TWO

AMBITION'S CONTEST

BY CHRISTINE FABER

CHAPTER XVII-CONTINUED

Dick Monahan searched every source which might be likely to afford some comforting news for his mistress, but his efforts were vain, and the faithful fellow's heart was fast beginning to lose all hope. Anne Flanagan, also, while she had little sympathy for Howard's self, sorrowed deeply for poor Ellen, the tears starting sometimes unbidden to her eyes when she heard the young girl beseeching the poor, to whom she ministered more faithfully than ever, one. to pray for her brother.

Ellen delayed the letter which was sometime due to her mother. How could she write and withhold what had happened, yet how could she write and reveal it? How could she of feeling, had left her equally powerstate that Howard was well, when she knew not, and when her own too fears were picturing him almost fatally ill from prison hardships; yet how could she tell, when such a relation must include her own dire you by my son. He had reason to suspense, and crush further the breaking heart at home. already Feverishly hoping that cheering news pier circumstances would render it would soon come from Malverton, she continued from day to day to she continued from day to day to postpone writing. At last a distracted ample fortune ; at my death he will epistle came from Mrs. Courtney, begging for one line to tell her that her children were in health and safety. Then Ellen attempted to but when she would write of reply ; Howard the pen fell from her nerve-less hand, and only her own scalding tears marked the paper. She would wait still one more day, she said to herself, and then, if no news came. she would write it all.

Malverton came that night. He hardly waited to be announced, but strode into her presence with the air of one who has some desperate and unhappy purpose at heart. She to meet him, then tottered and clung to a chair for support. The reaction from utter despondency to suddenly and unexpectedly revived hope had made her faint, but she recovered in a moment. and. trembling from eagerness, and with her soul in her eyes, she awaited his He did not seem anxious to news. begin, and he appeared to be trying to conceal from her the expression of his countenance.

'Speak !" she cried, his prolonged hesitation cruelly trying her; " in pity, do not keep me in suspense."

Then his face flashed out the look it had been trying to conceal-one of anguish as intense as any that ever convulsed her own features.

My efforts with my father have failed, but he has expressed a wish to see you. You must go and sue to him for your brother.

The pallor of her face increased to ghastliness, the color flying even from her lips, but that was the only visible effect of his words.

When shall I go ?" she asked huskily. Now, if you are sufficiently

strong to go through such an ordeal. He lattends no levee to-night, and will probably see you if you call. My escort is at your service She did not answer, but turned at

once to prepare to accompany him. He marvelled at her apparent calmness. On their rapid way to Dublin she gave way to no burst of emotion, expressed no fear ; she did not even ask a question. He might have wondered had he known that her whole being was engaged in fervent prayer, from which she was to draw the strength that ere long would be needed to support her under a blow the most cruel which had yet

incurred, and the duty which, as a crown officer, was his to exact the enforcement of the utmost rigor. She had paled and shuddered enough while h was speaking to show the effect at his words, but she did not be induced to forego forever his wild, attempt to reply. She was gathering her strength, as it were, for an effort that *must* move him to brother will soon be with you, and mercy, and he, after a moment's God grant that he shall ere long bepause, resumed 'There is but one way in which

your brother can be saved "-the blood rushed suddenly and hotly into her face,—" and that is by a sacrifice on your part."

He waited for a reply ; she was more powerless than ever to render one. The hope implied in the first part of his speech had seemed to send a lump into her throat which choked her utterance; while the fear and uncertainty caused by the latter part, less to speak. Reading it all in her expressive countenance, the nobleman again resumed

Something like a declaration of love, I understand, has been made to imagine it was reciprocated, or that it would be in the future when hapmore suitable. Having come of age, succeed to my title, and with it to the whole of my wealth. If you wish to save your brother "-he spoke more slowly-" you must promise to discard Malverton from your affec tions; to see him no more after tonight-I believe he waits below to escort you home; to hold no intercourse whatever with him; and neither to acquaint him nor any one else with the reason why you thus act. Are you prepared to make this

sacrifice, Miss Courtney ? Keenly did the stern eves search her face now-it was pale as the marble statue in her rear. She knew that the sacrifice demanded contained more suffering than she herself could then realize; for with every power of her soul. thought of her mind so filled with Howard, she could only partly com-prehend, as it were, all that was fnvolved in Lord Grosvenor's request and without pausing to think, she answered hoarsely

I consent to all you ask. He seemed surprised by her prompt

acquiescence.

