

SCALDED HER HAND.

Mrs. T. Wannamaker, Frankford, Ont., says: "I scalded my hand very badly and then took cold in it. It swelled and was very painful, but half a bottle of Hagar's Yellow Oil cured it completely."

MOTHER-LOVE.

His face all radiant with the loving seal A father's lips upon his brow have pressed, In pardon for a fault with tears confessed, An erring child seeks her he knows will feel The shame he fain would speak yet not reveal; She takes him to her love-enlightened breast, And hears the father's goodness sung; A wondrous mother's part that helped the wound to heal. Thus we, God's children, trembling 'neath His love That pardoned us and bade us "go in peace," Not guessing all our Heavenly Mother's part, Kneel at her feet; the while she bends above, And, knowing, smiles as sorrow finds release, And we pour out our love on that dear Heart. —Ave Maria.

A Victim to the Seal of Confession.

A True Story, by Rev. Joseph Spillman, S. J.

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(Montreal True Witness.)

CHAPTER I.—(Continued) "They are the environs of Straburg," the old lady replied. "We resided there until the commencement of the ill-fated war put an end to all our happiness. My husband carried on a trade in fruit; on one occasion when he came into Provencence to purchase a quantity of the dried plums of these parts, I made his acquaintance. My parents consented to our union, so I followed him to the Rhineland as his wife. We got on well till the outbreak of the war; and almost before we were aware of it, the Germans surrounded Straburg. Those were terrible times, Mr. Lenoir; one did not dare to venture into the streets because the enemy's shots flew about on all sides. After the defeat at Metz all hope of an accommodation was at an end. The quarter of the town where we lived was most hotly attacked. Before the bombardment began in earnest, through the intervention of some Swiss gentlemen of position, permission was obtained for the old men, women and children to leave the town. This was proclaimed with the beat of the drum in the streets, and immediately George said the children and I must go. Our parting was a truly sorrowful one. For the children's sake I complied with my husband's wish, Francis was then a lad of sixteen and still attending the Gymnasium; Charlotte was a few years younger. We bade each other an affectionate farewell, then I joined the band of exiles—some two thousand in all—which were to pass through the enemies' lines under the escort of our Swiss friends, and proceeded to Bale. Before we had crossed the frontier the cannonade in our rear announced that the attack on the city had begun, and soon a red glare lit up the sky in the direction we had left. Ever long we heard that the authorities had surrendered; and I learned in the newspapers a portion of the misfortune that had befallen us. It was said that every house in the quarter where our home was situated was reduced to ashes. I waited from day to day, looking for tidings of my husband; I felt daily more convinced that had he been alive he would have come, or at least would have written to us. The worthy people who had offered a refuge to the children and myself tried to console me that no dependence could be placed on the post in the time of war; they sought to deter me from returning to Straburg, but at the end of a week, I could bear the separation no longer. Leaving my children under the care of our kind retainers, I took the train to Straburg. God grant that you may never witness such a sight as met my eyes! Just as, after clambering over heaps of debris, and still smoldering ruins, I reached the spot where our house had stood, I saw the police extracting the body of my dear husband from beneath the rubbish. I identified him by his clothes and his wedding ring. See, this is the ring."

So saying, Mrs. Montmoulin brought out a bent and blackened ring, and showed it to the man who had listened to her narrative with the deepest interest. "One can see that it was in the fire as well as its master," he said as he examined it closely. "It has been indented too by the falling walls. And did the Prussians let you go without molestation? People say they were very devil."

"No, they were quite civil, and even allowed me to have the small sum contained in the cash box, which they also dug out of the ruins." One of the officers, too, who was superintending the men, gave me a half

eroin, when he heard that I was the widow of the man whose remains had just been found, and that was left utterly without means of subsistence. God gave me strength to bear up at that time, or my troubles would have deprived me of my reason, or brought me to the grave. As soon as I had seen my poor husband buried, I hastened back to Bale, having made up my mind to go back to my old home in Provencence with the two children. The good people who had shown us hospitality would not take anything from me, not a penny! God reward them! They even gave me a little present, and bade me God speed on my journey, when we started on our way through Geneva to my dear old native town, Aix, where my mother was still living. I took the little house, our present abode, and opened a small business in woollen manufactures with the few hundred francs that George gave me when we left Straburg, all the ready money he had at the time. This has provided us with a scanty subsistence just enough to live on ever since. But I am wearying you with my long story, Mr. Lenoir. You must forgive me; when an old woman begins to talk of by-gone days, she finds it difficult to stop.

