Da me les

A VICTIM TO THE SEAL OF CONFESSION.

A TRUE STORY BY THE REV. JOSEPH SPILLMAN, S. J.

CHAPTER X. THE JUDICIAL REPORT.

As soon as the sitting room was ached, the mayor, asking for a sheet of paper, wrote a telegram to the police authorities in Aix, reporting the dis-covery of a murder with robbery in Ste. Victoire, and asking that a magistrate police-inspector would come with

out delay.

Carillon, the innkeeper, was willing to go and despatch the telegram, but not unless he was accompanied by the police constable with the lantern. They obliged to let him have his way, for he declared nothing on earth wou induce him to adventure himself alone in the dark passages of that uncanny

As soon as the two men had gone, the mayor took up the receipt which lay on the desk where Mrs. Blanchard had left it, and inquired what it was.

"That is the receipt Mrs. Blanchard

Father Montmoulin replied. Very prudent on your part, to get the unfortunate lady to attach her sig-nature to this form—evidently prepared beforehand—only a few minutes before her death. And you have not any idea what has become of the money?" the nate lady to attach her sig-

mayor observed.
... None at all. I know nothing about

"Indeed, indeed. Well, it will be the business of the examining magistrate from Aix, who will be here by day-break, to look into that. I do not think he will have to search very far. In the interim, it will be as well, gentlemen, to draw up a brief report of our pre-liminary investigation. It will be use-ful to lay before the Court. Perhaps your Reverence may like to rest a little meanwhile?—stop—there is no other way out of the bedroom?" And the mayor took up the lamp and glanced

round the narrow chamber.

"You surely do not imagine that I attempt to escape," the should make an attempt to escape," the elergyman said sadly. "Of course I cannot help seeing that you all regard me with suspicion. I can only assert my innocence, which I hope the judicial inquiry will make evident. An attempt at flight would justify the worst suspic

This the mayor acknowledged, and perceiving moreover that the only window was at a considerable height above the stone-paved courtyard, he allowed the pastor to retire to his bedroom, whilst he, seating himself with his colleagues at the table, began to prepare the minutes, which the notary committed to paper. Without wishing to show a decided bias, he nevertheless placed the behavior and sayings of the priest in an invidious light, so that they could not fail to arouse suspicion.

Father Montmoulin, on his part, after brief prayer for help and guidance, laid down upon his bed without un-dressing. He then perceived to his that his cassock from the knees downwards was covered with spots of something wet. What could it be? He lit a candle and looked at his fingers; they were bedaubed with red sticky matter. It was blood, unmistakably. matter. It was blood, unmistakably, congealed blood, he told himself. And the horrible truth dawned on him, that in the darkness, he had been kneeling unawares in the blood that had lowed from the wound, that trickling towards him in a scarlet thread, had in spired Loser with such terror. With out a moment's reflection, he filled the basin with water, and began, not with out an involuntary shiver of disgust, to wash the hideous marks fron his cassock. The water was soon quite red; he was going to throw it out of the window. and refill the basin from the jug, for his task was not half done, several large spots still remaining on the front of the cassock, but the noise made by opening of the window was heard in the djoining room, and the mayor burst in lest, after all, the priest should

be escaping. "Whatever are you doing? Whatever have you got there," exclaimed the intruder, snatching the basin from the clergyman's hands. "That is blood!" he added in astonishment. "Look, gentlemen, what we have

basin full of blood," cried the

notary, pale with horror.
"Yes, it is blood," replied Father Montmoulin, composedly. "I must have been kneeling in it there, down Mrs. Blanchard's body ; just at my cassock. I have been try ing to wash the stains out."
Simple and reasonable as this ex

planation was, it by no means contented the mayor, now that his suspicions were thoroughly aroused. "Who know when and how those spots came there? Who knows he exclaimed.

