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THE  
"BLACK CONVENT"  
SLAVE

THE CLIMAX OF NUNNERY  
EXPOSURES

AWFUL DISCLOSURES  
The "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of Rome's  
"Convent Slavery"

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BY FORD HENDRICKSON

Author of  
SECRET CONFESSION  
TO A PRIEST

1914

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## DEDICATION

To the cause of country, Liberty and Freedom, God and Home, is this work respectfully dedicated with a prayer that it will be instrumental in arousing Protestants and Patriots to such action as will bring about the abolition of Rome's Convent System on American soil, and restore to deceived, enslaved Convent victims, that, today, languish back of Rome's secular prison bars, their God-given liberty guaranteed by the Constitution of our American Commonwealth.

THE AUTHOR.

## INTRODUCTION

The author, Mr. Hendrickson, on account of his personal experience with the Church of Rome and his extended study of her theology and convent system in America and Europe, is no doubt one of the best qualified writers today on the subject of Rome's monastic and convent system. While there are many books written on the subject, yet each of them as a rule only acquaints the reader with some one particular case, so that a complete information, relative to the objects, rules, treatment, etc., in the various orders of convent sisterhood, could not be had without the acquisition and reading of a number of books on the several orders of convent life. Realizing the need of such information to, and the financial inability of, the mass at large, the author was led to produce a work that would be complete in every detail, within the reach of all. Hence this volume.

In offering this work to the public we believe that a long felt want will be supplied—that the book of the age on convent cruelty and slavery is at hand—a book that will enlighten humanity and hasten the day in which Rome's diabolical convent system will be abolished. A work that will soon be wreathed and encircled by the glorious dawn of a new and brighter emancipation proclamation: the national liberation of the thousands of precious girls and daughters from the throes of Rome's convent slavery system. This will be our reward, and God will be pleased.

For the deceived Catholic people we have no ill will. It is not our intention to attack the laity. Our sympathy goes out to all that are bound in ignorance of the awful delusions of Catholicism.

THE PUBLISHERS.

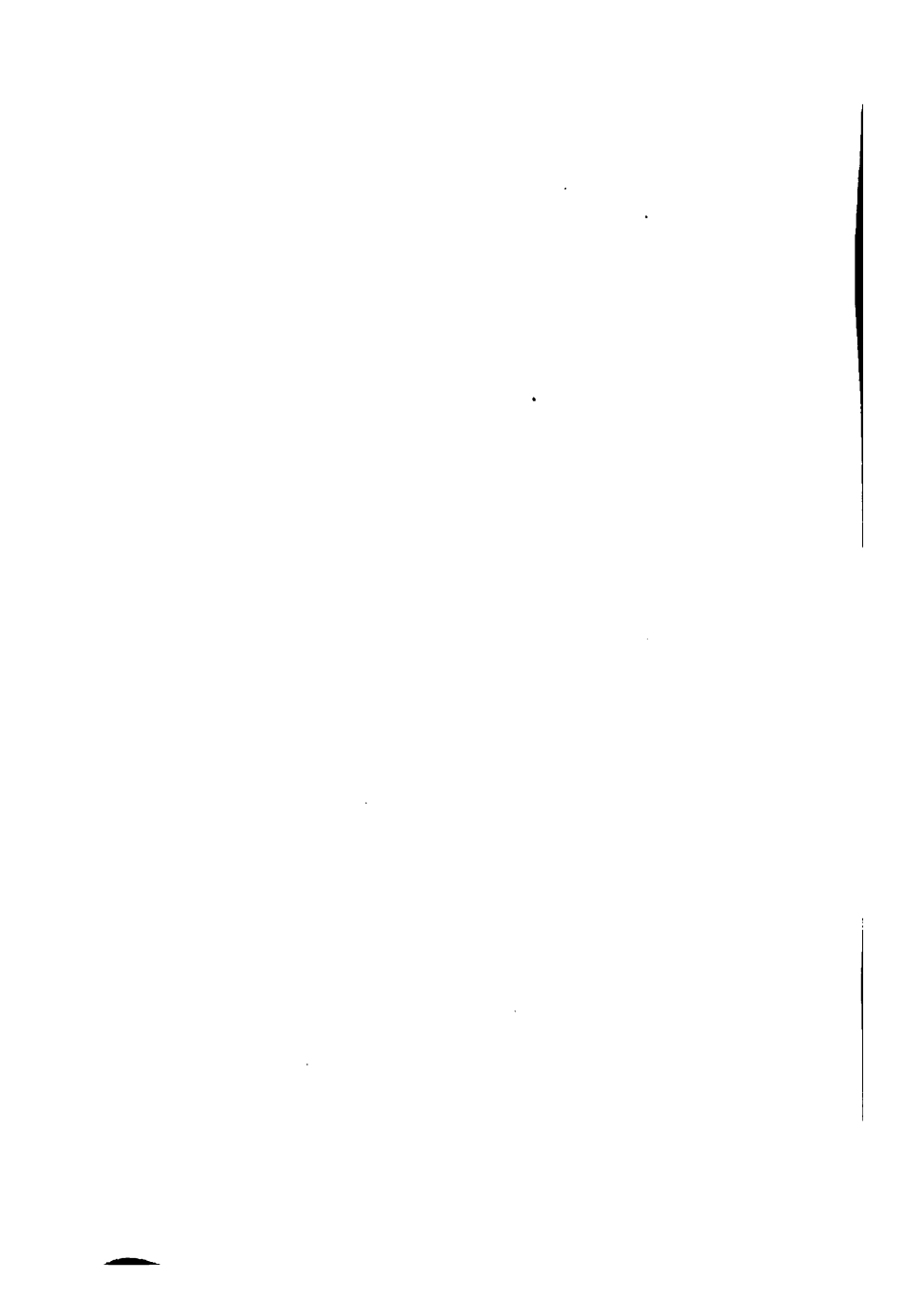
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# THE "BLACK CONVENT" SLAVE

## CHAPTER I.

### *The Trap.*

 HIS is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses; they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil and none saith, *Restore.*" Sad, sad indeed, is the fact that over sixty-five thousand of America's fair daughters today languish back of high stone walls, barred windows and bolted doors,—Crushed, bruised and mangled in spirit,—forced into an involuntary servitude by the church of Rome under the cloak of christianity.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy, is a system made up of various parts, viz.: The Parish, the Parochial school, colleges, convents, nunneries, monasteries, laundries, factories, secret societies, fraternities, etc;—Each operating singular, yet all focalizing in the papal head, at Rome, Italy, the pope, (Papa), serving the system in their several capacities. As a part of the institution, the convents and nunneries are classed among the most important adjuncts of the system. Like any other system, political or financial, the church of Rome holds out an object for each branch of the institution. Hence, in support of the convent system, (i. e. Nunneries and Monasteries), she offers, or pretends to offer, holiness as a compensation for personal liberty, surrendered when the vows are taken.

While, in some instances, conditions in the convent schools are identical with those of the Cloistered Con-

vents, yet there is no comparison between them. In the first place, the school and academies are more or less open and not intended for Cloistered life. While on the other hand the Cloistered Convent, or Nunneries, as we shall call them, are not intended for educational purposes, and are not to be classed with the convent schools in any sense. They are separate and distinct institutions.

The relative position of the convent school to the nunnery is the same that the social glass is to the saloon, or social game is to the gambling room. It is in the school that many protestant girls are lured and trapped by Rome's manner and sophistry that she offers to the world. It is here that every kindness is shown the girl of tender years, unschooled in the art of hypocrisy, as practiced by the cunning and crafty Mother Superiors and Sisters. It is here where Rome paints her pagan forms in glowing colors. It is here where the somber-robed sirens chant the "Litanies" and clothe every outward act with feigned piety and humility, and gradually entwine the slippery web of darkness and superstition about the unsuspecting victim. It is at this Catholic School or this convent, that Rome promises not to meddle with your daughters' protestant religion. It is here where silly weak-kneed protestants and politicians sacrifice their beautiful daughters upon the altar of priestly lust, or, to a premature death in the cell or dungeon.

The Convent School is closely related to the Confessional-box; both are used as traps to catch the choicest of game with which to feed the nunneries. Rome may burn the philosophers, scientists and discoverers for heresy, in advocating the idea of the spherical form of

the earth,—be a million miles from the New Testament church, and engage in grossest pagan idolatry; but one subject she has mastered, and ranks a peer above all others in, that is, the understanding of human nature.

Note that Mother Superior or black robed sisters as they secretly study the mental make-up; the nature of that sweet young girl. See that Jesuit Priest in the Confessional, schooled in the art of human nature with its every impulse, as he pries into the very core of that young girl's heart with an occasional question just at the right time. Does Rome deal with all alike? No. There is some she cannot bend. She selects her subjects. Here is a young girl without any knowledge of a living God, discouraged, possibly disappointed, and seeking an avenue for escape from the pains of a troubled mind. It is now that the Father Confessor or Sister would suggest the Cloistered Convent life as the means left to obtain spiritual happiness and contentment. Poor girl, ignorant of human nature and the frailties of mankind, decides to seek peace for her troubled, sin-burdened soul behind the cold, stolid walls of a nunnery.

### ENTERING A NUNNERY.

#### *The Black Veil.*

There are different orders of nuns. Generally speaking there are two classes, the "out door nun," and the "indoor nun." (The active and the contemplative nun.) She may be a sister of charity, a sister of mercy, whose chief duties as the "out door bride of the church" is to teach parochial school, sew, do fancy work on the vestments of the priests, conduct a washing and laundry business for the church in what Rome calls the "House

of Good Shepherd", and beg from compromising weak-kneed protestants; they are "money getters", they go by two's and visit our Protestant merchants that cater to Catholic trade. (We might say here, that only a few protestant merchants of this character come out *even* with the Catholic church. Rome only patronizes protestants in so far as it profits the church. If on account of location or other justifiable reason Catholics are obliged to trade at a Protestant store, you may rest assured that the priest or a pair of Sisters will wait on the Merchant and beg back the profits on the sale of goods to Catholics. Protestants are building Rome's Sweat Shops, her un-American Parochial School, and her Romish Hospitals, and granting the titles to the Italian potentate.—The Pope of Rome.

The indoor, or contemplative nun is not seen in public, she is engaged, married to the church, cloistered, liberty gone, surrendered to the inevitable, confined back of barred windows, bolted doors and high stone walls. *These are not Sisters of Charity* or the so called *Sisters of Mercy*.

There are different orders or societies of the cloistered nunneries as well as different orders of Monks in the Monasteries, (such as the Franciscan, the Dominican and others.) For instance the black nunnery, the Grey, the Carmelite, the Buried Alive, etc., each order being separate and managed by its own rules and forms approved by the hierarchy.

#### ORDINATION CEREMONY.

The day of taking the vows and passing through the ordination ceremony and receiving the "veil" is a day

of importance to the candidate and nuns. The candidates in most cases pass through weeks of anxiety preceding the event, as well as daily rehearsals, etc. (But how bitter the anguish in the breast of thousands that look back.) The services usually take place in the convent chapel, which, according to the order, has been arranged, decorated or draped for the occasion. Some ceremonies are quite simple, while others are carried out on a more elaborate style, as a rule, in harmony with the custom of the order.

In one order we would find the altar aglow with candles and strewn with flowers rich in color, and fragrance, as in the "buried alive" convent ceremony. This is usually attended by a number of church dignitaries such as Cardinals, Bishops, Friars, etc. The parents can attend the ceremony, and perhaps a few relatives or friends are present. On this occasion the candidate for the veil is adorned in a rich costume, beautifully trimmed and neatly adjusted to her form. In the Buried Alive ceremony the nuns do not participate, not even the Sister Superior. They do not leave their cells, *they are buried.*

From ex-priest Keatinge, we have the following: "We were present at the reception of a young daughter of an ancient Roman house, destined, whether by choice or parental determination, to the little known order of nuns, commonly called in Rome, the "Buried Alive." Of course, this does not mean physical interment. Let us explain what it does mean. The building occupied by these ladies is a "strict enclosure." The bare-footed Clares is also such, but not in this sense. A strict enclosure means that the nuns do not go out in the world,

and are denied all intercourse with it. It is a walled building, partly antique, partly modern. Its interior I only know from the description of the confessor of the order. The convent is divided into two compartments, the first is for the dying, who correspond to the novices of other orders, except that whether they are satisfied or otherwise, they cannot depart.

They are here initiated into the severity of living and austerity of penance, whose full acquirement fits them for the second compartment, the dead. Once within the portal, over which is inscribed: "We are buried with Christ," there is no past nor future for the nun this side of the grave but that which lies within the walls. Her habit is black, the light of day is excluded, and, if true to her vocation, she hastens to die by penances that abridge life as surely as poisons. She ceases to belong to the world as much as if her requiem had been really said, and not in semblance. Family and friends see her face no more, nor know when her last breath goes forth, or her remains are buried. The priest who hears her confession does not see her; she receives the eucharist through a small hole large enough for a mouth. The bishop who was my informant told me the nuns generally die without extreme unction, as no priest could administer it. They never speak to each other except through the superior. They dig their own graves and fill them up each 31st of December, placing in them a record of something to which they have learned to die that year. They scourge themselves, fast whole days together, habitually eating but one meal daily of vegetables, without salt or other condiment, dry bread and water. They lie on beds of ashes, and never disrobe.

For the very few dealings they have with the world, a solitary lay sister is kept, who conducts business this way: A circular wheel is fixed in the convent wall, divided into halves. It works on a pivot. A person outside the wall wishing to convey a parcel or message to the inside, rings a bell, and, placing it on the half of the outside, waits for his answer. On hearing the bell the lay sister turns the wheel—it cannot move without her—and the outside comes inside. The answer is then placed in it, and the wheel turns again, so that without seeing or hearing anyone, communication may take place. The sisters never see this lay sister who lives outside their enclosure in a cell near her wheel, to which, like Ixion, she seems chained. When death comes in reality the sister is taken to the chapel and laid upon her bier. The office for the dead is then chanted, and, while the awful *De Profundo* breaks on her ear, she dies. In her habit, as she lived, they bury her, regretting her happiness in going hence. It is probable they do not live more than ten years, but, as it requires special dispensation from the pope to penetrate inside the walls to the superior, no one knows exactly.

On the occasion of a reception, ecclesiastics are allowed into the chapel, but no one sees the nuns. It is a very pretty little chapel, but simple in the extreme. On the day we were present it was filled with the elite of the priestly world — cardinals, bishops, monsignori, Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans. The niece of a cardinal and the daughter of a priest was to be professed. The altar was dressed with flowers, but the frontal was black, and the chapel was decorated as if for a funeral. The service began by the solemn chanting of the *Dies*

Irae, during which all eyes were resting on the nun elect. She stood beside her mother for the last time, and a lovely married sister, whose son, a fine boy, looked on in wonder. The father, pale, collected and stern, stood on her right. She was dressed in costly bridal white; gems glistened on her black hair, but her face was pale, and her eyes red. The father looked unconcerned. The cardinal-vicar of Rome officiated in robes of cloth of silver, and miter set in diamonds. His voice sounded like that of a judge pronouncing the death penalty. The mass began and proceeded up to the gospels, then a Franciscan friar preached a sermon in which he painted in glowing colors the joy of the bride of Christ—an inconsequent rambling discourse of one who spoke from hearsay only. Then the cardinal sat in his faldstool with miter and pastoral staff, and the young girl was presented to him. She was very young, about seventeen apparently, and certainly did not understand the dread import of such an undertaking. The oath of obedience upon the crucifix, and the relics was taken—the complete surrender of self. Then while prostrate on her face upon the altar steps, Palestini's magnificent "Miserere" was chanted. The young girl was lifted up and carried to a small screened enclosure, during which the Te Deum was chanted. She reappeared divested of her bridal attire, and clad in black serge, her hair hanging dishevelled, and her feet bare. A priest presented to the cardinal a pair of gold scissors, the beautiful head bent before him, and in an instant the long, black curls lay scattered on the altar steps. A black veil was thrown over her, and she received a crucifix and rosary. The litany of the saints was then recited, and the solemn



benediction of the nun given with incense and holy water. She turned to embrace her mother and sister for the last time. The nephew whispered, "you'll come to see us soon." The father laid his hand on her head in silence, and then placed her hand in that of the cardinal. By this act the parental tie was forever gone, and he had no more authority over her. The choir began the anthem, "The Kingdom of Heaven is Like Unto Ten Virgins that Took Their Lamps and Went Forth to Meet the Bridegroom." The cardinal, leading the nun, approached the convent door and knocked three times with his pastoral staff, exclaiming, "Sister Catarina awaits in the name of the Lord." A voice within, that of the superior, answered, "Deo gratias." A key turned in the lock; the door opened, the nun entered, the cardinal vicar locked the door and, turning to the congregation, exclaimed: "Our sister is dead!" As if for the physically dead the priest replied: "May she rest in peace."

The spectators had looked for the last time on Sister Catarina in this world.

#### BLACK NUNNERY ORDINATION.


In the ordination services in a Black Nunnery the services differ from the Buried Alive ceremonies in some respects. In the Black Nunnery (according to Maria Monk, et. al.) the candidate is placed in a coffin, which act is symbolic of death. While the priests and others in attendance chant the Litanies, the Mass for the dead, burn incense over the coffin, sprinkle the form and pall with holy water. These are the cheering scenes through which that poor girl must pass to commence that life of so-called happiness that awaits beyond the pale of Rome's Convent wall of cold grey stone.

When the ceremony is finished the girl is raised from the coffin and receives a new name. If her name was Mary Roe, it is changed now, and she is known only by her convent name in the future. So if you inquire for Mary Roe at the convent, you will receive the answer that she is not there, that is, Mary Roe died when she took the veil, and the person that was known as Mary Roe, is now called, St. Francis or St. Agnes, or by another Sainted name. (Many a parent, friend or relative has been turned away from the convent door by the superior in charge with the words: "Your daughter is not here," or, "no one here by that name." Deceived father or mother, lost to their precious daughter now sick, pining away for a mother's love, through Rome's diabolical treachery and infamous lie from the lips of a fallen, fiendish Mother Superior.)

On the side of the coffin you will find the nun's name, her new name, by which she will be known in the future. And the box is placed in the nun's cell as a constant reminder of the future state of death. As an additional element in Rome's convent holiness there is placed on the lid of the coffin a skull and cross bones, this in an inclosure six by eight feet, underground, and walled up with rough dark stone with only a small tallow taper to light the place, and reveal the dark eye sockets and the hideous grin about the teeth and jaw of the skull, complete what the priest-craft consider a flower bed of happiness for a poor old mother's sweet daughter. To this we should add a rosary (string of beads) and a board or pallet of straw for a bed, and the holy home of your precious daughter is complete. (In remorse and miseries.)

## CHAPTER II.

### *Poverty.*

HE vows taken by the nun at the ordination services, constitute the essential part of the ceremony. Upon three vows hangs the veil, and in order to receive it, the vows must be taken. They are, *Poverty, Chastity* and *Obedience.*

The vow of *Poverty* not only separates the nun from all pecuniary considerations, but draws a solid veil between her and the parents that bore her into the world. By this vow father is brushed aside, and a simple thought of mother is banished. Her back is turned upon brothers and sisters, friends and relatives. Disrobed of her street apparel, she dons the convent garb. She is the same as dead to the song of birds, flowers, trees, brooks, and heaven's sunshine,—to everything and to everybody but her superiors. She has nothing of her own; should she find a pin she should take it at once to the Superior, according to the rules of the order; if she should retain the article found, even though a pin, she is declared guilty of theft and sacrilege.

