



CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

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NO. 49.

JUST RECEIVED,

Table listing various books and their prices, including 'Glories of the Sacred Heart' and 'Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost'.

AGENTS FOR THE DOMINION.

CATHOLIC PERIODICALS.

Table listing Catholic periodicals such as 'New York Tablet', 'Boston Pilot', and 'Dublin Nation' with their respective prices.

JUST RECEIVED,

SERMONS BY THE LATE

REVEREND J. J. MURPHY,

Text describing the sermons by Rev. J. J. Murphy, mentioning his death and the collection of his works.

THERE IS A WORD.

Text of a poem or short story titled 'There is a word' with a solemn tone.

Text of a poem or short story with a dark world and a passing knell.

[From London Society.]

A PERILOUS JOURNEY.

Text of a story titled 'A Perilous Journey' starting with 'There is a tide in the affairs of men'.

Text of a story titled 'A Perilous Journey' continuing the narrative.

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place in my uncle's office. Which? I was for the commission, Alice for the office. A respectable, influential solicitor; a position not to be despised; nothing but cleverness wanted; and my uncle's name, and no one to wait for; no liver complaints; no Sepoys; no sea voyages; no long separation.

I agreed, not unnaturally then, that it was the best. "Now, you young people, you've had time enough to say 'Good-bye,' so be off, Guy. Here, my lad, you'll need something to start with," and the old gentleman put into my hands a note for fifty pounds.

"I must beg, sir, that you will not insult—" "God bless the boy! 'Insult!' Why I've danced you on my knee hundreds of times. Look you, Guy,"—and the old fellow came and put his hand on my shoulder,— "it gives me pain to do what I am doing. I believe for both your sakes, it is best you should part. Let us part friends. Come now, Guy, you'll need this; and if you need a little more let me know."

"But, sir, you can cut me off from all hope; you render my life a burden to me. Give me some definite task; say how much you think we ought to have; I mean how much I ought to have to keep Alice—I mean Miss Morton—in such a position as you would wish."

Alice added her entreaties, and the result of the conference was an understanding that if, within five years from the date, I could show that I was worth £500 a year, the old gentleman would add another £500; and on that he thought we might live for a few years comfortably.

There was to be no correspondence whatever; no meetings, no messages. We protested and pleaded, and finally he said— "Well, well, Guy; I always liked you and liked your father before you. Come to us on Christmas day, and you shall find a vacant chair beside Alice. There, now; say 'Good-bye,' and be off."

I went off. I came to London to one of the little lanes leading out of Cannon street. Five hundred a year in five years! I must work hard. My uncle took little notice of me; I fancied myself harder than the rest, and paid me the same. Seventy-five pounds a year is not a large sum. I had spent it in a month before now, after the fashion of my father; now, I hoarded; made clothes last; ate in musty, cheap, little cook-shops; and kept my enjoying faculties from absolute rust by a weekly half-price to the theatres—the pit.

The year passed. I went down on Christmas, and for twenty-four hours was alive; came back, and had a raise of twenty pounds in salary for the next year. I waited for opportunity, and it came not.

This jog-trot routine of office-work continued for two years and more, and at the end of that time I was worth but my salary of £135 per year—£135! a long way from £500. Oh, for opportunity! I must quit the task, and become a merchant; all successful men have been merchants; money begets money. But to oppose all these thoughts or change, came the memory of Alice's last words at Christmas, "Wait and hope." Certainly; it's so easy to.

"Governor wants you, Westwood. He's sharp this morning; very sharp; so look out my dear nephew."

"You understand a little Italian, I think?" said my uncle.

"A little, sir."

"You will start to-night for Florence, in the mail train. Get there as rapidly as possible, and find whether a Colonel Wilson is residing there, and what lady he is residing with. Learn all you can as to his position and means, and the terms on which he lives with that lady. Write to me, and wait there for further instructions. Mr. Williams will give you a cheque for £100; you can get circular notes for £50, and the rest cash. If you have anything to say, come in here at five o'clock; if not good-morning. By-the-by, say nothing in the office."

I need not say that hope made me believe my opportunity was come.

I hurried to Florence and discharged my mission; sent home a careful letter, full of facts without comment or opinion, and in three weeks' time was summoned to return.

