

## VOL. XVII.

## MONTREAL, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1866.

# CLARA LESLIE.

### A TALE OF OUR OWN TIMES.

#### CHAPTER XXV.-Continued.

Clara's mind was too much exhausted for a single effort; she merely leaned her head forward, and silently suffered the agonizing sersations of those moments. She was consciously nothing ; death, judgment, heaven, hell, all seemed alike to her wearied mind. At times an almost reckless feeling possessed her; all she could do was to listen to that incessant whisper, which fascinated her with its very agony. Listen she must; resist it or argue with it she could not .---Time passed on unperceived, and again Father Raymond's gentle touch aroused her. She looked up. They had all left the church, and he was standing alone beside her, in the pale light of the sanctuary lamp. She guessed he had come to bid her sign the act of renunciation, and a shudder again went through her frame. She rose and followed him, however, immediately without a word. Two or three people were in the sacristy. She approached the table : there lay the paper. It was short, merely renouncing the errors of the 'sect' (Father Raymond read over the formula in a low voice to her, and that word went like a dagger to her heart : ' Mr. Wing-.eld had said right, by her own private judgment she was unchurching the Church of Eng-land') in which she had been born and brought up, and promising to take for the future the Holy Roman Church as the guide and arbitrar in all matters of faith. She took the pen; her hand did not tremble ; slowly and carefully she traced each letter, as if signing her own death-warrant ; and when she looked round for the first time, and saw the subdued but deep and heartfelt joy that beamed on the features of each of the assembled group, she felt as if they were imitating the fallen angels of darkness in rejoicing over her fall. She turned away sick at heart, unable to utter a word, and leaned against the wall for support .---Catherine was the one witness, as she had acted as her godmother; and when the second came forward. Clara saw what she had not perceived in the dim light, that it was the same person in the dress of the Oratory whose glance she had met at the moment of her bapfism, and another look satisfied her that it was indeed Mr. Morris. And now he came forward, and in his own gentle tone greeted her exactly in the same way as he used to do in former days.

'You said we should meet again,' said he,

Soe of God was really coming to dwell with her; had found Him; 'she held Him, and she would but how would He regard her? Would He now not let Him go;' she possessed Him, not spirit-think she had left the place in His vineyard that ually, but really in truth. The race was over, he had allotted to her ? impaliently fretted at the goal was won ; she had sought, and she, too, a meagre system, and sought for herself what had found. She stirred not; she feared to He did not intend her to possess; and then how break the chain that bound her to the Feet of could He love to abide with her? She heard the her risen and present Lord. All the past was Gloria in excelsis' intoned, the Creed chanted, and then the solemn moment of silence that followed the rich strain, ' Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth ; pleni sunt cœli et terra, majestatis gloria tua.' Still it was all pageant and outside show; it spoke not to her heart .---Suddenly that moment of silence was broken. Clara telt that every head was in the dust, and, roused for a moment, she quickly raised her eves. The pure white form that had once, and once only, met her eyes, was held aloft by the bending priest-the veiled glory of the Lord of Hosts was revealed, and every heart and head was in adoration. 'To him that overcometh I will give the hidden manna, and will give him a white counter; and in the counter a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it," seemed whispered to Clara's heart; and that moment of unspeakable delight (given as a foretaste of what God was about to shower upon her) when she had once before gazed on the hidden presence of the Lord of Glory, rushed on her memory. She could not bead her head; she could but gaze till It disappeared from her eye., while the beautiful words of one of those very Oratory Fathers rung on in her ears:

- Ring joyously, ye solemn bells;
- And wave, oh, wave, ye censers bright; 'Tis Jesus cometh, Mary's Son. And God of God, and Light of Light!
- O ear:h, grow flowers beneath His feet!
- And thou, O sun, shine bright this day ! He comes! He comes! O Heaven on earth! Our Jesus comes upon His way.

And then the choir took up the strain, and chanted forth the glorious welcome of the Jewish children-' Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domine. Hosana in excelsis!

