"'Tis a plan worthy of our chief; hath Jesus Barabbas any knowledge of it?"

"Not He! He is a devout Jew, the Son of a rabbi, and thinketh only to rid the temple of the golden eagle, which, in His notion, desecrateth it. He is a turbulent fellow though, and hath an unsavory reputation with the authorities."

"All the more reason why He should have no share in our plunder. We be reasonably unknown in these parts, and can therefore hope to get away. Let them take Him and crucify Him if they like; 'twill be the better for us."

"May Jove help us!" said Gestas devoutly, "I vow a golden chain at every shrine in Greece, if we be successful."

"I also!" shouted another.

Dumachus roused up at the sound, and rebuking them savagely for their folly, called for wine and food.

As he ate and drank, he now and then cast a fierce look in the direction of Titus. The boy paled, and clenched his hands tightly, for he guessed his thoughts, or fancied that he did.

"What shall we do with the lad here?" asked one of the men presently, observing these glances.

"'Tis in my mind—"began Dumachus, fixing his red eyes upon Titus with an evil smile.

TO BE CONTINUED.

A GLIMPSE OF THE PURPLE.

You'll be having them next in the—in the soup tureens." Biddy's voice was chocked with indignation.

Father Flavin laid down his spoon and spoke reprovingly, though there was a twinkle in his eye. "Tureen, Bridget," he corrected. "There is only one in the house, I believe."

"God bless the innocence of him," muttered Biddy to herself; but aloud she still expressed her disapproval. "And so them sparrows is to litter up the postbox with their messey eggs and things; and what's to become of the letters, eh?"

"How could I disturb them, and the place suiting them so well? Why, in five minutes they've grown out of all knowing in it; they were wrens just now, Bridget." But Biddy had left the roam in disgust.

There was no getting a sensible answer out of his Reverence when birds were in the question, and, indeed, it was more for the honor of the postbox, than from any ill-will towards its uninvited inhabitants that the house-keeper remonstrated.

His dinner over, Father Father Flavin stepped into the shrubbery that grew close up to the walls of his little house, and that was a paradise to all his smaller feathered parishioners. It was, perhaps, the loneliest parish in Ireland; the houses were scattered, the inhabitants were few and poor; the wild stretches of bog and mountain were treeless and bare; but in the priest's garden there was refuge undisturbed for as many birds as could find nesting place in the close-growing shrubs and small trees that the old man cared for so tenderly during his leisure hours.

The objects of Biddy's reproaches were a pair of wrens who had arrived late in the season to find all the best spots in the garden already occupied by larger, stronger inmates, and the newcomers were obliged to retire disconsolately to the very end of the plantation, where it was bounded by the so-called high-road, a lonely thoroughfare which led eventually to civilization, and here they discovered a perfect nursery for their young—a wooden box with a slit in it, only wide enough to allow such tiny bodies as their own to pass in and out. Here Jenny could sit for a fortnight in peace, with her eggs tucked warmly under her; here the young brood could grow to maturity, free from danger, and straw still hung round the letter-hole and four bright eyes peeped and twinkled apprehensively as the old priest drew near. But their fears were soon allayed. Those gentle, shrunken fingers would never harm even the smallest of God's creatures; that kindly heart had sympathy in it even for the anxieties of mother-wren; soon the little builders resumed their operations, and before its owner's eyes the letter-box was turned into as comfortable a home as baby-bird could wish for.

One thing, however, troubled the old man; if letters came and were thurst in by careless hands, would the tiny creatures have courage to face such threatened danger? Yet was the post-boy born who, when warned that a bird's nest lay within his reach, could pass it day by day and not despoil it? Father Flavin could not put such a temptation before Patsey Flood; some other plan of safely must be devised, and Patsey must remain in ignorance of the little birds' retreat.

