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A ROMANCE OF THE GREAT SOUTHWEST

BY JOSEPH J. OUINN

CHAPTER III.-CONTINUED

CHAPTER III.—CONTINUED The squeak of the swinging lantern became lost and left only the sound of dripping rain. Blue-bonnet looked about her in the darkness. The car was empty, only a few scattered piles of chaff lay here and there. Her dripping clothing clung to her flesh, water ran from her shoulders in a cold stream. Later she scraped to-gether litter into a small mound in a corner. Then sounded four long a corner. Then sounded four long blasts from the locomotive. The engineer was calling in the rear flagmen. A moment later the first few cars jerked and stopped, then the rumbling came down the length of the train as subdued thunder. One by one the cars moved until the vulsions, the blood would rush to entire line was in motion. Blue-bonnet peered toward the strip of light that marked the open door. Not a soul was in sight. Five light that marked the open door. Not a soul was in sight. Five minutes later the lights of Texokadid not throw their shadows on the red cars of Number 62. It was rum-bling northeastward through the discount of the Output of the straightened plains of the Oklahoma Panhandle. snakes up to her elbows. Bluebonnet leaned her head back `A flood of these memories came to rythmic beat of the wheels upon the result, The train was gaining mo-mentum and the steady click clack of mentum and the steady click clack of with a flash of light slipped by. With a flash of light slipped by. Out in the offing a dot of light straightening to smile sinically. appeared. Some happy home, she Then came Nava searching here and thought. Perhaps a mother or father smiling down upon a loved her rounded shoulders half-hiding child. In a moment she was dream-ing of her own parents. Where could they be? Perhaps in some far off city they were thinking of her this moment and here she sat huddled in a freight car, hounded, chilled, fearful, with no haven or home to turn to, only a terrible past of bitterness and anguish. In the agony of her desolation she gazed disconsolately out into the void but not a single gleam of hope came to her mind. She saw only the relent-less gypsies eager to rend her to American people. A white flame American people. A white flame of horror burst within her at the thought of Pemella's clutching hands. Then arose in her mind a grim, persistent fear that she grim, persistent fear that she would never be able to conquer the future, to twist out of the net in which she was ensnared. Blueheavy. It was like traveling in gypsy wagons over open desert smoky veils of heat that rise from the red-walled canyons of Arigona bonnet closed her eyes for a mo-ment, the low rumble and vibration wastes. It was as somnolent as the smoky veils of heat that rise from the red-walled canyons of Arizona. Slumber was coming to her as when the furnace winds blow off the Painted Desert wastes in the even-ing. In fancy she slipped back to ing. In fancy she slipped back to near the habitations and far down the broad mesa chamelonizing in the track Terlton hove in view. A the sunset, the fluted mountain flanks in the distance, the white the sunset, the fluted mountain flanks in the distance, the white alkali sand, the upreared cacti and the everblowing South wind crisp and parching. She opened her ears to a strange sound. A soft pound-ing grew louder. It was the brake-man walking on the roof. Then the noise lessened. He had crossed to the following car. to the following car. Again the deep rumble of the car indemned her to a lethargy to

by. It was every day routine. The village seemed in slumber save for a lone rider who sat on which she was slowly surrendering. She drew up closer to the wall for warmth for the night air was chill-ing. Great, torturing thoughts hovered in her brain. What cruelty would Romella force her to end who sat on save for a fone fuller who sat on his horse laconically. A dark crop of coppery hair, like a mop, showed from beneath his Mexican som-brero. His leg thrown sideways over the saddle gave him an appearlaid hold of her parent's hearts when they sought an institution would Pemella force her to endure should he find her? The chief would never permit her to slip away so easily. He had guarded refused to be blown away by the would never permit her to slip away so easily. He had guarded her too long to let her escape with-out instituting a search that would cover the nation. But it would be difficult to trail her after the rain. The gypsies could do nothing until the next morning. Then she would be miles and miles away. They would not suspect that she had ridden the freight. The reality of the thing even surprised her. Each turn of the wheels was taking her that much farther to-ward freedom. When would step train stop? Where would stop miles from a town! That would be tragedy in itself. But she had firmly decided never to return to the gunpies for down in best heat this : <text><text><text><text><text><text><text><text>

of cotton and ever and anon she would look up into the eyes of a woman who smiled down sweetly Two black eyes-gypsy black-were peering in at her through the open door. upon her. It must have been her mother for the smile appeared maternal, ineffably sweet, tender, full of solicitude. Her eyes were TO BE CONTINUED A CHILD'S PRAYER