In the language of Miss O'Gorman, we have the following statement: A sister is bound by the vow of poverty to have no dominion—no property—no use of any temporal thing—without license from a superior; hence, two things necessarily follow: first, that the vow of poverty obliges a nun not to possess, or take, or receive, any temporal thing, in order to keep, make use of,

or dispose of it, in any manner, whatsoever, without leave of the Superior. Second, that a sister acts contrary to her vow of poverty, not only when without permission she takes, retains, or in any manner disposes of anything that belongs to the community, but likewise when she accepts of anything from persons abroad, though they be parents or friends, without the consent of the superiors, from whom it is a sacrilege to conceal anything; therefore no limit is placed to the despotism of superiors who selfishly monopolize all things for themselves and the Priests.

A sister commits a most grievous sin if she violates the most trivial obligation of her Vow of Poverty; for instance, if a sister, without leave of a Superior, should give to another a picture, book, flower, pin, or needle, she would sin mortally, because the act of giving it away would show she had been proprietor of it. Neither can a sister, without license, take a book out of the library, or anything out of the wardrobe, refectory, or any other place, without acting in direct opposition to the vow of poverty. If a friend should send to a sister any delicacy, or any memento of friendship, the superior will take it from her and give it to another, for it is as much for one as another, and every member of the community may claim it equally. St. Austin says, in relation to the vow of poverty, as observed by religious orders: "If anyone should have anything given him and he should conceal it from his superior, he is guilty of theft." St. Basil is of the same opinion when he says: "For a religieuse to possess anything as an individual, without the superior's consent, is theft." Hence, as taught by the most eminent doctors of the Catholic

church, it is clear that a sister who receives or keeps anything in private is guilty of theft and sacrilege.

In order to have complete control over the beclouded minds of subjects, wily superiors will draw on their fears and imaginations by relating frightful examples which God made of those religieuses who violated their vows. In order to illustrate the ignorance and blind superstition of Catholic sisters, I will select a few examples from the "Christian Perfection," of Alphonsus Rodriguez, Spanish Jesuit, which is daily read to Sisters of Charity and Jesuits. Rodriguez says: "We read in the chronicles of St. Francis that there was a brother in one of the Convents of his order who knew how to read a little, and, desirous to learn more, found means of procuring himself a Psalter. But as St. Francis' rule prohibited all lay-brothers to learn to read, the father guardian, understanding he had got this book, asked him for it. He answered that he had it not; the guardian pressed him to tell where he had put it, and showed him that to live proprietor of anything was to live in a continual breach of his vows; yet the brother would not hearken to what he said, nor obey him. Not long after this he fell dangerously sick, and the guardian, for fear he should die in that state, commanded him, in virtue of holy obedience, to restore the book or tell him where he had hid it; but this unhappy man, being hardened in his sin, died without declaring anything. The night after he was buried, when the sacristan rang to matins, he saw a frightful ghost coming suddenly towards him; and hearing a melancholy, mournful voice, without being able to understand anything distinctly, he was seized with such fear that he fell down as if dead. The religious,

having heard the first peal of matins, wondered why the bell did not ring again; and, after having waited a little they went to the church and found the sacristan lying along as a dead man, who, coming to himself, told them what had happened. After they had begun to sing matins, the same ghost appeared again, crying and howling out lamentably, but did not utter any word so clearly as to be understood. The guardian, to encourage his religieuse who seemed very much affrighted, commanded the spirit in the name of God to tell who he was, and what he wanted there. To whom it replied, I am the lay-brother whom you buried yesterday. Then the guardian asked him if he stood in need of the prayers of the religious? To whom he answered, no, for they could do him no good, as he was eternally damned on account of the book which he had kept in his possession at the hour of his death. Since, therefore, replied the guardian, we cannot do you any service, I command you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to depart hence immediately, and to return no more to disturb us. These words were scarcely uttered when the ghost disappeared and was never seen after."

Examples like the above are daily quoted from the writings of so-called saints, calculated to engender the most rank ignorance and superstition. Oh, what duplicity is here practiced by those in authority upon the darkened minds of their unfortunate dupes, who accept these lying legends with as much avidity as a prattling little child accepts the fables of the "Arabian Nights."

#### VOW OF CHASTITY.

The two vows of Chastity and Obedience in many re-

spects are linked together; yet for the present, reference will be made to them separately.

Back of the vow of Chastity, down through the ages of Roman superstition and ruin there lurks thousands of ruined lives, broken hearts and dismal wails, whose cries are going up in supplication to high heaven for release. In view of all the facts and the evidence at hand, this vow ranks first as an outright misnomer.

Under this vow, the nun must never think of marrying, must forget all former male associates, and in the case of a sister of charity, she must not touch the hand of her father or brother. As stated: "A sister breaks the vow of chastity by looking a man in the face; she must not raise her eyes when speaking to one of the opposite sex; she cannot take his hand; she must renounce all curiosity, never look around her, nor through a window, nor toward a door when opened to see who enters. She must walk in the cloister and street with down-cast eyes, never showing a sign of recognition to an acquaintance."

Should a pupil linger beside a sister longer than is necessary, the sister is reported to the Superior as being too familiar with the children. On account of my natural cheerfulness of character, continues Edith O'Gorman, I was a particular favorite with the children and scholars in general, consequently my pupils were very affectionate toward me, often manifesting their love by taking my hand, encircling my waist, sitting at my feet, kissing my habit, etc., *whereupon I would be reported as guilty of great impropriety*, because I would venture to show any affection toward some gentle girl whose sunny smile would cheer my sad and isolated heart, which seemed perishing for love and sympathy. I was thus forced to

recoil from their innocent demonstrations of love as from a serpent's touch, which if I failed to do, I would be reported by the spies of the community who are ever on the alert.

Should a sister's thoughts go out into the world, or should her mind overleap prescribed limits, especially with reference to a priest, she must make known that thought at the Confessional. In other words, should a sister fall in love with a priest she is bound to tell him of it, and obtain his advice about it. Should a sister, on a mission, entertain an affection for a priest, she can inform the Superior, and ask for a change of place.

A sister is bound to accuse herself of all things relating to chastity; must disclose any temptation, nay, less than that, a dream, a vision against purity must be minutely detailed to the confessor. Here note the infamous craft of these regulations: A young girl being bound by her rules to disclose every impulse of her nature to her confessor,—the priest thus informed can take advantage of her as he may feel inclined. Sometimes policy will induce him to express a holy horror at the offense with a view to exalting his sanctity, especially if he have an aversion for the penitent, or should deem her an unsuitable subject for his purposes. On the other hand, should his evil heart suggest to him the moral destruction of this sister, how great the facility he possesses for its accomplishment. In the book of the "Conferences," St. Vincent directs that a priest shall not be permitted to enter the apartments of the sisters. The devil, he remarks, "is always at work, and even angels have fallen;" and the novices should not see



a priest alone in the parlor; neither is it allowed that she should visit a priest alone; yet she may remain at the Confessional for any length of time alone with her confessor; and she may confess to him in his own room in case of his indisposition. The priests often enter the rooms of the superiors, and remain there for a considerable time; nor is anyone permitted to open the door, or enter the room during their stay. When a priest enters the room of a superior, or officer, should a private sister be present at the time, she is told to withdraw at once; nor is anyone allowed to enter while he remains.

#### VOW OF OBEDIENCE.

The Vow of Obedience is the most important of the three, for it carries with it an unconditional surrender to every whim or notion of a superior, that would call in question any matter effecting the vows of Chastity and Poverty. This vow dethrones reason, intellect and self, entirely, and enthrones the superior as absolute King and guide. Under this vow, obedience to every command is required. Should a nun be directed to commit a crime, eat a worm, or a bug, lick the floor, or perform any other act, no matter how repulsive to the laws of God or nature, there is but one thing to do, i. e., *OBEY*. *Eat the bug or worm*. To question the act would amount to disobedience, for which additional penance would be enjoined. The nun is helpless, entirely in the hands of her superiors.

"By the vow of Obedience, a sister is required to give up not only her will but also her judgment and reason. Her superior, a woman oftentimes of inferior intellect, ignorant, superstitious, and domineering, cannot be ad-

dressed except on the knees of the sister; she must kneel at her feet, and listen to her commands as coming from the mouth of God. A sister must obey promptly the first sound of the bell which calls them to the different exercises of the day and night, and instantly drop everything she is engaged in. Even if writing she must leave a letter half formed. A sister must obey blindly, i. e., obey without reasoning on any point, and submit will and understanding to a superior; therefore, a sister must submit indiscriminately to everything commanded, though that which is commanded should even be criminal. This obedience is called perfect because it obeys without discussion or examination; hence, a sister in the observance of obedience must be as a dead body which sees not, answers not, complains not, nor has any perception; so a sister must have no eyes to observe curiously her superior's actions; must make no reply to the prescriptions of obedience, no matter whether they are criminal, repulsive, or absurd. A sister must obey as if she had no feeling, accordingly she must be in the hands of superiors like a staff which is taken in the hands to work with. A staff goes wherever it is carried; it has no motion but what it receives from the hand that controls it.

"A sister must be the same; she gives herself into the hands of her superiors, to do with as they like. When a sister receives a command from her superior, or confessor, she is taught to believe that she is more certain of doing the will of God in obeying their orders than if an angel came down from heaven to manifest His will to her. Her rule says, that obedience is the only sure way that leads to salvation. The vow of obedience is

supreme — the voice of the superior, the voice of God; *therefore, if any command clashes with the vow of chastity, or any other obligation, the vow of obedience must have the supremacy.*

A sister is in the greatest danger of moral death who thus gives herself to the guidance of passive and blind obedience. Her conscience is stifled; she must not trouble herself about the sin or its consequences, since she is bound to think the vow of obedience the only way to heaven. Oh, what blasphemy! What delusion! May the blessed light of the Son of God shine upon their poor misguided souls, and let fall from their darkened eyes the scales of error, and give them to know and feel that Jesus is the only way, the truth, and the life. Such is the earnest prayer of my heart for all deluded children of superstition. None, save those, who like myself, have been groping in the black wilderness of Romanism, and at last have found deliverance by the light of Jesus, can know what it means." (EDITH O'GORMAN.)

#### DAILY ROUTINE OF THE SISTER OF CHARITY

I will briefly portray the daily routine of a Sister of Charity according to the rules. At the first stroke of the bell, which rings at half-past four in the morning, every sister rises hastily from her bed, falls prostrate and kisses the floor. Should a sister fail to rise at the first sound of the bell, even if ill or indisposed, she is reported to the superior and required to do penance as for a great crime. Sisters are lauded for reporting the short-comings of each other. All dress in silence, and make their beds in one half hour.

At five o'clock another bell is rung, and all repair to

the community-room or chapel, for prayer. After some vocal prayers to the Blessed Virgin, and the invocation of saints, the morning meditation is then read. The meditation is generally divided into three points, each point mentioning some subject of contemplation; such as the suffering of souls in Purgatory, or some circumstance in the life of the Blessed Virgin, or saints; and, during Lent, on the passion of Christ. The meditation is made on the knees, the body being kept erect and motionless. This position, for an hour, is very painful, and it often happens that many of the sisters faint before the exercise is over. The meditation concludes with a prayer to the Blessed Virgin in the following words: "We fly to thy patronage, O holy mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all danger, O ever-glorious and blessed Virgin! Amen." The sisters then kiss the floor, and the bell rings for mass. On the missions sisters attend the parish church.

After mass the sisters assemble in the refectory for breakfast, which consists of the best of beefsteak, strong coffee, etc. Silence is always observed in the refectory during meals, while one of the sisters reads aloud from the lives of the saints; the priests, and superiors, however, give permission for talk and recreation whenever they feel like it. After breakfast, the sisters repair to their different duties until nine o'clock, when the bell rings for school.

At half-past eleven the sisters and pupils kneel in prayer and examination of conscience until twelve o'clock, when school is dismissed and dinner served. This is a savory meal of rich soups, roast meats, all kinds of vegetables, and delicious desserts, with porter, ale,

**etc.** (Sisters, like the priests, live on the fat of the land, extorted from poor, deluded people, who would give their last "Guiskeen" to "His Riverince," or the "Howley Sisters.") After dinner there is recreation or play till school time, when the sisters again engage in teaching.

At half-past three all say the rosary or beads, litany of the saints, etc., and school is dismissed; the sisters then go to the church or chapel for one-half hour's adoration of the consecrated wafer, or, as it is called, the "Blessed Sacrament." Supper is served at five o'clock.

Any observation or inquiry respecting the health or absence of sisters is prohibited. The rules wisely forbid the sisters to ask unnecessary questions, and two sisters must not walk together alone; there must always be a third party present. Sisters are permitted to visit the sick and prisoners during the spare time from their devotional exercises, before or after school; however, none must be out after six o'clock in the evening.

At eight o'clock the bell rings for Chapter, which I will try to explain as follows: The Superior sits and listens to the accusation or confession of the sisters, which each one makes on her knees in the following manner, "My sister, I accuse myself of having walked too heavily; of making too much noise in shutting the doors; of giving my eyes too much liberty; of running down stairs too fast; of not rising at the first sound of the bell in the morning; of eating between meals; of kissing a little infant for its beauty. I spent too much time in the parlor; also conversed too long with Father so and so. For these and all other sins, which I cannot call to mind, I humbly beg a penance, and also request my

sisters to point out to me the faults which they may have observed in me, contrary to our holy rules. Penances are then inflicted by the Mistress of Chapter, according as she likes or dislikes the sisters, and if she is actuated by jealousy or envy, she will keep the sisters on their knees two hours at a time, while she will unjustly accuse them of faults which they never committed. (Sisters sin with impunity against the direct commandments of God without reprehension, while the least insignificant offense against the rules and customs is punished with severe penances.)

After chapter they join in vocal prayers from the prayer book. The lights are then extinguished, and all retire to their different cells. (Chapter nights sisters retire about 11 o'clock.) The superior often dispenses with the rules and gives refreshment to the priests, when they often linger until the "wee sma' hours."

Sisters are obliged to go to confession every Friday, to the parish priest, and every three months they make an extra confession to a Jesuit or Passionist Father. The rite of confession affords the fathers great freedom to accomplish the purposes they may entertain. Seated in the Confessional, priests are empowered to propound questions which, from the lips of others, would be deemed flagrant insults; kneeling before him, a sister must listen to and answer questions which fire a pure soul with indignation, and are calculated to destroy every feeling of modesty, which is the handmaid of chastity and woman's most beautiful gift. Auricular confession in the Roman Catholic church is the underlying element which gravitates to the priest as its center.

The Confessional is a spiritual Court of Justice; the

priest is God's legate; he hears the accusation of the soul in its own condemnation; he is minister plenipotentiary to the Omnipotent. Confession produces deleterious effects upon the soul of woman through the undue persuasion of priests working upon her sensitive scrupulosity and the excessive intensity of her nature. After her mental strength has been drawn to the proper point, she is irrevocably in his priestly toils. Oh, how much of this is carried on and buried in the cess-pool of the confessional! Sisters are obliged to regard the voice of their confessor with as much credence as if Christ himself addressed them; therefore, no limit is placed to their confidence in him until they are victimized by the black-hearted betrayer.

In the Convent, superiors and officers are elected by vote (one illustration of the woman's ballot-box.) There are factions and party feelings. The defeated party is jealous of the triumphant; consequently it becomes a hell of contention, strife and envy. Sadly do they mistake who think nuns are free from the evil susceptibilities of human frailty. Neither is it to be wondered at that many of them become hardened hypocrites by thus living in direct opposition to the best part of their nature, while many others become the sorrowing victims of Convent wrongs. Oh, how many gifted and talented young minds are pining away in their prison-cells without the courage to escape such a life of mockery! *In a wild and youthful enthusiasm they made their choice; and they must abide by it until death claims them as his own.*

# THE BLACK NUNNERY

## CHAPTER III.

### *Maria Monk.*



WE trust that the reader will appreciate the author's inability to fully explain and expose the inside life of Rome's Convent and Monastic system in every known case of barbarity and cruelty. If an attempt were made to mention each and every diabolical and cruel treatment occurring within her convent walls it would take a score of able writers a life-time to accomplish the feat. In the following chapters, we shall treat several of the common cases of convent barbarity and popish perfidy as furnished from the lips and pens of victims who succeeded in making their escape from these Romish inquisition prison houses. The awful story told by Maria Monk, of her experience in a black nunnery, ranks among the first in exposing the black inside life of Rome's Convent System. In her own language she describes her taking the veil and first introduction to crimes and sins back of convent walls, barred windows and bolted doors: "I was introduced into the Superior's room on the evening preceding the day on which I was to take the veil, to have an interview with the Bishop. The Superior was present and the interview lasted about half an hour. The Bishop on this as on other occasions appeared to me habitually rough in his manners. His address was by no means prepossessing."

"Before I took the veil, I was ornamented for the ceremony, and was clothed in a rich dress belonging to



the Convent, which was used on such occasions, and placed not far from the altar in the chapel, in the view of a number of spectators who had assembled, perhaps about forty. Taking the veil is an affair which occurs so frequently in Montreal that it has long ceased to be regarded as a novelty; and, although notice had been given in the French parish church as usual, only a small audience had assembled, as I have mentioned.

Being well prepared by a long training and frequent rehearsals, for what I was to perform, I stood waiting in my large flowing dress for the appearance of the Bishop. He soon presented himself, entering by the door behind the altar. I then threw myself at his feet, and asked him to confer upon me the veil. He expressed his consent, and threw it over my head, saying: "Receive the veil, O thou spouse of Jesus Christ," and then turning to the Superior, I threw myself prostrate at her feet, according to my instructions, repeating what I had before done at rehearsals, and made a movement as if to kiss her feet. This she prevented, or appeared to prevent, catching me by a sudden motion of her hand, and granted my request. I then kneeled before the Holy Sacrament, that is, a very large round wafer held by the Bishop between his forefinger and thumb, and made my vows.

This wafer I had been taught to regard with the utmost veneration, as the real body of Jesus Christ, the presence of which made the vows uttered before it binding in the most solemn manner.

After taking the vows, I proceeded to a small apartment behind the altar, accompanied by four nuns where there was a coffin prepared with my nun name engraven upon it:

**"SAINT EUSTACE."**

My companions lifted it by four handles attached to it, while I threw off my dress, and put on that of a nun of Soeur Bourgeoise; and then we all returned to the chapel. I proceeded first, and was followed by the four nuns; the Bishop naming a number of worldly pleasures in rapid succession, in reply to which I as rapidly repeated—"Je renounce, je renounce, je renounce"—(I renounce, I renounce, I renounce).

