

Morning Star and Catholic Messenger.

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"And I, Wanda, dear, I that am his mother, I see all that's going on in my poor child's heart, and I can't find it in me to be hard upon him. You cannot understand it, Wanda; we're no two of us just alike in these things; and I dare say I shouldn't understand it myself, if I hadn't once in my life had occasion to see what love can bring a man to when it's crossed. Bart's of a nervous constitution, just like his father. Well now, Wanda, would you believe that your father, before we were married, lay the point of death, so as already to have received the last sacraments, because our parents had separated us and he wasn't allowed to see me?"

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Wanda, in sudden terror; but added, almost immediately recovering herself, "well, but father got well over it in the end, for all that; didn't he, mother?"

"He did, Wanda; but how! Our parents had quarreled about a right of way across a field, and things had come to such a pass between them that they were at downright daggers drawn, and couldn't bear to hear one another's name. Well, I wasn't allowed to see your father; and he, poor fellow, who was more in love with me than I knew of, plucked away till he lay upon his death-bed. Thanks be to God, the good priest, out of pity to the poor young fellow, reconciled our parents, and I was allowed to visit him before he died. The tears come into my eyes when I think of that day; I won't speak of it; but a month after that he was able to go to church with me and our parents for us to be promised together."

Wanda was looking hard at her mother, with glistering eyes.

"Look you, Wanda," resumed the latter, "your father was just a poor peasant, such as you see now; but sure and certain it is, there was that in him that made him one of a thousand, and so it may well be with our poor Bart too."

The maiden shook her head in thought, with her eyes fixed on the ground. After a few moments she looked up again.

"It's strange enough," she said, "that one person should pine away out of a nervous temperament, just because he's of a nervous temperament; for my part, I don't see how it can be. But, mother, my poor father was a match for you; so that wasn't out-of-the-way. With Bart and Cecilia the matter's quite different; that can never come to any good. And so he must just knock the foolish thought out of his head."

Mother Ann meanwhile had sunk away into a deep reverie; she paid no attention to what Wanda was saying, and gazed despairingly upon the ground. After thus sitting a while in silence, she sighed heavily, and began to speak as to herself alone:

"He suffers like a martyr! Kate told him something yesterday that made his eyes light up with joy; but she told him something too that made him grind his teeth with vexation. And last night in his sleep he talked and cried and called out quite as we might expect. I listened to him and now this morning he's all languid, and paler than ever, and his eyes look so dim and dead. Alas, alas! my poor Bart! my unhappy child!"

In the same moment that these last words fell from her lips and sounded through the room in a tone painfully expressive of heartfelt grief—just in this same moment Bart came in through the back door in a state of high excitement by the tone of his mother's voice, he stood still, and for a while fixed his eyes steadfastly on hers, from which the tears fell fast. Then, slowly going up to her, he pressed his lips to her forehead, and as from his eyes two warm drops fell upon it, in a sweet and almost inaudible voice:

"My poor dear mother!" he said; "ah, forgive me indeed, I cannot help it; but my forehead is aching, and I'm so nervous, and I'm bowed and one hand before his eyes, he passed on out of the house.

ever more delight over the wide creation. By degrees an indescribable smile shaped itself upon her countenance; her bosom swelled; her head set itself erect upon her delicate neck, her eyes sparkled with a new light; she lifted both her hands aloft, and, in a low but thrilling tone, exclaimed: "Liberty! liberty!"

And she made a motion with her arms through the air, as though seeking to clutch with her hands the infinite space itself.

For some little while she remained thus rapt out of herself, till her eyes had wandered back into the plantation, where she was within arms' reach of the young peasant. Her self-consciousness returned. Her head sank again slowly upon her breast, the old address chased the smile from her countenance; again she bent her eyes upon the ground and her thoughts upon her sad lot.

Again a little while, and she proceeded on her way along the footpath, dreamily musing as she went. But suddenly, as she turned an angle of the plantation, a cry of astonishment burst from her breast, a cry of astonishment that stood paralyzed with surprise before her.

