

THE LEGEND OF THE LACE.

A long time ago, in a village not far from Brussels in Brabant, lived a little shepherdess called Micheline. She was an orphan, had never known a mother's love, or indeed the love of any human being...

Then Norbert arose, and drying the vain tears which covered his face said: "Father, since you will not be moved by my sorrow you will see me no more; I will follow my lord to the wars where the arrows fall so thick and fast that even the swallow in her lightning flight cannot escape them, and it can be long before I fall with my death-stroke."

As for Micheline, her life, illumined for a short space by the love of Norbert, became still more desolate than it had been before. She knew that among the dames of fashion in their velvets and jewels, she would be a queen of beauty, if one ray of happiness illumined her features or a smile parted her rosy lips...

On Sundays at the hour of Mass when Norbert appeared on his way to the church, in his handsome uniform, his cross-bow on his shoulder, his sword at his side, and a falcon's plume in his hat...

It chanced one day that Norbert, while pursuing a wounded fawn, suddenly came face to face with the little shepherdess, and she had no time to hide. It was the first time he had ever seen her sweet and modest face, and he stood fascinated as though by a supernatural apparition, mute, motionless, forgetting his quarry, forgetting his dogs, forgetting everything.

Micheline, afflicted with confusion, longed to fly, but her lips refused their aid, her heart beat painfully, she could scarcely breathe and to keep herself from falling had to lean against a tree, closing her eyes.

Then Norbert, the proud archer of the guard, almost as much confused as herself, came forward and spoke to her. His voice sounded so soft and gentle that Micheline, accustomed to the harsh words and threats of her cruel aunt, thought she was listening to the Christmas hymns of angels of which she had sometimes dreamed.

From the first words of his son the fathers' pride took alarm, and in a violent passion he declared that he would never consent to such a marriage—

and then followed a torrent of contemptuous remarks about her poverty, her occupation, her rags! It was a great trial for the brave Norbert to find his father so implacable, and still greater trial to hear the invectives which he launched at her who was all the world to him. He cast aside his pride, and kneeling before his father, he wept bitterly, but the Baron remained inflexible before this great sorrow and humiliation.

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And now these two lovers had to part, and both shed bitter tears, for it was a parting without hope, an eternal adieu. And when Norbert finally left her, it was with slow and faltering steps, constantly turning to cast a last look on her whom he would never meet again; for was he not going to the plains where the arrows rained thick and fast?

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On Sundays at the hour of Mass when Norbert appeared on his way to the church, in his handsome uniform, his cross-bow on his shoulder, his sword at his side, and a falcon's plume in his hat, all the young girls hurried to their doors hoping to attract him by their beauty and Sunday fineries; but he took no notice whatever of their efforts, neither glance nor smile did they receive from him.

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thread, reproducing with great exactitude the exquisite designs she had seen in her dream, and which she had before her eyes as a pattern on her coarse gown.

Micheline in the midst of luxury never lost the virtues which adorned her youth. She taught all her daughters the art of making the beautiful lace, and established schools for teaching the same to poor girls; for the lace of Brussels had become famous, and every lady of fashion wanted some of it; even a queen would consider her outfit incomplete without this lovely and most costly lace.—Translated from the French by E. McAuliffe.

THE STOLEN ROSARY.

A TRUE STORY BY REV. RICHARD W. ALEXANDER IN THE MISSIONARY. Sunshine and balmy breezes, sweet with the odor of spring blossoms, made the May afternoon like a dream of Eden. The Southern city of Richmond was all astir in the beautiful weather; the streets were filled with active men, and gay women, who, with alert step and keen eye, scanned the cloudless sky, were on pleasure, or on business bent, with that elasticity and vitality of movement which the glorious day had evoked even since early morning.

On a side street stood a little church, and now as the sun went down, the doors stood wide open, and passersby could look in from the pavement, and note the altars, beautifully adorned with long white tapers and vases of fragrant flowers. There were two altars, one of which was crowned by an exquisite marble statue of the Blessed Virgin with a halo of electric stars over her head. The fragrance of roses floated down the aisles and out into the street, and appealed delightfully to the senses of a young girl who was passing by. She looked in, and impelled by curiosity, hesitatingly entered.

