CLARA LESLIE.

CHAPTER XVII.-Continued.

· A TALE OF OUR OWN TIMES.

Miss Leslie,' said Morris, more earnestly stills do not dally with conviction; hesitate not, God's grace cannot, must not, be trifled with .-Do not fear what the world can do or say. I do not fear,' replied Clara; God knows

how willingly I would dare anything were I sure it was His will. I only fear mistaking my own ardent feelings for the leadings of His Grace.' Then fear no more,' replied Mr. Morris;

make up your mind now, and I will lead you where your doubts will be laid at rest. They had reached the front of Trinity Church

and he paused and looked eagerly for her answer in the fluctuating color that came and went in

Do not doubt any more; ten minutes will carry you where God's priest will receive you into the bosom of Christ's One Church. Did you but know the rest and happiness of those who just left for the glorious courts of Christ's Immaculate Spouse.'

He thought she was yielding, and would have led her steps back; but she stopped him with a syddea effort, and said hastily, but firmly,

· No; it must not be yet. I owe it to those who have led me hitherto to pause before I take such an awful step. Good bye, Mr. Morris; something tells me we shall meet again, and it will be in the bosom of our mighty Mother'and here she looked up for one moment with a faint smile - with Father Newman, and and—' she could not go on; but she collected herself with an effort: 'Write to Alan, Mr. Morris, and tell him what has happened: tell him to pray for me; and now good bye.'

Wingfield, because she feared him less.

Mr. Morris was far less of the Anglican, and aimed more at being like a Catholic priest; and Clara had experienced his gentleness and tenderness in the confessional, so that his loss was indeed a heavy one to her. She heard his gentle God bless you!' felt the last long pressure of hands of imparting His light and His love to my bis hand; and darting across the New Road, Soul. On the contrary, I forewarn you that looked not behind her as she hurried up

A few days after, Clara was summoned to Douglas's study. It was an unusual call, and she felt foreboding evil. He was standing by the fire looking unusually stern, while Mildred. with cheeks rather flushed, was sitting by his side in silence.

'Clara,' said Douglas, as she entered, 'is this your handwriting ?'

Clara turned pale, for she instantly recognised

a note to Mr. Morris, which she had missed some weeks before. She saw that all was discovered: and fortifying herself with a silent prayer, calmly answered in the affirmative.

'And you have dared, Clara, in spite of my express prohibition,' continued Douglas, in a voice of deep indignation, 'to run straight in my face, and commence that detestable system of Romish confession and direction which certain are attempting to introduce clandestinely into in Osnaburgh Terrace. They were not however suffer in my house.'

'Clara's spirit was high. The extravagant language in which Douglas spoke made her cool pened to be staying in the house. Clara atand collected in a moment; and all her efforts could scarcely restrain the very slightest curl of the drawing room; but finding that her presence contempt on her lip and in her voice as she re- only laid a restraint upon every one, she confined

Douglas, it is very easy to call names, and to stigmatize as 'detestable' what the Church of that she never went out alone, and regularly the good of my soul, you know Our Lord Himself has said, 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' and He has declared that ' he that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.' mother to me.

Douglas sternly replied, tion, to me, because I do not choose you to lose change. your character whilst you remain in my house by running after clergymen whose sole aim is to un- ill !" dermine the Church of England, and secretly to carry them over to Popery, like Mr. Morris, - well, considering. Have you brought me an anbecause I do not choose you to soil your mind swer from Mr. Wingfield?

