

SO AS BY FIRE

BY JEAN COHON

CHAPTER XVI

THE JUDGE'S SWEETHEART

Through the great picture hall, with its rows of portraits, past the stately stretch of drawing rooms and library, Leigh led his bewildered guest, late as was the hour there was light and warmth everywhere at Roscroft's to-night, even down in the kitchen, where old Aunt Dill croaked and groaned over the wide hearth, and the servants, gathered in solemn expectancy, talked of the "old man" who was passing away. While up in her own room beautiful Miss Nellie was being warmed and cuddled into safety under Aunt Van's tender care.

The wide dining-room with its crimson hangings, its gleaming silver and glass, was a cherry shelter. A log fire leaped and crackled on the spacious hearth, and lit with ruddy glow the life-sized portrait above, that only to day had been snatched from its wrappings and lifted into place. Mr. Leigh's guest stood dumb before it. It was a girl in the full bloom of life and loveliness, her arms full of roses. The graceful figure in its exquisite gown was strange to Mr. Mills, but the turn of the head, the red-gold hair, the eyes, the wonderful sea-gray eyes, held him mute and breathless.

"Her picture!" And there was something in the judge's tone that struck like a death-pang through Daffy's heart. It took the prize at the Paris Salon last year and has just come home. It is a wonderful likeness.

A wonderful likeness, indeed! Through all the glamour of gown and jewels and flowers, Daffy could see the girl in the old gray sweater, the sharp-tongued starveling of the Road House, the little gray eyed girl seated on his soapbox. It was Weasel, Weasel, his Weasel!

One thought alone stood clear in the mad whirl of his brain, the surge of his blood, the leap of his heart. If she had reached this, this, no word or glance from him should drag her down. He caught up the silver-mounted decanter that Leigh had put on the table beside him, and, pouring out a drink that made his host start, swallowed it at a draught. It steadied him.

"Your, your sweetheart, I take it, Judge?" he found voice to say.

"My sweetheart; yes, Mills, my wife, I hope and trust in a not far future. As you've told me your heart story, I don't mind telling you mine. That little girl in the one woman in all that means."

"I know, I know!" repeated Daffy, huskily. "Judge, it don't seem as if I did know anything clear to-night. Your sweetheart, is it Judge? And how, how do you name her?"

"Elinor Randall," answered Leigh. "Her grandfather wished her to bear his name, though she is really Elinor Kent."

Elinor Kent! And then blinding light fell upon Daffy. Elinor Kent! The name he had himself carved pitifully on the wooden tablet over the grave under the old yew that any one who sought the dead girl might know. Elinor Kent! Elinor Kent! The rich, full liquor that had been gaining life and spirit in the Randall cellars for fifty years was quickening Daffy's dull brain into keen life, Elinor Kent! The forgotten girl who had died in the Road House!

The fierce old catamount of a grandmother, who would have no questions asked, the sudden fight in the doomed train! It was Weasel, sharp, keen-witted, starting Weasel who had stolen here in the dead girl's name and place.

Lord! The pluck of it, the grit of it, the mad daring of it! Though a pang fierce as that of the Spartan boy when his vitals were rended tore at Daffy's faithful heart, he vowed to himself to stand by and give no sign. Again he took up the decanter and poured out a draught that seemed only water to his parched throat, his burning veins.

"Here's to her, Judge, then! Here's to your sweetheart, and to you." He lifted the glass with a shaking.

"Here's, here's, luck, and, and, love to you both. And though I'm off to my own hills in a day or two now, and ain't likely to ever bother you again, Judge, I'd sort of like it when everything is settled between to have you tell her my little girl's story, Weasel's story, Judge. Tell her how lonely she was and how pitiful, and how hard every thing went again her. You couldn't blame her for nothing, Judge, you couldn't blame poor little Weasel for doing nothing that would change her hard luck. She was up against it from the time she was born. Yes, Judge, I'd like that beautiful lady up there to know about my poor little girl that died, Judge, that was killed, in the wreck."

"I'll tell her, Mills," answered Leigh, wondering a little at the strange earnestness of the request, but concluding that the liquor Mills had quaffed recklessly had gone to his head and loosened his honest tongue.

"It's a story of simple, faithful love that will touch her heart as it has touched mine."

