

Rev. Francis Clement Kelley in June Donahoe's.

The whole country knew that Thabor was a peculiar village and that chief among its oddities could be classed its religion, this latter fact being emphasized by the "godlessness" of the neighboring hamlets. But its peculiarities did not end there, though the strange form of worship prevailing in the village would have been enough to make it odd indeed. The Church of the Martyrs had been founded in Thabor, and in no other locality had flourished so well. Indeed, Thabor were making their last stand, and in Thabor were well entrenched for the final conflict. Besides its peculiar creed the village had its peculiar name, its peculiar streets, and last of all, its peculiar old character. Ezechiel Wood, bowed with his seventy years of service "for the Lord and the Church of the Martyrs."

If a stranger were to ask a pious Thaborite why Brother Ezechiel Wood had become so renowned in his native village, the chances were that a story stare would inform him, with an eloquence above expression in words, that Thabor pitied his ignorance, but refused to remedy it. In truth Brother Ezechiel was a born leader. The hopes of the Church of the Martyrs were centered in him. He could pray longer and more fervently than the domineer himself. His sermons, when per- and the pulpit became vacant through the absence or illness of the only minister of the church, were models of enthusiastic appeal to sinners—though there was not a sinner in Thabor since everyone had been already at the "merciful sea" and, confessing to a change of heart, had become a member of the only church. The old man's religion, too, was more practical than usually found, even in Thabor. The poor he knew well; but he still, they knew him. They could recognize his halting step on the threshold, his gray hairs at the door, and his rough grasp of hand in their when something usually passed from it to relieve the hungry and clothe the naked. But Ezechiel Wood was bigoted—logically bigoted, and that means a bigotry of the most unrelenting type. The Church of the Martyrs was "close communion." The dominion, in some of his flights of oratory, had often praised its splendid "isolation," and so nothing else in the religious line could live in Thabor. Methodists, Baptists, Dunkards, Lutherans, Presbyterians, had from time to time settled in the village, but it was not congenial, and they either left or became working members of the Martyrs. Thabor would have none of their religion, and Brother Ezechiel it was who kept the people from becoming "too liberal." Religiously, socially, politically, commercially, he dominated Thabor, and that was the end of all discussion.

Thabor was possessed of one line of railroad communicating with the profane world. At the depot the station master united in his person the duties of operator, baggageman, ticket agent, etc. Thabor could afford but one official there. In point of religion Brother Dods, the agent, was by no means "close communion." The station master, by virtue of his office, Vicar General of the Church of the Martyrs, subject only to the authority of Brother Ezechiel himself for the dominion of course counted for naught.

It was with some feelings of indignation that the village learned one morning that Death had dared to smile Brother Dods, and the station and Vicar Generalship had become vacant together. The indignation was not at all diminished, on changed as to object, when, that very evening, the big term of a new station master was at the desk, and in the frame of the ticket window appeared a broad, cheerful face from which answers to questions floated out in a brogue that experts would class as a pure Donegalism. The new official was Irish. Circumstantial evidence seemed plain, but Thabor did not at once give up. There was a hope that the religious doubt might conform to the religious duty of the village. Irish he was, but Brother Wood had worked miracles of conversion before, and he might do it again. Besides, the man might not be a "Papist" after all, and if he were—Thabor shuddered to think of the possibility. His conduct on the coming Sunday would decide all. In the meantime Brother Ezechiel left him no doubt as to the state of village sentiment, vouchsafing his information in more or less veiled directions, while the Irishman coolly ignored, for when Sunday came he sealed his doom when he stepped into his best, he tramped five miles to the "Popish church" at Zoum.

Then the storm broke; and Zoum the stove at Brother Watt's general store the godly gathered to discuss the latest and most terrible happening in village affairs. Brother Watt himself "allowed" that Thabor "won't start no Papist run." We draw off the "Piscopal because he was too Papist and—

"Yaas!" Brother Thomas thought "That's what we did. An we draw the line on good Methodists and draw a pin to let Irish in Thabor."