"Bart!" she exclaimed; and even he it was that stood paralyzed with surprise before her. The first impression of this unexpected meeting called up a smile of heaven's own bliss upon the countenance of each; but a glance at each other sufficed in a moment to cloud it over with an expression of sadness and even fright. Without speaking, they both bowed their heads and wept bitterly. Bart was the first to raise his eyes again and to find his voice for an expression of sorrow and condolence.

"Cecilia, poor girl, how thin and pale you are!"

"And you, Bart, I hardly know you again!" the maiden sobbed out, still without looking up.

"I!" exclaimed the young man, desperately; "what does that matter? But you, Cecilia, that are goodness and kindness itself, an angel here upon earth,—that you should have to suffer so! that you should die, like a poor dumb lamb, under that false villain's hands! It makes my blood boil to think of it. God be merciful to me, for I shall surely one day crush that venomous beast's head! But that's another matter. Where are you going to?"

"They've turned me out of doors," she sighed, with a fresh burst of tears.

"Turned you out of doors!" exclaimed Bart, with indignation and wrath upon his countenance.

But this first impulse was soon gone by, and gradually the expression of his countenance changed into one of growing satisfaction, and even pleasure, till at last, beginning to see clearly into the matter, he exclaimed, with transport:

"Turned you out of doors! What! for good and all?"

He waited for an answer, but she neither spoke nor looked up. After a while he resumed, in a still more urgent tone:

"Come now, Cecilia, you can sleep with my mother, her eyes sparkled with her; and I will surround you with respect and love; as though you were my very guardian angel in person. And I'll work—from early in the morning till late at night; and nothing shall be wanting to make us happy. And you shall get well again, and strong and blooming, and bring a blessing upon our house, as you did before. Oh, come, come! be a sister to my sister, and a child to my mother."

And with folded hands he seemed to beseech an answer. The maiden looked at him doubtfully.

"Oh, Cecilia," he cried, "speak! Think that there's one up there above us all who knows best whether what we do is right or wrong."

A smile full of meaning gleamed upon Cecilia's countenance; and, as she breathed heavily, like one that is struggling with some weighty resolve.

"Well, then," she replied, "so be it: your mother shall be my mother! I'll come home to her as if I was her own child."

A cry as sharp as if it had been the expression of severe and sudden pain burst from the young peasant's breast; he clasped his hands together, and, with a gasp, burst forth from under his fingers and tickled down his cheeks in copious streams. The maiden was at a loss to comprehend this violence of emotion, and essayed to calm him with soothing words.

"Ah!" he presently sighed out, at the same time laughing nervously through his tears, "there's pain in my eye! A strong sudden dose of it tries both heart and head, sorry; but it's over now. Come, dear friend, come along!"

They now struck into another path. As for Bart, he was totally a changed man. On he walked, with head erect and looking proudly about him as he went; his cheeks glowed with quickly-circulating blood; his eyes sparkled with blissful excitement; the motions of his arms and legs were of a somewhat excessive energy, and he walked with a long, gaiting stride; he was shaking off from them the effects of it; ever and anon broken ejaculations of delight burst from his lips.

"Oh, God! Oh, God!" at last he cried, "what a blessed thing life is! Look you, Cecilia, I'll work hard on the farm, and make hoops in the yard; you shall do as you did before—a little dressmaking for the neighbors; Wanda will look after the cow; mother will stay at home with the children, and I'll be sure to get any of us can get, we'll put it all together, and so make a savings-box. Then we'll buy another cow, and take a bit more land; and who knows? why, in time perhaps we may come so far as to hire a servant. And perhaps in time the little Chapel farm will be so happy a home, and, with God's blessing, so prosperous, that you'll never think again of that grim ugly prison yonder and all you've suffered there."

"Oh, Bart, how beautiful your plan is!" murmured the maiden, in deep emotion; "it will be a heaven upon earth!"

"That's just what it must be!" pursued the youth, in the same joyous strain. "And I'll plant our garden all full of the nicest flowers, with foot paths between the beds; and I'll make bird-cages to hang up here and there and every where, that there may be nothing but singing and merry voices all about; and I'll have a fountain of water, and a well of water, and a dance to tell, and dances to dance, and thank God on my knees every day of my life that he sent you to me. Heavens, heavens, what a life! dear Cecilia, what a life it will be! But look yonder by the draw-well: there stand my mother and Wanda."

constant happiness which she found in the tender good will of Bart and his mother, nor against the undisturbed serenity of her daily life. From her cheek, too, the sighs that were suffering gradually disappeared; she was habitually quiet and even reserved in manner, yet she would ever and again light up into one of those fairy smiles which can only proceed from a heart at peace within itself.