The newspaper was dropped every day at the gate by the driver of the long car, and the old priest's correspondents could be counted on the fingers of one hand. His sister, in the old homestead by the sea; a young curate who once, during a time of illness, had done duty for the old man, and had learned to love and reverence him with his humble simplicity, and a companion who fifty years ago had stood beside him at the foot of the altar and had received with him the Sacrament of Consecration to the service of the Divine Master.

The anniversary of that day was coming round again, and from these three friends Father Flavin might expect letters, which, though bringing pleasure to him, might mean death to the ten morsels of down that were daily nearing in likeness to a full grown wren.

Turning thoughtfully homeward, he slowly retraced his steps to the house, and, opening his seldom-used writing case, he penned a message to each of his three friends, begging them to put off sending him their yearly greetings until they heard from him again.

This done, his mind was at rest, for he was all unconscious of a meeting that had taken place some days before, forty miles away, at the residence of his Bishop.

A parish had fallen vacant in the diocese, populous and important, carrying with it the dignity of canonry in the Cathedral. "I have a candidate who will admirably fill the post," said the Bishop to his Council, "but I think his age and merits entitle Father Flavin to the first offer. On hearing his answer—and he will hardly accept so onerous a charge—we can decide about the other."

So over the hills in Patsey Flood's bag a big square envelope travelled, bearing on its back the episcopal arms.

A month later Father Flavin stood again before his letter box watching with delight the first efforts of the nestlings in learning to fly. Then, when the tenth brown ball, no bigger than an overgrown bumblebee, had flown in safety to a neighboring bush, the old priest ventured to unlock and open the protecting door. A bundle of moss and twigs and hay loosened from its hold fell at his feet, and with it came the Bishop's letter, stained, discolored, crumpled yet unmistakable. With trembling fingers Father Flavin stooped to pick it up. This had never entered into his calculations, and, as he read, he thought at first that his eyes were deceiving him; but no, a month ago it lay in his own power to become the pastor of one of the best parishes in the diocese, with two curates under him and a stall in the Cathedral as well.

What must the Bishop think of him? What explanation could there be of such neglect, such carelessness, such silence? The Bishop could only be congratulating himself on having discovered in time the unworthiness of one whom he had intended to honor. Humbly the old man bowed his head. After all his Lordship had rated him too highly: he was too old, too simple for such a post as the one he had just lost.

And yet—!

Returning to the house, he called for Bridget to lay out his Sunday clothes, he had business in the town which would keep him out all night, he said, and all the while in his heart he was wondering how the Bishop would take the only explanation, the only apology, that he could give.

The boy was harnessing the car as Father Flavin mounted the narrow stairs, and he sighed as his eye fell on the plain, black stock. So it was, and so it would now be to the end. He had had his glimpse of the purple, but it had faded forever.

The twittering of many birds broke in on his regretful reverie and almost impatiently he turned and clapped his hands, and so dispersed the clamorous feather-clad pensioners who thronged his window ledge, heedless of the disappointment that some among them had unknowingly brought upon their benefactor.

As, in surprise, they flew away, the Angelus bell rang out, and from where the old priest stood he could see over the garden on to the bleak white road beyond, now dotted with workers coming homewards for their mid-day meal, fisherfolk for the most part or bog laborers whom he had baptized, instructed, tended, and children, and who loved him with a love that is not given to many nowadays to win. Had he received the letter in time, had he accepted the offer that it contained, he would have been obliged to leave all these, his friends, his children. At the thought of this, his loss began to assume a different aspect. How would another have taken the place that he had deserted as leader of these wild, wayward, faithful soul? His frown relaxed, the sigh of regret died away on his lips; and he took up the despised black stock and adjusted it with a gentleness scarcely tinged with regret. Then with his usual kindly smile lighting up his face, he strewed the window sill with the crumbs that in the first flush of his disappointment he had refused to his pets, to his little benefactors in disguise.—Alice Deane in Irish Monthly.

CARDINAL MORAN ON IRISH AFFAIRS.