"Forgive you!" her companion rejoined. "I owe you many thanks for telling me this, and I feel for you with all my heart. If ever you want a friend in need, do you come to me. Upon my word you have shown great courage. I only hope the remainder of your life will be more tranquil and happy than the past has been, for you have had several trials. When you go to live with your son at Ste. Victoire you will have a good time before you."

"If it is the will of God, Mr. Lenoir, I have been looking forward to it for a long time," the old lady replied, and as she spoke she sighed deeply, for a dark presentiment seemed to rise up before her, like the shadow of a heavy cloud, as if another trial were yet in store for her. "If it is the will of God," she repeated gently.

"I trust your hopes may soon be fulfilled. Here we are at the inn already! Your conversation has made the time appear so short. Now Charles, my boy, look sharp, and mind you are down here again by six o'clock." And the stout baker swung himself to the ground more nimbly than one would have thought possible for a man of his weight, and politely helped Mrs. Montmoulin to alight. The two children soon jumped down, and after hastily thanking their friend, they followed their grandmother up the hill to the convent.

CHAPTER II. The Pastor of Ste. Victoire had ended a good day's work, for Sunday was with him a laborious day, as indeed it is for most hard-working priests.

On the Sunday of which we are speaking he had risen betimes and made his meditation in the Church, until it was time to ring the Angelus. This he did with his own hand, as his negligent Sacristan was not yet up. Since it was the first Sunday in Lent, a considerable number of his parishioners were desirous of approaching the Sacraments, and the good clergyman was detained for a long time in the Confessional, in fact until the time for Mass. He felt almost faint when he went into the sacristy to vest; the sacristan was there, ready to help him, but not in the best of humor, for he knew he had fallen in his duty and expected a well-merited reprimand. "Instead of this, to his surprise Father Montmoulin merely observed that he had taken a long rest that morning. The sermon that day was on the Sacrament of Penance; the preacher reminded his hearers more particularly that our Lord had rendered confession much easier than it would otherwise have been, by imposing strict secrecy as a solemn obligation on the minister who was His representative; so that on no account, not even to avert the loss of all his temporal goods, of his reputation, even of life itself, could the priest venture to violate the seal of confession. In illustration of what he said, he mentioned the well-known example of St. John Nepomucene; and in more recent times, the case of the Polish priest who, rather than break the seal of confession, suffered shame and reproach and ended his days as an exile in Siberia. Finally he appealed earnestly to the men of his flock—who unhappily few were present—urging them no longer to defer the duty, perhaps already too long neglected, of making their peace with God, and participating in the treasures of grace the Redeemer purchased for us by His bitter passion and death. It was rather later than usual when Father Montmoulin, having finished the Mass, after a short but fervent thanksgiving, repaired to his

**Nursing Mothers** dread hot weather. They know how it weakens and how this affects the baby. All such mothers need Scott's Emulsion. It gives them strength and makes the baby's food richer and more abundant. No. and St. All Druggists.

own room, where a cup of coffee stood upon the table ready for him. Then the brewer—always longer in Lent—had to recite, and almost before this was ended, half a dozen of his parishioners came in one after the other, each one needing counsel or help or consolation, according to their several circumstances. This lasted until Susan, the old housekeeper who attended to his wants, brought his frugal dinner in from the "Olive-tree" inn close by. This woman was not regularly engaged as his servant, he contemplated making a fresh arrangement, as soon as he could furnish a couple of rooms for his mother, and offer her a home under his roof.

Susan was dressed in all her Sunday finery, which consisted of a frock of pale blue material with a somewhat striking pattern of yellow and red flowers. Over this she wore a small shawl of green striped with white, the gaudy colors being ill in keeping with her wrinkled countenance and the grey locks that were rather untidily twisted up under her cap. The good woman was in fact, not far off seventy, and could never have been a beauty in her younger day; but that mattered little, for she was an honest old soul, and had no greater wish than to make all straight and comfortable for his Reverence.