Brother Larup's opinion was more cheerful: "The Railway Company settle him. We can just as well leave the bull thing to Brother Wood. He fix it with the Road."

Brother Ezechiel did his best. He wrote the president, the vice president, the general manager of the company. He interviewed the objectionable station master personally. He held indignation meetings with the sect bees and his crew. He enlisted

Well did Brother Wood secure one of the cabin

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AURELIA; OR, THE JEWS OF CAPENA GATE.

Albeit, on the day of trial, Regulus was ready for the struggle he had sustained against Piny-the-Younger. He had prepared himself for it with the superstition which it was his wont to mix with his most trifling acts, and he had not failed to consult the auspices. He had even been so far as to warn Piny-the-Younger that these auspices were favorable to him, and consequently threatening for his Piny's case.

"So be it," Piny had simply replied; "we shall see."

The celebrated lawyer had acted with the greatest reserve since the beginning of the suit. He knew that he was watched by his adversary's spies, and that advantage would be taken of the most trifling circumstance. Accordingly, he had shut himself up in absolute silence, and lived in the most complete retirement. This course made Regulus feel very uneasy, for he had had occasion to learn, at his own expense, the magnitude and power of Piny-the-Younger's voice, when he concentrated, by study and preparation, all the resources of his extraordinary talent and admirable eloquence.

Cæna-Salpicinus-Numerus, Aulus-Agerius-Uladis, and Publius-Hortensius Niger, the judges designated by the Pretor, having taken their seats in the court, their cries (acemias), or uelera, proclaimed silence in the assembly.

Piny-the-Younger then arose to open the case. It had been decided, the case being one of peculiar importance, that the lawyers should be entitled to as many clepsydras as would afford a full sitting of the court. Piny, who was to have the closing reply, reserved his most crushing arguments for that occasion, and confined himself, during this first attack, to the points involving the nullity of the monstrous contract by which a young girl had been devoted to her father.

With all the science of a great jurist, and the eloquence of a brilliant orator, heightened by the burning indignation of a noble heart, he explained how the legislation which gave sanctimony rights to parents over their children, after subsisting too long, was at last disappearing under the double influence of public opinion and of the highest intellects among the jurists, who repudiated it openly as barbarous and inhuman.

The admirer of the law, to which he traced the condition of public morals, and its disposition of the public mind, and its tendency to more generous ideas, was so powerful in energetic simplicity and in the splendor, that when rising almost to sublimity, he beseeched the judges to associate themselves with this great movement towards a new life, and to let the iniquities of former days be buried with the past, the whole assemblage was carried away, and interrupted him by their cries of enthusiasm and a thunder of applause.

Marcus Regulus, meanwhile, raised his hands to heaven as if protesting against these attacks on the intemperate situations of the empire. The large benches which concealed that of his face, gave still more expression to the play of the uncovered features, upon which surprise and indignation were admirably depicted.

When Piny-the-Younger came to speak of the influences which had controlled the free will of Cæcilia, he was designedly very concise. He demonstrated clearly, and by means of the most elementary principles of law, that Cæcilia, on a claim which she had made by Parnemon, the letter of the city prefect which made him fear for his last resources, and by the citation of the pontiffs, which placed him under the terror of an accusation of sacrilege, had necessarily given her assent, being the consciousness of his own acts, and betrayed himself and his daughter with a facility that he would certainly not have shown, had he enjoyed his ordinary calmness of mind and coolness of judgment.

"And I suppose," proceeded the speaker, covering Marcus Regulus with a penetrating glance, "that those causes were true, and that they were not a snare set for the weakness and credulity of an old man; for, if all their causes were ridiculous; if they were combined with profound perversity; if a secret hand applied itself to striking repeatedly at the feelings of this wretched father so as to make him claim that he was more truly bound, and that this shameful sale was never freely consented to by the father?"