A TRUE STORY By Rev. Richard W. Alexander in The Missionary

full of solicitude. Her eyes were large and lustrous and in those depths reposed a world of love. But she could not go back no farther, something seemed to drop out of her mind, leaving her stranded with only the picture of the Colonial pillars and a sweet-faced woman. If this vision had swum into her brain once it had come a thousand times. Blue-bornet had loved to dwell upon it for it was something different from gypsy existence. There was seren-A class of reverent little maidens sat one day, in the office of the Directress of a certain large academy, listening to the last in-structions of the gentle nun who was preparing them for their first Holy Communion.

She was a queenly woman with a gypsy existence. There was seren-ity about it that was in contrast to countenance of great beauty, spiritity about it that was in contrast to the driven life in camp. It was her foundation for the conviction that she was white, American, and not an Hungarian gypsy. But whenever she had spoken of every one who came in contact with her. Ever zealous and watchful she had guided these little girls all through their preparation for this

unique and specially sacred occasion of their lives, and now she was giving them the last evening's instruction. All eyes were on her noble face with loving reverence as she con-cluded her instruction with these

impressive words : "My dear children, you have been to confession, and your young against the rough splintery sides of the freight car and listened to the

tunity go to your father and mother and kneel down and ask them to forgive you, if you have ing and witness your happiness in

Remember you must be very recol-lected this evening, and think of disappeared. Number 62 pulled and coasted the great blessing in store for you through the night into the pre-dawn darkness. It stopped once to tomorrow.

The nun paused; and the little maids looked at her with reverence as if her words had been take water, again it slowed almost to a standstill for a stubborn steer

voices. group of warehouses, as red as the Rock Island can paint its posses-One earnest-faced little girl

attending this Catholic Academy because the winning kindness and graciousness of the directness had

THE CATHOLIC RECORD "Well, we'll see !" was the reply. But when morning came only her Protestant mother accompanied Amy. Her father would not,— could not go. Long forgotten memories of a First Communion day of his own, stirred under the crust of years, and he dared not trust himself. Grace was knocking at his heart, and while he resolute-ly barred the entrance, his peace was gone. And all through the day the vision of those innocent blue eyes and the fair little face in its pleading rose before him. The ceremony of First Commun-ion in the day

eyes and the fair little face in its pleading rose before him. The ceremony of First Commun-ion in the Convent Chapel was beautiful. Each little girl was accompanied by an "Angel" bear-ing flowers and a taper to do reverence to the Lord of all as He came to each little heart. With downcast eyes and folded hands they returned from the altar rail and tears rose to the eyes of many who watched them. Amy's mother was deeply impressed. After Mass during the breakfast, at which tister H - s generosity provided, happi-ness shone on every face. Was it not indeed the great day of their lives?

back pew and thought. His life passed before him-he knelt and lives

That evening when Mr. C--returned from his office, his wife prayed. And then as grace tri-gave him a full account of the beau-umphed, he rose, entered a Confes-

gave him a full account of the beau-tiful events of the morning, and Amy who still wore her white dress confirmed her mother's story by the beautiful joy that shone on every feature. Mr. C— was silent but his face showed his interest. He went into the library, and sat down with his newspaper, but Amy fol-lowed him and softly closed the door. She nestled close to her nestled close to her and conquered him. And he had caressing his face said : been told to go to Communion! He She father, and caressing his face said : "Papa, will you grant me a favor my First Communion day, to have a series of the serie on my

make me happy "Why, daughter, I thought you couldn't be happier. What in the world could I give you that would increase your joy ?" said her father smiller.

"Just one thing Papa !" said Amy. "And what may that be, dear ?"