WHY SHOULD NOT THE IRISH BE DISCONTENTED?

Cardinal Moran, Archbishop of Sydney, N. S. W., received a royal welcome on his return to Australia. Speaking at Freemantle, he thus referred to his visit to Ireland:

"It was his privilege to pay a visit to Ireland, and on every side he saw signs of great improvement. In every part of the country that he visited, he saw contentment and development—that was development wherever the beneficence of the law permitted that to take place. He had travelled in districts where on one side of the road the people were proprietors of their land, but on the other side tenants at will. On one side was contentment and industry, on the other unrest and dissatisfaction. He had made a point of not conversing much with leading political men, in order that he might form his own ideas, and he had seen what he might call the first instalment of Home Rule—that was the County Councils and the Urban Councils, which were achieving the grandest results. It had been stated in the hostile press that the concession of local administration would bring confusion to the country and debt.

"The contrary had been the case. The wise administration of the public funds, and the development of industry under the guidance of these local councils, had been marvellous, and had produced the happiest results on every side. In the same way, in matters of education, he had seen the greatest possible improvement everywhere, and in connection with industry the technical schools had produced the best results. As evidence of the intelligent devotion of the people to education, his Eminence instanced the yearly attendance at the Dublin Public Library, which forty years ago, the population being as large as it was now, was only 8,000, but had now increased to 150,000.

"It was his privilege before leaving Rome to present to the Holy Father the Irish Pilgrimage, one of the more singular pilgrimages, perhaps, that had ever been presented. It numbered 600 persons, representing the length and breadth of the country, and the whole body of citizens, Protestant as well as Catholic, were represented. The number of County Councils and other public bodies represented was 250, and no fewer than 250 had distinct addresses from those bodies which were represented. One of them from the workingmen of Dublin, bore no fewer than 18,000 signatures, and these represented not only Catholic but Protestants also, while the address from one of the County Councils was signed entirely by Protestants. That showed the great harmony prevailing among the people of Ireland, and the happiest results must follow.

"Some had asked him, 'But is it not true that there is discontent in Ireland? His reply always was, 'Yes, and why not?' There was discontent, and how in the name of common-sense could it be otherwise when in a great part of the country Coercion laws were in force and the liberties of the people were thrown aside. They could not expect people to be contented with their liberties were always trampled upon, and the laws were not administered in accordance with their wishes, their sentiment and their interests. It had been his desire to take no part in public affairs, but as he came from Australia, and was looked upon as a representative Australian, he was obliged to give his opinion. He had replied that there were no more loyal colonists in the world than Australians, because they are free men. They enjoyed a full measure of freedom, and with all their resources and energy the people were determined to build up a great Australia. So far as he could judge, not only from his co-religionists, but also from his Protestant fellow citizens, all the influence of Australia would be exercised to spread abrad devotion to freedom and free institutions.

THE APOSTLE OF THE NATIONS.

CARDINAL GIBBONS' INTERESTING SERMON.

His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons preached the sermon at the High Mass in the cathedral, Baltimore, on last Sunday. Quite a large number of persons were in attendance. The Cardinal's discourse was a review of the progress of the Catholic Church in America, and especially in Maryland, during the last one hundred years, and was replete with interesting historical data. It also contained a high tribute to Bishop Carroll. His Eminence said, in part:

"The first Sunday of the new year in the early stage of the new century affords an appropriate occasion for reviewing the history and progress of the Catholic religion in the United States during the nineteenth century. A retrospect of the Church in America would be manifestly incomplete if the name of the illustrious Archbishop Carroll were omitted. John Carroll was appointed first Bishop of Baltimore by Pope Pius VII. in an Apostolic Brief dated November, 1789. The See of Baltimore then embraced the whole United States. He was consecrated Aug. 15, 1780, in the chapel attached to Lulworth Castle, in Dorsetshire, England, the elegant home of Thomas Weld, a representative of an old and distinguished Catholic family. Mr. Weld had the honor of entertaining more than once King George III., of England, and the friendship of the sovereign secured for his host religious concessions which were denied to other Catholic gentry and nobility in those days of persecution.