After a magnificent peroration, in which he made a touching appeal to the conscience of the judges, Piny-the-Younger stated that he was through with his case, and modestly resumed his seat. He had used the water of six clepsydras, or, otherwise, had spoken only two hours.

The case, however, was continued until the next day, on the demand of Regulus, who affirmed that he would require an extraordinary amount of time to carry out his intention to reply to his adversary.

Regulus seemed delighted with the triumph of the argument. On his way out of court, surrounded by his friends and clients, he criticized freely Piny's discourse.

public had to bear. Marcus Regulus held these distributors of glory in high esteem, most of them were the simplest. He did not attempt to reply to that part of Piny's argument where Cæcilia's sale was attacked in the name of the eternal principles of morality, civilization, and family ties. As might be expected, he confined himself to the purely legal grounds, and argued that the text of the Law of the Twelve Tables was in perfect harmony with the public and private constitution, with the interests of the commonwealth and of the family; and that it had never been repealed by contradictory legislation, or even abrogated by custom, as alleged.

He recalled all the circumstances in which the greatest citizens of Rome had exercised the right of the father; and he further established that on certain rare but recent occasions, citizens had continued, without opposition, to show by similar or analogous acts their power over the bodies of their children.

But the speaker dwelt with greater force on the question of Cæcilia's free consent. "How," he exclaimed, "could the freedom of this consent be violated? By underworkings, by fraudulent suppositions, by means of terror and threats, or by the force of the father? But what is more real than the mysterious affiliation of Cæcilia with the Jews of Capena gate? Is not his daughter known to be a Christian; and then is it not natural that Honoratus Messas should have wished to discharge an unworthy and treacherous agent? Will it be said that the Pretor's judgment in favor of Parnemon was supposititious? Was not the transfer made by Gargus, of his claim against Cæcilia, a reality and an act performed in good faith?"

"It was an infamous surprise; and Parnemon and you are two great villains!" cried out the vespiilo, at this mention of his name.

But his voice was immediately drowned in the furious cries of the lawyer's attendants.

Regulus proceeded without noticing the interruption: "Finally," he said, "there remains the pontiff's citation of the great gods! He contended, attempting an oratorical flight, 'have ye not been insulted in the face of Rome? Was not the statue of the divinity venerated by young maidens contentedly dashed to pieces on the pavement of the public street? And by those who were the witnesses? By a Christian! By the enemy of our creed! Oh horror! Oh abomination! Oh sacrilege! I should throw a vellover my face and present myself in the attitude of a supplicant—'

"By your bondage, and your morning toga?" remarked Piny-the-Younger, with a smile, trying to remind his adversary of the theatrical desolation exhibited in his apparel.

But Regulus seemed struck with a well-timed weakness. "What has Parnemon done?" he continued; "what has this honorable citizen done, to whom they would devote to-day his dear child?"

"I have paid thirty thousand sesterii for her hand," Cæcilia said, his title for ten thousand; "I have settled the penalty for the sacrilege, and here is the receipt!"

"And Regulus waved triumphantly a sheet of papyrus, the apparent proof of the twenty thousand sesterii paid by the Pontiffs to the pontiffs for abandoning the prosecution.

"So," resumed Parnemon's counsel, "I have paid thirty thousand sesterii for the rights of which they now want to deprive me, on the pretext that I have insulted the man whom I found surrounded by these embarrassments! On good faith! On justice! As if it was I who invented the anguish and committed the crime! As if Cæcilia did not have an evident interest in escaping from the hands of a man who threatened her! Well, he has done it! Can one maintain any longer that it was not in the full liberty of his right, and all the strength of his consent?"

Regulus ended with a peroration which drew several rounds of applause from his rigid supporters. He showed in it skill, if not talent. He made a gloomy picture of the misfortunes that awaited the capital of the world, if no stop was put to the dark and threatening enterprises of the Jews who accused Christians, who sprung up in every direction and who would invade all society. "Such is their audacity that they would destroy even the emperor's power. What, then, would the divine magistrates have hesitated for a single instant between him and the obscure Christian, who is secretly supported by persons interested in violating the rights and the majesty of the empire?"

