

# HRONICLE ATHOLIC

# VOL. XVII.

### CLARA LESLIE.

## A TALE OF OUR OWN TIMES.

CHAPTER XIV .- Continued. 'You had a brother at Osford, Muss Leslie ?'

said Courtnay.

'Yes. Did you know him?' 'I did,' he replied, - 'he and his friend De

Grey. 'The Passionist Futher,' said Clara, ' Father Raymond.'

'Perhaps you know that I saw him in Rome,' said Mr. Courtnay, in a low inquiring tone, see-

ing her eager looks. Who ?-Alan ?' replied Clara, in as low a tone; '19 it possible? O Mr. Courtnay, teli me how is he? When did you see him? I never hear from him ; perhaps he told you.'

He mentioned that he never heard from his family,' said Mr. Courtnay; 'but I was not aware you would like me to speak of him.'

"O Mr. Courtnay,' said Clara — and he saw in her glistening eyes that he had mistaken her, - did you but know how often I long to hear from him. But I must not write. Perhaps he thinks I too have forgotten him,' she added, in a

me love Catholic faith. The very day I arrived left.' in Rome I found him out."

"And is he the same as ever ?" asked Clara ; ' is he changed.'

'He has grown older,' replied Mr. Courtnay ; fout he has the same sweet face, the same offectionate manner."

The tears made their way down Clara's face. And he can still love us, Mr. Courtnay .-You know they tell me converts change so, they forget all their old affections.'

At any rate, your brother is not changed on that point,' replied Mr. Courtnay, 'if I can judge by the overflowing love and affection with which he received me. He only seemed surprised and grateful to find that I could still love hom as much as ever.'

'And you saw a great deal of him,' said Clara.

We went over much of Rome together,' replied Mr. Courtnay. 'Shall I send any message for you, I am going to write to him almost immediately."

smiling through her tears; ' tell him that one, at could not resist the temptation of reading it, and any rate, of his family has not forgotten him, but that I must not write. Is there any chance of his coming to England ?'

'I have wished so to speak to you for a long time. I have been so unbappy since you have been absent."

There was a sympathetic kind of a noise, and Mr. Wingfield asked,

"Has anything happened to disturb your home ?" 'No, nothing,' replied Clara; 'my brother is still completely ignorant of all I do; my unhappiness has been of another kind.' She hesitated, then went on suddenly, with an effort, ' Do you know that Mr. Morris has given up his curacy ?' A complete change passed over Mr. Wing-

field's countenance. "I have heard so, and this made me the more anxious to return home, as I had told you to apply to him had you any need of confession during my absence. I hope you, too, have not been tampering with the allegiance to the English of the Fathers as Father Newman? If I am to Church,' he added, turning suddenly, and looking her full in the face. Clara could not answer ;she could not even look up; and Mr. Wingfield sighed deeply, saying, 'I was afraid of some-

thing of the kind, from the style of your letter.' There was a long silence. Clara's tears flowed fast. At last Mr. Wingfield turned again towards her, and said,

'Tell me now, truly, what you have been dovoice of bitter sorrew. 'I owe him more than I can speak,' said Mr. Courtnay; 'him words and his example first made gan to be unsettled? You were not so when I

'Oh, no, not at all,' replied Clara, amid her tears; 'but I took to reading ' Loss and Gain.' Mr. Morris gave me leave to do so, and that upset my mind first."

Mr. Wingfield sighed, and turned away. 'I thought I could have trusted you, Clara. I did think you would have ventured upon reading such a book without my sanction. You know that I think 'Loss and Gam' one of the most profane books I ever read in my life.'

Clara looked up.

'Indeed I did not know it. I never heard you say so. On the contrary, I fancied I had heard you praise it. Indeed I would not have read it had I known what you thought of it beforeband.'

Mr. Wingfield was silent; he looked displeased, and Clara, thinking it had better be all out at once, went on :

"Then one day, by a most curious chance, I saw on Catherine's table my brother Alan's pam-'Tell him everything you like,' said Clara, phlet, his reasons for conversion-and-and-I that made me almost beside myself.'