I had done little or nothing that could help me, and in a disappointed state of mind I packed up and went to the railway station at St. Domingo. A little row with a peasant as to his demand for carrying my baggage caused me to lose the last train that night, and so the steamer at Leghorn. The station-master, seeing my vexation endeavored to console me:

"There'll be a special through train to Leghorn at nine o'clock, ordered for Count Spezzato; he is good natured, and will possibly let you go in that."

It was worth the chance, and I hung about the station till I was tired, and then walked back toward the village. Passing a small wine-shop I entered, and asked for wine in English. I don't know what possessed me when I did it, for they were unable to understand me without dumb motions. I at length got wine by these means, and sat down to while away the time over a railway volume.

I had been seated about half an hour, when a courier entered, accompanied by a railway guard. Two more different examples of the human race it would be difficult to describe.

The guard was a dark, savage looking Italian, with "rascal!" and "bully!" written all over him; big, black, curly, with bloodshot eyes, and thick, heavy, sensual lips, the man was utterly repulsive.

The courier was a little, neatly dressed man, of no age in particular: pale, blue-eyed, straight-lipped, his face was a compound of fox and rabbit that only a fool or a patriot would have trusted out of arms length.

This ill-matched pair called for brandy, and the hostess set it before them. I then heard them ask who and what I was. She replied, I must be an Englishman, and did not understand the Italian for wine. She then left.

They evidently wanted to be alone, and my presence was decidedly disagreeable to them; and muttering that I was an Englishman, they proceeded to try my powers as a linguist.

newspaper. I didn't speak Italian, that was clear to them. The guard now struck in with a remark in French as to the fitness of the neighboring country. I shrugged my shoulders, and produced my cigar case. French was not very familiar to me, evidently.

"Those beasts of English think their own tongue so fine they are too proud to learn another," said the guard. I sat quietly, sipping my wine, and reading.

"Well, my dear Michael Pultuski!" began the guard. "For the love of God, call me not by that name. My name is Alexis Dzentzol, now."

"Oh! oh!" laughed the guard; "you've changed your name, you fox; it's like you. Now I am the same that you knew fifteen years ago, Conrad Ferrate—to-day, yesterday, and for life, Conrad Ferrate. Come, lad, tell us your story. How did you get out of that little affair at Warsaw? How they could have trusted you with your face, with their secrets, I can't for the life of me tell; you look so like a sly knave, don't you, lad?"

The courier, so far from resenting this familiarity, smiled, as if he had been praised.

"My story is soon said. I found after my betrayal to the police of the secrets of that little conspiracy which you and I joined, that Poland was too hot for me, and my name too well known. I went to France, who values her police, and for a few years was useful to them. But it was dull work; very dull; native talent was more esteemed. I was to be sent on a secret service to Warsaw; I declined for obvious reasons."

"Good! Michael—Alexis; good, Alexis. This fox is not to be trapped!" And he slapped the courier on the shoulder, heartily.

"And," resumed the other, "I resigned. Since then I have travelled as courier to noble families and trust I give satisfaction."

"Good! Alexis; good Mich—good Alexis! To yourself you give satisfaction. You are a fine rascal! So decent, so quiet, so like the cure of a convent. Who would believe that you had sold the lives of thirty men for a few hundred roubles?"

"And who," interrupted the courier, "would believe that you, bluff, honest Conrad Ferrate, had run away with all the money those thirty men had collected during ten years of labor, for rescuing their country from the Russian?"

"That was good, Alexis, was it not?" I never was so rich in my life as then; I loved—I gamed—I drank on the patriots' money."

"For how long? Three years?"

"More—and now have none left. Ah! Times change, Alexis; behold me." And the guard touched his buttons and belt, the badges of his office. "Never mind—here's my good friend, the bottle—let us embrace—the only friend that is always true—if he does not gladden, he makes us forget."

"Tell me, my good Alexis, whom do you rob now? Whose money do you invest, eh! my little fox? Why are you here? Come, tell me, while I drink to your success."

"I have the honor to serve his Excellency the Count Spezzato."

"Ten thousand devils! My accursed cousin!" broke in the guard. "He who has robbed me from his birth; whose birth itself was a vile robbery of me—me, his cousin, child of his father's brother. May he be accursed forever!"

I took particular pains to appear only amused at this genuine outburst of passion, for I saw the watchful eye of the courier was on me all the time we were talking.

The guard drank off a tumbler of brandy. "That master of yours is the man of whom I spoke years ago, as the one who had ruined me; and you serve him! May he be strangled on his wedding night, and cursed forever!"