The coffin was then placed in front of the altar, and I advanced to lay myself in it. This coffin was to be deposited, after the ceremony, in an outhouse, to be preserved until my death, when it was to receive my corpse. There were reflections which I naturally made at the time, but I stepped in, extended myself, and lay still. A pillow had been placed at the head of the coffin, to support my head in a comfortable position. A large, thick black cloth was then spread over me, and the chanting of Latin hymns immediately commenced. My thoughts were not the most pleasing during the time I lay in that situation. The pall, or *Drap Mortel*, as the cloth is called, had a strong smell of incense, which was always disagreeable to me, and then proved almost suffocating. I recollected also a story I had heard of a novice, who, in taking the veil, lay down in her coffin like me, and was covered in the same manner, but on the removal of the covering was found dead.

When I was uncovered, I rose, stepped out of my coffin, and kneeled. The Bishop then addressed these words to the Superior: "Take care and keep pure and spotless this young virgin, whom Christ has consecrated to Himself this day." After which the music commenced

and here the program was finished. I then proceeded from the chapel, and returned to the Superior's room, followed by the other nuns, who walked two by two, in their customary manner, with their hands folded on their



Ordination Services — Coffin Scene.

breasts, and their eyes cast down upon the floor. The nun who was to be my companion in future walked at the end of the procession. On reaching the Superior's door, they all left me, and I entered alone, and found her with the Bishop and two priests.

The Superior now informed me, that having taken the

black veil, it only remained that I should swear the three oaths customary on becoming a nun; and that some explanations would be necessary from her. I was now, she told me, to have access to every part of the edifice, even to the cellar, where two of the sisters were imprisoned for causes which she did not mention. I must be informed, that one of my duties was to obey the priests in all things, and this I soon learned to my utter astonishment and horror was **TO LIVE IN THE PRACTICE OF CRIMINAL INTERCOURSE WITH THEM.** I expressed some of the feelings which this announcement excited in me, which came upon me like a flash of lightning, but the only effect was to set her arguing with me, in favor of the crime, representing it as a virtue acceptable to God, and honorable to me. **THE PRIESTS, SHE SAID, WERE NOT SITUATED LIKE OTHER MEN, BEING FORBIDDEN TO MARRY;** while they lived secluded, laborious, and self-denying lives for our salvation. They might, indeed, be considered our saviours, as without their services we could not obtain a pardon of sin, and must go to hell. Now, it was our solemn duty, on withdrawing from the world, to consecrate our lives to religion, to practice every species of self-denial. We could not become too humble, nor mortify our feelings too far; this was to be done by opposing them, and acting contrary to them; and what he proposed was, therefore, pleasing in the sight of God. I now felt how foolish I had been to place myself in the power of such persons as were around me.

From what she said I could draw no other conclusion but that I was required to act like the most abandoned of beings, and that all my future associates were habit-

ually guilty of the most heinous and detestable crimes. When I repeated my expressions of surprise and horror, she told me that such feelings were very common at



The Priests, She Said, Were Not Situated Like Other Men, Being Forbidden to Marry. (Page 34.)

first, and that many other nuns had expressed themselves as I did, who had long since changed their minds. She even said that on her entrance into the nunnery, she had felt like me.

Doubts, she declared, were among our greatest enemies. They would lead us to question every point of duty, and induce us to waver at every step. They arose only from demanding imperfection, and were always evidence of sin. Our only way was to dismiss them immediately, repent, and confess them. They were deadly sins, and would condemn us to hell, if we should die without confessing them. Priests, she insisted, could not sin. It was a thing impossible. Everything that they did and wished was, of course, right. She hoped I would see the reasonableness and duty of the oaths I was to take, and be faithful to them.

She gave me another piece of information which excited other feelings in me, scarcely less dreadful. Infants were sometimes born in the Convent, but they were always baptized and immediately strangled. This secured their everlasting happiness, for the baptism purified them from all sinfulness, and being sent out of the world before they had time to do anything wrong, they were at once admitted into heaven. How happy, she exclaimed are those who secure immortal happiness to such little beings! Their little souls would thank those who kill their bodies, if they had it in their power!

Into what a place, and among what society, had I been admitted! How differently did a Convent now appear from what I had supposed it to be! The holy women I had always fancied the nuns to be, the venerable Lady Superior, what were they? And the priests of the Seminary adjoining, some of whom indeed I had had reason to think were base and profligate men, what were they all? I now learned they were often admitted

into the nunnery, and allowed to indulge in the greatest crimes, which they and others called virtues.

After having listened for some time to the Superior alone, a number of the nuns were admitted, and took a free part in the conversation. They concurred in everything which she had told me, and repeated, without any signs of shame or compunction, things which criminated themselves. I must acknowledge the truth and declare that all this had an effect upon my mind. I questioned whether I might not be in the wrong, and felt as if their reasoning might have some just foundation. I had been several years under the tuition of Catholics, and was ignorant of the Scriptures, and unaccustomed to the society, example, and conversation of Protestants; had not heard any appeal to the Bible as authority, but had been taught, both by precept and example, to receive as truth everything said by the priests. I had not heard their authority questioned, nor anything said of any other standard of faith but their declarations. I had long been familiar with the corrupt and licentious expressions which some of them use at confessions, and believed that other women were also. I had no standard of duty to refer to, and no judgment of my own which I knew how to use, or thought of using.

All around me insisted that my doubts proved only my own ignorance and sinfulness; that they knew by experience they would soon give place to true knowledge, and an advance in religion; and I felt something like indecision.

Still, there was so much that disgusted me in the discovery I had now made, of the debased characters around me, that I would most gladly have escaped from the

nunnery and never returned. But that was a thing not to be thought of. I was in their power, and this I deeply felt, while I thought there was not one among the whole number of nuns to whom I could look for kindness. There was one, however, who began to speak to me at length in a tone that gained something of my confidence—the nun whom I have mentioned before as distinguished by her oddity, Jane Ray, who made us so much amusement when I was a novice. Although, as I have remarked, there was nothing in her face, form, or manners, to give me any pleasure, she addressed me with apparent friendliness, and while she seemed to concur in some things spoken by them, took an opportunity to whisper a few words in my ear, unheard by them, intimating that I had better comply with everything the Superior desired, if I would save my life. I was somewhat alarmed before, but I now became much more so, and determined to make no further resistance. The Superior then made me repeat the three oaths, and when I had sworn them, I was shown into one of the community rooms, and remained some time with the nuns, who were released from their usual employments and enjoyed a recreation day, on account of the admission of a new sister. My feelings during the remainder of that day I shall not attempt to describe, but pass on to mention the ceremonies which took place at dinner. This description may give an idea of the manner in which we always took our meals, although there were some points in which the breakfast and supper were different.

At 11 o'clock the bell rang for dinner, and the nuns all took their places in a double line, in the same order as that in which they left the chapel in the morning,



except that my companion and myself were stationed at the end of the line.

Standing thus for a moment, with our hands placed one over the other on the breast and hidden in our large cuffs, with our heads bent forward and eyes fixed on the floor, an old nun who stood at the door, clapped her hands as a signal for us to proceed, and the procession moved on, while we all commenced the repetition of litanies. We walked on in this order, repeating all the way, until we reached the door of the dining room, where we were divided into two lines; those on the right passing down one side of the long table, and those on the left the other, till all were in, and each stopped in her place. The plates were all ranged, each with a knife, fork and spoon rolled up in a napkin and tied round with a linen band marked with the owner's name. My own plate, knife, fork, etc., were prepared like the rest, and on the band around them I found my new name written—"Saint Eustace."

There we stood till all had concluded the litany, when the old nun, who had taken her place at the head of the table next the door, said the prayer before meat, beginning "Benedicite," and we sat down. I do not remember of what our dinner consisted, but we usually had soup and some plain dish of meat, the remains of fricassee. One of the nuns who had been appointed to read that day, rose and began to lecture from a book put into her hands by the Superior, while the rest of us ate in perfect silence. The nun who reads during dinner stays afterward to dine. As fast as we finished our meals, each rolled up her knife, fork and spoon in her napkin, and bound them together with the band, and sat with

hands folded. The old nun then said a short prayer, rose, stepped a little aside, clapped her hands, and we marched towards the door, bowing as we passed before a little chapel or glass box, containing a wax image of the infant Jesus.

Nothing important occurred until late in the afternoon, when, as I was sitting in the community room, Father Dufresne called me out, saying he wished to speak to me. I feared what was his intention, but I dared not disobey. In a private apartment he treated me in a brutal manner, and from two other priests I afterward received similar usage that evening. *Father Dufresne afterward appeared again, and I was compelled to remain in company with him until morning.*

#### RECORD OF BIRTHS IN THE NUNNERY.

I went into the Superior's parlor one day for something, and found Jane Ray there alone, looking into a book with an appearance of interest. I asked her what it was, but she made some trifling answer, and laid it by, as if unwilling to let me take it. There are two book-cases in that room; one on the right as you enter the door, and the other opposite, near the window and sofa. The former contains the lecture books and other printed volumes, and the latter seemed to be filled with note and account books. I have often seen the keys in the book-cases while I have been dusting the furniture, and sometimes observed letters stuck up in the rooms; although I never looked into one, or thought of doing so, as we were under strict orders not to touch any of them, and the idea of sins and penances was always present with me.

Some time after the occasion mentioned, I was sent into the Superior's room, with Jane, to arrange it; and as the same book was lying out of the case, she said, "Come, let us look into it." I immediately consented and we opened it, and turned over several leaves. It was about a foot and a half long, as nearly as I can remember, a foot wide, and about two inches thick, though I cannot speak with particular precision, as Jane frightened me almost as soon as I had touched it, by exclaiming, "There, you have looked into it, and if you tell of me, I will tell of you."

The thought of being subjected to a severe penance, which I had reason to apprehend, fluttered me very much; and although I tried to overcome my fears, I did not succeed very well. I reflected, however, that the sin was already committed, and that it would not be increased if I examined the book. I, therefore, looked a little at several pages, though I still felt a good deal of agitation. I saw, at once, that the volume was the record of the entrance of nuns and novices into the Convent, and of the births that had taken place in the Convent. Entries of the last description were made in a brief manner, on the following plan. I do not give the names or dates as real, but only to show the form of entering them:

Saint Mary delivered of a son, March 16, 1834.

Saint Clarice delivered of a daughter, April 2, 1834.

Saint Matilda delivered of a daughter, April 30, 1834.

No mention was made in the book of the death of children, though I well knew not one of them could be living at that time.

Now I presume that the period the book embraced was about two years, as several names near the beginning I


knew; but I can only form a rough conjecture of the number of infants born (and murdered of course), records of which it contained. I suppose the book contained at least one hundred pages, that one-fourth were written upon, and that each page contained fifteen distinct records. Several pages were devoted to the list of births. On this supposition there must have been a large number, which I can easily believe to have been born there in the course of two years.



# ROME'S MODERN INQUISITION

## CHAPTER IV.

### *A Nun Is Murdered.*

HILE history is replete with numerous atrocities that took place upon the inauguration of the inquisition in the year 1198, we need not resort to the awful crimes and deeds committed during the dark ages to substantiate the fact that with Rome, it is rule or ruin, or, if needs be, kill.

While there is nothing startling in the formation and definition of the word inquisition, yet its very sound on the mentioning of the name, or even a thought of it, recalls more than its original meaning. It has struck terror to the hearts of thousands that have dared to stand for the right and believe the Bible. It constitutes the dark valley in the domain of the Roman history through which have flown the filthy morass of the past down to the present day. Inquisition means an act of inquiry, or it may mean a board of inquiry. However, the past, with its murders and crimes innumerable that have emanated from the papal throne, through what the popes have been pleased to call the "holy office" of the inquisition in this connection, will always be remembered with sorrow and sadness of heart.

The Catholic Church in general is built upon the theory of attracting the credulous and ignorant into its folds through its master arts of papal forms and ceremony. Catholicism, pagantry and ignorance complete a perfect

triangular arrangement in the hands of satan to deceive humanity, and where she fails to deceive, and the individual would stand for liberty and right, Rome's theology is to bend the character, or see that the death penalty is inflicted. Almost every conceivable inhuman mode of torture has been practiced by this "holy church." When torture fails to bend her subjects, then Rome kills. This part of Rome's work is taken care of by an Inquisitorial board and is called inquisition, so from custom and practice, down to the present time, the word means inhumanity, cold-blooded murder and fiendish torture, reaching beyond the feeble description of human lips. *Semper idem* is Rome's motto, which means she never changes; we may add, that in spirit this is true. She has the same spirit today; she murders, she deceives, she defrauds and inflicts the some diabolical, inhuman torture that she practiced when she conducted her public inquisitions. The only difference being that since the waning of papal power and authority, she conducts her inquisitions, perpetrates her crimes, and inflicts her tortures today in the name of religion back of high stone walls, barred windows and bolted doors. To wit: In the convents and nunneries.

Maria Monk exposes a recent case of holy Roman Catholic murder as follows: "It was about five months after I had taken the black veil," said Maria Monk, "when the Superior sent for me and several other nuns to come to her room. We found the bishop and some priests with her; and, speaking in an unusual tone of fierceness and authority, she said, 'Go to the room for the examination of conscience, and drag St. Frances upstairs.' Nothing more was necessary than this unusual

command, with the tone and manner which accompanied it, to excite in me the most gloomy anticipations. It did not strike me as strange that St. Frances should be in the room to which the Superior directed us. It was an apartment to which we were often sent to prepare for the communion, and to which we involuntarily went whenever we felt the compunctions which our ignorance of duty and the misinstruction we received inclined us to seek relief from self-reproach. Indeed, I had seen her there a little before. What terrified me was, first, the Superior's angry manner; second, the expression she used, being a French term, whose peculiar use I had learned in the convent, and whose meaning is rather softened when translated into 'drag'; third, the place to which we were directed to take the interesting young nun, and the persons assembled there, as I supposed, to condemn her. My fears were such concerning the fate that awaited her, and my horror at the idea that she was in some way to be sacrificed, that I would have given anything to be allowed to stay where I was. But I feared the consequences of disobeying the Superior, and proceeded with the rest towards the room for the examination of conscience.

"The room to which we were to proceed from that was in the second story, and the place of many a scene of a shameful nature. It is sufficient for me to say that things had occurred there which made me regard the place with the greatest disgust.

"St. Frances had appeared melancholy for some time. I well knew that she had cause, for she had been repeatedly subjected to trials which I need not name,—our common lot.

"When we reached the room which we had been bidden to seek, I entered the door, my companions standing behind me, as the place was so small as hardly to hold five persons at a time. The young nun was standing alone, near the middle of the room. She was probably about twenty years of age, with light hair, blue eyes, and very fair complexion."

Think of it. She resembled in appearance one that was the light of a boyhood home I well knew. She was some one's child, and by her devotion to Christ, resistance to crime, and loyalty to virtue, must have been worthy of love. *She had been true to the highest instincts of an immortal nature, and for this was to die.*

The narrative proceeds: "I spoke to her in a compassionate voice, but at the same time with such a decided manner that she comprehended my full meaning:

"St. Frances, we are sent for you."

"Several others spoke kindly to her, but two addressed her very harshly. The poor creature turned round with a look of meekness, and without expressing any unwillingness or fear, without even speaking a word, resigned herself to our hands. The tears came into my eyes. I had not a moment's doubt that she considered her fate as sealed, and was already beyond the fear of death. She was conducted, or rather hurried, to the staircase, which was near by, and then seized by her limbs and clothes, and in fact almost dragged upstairs, in the sense the Superior had intended. I laid my own hands upon her—I took hold of her, too—more gently indeed than some of the rest, yet I encouraged and assisted them in carrying her. I could not avoid it. My refusal would not have saved her, nor prevented her being carried up;



it would only have exposed me to some severe punishment, as I believed some of my companions would have seized the first opportunity to complain of me.

"All the way up the staircase, St. Frances spoke not a word, nor made the slightest resistance. When we entered with her into the room to which she was ordered, my heart sank within me. The bishop, the lady superior, and five priests were assembled for her trial. When we had brought our prisoner before them, Father Richards began to question her; she made ready but calm replies. I can not pretend to give a connected account of what ensued; my feelings were wrought up to such a pitch that I knew not what I did, nor, what to do. I was under a terrible apprehension that if I betrayed the feelings which almost overcame me, I should fall under the displeasure of the cold-blooded persecutors of my poor innocent sister; and this fear on the one hand, with the distress I felt for her on the other, rendered me almost frantic. As soon as I entered the room, I had stepped into a corner on the left of the entrance, where I might partially support myself by leaning against the wall between the door and window. This support was all that prevented me from falling to the floor; for the confusion of my thoughts was so great that only a few of the words I heard spoken on either side made any lasting impression upon me. I felt as if I was struck with some insupportable blow; and death would not have been more frightful to me. I am inclined to the belief that Father Richards wished to shield the poor prisoner from the severity of her fate, by drawing from her expressions that might bear a favorable construction. He asked her, among other things, if she was not sorry for what she

had been overheard to say (for she had been betrayed by one of the nuns), and if she would not prefer confinement in the cells to the punishment which was threatened her. But the bishop soon interrupted him, and it was easy to perceive that he considered her fate as sealed, and was determined she should not escape. In reply to some of the questions put to her, she was silent; to others I heard her voice reply that she did not repent of the words she had uttered, though they had been reported by some of the nuns, who had heard them, that she still wished to escape from the convent, and that she had firmly resolved to resist every attempt to compel her to the commission of crimes she detested. She added that she would rather die than cause the murder of harmless babes. "THAT IS ENOUGH, FINISH HER!" *said the bishop.* Two nuns instantly fell upon the young woman, and in obedience to instructions and directions given by the lady superior, prepared to execute her sentence. She still maintained all the calmness and submission of a lamb.

"Some of those who took part in this transaction, I believe were as unwilling as myself; but of others I can safely say that I believe they delighted in it. Their conduct certainly exhibited a most bloodthirsty spirit, but above all alacrity, and assumed from choice the most revolting parts to be performed. She seized a gag, forced it into the mouth of the poor nun, and when it was fixed between her extended jaws so as to keep them open at their greatest possible distance, took hold of the straps fastened at each end of the stick, crossed them behind the helpless head of the victim, and drew them tight through the loop prepared as a fastening.

"The bed which had always stood in one part of the room still remained there, though the screen which had usually been placed before it, and was made of thick muslin, with only a crevice through which a person behind might look out, had been folded up on its hinges in the form of a W, and placed in a corner. On the bed the prisoner was laid, with her face upward, and then bound with cords, so that she could not move. In an instant another bed was thrown upon her; one of the priests sprung like a fury first upon it, and stamped upon it with all his force. He was speedily followed by the nuns, until there were as many upon the bed as could find room, and all did what they could, not only to smother, but to bruise her.

"Some stood up and jumped upon the poor girl with their feet, some with their knees, and others in different ways seemed to seek how they might best beat the breath out of her body and mangle it, without coming in direct contact with it, or seeing the effects of their violence. During this time, my feelings were almost too strong to be endured. I felt stupefied, and scarcely was conscious of what I did, still fear for myself remained in a sufficient degree to induce me to some exertion, and I attempted to talk to those who stood next, partly that I might have an excuse for turning away from the dreadful scene.

"After the lapse of fifteen or twenty minutes, and when it was presumed that the sufferer had been smothered and crushed to death, the priest and the nuns ceased to trample upon her, and stepped from the bed. All was motionless and silent beneath it.