Wingfield. 'You are taking upon youself to still trembled before that mighty system of devo- Amen.' pronounce that the Church of England has no tion to the Blessed Mother of God, which is the She Sacraments, no priests ; that you yourself have last barrier Satan always throws before the soul all was once more an indescribable chaos, and

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men ns Pusey and Keble are out of the pale of have been deceiving you.'

"But,' returned Clara quickly, ' did I not just And she still clung to the thought that much was as well, by remaining where 1 am, condemn the only the abuse of a system. conduct of Father Newman and those who have acted with him? Why should not Dr. Pusey be Continent that word Plenary Indulgence hung as liable to make a mistake in the interpretation up?' proceeded bir. Wingfield. follow individual men, why should I not follow the one as well as the other ?'

bas placed you,' replied Mr. Wingfield ; 'in the other you are choosing for yourself.'

'But,' replied Clara, ' also in one case Father Newman has the Council of Trent to back him in his view of the controversy; whereas Dr.

Pusey has only his own private judgment, for no him out in all he says.'

"The Church of England sends ber children to primitive antiquity to bear out her tenching," replied Mr. Wingfield. 'She eppeals to the first six centuries, and challenges Roman controversialists to prove her not part of Christ's Catholic Church. It is on account of our strength in the Fathers that the Roman controversialists have lately changed their mode of attack, and no longer openly assert, as they did in the days of Milner, that the Church of the Fathere was precisely like the modern Church of Rome, but they fall back on the new system of Development. The controversy is one which

requires years of study-study so intricate that prayed to be guided oright." neither you or I are up to it.'

'This is precisely the point,' exclaimed Clara. I feel that I am utterly unable to look into the controversy : the very length and depth of it, as I tion is to be settled by me, I must settle it as an mise me one thing ?' ignorant or unlearned person—of whom the greatest part of Christ's Church is composedwould decide it. The more I think of it, the have promised any thing. more convinced I feel that there must be some

authority to appeal to.' And have you not the decision of your

'Consider what you are doing,' replied Mr. the Church of England,' replied Clara ; for she Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

never received the Body and Blood of Christ, that is returning to the fold of Christ, and spe- she perfectly trembled at the premise she had have never been confirmed, perbaps never been clously takes indeed the form of an angel of made. baptized-and all this on your private authority / light, when he hides his wiles under the guise of You are taking upon yourself to affirm that such greater honor to the Lord of Glory. As if He would sanction the cold disrespect paid to her

the Catholic Church, and that those whom you who was the means He choose to work out the have professed to follow so far as your guides tremendous scheme of salvation, and whom he deigned ' to be subject to' and to call Mother !

'And do we not see in every corner of the

'Alter all, what is a Plenary Indulgence? We both know that the Protestant idea of its being a pardon for sin is etterly false; it refers ' In one case you are remaining where God only to temporal punchment. We know by experience that forgiven sin yet brings its punish-

ment,' replied Clara, again looking up, and meeting his glance, with a look half-astonishment, half-sorrow.

Mr. Wingfield was silent. Clara felt that here he knew she had the best of it. He looked one can say that the Church of England bears at his watch ; the short winter's day was setting Year.' Good night, and God bless you.' iu; time was flying quickly.

I suppose you are not in a fit state of mind to make your confession ?' said be coldly.

Clara hid her face; his altered manuer cut her to the heart.

'I did not know that you would receive me,' said she sorrowfully.

He saw his power; it was the only hope left. 'Oh, certainly,' he replied ; 'I am willing, if tell ; but presently some one entered, and she you are ready. Do not think I do not feel for tried to be perfectly still. you,' he added more kindly. ' I too have passed through this ordeal of doubts and perplexity."

