fathers, but Harry's were made by his uncle, and he grew tired of the game, while Harry's love for it increased."

"Watch me, boys, hit the top of the picture!" As he spoke, the winged arrow was sent and Dick bounded forward. Like a tiger, Dick bounded forward. Like a tiger, Dick bounded forward.

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And as they gazed at the serene face, their souls were checked, and they said to one another in hushed tones. "Our Madonna Penseroso is sad no more!" Kathleen Eileen Barry in Rosary Magazine.

There are some shallow young men who delight in appearing as "free thinkers." Some even of Catholic ancestry are among these; and while they would, perhaps, declare themselves to be Catholics, they show very plainly they are not possessed of the true Catholic spirit by the manner in which they declaim against Catholic customs and observances and even against tenets which involve faith in Christianity. They would be insulted if called heathens, but their denunciation as infidels they would probably regard as a compliment to their mental ability based upon their advanced views in the matter of religion. They remind one of the story of a certain French priest who asked a member of the flock why he did not come to Mass. "Oh, Father," was the reply, "I am a free thinker."

"I am a free thinker," said the priest. "Have you ever read the Bible?" asked the abbe. "No," was the response. "Glaubebriand's Genius of Christianity?" "No." "The writings of St. Augustine or of Bossuet?" "Well, do you know the contents of the little catechism?" "I think not."

"My dear man," said the priest, "you are not a free thinker. You are only an ignoramus." So it is with numbers to-day who esteem themselves free-thinkers or rationalists, when in fact they are not. There are men who occasionally go to Church and are esteemed Christians of one denomination or another; sometimes they are reputed Catholics, and their professions are of just this order. Whatever the state of their consciences, whatever of faith and reverence, they are inwardly possessors, they are ashamed to manifest in their conversation much respect for piety and religion, while they evince indeed a certain sense of pride in their liberalism, their agnosticism and free-thinking, which are indeed but their ignorance.

The Metropolitan Opera House was in a tumult. The Sunday night audience that had come to attend the grand concert, refused to be placated by the management's apologies for the absence of the Italian diva. They clamored for their idol. "Capello!" "Capello!" "Capello!" At last she came. The house fairly rose at her, but she did not acknowledge their greeting. Her face was cold, unsmiling, rigid as a death-mask.

St. Patrick's Cathedral was brilliantly illuminated. It was crowded to the doors. Many religious denominations were represented in that throng; even the atheistic element was not lacking. Saint and sinner, believer and sceptic, had come there to listen to a preacher had spread over New York.

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