"They then began to laugh at such inhuman thoughts as occurred to some of them, rallying each other in the most unfeeling manner, and ridiculing me for the feelings which I in vain endeavored to conceal. They alluded to the resignation of our murdered companion, and one of them tauntingly said, 'She would have made a good Catholic martyr!' After spending some moments in such conversation, one of them asked if the corpse should be removed. The Superior said it had better remain a little while. After waiting some time longer, the feather bed was taken off, the cords unloosed, and the body taken by the nuns and dragged downstairs. I was informed that it was taken into the cellar, and thrown unceremoniously into the hole, covered with a great quantity of lime, and afterwards sprinkled with a liquid of the properties and name of which I am ignorant."

What is there in this transaction that would prevent its repetition in every nunnery in the land? In the terrible stories of the Inquisition, there is the same horrible spirit. Behold the helplessness of the victim, the cruelty of her persecutors, and the bondage of those who assisted in doing the terrible deed.

"I am unable to say how many nuns disappeared when I was in the convent. There were several who were gagged. Some of the old nuns seemed to take delight in oppressing those who fell under their displeasure. They were ready to recommend, or resort to, compulsory measures, and ever ready to run for the gags. I have seen a half dozen lying gagged and bound at once.

"I have been subjected to the same state of involuntary silence more than once; for sometimes I became excited to a state of desperation by the measures used against

ne, and then conducted in a manner not less violent than some others. My hands have been tied behind me and a gag put into my mouth, sometimes with such force and rudeness as to lacerate my lips, and cause the blood to flow freely.

Treatment of this kind is apt to teach submission, and many times I have acquiesced under orders received or wishes expressed, with a fear of a recurrence to some severe measures." Are such schools fit places for our American girls?

"One day I had incurred the anger of the Superior in a greater degree than usual: I was ordered to the cells. A scene of terrible violence commenced. After exhausting my strength by resisting as long as I could against several nuns, I had my hands drawn behind my back, a leathern band passed first around my waist, and fastened. This was drawn so tight it cut through the flesh of my thumbs, making wounds the scars of which never disappeared. A gag was forced into my mouth, after which I was taken by main force and carried down into the cellar and brought to a cell. The door was opened and I was thrown in with violence and left alone, the door being immediately closed and bolted on the outside. The bare ground was under me, cold and hard as if it had been beaten down even. I lay still in the position in which I had fallen, as it would have been difficult for me to move, confined as I was and exhausted by my exertions; and the shock of my fall, and my wretched state of desperation and fear, disinclined me from any further attempt. I was in almost terrible darkness, there being nothing perceptible except a slight glimmer of light which came in through the window far above me.

**"The door was opened and I was thrown in with violence, and left alone." (Page 51.)**



"How long I remained in that condition, I can only conjecture. It seemed to me a long time, and must have been two or three hours. I did not move, expecting to die there, and in a state of distress which I cannot describe, from the tight bandage about my hands and the gag holding my jaws apart to their greatest extension. I am confident I must have died before morning if, as I then expected, I had been left there all night. By and by, however, the bolt was drawn, the door opened, and Jane Ray spoke to me in a tone of kindness. She had taken an opportunity to slip into the cellar unnoticed on purpose to see me. She unbound the gag, took it out of my mouth, asked the Superior to come to me, who asked if I had repented in the sight of God for what I had done, and if I would ask the pardon of the Virgin Mary and of all the nuns. Replying in the affirmative, I was released, and, kneeling before all the sisters in succession, begged the forgiveness and prayers of each."

#### HOW INFANTS ARE MURDERED.

Infants within the black nunnery walls are put to death and their souls dispatched through the gates of glory, without a chance at limbo, by Rome's modern inquisition (priest and mother superiors), according to Maria Monk, in the following manner: "The priest first puts oil upon the heads of the infants, as is the custom before baptism. When he had baptized the children, they were taken one after another, by one of the old nuns, in the presence of all; she pressed her hand upon the mouth and nose of the first so tight that it could not breathe, and in a few minutes when the hand was removed it was dead. She then took another, and treated it in the same



"She pressed her hand on the mouth and nose of the girl so tight that it could not breathe, and in a few minutes when the hand was removed it was dead."



manner. No sound was heard, and both the children were corpses. The greatest indifference was shown by all present during this operation, for all, as I well knew, were accustomed to such scenes. The little bodies were then taken into the cellar, thrown into the pit, and covered with a quantity of lime." (Afterwards she saw, without doubt, her own child treated in the same manner.) "No attempt was made to keep any of the inmates in ignorance of the murder of children."

Ex-priest William Hogan, at one time priest in charge of one of the leading churches in Philadelphia, says: "The Mother Abbess took the nostrils of the infant between her consecrated thumb and fingers, and in the name of the infallible Church consigned it to the care of the Almighty, claiming that the strangling and putting to death of infants is a common, everyday crime in popish nunneries."



# Margaret Shepherd

## CHAPTER V.

*And the Stepping Stones Within the Corridors of  
Popery that Led Her into a Miserable Existence.*



ADAM SHEPHERD furnishes us the facts in the following language:  
“The Sunday for the mission fathers to begin their work arrived. I attended the services and rendered considerable help. Their sermons brought me in closer contact with the sufferings of Christ, and aroused all the religious fervor of my better nature. Father Daly advised me to take advantage of the presence of Father O’Connor, the Jesuit Provincial, who was leading the retreat, and to seek his advice in the confessional. Father O’Connor was much revered as a missionary, and received frequent calls from religious communities of nuns to conduct their retreats both in England and Ireland. As a rule, a Jesuit will take the two-fold position of confessor and director, not only to nuns, but also to those among the laity who hold important positions in private families, business houses, or under the government. It is an acknowledged fact that women especially, as a rule, prefer making their confession to a Jesuit rather than to a secular priest. This, no doubt, is in consequence of the peculiar fitness of the Jesuit (acquired by special training), for the purpose.

No religious order, or, indeed, men of any profession, understand human nature so thoroughly as do the Jes-

uits. There is no peculiarity of the human disposition of which they have not made a thorough study. They are adepts at winning the confidence of those with whom they come in contact. They are cultured, highly educated, understand the art of making themselves agreeable, especially so amongst wealthy Protestants, and not infrequently succeed in causing such to turn over to the Catholic Church, or, if they cannot accomplish this, they do not fail in obtaining large sums of money from the object of their particular interest. Like the majority of my sex, I too was glad to have an opportunity of seeking the advice of so skilled a confessor as a Jesuit Provincial, and I was not slow in taking advantage of it.

"Accordingly, after the mission had been in progress for a few days, I sought Father O'Connor one afternoon in the confessional, and for two hours listened to the advice of him whom I looked upon as God's representative. Oh, how well I remember with what skill he drew from me the whole history of my parents as I knew it, and yet he said very little!

"But how wonderfully soothed and comforted I felt as I left the confessional and knelt down before the altar rails to make my thanksgiving, and repeat the few prayers he had given me as a penance. I had promised the priest in the confessional that I would allow myself to be guided (as he directed me to), by Father Daly in the future; and he, on his part, promised to see and speak with Father Daly and to give me final advice before the closing of the mission.

"This promise he kept, and in the course of a conversation with him in the confessional, I once more promised to enter a religious community. The sermons preached

during the mission had wielded their influence over me. I was in a disposition to be obedient, and so I resolved once more to leave my future in Father Daly's hands; but even whilst I made this resolve, and promised with my lips, my heart kept saying, no, no, no. But He who reads all hearts knows that I tried to put this thought far aside.

"It was only a few days after the departure of Father O'Connor that Father Daly met with a serious accident. He was out calling on a parishioner, and returning home in the dark he missed his footing, and, falling over a large stone, broke his ankle. There being no house close by, and unable to rise, he had lain on the road three or four hours, where a couple of farm laborers, who had been to an adjoining village and were returning, past midnight, found him and carried him home. The exposure to the night air had given him a severe chill, and had added to the pain of his broken ankle, and there was a prospect of his confinement to the house for some time.

"Under these circumstances my cousin had, at the request of Father Daly, written to the Bishop, informing him of the accident, and asking that Father Egan be allowed to remain for the performance of his duties until some other arrangement could be made. Of course, we were very sorry to hear of Father Daly's accident, for he was a favorite with every one. He was a genuine Irish priest. Father Egan took up his quarters at the parsonage, and consequently we did not see much of him for some weeks. But after that, when Father Daly was getting better and able to be left in the care of the house-keeper, he would come up to the house in the evenings,

and talk with cousin on matters of interest to the parish, or play a game of cribbage or cards, whilst Elizabeth would play and sing, and I would be engaged upon some needlework.

Sometimes, looking up suddenly, I would meet the gaze of Father Egan, who seemed to be studying me. And I, well, often I found myself thinking of him! He had become my confessor since Father Daly's accident,



**"Passion filled my heart and showed itself on my face and in my voice." (Page 65.)**

and I knew not how to account for it then, but every time I entered the confessional, Father Egan seemed to

gain a peculiar influence over me. His advice and instruction were particularly helpful to me, and instead of being irritable with me as Father Daly was, he, on the contrary, was all gentleness and sympathy, and I found myself often longing for the end of the week so that I might be able to speak with him under the seal of confession. Occasionally, I would meet him in my walk through the neighborhood or at the house of some parishioner to whom I would carry some little delicacy from Elizabeth. At such times he would walk home with me, and then enter the house and remain to dinner or tea.

"And so the weeks passed into months, and May came around—May, the month dedicated to the Virgin Mary, when it is usual to decorate the church and the altar, as well as the statue of Mary, with the most beautiful flowers, and also to have benediction service every evening, accompanied by the recitation of the rosary in honor of the Blessed Virgin. And, that May month, Father Egan was very anxious not only that the church should be decorated, but that the Confraternity of the Children of Mary should be specially identified for their devotion to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception.

"And so every evening the Sodality would be present with their medals attached to a piece of blue ribbon worn around their necks. Oh, how tonight I go back in memory to that time! What would I not give to have those days back again with all their innocence? But why wish or long for that which can never be?

"One evening, the last week in May—I remember it well—my cousin James had gone to Dublin on business that would detain him until the next day, and Elizabeth, taking advantage of his absence and of the fact that we

had no visitors, had also driven to the adjoining village to visit some friends, so that I was alone in the house with the servants. I had been to benediction, and on my return sat down by the open window of the parlor. The May moon was streaming into the room, flooding it and the garden with a soft light.

"Everything breathed of peace; all seemed at rest but my own heart, and within it there was an aching void, an eager longing for something I could not attain, and then—I know not how to account for it—but I was conscious of the same peculiar influence that in those days as well as in the present at times surrounds me, and so, as I sat there that beautiful May evening, with closed eyes and saddened heart, my mother's form seemed to stand before me, and my thoughts went back again to the old home. Again I was a merry, happy school-girl, with no shade of trouble or sorrow in my heart. Then I was kneeling beside my mother, listening as she told me of the sadness that had entered her life. Once more I was promising her that I should enter a religious house; and so, scene after scene of all that had transpired since then to that present hour came up before me, and from the depth of my sad heart I cried out, as would a weary child, 'Come back, mother, oh, come back!' and surely that evening I felt her hand passing caressingly over my head as in the days of yore. And it was her voice whispering so tenderly my name, and under this influence the restlessness died out of my heart, a quiet peace entered, and so I sat there. I know not how long; but if, as some say and believe, the spirits of our loved ones do return and hover around us, then, indeed, my gentle mother was with me that evening as a ministering angel.

"So lost was I to all else beside, that I did not hear the parlor door open nor was I conscious of any other presence until a hand was laid upon my shoulder, and a voice said, 'My child, why are you so quiet? I have been here for some time watching you.'

"Startled beyond all control, I raised my head to find Father Egan standing by my side. Ah, why was it that at that moment it seemed as if all the brightness was dying out of my young life, that there was a severing of something, and that I felt a cloud settling over me? I go back at this moment, after all these years, to the memories of that night. I see again the moonbeams break and quiver, and hear the low murmur of a voice that was to lead me from the bright path of innocence, joy and peace into the dark valley of sin and sorrow—a voice full of sweetness that hid the poison of the asp. And so he came that evening under the garb of religion straight from the altar, where only an hour before he had officiated as a priest of God, and had given as such his benediction to the people; came with a smiling face, but with treachery in his heart, and I, in my simple faith, without even suspecting it, had allowed myself to be influenced by him.

"And that evening, when I recovered from the first feeling of surprise, the blood rushed to my cheeks as he, drawing up a chair and taking my hand in his, said: 'Now, tell me what you were thinking of when I came into the room.' And I answered simply, 'Of my mother.'

"He remained silent for a few minutes, and then said, as he stooped down, bringing his head almost on a level with my face:



"'I came to speak with you alone. I have longed to have this opportunity.'

"Back surged the blood to my face and neck, and my hand that he held trembled, but I uttered no word.

"'My child, look up!'

"I obeyed him. It was not in my power to do otherwise. And so, as he looked into my face, he said, still retaining my hand within his, 'Tell me, Marjory,' using for the first time my Christian name, 'why you are in distress. Will you not confide in me, and, if possible, allow me to help you in whatever may be troubling you?'

"Confide in him! Oh, yes. Even as he spoke it seemed as if my heart went out to him in perfect trust. How often had I found myself longing to speak to him, unrestrained by the precincts of the confessional, and now he was sitting by my side, asking me to confide in him. But my tongue refused to speak. Then he laid his hand upon my head and commenced smoothing my hair.

"'Have you nothing to say, Marjory?'

"But still I remained silent. Again he spoke; and oh, what sympathy his voice expressed!

"'I am anxious, my child, to help you before I go away.'

"This time I looked at him, and to my heart came a dull, aching pain, as I said:

"'Going away! Oh, no; do not say so. What shall I do? I will have no one to whom I can speak, and the rest of my days I will have to spend in a life hateful to me,' and, laying down my head, I sobbed—ah, yes, sobbed as I had never done since the night of my mother's death.

"'Hush, my child! you must not give way thus!'

"But I did not heed him. More violently than ever I sobbed; and he allowed me to, at last. When, wearied out, I still lay with my head on the arm of my chair, he said, once more passing his hand over my head:

"'Marjory.'

"I raised my head, almost ashamed of the grief I had exhibited, and, as I allowed myself to look at him, he spoke:

"'Tell me, little one, is the prospect of a convent life so hard to bear?'

"'Oh, Father,' I cried, 'I would do anything to escape it. Can you not help me? Can you not suggest some way out of it?'

"His hand no longer rested on my head. There was perfect silence for a few minutes, as, with downcast eyes, he toyed with the little crucifix attached to his black silk watch guard. At last, raising his head and looking me earnestly in the face, he asked:

"'How old were you, Marjory, when your mother died?'

"'Fifteen,' I answered.

"'And at that early age she informed you of your father's identity?'

"'Yes,' I replied.

"'And,' he continued, 'you have no feeling of condemnation towards your parents for their sin against our holy religion?'

"'Father,' I replied, 'I acknowledge their sin, but I remember also that they were my parents, and their memory is dear to me.'

"'Tell me, Marjory,' he said, 'if your parents were alive and you knew their position as you do tonight, would you condemn them if they remained loyal to each other?'

"'No,' I answered.

"'Think once more before you answer again,' he said. 'Remember, your father was a priest.'

"'There is no need to remind me of this fact, Father,' I replied, bitterly. 'It is never absent from my mind. Is it not this that darkened my life and condemned me to a future I loathe and dread? Oh,' I continued, the old wayward spirit taking possession of me, 'why am I to be debarred the pleasures that this world offers? I am young; my heart cannot be satisfied with only the prospect of a long life spent within the walls of a convent. I would rather die.'

"I had risen to my feet and was standing before him. Passion filled my heart, and showed itself on my face and in my voice. I was no longer mistress of myself. Father Egan, too, had risen, and so we stood face to face. His eyes fixed themselves on mine so I could not remove them. Gradually, the passion died out of my heart, and then, taking my hand and leading me back to my chair, he said:

"'Sit down there.'

"I obeyed him, for I seemed to have lost all will power. Then, once more taking the chair beside mine, he sat down, with his eyes still fixed on mine.

"'Marjory,' he said, and his voice sounded soft and low, 'I have spent many hours of anxious thought upon you. I have watched you when you least knew or suspected it. I understand your disposition and how you chafe under your present restraint, and I dread to think of what your suffering would be if you carried out the desire of your parents and the advice of Father Daly. Marjory, you are not at present one who would find happiness in a religious community.'

"If, then, you are convinced of this, Father, would you advise me, you, a priest, to make a mockery of God and our holy religion by embracing a life to which, in my heart, I can never give my consent?"

"I am not speaking to you this evening, Marjory, as a priest; in the confessional I occupy that position towards you. I speak to you now, not as the priest, but as a man."

"And what would you advise?"

"Do not forget, Marjory, that I shall soon leave Ireland for a foreign field, but I will help you before I go."

"How will you do it?" I asked, wondering what he would answer.

"I cannot tell you, tonight, all I would wish to, but I want to know if you will trust me; if you will do as I tell you, in order to rid yourself of the life you dread?"

"Oh! how gladly," I replied, "will I do anything."

"And you will leave your cousin's home without saying anything to him about it?"

"This rather startled me; I hesitated. Father Egan was watching me, but my hesitation lasted only for a moment. Looking into his face, I said:

"Yes, I am willing to do as you say. I will obey you implicitly, for you will never tell me to do anything that is not right."

"A shadow seemed to flit across his face, but only for an instant; then the next he smiled, and said:

"Have you not friends in Dublin with whom you sometimes spend a week?"

"Yes, I replied. "There are Captain and Mrs. Shaw."

"And, if you should receive a letter from them or a

Facile telegram asking you to visit them, would there be any difficulty in obtaining your cousin's consent?"

Mr. wi. "No; cousin James thinks a great deal of Mrs. Shaw, and has always given his consent gladly when I have received an invitation to spend a few days with her."

Mr. pa. "When will your cousin return home?"

Mr. pa. "Tomorrow evening, but Elizabeth will return after breakfast."

"And now, Marjory, tell me once more that you are willing to trust me."

"Yes," I replied, this time without hesitation.

"If you keep to this, you will never have cause to regret doing so."

"Then, taking an envelope out of his pocket, he continued:

"I have come, tonight, prepared to make this offer of help, and you will receive a telegram to come to Mrs. Shaw, and you will pack only a few necessaries in your portmanteau; take the afternoon train for Dublin, and if you cannot do so, catch the next early morning one; I will meet you at the depot, and then I will tell you my plans for your future. I will not be able to remain in Dublin; I must return the same evening, as I do not wish my absence to be known; and now, Marjory," he continued, 'you will not see me in this house again, nor anywhere, until you meet me in Dublin, and I want the rest of this evening to bring you some happiness; so come and sing something for me.'

"Saying which he went up to the piano, and, opening it, he ran over the keys; then, taking up a piece of music, which happened to be 'Killarney,' he said:

"Come, Marjory, and sing this for me."

"But I could not.

"Ah, well, he said, 'if you will not sing for me, I will for you; what would you like?'

"What was it that prompted me to say, 'Kathleen Mavourneen'?

"'Is it a favorite with you?' he asked.

"'Yes,' I replied; 'my mother loved it, and my father sang it for the first time he ever met her.'

"He looked up into my face.

"Your father sang it the first time he met your mother,' he repeated, and he continued, 'And I sang it the first night I saw you.'