'Have you?' said Clara faintly. 'I will do it at that moment. It spoke of a depth of inward any thing you bid me; but indeed, indeed I have peace that strangely contrasted with the chaos

'You must not trust your excited feelings, said he ; ' they are no guide. Now, Clara,' he added, you have often told me that I am the eyes brilliant. Clara thought she looked un-Voice of God to you; now is your time to prove usual; but Catherine said nothing, and tenface it, is enough to turn my brain. If this ques- you, love and affection for me. Will you pro-

She looked up, and met his look as of old fixed upon her; it was too much-she could

"What would you have me do ?" she replied ; only tell me." "Promise me that you will put all

these

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She scarcely heard the concluding prayers ;

He rose, and was silently bidding her good night, when she detained him for a moment, and said, in a broken voice,

'Might I not pray to God, that if these thoughts are a temptation of the devil, He would be pleased to remove them ?'

Mr. Wingfield's voice almost resumed its severity, and he sighed again.

'That would be the very way to increase the temptation. No; you must do exactly as I have told you. Crush them at once, and for ever,' he added emphatically, 'with a strong hand.'

Clara was struck dumb. He thought she was convinced; but her whole spirit had revolted from that first sentence.

'Good night,' said he, smiling. 'I shall send you some books that I think will do you good .----Meantime we must not leave any inice and Romish' books lying about, or procured. I must give you a long fast of those things, and confine you to the New Testament and the 'Christian

He left the room, and Clara, throwing herself into the corner of the sofa, sobbed and wept conrulsively. She had never felt so utterly wretched in her life; her heart was dry, her peace of mind had fled. God seemed to have abandoned her. She perfectly shrunk from the Communion the next day she had so longed for. How long she remained in this agony of tears she could not

'Clara,' said Catherine Temple's voice.

There was something peculiarly sweet about it at that moment. It spoke of a depth of inward Clara's mind was in.

'Here I am,' said she; and Catherine was in a moment at her side. Her face was flushed, her derly asked Clara what had happened with Mr. Wingfield.

'Have you seen him ? Have you confessed ? Clara, dearest, tell me.'

' I have promised, Catherine. Oh, what will Mr. Morris say. He has been so gentle, so kind.'

'I do not know,' replied Mr. Courtaay : ' ue did not speak of it. Is there any thing else 1 can say ?'

He seemed to wish for more.

'Yes,' replied Clara hesitatiogly, . tell him 1 too am changed. I think he would find me changed. Tell him there is one hope that is still the day-star of my existence,-the reunion of the Catholic Church. We cannot go on much longer as we are; and then, then we shall meet agaic.'

Mr. Courtnay looked earnestly at her.

'There is but one way-do not allow others to deceive you, Miss Leslie. I too bave tried that deception, but it is over now. There is but one way to unity. Rome will never change, and unity can be bought only at the price of unconditional surrender.

Clara locked fixedly into his speaking countenance ; but there was a move for departure, and respectfully bidding her good night, he hurriedly took his leave, leaving Clara to muse over what those last words could mean.

CHAPTER XV .- ANGLICAN DIRECTION. " Courage, duteous maiden ; the nails and bleeding is agony. I have no peace left."

brows. The pale and dying lips, are the portion of the Spouse."

It was Christmas Eve of that eventful year 1848, and Clara sat restlessly in Catherine Temple's boudoir, starting at every sound, and her heart sinking within her with a feeling of dead sickness, and half fainting whe .. ever she fancied almost shivering in her nervous anxiety, she sat waiting for Mr. Wingfield's arrival. At last there was a double knock, a step, and in a minute his tall form had crossed the threshold, and he was shaking hands with Clara. She scarcely looked at him, but sank on a sofa almost panting for breath, while he, perceiving her agitation, seated himself at some distance, and asked in told me in other matters feeling is not to be our his kind but still distant manner, if she had wished | guide.' to speak to him.

Clara saw that the moment was come; and gathering up her courage, breathed a silent prayer for help, and answered faintly, 'Yes.'-Then followed a long pause, Mr. Wingfield most overcome by her emotions, at a perfect towards Rome; only I thought the last step was such a system, you make yourself responsible for nounced the solema words: loss to get out a word. At last she said, in a to be taken together, and now it seems as if I all the abuses of it.' broken voice,

' Does any one know your state of mind ?' said Mr. Wingfield.