At all events that basin with its contents will be left standing, if you please, and I will trouble you to put another cassock. If i am not mistaken the analysists have a means of ascer taining, from the character of the spots how long it was since the blood was

I have only one other cassock, and that got covered with mud last night when I had to answer a sick call. It was hung up in the kitchen to dry,

was nung up in the kitchen to dry,"
Father Montmoulin replied.
"Then we will fetch it," the mayor
rejoined. "I insist on your taking off
this garment, in order that these very
suspleious spots may undergo scientide analysis." Ac analysis.

priest shrugged his shoulders and taking the light, went across the corridor into the little kitchen, with the officials at his heels. The cassock the officials at his heels. The cassock in question was hanging in a dark corner by the stove, it was perfectly dry, but muddy beyond description. Old Susan had not had time to brush it before leaving the day before. Just as Father Montmoulin was taking it down from the hook, a cry burst from the town-clerk's lips, and he was seen to point to a basket which was standing in an angle by the stove. an angle by the stove.
"My poor sister's basket!" he ex-

The mayor took up the basket and opened it. There was no doubt as to

the cwner, for one of Mrs. Blanchard's cards was fastened on the inside of the lid. The basket was empty.

"Do you recognize this basket?" he asked Father Montmoulin.

The priest looked aghast. "To be sure I do," he answered. "It is the basket that Mrs. Blanchard was accustomed to carry. I myself upt all customed to carry. I myself put all the money into it tied up in a hand kerchief."

"Can you tell how it got there?" "That is the very thing that be-wilders me. I have no explanation to offer." As Father Montmoulin uttered offer. As rather months flashed into his mind that the murderer very probably had set the basket down there with the purpose of incriminating him; that it might even be that he had only that the had only the sake gone to him to confession, for the sake f closing his lips as to the perpetrator of the crime by the seal of cor fession. If that were really the case of con

the confession was only a simulated one, no true confession; it was a mere mockery and as such certainly did not bind the priest to secreey. For a few moments it seemed to the good pastor that a way of escape had been made for him out of his painful position. He need only tell how Loser had come to him under the pretext of making a conhim under the pretext of making a con-fession and had acknowledged his guilt; he had at first held this confession to be valid, and accordingly it had been impossible for him to mention the fact that the man had been there, or point him out as the murderer. But now he saw through the diabolical design of the assassin and no longer felt bound to silence. He would speak, and thus a'l would be explained and the suspicin removed from the shoulders of the innocent to those of the guilty. The reader will not need to be told how earnestly Father Montmoulin desired

to give this all-important explanation ; but he was restrained from doing so by the doubt whether it was quite certain that Loser's penitence was feigned. Only if he could feel fully convinced, if there was no room for doubt that the man's confession was no real confession, did the seal of secrecy bind him no longer; a mere probability, however strong, was not sufficient to release him from his sacred obligation. And Father Montmoulin could not conceal from himself that Loser, although he was only driven by abject fear to acknowle edge his deed, yet did so with the object of obtaining absolution. And even if the murderer really did place the basket on the spot where it was

found with the intention of causing suspicion to fall on him, that afforded no valid proof that his penitence and his confession a mere mockery. Thus Father Montmoulin at the conviction that the argument which appeared to open an outlet to him was inadmissable; that argument that he was bound to keep the seal of con-fession in all its integrity, in spite of the consequences, which loomed before his eyes with an aspect more and more

menacing. Whilst these conflicting thoughts succeeded one another with lightning speed in the mind of the priest, forcing upon him the conviction of which we have just spoken, the mayor was hunt-ing about in the kitchen to see if he could discover any further traces of the crime. Before long, he spied out a corner of the handkerchief, which oser had thrust under the dresser or making his hasty flight. He drew it out, and with it came the carving-knife. Again an exclamation of horror escaped the lips of all present, as the bloodstained handkerchiel was spread out on table, and the knife, on whose handle and blade some marks of blood were plainly visible, was laid by its

side.
"No doubt at all about this!" cried the mayor, shuddering as he spoke. with the bloody deed was perpetrated.

"My poor sister! And it appears only too evident that this fellow, who calls himself a priest, to whom you gave all your money, has murdered you out of gratitude!" said the town-clerk,

out of gratitude!" said the town-cierk, with a look of rage at the priest.
"The knife at any rate belongs to him," the notary observed. "There are the initials F. M. engraved on the little silver plate on the handle. And the handkerchief too is marked with the ame letters !"

"What can you say to this? How do you explain it?" said the mayor in the greatest excitement," grasping the priest roughly by the arm.