"Yes; I had forgotten this, but his words recalled the fact to my mind. A choking sensation prevented me from answering his remark, and turning again to the piano he played the first few bars, and then sang the song. And as I sat and listened, my whole heart was stirred within me, so when he had finished I could find no voice with which to thank him. He came up to say good-night, and as he did so I arose from my chair and held out my hand to him. But without noticing it, and coming up close to me, and taking my face and holding it between his hands, he said:

"'Marjory, look at me,' and, as I met his eyes looking into mine, he said:

"'Kathleen Mavourneen!'

"And as he said this my eyes could no longer look into his, for at that moment my heart stood revealed to me. I knew now what the influence was he held over me; and he—did he read my heart? I know not for certain, but looking back now I think he did, for he, stooping down, kissed my forehead, saying:

"'Good-bye, until I see you in Dublin.'

"He left the room, and I sank once more into my chair by the open window, and looked out upon the beauty of the night. I heard his footsteps on the garden path, and as I watched him a cloud passed over the face of the moon, hiding his form from my view and casting a shadow all around,—a shadow which was destined to follow me through early life and in after years, when I had almost learned to forget of its existence, only once more to reappear bringing with it misery, destruction, and ruination to all that I had tried to do in reparation for the years I had wasted.

"Ah me, where are the promises he made that night? Where? Doomed, like an unfruitful blossom, to wither and die. And dead is that night, and dead the moon that lit up the garden path and flooded the room with its silvery rays. After all these years naught lives of that night but the shadow that crossed the moon and entered my life. *For all things that are not born of God end in darkness and ashes.* And those who, like me, sow in folly ever reap in sorrow. And scant pity has the world for one who has been guilty, not of sinning, but of trying to live it down. And the hardest of all blows directed against a woman who would fain bury the past from out her sight are those of her own sex. God forgives and forgets, casting the sin of the repentant one behind His back. Man sympathizes and holds out a helping hand; whilst woman never forgets, or seldom misses the opportunity to remind her less fortunate sister that, however much she may try to live down the past, yet there is a bridge between them, and at the same time she will welcome to her house and her table, and will introduce to

her friends, the man who was sharer in the guilt of the woman she despises. And so I suppose the verdict for all time in this world will be: 'Stone the woman ; let the man go free.'"

The subsequent events in the life of Madam Shepherd, make up the natural results from the foregoing narrative. The pages from this sad life, reveal to us how attachment was first formed between Father Egan and Miss Shepherd, which afterwards ripened into a relationship of confidence and trust equal to man and wife. It also tells how they both forsook all else in order to remain in the company of each other. It further tells of a little girl that was born during this relationship. It also reveals the iron hand of Rome repressing the life of the little girl born to them and the final separation of the couple, Father Egan fleeing to a monastery to satisfy the church, leaving his wounded victim in the hands of other priests whose objects were to complete her ruin within the shadows of the cold gray stone of the convent wall. But this last effort of the priesthood to have her spend the remainder of her days in a convent fortunately failed. Instead of this she came in contact with other influences from the ranks of Bible protestantism that wrought a change in her life affecting her future conduct. Her eyes were open, the scales of dark Romanism, error and superstition had been removed, she became a new creature. The story of Madam Shepherd's life should be remembered as one among thousands of instances of similar cases. Miss Shepherd's last days were spent in uncovering popery, lecturing throughout the land. As a result of her work, many a deceived Catholic father and mother had their eyes opened. Her



Lectures were far reaching and in known instances were responsible for the rescuing of ruined victims from the Pope's convent dungeons. Her work still lives.



# The Buried Alive Convent

## CHAPTER VI.

**T**HIS order is the strictest of them all. The condition of life in this institution is suggested from the name of the order. Dungeon life within the Buried Alive order, differs from other convents in that their existence and purpose is not denied. Generally the rigid rules of the institution are made known to the girl at the time the application is made, to become a member of the order, or, some time before application is made. The condition of life within the walls of this institution in most cases exceed the other orders for inhuman treatment and conduct. According to the rules, the girls are allowed to eat enough to keep the soul and body together. Their life is spent in a perpetual "Black Fast," subsisting on a light diet of vegetables. They eat no meat, drink no tea or coffee, nor use salt or pepper or other portions to please the taste. Under the theory of self-denial, the order teaches that it is honorable and acceptable to God to deprive themselves of every comfort and food even though it may result in death. They claim it a special virtue if the sister can conquer the physical life that God gave her, by gradual process of starvation.

No sight of barbarity can possibly exceed the awful physical conditions resulting from Rome's theory of self-sacrifice in this order. Of all the people to be pitied these poor deceived creatures indeed rank first. Innocent girlhood that Rome has forced the belief upon that to reach the portals of glory, God invites her to

take her life by starvation. Once inside the walls the nun is assigned to her cell robed in her convent garb consisting of an ordinary black gown girdled about at the waist and as a rule bare-footed. In all cases her head is shorn and her cell is kept dark. The nun takes no medicine, no matter how sick she may be, even if she contracts a fever, lose her mind and pound her head against the walls, there is no doctor, no father, no mother, no sister, no brother or another nun to aid her in any way to relieve her suffering. Indeed, dear catholic or protestant reader, how awful is popery within the confines of this institution! Rome boasts of her so-called sisters of charity, angels of mercy and various other orders clothed with angelic names, etc., but here in this institution, nuns are starved to death and in some cases reduced to a state of insanity without the semblance of a helping hand to soothe their pain or alleviate their suffering.

In a small cell, approximately 6 x 8 ft., these victims languish until death overtakes them, which at the most does not exceed eight or ten years, but few of them live to exceed five years. As may be imagined the condition of the cells, on account of no light or ventilation, would be unsanitary in the extreme after a very short time. In most instances there is a total absence of toilet accommodations. Their cell is bare except where they have a heap of ashes for a bed. They converse with no one, simply sit in silence and wait for time to part the curtains and bear them hence.

Several of these institutions have been penetrated and the actual conditions revealed to the world. In Italy, where the writer made his investigation and study of this institution, the order at one time had full sway

until the actual condition was revealed to the world on the outside of the walls. The discovery came about in the following manner: In Naples there lived a beautiful Italian maiden in a Neapolitan family of moderate circumstances, who was loved by a young man in the same city. Ere long the association of this young couple became known to the parents of the girl, who objected to the match. She was at once forbidden to permit any further attentions upon the part of her young gentleman friend. The young people, not to be thwarted so easily by parental objection, resorted to secret meetings in which plans were laid for the future. They had planned the day of their marriage and everything apparently was made complete for the occasion without knowledge of the parents. But before the time arrived for them to carry out their plans, through the strategy of the priest, the girl was kidnapped and carted off to the "Convent Buried Alive." The young man searched night and day throughout the city of Naples in the hope of finding the girl. Every known nook and corner that he thought it possible for her to be, he visited, but was unsuccessful in obtaining even the slightest clew. Finally, becoming discouraged after weeks of fruitless toil, he abandoned all hope of locating the girl. This failure left him a wreck in which self-respect and virtue were forgotten. A life of ruin and dissipation now marked his path. The worst haunts of vice and ends of iniquity soon indulged his patronage.

It was while thus engaged that a Neapolitan "gentleman" introduced him to a certain Buried Alive Convent in the city of Naples that was operated by several nuns for immoral purposes. He was admitted into the institution one evening and escorted to one of the cells

occupied by one of the inmates. When the door was opened, he found himself face to face with his former sweetheart; that is, in front of him stood all that was left of the once happy and beautiful young lady. Though debauched and ruined himself he was dazed with horror at the sight of the shattered form as the hands swung aloof as if to clutch the walls for support and composure. He grasped the wounded victim in his arms until a measure of calmness prevailed, and from her lips heard the awful story of months of fiendish torture at the hands of the Superiors of the Convent. He hurriedly left this holy haunt of vice and shame, and in a short time he arrived at the home of the parents of the convent victim. He rapped at the door, and was met by the father, who at first refused to believe the awful story. However, his strong appeal and earnestness won sufficient confidence of the man, and the father decided to investigate. Further inquiry regarding the "Sepolta Vive" (Buried Alive Convent) was made, resulting in additional evidence supporting the young man's story.

The Minister of Justice was asked to intercede after the Superiors had refused to deliver the daughter, or permit the father to see her. The officer granted an order for her removal from the convent. Half starved, she was carried from one of Rome's anterooms to hell, being unable to walk. All that was left was a mere skeleton. Other convents of the order were at once investigated by the officials, which resulted in the liberation of nearly three score of these miserable, nearly starved, "semi-dementia" (*Victims of Convent Holiness.*) Some were idiotic and acted like animals, and would crouch in a corner and cry and shriek. Others were despondent,

mind shattered and weakened, apparently resigned to their condition. Others died shortly after being taken out into the fresh air.

While the investigation was going on, every effort was made by the Vatican to stop the procedure, but without avail. The authorities of the Italian government compelled the archbishop and all to stand aside until it had completed its work.

While the Italian government knows but little of religion outside the ranks of Catholicism, yet it is boss of Italy, and when proper complaint is made regarding the condition or corruption in an Italian convent, *they investigate*. We found many noble people of the Italians in Rome and Naples. But few of Italy's best stock leave their native land. America receives the mixed peasantry of the north and the swarthy type from southern Italy and Sicily, mixed with Moorish blood. The "Black Hand" type, the nervous, quarrelsome characters that swarm our American cities and live on a level with the animal kingdom, these are counted good Catholics, and capable of conducting the affairs of our government.



# BARBARA UBRYK

## CHAPTER VII.

### *The Carmelite Convent.*



ON the twenty-first day of July, 1869, a man, dressed like a peasant or woodchopper, approached the door of the Police Office in Cracow, and, watching his opportunity, threw into a box a letter directed to the Court of Correction, a court to which any poor, and oppressed person can always appeal and be sure of obtaining justice against the oppressor, no matter how rich and powerful.

The strange man immediately disappeared, and was lost to view in the gloom of the rapidly-falling evening. When the letter was opened by the proper magistrate, he uttered an exclamation of astonishment. It read as follows:—

“There is in the Carmelite Convent, close by the Botanical Gardens of the North Suburb, a nun, Barbara Ubryk by name, who prays you, in the love of God, to set her free. She regularly entered the Convent, after serving her novitiate, in 1846. In 1848, because of alleged bad conduct, of which she declares herself innocent, she was thrust into a half-underground cell next to the privy-sink of the Convent. The cell window was then walled up with bricks and cement by Fr. Calenski and the Lady Superior, Mother Josepha, no aperture being left to it but a narrow slit near the top of the wall, about six inches long and two inches wide. But the wall is so thick that no light ever comes in through this slit, and no fresh air. The door

has always been kept tight shut and bolted, only being opened once every other day, to allow a crust of bread, or a dish of mouldy potatoes, and a mug of water, to be put in to poor Barbara. There is nothing in this cell of horror, but a little straw; no bed, chair, or table, not even a stool, and the scanty clothes she had upon her when she was first put in the dungeon, have been completely worn out and rotted away years ago. And now this wretched woman, who has thus been buried in this underground vault, which is only eight feet long by six feet wide, for twenty-one dreadful years, has almost become a wild beast. She is shrunk away to a skeleton; she is perfectly naked, and her whole body is covered with long, coarse hair, like that of some animal. And yet she still hopes for deliverance. If you will send an officer you will have proof for yourselves. Do not let the Confessor or the Lady Superior put him off; but let him insist on seeing Sister Barbara when he first goes to the Convent."

He who thus read was the Vice Judge of the Court.

"Can such barbarity be possible," he exclaimed, turning to the Presiding Judge, who was listening.

"I have heard some strange stories about Fr. Calenski and the Lady Superior of the Carmelite Convent," replied the latter. "I do not think the bishop can be aware of all that goes on there: for though he is a good and holy man himself, his nature is unsuspecting, and they can deceive him easily if they are in collusion with each other. At any rate I will immediately write to him and ask his permission to investigate this horrible story."

The Presiding Judge at once wrote the proposed letter and enclosing the anonymous note, called an officer



of the court, and dispatched them to the Bishop's palace. On presenting the letter to the prelate, he was astounded; and yet, bethinking himself of many anonymous communications which in times gone by had been sent to him by evil-disposed persons, he remarked that this was doubtless of a like character and would be found to be false. At the same time he promptly wrote the necessary order for the admission of the officer to the Convent, so that the Judge might see for himself that the story was a base fabrication.

In a short time the officer of the Court of Correction was at the Carmelite Convent knocking for admission. The Sister, who opened the door, asked him his business. He showed her the order of the bishop, and requested to see Barbara Ubryk. The portress turned pale, and stammered that it was impossible, she thought, but she would go and inform the Mother Josepha.

With the shrewd perception that policemen invariably acquire in their profession, the officer perceived that the story was true. He therefore, instantly, but with all proper respect, laid his hand upon the portress and said:—

"Pardon me, but I command you, in the name of the Emperor, not to do so. In the name of the Emperor, I also command you to lead me directly to the cell of Sister Barbara Ubryk!"

Perceiving that resistance and evasion were alike useless, the portress led the officer into the Convent, then down a flight of stone steps, then along several damp, gloomy corridors, and finally halted before the vault door behind which languished Sister Barbara. It was locked, and, as the key was in the possession of the Lady Superior, she was summoned to come and

open it. At first she was furiously angry, and threatened the officer to have him punished by the bishop. But when he showed her his authority, directly from the bishop himself, she became deadly pale. Quickly recovering herself, however, she tried her keys, and pretending not to be able to find the right one, she requested the officer to come again in the afternoon, by which time the cell would be opened.

The latter, seeing through this shallow artifice, took the keys himself and soon opened the door. As he did so he actually staggered back, almost overcome by the horrible stench that rushed forth out of the cell. He could not see the imprisoned nun, for the dungeon was perfectly dark. But a half-wild cry, issuing from the dreadful gloom, told him that the captive was at least alive, and he instantly ordered a light to be brought. When it came, and he entered the den, or rather leaned in, the sight that met his gaze appalled him. Only for a few moments did he look upon the living thing—once a woman, now almost a wild animal—that crouched in the farthest corner, and then stepping back into the passage, and partially closing the door, he exclaimed:—

“God of Heaven! that is the most horrible sight I ever beheld, and I have seen a good many in my time! I command you to send at once to the Presiding Judge of the Court of Correction, and tell him to come immediately here, and to bring the bishop with him!”

At hearing this the Lady Superior sank on her knees, and begged the bishop might not be summoned. Anything but that. But the officer was inexorable.

“I will stand here on guard,” he said, “so that noth-

ing may be disturbed, and the bishop shall see you in your true garb."

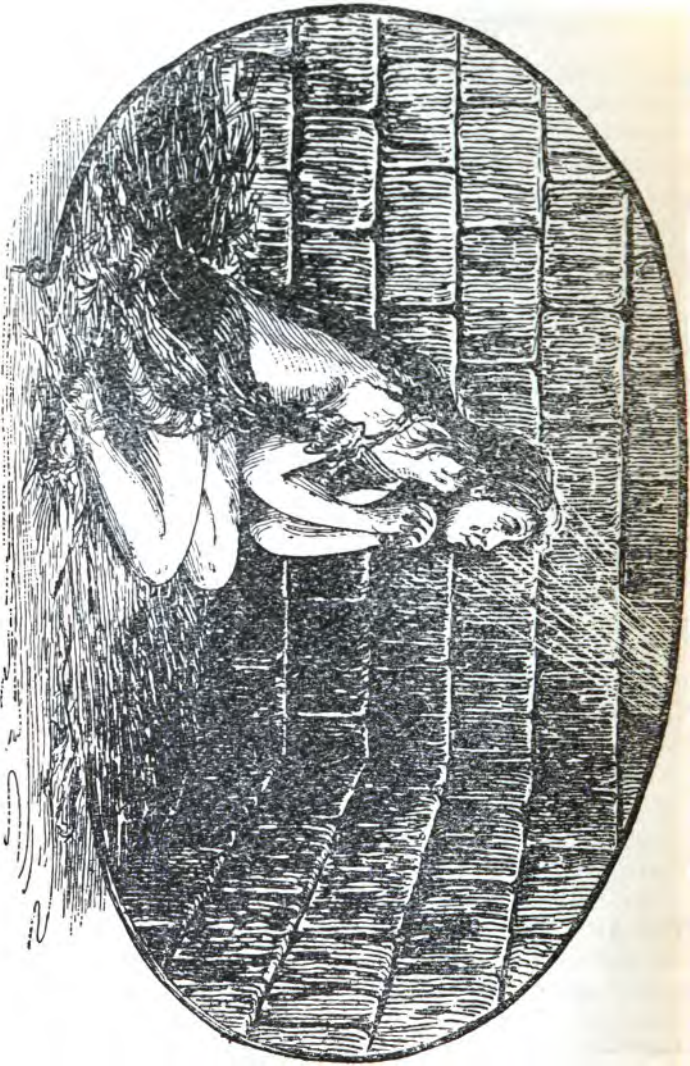
Within a short time the bishop, accompanied by the Presiding Judge of the Court of Correction, arrived at the Convent, and as they came up to the faithful officer, he threw open the cell door and bade them look in upon the scene.

All the party then entered, though they were obliged to hold their handkerchiefs tightly over their mouths and noses, to prevent the stench from making them sick.

Sister Barbara, crouching in a heap in the corner, shrieked in terror: "Oh, do not beat me again! I will obey! I am so hungry! Pity me and give me a little meat, and I will obey! I will say it was my fault! Oh! Oh!"

She ended her supplication with a shrill, wild, yet suppressed, wailing scream, and huddled herself still closer into the corner. No one spoke for horror and wonderment, during the space of several minutes; but all continued to gaze, first at the naked, wild creature that had once been a beautiful girl, and then at the Lady Superior, and the nuns who had gathered about. In this dungeon, covered with filth, in the midst of which were a broken plate with two mouldy potatoes upon it, and a black jug of water beside it; in this hole, without fire, bed, table, or any article of furniture; into which the light of a sunbeam had never entered for twenty-one years, had the inhuman Superioress and Confessor buried that poor girl, who should have been their companion in religious love. During all that long, dreary time, had they and the Sisters passed and re-passed the living tomb of unfortunate, helpless Bar-

**"She ended her supplication with a shrill wail, yet suppressed wailing  
scream and huddled herself still closer into the corner." (Page 81.)**



bara, many times daily, without looking in upon her, or giving her a word of pity.

Alas! wretched victim! Then such a young, lovely girl, now a wild, frightful-appearing, semi-human beast; her body entirely nude, bristling with long, jagged hair, filth and vermin; her limbs shrunk and bent like withered sticks, her head and hair squalid and diseased; her thin, hollow cheeks nearly touching each other, and her great, wild eyes flashing and glaring out from their deep sockets! There she cowered and kneeled before the bishop. He gazed upon her awhile, and then as great tears of pity rolled down his face, he went to her and gently attempted to raise her up, speaking words of kindness, hope and comfort in her ears, that had long been used only to abuse. But her intellect was too much shattered to comprehend him, and she shrank from him in abject terror. Then his anger burst forth, and, turning suddenly upon the Lady Superior and her sister nuns, he exclaimed:—

"Oh, wicked, wicked women! Is this your sisterly love? Is this the way you expect to come to Heaven? You are not women! you are not sisters! No! you are furies!"