Perhaps you do not fully comprehend; on no pretext which my son can assign for an interview are you to see him; on no pretext are you to answer any communication he may send. He will probably seek for an explanation of your strange conduct ; he may possibly intercept you, waylay you into an interview ; he may even delegate your brother to worm the secret from you; but you must never disclose it. let the opinion of you be what it may; you must bear faithfully within your own breast the cause of your refusal to

see or hear from Malverton. This is the price I demand, Miss Courtney, for the release of your brother.

He had spoken with more stern ness than he had yet used, and the expression of his face was harder. I consent to it all," she faltered.

He again seemed surprised by her compt acquiescence, as if he fancied that he had mistaken her regard for Malverton, and that after all her affections were not so deeply involved. Remember, Miss Courtney, what you are sacrificing—a title

slight touch of sarcasm in his tones. That is little to forego for Howard's safety," was her reply.

His voice took another accent. "But there is more, Miss Courtney a heart that loves you."

Bright times are approaching, Miss Courtney," he said, in his own inimitably tender way. "Howard may have learned a salutary lesson from this last rash work, and he may ambitious schemes. At all events since my father's word is passed, your

ne all that you desire to see him, Farewell till to-morrow. He did not notice the mournful "Come in, Ellen, and we of mv plans for the future."

did he dream, as he hurried back to the carriage, of the fiery suffering through which he would pass ere he should again look on the face of Ellen Courtney.

That same night the heart-broken girl penned to her mother the letter, so long delayed-a full and exact ount. Now that the danger had been averted, she felt that she need no longer hesitate to tell the worst. She could not state further about the future than that, as Lord Gros-

venor had told her. Howard would be obliged to leave Ireland, and in that case, of course, she would bear him company. But she contrived, as was her want, to import a hopeful strain to the missive, something that made Mrs. Courtney murmur when she had read it through blinding tears

mv home! *

Ellen's interview with Lord Gros-venor, the latter dispatched his son to England on some commission, the dispatched to her by his own valet. The note apprised her of this un-

he should be informed by letter. addressed to Grosvenor House, in London, when Howard's release should take place, and of the decision at which the latter would arrive with regard to his future. He also requested an immediate answer to given to the bearer of his own missive, as the latter was about to follow him to London.

'I have no reply to give," she said to the man who had received instructions to wait for such. He bowed and withdrew, but with

expression in his countenance which betrayed his reluctance to depart without that which he had been commissioned to bring. Every drop of blood seemed to

have gone from Ellen's heart. Not even to be permitted to thank him who had proved so true a friend ! to be obliged to act in a manner which would stamp her ungrateful and heartless, was keener pain than it seemed possible to endure; and when she reached her own room, she pressed her hands to her face and sobbed aloud.

> CHAPTER XIX THE STRUGGLE OF FAITH AND INTELLECT

The peer's word was punctually kept. Howard was liberated, but in a manner which was infinitely more mortifying and bitter to the young man than the infliction of an ex treme penalty would have been. There was no opportunity for fine speeches bursts of sentiment which and must immortalize his name. There was not even a chance for a fearless -with a bearding of Lord Grosvenor, for that gentleman did not once deign to Howard's sight. He was simply treated as a hot headed youth who had been released too soon from his

nurse's care, and,

himself in his own room.

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

prayer. He rose suddenly, and, ate heart. Your words last night unlocking the door, stood before her sank into my soul as nothing else has with pallid face and wild eyes. Still on her knees she lifted her hands to him.

Oh, Howard, when is this to end? change your course ?' It was a cry so desperate that even hc thrilled at the sound. He bent to her.

