

"The doctor, who sat next to the Landrath, muttered something that sounded like 'Jesus in disguise.'

"You are mistaken," I said, turning to him with a smile, 'I am a travelling wine merchant of liberal views and friendly to the Empire.'

"And so they did not catch the pastor?" asked the Landrath.

"No: at least they had not done so when I left the place."

"If those peasants don't submit," said the Landrath angrily, 'I shall just say the word and send a body of soldiers into the place till they are tamed.'

"The rest of the party nodded approval.

"As this affair seems to be of importance to you," I said to the Landrath, 'I should advise your having the church closely watched next Sunday from as early as five or six o'clock, as doubtless the pastor will re-appear there on that day.' And thereupon I made my bow, leaving the gentlemen to puzzle their heads over my character and to revile the 'disguised Jesuit' to their heart's content."

Our friend spent the remainder of the week in a village on the Luxembourg frontier, the Moselle being the boundary. At this very time fell the *fete patronale* of the Church, and the pastor of the place, our Renitentus, and another priest—all three under the ban of the May laws, and all wearing thick beards—met by appointment to celebrate High Mass at nine o'clock. Every precaution had been taken by the people. A boat was in readiness to take them across the river in case of need, all the rest of the boats being removed to as great a distance as possible and made fast to the shore, and sentinels were posted about the place to give warning of danger. Hardly was Mass over when a lad ran into the church to give the alarm. The priests hastily unvested, charged the people to keep perfectly quiet, and made the best of their way to the river. The *gendarmes* were not two hundred yards off; but the boat was safely reached, and had pushed off some distance when they reached the bank, where they were greeted by much "chaff" from the fugitives, who regretted the trouble they had had and advised them to rest themselves a little and get cool. The river side was crowded by parishioners, cheering and waving hands and handkerchiefs, and the three "recusants" landed safely, congratulating themselves on drinking their coffee in a village inn instead of a Prussian prison.

Renitentus had relations in a town not far off, for which he took his passage in one of the Moselle boats, the captain of which turned out to be a schoolfellow, who was much surprised to see him in such unclerical garb. When the story was told, the honest sailor 'bid him fear nothing while he was on his boat; but an unexpected danger appeared in the shape of the *gendarmes* from whom the dark corner of the coach and the patriotic song had so lately saved him. These, however, were closer quarters, and recognition seemed certain. A few words put the captain *au fait*: he beckoned his old friend into his cabin, where, as he said, he might easily lie *perdu* till the end of the passage. "But that would be very dull in such fine weather, and we will do things more poetically. You seem to be going through a practical course of the *Aeneid* and *Odyssey*; why not do the same with the 'Metamorphoses'?" When once a reverend pastor has turned into a commercial traveller, he can surely change from that to a sailor." Accordingly he donned a red jacket and cap, went on deck again, and got safely to B—.

Saturday saw him again on his way to his faithful people, and an hour after midnight he was in the church. No lights could be ventured on, and in darkness and silence one after another stole in, after whispering a pass-word to the sacristan who stood at the door. Confessions were heard till two; and then two candles were placed on the altar, screens arranged on each side, curtains drawn before the windows, and Mass was said. It must have been a night never to be forgotten by that hunted priest and his faithful people. The dark thronged church, the stillness scarcely broken by the low voices of the celebrant and his server, and now and then by a stifled sob. When Mass was over, Holy Communion was given, then the priest blessed his children, and left the place as he had entered it, in silence and alone.

The Landrath faithfully followed the friendly advice he had received, and the police watched the church with exemplary but unwarded patience for some hours.

In the course of the week the following letter was sent to the banished pastor; and what must have been the consolation of such an assurance of fidelity and zeal in the midst of persecution and hardship.

"Honoured 'Herr Pastor,'—It seems that the police are on the scent: we must go to work very cautiously, and so we have put ourselves in communication with the parish priests of the neighbourhood, and receive their permission for you to offer the Holy Sacrifice at night on the three next Sundays, at P—, G—, R—, and M—. Your parishioners will meet you at these villages. We have taken every precaution to prevent your arrest, trustworthy sentinels will be posted; a short sharp whistle is the signal of danger; the cry of the cuckoo the token that all is right. Your people will keep true, in spite of every trial and sacrifice, to the priest sent by their bishop; and nothing shall make us waver in our devotion to the Church, Catholic and Roman, the Pope and the bishops. We thank you for shrinking from no trouble to be a faithful shepherd to your flock."