"Be calm, my dearest Conrad, calm yourself! that beast of an Englishman will think you are drunk, like one of his own swinish people, if you talk so loud as this."

"How can I help it? I must talk. What he is, that I ought to be; I was brought up to it till I was eighteen; was the heir to all his vast estate; there was but one life between me and power—my uncle's, and he at fifty married a girl, and had this son, this son of perdition, my cousin. And after that, I who had been the pride of my family, became of no account; it was 'Julian,' 'sweet Julian'!"

"I heard," said the courier, "that some one attempted to strangle the sweet child, that was—?"

"Me—you fox—me. I wish I had done it: but for that wretched dog that worried me, I should have been Count Spezzato now. I killed that dog, killed him, no, not suddenly; may his master die like him!"

"Pay! No one pays for me, little fox; no, no, no go: I will pay."

The courier took his departure, and the guard kept walking up and down the room, muttering to himself:

"To-night it must be. If he goes to Leghorn, he meets his future wife; another life, and perhaps a dozen. No, it must be to-night or never. Does his mother go? Fool that I am, not to ask? Yes, it must be to-night; and he left the room."

What should be "to-night?" Some foul play of which the Count would be the victim, no doubt. But how? When? That must be solved. To follow him, or to wait—which? Too wait. It is always best to wait. I had learned this lesson already.

I waited. It was now rather more than half-past eight and I had risen to go to the door when I saw the guard returning to the wine-shop with a man whose dress indicated the stoker.

"Come in, Guido; come in," said the guard, "and drink with me."

The man came in, and I was again absorbed in my book.

They seated themselves at the same table as before, and drank silently for awhile; presently the guard began a conversation in some patois I could not understand; but I could see the stoker grow more and more interested as the name Betrix occurred more frequently.

As the talk went on, the stoker seemed pressing the guard on some part of the story with a most vindictive eagerness, repeatedly asking, "His name? The accused! His name?"

At last the guard answered, "The Count Spezzato."

"The Count Spezzato!" said the stoker, now leaving the table, and speaking in Italian.

"Yes, good Guido; the man who will travel in the train we take to-night to Leghorn."

"He shall die! he shall die!" said the stoker. "If I lose my life, the betrayer of my sister shall die."

The guard returned to the unknown tongue, seemed to be endeavoring to calm him; and I could only catch a repetition of the word "Empoli" at intervals. Presently the stoker took from the seats beside him two tin bottles, such as you may see in the hands of mechanics who dine out; and I could see that one of them had rudely scratched on it the name of "William Atkinson." I fancied the guard produced from his pocket a phial, and poured the contents into that bottle; but the action was so rapid and the corner so dark, that I could not be positive; then rising, they stopped at the counter, had both bottles filled with brandy, and went out.

It was now time to get to the station, and having paid my modest score, I went out.

A little in front of me, by the light of a small window, I saw these two cross themselves, grip each other's hands across right to right left to left and part.

The stoker had set down the bottles, and now taking them up, followed the guard at a slower pace.

Arrived at the station, I found the count, his mother, a female servant, and the courier.

The count came up to me, and said in broken English, "You are the English to go to Leghorn with me? Very well, there is room. I like the English. You shall pay nothing, because I do not sell tickets; you shall go free. Is that so?"

I thanked him in the best Italian I could muster.

"Do not speak your Italian to me; I speak the English as a native; I can know all you shall say to me in your own tongue. See, here is the train special, as you call it. Enter, as it shall please you."

The train drew up to the platform; and I saw that the stoker was at his post, and that the engine-driver was an Englishman.

fox, but not my strong fox; you will lean against the door. I know you will, unless I prevent you; and I will not prevent you, unless you give me all you have in that bag."

The mocking tone of the guard seemed well understood, for I heard the clink of gold.

"Good, my Alexis; it is good; but it is very little for a life. Come, what is your life worth, that you buy it with only your master's money? It has cost you nothing. I see you will lean against that door, which is so foolish."

"What, in the name of all the devils in hell; will you have?" said the trembling voice of the courier.

"Only a little more; just that belt that is under your shirt, next to your skin, and dearer to you; only a little soft leather belt with pouches in. Is not life worth a leather belt?"

"Wretch! All the earnings of life are in that belt, and you know it."