At the sight of this piece of evidence

which seemed almost to establish his guilt, Father Montmoulin turned as white as a sheet. All seemed to corroseemed almost to establish his borate his idea that Loser had left al those things in the kitchen with the object of making the priest guilty of bloodshed; even the use of nis knife as the instrument of murder seemed a part of this infernal plan. Certainly such a wretch as this man certainty such a wretch as this man could claim no consideration at his hands. But again he repeated to him-self: "All this is no reliable proof that Loser had not the intention to con-

fess; consequently I must keep silence."
"This knife," Father Montmoulin answered at length, after visibly struggling for self command, "undoubtedly is my property, so is the handkerchief. It is the one in which I mrapped up the money that I gave to Mrs. Blanchard. How the knife and the handkerchief got into this state, or who hid them under the dresser, I am quite unable to say. I only know that old Susan complained at breakfast time that the knife was missing."; "Probably the murderer took it away

peforehand, and laid it somewhere in readiness for the deed he meditated. must say he seems to have laid his plans remarkably well. Only he reckoned, methinks, upon one thing somewhat too surely, that certain circumstances, let us say the sacredness of his office, would avert all suspicion

from him."
"Sir, you have repeatedly made use of expressions which showed that you regarded me with suspicion, and now you actually assert that you consider me to be in all probability the guilty ! I really must beg to protest decidedly against these accusathe priest answered

"Oh of course, this indignation is

quite the right thing, only unfortunately it comes a little too late, in the face of all this overwhelming evidence, face of all this overwheiming evidence, retorted the mayor contemptuously. Then changing his tone, he added: "You would do better if you made a clean breast of it. At any rate it might be the means of procuring

r sentence." " However strong the circumstantial evidence is against me, I cannot do otherwise than repeat that I am per-fectly innocent," Father Montmoulin

If so, then explain the facts before us! Loser who certainly would have come under a measure of suspicion, was away at the time, as you yourself acknowledge. Wno came into this kitchen and took away the knite? Who should know that Mrs. Blanchard was coming at a fixed time to fetch that sum of money from your house: Who was acquainted with her habit of going through the tribune and dow the dark winding stairs, so as to lay in wait for her and murder her at the most suitable spot? Who, I ask, knew You will surely not and did all that? suggest that old Susan was the per

petrator of the crime?' I can only say, as I said before, that I am innocent, and God is witnes of the truth of my words!"
"For goodness' sake do not call

" For goodness' God to witness, and turn up your eyes in that manner, hypocrite that you are!" cried the mayor in a voice under. .. Do not think to throw dust in our

eyes with your pious pretences,' notary interposed.
"My poor sister's blood cries for

"I shall not rest, until I see you on the scaffold, in the hands of the

Father Montmoulin had a presentiment that he would be condemned in the court, and his assertions of inno cence would be branded as hypocrisy. He felt the injustice done him acutely and tasted beforehand something of the bitterness of the chalice that he have to drink. However he could do nothing to avert this trial, except by So under his breath he mured the words of our Lord in the Garden of Oirves: "My God, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me: Nevertheless not as I will, but as Tnou

Then you persist in your refusal to confess your guilt?" the mayor once

more inquired.
"I have nothing to confess, priest replied quietly. "You may call me a hypocrite if you choose; I am innocent, and I trust in God that He will make my innocence clear as the

day."
.. We shall see what the jury will think about your innocence, when all these facts are laid before them in court! But now come with us to your rooms, and have the goodness to change the blood stained cassock for this one, which in truth is not over clean will arrange side by side all Then we the proofs of your innocence; cassock, basket, handkerchief and knife. There yet remains for us to find the £480 in your possession, and I do not despair of doing that. Meanwhile we have doing that. Meanwhile we have every reason to be satisfied with the result of our preliminary research. Who is there? Carillon and the policeconstable, to be sure. Is the telegram despatched? Very good. We have not been idle during your absence, Mr. Carillon. The basket belonging to the murdered lady, the blood-stained knife with which the deed was done, besides the handkerchief on which the assassin wiped it, have all been found; and ooth knife and handkerchief bear the

initials of our reverend pastor!' exclaimed the inn-"Impossible!" with a sidelong glance of no keeper, ass at What an editying story that will be!

