

THE REIGN OF TERROR.

During The Reign of Terror in France, for a priest to be seen on the street, clad in his clerical dress, was to court certain death. The populace seemed to have gone mad. The Republic had just been declared, and the devil, always on the lookout to encourage sin, had found ready hands and willing minds in the half-crazed country.

But, despite the terrors of the time, the clergy were able to perform their holy duties by stealth, or some of the braver ones celebrate Mass openly, awing the people by their display of supreme courage, and setting an example which in the end brought good results, though many were put to death for their loyalty to duty.

One of the noblest families of poor France, which through all trouble remained loyal to their Monarch and were true to the teachings of the Church, was that of the Count de Herat.

He resided in a small town not far from Paris, and before the Vandals had a chance to hide and carry off the vestments and holy vessels used in the little village church he had them taken to his house which was, in truth, a regular fortified castle, having been the home of his ancestors for generations.

Though of noble blood and highly honored at court, the Count de Herat never forgot his religious duties, and his great delight was to beautify the house of God. The church in the village was a perfect gem in its way. Costly windows, magnificent paintings and precious vessels studded with priceless gems were his contributions, for, as he said, "Nothing was too good to adorn the home of the Most High."

His family consisted of the Countess de Herat, and one son, Henri, and an infant daughter, Marie.

Of his servants, only a few remained. The others, hearing that the throne had been overthrown and that France was a republic, where Kings and Counts were but equals of the common people, had deserted and gone to Paris.

One evening at dusk the Count who was walking around the yard, seeing that the gates in the high wall that surrounded the castle were secured, when the gate keeper was away, was about to close the principal gate when he discerned a slim figure, enveloped in a black gown, coming wearily up the path.

He paused, and as the figure reached him he uttered an exclamation of surprise and rushed forward.

"Father, father," he cried grasping both the priest's hands in his own, "what has happened?"

Then noticing the extreme paleness and weakness of the priest, he hurried him into the castle, and after the clergyman had partaken of a substantial repast and was snugly ensconced in a big arm-chair, which was surrounded by the Count's family, the priest said:

"Alas! poor France, my country, that I should live to see such scenes."

"What has happened?" cried the Countess in an agitated voice. "Are all the royal family safe?"

"Listen," said Father Francis; "the members of our Sovereign's family are imprisoned behind the bars—herded with murderers and cut-throats, unless they escaped beyond the confines of France."

"This morning, despite the troublesome times and uproar, and the fact that many of the royal household had nearly lost their reason by fear, I was told to celebrate Mass as usual in the chapel—you know the little chapel—and we had orders to leave the doors wide open, so that even the most humble of the people could come to Mass. It was just after the Elevation when a mob, headed by a villainous ruffian, entered the chapel, and with

terrible cries and oaths ordered all to leave.

"During the *malee* several shots were fired in the direction of the altar, and I was horrified to see that one of the bullets, which was fired point-blank at me by a burly ruffian, whom I recognized as a murderer I had visited at the jail only a few weeks ago, missed, and pierced the forehead of the Saviour on the cross at the back of me.

"Something told me that it would be useless for me to remain, so I hurried up to the tabernacle, and taking therefrom the body of our Lord, and, with a prayer for preservation, left by a rear door.

"As I got on the street in the rear of the palace a cab drove up to the rear of the curb. Without any request of mine the driver jumped down, and opened the door, and, motioning me to get in, drove off rapidly to the confines of Paris. He then told me to alight, as I would now be safe, and then drove back as rapidly as he had come. I came here, and now will deposit my treasure in your little oratory."

With reverent air and bowed heads and carrying lighted tapers a little procession escorted Father Francis into a magnificent little chapel in one end of the castle, where he deposited the Holy Host in a safe place, and after a short prayer, all retired for the night.

The next morning he celebrated Mass, and also for several days after. A week had passed, and the attendance of the faithful at the little chapel had steadily increased. Fugitives from Paris were daily arriving. The castle was already overcrowded, but the hospitality of the Count and his family to those who sought shelter was as warm as when peace reigned. Men and women high in court circles eagerly accepted what shelter the Count could give.