"Now, I'm going, Judge. No, I couldn't stay," as Leigh ventured a remonstrance. "I just couldn't stay to-night. I've got to get out again into the storm. Good night, Judge, and good luck to you and your sweetheart!" And Daffy, who had reached the front door while he was speaking, wrung Leigh's hand in a mighty grip and strode out on the porch, sprang into his sleigh, and dashed off into the storm. How or where he went he never knew—the rest of that wild night was a hideous blur of snow and sleet and darkness, of sweeping drifts and shrieking wind, through which one picture named fire lit before his mental vision.

The Judge's sweetheart, the girl with the red-gold hair, the sea-gray eyes, who had been borne away from the little mountain under Daffy's own despairing gaze more than two years ago! He saw it all now—he saw it all. Weasel—Weasel, pale and pinched, hungry, starving Weasel, had reached out desperate hands for all that had been denied her—had aroled the dead girl's name and home and place. And he would stand by her again and through the storm, as he had, he would stand by Weasel's lie though his own faithful heart was rent in twain.

As Leigh turned back into the hall after his parting with Mills, Madame Van came down the stairs. All the lines of age marked her fine old face to-night; her eyes were dim with tears.

"The Judge is sinking fast, Allison. Thank God the priest has come. Father Martin is ill with the grip, but happily Father Lane was down at St. Barnabas' for a short visit, and he came on horseback through the storm."

"And Nellie?" asked Allison eagerly.

"She has recovered completely, but is dreadfully nervous and shaken. Allison, that girl's heart is yours, I know. Your name was on her lips as she returned to consciousness. And oh, I wish—I wish that her grandfather could know that all was settled between you before he goes. He told me this evening, just before the death stroke fell, that he would rather give her to you than to any man on earth."

"Dear old man, would to God that he might leave us with his dying blessing," said Allison, with emotion. "Let me see her, let me plead with her, Aunt Van. Of late, I have had hopes that—"

"Hope!" repeated Aunt Van. "I have surely that she loves you, Allison. I know how to read a girl's heart. Come. She is up in the sitting-room waiting for a summons to her grandfather's dying bed. He is sleeping fitfully now. Go to her, Allison; she will listen to you to-night, I know."

Leigh sprang up the stairs like a boy. He knew the sitting-room of Roscroft well. It was in the old wing of the house—the original mansion of the house—had a high, wide, simple, homely charm the later editions lacked. The low ceiling, the wainscotted walls, the small, deep-set windows belonged to a generation long gone by. Here were gathered pathetic relics of the wifehood and the motherhood of the past—sewing-table and work-basket, and writing-desk. A toy-house in the far corner, the tiny rocking chair which the baby Nellie had called her own. The brick chimney place where, in later years, Allison Leigh and Milly Randall had roasted chestnuts and popped corn, was rusty with cheerful blaze to night and in the chintz- cushioned chair before it was a slender figure gowned in a soft white cashmere negligée—a Parisian fancy, that mimicked in its straight graceful lines, its silver traceries, the garb of the Greek goddess of old. The red gold hair had been knotted into a loose coil, the young head lay back on the flowered cushion, the gray eyes stared dreamily into the open fire.

What was coming to her? The girl did not know. She sat there gaily awaiting her fate. Even the river was frozen against her to-night—there could be no rest in its gleaming depths.

Daffy! What Nemesis had brought Daffy to her side—Daffy, keen-eyed, outspoken Daffy? What fiery witness had brought Daffy to bear witness to her living life? The end had come, as she felt it must. There was but one dull hope flickering in the blackness, that the old man dying in yonder room might never know—that in mercy he might never know. Then suddenly a quick footstep sounded behind her a tender voice called her name, and Allison Leigh, with all his soul shining in his eyes, was kneeling at her feet.

Life, love, safety again! Life, love, safety! In the wild rapture of her relief all lesser doubts vanished. He was pleading with her, the one man she had loved all these glittering, mocking years, the man she had loved from the first.

"Sweetheart, you will listen, you will give that noble old man dying in there this last happiness? He knows me, he trusts me, I have been almost like a son to him—let him bless our love before he goes."

How the deep music stirred the chilled blood in her heart! And she had struggled against this strong, sweet call so long—she had striven to put land and seas, even the gilded fetters of a loveless betrothal, between her and Allison Leigh, all in vain. To-night she was weak and shaken, bewildered by the horrors of death and darkness and danger. Heaven closed against her impetuous. Faith, hope, all things sweet,

RAT KELLY KICKS IN ON CHRISTMAS EVE

By The Rev. Thomas Scanlan

His Lordship the Chauffeur, dapper as an army officer and quite as well set up physically, left his seat of duty in the big steamline greyhound that had come to a stop before the church door, and came smilingly across the lawn to greet me (I was sitting at the time at an open window on the ground-floor of the rectory). The sunlight flashed on the visor of the smart cap which he lifted in salute as he appeared, and gleamed in pleasant high lights from his polished boots and puttees. And upon the breast of his grey-blue uniform there was black braid in quantity to excite the envy, I am sure, of any Hungarian Orchestra leader.