Writhing under his terrible words, some of the sisters began to excuse themselves, and stammer forth explanations; but the bishop instantly rebuked them and would not listen to them, exclaiming:—

"Silence! Silence, wretches! Miserable creatures! You utterly disgrace religion! Away! Be gone out of my sight! Naught that you can do will ever atone for this horrible iniquity!"

At this instant Fr. Calenski, the Confessor, who had just come in, and was in ignorance of what had oc-

curred, entered the cell to see what the excitement was, never dreaming that his bishop stood there to upbraid him for his villainy. The bishop ordered the Confessor and the Lady Superior to stand together before him, and in the presence of all administered to them the most scathing denunciation for their crimes, concluding as follows:—

"I not only suspend you of all your powers and authority, but I also shall turn you over to the civil authorities, to be dealt with as they may decide. Your Convent shall be abolished, and I shall see that the mantle of the church shall not shield you from punishment!"

Before he and the officers left, he ordered poor Barbara to be washed and clothed, and taken to clean apartments. As the attendants were leading her away, she asked:—

"You won't take me back to my grave, will you? Why did you bury me there? I did not deserve it. Yes! Yes! I have broken my vows; but these, these are no angels! These Sisters are far worse than I am!"

At this instant she seemed to remember her wrongs from the Confessor, and, rushing at him with her hands clenched and her eyes fairly blazing, she shrieked out the words:—

"Oh, you beast! You beast!"

With these words she fell at his feet insensible, and was carried away.

Every appliance that skill could command was put in commission, and tenderly cared for, and poor Barbara began to mend. But towards evening she became so wild and excited that it was found necessary to take her to the mad-house. When she saw the sunshine

and the green grass in the Convent garden, as her attendants were taking her away the next morning to the asylum, she was convulsed with joy, and, breaking away, she flung herself down and kissed the waving green blades with the most frantic delight. Not long did she do so, however, for the shock of going into the fresh air overcome her, and once more she became insensible, in which condition she was conveyed to her new quarters.

For some time she could not lie in a bed, but would constantly be getting up and pulling back the carpet so that she might crouch or lie down upon the bare, board floor.

As was to be expected, when the story of Barbara's cruel treatment was noised about the city, the infuriated populace, although nine-tenths of them were devout Catholics, rushed to the Convent, and at once attacked it. The military was called out and only succeeded in saving the building from utter destruction by their discretion, patience and bravery. But as that has been detailed in the newspapers, we proceed with the victim's own account of her dreadful imprisonment.

#### HER OWN NARRATIVE.

After the death of my father in 1843, at which time I was sixteen years old, my mother moved from the city of Vienna to the residence of her sister, my aunt, Paulina Bertholenski, a short distance from Cracow. For a year previous to this I had been receiving the attentions of a young gentleman of Vienna, and, in fact, we were betrothed, for I loved him very dearly, and he had asked me for his wife. He did not love me,

however, as I did him, for when, on my father's death, it was found that I would not inherit much wealth, my suitor became suddenly cold, and finally asked to be released from his engagement to me. Though my poor heart was broken, I bade him farewell, resolving never to have another suitor. People used to say I was beautiful; and many times after this event my mother chided me for refusing the attentions of several young gentlemen who desired to court me.

My natural disposition was one of much gaiety; but I now became a victim of melancholy, which made my mother extremely angry with me, so much so that she sometimes struck me, and forced me to see gentlemen calling at our house. Once she reproached me with the remark that, if I did not soon get married I would always be a burden on her. This drove me crazy, and, in a moment of grief, I resolved to enter the Carmelite Convent.

"Mother, dear mother," said I one day, after determining what I intended to do, "I love you, and would like to obey you, but I cannot marry. I could give no man my love, and would therefore bring him only misery. Yet will I not be a burden on you. I will bid adieu to the world, with its frivolities, and go and live as a Carmelite in the Cracow Convent. There, in pious converse and happy contentment, I will pass the remainder of my days in prayer and meditation."

My proposition pleased my mother, and, in a short time afterward, I began my novitiate, that ended in my assuming the veil and vows of a Carmelite nun in 1846.

During the time that I was passing my novitiate, the Lady Superior, Josepha, was exceedingly kind to me; never speaking to me except with a gracious and sweet



**smile** upon her face, and often doing me many little, kindly favors, that were really against the rules of the **Convent**. Fr. Calenski, during this time also was kind to me, but maintained a distance towards me that he did not exhibit towards the other inmates of the institution; though, from the glances that I accidentally discovered him sometimes casting at me, I felt that he took a particular interest in me.

I thought now that my life was the most delightful one in the world; that I would never grow tired of it, and I yearned daily for the hastening of the time when I should complete the course of duty that would entitle me to become a nun of the order. At last this long-wished-for day arrived, and amidst the most solemn ceremonies, I took the required vows and received upon my forehead the sisterly kiss from the Carmelite nuns, that sealed me as one of themselves for life. I was now a nun; a member of the order in full, cut off forever from the outside, wicked world. Oh, how intense was my joy, and how sweetly did I slumber that night on my humble pallet! Could I have only died during that sweet sleep, from what an eternity of sorrow would I have been saved!

Nothing of any note occurred for a month or two subsequent to my assumption of the vows, though it did not miss my observation that there was somewhat of a change in the deportment toward me, of both the Lady Superior and Fr. Calenski. Whereas the former had heretofore been so extraordinarily kind and familiar, she was now much more cold, distant and even haughty. The change in Fr. Calenski was not so marked; yet still, it was very perceptible. Instead of treating me with more reserve than my companions, as he had formerly

done, he was now more familiar and more pleasant with me than with any of them. I did not then perceive his wicked object; but afterwards, when I was languishing in my living tomb, the whole plot stood revealed before me in all its horror,

I well remember the first occasion on which he commenced his advances to me. For some trifling offense in the supper room — striking my knife thoughtlessly again my plate while one of the Sisters was reading to us—Mother Josepha, as we called the Lady Superior, ordered me to remain all the next day fasting in my cell. Punishments were so often ordered to us by the mothers of the Convent — the four oldest nuns were called mothers — that we did not think hard of them, and I was enduring mine in all humility and resignation.

About half the afternoon had passed away, and I was engaged in reading the "Lives of the Saints," when suddenly, and of course unexpectedly, the door opened, and Fr. Calenski came in, shutting the door after him. I was surprised and nonpulsed by this, and rose quickly to my feet.

"Daughter," said he, "I see you are alarmed."

"Not alarmed, father," replied I, "but startled."

"Yes, yes," was his reply, "that is the proper word, 'startled,' for of course you could not be alarmed by me."

He laughed, and gave me a meaning look as he made this answer.

I brought him the cell stool to sit upon, and when he had sat down, I kneeled before him in accordance with my duty, and awaited what he had to say, supposing, of course, it would be instruction and pious conversation.

For a short time he did so converse with me, respecting my duties, devotions, and so forth. Then suddenly he changed his manner and tone entirely, and said:—

"Barbara, does not Mother Josepha often order you to fast now?"

"Yes, father," I replied.

"Ah, that is not right! And she commands you also, rather frequently, the penance of flagellation with the thongs, does she not?"

"She does, father," I replied.

"I must stop all that, or she will ruin your loveliness of face and admirable contour of figure. Barbara, do you know you are beautiful?"

"Thanks to heaven, father," said I. "I think no more of it now. Before I took upon me the vows of a holy profession—ere I left the vain, foolish world—I was called beautiful; but whenever I look upon yonder skull I think to what an end mere beauty must come."

"That is exceedingly correct and proper on your part, Barbara; but you must not fix your thoughts so entirely on the future as to lose sight altogether of pleasures within your grasp for the present."

As he said this he placed his arm upon my shoulder and drew himself, still sitting on the stool, closer to me. So complete was my confidence in the holiness of Fr. Calenski, that even his strange language and still stranger movements did not awaken any suspicion within me, and I therefore did not change my position. But when a moment later he bent down and kissed me full on the lips, a frightened chill flashed through my whole

frame, and I started back and looked up at him in wonder.

"Why, daughter, are you frightened? Is the kiss of a father, who loves you as a child, so dreadful?" and he again drew himself close to me.

I knew not what I was about, nor what to do, and in my bewilderment I made reply, half stammeringly:—

"No, father, but it is so strange; so unusual, so — I scarcely know what to tell you."

"There, there, Barbara," he laughed, "I know it is a little unusual now, but in future you will get used to that, and more to, from me. It is my love for you. But I must go now. Rise, daughter."

I obeyed mechanically, and stood waiting for what else the Confessor had to say. He also rose and said:—

"Before I go, Barbara, I will interpose my superior authority and relieve you from punishment. Here, I leave you some seed-cakes, and some dried fruit, and tomorrow I will bring you something better. And remember, when Mother Josepha orders you any penance, I relieve you from it."

"But, holy father —" remonstrated I, trembling at the idea of such a thing.

"Never you mind, daughter!" interrupted he, smiling and placing his hand playfully over my mouth. "You must obey me; I am superior above Mother Josepha, and she, I think, has a little too much zeal in punishing you, because I have spoken sometimes to her of my liking for you. In the outside world she would be called jealous. But I must go now; you will mind what I tell you."

After saying this, Fr. Calenski went out of the cell, leaving me a prey to most conflicting and harassing

thoughts. What should I do? I endeavored to interpret his singular conduct favorably against my own intuitive judgment that it was at least wrong if not wicked. The cakes and fruit that he had brought me were exceedingly tempting, and as I had been punished much by fasting that week, I ate all of the refreshment. The cakes tasted not only delicious, but, as I thought, somewhat peculiar. So likewise did the fruit, each piece of which I noticed had been cut open at the ends.

After the repast I sat down upon my pallet and recommenced reading the "Lives of the Saints." After awhile I began to feel drowsy. To shake this off I arose and walked about my cell briskly; but I became so sleepy in spite of all my efforts to keep awake, that at last I sank down in a heavy slumber upon the pallet.

How long I slept thus I could not tell; but when I at last aroused it was dark. Terrified at my negligence, I tried to spring up; but such an apparent languor had possession of my limbs that I could only rise to a sitting posture. At this instant I also became aware that I was not alone, for some one moved about in my cell, and in a moment or two a small wax taper was lit by my companion, who was none other than Fr. Calenski.

"You have had a long sleep, Barbara," said he, reaching the taper upon a small shelf on which were my books, and coming and sitting down beside me.

So heavy had been my slumber, or rather torpor, that I now felt half listless, like a person in a dream, and though I looked at Fr. Calenski I made no reply, as both my will and power seemed completely overcome or torpid. After a few moments' silence he said

in a bantering tone and giving me a little shake:—

"Come, Barbara, rouse up a little, and let me talk with you."

Then placing one arm around my waist he pressed me to him so strongly as to nearly drag me off my pallet and hurt me very much. At the same time taking from his vestments a phial of pungent vaporous extract, he held it beneath my nostrils, causing me to inhale it. So sharp was the vapor that it strangled me and made the tears spring into my eyes, and caused me to utter a cry of agony. Dashing down the phial as though in anger and alarm, he exclaimed:—

"Ah! little fool, don't make any noise! There now, be quiet."

At this moment he placed both arms around me and drew me to him.

Whether it was this act or the effect of the pungent liquid in the bottle which broke the languor that had enthralled me, I do not know; but, instantly recovering my strength, I sprang away from my companion, striking him in the face, and screaming out:—

"Go away out of my cell, Fr. Calenski! Why do you behave so wickedly?"

I shall never forget the horrible expression that came over his features when I screamed. In an instant he bounded up, put out the taper, and seizing me roughly, gave me a heavy blow with his open hand on the side of my head, saying, in a low, hissing tone:—

"Silence, if you utter another scream, I'll kill you! You'll disturb all the Sisters, and have Mother Josepha here!"

My spirit was up now, however, that the Confessor had thus uncloaked his villainous intentions, and I re-

plied instantly, as I recovered from the staggering effects of the blow he had dealt me:—

"Shame, Fr. Calenski! Shame to you! Though you are our Confessor I fear you not; and if you do not instantly leave my cell I shall scream for help! Now then, go, or I will rouse the whole Convent! I do not care if you kill me for it!"

"Hush, Barbara, hush!" replied Fr. Calenski, "I am going out. Be quiet, and I will not lay hands on you again. Remember, however," he continued, in a low, bitter tone, "that I will punish you for this behavior, so that you will pray for death ten times a day. You have repulsed me, and now you shall see what my power is. I will torture you well; believe me, but I will!"

There was something in his manner that sent a chill of apprehension through me. Yet feeling strong in the right, I banished the momentary fear, and was in the act of making a reply, when suddenly the door was opened and there stood Mother Josepha with a lamp and bunch of keys in her hand.

"What is the stupid fool bawling about?" asked she of Fr. Calenski, after stepping in and closing the door tight. "Sister Agatha and Lucie, next above, told me they heard her scream out your name, and also something else that they could not make out. There will be a pretty fuss if this comes to the bishop's ears. I really do wish that you would be more careful!"

These last words were directed to the Confessor, and, from the looks that he and Mother Josepha exchanged between them, the new and horrible revelation was made clear to me that she was as bad as he was and that both, instead of being the holy persons they

seemed, were only whited sepulchres full of loathsomeness. My brain reeled as this conviction flashed upon me, and, losing my judgment and discretion, I boldly accused them of what I thought them guilty. When I had finished, they looked at each other, and next at me. Then both stepped to the farthest corner of the cell, and whispered for several minutes together, talking in French, which I did not sufficiently understand to know exactly what they said, though I knew enough to make out that it was what they should do with me. At the conclusion of the conversation, both left my cell, Mother Josepha last. As she was going out, she said to me in a tone I never forgot:—

“Girl, your own silly lips have sealed your doom!”

A moment more, and I was alone. Oh, what terrible thoughts and dread filled my mind! What had I done? What would be done with me? I now knew the Confessor and Lady Superior to be wicked; and yet, alas! I knew also that here in the Convent they had the supreme power. In their hands I was helpless. I was aware that they intended to do something dreadful to me, not only out of personal enmity to me, but also to prevent me from making any damaging disclosures. I at once concluded that they would take my life, and I composed my mind to meet my fate.

#### DOWN IN THE DUNGEON.

For a week I remained in my cell, not being allowed to come out, except when I was accompanied by Mother Josepha and Mother Cecilia, who was next in authority to the Lady Superior. Mother Cecilia, I noticed, seldom spoke to me; and her manner was that of a person who is in charge of a lunatic. She would



watch every motion of mine, no matter how trivial, and she seemed to be afraid of me.

At the end of the week, one Friday evening after Vespers, and when all the Sisters had gone to their cells for the night, my door was opened by Mother Josepha, who ordered me to come out, as she wanted me to do some menial labor in the kitchen for punishment. I knew it would be useless to resist, so I arose and followed her.

She led me down stairs to the foundation floor of the Convent, then along a cold, damp corridor, near the end of which was a heavy oaken door, padlocked on the outside. Putting down her lamp, Mother Josepha proceeded to unlock this door. Instinct told me what was coming; and that, instead of taking me from my cell to do kitchen work, the Lady Superior intended to imprison me in that cellar cell.

The idea of escape rushed upon my mind, and I turned my head to look along the corridor, a dim hope rising within me that I might run and escape out of the building. But, as I turned thus, there I beheld, standing close behind me, with a vengeful, wicked smile upon his face, Fr. Calenski, who must have come noiselessly out of the passage-way.

The plan had been well laid. In case, as was supposed by my persecutors, I might make an attempt at escaping, the Confessor had thus quietly followed our footsteps, in order that he might be ready to render all the brute force which might be necessary to overcome my resistance.

By this time the door was opened, and Mother Josepha told me to go into the dungeon.

"Yes, Barbara, go in!" added Fr. Calenski, with a demon-like satisfaction in his manner, as he waved his hand toward the cell.

For a moment I was undecided, and then, bethinking me how little resistance would avail me, I crossed the dreaded threshold. When inside, I asked:—

"Mother Josepha, how long must I stay here?"

"Till you die, Barbara!"

These words were uttered by Fr. Calenski and in a tone that chilled my heart with despair. An instant more, and the thick oaken door was closed, the padlock secured, and I was alone in my living tomb.

After I had been left thus solitary for some minutes, I began to think of the size of my dungeon, of its accommodations, and so forth, stoutly resolving to bear up bravely under my afflictions and oppression. Knowing that it would be many hours yet before day-light came, I began to grope around the room to ascertain what was in it. I began at the door and moved towards the right, feeling the wall and floor as high as I was able to reach up, and as far as I could reach out my arms. The wall was of stone, cemented, and the floor of heavy oaken planks, so mortised and fitted together as to make it like a solid oak block.

When I state that this underground vault was only eight feet long, six feet wide, and an inch or two over six feet high, in the middle of the ceiling, which was arched, it may easily be supposed that my groping search did not occupy more than a few moments, and resulted in discovering, first, that the walls were perfectly bare, and second, that the floor was the same, with the exception of two small hutches of straw in one corner — the two together, weighing about nine

pounds — and a sort of privy seat, such as are to be found in prisons. This seat was fixed, and evidently led down into the general cesspool or sink of the Convent. I was convinced of this from the frightful smell that came up out of it.

By leaping up with all my strength, I could sometimes touch the ceiling with my fingers. My object in thus jumping up was to ascertain where the window was. I thought there must be a window in the ceiling, as in the end wall the only aperture I had felt was like a narrow slit, in the bottom of which I could just insert my four fingers flat across. How long it was I could only tell by jumping up and running my fingers up to the top of the slit. That it opened into the air I knew from the rush of cold wind which would once in a while come in.

This was all that I could discover, and the violent exertion of the leaping so wearied me that I undid the two hatches of straw, and, spreading it out smoothly, I threw myself down on it, and soon fell into a profound slumber.

When I awoke, I felt very stiff in my limbs, and had a dreadful pain in my back and loins. I thought I must have been asleep for a very long time, yet I saw not the expected day-light; so, not feeling sleepy any more, I sat up and awaited the coming of the dawn.

Hour after hour passed away, yet still my dungeon was as dark as when I first entered it. I got up and walked about, and jumped, laid down and sat up, got up and went through the same exercises as before, over and over again, looking, always looking, for the appearance of the precious sunshine.

By the time I had been thus awake for twelve or fourteen hours, I knew that I was doomed never to see the light again while I remained in this grave. Then I fell to crying, and wept myself asleep. Again I woke up and was still alone in utter darkness. Hunger, too, and thirst, added their pangs and began to make me feel weak. Again, therefore, I searched, with my hands, every inch of the floor, in the dim hope that, while I had slept, my persecutors had perhaps come and left me a little food and drink. But no; there was nothing but the bare floor.

Once more I began a weary, listless watching for something, I knew not what. After many more hours of silent horror I heard some one at the door, which caused me to scream out with very joy that the dreadful monotony was about to be broken. The door was opened, and there stood Fr. Calenski with a lamp in one hand, a pitcher of water in the other, and a portion of a stale loaf of bread under his arm. He came in, and, shutting the door after him, gave me the bread and water, which I eagerly devoured, as I was literally famished. While I was eating, he stood watching me, as though I were a wild beast; and when I asked him to please tell me how long I was to stay there; how long I had been there, and what time it now was, he said that I had been there two days, or about forty-eight hours, that I would be fed every forty-eight hours for the rest of my life, and that never again would I see the light of day, so it made no difference to me what time it was now. He then continued:—

“You have almost exposed both me and Mother Joseph. The rest of the Sisters are suspecting things, and all because you were foolish enough to resist me. Now

I have arranged everything. It is given out that you attempted to kill us; that you have become raving mad, and so dangerous as to force us to confine you in this cell. You are now in my power and I can do as I please with you here, and the more you cry for help, the less likely will it be that you get any, even if your cries are heard at all!"