Come in, Ellen, and we will talk

She obeyed, clasping his arm while e locked the door to prevent further intrusion, and sinking on her knees beside him, instead of taking the chair he proffered. She could not listen to his plans for the future she must make the appeal with which her soul was on fire, and she burst out at once with

'To what further lengths must your ambition lead you, before you will stop ? You have served it so faithfully, and how has it rewarded you-how much fruit of all your aspirations, and hopes, and plans, do you hold tonight? Oh! Howard, which is the nobler cause-the paltry, fleeting, ignoble world, or the Being who has made that mind for which you claim such noble endowments

Something, perchance born of the Children would only come by her last sacrifice, enhanced the meaning of her words, and made them strike to Howard's heart.

The very next morning after Again was her influence winning him as it had done at Sorrento; and he listened, while a flush stole over his features, and a softened look came execution of which would require a into his eyes. From the teachings of month or more; and upon such a that religion to which she had been speedy departure did the peer insist, so faithful, from the depths of her that religion to which she had been that Malverton had only time to indite a brief note to Ellen, which he more earnest words with which to strengthen that appeal. expected journey, and requested that lore he could not have found the like of this; his boasted philosophy paled before the light of her religious wisdom; the splendor of his mind dimmed before the dazzling radiance of the purity of hers, and his ambition waned before the simplicity of her heart. He rose when she had concluded.

and walked to the window. The midnight sky was alight with its thousand gems, the silent world a figure of peace and quietness : some-thing in the calm exterior wooed him to a communion with himself where space would seem to give freedom to his thoughts. He turned, and saying: I am going out for a little, Ellen don't wait up for me," dashed from the room, and out into the calm. bright night.

Long and steadily, as he paced the avenue, did he continue to look into the starry sky. Some heavenly influ-ence, won perchance by his sister's prayers and sacrifices, descended into his agitated soul. The scales that Ambition had placed before his eyes fell, and, for the first time, he saw the whole of his past wild course in its true light. The aspirations which he had deemed so noble were only the promptings of misguided passion the will which he had fancied to be the emanation of a superior mind, was only the result of a wretched vanity; and his ambitious desires but the natural outpourings of a heart which had been false to its God.

How was he humbled! Instead of climbing the mountain heights, as he imagined he had been doing, he had all the time only been grovelling in the slough of the valleys. In his blind adherence to Ambition, in his search for worldly honor, he had lost the one true Good which was speak ing now to his soul in unmistakable accents of forgiveness, and tenderness, and love. He flung himself on

plaint of her voice, the depth of her hope ever to inflict on your affection. ever done, and I am about to act up

the change your influence has effected. I cannot tell you what I intend to do, for I dare not trust myself to Will nothing touch you-nothing fully execute my purpose-only test assured that my plans tend no more to the old wild course. I have done with that now, I hope forever; but if I should be stirred to the old paths again, if my old passions should re-

sume their sway, I pledge myself to return to you ere I set on the first wild step. Of your future, during the time that I may be absent, what shall I say? It is cruel to keep you longer from mother—but oh, Ellen, in this hour when you seem dearer than you over did before, my heart the guild had a monopoly on it shrinks from telling you to return to busy fingers. And, perhaps, That would be placing so New York. tongues. But as busy as the tongues

many miles between us; for I shall be somewhere on the continent, and suggest a name for the guild during our separation I shall want to five months old, wholly and entirely feel more than ever that you are not acceptable to all concerned. so very far away. We have been nearly five years from home-pered society which grew out of a chari haps mother could now be induced table desire on the part of a few to forego her singular determination women to help the families of strik and come over to you, when, together you could wait my return. But if The strike was prolonged, the winter she should still refuse, there are warm and true friends here with was bitterly cold and there was much

destitution and consequent suffering. In the midst of the strike the steel whom you can make a home, and who will gladly assist you to beguile mills shut down, throwing another the tedium of my absence. But that thousand men out of work, most of would be condemning you to a cruel whom had lived improvidently from exile; no, Ellen, I will not ask it — unless indeed your own heart prompts hand to mouth, and who now faced what might prove appalling you to make the sacrifice, and mother tions of hunger and cold with the fully consents to it. Ask my mother stoicism which the foreigner brings to trust me this time as perhaps she with him to these elastic shores. has not trusted me since we left home. Beg of her to institute no inquiries for me, for again I pledge whose business took him about the myself, ere I take one step towards a West End twice a week, and with characteristic energy she had imme course which would not meet her approbation, to return to you, should diately set to work to enlist the aid you remain in Ireland; to write should you have gone home. I can and interest of a few friends to look after the needs of the strikers hardly promise that were I to be families. As the again swayed by ambition I would go with the close of the steel mills home then. Do not expect to hear more women were pressed into servfrom me until you see me, unless I ice until nearly every parish in the should be attacked by any illness; in that case you shall know immediately so that you may come to me. Dick will accompany me to London, when