She had never been in a Catholic Church before, and remembering all the dangerous things she had heard, of the ways of "Roman Catholics," she slipped into the pew nearest the door, so that in case of danger she might instantly escape.

There was only a small congregation present, and all seemed so earnestly engaged in their devotions, that she found herself almost unnoticed. She breathed freely, and began to listen to what was said, for the whole churchful was repeating at certain intervals some sentences of prayer over and over again. She discovered they were led by a single voice far away, and she located what she thought was the minister, at the foot of the shrine, where the marble Madonna stood like a vision.

In vain she tried to catch the words that were so often repeated: only these came to her ear: "Holy Mary, Mother of God—" Over and over again they fell on the air, and while more words were said, they died away in an indistinct murmur.

Unconsciously she murmured them herself: "Holy Mary, Mother of God!" Suddenly her eyes caught a broken chaplet lying in the pew before her. She had no idea of connecting it with the prayers she heard, but it was a curiosity, and stealthily she snatched it up and slipped it into her pocket.

Noticing there was a stir among the people, she hurriedly arose, and fled into the street, quite excited at her own bravery in entering a "Popish Church" without meeting opposition or challenge; and determined to make an interesting story of the whole adventure that night among her friends.

Sure enough, to a party of young people that evening, she detailed the episode, and told graphically of her visit to the church, the scene she beheld, and as the party refused to believe her, drew out the broken rosary to prove her story.

The "superstitions of the benighted Catholics" were commented upon, and the rosary was passed from hand to hand in curious examination.

The party dispersed, and our heroine, taking the chaplet, at last went to her room to retire for the night. She threw the beads on her dressing table, and then with a sigh of relief, that she could pray to her Heavenly Father without such popish mummery, fell on her knees, to say her night prayers. Strange! They had left her mind! Nothing could she utter but— "Holy Mary, Mother of God!"

grace. Mary, the Mother of God, had won another convert to her divine Son's Sacred Heart.

Oh, blessed Mother of God! Thy fair loveliness in part of the beauty of the children of Eve, bereaved of Thee, that those who know Thee not, may find Thee, and finding Thee love Thee, O Holy Mary, Mother of God!

AT THE GREAT EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS AT COLOGNE.

At the Irish section of the Eucharistic Congress which is being held in Cologne, Germany, under the presidency of Cardinal Vannutelli, the Papal Delegate, Father Ambrose Coleman, O. P., of Dublin, Ireland, read a paper on "Mass in Penal Times in Ireland."

The section is under the presidency of the Most Rev. Dr. Lyoner, Bishop of Achery. In the course of his paper Father Coleman said: It is a remarkable historical fact that for two hundred and twenty-two years the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was forbidden by law in Ireland, and it is an equally remarkable fact that during that long period of persecution the Holy Sacrifice never ceased to be offered up in every part of the land. No other country in the world can point to such a glorious record. In other countries, it is true, penal legislation against the Mass existed for an equally long period, but with the important difference that in some of them, such as Norway and Sweden, the faith was completely stamped out of the people after two or three generations, and in others, such as England, only a remnant of the people remained Catholic to the end; whereas the Irish people were just as Catholic to the end of the period as they were at the beginning, patiently bearing all the disabilities incurred by reason of their religion, a nation enslaved at the hands of a handful of bigoted Protestants, who possessed all power, influence and wealth.

The bigoted and intolerant Protestant landlords, who possessed practically all the land in the country, could not be induced, in numberless instances, to grant sites for Catholic churches and chapels, and very often in the lease given to Catholic tenants there was a clause against the sub-letting of any land for the purpose of building any Catholic school. Again, in the Protestant part of the North, which had just seen the formation of the Orange Society, based on deadly hatred of everything Catholic, it was impossible to buy even a humble chapel for fear of its being wrecked or set on fire. Most Rev. Patrick McGettigan, who died Bishop of Kaphoe in 1861, used to relate that in his childhood he was often placed on the summit of a high rock to signal the approach of the priest-hunters, whilst in an adjoining hollow the parishioners were assembled around the temporary altar on which the Holy Sacrament was offered up.