'As to the deception, Douglas,' replied Clara, knows I have hated it enough. God knows I but you have been long prepared for a discovery be guided to where the young Child lay with was loth enough to begin it. And as to my of this sort. I think I would yield as far as the Mary His Motner, to adore in grateful, ardent uning being soiled by any more contact with Mr. Daily Service is concerned; you can always ac- love. Morris, you may rest satisfied; for he has left company Mrs. Leslie to Church. Going to London; he is now a Catholic.'

expected such conduct from him; but Mr. not give up any thing which is of so much good own. Wingfield— It seems you are not contented to your soul; and if he does not wish you to go with one confessor,' he continued sarcastically; to Margaret Chapel, I would go to any other a pretty pass. A fine serpent in the grass I have have already expressed your determination with been receiving into my house; he deserves to be regard to confession; I would say no more on exposed in the public papers for his sly villany !' that subject. I do not expect to be in Town He began pacing angrilly the room, regardless of till the Eve of the Purification. I shall then an imploring look from Mildred. Clara felt her hope to see you again at Mrs. Temple's as usual, advantage and said nothing. She only looked if you can manage to be there; if you cannot, quietly and calmly at her brother; for she had you must let me know. I take this opportunity no temptation to be angry. In a moment he rehave exchanged the sham Catholicity you have stated himself. 'Clara,' said he, 'I have given you every confidence. You have betrayed that confidence; yet if you will give me a written promise that you will never again go to confession, you may still have all the liberty you have hitherto had; if not, I forbid you ever to enter Margaret Chapel again, and whenever you leave this house, it must be either with Mildred or myself. You will not like this; I only ask your simple written promise. Are you ready to give

> this country is that she allows full liberty of con- preserve you from any rash step. science to every one. Why should we alone be deprived of what every one else possesses? Are you consistent?

'I am not here to argue with you, Clara,' re-His eyes were full of tears, and she felt as if her heart would break. She was parting with one whom she loved in a different way to Mr. but I may take my measures accordingly. Will you give the promise I require?

'No, Douglas; I never will,' replied Clara firmly; and she rose from her seat. Her pale cheek kindled and her dark eye flashed as she spoke in calm, thrilling tones; I have known too long the mestimable blessing of confession to give np what has been the means in God's whenever I can possibly find an opportunity, and oriest the exercise of that power which was solemnly given to you and every clergyman of the Church of England at their ordination, and which is the sole appointed means whereby we may obtain the remission of sin.

reply; and she instantly obeyed.

CHAPTER XVIII .- HOME TRIALS. "When our heads are bowed with woe, When our bitter tears c'erflow, When we mourn the lost, the desr, -Gracious Son of Mary, hear.

Thou the pain, the grief hast known, Though the sin was not Thine own; Thou hast shed the human tear,— Gracious Son of Mary, hear."

Every one may imagine that conversations such as the one detailed in the foregoing chapter clergymen, traitors to the Church of England, did not contribute to the peace of the household her bosom, and which I told you I would never repeated. Douglas kept up his severe face, spoke little when Clara was in the room, and while Catherine perused the note. was often closeted with Mrs. Selwyn, who haptempted to behave as usual when she came into herself much to her own room, and there pursued her usual employments. The only difference was note and returned it to Clara. England herself authorizes and always. As to every morning accompanied Mildred to the dis-Catherine Temple, telling her it was out of her happiness. power to come and see her. She had taken the O Clara!' said Mildred sorrowfully; and ber note before Sunday; and accordingly on doubts can be the work of God.' ouglas sternly replied, Saturday alternoon a well-known knock at her 'So that is the packet I have even the law of the land gives me this power busy at her window, and flew to meet her. She over you till you are of age. And as to your looked pale and baggard; but there was an un-

Dear Clara,' said she tenderly, 'you look so

'Do I!' she replied; 'but I am wonderfully ine's face.