city was represented in the number which gathered once a week in hitherto unused vestry room of centrally located St. James' Church I shall send him back to you. God donated for the ladies' use by Father bless you, and pray for me as you Pender, the pastor. The ladies had done splendid work, have ever done. there could be no question of that.

HOWARD "

Silent and rigid, as though every and comfortable clothing for innu pulse had stopped, every faculty had suspended its work, Ellen stood on the perusal of that epistle. Amid the bewildering emotions which crowded upon her one feeling stood out intense and cruel-Howard had voluntarily separated himself from her; and it required minutes for the hope consince the guild had proved to be such tained in the letter to work itself a power for good, it was decided to through the sea of bitterness that accompanied that thought. continue it, even after the strike But when the hope did make itself underended, the steel mills opened up, and stood, when the tortured mind gath ered at last from the missive that the writer had probably gone to endeavor to seek the path from which he had so sadly strayed, to bury himself in study, perchance-but certainly not study of a dangerous character judging from the tone of his noteof the exclusively American parish her heart bounded with joy. If that were the object of his going, gladly "so appropriate, you know—an American saint"; and the few Polish would she endure the separation, and she hastened to her knees to

pour out her thanksgiving and pray anew for her brother. Anne Flanagan expressed little

for St. Hedwig. In the beginning Mrs. Ryan had made a tentative surprise when she heard of Howard's suggestion that the sewing society be sudden departure. It was no more called St. Brigid's Guild, but her than in her secret heart she had suggestion had been so quickly and expected from the young man, judgenergetically put down-"entirely ing by his past wild course: and too Irish, you know," seemed to be though Ellen read his note to her, the unanimous opinion—that the organizer and chief worker became she had little faith in his having gone with any intention to reform, deeply offended, and set her face ugh she rained from

A ludicrous sense of the truth of this lit up Mrs. Ryan's eyes with an answering gleam.

she admitted, shamefacedly "Well," enough, "do you blame me ?" The room in which the conversa-

tion took place was evidently conse crated to the uses of the needle. was large, and bare of anything

except three sewing machines, two long tables and several small On these latter were piled large quantities of clothing neatly arranged and ready to be distributed ; and one of the long tables was partly filled with articles to be made-infants

were they had never yet been able to

The guild was a loosely construct

ing glassworkers in the West End.

Mrs. Ryan had learned of these sad

needs increased

conditions through her husband

Not only had they provided warm

merable women and children, but

they had looked after the wants of

the sick-and Lounded their hus-

bands, sons and friends generally, to

secure some kind of temporary work

for the idle men. It was admirabl

work, and they did it well ; and

prosperity reigned once more in the

At various times various names

had been suggested for the guild.

The Italian ladies from St. Angelo's

Anthony's Guild ; the German ladies

leaned to St. Christopher : the ladies

of St. Ann wished it called St. Rose

ladies who came in timidly each

week, held out firmly but hopelessly

parish had wanted it called

populous West End.

It

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DENTISTS

been inflicted.

When they arrived at the stately residence of Lord Grosvenor, Malverton dispatched a few private words on a card to his father. A reply was promptly returned. Miss Courtney was requested to come immediately and unaccompanied by her escort, to the presence of his Lordship.

You will be brave," whispered Malverton, pressing her hand. She bowed slightly—her white lips

could not then have spoken - and departed with the servant.

Lord Grosvenor was seated at a small table engaged in writing when she was ushered into his spacious apartment, nor did he pause in his work when her name was announced. He waited for some moments after the door had quite closed upon the lacquey, and Ellen, uncertain whether to advance, remained in trembling embarrassment where the domestic had left her. The palpitations of her heart, to her own overstrained ears seemed louder than the audible scratches of the jewelled pen between the nobleman's white fingers, and the seconds which she waited seemed like hours in her cruel suspense.

