

AMBITION'S CONTEST

BY CHRISTINE FABER
CHAPTER XIV

A SLIGHT GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

A singular spirit of silence and gloom seemed to have settled on the little party, which did not abate during the voyage. Howard, wrapped in his dark thoughts, would sit for hours apparently watching the sailors, or would pace the deck with folded arms and downcast head. Ellen rarely left the cabin, and only for a few moments at a time, when accompanied by her maid, she sought the deck for sake of the invigorating breeze. Anne herself, once so voluble, had little to say. The polite, merry captain endeavored in his own fashion to make the voyage pleasant to the dispirited little party; striving in his spare moments to engage Howard in conversation, notwithstanding the monosyllabic replies of the latter. Even to Miss Flanagan, whose ignorance of the language he had at once comprehended, he tried to make his good intentions known by a series of bows and expressive gestures, all of which to that lady were as unintelligible as his words would have been. For Ellen's entertainment, he brought from the bottom of a great sea chest a number of French books. Many of them were dusty and partly moth-eaten, but they were novels, and because of that fact, he doubted not their acceptance by the young lady. The latter, divining the kindly motive which prompted the offer, took the books, and thanked the delighted captain with a smile and sweetness of tone which made him anxious to bring her something else, that he might be again rewarded in the same charming manner. But when he had bowed himself out of the little cabin, Ellen turned wearily from the books to a sheet of paper on the table before her; she had already inscribed on it the date and "Dear Mother," and now sat painfully thinking how much it would be requisite for her to tell of the events that had occurred since the last writing—she was so anxious to spare pain to that tender heart at home. Raising her head suddenly, she looked at Anne Flanagan, who was sitting opposite, apparently in deep and unhappy thought, then asked: "Did Howard tell you, Anne, to what part of Ireland we were going?" "No, nor did I ask him," was the brief reply, without raising her head. Ellen put down her pen, and went out on deck to seek Howard. He was standing, apparently so interested in the unbroken view of sea and sky as not to heed her approach. She asked quietly: "To what part of Ireland are we going?" He turned in evident surprise. This was their third day out, and Ellen had not once previously referred to their destination. From her continued silence he had supposed that Anne Flanagan had not told her; and though he marvelled slightly at the seeming abatement of an interest which was wont to be so vivid, he was too much engrossed by his own dark thoughts to particularly care. He answered as quietly as she had spoken: "Why are you so anxious, just now, to know where we are going?" "I am writing to mother, and must tell her where to direct her reply."

"Since you have forsaken your God," she mournfully interrupted. His better nature was once more touched by the despairing sadness in her tones, the indescribable expression of sorrow and reproach in her eyes. "No, Ellen, no? The hasty speech which led you to form such a conclusion was inadvertent and wrong. I believe as firmly as you can wish in His existence—'but I refuse to bow in the blind obedience which our faith demands; my reason and my knowledge alike tell me it is wrong, and every faculty of my soul rises up to protest against a subservience which is degrading to the intellectual powers of man.'" "Can obedience, which is at once the mark of the soul's highest and noblest virtue, humility, ever be degrading? Of what use is it to acknowledge His existence, when you only do so to defy His teachings and commands? Rather is the blind presumption and wretched vanity of the creature, who dares to question the authority of his Creator, low and degrading indeed."

AN OLD WOMAN'S GRATITUDE

A TRUE STORY OF A HOSPITAL WARD

By B. S. Lyne
'Twas 10 o'clock, one wintry night, in dreary, dark December; When at my window came a tap, Remember, love, remember."

win souls to Him and bring back our unhappy country to her allegiance to the Church." "God will not work miracles," I replied moodily. "Oh, yes, He will," she cried, "sooner than a soul that trusts in Him should be neglected or lost. I have seen many an instance of this during my hospital life, and I know what prayer can do. You are morbid tonight, my dear Marion—suppose I tell you some of my hospital experiences? They are not at all doleful, and will help to cheer you."

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