travagance and love of notoriety, were it not for was soon absorbed; while Catherine walked to ed at rest, and she stooped and kissed Clara, soon again; had another talk with Mrs. Selwan the system of deception you have been carrying the window to contemplate the medallion. She with a low whisper that went to Clara's heart. read as follows:--

ead as follows:—
'There is but one way, dearest Clara,—
'My dearest Child,—I was very sorry to hear prayer will settle it. Pray to be guided aright Margaret Chapel, after all, is only one of the "I am very glad to hear it," replied Douglas; luxuries of religion,-it is not an essential. As ask any thing about herself; - she received just what he ought to have done long ago. I to H. C., I would tell my brother that you canyou must have two. Really we are coming to church where there is weekly Communion. You of sending you the books I promised you. You will find the Preface to the new volume of Sermons Mr. Keble has brought out very interesting; also the sermon in which I have put a mark,- Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not,' &c. We live in dangerous times,-times of sorrow and anguish of heart; it behoves us to beware well what we do. One false s'ep may be fatal to our eternal happiness: and, oh, what will be our feelings it we wake up at the last Great Day, and find that unconsciously we have been living in a state of mortal sin!-'Douglas,' replied Clara firmly, 'the boast of God bless you and guide you, my dearest child,

> Ever, in Him, 'Your most affectionate F -

'C. R. W.' 'Do you like my St. Mary Magdalen?' said she, as she folded up the note and stood by her friend:

Catherine turned to look at her. There was a faint smile, so faint and so sad, on her features that it only heightened the melancholy lustre of her eyes; and Catherine's eyes filled with tears, for she could not help seeing in the beautiful features and unturned eyes of resigned sorrow in the medallion a reflection as it were, of Clara's pale countenance.

'Dearest Clara,' said she, 'it is beautiful .-You improve daily. But you could not have the Terrace, and in an instant gained her own I feel that I require it, I will seek from God's done that unless you had been in a sad mood

'I don't know how I did it,' replied Clara .--I caught that expression one night, I don't know how. I found it done in the morning.'

' Are you become a somnambulist, my poor child,' replied Catherine surveying in pity and 'Then you may leave the room,' was the cold sorrow the sweet sad face before her.

'No; I am aware I did it,' replied Clara; but my thoughts were far away at the time .-My guardian angel must have guided my brush : I did not do it. But here, read this note, Catherine; we must not waste time over my painting. I hope no one knows you are here."

'Mrs. Selwyn does,' replied Catherine. 'I have been talking to her this half bour in the drawing-room; and I believe I have won her heart, and made her think me one of the most wise conductors of young ladies she ever saw .-She even begged me to go and reason you into compliance and sober-mindeuness.'

Clara could not laugh, - she could scarcely smile ; and she seated herself in silent thought

Luxuries of religion!' repeated Catherine; and then went on reading.

'We have not many luxuries,' replied Clara, sadly; 'it is well if we have even the bare bones.

Catherine's color heightened as she folded the

'Mortal sin!' said she, 'Does Mr. Wing-fied think that such men as Father Newman will daring to do what you have forbidden, if it is for trict Church, instead of sometimes escaping early wake up and find themselves in mortal sin?—that in the morning to her favorite chapel. She had they were not following the call of God? He written an account of what happened to Mr. says indeed well that we live in dangerous times, Wingfield, asked his advice, and enclosed it to when one false step may be fatal to our eternal

But he forgets there are two sides of the After all, Douglas, you are neither father nor opportunity of every one's being out to slip this question,' interrupted Clara. 'He does not seem into the post. She had hoped for an answer to to take in consideration that it is possible any

'So that is the packet I have brought here?' 'I stand in the place of both to you, Clara; door announced Catherine Temple. Clara was said Catherine after a moment's pause, in which one flash of glad surprise' was ber answer to Clara's speech. 'I have read that Preface, and making a martyr of yourself, and quoting texts of natural brightness in her large eye that almost I think Mr. Wingfield is mistaken in thinking Scripture, only written for those ages of persecu- alarmed Catherine. A few days had made a vast that will settle your mind; it will only completely puzzle you.'

Clara, raising her now anxious look to Cather-

you yourself have forced it upon me. God of the new troubles that are come upon you; and, like the wise men from the East, you will Clara would have asked more; but she knew

from Catherine's manner that 'it was useless to all the secrets of others but never told her But, Catherine,' she replied, 'Mr. Wing-

field says that praying to have these doubts taken from me-if they are a temptation-is the very way to strengthen the temptation. He requires me to crush them at once."