In his blue eyes there was sunlight too, or whatever that glow can be called which Celtic generosity casts kindly in the windows of its possessor's soul. His cheeks were rosy despite the housing of plate glass wind shields which enclosed the migratory work-shop from which he had just emerged.

"Good morning, Father," said he, striding up to the window ledge and grasping my hand with one that had been calloused and strengthened by years, I knew, of "gear-strippin'" on many different kinds of motor-cars.

"Is a high morning; isn't it?" he continued cordially. "And verily to this statement you could be no response save assent, for we were up then being blessed by almost June like weather in the very heart of the month of December. So—" It is that indeed, Michael," said I, "high and clear, and but little like the weather that a man would be needing for the work that I am at now." I flourished some pencilled pad-sheets before him.

"Think of the superhuman difficulty Michael," I said, "of writing a Christmas story on a day like this! Why that green lawn and this sun-warmed breeze are enough to drive a writer into a fine epiloic frenzy on Springfield, you think so yourself, Michael?" I asked with unsmiling solemnity.

"Well," he replied, scratching the top of his head dubiously, "I suppose you would be having trouble writing about snow and sleigh-bells and Santy Claus, now. But why don't your Reverence write about a Green Christmas?"

"Precisely because nobody wants to read about one," I replied. And, besides, I've got a story all thought out that needs snow and winter winds and bitter weather for its background. Would you like to hear its plot?" I asked.

"Well—yes," responded Michael in a tone that was a most humanly natural mixture of reluctance and resignation. "That is, if your Reverence pleases and if it is not too long?" He glanced across at the church door. "I am waiting for the little lady" (that was his employer's wife) "she has gone to say the beads, I think, and will be out again in a few minutes."

Then I lightly explained that the revealing of a story plot was not an exclusively time-consuming operation and proceeded forthwith to prove my assertion. "My plot, I wish to confide to you, Michael," I said, "is an entirely new and original one. It is a striking idea that I have thought out myself. I believe it will make a wonderful story. . . . In the first place you must imagine an old homestead situated in the midst of a bleak English moor" (that bleak moor" got by Michael I am certain; but he did not blink an eyelid and so I went on without pause).

"In this old homestead there dwells a family consisting of a stern and aged father, a gentle mother, an attractive daughter and a high-spirited son who has just attained his majority." (Michael did wink a little here; but perhaps it was from eye-weariness.) "All goes well in the homestead until a bold young squire from a neighboring demesne begins to make advances to the daughter of the house. He meets with instant favor from the girl and with utter discouragement amounting on one occasion to a physical rebuff from the old father." (Many a physical rebuff Michael had administered in his day, I'll warrant, but he had evidently not thus named them.) "The inevitable happens: the girl and the squire elope and the old man curses her and shouts out his hopes that her shadow will never darken his threshold again. And then—"

"He was a hard old cuss, wasn't he?" said Michael in almost an admiring tone.

"Yes," I answered, considerably cheered by his strained attention, "and in the midst of his trouble his high-spirited son disgraces him (forgets a cheque or something of that sort, you know) and after a stormy scene with the old gentleman and an affecting parting with his mother he leaves the homestead too."

"Well, what d'ye know about that?" exclaimed Michael, his eyes shining with interest.

"Now all this, you understand," I continued, "happens as a prelude to the real story. Several years roll by and the venerable couple fall fast in the venerable couple in the old home. Nothing has been heard from either of their children; the wolf of poverty is howling at their door and a big mortgage which has been hanging over them for years is about to be foreclosed on them and the date of the foreclosure has been arranged by the hard-hearted landlord to fall on exactly the day after Christmas of that very year."