Cecilia worked at dressmaking for the neighbors, at which, being an uncommonly skillful hand, she made a very pretty bit of money, not a little to her gratification and to the encouragement of Bart and herself in their ambitious hopes and plans for the enlargement of the farm. True, the savings-box received but a few shillings a week; sometimes indeed even nothing at all; but sometimes, on the other hand, a piece of silver. Still its contents increased; and when Bart came to his mother's chamber, and merrily shook the box which held the collected savings of their love and industry, the sound it gave was pleasant to the ear and full of promise to the heart.

The young lord had made it his special business to dress and decorate his mother's house as to render it a pleasant home for his beloved great; and for this purpose had tasked to the uttermost his powers both of invention and execution. In the little garden behind the house, he had laid out little beds, divided by little footpaths, and edged in with ever-dwelling thyme. Quite behind, close by the hornbeam hedge, he had put up a trellis and over it trained a bower of honeysuckle and clematis, with a bench on either side—one for his mother and Cecilia, the other for Wanda and himself—where on Sundays after service they would all come and sit together, and sing and tell pleasant tales, and rejoice in calm disquietude over the true tranquillity of their life and God's manifold mercy and goodness.

In the garden grew all kinds of flowers; not only the well-loved lowly plants that are native to the heaths and thickets of the Kempen (or Campine, an extensive moory district in the neighborhood of Antwerp) but also many of those which have been naturalized from other regions,—the last a present to Bart from Frank, the neighbor gardener at the Manor-house.

Against the house he had hung several bird-cages, from which incessantly resounded the sharp, clear notes of their inmates; and pigeons so tame that they would come and take their food out of Cecilia's hand, and their houses in the roof, and strutted with pouting breasts along the paths. At the corner of the beds were planted upright sticks, bearing on their points little mills which turned with the wind, or square tin censors in arched or gable form, with the wind which blows steadily in the direction from which it blows; all of them matters which Bart had devised and executed for Cecilia's pleasure and out of love for her.

Wanda had her full share in the common happiness, which she entered into with the unselfish heartiness of a child, like a child too rejoicing in the felicity of the rest.

As for other Ann, she was overwhelmed with attention and demonstrations of affection; and as she saw her children's eyes beaming pleasure upon her at every glance, she certainly would not have changed her lot with that of the lady of the Manor. In fact, the poor little cottage of the Chapel farm was a very paradise upon earth.

Very different was the state of things at the gloomy abode from which Cecilia had been expelled, and which since her departure had been left to solitary and so silent, so desolate a hill, that it stood there among the trees like some faded building smitten with the curse of heaven. Sometimes for two days together would the laborers who were at work in the fields about not once see the door open. The mysterious house, with its creviced walls and broken window-panes, inspired all the villagers with an uneasy fear; it was only the most daring and adventurous spirits that would willingly after nightfall have taken their way through its interior.

And now, for the last two Sundays Uncle Jan had not even been out to church, and this, when asked after him had replied that he was confined to his bed with the gout; but, though it was very well known that he had occasionally suffered from this complaint before, yet, coming from Thys, this explanation hardly struck as universal or credible. However, old Jan's miserly way of life had made him so unpopular that no one seemed to trouble himself any further about him—so one but only Cecilia, who had wept bitter tears at hearing of his illness.

(To be continued.)

THE RUINS OF CARTHAGE.

Mr. W. E. Robertson, a Scottish gentleman, having recently visited the site of this once proud and famous city, gives an account of the present condition of its ruins, and expresses regret at the wholesale destruction of the few but beautiful remaining monuments of its departed glory. Mr. Robertson writes:

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DRY SALT MEATS, ETC.

WESTERN PRODUCE

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GRAIN, CORNMEAL AND HAY,

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STRICTLY FORBIDDEN

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