She was again absorbed; but the mystical moment was at last come, and Clara Leslie was to be the temple of the Holy Ghost. For the first time that dear Lord, Whom she had so long sought and loved, so long 'felt after' and not

most solemn moment of her life was at hand; but slowly down her cheeks. One thought absorbed still the dull weight of doubt hung over her; the ber and held her captive, as by a spell. She one long painful dream, the present the only reality; the veil that hangs before the unseen world was withdrawn, and even in that moment of unspeakable delidht she seemed to feel the form of her guardian angel veiling his radiant face before the glory of Him who dwelt within

her, and to see the tears of angelic joy that he shed over the lost one found,-the poor wandering lamb restored to the one Fold.

The sweet and well known tones of Alan's voice at last aroused her. He was standing at foot of the altar of the Blessed Virgin in his sacerdotal garments, and the first word she heard him utter were these:

'Emitte lucem tuam et veritatem tuam ; ipsa me deduxerunt et adduxerunt in montem sancium tuum, et in tabernacula tua !'

Et introibo ad altare Dei; ad Deum, qui lætificat juventutem meam,' replied the voice of the kneeling novice who was serving at Mass by his side.

How many times had Clara repeated those beautiful words in days gone by, when, 'saying Hours,' with Alan ! She turned to follow the Mass; and it would be difficult to describe the feelings with which she realized thus, for the first time, the tremendous office of a Catholic priest. Her thoughts wanderd back to the days of her childhood, the love that had grown with their growth and ripened with their ripening and opening minds, the agony of that break-up of their earthy happiness, that long and terrible separa-tion, and now their reunion ! But how changed ! -one consecrated in reality, the other at least in will and desire, entirely to God, and Him alone! She looked at the pale sweet features of the young priest, his earnest look, the lowliness of his attitude at the 'Confiteor,' gradually brightening into a look of subdued joy and beavenly awe, as the service advanced, and in his turn he held up the Lord, Who had just obeyed his creature's invocation for her adoration; and then she heard the deeply humble, found, was to take possession of His own, and to . Domine, non sum dignus,' and perceived that he abide in that heart, cleansed and purified irom too was eating the bread of angels, --- omne de-every stain for His approach, for ever. Cathe-rine gently touched her, and she saw her rise with tears; and as Mass after Mass quickly very well known saint; but when once you very bosom of our own Church, unnoticed and quickly succeeded one another, she felt that it was indeed a great act that was going on ; words were only the medium by which that act must necessarily be performed. She did not follow the service, she was too much excited ; too absorbed in the one thought that her Lord was appearing and disappearing before her, to attempt it. At last Catherine felt that it was ne cessary to take her away. She saw that she was not tired at that moment; but the excitement once over, she knew the reaction that would follow. The carriage was waiting, and Clara laid her tired head on Catherine's bosom with an overflow of grateful emotion.

tations had indeed ceased, and she felt that the never shed, chased one after another softly and long dream; and the idea that she was really a cency, Mr. Alan Leslie did noteven wait for the Catholic, and was never more to obey the summons of those Anglican bells-that what she had seen the night before was not a rich treat never more to be enjoyed, but a thing to be, for the whole rest of her life, of daily occurrence and duty,-rushed upon her mind, and gave her such abundant alacrity to her movements, that a few minutes sufficed her to dress; and then, having poured forth in a few ardent words the grateful emotions of her soul, with a light step and unhappy young lady have remained in the bosom sparkling eye she sought the breakfast parlour.

'What saw ve. O shepherds? Tell it unto us. Who has appeared upon earth ?' she chanted nursing in her bosom. Under the pretence af in her low, sweet voice, as she came silently bebind Catherine's chair, and flung her arms round | ed her into all the mysteries of that hot-bed of her neck without being perceived.

'The Saviour is born, and choirs of Angels praise the Lord. Alleluia ! alleluia !' responded in the same sweet tones, a person whose presence girl actually confessed to him, and treated his she had not remarked ; and she turned from one every command as if it came from God Himself. so very dear to receive the morning greeting of This clergyman, it is said, has many more of one dearer still.

' Alleluia, indeed,' she replied, as he looked in her face, and said tenderly : 'I see I need not ask if all is well. God has given you rest, my guardians may take waining. Mr. Wingfield poor wandering, weary one.'