Well that Christmas, believe me, Michael, is not to be like the one we are entering upon now. The gales of the north, in this one, shall

have been blowing furiously for a week before Christmas and the snow is to be piled in huge impassible drifts across the entire countryside. The icy wind whistles and shrieks in the gables of the old homestead and fights against the feeble warmth within which comes from a pitiable small log fire over which the two old folks are crouching as the darkness sets in on Christmas Eve. They have been discussing the coming misfortune of their eviction on the day after what they believe will be their last Christmas in the ancient home, and the old man has just risen with the sad remark, "It's a wild night on the moor, Nell; I wonder where our wandering bairns may be—" when the sound of jingling sleigh-bells is borne to their ears above the whistling of the winds; the doors burst open and into the room rush the long-lost prodigals, their daughter followed by her handsome husband carrying a chubby infant; their son carrying a cheque for £5,000 not forged this time, but genuine and sufficient to pay the mortgage debt many times over. Then the mid-night chimes are heard faintly pealing from the village church-spire as the old man relaxes and falls weeping into his son's and daughter's arms. Now Michael, what do you think of that?" I asked, as modestly as I could.

"My listener drew a long breath and gazed across at the church door. "It's good," said he, "but is it true? D'ye know, Father, that I sometimes think that half them things are made up?"

"This was staggering. "Why, of course! They're all made up," I replied sharply. "You never did hear a true Christmas story, I'm willing to wager. I mean a real story of Christmas, with a good plot and interest and beauty and romance in it, which was at the same time a true story. They just don't happen, that is all."

Michael's eyes twinkled and a slight flush appeared beneath them. "It's not I, Father," he said almost shyly, "that should be asking you to believe that we have a true Christmas story at any rate. Of course I mean the story of the first Christmas, Father."

I bowed my head. "But apart from that," I persisted (my vanity as a fictionist having been wounded) "apart from that, I'll warrant you have never heard a good Christmas tale with a real Christmas atmosphere to it that was the story of a true occurrence. Now be honest, have you? You have lived almost half a century now, tell me did you ever live through a single Christmas incident worthy of the name of a 'Christmas story'?"

He shook his head disconsolately and said, "Well, no, Father, not exactly, except—"

"Come out with it; what was the exception?" I demanded.

"Well it isn't a story and I don't think you could find one of them plots in it. It's only something that I know that did happen and it happened on Christmas, and your Reverence speaking about Christmas and about the evicting of them people in England made me think of it. You know, Father, that I was driving a taxicab in New York City two years ago, and a man at the wheel of one of them, sees and hears a good many things, I'm thinking that he wouldn't want ever to be talking about; but this—well it's a bit different from the rest."

"When I was driving for the Black Taxi Company, I lived at the time in the old gas house district at the foot of Seventeenth street. That's not just what you would call a high-class place, you know; and though I am quiet and peace-making, I ran up against a good many rough ones in the year that I was there. The worst of them all was a Jew gun-toter who was called, in that neighborhood, 'Rat Kelly.' I don't know where the Kelly part of the name came from; but 'Rat' suited him fine. He had a sharp yellow face and yellowfang teeth and eyes like shoe-buttons. When I first seen him poking pinholes with a couple of playing in a drink place, he already had three notches on his gun—all chips that had belonged, before he plugged them, to the River Gang; and them fellows you know are always scrapping with the Gas House crowd."

"That was Spring or Summer when I seen him first. Along towards Fall a kill was made down town on the East Side and Kelly was blamed for it by everyone, but the bulls didn't seem to want him just then and he never even took the trouble to hide. Take it from me, Father, he was the worst man that ever lived, that chap. He had a reputation for being treacherous that would have made the Apostle Judas look like a saint if you mean and low. He was a gonoph and a sneak that nobody would trust; and nobody would have ever gone near him at all, except that when he had a shot of coke in him, which was most of the time, he was loose with his money, and a lot of his 'friends' used to gather around him then to help him count it."

"Well, it comes about this time of the year, and another poor devil was led, at the Brooklyn sugar wharfs this time, and there was head-lines in the high lights in the papers next morning saying that the police knew that Rat Kelly was the guy that did it."

"Well, he made a get-away, just as quick and as complete as he was wanted to do by them higher up I guess and for a long time we had daily news of how he was heard of in this place and chased out of that and supposed to be in another—but they never told of getting him."

I was living then, as I say, near the foot of Seventeenth street and I stayed there most of all because I wanted to help out with a little board-money an old widow that had come as a lass from the same part of Cavan as my mother. But that is neither here nor there. What I wanted to say was that there is a row of tenements there and my lodgings was in one of them. The day before Christmas came around and I found myself by the lots that we cast, scheduled for the noon-to-midnight duty shift. I went up to the garage at noon for my car and was out from then until near eleven that night bringing the shoppers to the lobster-joints on Broadway. But along about eleven there came a lull and I took the chance to drive over on the jump to my room at the Rectory to get my necessities, for it was a bitter cold night and my feet were freezing to the pushes.