I was utterly helpless in that bad man's power, as he had truly said, and when he had left my dungeon I indeed felt like a wretch; a blighted outcast, indeed! My woman's strength and resolution were no match against overpowering force. For a long, long time I lay half insensible upon my heap of straw, and then, when I grew stronger and collected my senses, I became a prey to the most harrowing thoughts. I asked myself a hundred times, why was it that I was permitted by Heaven to be so dreadfully used? I, who had never harbored even an ill will to any living creature. During what I calculated to be the next two weeks, Fr. Calenski came to my dungeon eight to ten times. On the occasion of his last visit, he said:—

"I am tired of you now, why don't you die or go really crazy?"

I begged him in every way I knew how to set me free, or at least take me out of the dungeon. I promised solemnly never to speak one word about the past. But he only laughed at me, and remarked that that was a risk neither he nor Mother Josepha could incur. Then I implored him for something to employ myself with.

"I will go mad if I am kept here!" I cried, wildly.

"Well, go mad!"

With these words, spoken with the most intensely cruel expression, the Confessor left me and locked the

door, after which it must have been two years before I saw him again.

#### HOW SHE PASSED HER TIME.

After this last visit the strange impression fixed itself indelibly upon my mind that I would live many long years in this awful dungeon; but that after that I would be rescued and taken out. In my childhood days I had read with much avidity the narratives and histories of the victims who had lived in dungeons in the Bastille and other prisons from youth till exceeding old age, enduring all the sufferings of cold and hunger, and torture; and I felt that I was to become just such a victim. Strange as it may seem, yet it is true, that after this conviction took possession of me I resigned myself to my fate, and laid out many plans and methods for occupying my mind so as to pass the time away.

One of these was to count the hairs on my head. My hair had begun to grow long. This generally kept me employed for three or four of what I used to call days. Every hundred hairs that I counted I would tie with cotton, a spool of which, with a needle and a paper of small pins, was everythinig I had about me, when first placed in the dungeon. In the course of time my cotton wore completely out, and then I used a strand of hair in place of it.

Another source of employment my hair afforded me was to take six, eight, or twelve single strands, and plait them so all over my head, and then do all up into some supposed fancy style, and wonder how I looked, and what people would say if they could see me.

Still another means of employment I made for myself was to construct fancy articles out of the straw that

served me for a bed. Besides these, I wove out of it with my fingers and teeth a rug or carpet that covered nearly half the floor. The outside edges of this I trimmed with a fancy fringe made out of the beards, or heads, that had contained the grains of wheat. The latter I carefully picked out and ate; and I well recollect how delicious these stray grains used to taste to me, because I was always so hungry.

In the course of time my eyes became so accustomed to the darkness that I could distinctly see all the little articles I had made, and from the difference in the amount of what light did get in at the slit in the wall, I got to be able to tell night from day quite easily; though to any one else all this would have been perfect darkness continually.

All I longed for to complete my happiness was a pet of some description; a cat, a rat, a spider, a beetle, an ant, or anything to which I could talk, and which I could make love me, and stay with me. And I recollect how nearly crazy I was with delight, when, one day a little mouse, that had run into the slit of a window, fell down upon the floor of my dungeon. I bounded to it, picked it up tenderly, kissed it, and cried bitterly over it because it seemed badly stunned by the fall. After a while, however, the little animal recovered and in a short time became quite sociable. He and I soon got to be attached to each other, and would play together for hours. Even this pleasure was taken from me; for in a few months the mouse sickened and died. No one can imagine how intense was the agony of my grief when my pet was dead. I mourned for it several years, as though it had been a darling child.

Sometimes I found employment and amusement in the same way I once read that the prisoner of the Bastille had done, which was this: Taking all my pins in my hand, I would shut my eyes, and then throw them singly behind me; and when I had cast all away, I would go down on my hands and knees to hunt them up again. But I had become so expert at the finding of them, that it afforded me but little employment.

One greatest trouble to me, and one which at times drove me nearly mad, was that I had no water with which to keep myself clean, and I became covered with vermin.

At times when Mother Josepha, accompanied by one of the other mothers— or, as was occasionally the case, by a sister—I would beg in the name of God for a little water to wash myself. It was always refused me, and I would then rave about my dungeon screaming, and beating the door with my fists till they bled again.

By the time ten years had gone by, my clothes were so rotten and worn away that they would no longer stay on me. Often, during the latter part of this time, I had sewed them together with the strands of hair that I pulled out of my head for that purpose. But nothing would hold them; I therefore was obliged to go about my dungeon completely naked.

To add to the horror of my situation, the privy pipe sometimes became filled up, or the Convent cesspool overflowed. Which it was I do not know. The result, however, was that my dungeon would become filthy in the extreme. Oh, how often have I gone down on my poor bleeding knees and prayed Mother Josepha to have some little mercy upon me or kill me dead. Yet all



my entreaties seemed only to render that woman's heart more stony. Nay, more, she actually delighted in the torture she thus inflicted upon me.

### SHE BECOMES INSANE.

One day in the midst of my desolation something seemed to break inside my brain; and for hours afterwards I experienced the strangest sensations. I became wild with some dreadful, undefinable fear. I dreaded something, I knew not what. I leaped and jumped and laughed and cried and beat myself against the wall and screamed with all my might. Then I knew I was mad at last—insane!

Just after I experienced this terrible feeling, Mother Josepha, in company with Fr. Calenski, opened the door, the latter having in his hand a long, heavy strap like a knout. I could not stop screaming, though he ordered me to be quiet. Then he beat me till I fell down, after which he and Mother Josepha went away.

How many years I remained in this condition I do not know, but the only recollection I have of it is being often so very cold and hungry and dirty, and being often beaten with the knout or a heavy walking cane.

While this spell was on me I knew I used to rave a great deal, and I always remember how often Mother Josepha, with some of the Sisters, would come to the door and gaze at me. And how the Sisters would hold up their hands in horror and say:—

"What an awful, wild lunatic poor Barbara has become!"

And I remember, too, how terribly angry these remarks used to make me, and how much worse I used to

be afterwards. I cannot tell how long my insanity continued, but it left me just as suddenly as it had come on.

One night I lay down in my filthy, rotten straw, and went to sleep, and when I awoke I was in my right mind. The strangest part of my recollection is that from the moment I was placed in this dungeon up to the day I recovered from my insanity, I never had had one dream. Sometimes I used to think to myself, if I could only dream about my young days, about my mother and father and sisters and brothers; about the green fields and the rivers, the flowers and trees, how happy I could be, at least in my sleep. But after I became sane again, I began to dream not only in my sleep but even when awake.

No one can imagine what a delight this was to me, and while I dreamed I used to think, I hope I will not wake up now till my dream is done. Then, when I was awake, I would sit hour by hour conjuring up scenes of pleasure in my past life; every place, time and occurrence passing in review before me exactly like a panorama in the most vivid reality. At such times, though, if any one came to the door I would not allow the interruption to break the pleasing trance.

It may seem a strange assertion for me to make, but so habituated had I become to the filth and suffering of my situation that I now looked on it all with calmness of despair. Yet I did not despair. Oh no! had I done so I should have died long ago. I never ceased praying except, perhaps, during the years that I was insane. But before, and since that, I have never failed to pray morning, noon and night, not only for myself

but also for my enemies, who were thus torturing and persecuting me so frightfully. Like a star in the great, dark distance, was that precious, precious comfort of God's Holy Word:—

"Not a sparrow falls to the ground without He knows it."

I kept my eyes fixed on that star through all my twenty-one years of agony. Nothing could blot it out; no cloud could hide its cheering rays from my poor eyes. All for the best. It is my lot to suffer here, and in His own good time God will reach out his omnipotent arm and pluck me forth out of this dreary dungeon. This was always my thought, and when I revert to my happy deliverance, it seems as though that unfailing star came nearer and nearer, till it burst into my dungeon, drove out all the gloom, and filled it with pure light. Thank God for his mercy and goodness to me, the most unworthy of his creatures.

#### HOW SHE WAS FINALLY RELEASED.

A few weeks before I was released from my dreadful dungeon I was one night startled by the appearance at my door, of Sister Mary, one of the oldest nuns next to the mothers, in the Convent. It was not so much hunger. But what surprised me was that she was the mere fact of her coming, for no one had been near me for nearly three days, and I was very weak from alone.

"Where is Mother Josepha?" I asked.

"Hush, Sister Barbara. She is asleep. All the sisters are asleep. I am your friend. Trust me. I

have brought you some food and drink. I have not been able to sleep for several nights by reason of thinking of you. From all that I have observed and heard I am assured that you are the victim of a horrible conspiracy on the part of Father Calenski and Mother Josepha. But you are not the only one who has suffered. All is not well in the Convent. What I come alone here for is to ascertain to a certainty, whether you are mad as they say you are. It is given out that you are raving mad, frightfully dangerous, and that it is necessary to keep you securely confined in this dreadful place.

I was trembling violently with the sensation of struggling hope and dread within me, but I controlled myself as powerfully as possible and replied:—

“God and the saints bless you, dear Sister Mary, for your bravery and kindness! let me tell you my story and you will say it is strange that I was not crazy long ago or dead; and when I have done you shall demand of me any proof you like of my sanity and I will give it to you. Oh, if you could only get word to our holy bishop, he will interpose his authority and save me. I know he will!”

I then told Sister Mary my whole story, simply, truly.

“Oh, horrible, horrible!” she exclaimed, when I had finished. “Poor Barbara! Poor Barbara! But live in hope! From this night forth I shall labor to have you freed. Do not be too sanguine. Father Calenski and Mother Josepha are all-powerful here, and without I use caution and judgment I may not only bring myself under some awful punishment, but may also make

your own condition still worse than it is now."

"That cannot be, dear Sister, Mary; but I will be patient, indeed I will. You are so kind! so kind!"

She was about to go away. I had not heard one word of kindness for twenty-one dreadful years; and her affection impressed me so that I asked her to let me touch my lips to her hand. She did not answer a word, but, as the tears filled her eyes, she stepped back again and kissed me on the forehead.

A moment more and she was gone, leaving me alone. I put my hand up to my forehead where sister Mary had kissed me, and I thought of the day, many a year gone by, when she, and Mother Josepha, and the rest of the sisters, had given me the sisterly kiss and I became one of their number. Oh! how I cried at the thought! Then I saw the star in the distance coming nearer and growing lighter, and I felt that deliverance would soon come to me now.

And the rest of that night I sat awake in the midst of the filthy remnants of my straw, pondering over this unlooked-for promise of succor and deliverance. Yet it did not surprise me as it might be supposed to have done, for, from the second day after I had been first thrust into this loathsome hole, I had a childlike faith in the goodness and mercy of God. I felt then the conviction — and this conviction had never died out of my mind even in the midst of the darkest and direst of my afflictions and oppressions — that some day He would by some means in His kind providence set me free.

It was at least ten days before I again saw Sister Mary, and during these days and nights I suffered all

the torments of suspense. At one time I thought that perhaps she had been watched by Fr. Calenski or Mother Josepha, and been herself imprisoned in some dismal dungeon like my own, at which I wept for hours. Then I would imagine that perhaps she had been forced to give up her attempts to free me on account of the vigilance of my persecutors. Yet again the terrible idea would flit across my mind, like the shadow of an ill-omened bird, that Sister Mary was perhaps in some way in league with my oppressors. But I banished this the moment it presented itself as unworthy.

No! no! I could not suspect that good and noble sister of treachery! She, who, of all those in the Convent, had made her way down to my dreary dungeon in the dead hours of the night, bringing me delicious food, and most precious of all, words of kindness and hope and cheer. Yes, yes, I would trust her.

On the tenth night of her absence, just after one o'clock, I was roused from the dreamy, semi-unconsciousness I used to call sleep, by the noise of somebody unfastening the padlock of my dungeon door. I started up, fearing that the visitor might be Fr. Calenski or Mother Josepha, and yet hoping it might be Sister Mary. It was Sister Mary, and I could hardly express a scream of exquisite delight as I heard her friendly voice, in low tones, say:—

"Are you awake, Sister Barbara?"

"Yes, I am awake. Oh, dear Sister Mary, how sweet it is to hear your voice!"

Without answering, she came in, and, closing the door after her, opened a small lantern, which, though dim enough in reality, seemed so excessively bright to

my eyes as to make them ache. Setting this down, Sister Mary next produced two or three slices of soft, white bread, between which were two or three very small bits of bacon. She gave me this — to me — tremendous quantity of food, and said:—

“Sister Barbara, until tonight I have been unable to come to you, neither have I been able to do anything for your release. But do not think I am cold or neglectful. Depend on me, and have patience. Either Fr. Calenski or Mother Josepha would not hesitate to kill me outright, or else bring me here and shut me up for life with you in this dreadful den, if they ever suspected me of my design. Even now I am running a great risk in coming to you. But I could not help it, I felt that I must speak to you again. I may not be able to see you any more before I make known your case outside the Convent. I will try every method, and if I see no other way within a week, then I will watch my opportunity; escape out of the building into the street, go to the Court of Correction and state your case before the judge, who will certainly give ear to the statement and investigate it immediately.”

“Why not speak directly to the bishop when he next comes here?” asked I.

“Ah, poor Barbara, you little know how impossible that would be. Not that our bishop is not a holy man; but that I would have no opportunity to do as you suggest. And even were I to do so, the Confessor and Mother Josepha would tell the bishop I was crazy or something of that sort, and not bring him to your dungeon.”

"Well, dearest Sister Mary," replied I, "do as seems best to you on my behalf, and I will ever pray for blessings upon you for your kindness and love."

"Be of good cheer, Barbara," said Sister Mary, taking up her lantern preparatory to leaving me, "be of good cheer, you shall soon be free now, or I will perish in my attempt to make you so. Farewell."

"Farewell, and God and the Saints be with you and keep you. Whether you may succeed or not, I shall always feel deeply grateful to you for your kindness."

Sister Mary darkened her lantern, and, passing out from my dungeon, shut me in again. I ate what she had brought to me with great relish. The slices of soft, white bread, I remember, seemed to me the most delicious food I had ever tasted. Strange as it may seem, yet it is true, that now, when fresh hope of being delivered from horrible captivity was awakened in me, I began to fret and worry about the question of how soon I would be released, for as I have already said, I had all along had the impression that I would be released in some mysterious manner in spite of the precautions of Fr. Calenski and Mother Josepha to the contrary.

I spent at least half my time now in praying that I might speedily be rescued. I was praying thus the day after Sister Mary's visit, when Fr. Calenski, accompanied by Mother Josepha, came to my dungeon. I did not cease when they came in, but I was quickly interrupted by Fr. Calenski, exclaiming:—

"Ha! get up, you miserable wretch! What is that you are praying for? To be released, eh? I will release you!"



With these words he struck me on the back of the neck with his cane so violently as to prostrate me on the floor. He made another blow at me, but by a great effort I shrank away into the corner and begged him not to beat me, that I would mind all he said.

"I wish she was dead!" said Mother Josepha.

"Yes!" added the Confessor, "and if she don't die pretty soon I will kill her myself! She has more lives than ten thousand cats. But I will fix her very shortly. A dose of arsenic will help her wonderfully!"

"Barbara," asked Mother Josepha, "have any of the Sisters been here at any time to see you?"

A cold chill of horror wrapped itself round my heart at this ominous question, asked as it was in a peculiar tone. A thousand suspicions, a thousand dreads, trooped through my brain in an instant of time. Had the Lady Superior, or the Confessor, seen Sister Mary either going to, or leaving my dungeon? Had some one of the Sisters seen her and given information thereof to my persecutors? Or was the question of Mother Josepha propounded on a mere suspicion of her own, aroused by some trifling circumstance, or accident; such as the padlock having been meddled with since she herself secured it? Or, were there any crumbs of my bread on the filthy floor that had attracted her eye? This thought was dismissed immediately, for I knew I had been too careful in eating the bread to allow a single precious atom to fall. Possibly there might be mingling with the stench of my dungeon a faint odor of rose leaves. Sister Mary was fond of keeping dried rose leaves about her, which she gathered in the garden of the Convent.

All these thoughts, as I have said, rushed through my brain in one instant of time, and in an equally short space I had weighed each of them and decided on my line of action. I pretended to be greatly excited as I replied that she would never allow any of the Sisters to come to see me.

"That was not what I asked you," she said; "I asked you if any of the Sisters had been here to see you?"

"No, you know they have not!" I promptly and savagely answered, feeling that the circumstances in which I was placed justified me in telling an untruth.

"What do you mean by answering that way, eh?" exclaimed Fr. Calenski, raising his cane and giving me several dreadful blows with it, and causing me such agony that I became nearly crazy, and could not help screaming out. He then looked down at the broken dish on which there were three small mouldy potatoes, and, laughing at Mother Josepha, said:—

"Well mother, I think there is no need of leaving our wild pig anything more to eat, for she has enough there to last her a day or two, and it will never do to feed her too high, you know."

"I will put these that I have brought with those she has, and that will do for several days."

Thus speaking, Mother Josepha emptied four or five potatoes out of a little bag on to the plate, and then, in company with the Confessor, left the dungeon.

For several days after this I felt a numbness in my neck and back where I had been struck by Fr. Calenski, and this gradually gave way to a mental dullness and stupidity that I could not possibly resist, though I made the most strenuous effort to do so. I now feared that

I was becoming idiotic, which gave me a frightful anxiety. On several occasions after this, Fr. Calenski and Mother Josepha beat me, and I became so filled with despair — for I had not as yet received another visit from Sister Mary — that, for the first time since I had been immured in my dreadful dungeon, did I pray for death to relieve me from my torments.

But, thank God for His mercy, He at last remembered me, His unworthy creature. After languishing over twenty-one years in my living grave, and almost giving up all hope, I was startled one day by a strange visitor, clad in the uniform of an officer of police. I could see him very distinctly, though he could not see me.

Dear reader, it is not in my power to tell you what my sensations were at this occurrence. You may, perhaps, partially imagine what your own feelings would be, had you been like me, locked up for more than twenty-one years in a damp, loathsome vault in the ground, without one ray of blessed sunshine all that dreary lifetime; and then, suddenly, an officer of the law standing at your dungeon door to bid you come forth to liberty.

I was obliged to hold my hands tight upon my heart to still its wild pulsations; and I screamed out my joy. Had I not been able to do this, I am certain I should have sunk down dead with excessive happiness.

My first thought, after I collected my sense sufficiently to think at all, was about good, noble-hearted Sister Mary. I did so long to see her, for I felt certain that to her I was indebted for my rescue.

Very soon after this, however, I began to lose all control of myself, and I know that by the time the bishop and the rest came and stood in my cell, I seemed actually demented. Yet I could not have helped it, had I been threatened with a thousand deaths.