"The consecrating Bishop was Dr. Walmsley, Vicar Apostolic of the London district. This prelate was not only a learned churchman, but also a scientist of marked distinction. When England had determined in 1750 to adopt the Gregorian calendar Bishop Walmsley was associated with other scientific men in arranging the calendar and adapting it to the British realm. One of the acolytes that served at the altar on the day of consecration was the son of Mr. Weld, and this youth afterward became a distinguished Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church.

A JESUIT'S PREDICTION VERIFIED.

"The sermon on that occasion was preached by Rev. Charles Plowden, an intimate friend of Dr. Carroll and a member of the Society of Jesus. Father Plowden in his discourse uttered a prediction which has been amply fulfilled. He said that the day would come when the daughter would surpass the mother, when the Church in America would outgrow in numbers and influence the Church in England.

"His words have been abundantly verified, for to-day the Catholic Church in the United States vastly excells the Church in England in the number of her hierarchy, her clergy and laity and in the splendor of her institutions of religion, of charity and education. I regard the selection of Bishop Carroll as a most providential event for the welfare of the American Church. If a prelate of narrow views, a man not in sympathy and harmony with the young republic, had been chosen the progress of religion would have been seriously impeded. It is true that the Constitution had declared that none should be molested on account of religion nor in the free exercise thereof, but constitutional enactments would have been a feeble barrier to stem the tide of popular prejudice and justified by the patriotic example of the chief ruler of the American Church.

A SPLENDID TRIBUTE TO BISHOP CARROLL

"John Carroll was the man for the occasion. We may apply to him the words spoken of John the Baptist, 'There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came for a witness to bear witness of the Light.' He was a man of sterling piety and enlightened zeal. These gifts endeared him to the faithful. He was a man of consummate tact, of courteous manners and unfailing charity. He enjoyed intimate relations with his fellow-townsmen in the various walks of life without distinction of creed. He was deeply concerned in civil as well as in religious affairs. He was the prime mover, if not the actual founder, of the Marylander Historical Society, of Baltimore, which still exists among us, and one of his clergy was for some time its librarian. This interest which he took in social and literary improvement rendered him very popular with his fellow-citizens.

"Above all he was a sturdy patriot and labored indefatigably for the success of American independence. In 1776 he accompanied Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll of Carrollton to Canada on their mission to secure the co-operation of those colonies in the cause of independence. He was thoroughly in touch with the spirit of our institutions, and by these loyal sentiments he won the friendship of the first Chief Magistrate, the immortal Washington.

WONDERFUL PROGRESS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

"A short time before his consecration Dr. Carroll addressed a letter to the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganada, in which he reviewed the condition of religion in the new republic. He stated that the Catholic clergy numbered twenty-five, and he estimated the Catholic population at 25,000, residing chiefly in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York. The United States did not then include the Territory of Louisiana, which contained a few scattered Catholics chiefly of French descent.

"At the present time, a century from the day of Bishop Carroll, the Catholic Church in the United States comprises a hierarchy of nearly 100 Bishops, 12,500 priests and a Catholic population numbering from 12,000,000 to 14,000,000. If we include our Philippine and Porto Rican possessions the number of Catholics under the aegis of the American flag will amount to fully 20,000,000.