Murder, murder with robbery—"
"And hypocrisy too and many other
things hidden under the cassock; yes,
this affair will be much talked of in the country round," said the mayor finish ng the sentence, and at the same time resolving to make the most of this trump card at the approaching elecsitting room, and finish our prelimin-ary report ready for the arrival of the magistrate. Turning to the police-constable, "Grisable," he said, "do you take charge of this reverend gentleman, and do not let him out of you sight, not even under the pretext of changing his things. Who knows but he might put the climax to his exploits by a death like at the case. ploits by a death like that of Judas, and I consider that by his appearance in the dock, and perhaps on the scaf-fold, he would explate them in a far

more becoming manner.' What with physical indisposition and mental distress, Father Montmoulin felt he could bear no more. He gladly followed the constable into his bed and after he had donned muddy cassock in accordance with the nuddy cassock in according upon mayor's orders he threw himself upon bed, and after a short time from sheer exhaustion, into a refresh

ng sleep.
In the adjoining apartment the notary ecupied himself with drawing up ong and elaborate report of the proceedings, which amounted to a formal accusation of the unfortunate priest. At length the document was completed; it was read aloud, a few additions made the margin, and then signed by the three village authorities. The keeper was also allowed to subjoin his signature to the paragraph regarding the discovery of the body. This he considered no slight honor, as acknowledged to the mayor with a deep obeisance. He then fetched a basket which he had brought from his house on his way back from the tele-graph office, and placed upon the table plates and glasses, sausages and cheese two or three bottles of wine and what ever else appertained to a light supper.

"You will find this a choice Chate Margaux, gentlemen," he said, "an old pure wine. The best medicine possible after all the agitation and horrors of this night. I beg you will accept this little offering out of my cellar accept it as a proof of the profound esteem and respect I always entertain for those in authority, first and fore

most our excellent mayor. I pray you Sirs, to drink his health with me. The energy, the caution, the consummate prudence with which he has approached the sinister crimes of clericalism, and as good as torn off the mask of hypoerisy that has served too long to con-ceal its real character, entitles him to a prominent place in our district, our department, our country. The wine with which I am filling your glasses. gentlemen, is a generous liquor, de-serving of the praise of our highest poets. It is worthy of the work in

which we, as ministers of justice, have been engaged this night."

The mayor and his subordinates may or may not have applauded the oration of the innkeeper, who in his youth had been attached to a troop of provincial actors, but at any rate his invitation to glass or two of good wine, with refreshments of a more substantial nature, was not a little welcome. The flowers of rhetoric with which Mr. Carillon indulged, as was his wont, were therefore listened to graciously, and during the few remaining hours of night the bottle circulated freely among the little party. The recent discoveries were duly discussed, each and all making more and more sure that the hand that murdered Mrs. Blanchard was no other than that of Father Montmoulin.

TO BE CONTINUED

THE GARDEN UNDER THE HILL I.

Far away from the noise and traffic of the large city which is the metropolis of Ireland, there lies a sweet little hamlet, secluded and quiet in the everlasting peace of the great mountains. No echo of the life and bustle and activity of the multitudes that dwell within the radius of that city finds its way here. The sun rises on silent field and mountain; it rises on silent field and mountain; it pours its scorching neontide rays upon the cattle that graze the hillside and upon the quiet laborers who till the land; at eve it slowly sinks behind the curtain of rock and heather that hangs before the gates of the West, and leaves behind the hush of twilight and the behind the hush of twilight and the great sile ree of night. It is a quiet corner of the world, and were it not for

the merry voices of children at their mid day or evening play, and for the sound of the church bell as it chimes for Mass and Angelus, it would seem to be uninhabited. Tiny farm houses dot the foot of the

for unitain chain, and some may be seen far up the steep slopes in lonely desolation. Midway between these and the lower cottages stands the pretty little church, marked out for observation by its light spire that rises in contrast to the dark background of fir and bracken. Close to the church is the presbytery, and here in the quiet garden reclaime by labor and untiring energy from the hard grasp of the mountain sentinel that guards it, walked the aged curate who ad spent the greater part of his life in this remote spot. The parish church itself lies upon the fringe of the city and there the parish priest dwells amid the greater part of his flock. It is a large pastorate, extending for miles along the mountains and towards the boundaries of Dublin, necessitating a resident curate to look after the out