'Yes; Catherine Temple.' "And what did she say to you?" interrupted Mr. Wingfield.

She merely explained certain difficulties I work. He would perfect His own."

'Yes; if it be God's work,' repeated Mr. Wingfield ; ' and I have no doubt whatsoever as to its being any thing but a phase of our natural low you instead of Douglas; I approve of what self-will. I am greatly grieved.'

Clara burst again into tears.

'Ab, that is when I have most feared. I knew you would be grieved, and 1 owe you so much ; you have borne with me so long and so kindly. Sometimes the thought was more than I could bear.'

Mr. Wingfield looked touched.

"Well, but tell me, on what point are you disturbed ?' he replied. Perhaps I can satisfy you. You cannot doubt the succession of the English Church, or the Sacraments ?'

"I do doubt the sacraments,' said Clara, in a low tone. 'I never did before, and the doubt

"And do you think to escape doubt by joining the Church of Rome ?' answered Mr. Wingfield. You will be restless with them, as you are here. Perhaps you may be satisfied for a short time there ! but very soon doubt will assail you again, and you will be as unhappy as ever. Look at all that is said in that book you were reading lately, 'From Oxford to Rome.' That is written by one who has tried the system and returned to us again.' •

Clara looked puzzled. There was an appearance of truth in what he urged, she too had been greatly struck with that sadly mischievous book, full of ingeniously told falsehoods.

'But,' she stammered, 'if it is true, it won't matter how one feels. The person who wrote that book went by feeling; and you have often

Why should you doubt the Sacraments of the Eoglish Church ?' continued Mr. Wragfield .--Can you doubt that God is amongst us ?'

'I should not doubt it weres I a Roman Catholic,' replied Clara. 'I have always considered-unconsciously, I believe-this movement as

ought to take it alone."

Church ?' said Mr. Wingfield. · But does she decide any thing l' replied Clara.

I fancied till now I was following her, not indi- mind to dwell upon them." vidual men, and I felt secure ; but all of a sud-

den I feet as if a veil was fallen from my eyes, and I read the Services in quite a different spirit. brought to her; she would not influence me one | It seems as if I had till now been distorting them way or the other. She said, if it was God's | to my own meaning. They can mean any thing : | this is not God's work, I am sure of it.' and when you say I am assuming a right to judge whether the Church is right or wrong, have I not been doing so all these years? I choose to fol our own Bishop condemns: I say the Prayer-Church of England every day of my life; and now you say, I must not use my own serve on the vital point-' Is she a Church oc not !' '

To this Mr. Wingfield made no answer, as is the wont of Anglican clergymen when pushed into a corner, but continued, 'You are quite sure of the doctrine of the Real Presence ?'

"O dear father !' said Clara, warming with the subject, and looking up into his face, "what does that dreadful paragraph at the end of the Communion Service mean?'

'That is a mere protest,' said Mr. Wingfield evasively; ' look at the Catechism.'

"I have looked at only that till now,' replied Clara: 'but now I seem to open my eyes to another side-the Evangelical side-of the question, and the whole Communion Service seems on their side, not ours.'

Mr. Wingfield was silent, then went on in a few minutes:

"Do you know the formula of abjuration?" "I do,' replied Clara, producing it. "I procured it at once.'

"And are you prepared to sign all this ?" said Mr. Wingheld, casting bis eyes over the paper, which was Pope Plus's Creed

'I am, guite,' replied Clara; and she met his glance with so firm a look, it was almost as if an inspiration passed over it. I have studied it and had it explained, till I feel no more difficulty. | mise.'

Mr. Wingfield seemed disappointed; he had vances since he had seen ber.

"Are you prepared to give your sanction to all that almost idolatry, or at any rate that ' likeness of idolatry,' which the Church of Rome

"Then one is responsible for all the heresy in' solve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the from the closed doors. At another moment she

thoughts by ; that you will go about your business actively, cheerfully, and never allow your

"Put them by as if they were sin ?" asked Clara.