"Let us now consider to what providential agencies we are to ascribe this marvelous growth. Apart from natural increase and from conversions we are indebted to the tide of immigration which has been steadily flowing to the shores of America. The first country to which this State owes a debt of gratitude for the faith is England; for Maryland, the mother State of the United States, was founded by English Catholics. Leonard Calvert, the brother of Lord Baltimore, together with a colony of English Catholic gentlemen, and their families, sailed from Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, in the Ark and the Dove, and landed on the banks of the Potomac in 1634. This colony was the first to establish on American soil the blessing of civil and religious liberty. In the mother country the colonists had drunk deeply the bitter waters of persecution, and now, when they enjoyed the luxury of freedom, instead of having recourse to measures of retaliation or of restricting this precious boon to themselves, they determined to share it with others. While the Puritans of New England persecuted other Christians, while the Episcopalians of Virginia proscribed Puritans, Catholic Maryland gave freedom and hospitality to Puritans and Episcopalians alike.

"In the words of Bancroft: 'The foundation of this colony of Maryland was peacefully and happily laid. Within six months it had advanced more than Virginia had in as many years. But far more memorable was the character of the Maryland institutions. Every other country in the world had persecuting laws, but through the benign administration of the government of that province, no person professing to believe in Jesus Christ was permitted to be molested on account of religion. Under the munificence and superintending mildness of Lord Baltimore, a dreary wilderness was soon quickened with swarming life and activity of prosperous settlements. The Catholic who was oppressed by the laws of England was sure to find a peaceful asylum in the quiet harbors of the Chesapeake, and there, too, Protestants were sheltered from Protestant intolerance. Such were the beautiful auspices under which Maryland started into being. Its history is the history of benevolence, gratitude and toleration.'

"You will all, I am sure, agree with me that no country in Europe has contributed more efficiently to the establishment and growth of the Catholic religion among us than faithful Ireland. Whatever may have been the unhappy causes which have led to the expatriation of so many of Ireland's sons and daughters from their native soil, Almighty God has made their exile subservient to higher and holier purposes. I can safely affirm that there is scarcely a city or town throughout the United States where the Catholic religion has not been preached and sustained by priests and laymen of Irish birth or extraction. And the Irish missionary spirit is perhaps, still more marked in Australia and through the vast extent of the British possessions. Ireland has been the apostle of the nations.

"The Church in America is also indebted for her progress and development to the Catholic immigrants from Germany, Bohemia, Poland, and other parts of Northern Europe. These colonists have inherited the national traits of their warlike ancestors who, in the fifth and six centuries, came down from the North and invaded Southern Europe.

"There is another across the Atlantic which deserves an honorable mention— as country whose souls are the pioneers of religion on American soil. For three centuries after the discovery of our continent heroic missionaries from Catholic France were laboring in evangelizing and civilizing the aboriginal tribes of North America: They explored our lakes, our rivers and mountains, carrying the torch of faith in one hand, the torch of science in the other, and they forwarded to the mother country charts of this continent which, even at this day, are regarded as marvels of typographical accuracy.

"And thus we see that as every nation of Europe contributed a block of marble to the Washington monument in the capital, so have the various countries of that continent contributed a column to the edifice of the Catholic Church in America. And as these marble slabs of the monument are chastened and whitened by time and the action of the climate so that they appear as if cut from the same quarry, in like manner the various nations congregated in this country and assimilated into one homogeneous mass by religious training and social intercourse so as to form but one body in Christ."

He Will Provide.

Without murmuring or complaining, lay in God's hands whatever you cannot understand. The world may laugh at your faith, but you shall feel peace. Never fear that God has forgotten you, when clouds of doubt and darkness gather round you. Doubt Him not. Whatever betide, night or day, remember that His love will provide all things for you.—Sacred Heart Review.

She Will Lead Us.

Let us have confidence in Mary, and go to her in all our troubles. With her aid, and under her protection, we shall vanquish the infernal foes that battle against us; we shall conquer those enemies that often press us so hard; we shall come forth victorious from the fierce combat of life. Mary, with the kind hand of a mother, will lead us on to glory and happiness, for her maternal heart sympathizes with us, her afflicted, suffering, exiled children. From her place beside the throne she intercedes for us, and we well know that with the sceptre of intercessory power, she rules that secret realm of all mercy and all love—the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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