lying districts.
Father Daly paced up and down the walks of the garden he loved so well and tended with such care. All around it stretched wide herbaceous borders, gorgeous with the many hues of brightly Hollyhocks, sweet colored flowers. Hollyhocks, sweet williams, phlox, Japanese anemones columbine, snapdragon, and many such sweet old-fashioned flowers blended their various tints in gaudy, yet harmonious various tints in gaudy, yet narmonious array. In the centre, following the in-cline of the mountain, lay a green slope of grass, closely cut, and levelled here and there to form a little terrace upon which one found a rustic seat placed beneath the spreading branches of an Irish yew or weeping ash. Groups of rose trees dotted the grass at intervals, and everywhere, everywhere there were lilies. They stood in rows, they stood lilies. They stood in rows, they stood in isolated groups, they dominated the whole place and lent the finishing touch to the entire garden. Their tone of white subdued the harsher tints of blue and yellow and crimson, blending them in harmony. Their suggestion of snowy purity transformed this little Eden into purity transformed this little fiden into a paradise. The flowers swung to and fro in full summer stirred by the mountain breeze, and then I used to say that this garden, which I also loved, was like some lively major chords on a stringed instrument. And when my eyes fell upon its owner I would say to myself that here was the minor chord with its

note of sadness.
Not that Father Daly was ever melan choly. No. But his eyes looked sad and tender and full of that peace and and gentleness which one associates with the saints. And Father Daly was a saint in my estimation. I used to wonder why he, with his brilliant in-telligence, his splendid gift of oratory, his administrative power, and his stro nis administrative power, and his strong physique should bury himself in this lonely place. For I knew that it was by his own choice that he remained here. More than once a parish had been offered to him, more than once had he been asked to preach on great occahe been asked to preach on great occa sions in the city and elsewhere; and sometimes, when many years younger, he had done so. But of late he had withdrawn from all such distinction and solated himself here, devoting his time to the poor and allowing himself but one pleasure—the cultivation of his garden. Of course he was not quite a for Father John—we called him Father John in pleasant familiarity and to distinguish him from his elder brother, a famous Jesuit—Father John permitted famous Jesuit—Father John permitted the virtue of hospitality full sway some times, and on these occasions the little table in his dining room was stretched to its full proportions, and round the festive board the merry laughter of brother priests echoed far out among the nine trees, and none was more care the pine trees, and none was more gathan Father John himself. He love too, to gather the school children about him, and at Christmas and Easter there would be a merry-making in the old school house. Little First Communi-cants were also invited to breakfast on the great day, and were afterwards

allowed to roam about the beloved to their heart's content

But after all, it was a monotonous, cheerless life, and I often rallied him upon his wilful seclusion. It seen me such a waste of talent. But Father John would reply: "There are souls to be saved here as well as in large towns be saved here as well as in large towns, and as for my garden—no, I caunot leave my garden—for a reason."
"What reason?" I would ask with temerity. But Father John always shook his head and answered with a smile: "Some day, my friend, I may tell you. Not now." tell you. Not now. II.

When I began to write this sketch of one whom I revered so much, and whose memory is still so dear to me, I recalled memory is still so dear to me, I recalled him again as walking in that sunny, sheltered garden wherein I spent so many happy hours. On that hot summer evening I paused for a moment at the little rustic gate, unwilling to interrupt his quiet reverie. The news that I had to tell him was such as would call him forth from this happy retreat to face, perhaps, the sternest duty of a priest. knew that he would not shrink from t, and for that very reason and the risk it entailed, I wavered in my own im perative duty—to call God's minister to the bedside of a poor woman stricken down with malignant fever, such as I feared would spread rapidly among his

little flock.

He saw the anxiety in my face and said briskly: "Some one ill, doctor?

Am I wanted?"