As he advanced in years he became one of the adepts who were wont to hold the candles in their hands, and prevent them from being blown out by the wind, for there were no candlesticks on the open-air altars of those days. As another instance, coming home to ourselves, I may refer to the case of my own maternal grandmother, who, when a child had to hear Mass every Sunday and festival in a field in all kinds of weather with the rest of the parishioners, while a priest said Mass in a hut in front, the people having to endure this hardship because no landlord would give a site for a chapel. This parish, I am glad to add, possesses at the present day one of the finest parochial churches in Ireland.

THE MASS "ARK OF CARRIGBOULT." To give another instance, I am well acquainted with a gentleman, a prominent merchant of the South of Ireland, who as a boy used to serve Mass regularly in what was known as the "Ark of Carrigbault." This was a structure, built as a travelling van on wheels, with large glass windows all around, through which the priest and altar could easily be seen. It was designed as the only possible means of enabling the people of the parish of Carrigbault to hear Mass. The local landlords were so bigoted that none of them would allow a chapel to be built on their lands, and prosecuted and evicted tenants who allowed Mass to be said in a temporary shelter for the priest. The van was forbidden to enter any of the lands occupied by the tenants, hence the people, comprising several thousands, could hear Mass at the cross-roads, the Ark being placed at the junction of the roads, and the people kneeling in four distinct groups along the four roads.

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On the death of Elizabeth the Catholics were filled with the hope that they should enjoy toleration under her successor—James I, son of Mary Queen of Scots. And so they took possession of many of the churches that remained, and began to say Mass in them. This did not escape the vigilant eye of the Lord President of Munster. Writing from Waterford, he says: "Masses infinite they have in their several churches every morning without any fear. I have spied them, for I chanced to arrive last Sunday, at 5 o'clock in the morning, and saw them resort out of their churches by heaps." The hopes of the Catholics were doomed to disappointment, and a most vigorous persecution followed for the next few years. Some years later a proclamation was issued against the clergy, the Lord Deputy intimating that the "Late intermission of legal proceedings against them has bred such an extraordinary insolence and presumption in them that he was necessitated to charge and command them in his Majesty's name to forbear the exercise of their Popish rites and ceremonies." The Lord Deputy complais in a letter to Primate Usker, that this proclamation was ill observed.

CROMWELL PARCELLED OUT THREE-FOURTHS OF THE COUNTRY TO BRITISH ADVENTURERS. During the terrible Cromwellian regime, when three-fourths of the country was parcelled out among the English soldiers and adventurers, and the great bulk of the people were driven into Connacht, the poor Catho-

lics never showed greater constancy in their religion. Even in that awful period they heard Mass on every opportunity that offered. A letter from a Capuchin Father, who visited several of his brethren at that time, throws a remarkable light on the situation. A pathetic instance of the hardships borne by the priests at the time is that of an old Dominican Father, who during the Cromwellian period, had to hide himself out to one of the English planters as a shepherd. Exposed in this occupation to all the vicissitudes of the weather, he completely lost his sight, and then, attired as a common beggar, with a wallet on his back, and led by a little boy, the poor old man, revenged as a messenger from God, made his way from house to house, spending the last days of his life hearing the confession of the people and consoling them in their affliction.

Not until 1782 was the Act of Uniformity, the principal weapon all along in the hands of the persecutors, actually repealed by the Act of Parliament (21-22 George III.) by which priests, on taking the Oath of Allegiance, and registering the names, ages and places of abode, were allowed to exercise their priestly office without being subject to the penalties of previous years. But the Act restricted them "from officiating in any church or chapel with a steeple or bell, or any funeral in a church or churchyard, or from exercising any of the rites or ceremonies of the Popish religion, or wearing the habits of their order, save within their usual place of worship or in private houses, or from using any symbol or mark of ecclesiastical dignity or authority." The immediate effect of the Act was the building of churches and chapels without steeples or bells in more open places than formerly, most of which have long since disappeared to make way for the noble ecclesiastical structures we see everywhere around us in Ireland. But it must not be thought that by the passing of this Act of Parliament all the difficulties consequent on Catholic worship were at an end.

