Sanctuary

The evening congregation sat in solid rows in the little village church. Rows of black-headed bosoms, rows of gnarled red faces, rows of patient eyes staring at the preacher with the attention of unheeding drowsiness. Behind the pillars one or two old men slept outright.

The preacher's voice spoke with monotonous clarity through the half light. A naked gas jet flared above his head, lighting up his young face and his folded, surpliced arms. The choir-boys behind him were fidgeting peacefully, tired of scribbling on their hymn-books. The organist nodded in his loft. On the altar two long white candles in silver sticks burnt with steady flames, and below them, embroidered in gold thread on the red velvet altar-cloth, glowed "Sanctus. Sanctus. Sanctus."

The door at the rear of the church flung back with a crash. The preacher stopped. The choir sat up and leaned forward. The congregation turned round in a body, scraping all the chairs on the stone floor. The organist's startled nose peered out of his loft.

The curtain had been pushed to one side. A bedraggled man ran through the door, up the aisle, past the pulpit, and flung himself on the altar, shrieking, 'Sanctuary! Sanctuary!"

The candles flickered wildly in the rush of cold air that had just raced the man to the altar. The congregation rose, but the preacher motioned them to sit down again. Then he slowly descended from the pulpit, and approached the altar. The man lay in a heap at its foot, one filthy hand clutching the cloth. His muddy clothes betrayed him—a convict escaped from the prison across the moor.

"My friend, you have interrupted God's service. Now you are desecrating God's house. You must go."

The convict turned and looked at him.

"Desecration?" he cried. "Desecration to hide in a church? Where else shall I go eh? Where do you want me to go? Back to hell?"

The preacher made no answer. He had stopped quite still a few yards from the altar and he leant slightly forward. His hands were clenched under his surplice. The double line of choir-boys made no sound.

When the convict spoke again his voice broke hoarsely, as though he had suddenly spoken aloud to himself when he was quite alone.

"I heard your text as I came in. Were you lying from your pulpit?" The preacher stood silent.

"I was put in prison for life, for murder"—involuntarily the preacher glanced for some one behind him; "Yes, I did the murder all right, and I'd do it again if I had the chance. And I was put in prison for life. me!

"It wasn't what was said I minded. And it wasn't the food or the wardens. It was just—prison for life. I was born wild see, and I'd always lived wild. Out in the country, always on the move, sleeping in ditches, haystacks, anywhere."

He was scarcely looking at the preacher now, and again there was that queer feeling that he was alone, talking to himself, going over and over the old circle of thoughts, just as he had through those nights on the bed in his cell.

"I can't remember the last night that I had ever slept under a roof. And then, prison for life—for life. see! No more fields at night, or cooking a rabbit you've just knocked on the head. No stream to drink out of when you're thirsty, and no pipe to light when it's pouring rain. Prison for life——"

The preacher took a step forward. The man looked up sharply, and the terror rushed back into his voice.

"And no they're after me. They've got the dogs out after me. They're bound to get me if you don't stop them. They'll get me. They're coming after me now. Oh, God!"

His shriek died into a whisper as he cowered back on the altar.

The sound of running feet came through the door. Three warders stood in the shadow blinking at the light. Then suddenly the one in command saw the convict, and spoke hurriedly to his men. They were halfway up the aisle when the convict turned desperately to the preacher again.

"Are yo going to let them take me?" he cried. "Are you going to let them take me from your God's altar?"

There were some uneasy noises from the congregation. The warders were on the chancel steps.

"Get him out of here as quick as you can," ordered the leader. "Sorry to make all this trouble in a church, sir, but we'll be as quick as possible."

The convict clung desperately to the altar. The candles above him flickered unsteadily.

"Look at your altar," he screamed. "Doesn't it mean anything? Doesn't it mean anything; you, and your Church and your talking? Were you lying up there in your pulpit? Were you lying—lying——?"

The scream rose to a fearful laughing, so that a woman in the congregation began to wail.

"Stop!"

The preacher stood in front of the warders. "You shall not touch him."

The convict gave a shudder of amazement. His body tautened as he dragged his face from the altar-cloth. Several times he half shrank as though he felt hands on his shoulders. Then he slowly sank limp and lay silent, his eyes staring at the preacher. The woman's wail died to a steady sobbing.