"I got the shoes and pulled them on in a hurry and was beating it out to my cab again when a kid about ten years old comes up to me on the run and shoves a folded paper in my hand and then scoots like a bucko up the street. I stood there foolish, looking first at the thing in my hand and then at him and finally I brought it over and looked at it by the light of one of the cab-lamps. It was a scrap of paper with a ten-dollar bill folded in it and across the paper there was writing which said 'A Catholic dying in the cellar of 590 E. Eighteenth street. Bring a priest in the taxi quick, hurry up, don't wait.'"

"I knew that that number and house was only around on the next block and at first I was going to take the risk of going around to investigate; then I thought, what's the use of that and I cranked her up and shot the gas into her at law-breaking limit until I pulled up at the Immaculate Conception Rectory in Fourteenth street. Believe me, it looked as silent and dark as a grave and I felt pretty bad about dragging the young priest out of bed who did answer the bell, but I tell you the smoke-eaters have nothing on him for getting dressed in a hurry. Why before I had the old boat turned around it seemed to me, he was out through a back door and was diving into the vestry-entrance of the Church. In a minute he came out again with his right hand held up into that awful cellar. It was terrible. I stunk of rotten rags and garbage and it was at first, to our eyes, all dark. Then over towards one corner behind a big pile of junk, of some sort, I saw a light. I told the priest to stand on the stairs and I went over slowly holding a beer bottle that I had picked up, as a club, and expecting, I tell you the truth, Father, to be brained any minute from behind or from the darkness on both sides of me."

"Now a cabby is not supposed to leave his machine you know, except to eat, while on duty. But I didn't like the looks of things there and I wasn't going to let the soggy run any risks, so I stopped the motor and put the key in my pocket and led the way for him down into that awful cellar. It was terrible. I stunk of rotten rags and garbage and it was at first, to our eyes, all dark. Then over towards one corner behind a big pile of junk, of some sort, I saw a light. I told the priest to stand on the stairs and I went over slowly holding a beer bottle that I had picked up, as a club, and expecting, I tell you the truth, Father, to be brained any minute from behind or from the darkness on both sides of me."

"But nothing happened and as I got nearer the light I saw what looked at first to be a big crowd of people sitting around and talking in whispers. I went near them and a man jumped up before me and said in a loud way, 'Who're you?'

"Now I didn't want to say that I had the priest with me until I found out whether it would be safe for him to be there. So I said, 'Who's sick here; what's the matter?'

"At that the man before me began to get over his scare of me and he talked more easy. 'Oh, there's a woman in child-birth here,' he said. 'I'm a doctor and there is a neighbor-woman here. Who sent you here and what do you want?'

"I ran back and called the little Father and brought him over to the people near the lantern. I heard a lot of voices say 'Priest!' as he came up and I heard very plain a man's voice crying and saying 'My God! How did he find us!'

"Well, the doctor spoke a few words to him and then when the priest slipped his purple stole over his shoulders everybody stepped back. I then saw that there was another man, there beside the doctor. I asked the doctor if the child was born yet and he said yes, but he told me that the mother was near death. 'That's the husband,' he said, pointing at the other man, who I could see between me and the light, crying into his own hands like a woman. 'And the mother is lying on a bale of rags there.' To tell you the truth, I could not see even the doctor, much less the woman for the lantern, hanging very low. Well the doctor gassed on a lot about the danger of her taking blood-poisoning, I think, but I was watching and listening all the time to know if he was wanted by him. But he didn't call me, though he did call the man who was crying in his hands. He went over under the light and for a few minutes I could see the young priest talking fast to him and him nodding his head like a Chinese doll. Then he must have knelt down beside the bed because all that I could see was the priest standing underneath the light reading something out loud from his book. The Father then turned to us and called out for the doctor and for the neighbor-woman to come

over, and I tell you I felt pretty cheap standing there alone, but I found out in a few minutes that the priest did not know I was in the cellar; he thought I had gone back to the cab to wait for him.

"Well after a bit I heard the queerest conglomeration of crying and laughing, and giggling you ever listened to. I did not know who was doing it all until I saw that poor fool of a husband coming out with the little priest and mauling him all over like a puppy dog. The priest was smiling too, and we three went to the sidewalk leaving the doctor and the woman with the new mother.

