

IV.

The world had now changed for me, though I still visited the lake and brooded over happier days. In the long and melancholy autumn twilight I strolled as of old along our accustomed paths, but all nature seemed different. The notes of the thrush had lost their sweetness, a discordant key pervaded the blackbird's tune; the warbling of the linnet was mellowless; there was dissonance in the song of the lark and melancholy in the hum of the bee. The voice more musical than any was for ever stilled.

As winter came on, cold and cheerless, the stars shone with a feebler ray, and the moon seemed cold and dull as I nightly visited Winnie in her frozen grave. At times I followed Kyrle as he strolled with bent head over the heath-empurpled moorland. His gun lay rusty on the rack, and his once ready hand was now nerveless by his side. The defiant crow of the grouse went by unnoticed, the woodcock and pheasant sought superfluous cover, the sentinel plover kept a vain vigil; the startled cry of the curlew sounded a false alarm; and the shrill cry and quick manoeuvres of the snipe were wasted; our thoughts were not of these.

Winter passed into spring, and the flowers bloomed again, but Winnie was in her grave, with the wild flowers entwining the cold stones above. The primroses and violets faded unplucked, for the hand that gathered them was now cold and lifeless.

The aggressive brightness of summer now seemed misplaced and distasteful, but the more subdued autumn brought consolation. A marble headstone had been erected over Winnie's grave, and on top, with outstretched wings, was poised an angel. Gradually I had come to think of Winnie as the figure above, rather than as the form beneath. I have said that nightly I visited the graveyard, and, gazing on the angel, I felt that I was again in Winnie's company.

Thus it was one night in December I went as usual to visit the tomb. The moon shone bright in a cloudless sky, and a multitude of stars bedecked the firmaments, and the snow lay thick on the ground, reflecting the brilliance of the heavens above. As I jumped over the enclosing wall at my accustomed point, near Winnie's grave, I saw a man approaching in a heavy overcoat, and was about to spring on the desecrating intruder when something familiar in his appearance arrested me. He came along to the grave, and kneeling down, he cried out—'Oh, God, it is too true; forgive me, Winnie. Do you know? Can you understand?' It was Con. As I gazed at him in bewilderment, the figure on the tombstone faded away, and Winnie herself stood beside him; Winnie, not as in death, but the pleasant Winnie of happier memory. She took him by the hand, and pointing heavenwards disappeared as mysteriously as she had come. I ran round the graveyard in a vain chase—Winnie I saw no more—but on returning Con was still there, slowly reading from the tomb—

'Though she has perished, love in deathless bloom
Outlives the torpor of the wintry tomb;
There is a clime where sorrow never came,
There is a peace perennially the same;
There rolls a world where severed hearts renew
Bright sympathies, the exquisite and true.'

But, alas, thought I, not for Plato.—'Weekly Freeman.'

The Catholic World

ENGLAND.—A Jesuit Astronomer

The Rev. Walter Sidgreaves, of the Stonyhurst College Observatory, has been awarded a gold medal by the astronomical section of the St. Louis Exposition for his investigations in stellar spectroscopy.

The Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines

Prior to his departure from England the Most Rev. Dr. Agius, Apostolic Delegate to the Philippine Islands, visited Downside Abbey, and was entertained to dinner on the occasion by the Abbot and community, a number of guests being present. In proposing the health of the Apostolic Delegate the Abbot congratulated the community that a member of their Order should have been selected for so high and responsible a position, adding that he believed this was the first time an Englishman had been so honored. In speaking of Malta, the birthplace of the Archbishop, he referred to the unique privilege of the Cathedral of St. John in the island, as being the only Catholic church in which the King of England had a throne. In his reply, the Archbishop bade farewell to his many friends in the community, saying that his work in the Philippines was to be the work of the rest of his life.

Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School

It is announced that St. Charles' College, Bayswater, has been purchased by the Nuns of the Sacred Heart, who will use it as their training college for teachers, in place of the present establishment at Wandsworth. The Oblate Fathers, when, as a preliminary to the sale, they laid before the Holy See all the facts relating to the financial position and the liabilities of St. Charles' College, also sent a very full statement as to the history of the foundation of the College and of the gifts which had been made to it. In reply, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, after carefully considering all the facts of the case, gave permission to realise the property, and at the same time left it to the unfettered discretion of the Oblate Fathers to allocate in any way they thought best whatever surplus might remain after all liabilities had been discharged. This discretion they have exercised in a most generous manner for educational and religious purposes, as the Fathers have, through their Superior, Father Wyndham, made a gift of £10,000 to the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School to be built at Westminster. In connection with this gift the 'Tablet' states that £20,000 has been subscribed in all towards the Memorial Fund so far. This amount, it is stated, ensures the accomplishment of the scheme, and it is believed that now that the goal is practically within reach the funds still necessary to its completion will be readily obtained. The contributors so far number only 300 persons, but of these the Archbishop of Westminster, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Marquis of Ripon have each subscribed £1000, while there are several others of £500.

FRANCE.—Leaving the Country

So many of the Catholic peasantry of Brittany are leaving that country on account of the persecution to which the religious Orders there are subjected, that the Government has become alarmed at the exodus and the Minister of the Interior has sent circulars to all the communes of that department, urging the officials to take steps to keep the people at home. The Bretons are pious Catholics, and what is needed to keep them home is for the Government to cease its persecutions.

The Separation of Church and State

The President of the Council (says the 'Catholic Times') has made his appearance before the Commission sitting to consider the question of the separation of Church and State in France, and has given his view of the Government's proposals. They are more severe than M. Briand's even, and must result in enslaving the Church to the State in a way worse than did the Concordat. However, M. Combes proceeds warily. For two years he will let the Catholics have their churches free of cost, and for four years will continue to pay the clergy their stipends. We may be sure he has not done this out of feelings of generosity or of justice. But he has done it in order to gain time while his plan works out its course. And his plan is now clear: he wants to split up the Church. He will permit associations in a diocese, but will not allow those of different dioceses to federate or unite with one another! This reduces all the dioceses to units, isolated one from the other, and must thus render them an easier prey of the Government. Processions will not be allowed, excepting funerals; and religious worship, though permitted in church, will be still 'under the direction of the State.' What more is needed to convince any man that, should the Concordat be abrogated, the latter state of the Church in France will be worse than the former? Under the Concordat she had a few liberties; under the new police rules she will have none.

HOLLAND.—A Church Destroyed

A fire broke out on November 7 in the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, near Vondelpark, Amsterdam, owing to the overturning of a fire which a plumber was using while working on the roof of the building. The church was burnt down.

INDIA.—Pastoral Visitation

During a recent pastoral journey Bishop Allen, of Madras, India, confirmed 854 Christians, 309 of them being converts from paganism.

POLAND.—Memorial to a Cardinal

A movement is in progress at Posen Prussian Poland, to erect a monument to Cardinal Ledochowski, who suffered much for the faith and for Poland, and died in exile in Rome.

ROME.—Indefinite Rumors

Rumors of a persistent but indefinite character (writes a Rome correspondent) are afloat to the effect that a modification, practical or other, will be given to the Papal 'Motu Proprio.' Anyhow, the old music lives on. Feast after feast and Sunday after Sunday show that, but the known tenacity of Pius X. justifies extreme caution in the acceptance of such rumors.