"Look here, sir, said the warder, stepping forward. "I'm afraid I must ask you not to interfere. That man is an escaped murderer, and I've got to take him back to prison." The preacher stood still. "You don't realize what you're doing, sir. We don't any of us want a scene in a church, so I must ask you to stand back. We shall only be a few minutes."

"This is God's house" replied the preacher, "and that is God's altar. It doesn't matter what the man has done. Now he claims God's mercy, and he shall have it. Leave the church, or sit down quietly. You are interrupting a holy service."

Two of the warders attempted to edge round the side, but the preacher stepped back and stretched his arm towards them.

"You dare not touch the altar. Leave this church."

The two paused and looked at the warder, who motioned them to go on. Still they did not move. A muttering began at the back of the church. One of the choir-boys jerked to his feet, panting, then doubled up into his seat again. A heavy Prayer Book fell to the floor with a crash.

The warder signed uneasily to his men again. The preacher swung round, seeming to snap the atmosphere like taut elastic.

"Men of my parish," he called, "will you see your church defiled, and your altar desecrated? I appeal to you to come to the aid of God. Save this poor wretch. Give him the sanctuary he asks for."

Silence, and the woman sobbing.

"We're with you, parson," shouted a burly fellow, suddenly tumbling up from the back. "Come on lads, and turn 'em out."

Three or four more farm-hands rose up from the back of the church, and, gathering in number, started for the altar. The warder watched them anxiously.

"We'll wait outside," he decided, quickly. "No use kicking up a fuss here."

The three filed through the vestry door. Whistles blew shrilly outside. The candles burnt clear and strong on the altar. The convict lay still at the foot.

The preacher climbed slowly back into the pulpit.

"If you will all sit down," he said, quietly, "we will resume the sermon. My text was in the eleventh chapter of Matthew, the twenty-eighth verse, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest.'"

* * *

SANCTUARY FOR ESCAPED CONVICT. DRAMATIC SCENE IN VILLAGE CHURCH. VICAR DEFIES WARDERS. SCOTLAND YARD REFUSES TO MAKE STATEMENT.

The London papers "splashed" the story heavily. All England chattered about it at breakfast.

English Parson Saves Escaped Murderer. Cops cried: Big Five Silent. Dramatic Revival of Old Sanctuary Law. "Church Cannot Save Him," says New York Bishop.

Within a few hours it was discussed all over the world.

The village bustled with activity. Reporters rushed there; an enterprising motor-coach company arranged excursions from a nearby pleasure resort; tourists in hundreds turned aside to see the church. The village inn was more than full long before the evening, and by the next day cottagers were arranging to sleep in the kitchen while they collected fabulous prices for their tiny bedrooms.

But nobody was allowed inside the church. Only the vicar, carrying baskets of food, was alowed to pass at will through the police cordon drawn up around it, which excluded reporters as well as tourists. The village shopkeeper sold his first news picture for a record price—a picture of the interior of the church.

The villagers soon added to the sensation by fighting whole-heartedly for the sanctity of their altar. Headed by the vicar, they sent out deputations. One to the King, imploring royal aid; one to Scotland Yard, beseeching them not to desecrate the church; one to the bishop, begging him to support their holy cause.

The Palace replied that it was a matter for His Majesty's Ministers. Scotland Yard regretted that it had no choice but to carry out the law. The bishop came down to see.

He looked strangely disturbed as he stepped from the train on to the tiny village platform. Strangely, because his face was so much more used to expressing happiness and smiles.

He remained strangely silent, too, except for mumbled commonplaces, all through the drive to the vicarage, all through the awkward, uncomfortable lunch, until he had passed the police cordon, and stood in the shadow of the porch, out of the glare of the autumn sunlight.

The vicar led him quietly round the back aisle until they could see into the Lady-chapel.

By the miniature altar knelt a man in a cassock. The sun streamed on him weaving all the colours of the stained-glass window above into a halo of light around him, and painting the white altar-cloth with its branched candlestick before his bowed head.

The bishop slowly took the vicar's arm.

"Is that——?" he asked in a whisper.

The vicar nodded.

"He has been kneeling there ever since. He changed his prison clothes for an old cassock he found in the vestry."