"When we got out in the air and under a street-lamp I had a good look at that husband and I saw then that he was only a boy about twenty with a little chin and round eyes like a girl's. He had had a awful lot to say to my priest and he said it some times crying and sometimes beating his thin hands together and laughing and jumping up and down like you've seen them school girls do when there's candy coming. Of course I didn't butt in, though I was mighty curious to hear from some of the things that I had heard the young fellow tell drop; but after a while I saw the priest look at the poor shivering kid and then do a very nice thing. He took the lap rug out of the cab and put it around the young chap's shoulders and he said to me, 'I'll pay for it. They need it, the two of them, badly enough. God knows.'"

"Well, I took the Father to the rectory then and of course I managed to pull away from the curb just when he began handing over the payment for the rug. I yelled back at him that I could get a reduced rate on it charged to my pay envelope if I told the company it had been stolen—which it certainly was, wasn't it?"

"But after leaving the priest home I knew it was nearly midnight and that my working time would soon be up; so I beat it around fast to the tenement cellar again, for there was a few things I wanted to know the reason for. One of them was why that poor, crying simp was keeping that woman in a cellar and not in a hospital."

"When I got there, there was quite an improvement in the place. Three lanterns instead of one, were hanging up, and the smell of the doctor's drugs gave the air in the cellar a clean and the first time I saw with a man for the first time since the woman. She was Irish, a slip of a girl, black haired and a beauty. I didn't need three lanterns, let me tell you Reverence, to see that. Her eyes were closed, and these hairs—what d'ye call them" (he pointed to his own yellow eye lashes) "were lying like big black half-circles on her cheeks. Her face was as white as the paper before you and at her bare breast was a little patch of black hair that I knew was the kid. And around the two of them I believe me that I did see whether I could get any reduced rate or when I saw get there—around the both of them was that big warm cab-rug, covering them as well, if I say it myself, as an Irish mother's shawl would do it."

"I looked at the whole thing for a few minutes (the neighbor woman was dozing against the rags and the doctor was gone) and I've known, Father, that I'm blessed if I didn't begin to blubber up, too. Just like that poor boob of a husband I was getting to be a murrer and himself came down the cellar stairs with a bottle of something the doctor had told him to get at the corner drug store. He gave it to the neighbor-woman and then I collared him and hauled him, shaking like a chicken over to a corner and jammed him down on a leghad and asked him in not polite language what he had his wife down in the cellar for under those conditions."

"Well, the poor kid, between sobbing and crying and shivering and laughing, got off the greatest tale you ever listened to. He said that he and his wife had been living in a small room on the top of that very tenement where we were then in the cellar of it. He had been a ribbon-maker or some such fool thing, and had been out of a job for a month. He was warned and warned to pay his rent and they were both put out of their room a week before by the brute that owns these houses. 'The girl was in no condition to walk downstairs, much less get out looking for a room on no more, and the doctor called that Dago used to keep junk shop.'"

"Now the funny part of it is that as soon as they got into the cellar a horrible looking gink with a white face and a snarling mouth jumps up out of the rags and pulls a gun on them and begins squealing that he'd drop them if they come any nearer."

"Of course it was Rat Kelly, hiding; but they didn't know that or know him from Peter McGinn, and after a while he found this out, and he told them they could stay in the cellar if they kept on one side and didn't bother him (all he wanted was room to work a coke gun on himself, anyhow)."

"Well, the boy spoke of the hospital, but the girl had the Irish fear of it in her and wouldn't give in, and the two of them were about as fit for the duties of parents as ordinary ten-year olds would be."

"So that awful night came on them in a hurry, and if you will believe me Father, they were both so unready that there wasn't even a little shirt or pants laid by for the poor kiddy if it did come! I could have choked him when he told me that, but his neck wasn't really the kind you like to choke. Well, all about 10:15 that night, things began to happen

POWER OF THE CONFESSIOAL

The Ave Maria, quoting from the New York Independent, attributes the following statement to the late Miss Frances Willard:

"I am a Protestant, but there is no blinking this fact: the Catholics are, in this country and in England and in Ireland, ahead of us in social purity. You can take a Protestant family into a London slum and put them into a room at the right hand top of the stairs, and then put a Catholic family on the other side of the stairs, and you will find after two, three or four years, half of the girls of the Protestant family have gone to the bad, and all the members of the Catholic family have retained their virtue."