One Sunday morning, assisted by two other priests, Father Francis announced that he would celebrate solemn High Mass. Little Henri, who had acted as altar boy for the priest, and who had a holy reverence for all things connected with the Divine Sacrifice, assisted in getting the vessels and vestments ready.

The Mass progressed without interruption till Father Francis, near the end, turned and began to speak a few encouraging words, when a servant entered hastily and spoke to the Count, who left the chapel. In a few minutes he returned, pale and anxious. In the meantime, Father Francis, on seeing him depart, rightly guessed the cause, and hastily finished the Mass.

The Count then announced that the castle was surrounded by the rabble of Paris.

Already the fierce cries of hate could be heard by those within the chapel.

"Bang, bang!" they heard and they knew the Communists were trying to batter down the castle gates.

"Crash!" they knew a gate gave way, and in another instant they heard shouts right under the windows, for the chapel was in the top story of the castle.

But the castle doors and windows were protected by solid oak and iron, and the mob would have no easy matter to get in.

"Courage!" cried Father Francis. "Let us trust in God."

All this time Henri was in a small room back of the altar trying to extinguish the red-hot coals in the censor by blowing on them, but they only glowed the brighter.

"Friends," said the Count, "if the worst comes to the worst, we can all escape by a subterranean passage. The trap door is behind this very altar, and the passage leads down to the banks of the Seine. We are in no real danger yet. Let us wait a while and pray. I will now go in the rear room and open the trap-door and have every thing in readiness so we can depart at once, if necessary."

The Count hastened into the rear room, where Henri was making fruitless efforts to extinguish the fire in the censor. He took it out of the boy's hands and, opening a narrow window at the extreme back of the room, dumped out the red-hot coals.

Cries of rage and agony followed, succeeded by a heavy fall. The Count glanced out of the window and saw a group of men and fearful looking women surrounding a body lying on the cold stones. They whispered a while and hurried off with blanched faces.

As he turned away from the window he heard cries of alarm from the direction of the gate, followed by ringing rifle shots, and the remnant of the mob that he could see were running as if for life.

The Count hastened into the chapel shouting:

"We are saved. The troops are here," and prayers of joy and thanksgiving were heard on all sides.

A body of the troops of the regular army were riding from the frontier towards Paris to help put down the Commune, and their appearance on the scene completely turned the tide of affairs.

After matters quieted down, the Count told Father Francis and the captain of the troops about the incident he had witnessed in the rear of the chapel, and they hastened around.

Lying on the flag-stones was a man. A livid mark right on the centre of his forehead showed where the live coals had struck him. He was not dead, and after a while came to.

"Retribution," he cried, "has overtaken me. I shot the Saviour in the forehead in the Paris church and He has burned me in the same place and burned out my eyes also."

Those around the bed on which he had been placed looked and shuddered, for they now saw that the incense, which had melted into a watery paste, had really fallen into his eyes and burned them out.

"O God, mercy!" he cried. "Listen; it was I who planned the attack on this castle. It was I who attempted to ascend by means of a ladder to the chapel window and I swore that even if fire descended from heaven on my head I would enter and tear the tabernacle doors open and destroy its contents, and when the fire really did come down, my comrades thinking, as I did, that it was a punishment from Heaven, were terror-stricken," and the poor wretch writhed in agony. "Mercy, mercy!" he cried. "Will some one put me out of my agony?"

"My child," said Father Francis, as he bathed the suffering man's burns in ointment, "make your peace with God. You will soon be dead. Remember the worst sinner can repent."

"There is no hope for me," almost screamed the man, as he shook with pain.

"Carl," said the priest, and the man started as his name was pronounced, "you remember when I visited you in jail in Paris, where you were under sentence of death, you promised to make a good and hearty act of contrition for your sins. Now, grasp the opportunity a good and merciful God has given you to make restitution. He is eagerly listening for you to say you are sorry. Hasten, before it is too late. He could have crushed you; He is kind. Remember He has said, 'Ask and ye shall receive.'" And tears began to come from the sightless eyes of the wretch.