"But why does he kneel there?"

"I think it was rather a shock for him to find that the church really could save him, even for a short time, from prison and a life of hell."

The bishop was staring almost absent-mindedly at the figure kneeling in the stream of light by the altar.

"A murderer" he murmured, "who has killed with his bare hands——"

"'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone . . .'" The vicar might have been talking to himself.

A distant bell began to toll quietly. The bishop sank to his knees.

The affair was very different next day. It was no longer a question of a rebellious vicar but a revival of the historic struggle between Church and State.

Politics dropped out of general conversation, a big boxing match passed almost unnoticed, cinema divorces were scarcely mentioned, and a murder was a matter of secondary interest. The world discussed nothing about the escaped convict kneeling quietly in the little village church, surrounded by a silent cordon of police.

People began to take sides. At first, most thought that the law should be rigidly enforced, even at the price of tearing the man from the altar itself. A few, however, even at first, expressed loud horror at such contemplated desecration.

They were soon joined by sentimentalists. The romance of the affair began to affect the nation. An immediate arrest would have met with almost universal approval, but for some reason Scotland Yard delayed. The bishop's support of the vicar was doubtless responsible for the first change of public opinion. But once changed the sentiment gathered force like a river in spate. A murdered kneeling by a village altar came to be regarded as something sacred—fiirst as a martyr, and then as a kind of saint. Feeling ran so high that even the newspapers had to moderate their tone.

Questions were asked in Parliament. Processions marched through city streets demanding that the altar should be left untouched. Public subscriptions were started, and ran instantly to huge figures. Other bishops expressed their support for the first. Scotland Yard had left it too long.

There was a police-station almost next door to the village church, and at first there were rumours of a continuous guard. But if it were ever started, it was soon stopped.

The church became a tourist objective, and religious societies organized pilgrimages to the village. Motor-coaches hooted, megaphones shouted, and traffic roared outside the little church. All the services were crowded.

And inside, the convict knelt in peace and prayer for the rest of his life. He suffered no more shame. He ate no more coarse food. He was never ill-treated, or ordered about by warders.

But then, of corse, he was never again in the fields at night. He never again cooked stolen rabbits that he had just knocked on the head. He never drank from a stream when he was thirsty, not lit a pipe in the pouring rain.

Every night for the rest of his life he slept under a roof.—John O'London's Weekly.

A Fisherman of Note

Katherine Wilson, 18, of Brownsville, Texas, is a real fisherman—and has a badge to prove it. The badge was made from the scale of a six-foot tarpon she landed, recently.

Earnest Work

"Be sure no earnest work
Of any honest creature howbeit weak,
Imperfect, ill-adapted, fails so much,
It is not gathered as a grain of sand
To enlarge the sum of human action used
For carrying out God's end. No creature works
So ill, observe, that therefore he's cashiered.
The honest, earnest man must stand and work,
The woman also — otherwise she drops
At once below the dignity of man,
Accepting serfdom. Free men freely work.
Whoever fears God, fears to sit at ease."

He cried: "True. After Adam, work was curse;
The natural creature labors, sweats, and frets.
But, after Christ, work turns to privilege,
And, henceforth, one with our humanity.
The six-day worker working still in us
Has called us freely to work on with Him
In high companionship. So, happiest!
I count that heaven itself is only work
To a surer issue. . . .
O, cousin, let us be content, in work,
To do the thing we can, and not presume
To fret because it's little. . ."
—Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in "Aurora Leigh."

"Thank you very much" said the clergyman as little Georgie handed up his offering for the harvest festival. "I must call round this afternoon and thank your mother for those eight beautiful apples." "P-please, sir," stammered Georgie, "would you m-mind thanking her for t-twelve."

The Household Word For Tea

"SALADA" TEA

"Fresh from the Gardens"

Perfect Tennis Spectator Defined by French Paper

Here are qualifications of the perfect tennis spectator as L'Auto, noted French sporting paper, views the matter, as reported by the Associated Press:

Arrives at least fifteen minutes before the great match; seats himself quietly; pretends to be dead.

Knows that to move or blow the nose may decide immediately the fate of the Davis Cup.

If a young lady is escorted, chooses one mute and paralyzed.