"And what may that be, dear "Why, Papa, weren't you once a Catholic? You won't be happy while you are not going to Church, it was agreed they should go to the 5 o'clock Christmas Mass at the Cath-

The man of the world grew pale, Wasn't it true? Had he been really their amazement and joy, their father who had accompanied them happy all these years? Life was passing. How long would it last? Was his little daughter, standing there although the bits with (they thought for curiosity only) arose and knelt between them at there clothed in white like an angel. the rail. Amy could not restrain her tears. At the breakfast table, her pleading eyes fixed on him, was she to be his accuser? He moved after the Xmas greetings she threw her arms around her father's neck, and parent and child wept joyfully impatiently. He could not answer. In the silence which followed Amy

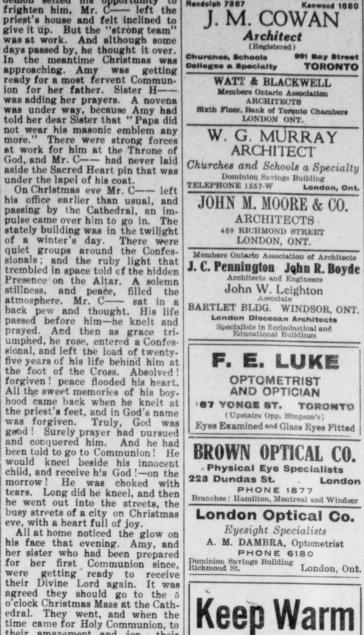
feared she had displeased him. Taking hold of the Masonic emblem together. What a happy Christmas it was ! which hung from his watch chain, We need not follow the years as she pleaded : "Won't you come back to the they passed by. Mr. C--- was a good practical Catholic now, and his

Church, Papa dear, and be a good Catholic!" His glance fell on her knowledge and love of the faith. It may not be a surprise, then, to read that the eldest daughter, Amy, hand which unconsciously held the trinket. He pushed her gently after reaching her nineteenth year

away. "Some time, maybe; you mustn't begged her parents permission to worry Papa now. Let me do some-thing else, dear," he added, noticorder of Mercy, where she is now, reader, a professed and a happy ing the disappointed look in her

Nun, serving faithfully and min-istering to the poor, sick and "Well, then," said Amy, in a sad-dened tone, "Sister H— told me ignorant. One unceasing prayer was still hers, and also the dear to ask you to wear this, under the lapel of your coat; she sent it to Sister's who guided her childish steps the first time to the Comyou in memory of my First Com-munion day" and the child drew a munion rail. It was the conversion little gold League pin of the Sacred Heart from a small box and showed prayer in his own good time, it to her father. "Did Sister H-

mayer in his own good time, Mrs. C— seeing the happiness of her husband and her family, renounced Methodism, studied the me?" he said. "Yes, Papa, she did; and I was claims of the Catholic Church, and on the feast of our to give it to you whether you granted my request or not." "Pin it on," he said, raising the lapel of his coat. "I'll wear it for your sake dear, and for hers." He this f and on the feast of our Blessed Lady's Immaculate Conception was baptized, and soon made her First Holy Communion. All this family is now in the Catholic

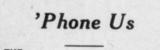


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where she would have every advan-tage of culture and education ; and they had made no objection when their daughter wished to make her First Communion with her little companions, as, happily, she had been baptized a Catholic, and some lingering memories of his Faith had remembered the gentle nun who received his little daughter into the school. tugged at her father's heart

As she lingered at the great door-way, Sister H—took the littlehand and said with a smile :

"I know what you want to say, dear; ask father and mother, both, to come tomorrow. I know that father does not go to church, but said nothing. She softly closed the door, and the man sat thinking. perhaps our dear Lord will make you the instrument in his conver-

and the influence of a holy Nun who academy when he placed her at is now with God enjoying the reward of her beautiful life. school. "For my conversion !" he repeated with a smile. "Well! I need con-version, and you both will be a strong team! But run along dear, and enjoy yourself. I will give you some other remembrance for your First Communion day." Amy looked at him earnestly, but said nothing. She softly closed the

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