It was time that Regulus should bring his speech to an end. He was completely exhausted. The clepsydras had been repeatedly refilled; the usual hour for closing the court was passed, and several times already the judges had sent the magistrates to examine the records in the Forum. The trial was therefore continued until the next day, when Piny-the-Younger would reply to Regulus.

Your hand, red with so many murders, has alighted on this poor girl; I recognize its bloody impress! It is you who have prepared those odious snares! By all the gods! It is you who have accumulated on the head of this wretched father all the misfortunes through which he has been led to sell his daughter. Oh shame! Oh crime! Cæcilia came to this man for advice, and this man played with a father's despair as the tiger plays with his prey. Oh, Regulus! truly have you styled the most pitiable of wild beasts!"

These last words of the orator contained a terrible allusion to the remark recently repeated in Rome, to which we have already alluded.

Regulus was boiling with rage. He seized this opportunity to interrupt his adversary.

"Piny," he hissed, and his voice was as sharp as the point of a sword, "what do you think of Metius Modestus?"

And he threw a glance of implacable detestation to the judges.

To understand the full import of this remark, it must be known that Domitian had recently banished Metius Modestus for not rendering a sentence in conformity with the imperial views. It was, therefore, a threat directed to the magistrates. It was not only a dangerous question for his adversary to answer, but to hesitate in the present circumstance.

Regulus stood up with flaming eyes, awaiting with hateful anxiety Piny-the-Younger's answer.

The latter saw at once the snare. "I shall reply to your question," he retorted, with perfect composure, "when the magistrates will have to judge it."

"I ask you," insisted Regulus, trembling with rage, "what you think of the devotion shown to Domitian by Modestus?"

"I think," replied Piny, immediately; "that it is not permitted to discuss a question after judgment has been rendered!"

Regulus, disconcerted by so much presence of mind, remained silent, and took his seat still angry and threatening.

The blow had told, however. If Piny had saved himself by his ready answer, his case was compromised, and would, probably, be lost. He read in the eyes of the embarrased counsel of the judges, the same vain that he made renewed efforts to repair this severe check, and that the rose to the most sublime height of eloquence. His voice was but a mere sound, finding no echo in the hearts of the young girl's friends, who were about to betray their own conscience through fear of a villain's denunciation.

Regulus retired in triumphant security.

tion when Parnemon reported that Cæcilia's friends offered to double the sum first proposed, if the young girl was immediately set at liberty.

"Come with me," said to the slave-dealer, after reflecting an instant; "in a few hours that immense sum will be ours! What a magnificent result, Parnemon! By all the gods, this is more than I ever hoped."

The informed and his worthy accomplice proceeded to the latter's tavern. Regulus hoped to extort, by bribes and threats, an immediate confession from Cæcilia.

"Send the girl here," he said to Parnemon, "and leave us. I shall recall you directly."

Parnemon obeyed, and Cæcilia was in the presence of her real persecutor.

"My dear child," said the arch-priest, "I have come to restore you to freedom and your father."

Cæcilia started, a hopeful surprise sent a bright glow her delicate features; but this feeling soon vanished when she met the cold, anxious gaze of this man whom she had never seen, and whose slight caused her an instinctive fear. She stepped back, involuntarily; but, gathering courage, she replied:—

"I thank you, my lord. I shall always remember your generosity."

Regulus had not failed to perceive the impression caused by his presence. He was angry thereat, and resolved to stop at nothing to attain his object. There was, besides, little time to lose!

"Yes," he repeated, "I come to restore you to freedom, and your father, but on one condition—"

Cæcilia looked up. She was firm now. "That condition," resumed Regulus, who had made a slight pause, "is that you will reveal to me all the mysteries of the sect to which you belong, and tell me the names of those who are, like you, Christians?"

"O my God!" the young girl muttered, with unexpressed contempt, "I felt that this man had not come to save, but to destroy me!"

"Well?" asked Regulus, who feigned not to have heard.