'No, Clara,' replied Catherine warmiy .such prayer never never could be wrong: your own sense will tell you so. But we must not talk of these things; I have no fear but that you will ultimately be led aright. To talk of something else,-how would you like to go into the country with Mrs. Selwyn? O Catherine, they are not going to send me

to Ashton-le-Mary-away from London-away from Mr. Wingneld -with our own beautiful St. Wilfrid's in the hands of strangers. Oh, I could not hear it!

'And yet I believe it would be the very best thing for you,' replied Catherine; ' and so I told Mrs. Selwyn.'

O Catherine, how could you! exclaimed Clara. 'No weekly Communion! no Daily Service! not a person to speak to; a regular Evaugelical in dear papa's place! What should I do there? and she hid her face in her

'There is a High-Churen clergyman within five miles,' replied Catherine, 'where I think you would get weekly Communion, and there are Wednesday and Friday prayers at St. Wilfrid's. Besides, dear Clara, you would have your liberty there. Mrs. Selwyn would be kind, I am certain, if you managed her; and there would be no Mr. Wingfield to fear. To me it would be such a sweet joy to revisit St. Wilfrid's and my father's grave.

Clara thought for some time. 'I am glad you have told me, Catherine,' said she ; 'I cannot be more miserable than I shall be here, and perhaps it will be well for me to be employed. Here, my visiting the poor is cut short for ever. God's Will be done,' added she, with a melancholy almost spathy; 'whatever it may be, I must be wretched wherever I am.'

' Dear Clara,' said Catherine, her eyes filling,

do not say so.' 'O Catherine,' exclaimed Clara; 'you know not what it is to pass nights, whole nights, in tears, to have doubts haunting every moment of devotion, and to strive to quench them with the dreadful feeling upon you that you are resisting the Voice of God. Sometimes I cannot do it .-I feel as if I must tell Mr. Wingfield that I recall my promise. When I am reading the Rible passages cross my path, like a flash of lightning, that I never saw, or passed over as inexplicable before; and the explanation of the Church of Rome seems the only one that takes it in all its fullness. I cannot bear to hear people talking of copes, and crosses and embroidery, and architecture, as if that would fill the heart. I could not have lived all this time had I not believed that we were in a transition state; and now that hope seems vanishing. From the commonest book and the vellest commonplace remark, all seemed to tell one tale, to sneak to one end, to my mind .-Macaulay has done me a world of harm; he has

cannot stand this much longer; I shall be ill.' 'That is why I wish you to go into the country, and change the scene, Clara dearest,' replied Catherine; ' you would have other rucollections there, other occupations; your mind would have time to settle down into its usual equilibrium.

told me home-truths about the Church of Eng-

land; and that poor Douglas thinks it is the best

book in the world for me to read. Catherine, I

'Other recollections?' replied Clara; 'yes, of Alan. Shall I not think of that last bitter scene that dreadful night after poor papa's death, when Alan tore himself away? Ah, now I feel all he Nice? There the whole Catholic world was suffered. And then my own papa's grave—that assembled; at Trent but a very small portion .beautiful coped tomb beneath the chancel-wallhis smile in death. O Catherine, they loved me, we all bow to; the other merely the voice of they loved me: but they are both gone!' and Clare hid her face in her hands, and sobbed convulsively.

Catherine tried to comfort her. She wept suspected even. At last she sank back into her What will settle it, then, Catherine?' replied former calm apathetic state; but she was resigned to whatever might happen.