I need not here repeat the details of my liberation, and the discomfiture of my persecutors, Fr. Calenski and Mother Josepha. It would not behoove me as a Christian, and humble follower of God, to desire revenge. Christ has taught my lips and my heart to forgive my enemies, and I do so fully and freely.

Another duty I must perform ere closing my narrative, and that is to entirely exonerate all the Sisters in the Convent from any complicity in my long imprisonment and dreadful persecutions in the dreary dungeon. Fr. Calenski and Mother Josepha were the sole and only ones to blame in the matter. They induced all the Sisters in the building to believe that I had become a raving maniac, and that it was necessary to confine me in the dungeon. And had it not been for Sister Mary I should have been either still a prisoner there in that living tomb, or mouldering in my grave.

I wish to be particular in regard to this correction, as it had been stated in all the public newspaper accounts that the Sisters were cruel and heartless to me. What gave this color I have no doubt was the fact, that when they came into my dungeon at the time the bishop and officers were there, the former reproached them in great anger as though they had been equally guilty with Fr. Calenski and Mother Josepha. It is true that he did thus reproach them at that time, but as soon as he learned the true account of it he fully withdrew all he had then said to them.

It is all over now, and I am free to spend the few remaining days of my life in serving God and praising Him for His goodness and mercy.

(Signed) BARBARA UBRYK.

The foregoing statement has been duly and legally made to affirmation by the nun, Barbara Ubryk, of the Carmelite Convent, as being in every whit true. Done before me officially this sixteenth day of August, eighteen hundred and sixty-nine, A. D.

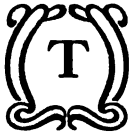
Kironski, presiding judge of the Court of Correction, Austria.



# Convent of the Good Shepherd

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *American Sweat Shops.*

HE Good Shepherd Convent is found in every part of the country in the large cities. Like most of the names used by the Catholic church, the name Convent or House of the Good Shepherd, would indicate a place of care and protection; a place of refuge for sheep (girls) without a shepherd. All forms of names are used by Rome to deceive and trap. Such as "Society of Jesus," where they use the name of our Savior as the very head of that tricky, underhanded, bloodthirsty, Catholic organization. Then follows the "Sisters of Charity," this name aids them to raise money to feed the priesthood and build her schools, convents and churches. Rome is sharp enough to attain the desired results in some manner. The Protestants pass laws prohibiting the use of the public school funds from being applied for secular schools, while the so-called Sisters of Charity (beggary) piously wait upon them and receive their personal subscriptions. These beggars serve the church among the Protestants—seldom does the priesthood venture directly to the business men.

The house of Good Shepherd is the boldest piece of diabolical work in America operated in the name of religion. *It is an open form of slavery*, and the boldest challenge to the spirit of true Americanism within our knowledge. Sleepy Protestantism shouts the battle cry

of freedom, sings America with tear stained eyes, meets on Decoration day and other National and State occasions, and eulogizes the price paid in the blood of our forefathers in the purchase of America's liberty and freedom, while at our elbow, Rome holds girls and women who have reached their majority, slaves, back of the House of Good Shepherd walls. Today there are hundreds of women from 18 to 40 years of age that are compelled to toil from morn till night, and sometimes a part of the night, serving Rome's set of black-robed Mother Superiors. Many of these females have served the system from early childhood either washing, ironing, sewing or engaged in some department of manufacturing. Many of these females mentally, (regarding knowledge of their rights) are as a child, totally ignorant of any phase of civil liberties or personal rights.

They believe that the holy fiend, or the Mother Superior, owns them; that God has ordained Mother Superiors to have charge of them and rule. Many taken when small and placed at a wash tub to be hounded from morning till night with a pair of black eyes compelling them to do the work of a strong adult. The treatment of the negro in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is a compliment to the conduct of the ones in charge of these Houses of Good Shepherd. And in the fact of all of Rome's fiendish barbarous treatment, America permits inaction of reign supreme. No other monster or individual could break the law, violate the constitution, incite riot and bloodshed and escape the prison cell or electric chair, as in the case of popery. No Protestant minister could live with his "niece" in a twenty room house without an introduction to an old

fashioned "tar bath" and a "suit of feathers," but a rum-soaked, stall-fed bachelor priest can use his own pleasure in the matter, and the Protestants call him Father!

Again, Rome is using our Juvenile courts in many instances, as a modern office of the Holy Inquisition, to fill her houses of Good Shepherd, in order to secure labor, penal in character, without compensation, to enlarge her profits and enrich her coffers. Let the various unions inquire into the price of labor paid in Rome's shirt factories, base ball factories and laundry institutions. When Rome needs help in her laundries or factories she proceeds to recoup her force through an "Unamerican Catholic police force" or some Jesuitical Romanized court of the inferior class.

#### ABUSE OF JUDICIAL AUTHORITY.

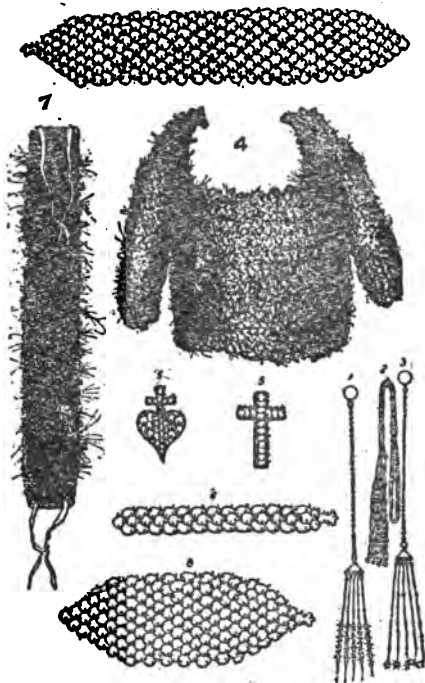
It is an abuse of judicial authority and trust for a court to cause or permit a person to serve a penalty in a Secular Sweat Shop or Secular Penal Institution. Rome is introducing in our land her European practice of the dark ages, i. e., her right to control and direct the punishment of the people. Houses of Good Shepherd is a challenge to our children homes (public) and our state penal institutions for females. Rome is a law-breaker, a law-challenger, a usurper, the black enemy to American institutions. The nation must show its colors. Rome's high-handed debauchery and diabolical slavery system is drawing to a close.

#### PENANCES.

Rome claims the right to inflict the punishment or penalty for both *sin* and *crime*. The sisters in charge of the convents and nunneries reign supreme. If a child



## INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE.



: List of Penitential Articles.

- 1, 2, 3. DISCIPLINES, knotted Rope and Steel with sharp points to draw blood.
4. HAIR SHIRT, with arms.
5. CROSS and HEART combined; Heart only; Crosses, with numerous Steel sharp points to draw blood.
6. ARMLETS, with Steel sharp points to draw blood, and Horse-hair.
7. CINCTURES, with Steel sharp points to draw blood, and Horse-hair, to be worn round the waist.
8. ARMLETS, with Steel sharp points to draw blood.

violate a rule of the Good Shepherd Convent, the child is punished. If the punishment is inhuman, *there is no appeal*. If the child dies from rough treatment, *there is no investigation*. There is no coroner's inquest. When the child is sick, no doctor. It must die without medicine if such is the decree of the Holy Sister!

Penances are many and there are various causes for their prescription. It is very common to compel convent victims to kiss the floor or the feet of the sisters, miss meals, etc. Katie Wetzel has to walk on broken glass placed in her shoes until her feet were all lacerated. Edith O'Gorman was compelled to eat worms because she screamed when the worm fell upon her hand while attending the garden. Others were compelled to eat mice and drink foot water from a Superior's feet. Many are the inhuman penances intended for humiliation.



# RECAPITULATION

## CHAPTER IX.

**T**HOUSANDS of Catholic parents today are content at home in the belief that their precious sweet daughters are happy and contented and enjoying a state of purity and holiness only to be found within the pale of Convent walls. *How awful is this delusion, how terrible the deception.*

While that poor deceived Catholic father and mother are comfortably seated at home, reflecting on the happy state of their child, possibly at the very hour, if the mystified curtains of a convent cell were parted, they would behold a miserable, half-starved, demented, victimized, wretched, ruined child, stretched in awful agony upon a cold, damp floor. Perhaps if they were near that wretched den they would hear a mournful sound, a pitiful wail from the lips of a dematiated being, their own flesh and blood, their child.

Perhaps while you are reading, a black robed being is winding his way in company with a Mother Superior, down through the dark corridors with flushed cheeks and anxious tread. They stop at a heavy door on massive hinges. The holy (?) father holds a lighted candle while a squinty eyed holy (?) Mother Superior unlocks the door. Then if they could just take one further look, and learn the awful dark secret of the next hour, they could fully appreciate the real purpose and meaning of a high stone wall, bolted doors and barred windows ever present at the cloistered convent.

Or, perhaps, that once sweet girl is now reduced to ashes in the cellar lime-pit.

Or, perhaps, her withered form is stretched upon a cot in the convent infirmary, unconscious, while her new born infant is being smothered by the holy (?) fingers of a Mother Superior.

Or, perhaps, while attempting to make her escape from the institution with the aid of strips of sheeting knotted together, she fell, and now lies mangled, near death, as a result of the fall.

Next to the wretched victims themselves, we sympathize with the poor deceived Catholic parents of these girls who live and die, bound in the awful delusion concerning their daughters' convent existence. Would to God that every Catholic and Protestant parent of these convent victims, could fully appreciate the actual conditions and inside life of these frightful dens.

We know of Catholics who conscientiously boast of the holy state of their daughters and relatives or friends in the nunneries, where they are supposed to pray and meditate night and day, while at the same time the supposed pious nuns are rubbing clothes on a wash board nine or ten hours every day. In many cases these sweat shop popish slaves have prematurely ended life from hard knocks and over-work. Many of the nuns supposed to be living in seclusion, have been transferred to the Good Shepherd laundries or other factories, where Rome drives them by a heavy lash from morn till night, a slave on scant ration and no pay, and this, dear reader, in the name of the Christian religion in a civilized country. My dear Catholic reader, ask your priest to bring you Bible proof for a Convent or Nunnery; don't

let him excuse you. Force him to produce the proof. And again, Catholic father or mother, if the convents are filled with holiness, why is your daughter's cell or dungeon secured with heavy iron bound doors and barred windows. The priests tell you that your daughter is contented. If she is satisfied and happy, what are those penitentiary appliances for? Do thieves break into convents and steal holiness? Or, do the nuns get so happy that it is necessary to bar the windows to prevent them jumping out during a fit of happiness? Poor deceived people there is a reason for the bars, bolts in doors, and those walls. *They are to keep your daughters from breaking out.* Those bars and high walls are to protect the church with its unmarried priesthood, from exposure. Your daughters are ruined and debauched, and the only hope of a lecherous whoremonger priesthood, is to imprison the witnesses and hide the dark deeds of vice and crime. The condition is appalling, it is awful, yet very natural under the circumstances. Your daughter was born into the world with a law of nature God gives, to love a member of the opposite sex. She was fashioned and modeled after God's own pleasure to marry and become a mother, and in opposition to all this, Rome has duped and forced her to believe the contrary. Now she sits probably in the conscience examining room preparatory to meeting her father confessor. Dear reader, who is this father confessor, this priest, this man? You say that as priest he represents God, and cannot sin. The answer comes that he is still just a man, and his vows and robes don't change him. He is subject to the same passions that are common to mankind. He was created to have

a wife of his own and raise a family, that the bed would remain undefiled. There he sits, sworn to never marry, with the cords of love vibrating in his bosom, with that nun, your daughter, listening to a confession of every evil thought and image that has passed through her mind. They are alone. She is beautiful, and according to Rome's theology, she is bound to tell the priest if she has an affection for him, (if she loves him). Tell him all her feelings, her passions. *Can't you see the result?* Or perhaps the father confessor has a fancy for this particular nun, (and they do. The nuns also become bitter towards each other in many instances because of jealousy,) and she is a model of self respect, glories in her virtue and would rather die than sacrifice it upon the altar of lust.

The father confessor hears her story, passions are aroused, unholy fires are fanned into a flame. He places his arms around her waist. She recoils, then resents. She struggles but soon is overcome by brute force, doors closed, thick walls, shut away from the public, yes, we might say more, beyond the reach of the law. No one is there to help, no father, no mother, alone with a whiskey-soaked whoremonger priest. She is no match for him. A mother's daughter is wrecked, is ruined.

She would risk her life to escape the lustful vampires that now seek her for a prey. She tries to escape. A Catholic police or a juvenile court throw her back into the blood stained arms of the Mother Superior. Hence the barred windows and high stone walls. This life, now, must be veiled. Your daughter is now a prisoner, doomed to starvation, misery and an awful death. If that poor Catholic parent could see that priest on

his death bed, tossing in the throes of mental anguish, making a futile effort to release his soul from torment by an act of confession, then see the pangs of death seize him and drag his soul, laden with sins, down into the stygian vaults of an eternal hell, writhing and vaulting down through the dark corridors throughout the endless ages of eternity, conscience bound and chained by the relentless chains of retribution, they would no longer advance the claim of purity of priestly conduct within the shades of Rome's Convent walls.

#### TO PROTESTANT PARENTS.

A word of warning to Protestant parents who court favor with Rome by sending your precious daughters to her convent schools with the understanding that they will not tamper with your daughter's religion. True, Rome will promise this, and according to the churches theology, your daughter has no religion, i. e., your daughter's Protestant faith is the negation of religion, therefore it is no religion from Rome's point of view, and anything that might be done or said reflecting on the Protestant faith, would not be construed as against your religion. (Would to God that the Protestants would better acquaint themselves with Rome's theology.) It tickles the priesthood when they succeed in capturing a Protestant girl to marry the church (?) and serve the priesthood in the nunneries.

How often the selfish nature of a Protestant politician or business man becomes responsible for the sacrifice of their sweet daughter's virtue upon the altar of priestly lust. The picture of this black altar and its fair sac-

rifice is best described in the language of one that passed the full length of the popes, convent and virgin (?) priesthood gauntlet.

Hush! Out from that past rises up a figure; she stands before you, a young, bright, happy, joyous girl, your daughter. And as you look upon her in the light of those earlier years, you remember that you had hoped to spend the evening of your life surrounded by her love. You looked forward to the time when her children would climb to your knee, and you would caress and love them. You pictured yourself at last having your daughter to be with you when the final parting came. This was your dream. Now the awakening. Where is your daughter? Do you see the walls of the convent looming out in the distance? Come with me, and, as you pass through the massive door, follow me. Here we are in the cloister. We walk along until we come to the church. We enter, and there in the pews are the silent, black-robed Sisters. The stillness of death prevails; the evening shadows have deepened into the shades of night; the lamps burn low. Now, we see one of the Sisters approach the organ and softly the notes roll out, the "*Stabat Mater*." The rest of the nuns unrobe their left shoulder, and as they join in singing the "*Stabat Mater*," they hold in their hands a discipline, and with it they scourge themselves. Do you see that young nun on the left-hand side of the organ? Do you see the pain expressed in every feature? Do you hear the groan that involuntarily escapes from her lips? Do you recognize in that pale, sad-faced, black-robed woman the bright, happy girl you sent to the convent school?



Let us proceed further. We leave the church, and, ascending twelve steps, find ourselves in a room comfortably furnished. A man in the guise of a priest of Rome is seated on a sofa. The door opens, and the young girl we noticed in the church enters the room, and, as with downcast eyes she kneels to receive the priest's blessing, a look of loathing and fear passes over her features.

"Come and sit down here, my daughter; I desire to speak with you."

With trembling steps the girl approaches the sofa, and the priest, taking her hand, says: "Why so fearful of me, my child?"

And, drawing her down beside him, he places his arm around her waist; his hot, liquor-fumed breath fans her cheek. His coarse sensual lips are pressed to hers; she shrinks away in loathing; her womanly modesty is outraged; she struggles to liberate herself — too late! Poor, helpless girl, she has not sufficient physical strength to overcome the wretch that holds her; her piercing cries for help are not heard outside the room. Exhausted, she lies in the grasp of this spiritual father, and before she leaves the room her purity has been violated, and she becomes the toy and convenience of this "protector" (sic) of morality.

Follow me again. We pass down two flights of stairs — how dark and damp it is here! Come, let us peep through the door of the room at the end of the cloister. Hush, tread softly! What sound is that we hear? Sobs? Surely not sobs? Yes; deep, bitter, heart-rending sobs! Look in; do you see the figure lying prostrate on the cold, damp floor? Ah! how the sobs shake

her slight frame! She speaks. What does she say? Bend your ear and listen: "Oh God! my God, let me die! I cannot bear this any longer; I gave up *all*—father, mother, home, friends, because they told me, these priests and nuns, that by doing so I should secure heaven. Where is the joy? Where the peace they depicted to me? *Oh, years that have passed, come back, come back to me!* Give me once more my youth, my home, my mother's love, my innocence, my peace of mind, my faith in God. Oh, for one hour of the time when I was free, before I ever entered into this hell upon earth! Oh, mother! Mother, would to God I had died ere you sent me to the convent school, for I am ruined body and soul." Ah me, how she sobs! Do you recognize in her, your once happy daughter? What! You cannot bear it! Yet you sold her to Rome, and your price was the satisfaction of your own and your husband's political and social ambition. What think you of your bargain? What do you say? You would recall the years if you could, and undo all the past? Too late, too late! and soon at God's judgment-bar you must render up an account.

"Oh, Rome, thou woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, thou Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth, thou who hast become drunken with the blood of the saints, thou destroyer of the home, thou enemy of pure womanhood, thou murderer of helpless infancy, I *know thee as thou art*. I, who have suffered, I whose life hath been lighted by thy baneful influences, I rise up from all thy darkness, thy impurities and oppression, to warn the womanhood of the land against thee, thou ravening wolf in sheep's clothing."



## When The Convent Walls Come Down

(Tune) "When the Pearly Gates Unfold."

O how hard it is to suffer;  
'Neath the sun and moon and stars;  
While the world rolls ever onward,  
And I gaze through convent bars.  
How I miss my dear old mother  
When the sisters at me frown;  
But this all will soon be over,  
When the convent walls come down.

### CHORUS.

Convent life will soon be over,  
And the sisters' piercing frown  
Will no longer scare and haunt us,  
When the convent walls come down.

O how well the Priest deceived me,  
When he led me to this life;  
Telling how I would be holy,  
In a place that knew no strife.  
Brightest scenes of life he painted,  
And how well it all did sound;  
But we'll have another picture,  
When the convent walls come down.

Shoulders sore and both feet bleeding  
From the tread on broken glass.  
Hark! the convent bells are tolling,  
And the black rob'd Sisters pass.

Nearly starved now and deserted,  
With my hands and feet all bound;  
But we soon will leave the dungeon,  
When the convent walls come down.  
God above acquaint our nation  
With this soul destroying pen;  
How we toil half starved in anguish  
In this holy place of sin;  
How we live in Papal bondage  
Till we're lowered 'neath the ground;  
But this all will soon be over,  
When the convent walls come down.

Darkest night spreads all around us  
In these dismal cells of fear;  
But we hear the distant rumble  
Of a conflict drawing near.  
Truth peals forth from lips undaunted;  
Congress Halls have caught the sound  
Telling how it will be settl'd,  
When the convent walls come down.



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