The Christians, so far, had not been persecuted solely on account of their doctrines. When Nero sacrificed them to his fury, it had been to divert the accusations brought against himself since the burning of Rome; and if Domitian now feared and wished to punish them, it was only because they were suspected of plotting against his power and the empire.

It was therefore necessary to prove to the emperor not only that Flavius Clemens and his family were Christians, but that they conspired for his overthrow; otherwise, Domitian, however inclined to shed blood when a pretext was offered, would not proceed against his own kindred without some serious proof.

The informer knew Domitian perfectly well; he could not disguise to himself the power and high favor of those he wished to designate to his vengeance, and he felt that he must be armed with convincing proofs, or he would succumb in the struggle.

So far he knew nothing; he could assert nothing positively! How could he excite the emperor's fear of the Christians, if he did not know their number? How could he alarm him with their secret designs, if he was ignorant of what took place in their assemblies? Could he point to those already ascending the steps of the throne, when he had only vague suspicions of the affiliation of Flavius Clemens and his family with the creed of Christ?

Cæcilia knew all these things, and could have enlightened Regulus; but Cæcilia was mute—the most cruel tortures had not wrenched from her a single confession! The informer grew impatient in proportion to the resistance of his victim. He invented the most cruel tortures to make her speak. But Cæcilia, exhausted by her sufferings, fell sick, and came near dying.

Regulus began to fear the consequences of his infamy. He might be prosecuted for this murder, and a magistrate appointed since Nero's time to protect the slaves from the atrocities of their masters; and, as in this case, the slave was of free-born condition, the offender would be severely dealt with.

But he feared also that death would ravish his prey, and with it his hopes of fortune and ambition.

For these reasons he had the young girl nursed and cared for, better and at greater expense, than Cæcilia could have done.

Cæcilia's youth saved her. She lived to continue her wretched existence, but she was strengthened by her faith, comforted by the hopes which still lived in her heart, and her love for Domitian, which grew stronger every day.

It was amidst these circumstances that the tax-gatherer, assisted by the Piny-the-Younger, brought suit against Parnemon for the recovery of Cæcilia. Marcus Regulus had never caused it to be divulged all his attention to the struggle about to commence. But he had little confidence in Parnemon, who, during the progress of this suit, could sell the young girl to his adversaries for a large sum. He compelled the slave-dealer to give her into the hands of a woman named Lauffella, in whose fidelity he believed he could trust implicitly.

Immediately after the confirmation of Parnemon's rights by the Pretor, Regulus had resolved to see Cæcilia. It was the only means by which he could preserve a hold upon his victim with some security for his ulterior projects. By stipulating that she could never be emancipated, he remained her master, and she was his property, and no longer feared treachery on the part of Parnemon or Lauffella.

This life of perpetual slavery would frighten Cæcilia, and, sooner or later, she would seek to get free of it by betraying her secrets! Regulus would then exact a large sum for relinquishing the obligation which formed an insupportable obstacle to the generous wish of the young girl. Cæcilia was in case Cæcilia should be set free despite the clause prohibiting her manumission, could claim her, into whose hands she might be found, even after her father's death.

But whatever hypothesis he should prove the true one, it was an atrocious act of revenge, and the thought rejected this cruel too far. How could he return the girl to her father, and see her in the hands of her father, if he was unable to think of it. Besides, she had not spoken, and Regulus would never consent to release her without knowing her secrets and the names of so many illustrious people. Better to meet the groans of a sister, than to see the young girl's shoulders, which she stretched his avicious thirst, than to neglect this chance, which once lost, might never present itself again. This vile and cruel man still hoped to make his victim speak. Her heroism did not excite his admiration, but his hateful rage.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS AND THE CHURCH.

We would commend to the advocates of the rights of woman a few facts from history. It is an historical fact that the laws of the Church and the decrees of her councils did more to raise and ennoble women than the brilliant spirit of chivalry which produced the most heroic actions and contributed in a great measure to soften and humanize the savage manners of the feudal ages.