'And now we may as well have breakfast,' said Catherine, as she assumed her post at the head of the table ; 'I am sure, Father Aidan, you, at any rate, must be in want of it."

" Clara looked quickly up, and Father Aidan met her eager look with a smile. Am I to call you Father Aidan, Alan ?'

'I hope you like my new name, Clara,' was the rejoinder.

'I always loved St. Aidan, you know, Alan, she replied : ' and 1 think it very appropriate to one who means to devote himself to the conversion of England; but it will seem strange to call you Father.'

'But 1 shall be always Alan to you, Clara,' was the answer.

' Tell me, Alan,' said Clara suddenly, ' what possessed a Passionist Father to take the name of Raymond. Why, it carries me back to the been striving to impress on her mind ever since days of old romance, and knights and heroes, not his brother's apostasy. All this, it is said, is saints. When I was first introduced to him, done under Mr. Wingfield's sanction, who only I thought that 1 never heard such a romantic name.'

' There are two saints in the Calendar of the name of Raymond,' replied Father Aidan ; 'St | such disgraceful scenes are enacted under their Raymond de Pennafort, and St. Raymond Non- very eyes? Is the many-headed monster that,

funeral of his father; but after seeing the effort he made around his death-bed was perfectly fruitless, hurried off to London to be received into the Romish Church. His sister would then have followed his example, had not the persuasions and entreaties of her elder brother and sister-in-law prevailed upon her to go with them to London, and return to a better state of mind .--Things would probably have ended thus, and the of her family, had she not been brought under the influence of one of these reverend perverters of youth whom the Church of England has been keeping ber in the Church of England, he initiat-Popery, and contrary to her brother's known and express commands, claudestinely obtained such an influence over her mind that the poor deluded these fair penitents, whom he holds in equal thraldom; and we do not hesitate to denounce his name to the public, that other parents and (for this is the reverend seducer's name) is the Rector of Lumley, which brings him in a large income, where with he attempts to undermine the Established Church. Miss Leshe subsequently took a vow of celibacy, and, neglecting all the ordinary decencies of life, insisted upon a liberty which her brother very naturally thought improper for so young a person. Till the age of twenty-one she was by law under her brother's control ; but no sooner had she attained the legitimate age, than, throwing off every appearance of decency, which till then she had worn, she boldly demanded her property, publicly left her brother's house, and was received into the Romish Church a few days ago at the Passionist's Church, by the very Mr. de Grey who years ago perverted her brother's mind at college, and since has, by clandestine meetings, succeeded in overthrowing all that Mr. Douglas Leslie had remains himself a little longer in order the more surely to entrap others into his net. What are the prelates of the English Church about, while

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in the bosom of our mighty Mother; and will rine gently touched her, and she saw her rise you allow me to be the first to welcome you and go towards the altar. The priest was althither.'

her hand in his, and said,

long, like Charles; but I am come at last, and and bent down over the altar-rails. The feeling may my rest be like his !"

' Amen,' said he, still more gently.

He had laid the other hand over the one she had given him, as he was wont in old days to do. His manner spoke more than his words, and Clara felt comforted, and able to answer, with more appearance of composure, the kind words and looks that were now showered apon her on all sides.