When he breathed his last he had repented, and his last words were "Jesus, mercy."

The Commune raged for a while, but France came to her senses to find a new Government in power, and in the inhabitants of the Count's castle were outcasts and exiles from their beloved France.

Henri saw his poor mother die of grief, and his father soon followed.

He and his sister were placed by kind friends under the protection of religious, and were taught to lead holy lives.

To-day Marie is a Sister of Mercy. Henri's chosen vocation of the priesthood has placed him in a small country parish, but he would not have it otherwise, because it is the identical village and the identical church he attended when a boy.—Peter Callaghan in the *Michigan Catholic*.

Music.

Music is a language whose notes are most touching in sorrow and most mighty in anger. The sublimest thoughts that ever told the history of a past long dead, or, peering into the future, shaped the doctrines of the unborn, found form in the sweet rise and fall of music's tenderest cadences. They were sung in court and camp and hall; they sank into the souls of peoples, stirring the brave, praising the fair, soothing the sad. Now they were a solemn hymn of praise to God; again they were a joyous melody for society; and then they were a mournful dirge over the departed dead. This is true of the songs of Greece, or when the Troubadours kindled chivalry by the banks of the Rhone, or the more northern minstrels roused to war the unpeaceful heart of the Vikings. What music was in Ireland and amongst the Irish, Thomas Davis wrote in one of his essays in the *Nation*. Listen to his bold, noble words:

"No enemy speaks slightingly of Irish Music, and no friend need fear to boast of it. It is without a rival. Its antique war-tunes, such as those of O'Byrne, O'Donnell, Alstrom, and Brian Bora, stream and crash upon the ear like the warriors of a hundred gleams meeting; and you are borne with them to battle, and they and you charge and struggle amid cries and battle-axes and stinging arrows. Did ever a wail make man's marrow quiver and fill his nostrils with the breath of the grave, like the ululu of the north or the wiraathrae of Munster? Stately are their slow, and recklessly splendid their quick marches, their 'Boyne Water,' and 'Sios agus sios liom,' their 'Michael Hoy,' and 'Gallant Tipperary.' The Irish jigs and planxties are not only the best dancing tunes, but the finest quick marches in the world. Some of them would cure a paralytic and make the marble-legged prince in the *Arabian Nights* charge like a Fagan Bealacá boy. The hunter joins in every leap and yelp of the 'Fox Chase'; the historian hears the moan of the penal days in 'Drimindhu,' and sees the embarkation of the Wild Geese in 'Limerick Lamentation,' and ask the lover if his breath do not come and go with 'Savournean Deasliagh' and 'Lough Sheelin.'"

The Very Rev. Canon Foley, P.P., Crookstown, died on June 30th, at his residence, Kilmurray. He was highly esteemed by the people of his parish, and his loss is deeply deplored. Canon Foley was a patriarch in the true sense of the word. From his ordination to his double years have rolled by, which carried with them interests of supreme importance to religion and country; and in all these Canon Foley took a prominent, an honorable and a most useful part. His first missionary life brought him into the full sweep of the famine misery in the west of the diocese, and in that trying era there was not a braver or a truer priest. Neither sickness nor plague had terror for him. Physically a robust man, mentally endowed with the genius of his faith, he knew no danger. In Schull and Goleen the hand of death was often stayed by his heroic charity, and the worst plague of proselytism was met and overcome by his apostolic fidelity. For the natural necessities of his people he begged with an importunity of zeal that nothing could resist. For their supernatural wants, the schools which he erected, the churches which he built, his wonderful perseverance in their instruction are his best and most enduring monuments. This characteristic of his priestly youth remained his characteristic to the close of his honored career. May he rest in peace.

Canada will receive 30 first prizes for her chess exhibit at the World's Fair.