L'an't go to communion, said she at last, An expression of the most beautiful peace so it is no use making a fuss about it. I must ing of your Mother, replied Mr. Wingfield crossed Catherine's face. Clara could not but see Mr. Wingfield before 1 go again. It is no

I skryteniu kraticalia a mery es es es es es es es es

as she passed the drawing-room; and then lett the house. Mrs. Selwyn was to remain a few weeks longer in London; but a new circumstance brought things to a crisis, and hastened her departure. The Eve of the Purification came; the watch over Clara's movements had been a little relaxed, as she had not had any occasion for transgressing orders. In the afternoon she put on her walking things, and quietly slipped out of the house. She generally passed the afternoon in her own room, and she hoped her absence would remain undiscovered. With trembling steps she hurried into Albany street; it was only when she had turned the corner of the New Road and reached Harley Street that she felt beyond pursuit. Mr. Wingfield was waiting for her, and Catherine Temple, as usual, absented herself. He received her much as usual; but on seeing her pale and downcast looks his countenance changed, and she turned away and sighed deeply. Sho saw that he had read her mind, and that he had seen that her doubts were anything but quieted; but she was in one of those apathetic moods which cannot weep, nay, can scarcely feel, and with a dull load of sorrow pressing on her heart she stood before him, without uttering a syllable, her eyes cast down, and feeling like a culprit before his judge.

'Sit down,' said he, for that he saw that she trembled; and then he leaned his head on his hand, and sighed again and again. He seemed at a loss what to say.

' Are you going into the country?' said he at last.

'If you think I ought,' she replied hesitat-

ingly. 'Why, what else can you do?' was the ab-All this was not encouraging. Poor Clara's

heart sunk more and more.

· When did you go?' continued he.

Mrs. Selwyn thinks of leaving in a week or two,' replied Clara, 'unless, as I think very likely, my coming here without leave is found out, and I am sent off at a moment's warning.'
They do not, then, know you are out?' re-

' No,' was the sad, short rejoinder.

How different was all this from the eager blushing looks and timid delight with which Clara used to await the now-dreaded Mr. Wiagfield, and the kind smile and affectionate words with which ber evident awe was perceived and encouraged! There was another long pause.

'Have you read any of those books I sent you ?' said Mr. Wingfield, at last.

Clara answered in the affirmative.

'Did you not like Mr. Keble's Preface?' was the next question. Clara besitated.

Do you not find it conclusive?' he contipued.

She made an effort.

'It is above me. It is a train of reasoning which requires the utmost stretch of mind to grasp. It seems to me so obscure. How can it be intended to guide the ignorant and unlearned ? for as such I must rank myself. There are millions who know even less than I do; how can such a piece of subtle reasoning be even comprehended by them? The Church of Rome, on the contrary, seems to me so plain and consistent in all its ways, so par excellence the guide of the poor and ignorant !

She defines plenty of things which the Church Catholic never defined,' said Mr. Wingfield.

Because there was no need for it,' replied Clara. 'It seems to me as if she defined Transubstantiation in the sixteenth century just as she did the doctrine of the Trinity in the fourthbecause it was attacked by heretics. If no one had attacked the doctrine, the faith of the Church would have remained undefined, as it was before. The doctrine of the Trinity is as little defined in the Bible as the doctrine of Transubstantiation or Purgatory.

'But do you not know,' replied Mr. Wingfield, that the Council of Trent has no claims to being a general Council, like the Council of One was the voice of the Catholic Church, which one branch, and an erring branch, of that Catholic Church?

But how am I to know that ?' replied Clara. Roman Catholies say the Council of Trent was with her, for she telt for her far more than Clara the Voice of Christ's Catholic Church Just imagine the depth of research needed to determine even that one simple question ??

The more reason why you should remain where God has placed you, and trust the teach-

I'cannot trust ber, replied Clara, earnestly; by telling all your secrets and the secrets of my Catherine produced a small note from her remark it; for her brow, almost ever since she use writing to him, he does not answer me. I she teaches nothing, or else she teaches confamily to men of this kind-Jesuits in disguise- pocket, with the well-known tiny seal and ini- had known ber, had word an expression of pain must see him when he comes to Town. The Church of Rome, alone, teaches

really, Clara, one could smile at your girlish extitles of R. W. Clara hastily opened it, and and anxiety. All that was now past; she seem. Catherine promised to come and see her very the Bible in all its fulness. Day by day it breaks. the age population of the second