And now the chapel of the Oratory Fathers was beginning to be lighted for the midnight office. and Clara, absorbed in the thought of what raised above her in the sign of blessing,-and in was in store for her within so short a time, longed for quiet, and again stole into the chapel with Catherine. Her place was beside the altar she had knelt at before her reception. She could scarcely realize her new position ; her mind was still dark and bewildered. She followed not the beautifully chanted office; even the well-known, long loved, and thrilling notes of the 'Adeste, fidelis' could only awaken a passing thought, a momentary gush of delight. Her book lay unnoticed, after a very short time, before her ; and rapt in that one thought that ere long Jesus Christ would really, and without a doubt, come to abide within her, she knelt motionless, her face buried in her open hands, almost unconscious of anything around her. She did aot see the gorgeous procession that made its way down convert's eyes, and Clara still knelt untired bethe chapel; she scarcely heard the ringing of the bells, or the loyous notes of the beautifully modulated Te Deum, though Alan's voice seemed of this night of excitement, could not disturb to rise in that majestic stram of Catholic thanks- her; and, absorbed in the sweet recollections giving above all the rest in its glad sweetness; that crowded upon her mind of that very night she saw not the clouds of incense that filled the the year before, would have been very loth to air, nor the beautiful vestments of the officiating tear herself away. As to the young convert, priests; there was no joy to her thoughts, but she indeed realised that the tempter 'could not all was still and silent awe, like the solema quiet stand the presence of the Lord of Hosts.' Overof some mighty forest before the coming of the whelmed in the mutterable sweetness of that whirlwind. At last the hour of midnight rolled hour, she saw and heard nothing but the presence time, but she could not at that moment attempt | described. Prostrate in adoration before Him, to follow it. She merely looked up for a mo- she seemed to hear Him whisper to her heart, thoughts. The tempter's busy triumphant temp- doubt? and tears of silent ecstacy, as Clara had She could scarcely believe it all,-it seemed one terminated his life. Regardless of common de- 'He met me in the street,' said Clara, 'com-

ready standing, with his face towards her, on the A thousand thoughts rushed into Clara's mind, altar-steps, and several had already left their and the color returned to her cheek as she placed seats. She hastily followed, and as hastily knelt by Catherine's side ; her heart fluttered, and her 'Yes; our mighty Mother. I have waited hands trembled as she clasped them before her,

> of intense awe was almost overpowering. Nearer and nearer came the officiating priest; once, twice, thrice, did the low voice tall upon her ear

> - Corpus Domini Jesu Christi custodiat animam tuam in vitam eternam. Amen.' It was Catherine's turn. She felt the slight movement that accompanied the reception of her Lord : but the first five words had been pronounced ere Clara raised her head. Once more she caught a glimpse of 'the vast Creator, reposing, infant-like, in His

creature's hand,'-the pure, round, white Form another instant it was resting on her own lips .--All was accomplished. A flash of light seemed to pass instantaneously through her soul; and, vanquished and dismayed, the tempter fled.

He comes ! He comes, the Lord of hosts,

- Borne on His Throne triumphantly, We see Thee and we know Thee, Lord,
- And yearn to shed our blood for Thee-
- Our hearts leap up ; our trembling song Grows fainter still ; we can no more.
- Silence ! and let us weep and die
- Of every love while we adore. Great Sacrement of love divine
- All, all we pave and are, be Thine.

High Mass had been long over; Low Mass after Low Mass was being celebrated. It was not a night when sleep could easily visit a new fore the altar. She was so perfectly still, that Catherine Temple, though fearing for the effects forth from all the bells of that great city, and of 'Him Whom her soul loved.' We will not o'clock service on all sides awoke Clara next the midnight Mass commenced. Clara had intrude into the mysterious rapture of those mo- morning. She started up, threw open the win-ment, and then was again absorbed in her ewe 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou realising where she was, or what had happened. utterable grief, that it brought on the illness that ' how did he manage that ?'

Catherine pressed her gently and fondly again and again to her bosom.

' And you are now quite happy now, my sweet child ?'

'O Catherine,' replied Clara, ' this is indeed the reality; I am no longer an outcast; the excommunication is withdrawn; I have sought, and I too have found.'

'And 'your mighty Mother' is what you expected her to be !' said Catherine tenderly .--Ah, Clara dearest, even this is but the foretaste of all that God has in store for you. This day year only, your joy will be full, and you will know what the rest of a Catholic is.'

'I can believe it,' replied Clara, 'I have had but my first draught of the cup of joy, my first glimpse of the beauty of Christ's Immaculate Spouse ! Oh, the king's daughter is indeed all glorious within.'

CHAPTER XXVI.-MALTA.

" Bride of Him that is for ever, Low we bow before thy shrine, -Bending knees, that never, never Bent at altar save at thine ; Offering hearts, that ne'er will falter In thy darkest hour of woe, That will perish ere thine altar Be polluted by the foe ; Offering hands, that would fulfil All those hearts have power to will. Dread we death?-in such a strife Death were but the door to life !" British Magazine.