As soon as she had put the soup upon the table, she smoothed her apron with her wrinkled old hands, and standing at a little distance she began, with the familiarity of an old domestic;

"What a splendid sermon you gave us to-day, Father! All about the seal of confession, and the beautiful story about the Saint, and the Polish Priest! I looked around me once or twice in church—I hope I did not do wrong, if by my edification—and you should just have seen how the people were crying. The persons who ought to have heard it, like the Mayor and the Notary, and the Liberals as they call themselves, were not there, nor were the pious. They have got something better to do now than to come to church; they are so busy with the election! And as for one who was there, that lot of a scurvy-dog, instead of taking the sermon to heart as he should have done, and resolving at last to go to confession."

"Well, Susan, we know that the most eloquent discourses do not change the heart. You ought to pray fervently, that will do more good than lamenting over the obduracy of sinners. We have a long-suffering and compassionate God who knows how to recall the wanderers to Himself."

"Mercy on us! I only meant first to tell your reverence what a fine sermon you preached and now seemingly I have been proud and uncharitable! But will you not take another slice of the roast beef, Father? No? Well, I expect it is rather tough, the butcher serves us very badly now. I have scarcely got a tooth left in my head, but you are young and with your excellent set of teeth you might manage it. Am I to clear away? I do not think however you will keep up your strength, eating as little as you do."

"I shall get on well enough, Susan. Now you must leave me time to get ready for Catechism, it is really more important than the morning's sermon," answered the priest, watching the old woman with a smile as she carried away the dishes amid many an anxious shake of the head. When the door had closed behind her, he took up a Catechism and began to think over the instruction which he had already prepared some days previously. For some time he sat at the table meditating, his head resting on his hand. He was quite a young man; his pale rather handsome features wore a pleasing expression, for although somewhat careworn, he was naturally of a blithe and cheerful disposition. The careful and pious training of his boyhood, and the course of study he had subsequently gone through, imparted a certain refinement to his countenance.

The whitewashed walls and simple furniture of the room were in keeping with its occupants. The old-fashioned carving of the dark wooden ceiling and door-posts bespoke considerable antiquity; and the Crucifix hanging on the wall, as well as the picture of the Last Supper facing it, were far superior to the ordinary productions of modern religious art. The common gilt earthenware vases on each side of an image of our Lady of Dolours looked, it is true, somewhat out of harmony with the quaintly carved wood-work, and the writing-table of unpolished deal, the bookshelves with half-filled with books, the plain chair and table, testified to the poverty of the priest. In this case, however, poverty did not banish cheerfulness and content. What, in fact, did he want with grandeur and show? To his mind the fragrant hyacinths at the open window, the bright sunshine that lit up the room the mild spring air laden with the scent of the orchards in flower, did more to make the humble apartment homelike and pleasant than rich carpets costly paintings and luxurious furniture would have done. A Sabbath stillness, an atmosphere of peace reigned on the whole scene; nothing in his surroundings led the good pas-

tor to suspect how near the storm was approaching which would wreck the happiness of his tranquil life.

The church bell rang out its summons only too soon. The priest rose, and went into the church to give the instruction; to this he had to devote his whole energy. Then followed Veppers and Benediction, and to wind up all, an infant was brought to be baptized.

No marvel that when Father Montmoulin at length threw himself back in his easy chair with a sigh of relief, his eyelids closed from sheer weariness, and drowsiness crept over him. But a moment later he started up and rubbed his eyes. "Come, come," he said to himself, "this will never do. I am too young yet to go to sleep in broad daylight. I have just time left to look over the accounts of St. Joseph's Guild, and count the money that Mrs. Blanchard deposited with my predecessor and myself. She is coming to-morrow to fetch the whole sum; thank God, they will soon set about building the hospital. It is astonishing what an amount these good ladies have contrived to collect. France is as ready as ever to help the needy; God grant she may, thereby win the divine favor, and the old child-like faith may revive in our land." Thus musing, he cast a glance out of the window at the quiet village that lay below, half-hidden by the trees which were now in full blossom. Then he turned to his writing-table, and opened the drawer where he kept the cash-box containing the funds of the Guild. He spent some time reckoning up his figures, and then slowly, and doubtfully, in, it must be confessed, no very business like manner, he began to count the monies spread out on the table.

(To be continued.)

**MISCELLANEOUS.**

**Sandy Spikes**—Say, Billy, what yer stoppin' off at such a hustin' town as dis fer? Somebody'll tink yer lookin' fer work next. Billy Colgate—Dat's just what I'm d'is' Sandy; lookin' fer work. Sandy Spikes—W-what? Billy Colgate—Yep; lookin' fer work, so I'll know where it is, an' won't run zig-zag when I'm off me guard.—Chicago News.

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