Advises her to wear dull gray and sees that she does not have too much rouge on her lips nor blue in her eyes.

Doesn't look at his watch, which may create a distraction, bringing on disaster.

Holds his applause until the moment after the last exchange of the ball.

ACTIONS

Actions are like ships on the horizon, being silhouetted against skies of thought.

The wife of a man who had "made his way in the world" was asked why she had changed her doctor. "Well," she replied, "fancy ordering linseed tea and a mustard plaster for people as rich as we are!"

Quick RELIEF from pain

A lot of things can cause a headache or other pain, but there is one thing that will always give you relief! Just take a tablet or two of Aspirin. Your suffering ceases. Relief comes instantly, regardless of what may have been making your head throb with pain.

Aspirin is harmless—cannot depress the heart. So there's no use waiting for a headache to "wear off." It is useless to endure pain of any kind when you can get Aspirin. It is a blessing to women who suffer regular systemic pain; to men who must work on, in spite of eye-strain, fatigue or neuralgia.

Learn its quick relief for colds; for neuritis, rheumatism, lumbago. Be sure to get Aspirin—and not a substitute. All druggists sell Aspirin tablets. "Aspirin" is a trade-mark registered in Canada.

"Man . . . they're good!"

Men like these finer-flavored crackers, oven-fresh and flaky with just a trace of salt. Have them handy in the pantry always.

Christie's PREMIUM SODA CRACKERS

SEND FOR FREE BOOK ON BABY WELFARE

Does baby cry at night and wake you? Is he difficult to manage? Pale or underweight? Our authoritative book on Baby Welfare will help you. Mothers all say they wish they had known of "Baby's Welfare" sooner—it's so helpful, sensible and saves so much trouble. Your copy mailed free. Use the coupon below.

The Borden Co. Limited.
115 George St., Toronto, Ont.
Gentlemen: Please send me free copy of booklet entitled "Baby Welfare."
Name .....
Address ..... C.W. 14

EAGLE BRAND CONDENSED MILK

HOLLANDIA'S WORLD-FAMED FLOWER-BULBS

——Order your Bulbs direct from Holland's best Bulb Farm——

Encouraged by numerous orders lately received from your country, we have decided to expand our business and maintain a permanent market for our world-famed collections of Dutch Flower Bulbs for home and garden.

We are therefore making the following attractive offer of a new selection of varieties, made with special regard to suitability to your climatic conditions by professional experts. The collection will be found to be unique for its skilful combination of rich colouring with delightful scents.

By taking advantage of this supreme "HOLLANDIA" collection, you can make your home and garden a Flower-Paradise for $6.

In view of the large number of orders which come in daily, we kindly advise you to order early. Please write your name and address clearly on every order. All correspondence, orders, etc., must be strictly addressed to:

HARRY BRUHE, Managing Director of the
Bulb-Nurseries "Hollandia"
VOORHOUT by HILLEGOM—Holland—Europe

Our magnificent collection consists of:
6 dozens of Darwin Tulips, in 6 Fine Colors
2 dozens of Cottage Tulips in 4 Fine Colors
1 dozen of Lily Flowering Tulips
1 dozen of Double Tulips
1 dozen of Hyacinths For Pots, all colors
1 dozen of Hyacinths for Bedding, all colors
5 dozens of Crocus in various fine colors
3 dozens of Snowdrops, the "Queen" of Spring-flowers
2 dozens of Iris in various fine colors
2 dozens of Muscari (Grape Hyacinths)
2 dozens of Scillas, sweet little flowers
2 dozens of Narcissus (Daffodils) all kinds
336 Flower-Bulbs
14 "Hollandia Novelty Bulbs" FREE

Your own choice of colors can always be considered.

350 Flower-Bulbs for $6

DOUBLE THIS COLLECTION (700 Flower-Bulbs) for $10

Prompt service; delivery never later than one week before planting-time. Delivery FREE of charge at destination. A certificate of health is furnished with every order by the Phytopathological Service of Holland. All varieties are packed and labelled separately. Illustrated Cultural Directions in English, French, or German are sent free with orders. All orders must be accompanied by remittance, for the full amount and should be addressed as above. Special terms for wholesale orders.

THE LEADING FIRM IN THE BULB INDUSTRY.