The clang of the bells ringing for the eleven carefully closed to exclude all the light, when she | ed so completely to pervert the mind of his sister had left her in bed a few hours before,-scarcely

know his bistory, I am sure that you will be the uncrushed? We would advise such men as the first to admire him, Clara.'

'Was it not he that was sold for a slave at Algiers ?' said Catherine ; 'and one of the torfasten his mouth with a padlock, to stop the torinfidels to the true faith.'

'You are right,' replied Father Aidan, while Clara sighed forth half to herselt, '1 sometimes wish they would do the same to me, or that I had St. Francis de Sales' button and buttonhole, to keep me from talking so much.'

Father Aidan and Catherine exchanged smiles across the table, and the subject dropped, or was exchanged for another, i.e. the quickest means of getting abroad. They did not perceive for a httle while that Clara was not joining in the conversation, but was deeply absorbed in a newspaper that lay on the table. The article that had attracted her attention was as follows :----

'PERVERSION TO POPERY: WARNING TO PARENTS .- We have already dedicated several articles in our late numbers to the task of warning parents, and any one else who has the charge of children, against the insiduous attempts now being made by clergymen professing to be of the Protestant Church of England, who, like wolves in sheep's clothing, have entered unawares into the fold, and are eating out the vitals of the Church, by teaching doctrines which they have foresworn, and misleading the young, imaginative, and ignorant into the path of perdition and the jaws of Antichrist. Another deplorable instance of this kind has just come under our notice, and we basten to add it to the daily increasing number of palpable warnings as to the mischievousness and depraving influence of the Puseyite system, more especially on the female mind. We regret to say that the victim of these wiles is the daughter of the late lamented Rector of Ashtonle-Mary, Mr. Charles Leslie, and the sister of one of the most respected of our London clergy. As early as five years ago, before the death of her justly revered father, her second brother, a surprise to find Mr. Morris in London. He who has just arrived in England under the absurd title of Father Aidan, had been imbued with these principles, destructive of every family affection, at the University of Oxford, and managduring the Long Vocation, to Mr. Leslie's un-

Bishops of London and Excter to beware how they tamper much longer with the best feelings of the English nation, and destroy for ever the tures inflicted upon bin by ins masters was to domestic peace and happiness of every family within these realms. Englishmen ! will you alrent of eloquence wherewith he converted the low yourselves to be touched in your dearest point, and have the very sanctuaries of your families rifled and violated, and yet remain inactive spectators of the advance of the spoiler ?'

'Had you not better finish your breakfast, Clara ?' said Catherine at last. 'What can you find so very interesting in that paper ?'

Clara handed the paper without a word of rereply to Father Aidan, and then quielly recommenced eating her breakfast.

'Poor Mr. Wingfield,' said he, as he finished the edifying paragraph; 'I pity him, because he is the only one that will suffer from it.'

Catherine could not resist laughing, as, in her turn, the paper was handed to her.

'They are a little beforehand in their assertions,' said she ; ' if it were worth while, I should like to count how many downright falsehoods this paragraph contains. Never mind, Clara," she added, as she saw that the latter sat silently eating her breakfast, and looked rather finshed and excited, 'we will soon be beyond the reach of such foolish tittle-tattle. You will forget all this when we reach the dear little island, that Protestants complain about as being so intensely Catholic.'

' I was thinking of Douglas and Mildred,' said Clara, sighing ; 'they must be rather sad this morning, with that paper for their Christmas breakfast.'

'It is wonderful,' said Father Aidan, 'how you have escaped so completely, Mrs Temple.-Why, you and Morris are the ony ones who have come off without getting bespattered.'

'The absurd title of Father Aidan,' repeated Clara. 'Ab, Alan, it seems every one knew you were coming home except me. And what far more deserves the title of ' reverend perverter' than poor Mr. Wlogfield. You do not know how he wanted to carry me off at once this day year down to the Oratory, to make my renunciation. and I wouldn't go.'

'Indeed !' said Fatter Aidan, greatly amused