"Is it possible, sweet fox, that I have found your nest? I shall give Maria a necklace of diamonds, then. Why do you wait? Why should you fall from a train, and make a piece of news for the papers? Why?"

"Take it and be accursed in your life and death!" and I heard the belt flung on the floor of the carriage.

"Now, good Alexis, I am in funds; there are three pieces of gold for you; you will need them at Leghorn. Will you drink? No? Then I will tell you why without drink. Do you know where we are?"

"Yes; between Dominico and Signa."

"And you know where we are going?"

"Yes; to Leghorn."

"No, sweet Alexis, we are not; we are going to Empoli; the train will go no further. Look you, little fox; we shall arrive at the junction one minute before the Sienna goods train, and there the engine will break down just where the rails cross; for two blows of a hammer will convert an engine into a log; shall I get out to examine it; that will take a little time; I shall explain to the count the nature of the injury; that will take a little time, and then the goods train will have arrived; and as it does not stop there, this train will go no further than Empoli, and I shall be Count Spezzato to-morrow. How do you like my scheme, little fox? Is it not worthy of your pupil? Oh, it will be a beautiful accident; it will fill the papers. That beast of an English who begged his place in the train will be fortunate; he will cease, for goods trains are heavy. Eh! but it's a grand scheme—the son, the mother, the servant, the stranger, the engine-driver, all shall tell no tales."

"And the stoker?" said the courier.

"Oh, you and he and I shall escape. We shall be pointed at in the street as the fortunate. It is good, is it not, Alexis, my fox? I have told him that the count is the man who betrayed his sister. He believes it, and is my creature. But, little fox, it was not my cousin, it was myself that took his Betrix from her home. Is it not good, Alexis?—Is it not genius? And Atkinson—no, the driver—is now stupid; he has drunk from his can the poppy juice that will make him sleep for ever. I will be a politician. I am worthy of office. I will become the Minister of a Bourbon when I am count, my dear fox, and you shall be my comrade again, as of old."

I was, for a time, lost to every sensation save that of hearing. The fiendish garrulity of the man had all the fascination of the serpent's rattle. I felt helplessly resigned to a certain fate.

I was aroused by something white slowly passing the closed window of the carriage. I waited a little, then gently opened it and looked out. The stoker was crawling along the foot-board of the next carriage, holding on by its handles, so as not to be seen by the occupants, and holding the signal lantern that I had noticed at the back of the last carriage in his hand. The meaning of it struck me in a moment; if by any chance we missed the goods train from Sienna, we should be run into from behind by the train from Florence.

The cold air that blew in at the open window refreshed me, and I could think what was to be done. The train was increasing its pace rapidly. Evidently the stoker, in sole charge, was striving to reach Empoli before the other train, which we should follow, was due; he had to make five minutes in a journey of forty-five, and at the rate we were going, we should do it. We stopped nowhere, and the journey was more than half over.—We were now between Segua and Montelupo.—Another twenty minutes and I should be a bruised corpse. Something must be done.

I decided soon. Unfastening my bag, I took out my revolver, without which I never travel, and looking carefully to the loading and capping, fastened it to my waist with a handkerchief. I then cut with my knife the bar across the middle of the window, and carefully looked out. I could see nothing; the rain was falling fast, and the night as dark as ever. I cautiously put out at first one leg, and then the other, keeping my knees and toes close to the door, and lowered myself till I felt the step. I walked carefully along the foot board by side steps, holding on to the handles of the doors, till I came to the end of the carriages, and was next the tender. Here was a gulf that seemed impassable. The stoker must have passed over it; why not I? Mounting from the foot-board on to the buffer, and holding on to the iron hook on which the lamps were hung, I stretched my legs to reach the flat part on the buffer on the tender. My legs swung about with vibration, and touched nothing. I must spring. I had to hold with both hands behind my back, and stood on the case of the buffer-spring; and, suddenly leaving go leaped forward, struck violently against the edge of the tender, and grasped some of the loose lumps of coal on the stop. Another struggle brought me on my knees, bruised and bleeding, on the top. I stood up, and at that moment the stoker opened the door of the furnace, and turned towards me, shovel in hand, and put in the coals. The bright red light from the fire enabled him to see me, while it blinded me. He rushed at me, and then began a struggle that I shall remember to my dying day.

He grasped me round the throat with one arm, dragging me close to his breast, and with the other

(CONCLUDED ON SEVENTH PAGE.)