The peer turned at length, and, rising, came forward to meet hernot exactly with the graciousness of a few weeks past, nor yet with quite the cold exterior she had anticipated. She replied to his salutation but faintly-her voice had not yet recovered its wonted power. He grace fully placed a chair for her, and resumed his own seat. Then his eyes, with their sharp, stern look, dwelt upon her face-as if he would efore he spoke, the emotions with which he might have to deal. She wondered if he was waiting for her to begin; if he would ask no question ! if he expected her to burst at once into her plea. But he relieved been too painfully strung for the her by approaching himself the object past few hours. of her visit.

With a studied slowness he dehands. scribed to her the treasonable crime time they should rest in his grasp, for which her brother had been she did not attempt to withdraw arrested, the penalty which he had them.

If he had desired proof of how much the sacrifice would cost her he had it then; the realization of what Malverton would suffer swept across could only bring ridicule upon himher mind, and her blanched cheeks, self. and quivering lip, told how the iron had at last entered into her soul. The whole proceedings of his release were so quiet and common-Gulping down the lump which rose place, and set him down to a level to in her throat, she answered : which, in his own imagination, he My brother is first."

"Enough, Miss Courtney, our com-

pact is made; your brother shall be liberated. He will probably be obliged to leave the country, but he shall have time to return to you and effect whatever arrangements he may desire. And now, I think I may say that I know enough of your character to believe that your promise will be inviolably kept, despite the suffering it may entail."

He rose, summoned a servant to attend her, bade her a graceful farewell, and turned to his writing.

" Is it success ?" whispered Mal-verton, when she joined him. She bowed her head.

He could hardly wait till they were seated in the carriage, and on their return to Ashland Manor, to give vent to his joyful emotions.

I knew my father must relent," said. "I knew that underneath he said. his cold exterior his heart beat warm and tenderly."

Ellen did not reply. But the young man's blissful excitement prevented him from observing the omission - prevented him also from noticing that, while she afterwards answered his rapid questions and detailed as much of her recent interview as she might without infringing him to admit even her, and when the night came on and grew apace, on the promise she had given, her and he still refused to open to her, demeanor was singularly unlike what might be expected; or if he did she sank upon her knees outside his observe that fact, he attributed it to door, and the reaction of feelings which had

In parting he caught both her fell on the ears of the unhappy Knowing it to be the last youth, striking through the contend-

the sward which hordered the avenue while he was and shed his first bitter tears of penienjoined to leave the country within tence and remorse. A sister'sprayers a fortnight, he was cautioned to were heard! refrain from a foolhardiness which

When, an hour after he returned to the house, he found Ellen, contrary to his directions, waiting for him, he did not reproach her, as he might at another time have done-his heart was too full of new and strange feel. ings-but he caught her to him in a had never before descended, that it long and tender embrace, and then requesting her to waken Dick—if the was with thoroughly mortified. abashed, and humble feelings that latter had retired-and send him to he found himself at last free to his (Howard's) room he bade her an return to Ashland Manor ; and when affectionate goodnight. She yearned to know for what pur-

he arrived there he was in no mood ago,' for the frantic welcome of his sister. pose he could wish Dick at such an He even grew impatient under her hour, but she forebore to ask-there prolonged embrace, though he had was something so unwontedly gentle still sufficient manhood to conceal in her brother's demeanor, that she that feeling. But it was with an air feared to disturb it by an undue quesof intense relief that he broke from tion, though she turned as she was her at length-that he hurried away on the point of obeying, to know if from the extravagant welcome of Dick, and the quieter demonstrahe would not have some refreshment -he had tasted nothing all day. He tions of Anne Flanagan, and shut smilingly assented, and she withdrew to serve it with her own hands.