All went well on the next three Sundays, on the fourth came a change. At midnight Renitentus was crossing a field leading to the village of M—, when a shrill, sharp whistle struck his ear, then another, this time close at hand, and now horses' hoofs were heard coming nearer and nearer. No one was to be seen, and not a house was in sight where he could take refuge. By-and-by a *gendarme's* helmet glittered in the moonlight, and a voice called out, "What did that whistle mean?" A man jumped out of a ditch, and ran across the field, the *gendarme* was about to give chase, when he saw the priest, and asked what was his business. No answer being given he was ordered to march, with a threat of being ridden down if he attempted to escape. He was taken before the authorities of the place, identified, and sentenced to a month's imprisonment, at the end of which he was banished from the Ger-

man Empire by command of the Government. This term of imprisonment was very hard, the diet so execrable that he fell sick in consequence, and his treatment rude and insulting to the last degree. On this subject he says he mentions it not for the sake of complaint, knowing well that far worse was endured by thousands of confessors of old, but to protest against the crying injustice of the Government in treating political prisoners, suffering for their adherence to a principle, in precisely the same way as the basest criminals.

The four weary weeks came to an end. Forty-eight hours were given him before leaving his country, which he had simply and firmly declared he would not do voluntarily; his conscience as a Catholic priest forbade that; but he would wait quietly for what was coming. The poor young priest was to have a consolation before his exile, which, he says, made him forget all he had suffered. His mother was waiting for him. She had read the announcement of his banishment in the papers, and had come to bid him farewell.

"It was one of the happiest hours of my life; but how can I linger over this bright spot, this sunbeam that broke out of the clouds into my dark life? Let the reader remember that I am the only son of an aged mother who spent her last heller and bore many privations for the sake of educating him, who thanked God with tears when she saw him a priest at the altar, and who now after long separation met him on the eve of his exile to bid him farewell, perhaps for ever. We sat together, hand in hand, late into the night. I told her all my story, and she laughed and wept by turns. I have never seen her since."

And now we come to the closing scene of this pathetic drama. It was three days before Christmas, and the banished priest resolved to risk everything rather than leave his people without Mass on the feast. It was fearful weather; snow had fallen heavily for a week and lay several feet deep; not a trace of a road was to be seen, but he had promised his people to be with them at midnight, and he started at three in the afternoon. At every step he sank two or three feet in the snow, heavy flakes, driven by a strong wind, almost blinded him, and he began to fear that even if he did not lose his way, he should never reach N— in time. Once he walked right into a stream, but on he went. The man who defies the mighty Prussian Government is not to be daunted by a snow-storm.

It was half-past eleven when the brave-hearted priest reached his journey's end. Neither his flock nor the police had thought his appearance possible in such weather, so all was quiet in the village, and a suppressed cry of joy greeted his entrance into the church, where one of the parishioners was saying the rosary with the congregation.

"As the clock struck twelve I began Mass—never with such joy and devotion before—and very touching it was when one of the choir, in a low voice intoned the glorious hymn *Heiligste Nacht! Finsterniss weiche!*—'Holiest night! the darkness flies.' During the first Mass, I gave a short sermon on the text, 'Glory be to God in the highest; peace to men of good will.' Never did the words come so entirely from my heart, never was I so entirely happy as then. Yes, happy. Let the man of 'culture' and the unbeliever mock as they may; happy, in spite of trial and persecution: all weariness, all pain and care were gone, and tears of joy and sorrow filled my eyes as I thought of the circumstances under which I was keeping the holy Christmas feast, and of the faithful devotion of my people to their Church. It was a happiness such as the world cannot give. I said my three Masses, baptised three children, and gave my flock the general absolution. Then my good and faithful children pressed round me, clinging to my hand and weeping. I said a few parting words, and tearing myself from their entreaties to stay a little longer, passed once more into the darkness of the night. Next morning, when I reached the house of a priest, in the neighborhood, I broke down, and lay for many days in a violent fever.

"Since then I have only been twice at N—. To do so more frequently would have been running into the arms of the police, for my parish is desolate. The nearest church is an hour and a half's journey from N—, and only a small number could get there on Sundays in that bitter winter to hear Mass. My people have no teaching—no priest to administer the sacraments, to console the sick, to bring the food of life to the dying . . . but their Father in heaven is merciful!

"I have related the manifestations and the results of the war of culture in Prussia merely as they exhibited themselves in my person: similar scenes are repeated every day in all directions. The whole country sits sorrowing, and the priests are prisoners, or emigrants, or, like myself, homeless wanderers. And yet it is a contest in which the State will not triumph! It may make new laws, and take the bread out of the mouths of the priests; but it will learn all the more plainly that it has to do with Catholic priests."

The annual anniversary requiem mass for the repose of the soul of Mgr. Darboy, who fell a victim to the wanton tyranny of the Paris Commune in 1871, was celebrated in the Cathedral of Notre Dame on the 24th ult., at 9 A.M. The choir of the church was draped in mourning. Among those present were the martyr's sister and many relatives of the family. The erection of a statue to his memory, from the chisel of M. Bonassieux, which was to have accompanied this ceremony, has been delayed, because M. Abadie, the architect of the new church of the Sacred Heart, could not find time to complete the chapel in which it is to be placed. This statue will be situated in front of the monument to Cardinal Morlot, Mgr. Darboy's immediate predecessor in the see of Paris. It is expected that it will very soon occupy the place for which it is destined.