"At once," I answered. "But I

must warn you, Father, that there is great risk and danger to yourself. It is a case of bad typhus. When will these people learn to send for a doctor in time? Now I find poor Mrs. Connor ill, one of her children dead, and the others sickening — worst of all, the neighbors running in and out of the ouse, spreading contagion as fast as

'Poor people, poor people!" said ther Daly. "Well, doctor, I must go Father Daly. "Well, doctor, I must go at once. We priests cannot allow you medical men to have such a privilege all

to yourselves, you know."
"Privilege!" I began I began — but he was

out of sight in a moment.

I was scarcely seated in my trap when he came round from the vestry door of the church, and I saw by the reverenthe church, and I saw by the reveren-tial expression of his countenance that he carried the Blessed Sacrament with him. He got up beside me, and we spoke not a word till we reached our destination, now the abode of misery

For three weeks Father John and fought this terrible scourge side by side, and be it said for the honor of my own profession, I was ably assisted by two young neophytes fresh from the schools; quick, ardent young fellows, disdaining to count the cost in such a work of The parish priest, too, came to mercy. The parish priest, too, came to assist Father Daly, but every poor sufferer wanted the man who had always been his friend, who had grown gray the service of his lonely flock, who had narried them and baptized their children. No wonder that they wanted him in their dying hours! Weeping wives and husbands, fathers and mothers, clung to his hands, crying out to him to save their beloved.

"The doctor is doing his best, my poor people," he would say, "we must leave the rest to God."

He scarcely took any repose, for the ravages made by this frightful malady ravages made by this frightful manady were so sudden, and death followed so quickly, that we lost in the first week eleven, and in the second fifteen. The school was closed, and indeed the poor

school was closed, and passed away.

I urged Father John to take every precaution, but it seemed useless. and night, night and day, he was ever at his post, and, as time sped on, he seemed to me to grow more frail and less able to work. Yet his spirit never lattered. able to work.

At length, at the end of the fourth week, we got a little breathing space, and I went up to the presbytery to try and I went up to the presbytery to try and induce my friend to take a rest. He was sitting under a tree in his garden, but as I approached he came slowly and feebly towards me. After a

few remarks he said:
"Doctor, you have often wondered
why I chose to live in this quiet place—
this beautiful corner of God's world." And he looked up at the towering mountain and round his pretty garden, as he continued: "How my poor flowers have been neglected! But it was for the flowers of God's garden, and this little spot has been but a reminder of those other flowers. These lilies have always seemed like so many white finger pointing to heaven. I should like pointing to heaven. I should like t tell you the story of my lilies, doctor. "I should like to hear it, Father John," I answered; "but just now l want you to come in and lie down Things are mending in the village, bu

Things are mending in the vinage, date we still have some work to do, and I am getting anxious about you."

"Very well, doctor, I will obey you, but my head aches a little. Let me sit

in the cool air for a few moments, and then I will do as you wish. I want to talk about my lilies to-night," and he

looked tenderly at them.

I allowed him to have his way, for the air might do him good, and I did not to thwart his evident desire to speak, so I listened with interest while he began as nearly as possible in the following words.

"Forty years ago, doctor, I was a careless, happy-go lucky young fellow. There was no stoop in my shoulders then, and I had no grey hairs. Indeed I was a very fine fellow in my own estim-ation. My father was a member of the faculty "he said this with a little smiling bow to me-" and he educated me to follow in his footsteps and help him in his practice. But I am afraid that in a great measure I wasted his money and my own talents—such as

were. It was my misfortune to be a general favorite, and among fellows of my own turn of mind—that is, with a taste for pleasure and idleness—I was in per-petual demand, and indeed I was only too willing to join in every sort of gaiety and frivolity. But I think I was too lazy and inert to take the initiative myself. I followed where others led.

Gaiety, however, is one thing; dissipa-

tion is another.
"I went to Galway College to study, and if I had profited by the counsels of our good president, and taken his kindly lectures to heart, well—I should not have so much to regret now."
"We should have missed you here.

Father John," I said.
"No, no, my friend. But I thank
God that He led me in His own way
and gave me work to do, even in this
little corner of His vineyard," and he
slowly raised his biretta for a moment. Father John," I said.

"Well, instead of taking his advice I began by being idle, and gradually flung all the restraints of common prud ence from my mind, and went in heart and soul for enjoying myself, no matter at what cost.