In the year 1129 we find the Council of Palencia, in the kingdom of Leon, decreeing exile against those who attack women. The Council of Rheims, in 1157, commanded all beligerents, under severe spiritual penalties, to respect women, and the General Council of Lateran, convoked in 1179, is no less outspoken and determined in vindicating and protecting the rights of women. Similar decrees were passed at the Council of Oxford in 1223, and in the Swedish Council of Arboga, held in 1306, it was refused to pirates, razzias, incendiaries and other malefactors.

The student of history will find the Catholic Church at all times and in every country struggling against injustice and sensuality, and endeavoring to substitute in their stead the empire of law and purity. And this protection is not a mere passing effort of generosity, but a system practiced every part of Christendom, continued for centuries and inexhaustible in resources, both in producing good and preventing evil. An indefatigable zeal for the sanctity of marriage and an anxious solicitude to carry the principle of female modesty to the highest degree of delicacy are the rules which have guided the Church in her efforts for the elevation of woman. These are the two great means she has employed in attaining her object of raising women above the rank of slavery.

The Church, by her doctrines of fraternity in Jesus Christ and equality before God, gives a divine sanction to the true status of woman, and proclaims that she ought not to be man's slave but his companion. Hence, the amelioration of woman's lot was felt wherever Catholicity was preached, and ever began to gather the fruit of a doctrine which made a complete change in her condition by giving her a new existence. The dignity of woman is incompatible with corruption and licentiousness, and the Church, by the severity of her morality as well as by the lofty protection she affords to the delicate feeling of modesty, corrects, purifies manners, and makes woman worthy to hold her place in the divine economy.—American Herald.

NEVER HEARD OF THE "OUR FATHER."

If Page Persons had been able to recite the Lord's Prayer in the criminal court in Kansas City, it might have saved him several months in jail. Judge Welford was in a religious mood when he went upon the bench in the criminal court. Page Persons, a saloon-faced boy, was before him on a charge of stabbing a man, and he pleaded guilty and asked the mercy of the court.

"You're guilty, are you?" asked the judge.

"Yes, sir."

Persons' attorney whispered to the judge and pointed to the prisoner.

"The Lord's Prayer. D did you ever hear it?"

"No, sir."

"You never heard the prayer that begins 'Our Father who art in heaven?'"

"No, sir."

"Then your parents haven't done right. They look respectable but they haven't done their duty to you. It's a disgrace to civilization that a man comes into this court who never heard the Lord's Prayer. That's the one prayer made by men as thinking prayers and sounding cymbals compared with the Lord's Prayer. Every child born into the world ought to be taught the Lord's Prayer at its mother's knee. If that was done, I would not be kept so busy in this court and wouldn't have to get out of a sick bed to hear cases like yours. If you had just known one petition in that prayer, I could see you not into temptation, and had borne it in mind, you would not be here this morning."

TENDER MOTHER EARTH.

Wherefore the earth, receiving our mortal remains and sheltering them from external injuries, performs a sweet, maternal and desirable function. She has a bosom to receive us as she had a breast to nourish us.

"She offers us a refuge," says Piny, "when all nature repels us. She covers us as a tender mother and keeps our last sleep sacred! She nourishes the pasceous cyprine trees and the weeping willows which shelter our last abode. The beloved dead whom we have confided to her resemble the traveler who sleeps after the fatigues of a hot day under the cool shades of the wayside, waiting for the moment to start on his final, heavenward journey."

The luminous and calm poetry which hovers over the silence of the cemeteries appeals to lofty souls, and those who have the courage to think of their death, picture to them-

self, with a melancholy not without sweetness, the couch of which we sleep so well under the care of nature and the affection of those whom we have left behind.

It was therefore necessary to prove to the emperor not only that Flavius Clemens and his family were Christians, but that they conspired for his overthrow; otherwise, Domitian, however inclined to shed blood when a pretext was offered, would not proceed against his own kindred without some serious proof.

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