'As if they were thoughts of blasphemy or im-purity,' repeated Mr. Wingfield. 'Trust me, But I do so fear being biassed by affection towards you,' said Clara, besitatingly ...

"Ah, now that proves what I said," continued Mr. Wingfield; 'there is the very mark that it is a temptation of the devil; as if there is not Book means this and that; I am judging the affection biassing you the other way ! O Clara, do you not see it yourself?"

> Poor Clara felt like ode caught in a trap; she dared not say that she had not thought of Alan, and she replied sadly, 'Yes, I see it ; there is affection on both sides."

> "Then you will put aside all these thoughts; you will consider them as a temptation. If they are not, which I am quite sure they are; it will not binder them from taking their course."

'But only suppose if I were stifling the suggestions of God's spirit !' said Clara, clasping her bands.

Mr. Wingfield turned away. Clara could not bear this. She tollowed him, took his hand, kissed it, and said imploringly.

'Do not be angry with me, dearest father.'

'I am not angry, Clara,' said he, 'I am only grieved, deeply grieved. I thought you had more confidence in me. I cannot help being disappointed in you. Will you not give me this one proof of your love ?'

Clara faintly murmured, ' Yes, I will.' other hand over hers, which still held his be- celebrating the birth of the Son of God; and tween them.

Clara sunk on her knees. Her tears fell fast as she murmured, 'Yes, yes, indeed I do promise it ; and may God help me to keep that pro-

Mr. Wingfield gently disengaged his hands, not expected this. Clara had made rapid ad- laid them on her head, and blessed her "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy same light and joyous step, the same bright Ghost.' And then Clara knelt by his side; the blooming face, that for, two successive Christconfession was made; and she felt her whole heart sink within her, instead of her usual trustkeeps up within her bosom ? said Mr. Wiogfield. ing peace, when he again laid his hands on her too. Catherine, Temple was missing from the head, and in an especially impressive voice, pro-such a system, you make yourself responsible for nounced the solemn words:

Catherine struggled to contain her indignation. 'My poor child,' said she, 'they have worked upon your sensitive affections, and now how you will suffer !- suffer indeed !?

"Ob, it is not fair," exclaimed Clara, in an agony of tears ; fit is not quite fair. He does not know the agony he puts me to."

' Clara,' said Catherine earnestly, ' such a promise is not binding.

But Clara had already checked herself.

'I must not speak so,' said she, 'it is binding. He knows best what is right for me. Catherine, 1 have been wrong.'

Catherine said no more ; but she sighed deeply and pressed Clara to her bosom.

'My heart is full, Clara. I could speak volumes: but it must not be. God will direct you aright; only pray to Him. Such a soul as vours was never intended to abide in darkness. Levate capita vestra; ecce appropriouat redemptio vestra.' '- (Lift up your heads; your redemption draweth nigh.)

Clara was silent. She knew that those words were one of the antiphons for that evening's Vespers ; and they were treasured deep, to be mused on, and received as the omen of a happier and brighter day to come.

CHAPTER XVII. - NEW SORROWS.

- " The arrow cannot wound the air,
- Nor thunder rend the sea, Nor injury long affilot the heart That rests, O Love in Thee !

The winds may blow, the waues may swell, Bat soon these tumalts cease ; And the pure element subsides Isto its native peace."

Aubrey de Vere.

That night was a sleepless one to Clara. She sat up long after the hour of midnight had struck "You promise, then," said he, laying the the joyous moment when the Catholic world is even when she did, tired out, lay berself down on her bed, sleep seemed to have fled. Her alarum roused her in time to dress for the early Communion; and, unfit as she felt for any exertion. she persevered in going. Who could have recognised the pale and baggard countenance that slowly made its way on that morning to be the masses had passed quickly down those well known streets ? Auother, disappointment awaited ber By His authority committed unto me, I ab- joyous byma 'Adeste Fidelis' already issuing