"There was a Mrs. Blake, the widow of a doctor who had been an old college chum of my father, and who lived not very far from the town. She was anxivery lar from the town. She was anxious to show me every kindness, and I spent a good deal of my time at her house in the beginning, and indeed more or less till the end. Mrs. Blake had a daughter, and—the usual thing happened. I fell, or fancied myself in love. She was a sweet innocent girl quiet, holy, and gentle in every waythousand times too good for me.

"The parish priest of this district was a brother of the late doctor, and of course I met him frequently at his sister-in-law's house. These meetings were not always quite pleasant non quite convenient to myself. Father Blake knew a little too much about me. He would put me through my facings sometimes as to my attendance at the Sacraments, and I am afraid my replies Sacraments, and I am alraid my replies were not always satisfactory. One day he came to my rooms and read me a great lecture, which I took upon myself to consider—young fool that I was—as an uncalled for interference. Nevertheless Father Black 2019. theless, Father Blake did not quarrel with me. He was friendly when we met, but I always felt that I had incurred his strong disapproval.

"I need not make a general confession, doctor," he continued with a smile, "but you know all the vices and follies and sins that beset a young, hot-headed fellow that won't take advice and pull up in time. One false step leads to another and—facilis descensus Averni — you know the rest, doctor. However, I must not detain you much

onger.
I managed to scramble some way through the examinations, but never took a very high place. I was a won-der indeed that I passed at all, for I allowed myself little time for study and spent the greater part in mischievous behavior with my chosen companions. At length, before the third examination, we exceeded all bounds, and the presicompanions. dent had no choice but to expel us from the college. There were three of us-one went down hill quickly, the other went to Australia, and I lost sight of him, and by God's mercy the least

worthy is here to day."

For answer, I touched his old, wrinkled hand. I could find no words

or such humility. After a pause he went on :

"Our interview with the president was a painful one, as you can imagine, We tried to assume a careless, ent attitude, but I, for one, v careless, indiffer ally afraid to go home. I made up my mind to go to Liverpool and see what fortune would do for me there. could not leave without seeing Nora once more. I had never spoken to her of love—some saving grace had pre-vented such presumption.
"I remember well that that particu-

lar day was bright and sunny, but I felt as if I were walking through a dark cloud as I set out for Mrs. Blake's house. I was tired and disheartened and was thinking of turning back when I had accomplished the greater part of y journey; but Father Blake was just entering his house as I approached, and accosted me in his usual friendly way.

"Come in, Mr. Daly, and rest. I am afraid you will be disappointed if you are going on to Seaview Cottage, for my sister in law and Nora have gone to Dublin.' 'For long?' 'Well, gone to Dublin.' For long?' 'Well, perhaps—Nora has been wanting to go for some time.

"I could not understand his reti cence, and a sudden defiant resolution took possession of me. I told him that I should see Nora and asked for her address. Father Blake was shrewd enough to know what that meant, but he was a kind man, and full of tact. When I had stumbled through a few bombastic high-flown phrases, frained from any stern rejoinder, but it was obvious that he intended to pursue a course of humiliation. Rough words would but have incensed me, and I had

a rude lesson to learn. " He led me out to his garden, and I followed, not knowing why. We came to a bed of lilies, just like those," and Father John pointed to his own.

'You know of what virtue these flowers are emblematic, Mr. Dal said Father Blake. I nodded in

ence.

"They require good soil and sunshine or else they will not thrive,' he went on. 'Now, come a little further,' and he led me out beyond the garden to where stood a refuse heap.

"Suppose I transplanted my liles to this spot. Mr. Daly? How long do

to this spot, Mr. Daly? How long do you think it would be before—with the accumulated rubbish heaped up and thrown on them every night—how long do you think my lilies would survive How long before the bulbs were crushed and the shoots stifled? Even if one shoot did force its way upward, the effect would be at least a little incon-

gruous, you must admit.'
"I understood that this was all figurative larguage, and that the lilies sign fled Nora Blake in her innocence and ned Nora Blake in her innocence and purity, and the refuse heap my own soul. I was angered and humiliated, but Father Blake was rereiless. He led the way back to his garden and

continued: " When the Christian soul is regenerated by baptism, God plants within it a beautiful lily. He expects that