The news of his return was soon rather than disturb Anne Flanagan. promulgated by faithful Monahan, and his friends speedily made their It was with an unaccountable feeling of relief and peace that Ellen at appearance in order to tender their congratulations. Howard refused to last retired-as if some mysterious influence was endeavoring to make see them. His impatient, fiery spirit her comprehend the change which chafing under the humiliation he had been wrought in her brother, and imagined he had received could not endure the sight of faces, the sound conveyed to her the preparations, of voices, and he spent the whole of that long day—it had been early which Howard, aided by Dick, was making for his own secret departure morning when he returned—securely closeted with his unhappy thoughts. -no untoward sound reached her ears to startle and awaken her, when he, accompanied by Monahan, silently No one of the loving pretexts which Ellen invented could induce and hurriedly, in the garish dawn of

the morning, left Ashland Manor. The devoted sister knew at last that her brother had gone; that for the first time in his life he had volunprayed in the utter tarily separated himself from heranguish of her heart. Something she felt the cruel knowledge, even wrung the petition aloud from her before it burst upon her from the lips-it went up, the cry of a heart note which he had left conspicuously broken with useless sacrifices, and it on his dressing-table, and which ran :

"Dear Ellen,-Once more forgive ing passions of his soul—it laid bare at last a cord that vibrated to the

expression to her opinions in the hearing of her young mistress.

TO BE CONTINUED THE GUILD LADIES ARBITRATE

"It's a queer way to run a guild," do vou blame me ?" Mrs. Ryan remarked for the hun-"U-m-m," was Mrs. Rochford's

"It should have had a name long Mrs. Ryan went on. Pins in her mouth and her mind

obviously set on the hem she was turning, "U-m-m" was again the turning, only reply Mrs. Rochford had to offer. At which Mrs. Ryan's crisp temper gave way.

dredth time.

comment.

'Um-m' all you like," she burst out wrathfully, "but I know very well you think the same as I do. And when I think anything I say it ! A fact which there was no contradicting.

Mrs. Rochford adjusted the last encumbering pin. inspected the hem critically to see if it was straight, and then looked up to smile disarmingly into her friend's cross face. Of course I think the guild ought

to have a name," she agreed cheerfully, "but if we can't agree on one, what's the use of talking about it ?

To keep on discussing things like that only serves to bring out new animosities, I think.'

"But we ought to be able to agree on one," Mrs. Ryan argued. "If some of the members would only give up their foolish prejudices-

"Well," dryly, "suppose you and I start by giving up some of ours." "What ! And let those Germans

and Italians have everything their own way? I should say not !' indig-nantly. "Besides," as Mrs. Rochford began to laugh, "I am not prejudiced -I have nothing against some of the names they suggested—" "Except that they suggested them,'

resolutely against giving her sanction to any other name.

Thus matters stood on the day which chronicled the foregoing conversation. Mrs. Rvan and Mrs Rochford had gone early to the guild room to do some cutting out, and the matter of the name having received its usual discussion. Mrs. Rvan had put her ingenuous question : And when her good friend and

St

heretofore staunch upholder had answered with unexpected frankness, "I'm afraid I do, just a little," Mrs. Ryan experienced quite an unpleasant shock—a jolt she called it. "Jane Rochford !" she exclaimed,

keen reproach in her tone. never-

'We're both to blame," Mrs. Roch ford hastened to explain ; "I, just as much as you. Some one must give in, and why not we who really organized the work and are responsible for bringing these women together They are all nice women-splendid women, some of them-

"But so pigheaded," Mrs. Ryan interjected plaintively. "I never met such an obstinate crowd. I don't believe, if we should give in, that the rest of them could agree on a name.'

"We might try," Mrs. Rochford sug-ested boldly. "Why not take a vote gested boldly. on it ?'

"Well," slowly : It was plain Mrs Ryan was not so sure about the expediency of this. "Very well," she added after a moment's thought. "I'll tell them today to come prepared next week to vote on the question of the name." But it was Mrs. Rochford who told

the ladies, at Mrs. Ryan's suggestion. "You have more tact than I have,' she said smiling. They are going to arbitrate the matter, Mrs. Rochford announced playfully, by putting it to a vote, and every woman was expected to make a valiant effort to select a name that would be accept able to the majority. Difference were to be sunk, she implied, that their beloved organization in which