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CROMWELL PARCELLED OUT THREE-FOURTHS OF THE COUNTRY TO BRITISH ADVENTURERS. During the terrible Cromwellian regime, when three-fourths of the country was parcelled out among the English soldiers and adventurers, and the great bulk of the people were driven into Connacht, the poor Catho-

lics never showed greater constancy in their religion. Even in that awful period they heard Mass on every opportunity that offered. A letter from a Capuchin Father, who visited several of his brethren at that time, throws a remarkable light on the situation. A pathetic instance of the hardships borne by the priests at the time is that of an old Dominican Father, who during the Cromwellian period, had to hide himself out to one of the English planters as a shepherd. Exposed in this occupation to all the vicissitudes of the weather, he completely lost his sight, and then, attired as a common beggar, with a wallet on his back, and led by a little boy, the poor old man, revenged as a messenger from God, made his way from house to house, spending the last days of his life hearing the confession of the people and consoling them in their affliction.

Not until 1782 was the Act of Uniformity, the principal weapon all along in the hands of the persecutors, actually repealed by the Act of Parliament (21-22 George III.) by which priests, on taking the Oath of Allegiance, and registering the names, ages and places of abode, were allowed to exercise their priestly office without being subject to the penalties of previous years. But the Act restricted them "from officiating in any church or chapel with a steeple or bell, or any funeral in a church or churchyard, or from exercising any of the rites or ceremonies of the Popish religion, or wearing the habits of their order, save within their usual place of worship or in private houses, or from using any symbol or mark of ecclesiastical dignity or authority." The immediate effect of the Act was the building of churches and chapels without steeples or bells in more open places than formerly, most of which have long since disappeared to make way for the noble ecclesiastical structures we see everywhere around us in Ireland. But it must not be thought that by the passing of this Act of Parliament all the difficulties consequent on Catholic worship were at an end.

PROTESTANT LANDLORDS REFUSED TO LEASE LAND FOR CATHOLIC WORSHIP OR EDUCATION. The bigoted and intolerant Protestant landlords, who possessed practically all the land in the country, could not be induced, in numberless instances, to grant sites for Catholic churches and chapels, and very often in the lease given to Catholic tenants there was a clause against the sub-letting of any land for the purpose of building any Catholic school. Again, in the Protestant part of the North, which had just seen the formation of the Orange Society, based on deadly hatred of everything Catholic, it was impossible to buy even a humble chapel for fear of its being wrecked or set on fire. Most Rev. Patrick McGettigan, who died Bishop of Kaphoe in 1861, used to relate that in his childhood he was often placed on the summit of a high rock to signal the approach of the priest-hunters, whilst in an adjoining hollow the parishioners were assembled around the temporary altar on which the Holy Sacrament was offered up.

As he advanced in years he became one of the adepts who were wont to hold the candles in their hands, and prevent them from being blown out by the wind, for there were no candlesticks on the open-air altars of those days. As another instance, coming home to ourselves, I may refer to the case of my own maternal grandmother, who, when a child had to hear Mass every Sunday and festival in a field in all kinds of weather with the rest of the parishioners, while a priest said Mass in a hut in front, the people having to endure this hardship because no landlord would give a site for a chapel. This parish, I am glad to add, possesses at the present day one of the finest parochial churches in Ireland.

THE MASS "ARK OF CARRIGBOULT." To give another instance, I am well acquainted with a gentleman, a prominent merchant of the South of Ireland, who as a boy used to serve Mass regularly in what was known as the "Ark of Carrigbault." This was a structure, built as a travelling van on wheels, with large glass windows all around, through which the priest and altar could easily be seen. It was designed as the only possible means of enabling the people of the parish of Carrigbault to hear Mass. The local landlords were so bigoted that none of them would allow a chapel to be built on their lands, and prosecuted and evicted tenants who allowed Mass to be said in a temporary shelter for the priest. The van was forbidden to enter any of the lands occupied by the tenants, hence the people, comprising several thousands, could hear Mass at the cross-roads, the Ark being placed at the junction of the roads, and the people kneeling in four distinct groups along the four roads.

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