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GETSAMINE.

(Caroline D. Swan, in Sacred Heart Review) A golden chain, O Lord, A chain of woe, Ever in sweet accord Swings to and fro.

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THE BLACK FINGER

BY M. T. WAAGAMAN.

(From the American Messenger of the Sacred Heart.)

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

"The Right Baptizades, and the Corporal's Works of Mercy, and the Six Sins against the Holy Ghost, and all of them, sur. Shure there was not a sinisler giri in the whole Allegheeny Ridge than the same Norah Kelly, and now her mother tells me she is tak all of a trumble if she hez to so much as pass the church door. Faith, if I got me hand on her I'd make her trumble in a minute."

cast a cautious glance around him and lowered his voice to a whisper: "Ye don't know the half of the devil's wurk that is going on up in these mountains. I haven't drawn an easy breath for yer riverince since—since that cold riprobrate (the Lord forgive me for calling him such hard names) Dan Bourke—died."

"Why?" asked Father Paul, his eyes fixed thoughtfully on the fire that was beginning to blaze royally under Tim's skilful touch.

"Shure, he was one of the boys, sur, the 'Hushers,' as they call them, and they're a dark murdering pack of wolves, that's what they are, yer riverince, and there's them that say Dan was head and master of them all and could lift the Black Finger on anybody from say to say."

CHAPTER IV.

A WAIF FROM THE STORM. "For me?" said Father Paul, quietly. "Ab, I understand, Tim. You mean these poor, mangled wretches that I have learned too much. Ah, well, I don't worry about me. A priest, like a soldier, must do picket duty and take consequences. Hark! is that the wind, or do I hear something crying at the church door?"

"Then we must unbar it," said the priest calmly. "Come, don't be a foolish coward, Tim, I must see what or who is suffering without!"

"Wine, quick," said Father Paul to Tim, who was standing staring blankly at the unconscious boy. "A little of the altar wine; you will find it in the closet in my room."

"Bring the wine as I bid you at once," cried the priest sternly. "Awd by the imperative tone, Tim shuffled off and returned in a moment with the wine, which Father Paul poured between the livid lips."

"It's all up wid me, Tim," he said, "the mark is on me doer-post. I'll go off to Richardville and make ready to meet me God. I'll never see another moon."

But I'll never reach the cold road alive!" "And he didn't, sur. The next day he was found dead in Stuyker's Run."

"There's no one dares call him that name, yer riverince," said Tim, in a lower tone.

"You can leave us now, Tim," said his young pastor, about half an hour later. "Thank you for your help, my good fellow, but I won't need you any more tonight. The boy is sleeping comfortably and will be all right, or nearly so, in the morning. The poor little chap is both starved and frozen. He has been hiding, I judge, ever since Dan's death."

"MY DEAR BOY,—I have been thinking much of you lately and of the post to which I, perhaps, too hastily assigned you last summer. I felt sure, to one who had been so long at books, a little study of nature in the rough would be advantageous."

"But since her return to the city her account of affairs in the mountains has caused me grave doubts as to the wisdom of my decision. I understand that the whole region about that is in a most lawless condition, that the very few Catholics, who, in the inclement season attend your chapel, could easily seek spiritual ministrations at the town of Richardsville; that, in short, to human eyes your time and talents seem wasted in your present sphere."

"Now, my dear Paul, as wisdom and prudence take precedence of fortune, I don't propose to let a Welsh collier add his brilliant young cleric to the martyrology, so I write to offer you the post of Secretary at the Cathedral. Father James is far from well this autumn; indeed I think his cough will necessitate a winter at the South. As for me, well I am turned of seventy now, and at three score and ten the Shepherd's crook begins to grow heavy and his voice weak. I think a clarion call, such as you could sound from my pulpit, would wake some of the sleepers in our cushioned pews effectively. But understand me, dear boy; this is not an official summons home. It is your father who writes you frankly, leaving you free to follow the dictates of your own heart, or rather of the Holy spirit, which I know dwells in you."

"Come back to me and you will be welcomed with outstretched arms; remain at your post if you feel God's gull is there, and you will have, as always, my tender and paternal benediction."

"Ever, my beloved son, your friend and Father in Christ. (To be continued.)"

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