

too, was the son of a man to whom Stephen Hayes had been much indebted in the early years of his voluntary exile—a Scotch settler, who prospered wonderfully by reason of his great business talents and enterprise. He was renowned as an agricultural machinist, and his firm was the greatest of its kind in the whole world of those days. Born in California, young Ogilvie early acquired all the quickness in apprehension, the decision in character, the push, the exaggerated adaptability to conditions, so as to seize every advantage point, which, under the name of "sharpness," gives a peculiar claim to a peculiar American type. He was early put into business life, conformably with Scotch precept and practice as well as American ideals. His talents found a suitable field in the pushing of his own and his firm's fortune in this way. He was a fluent talker, a tolerably pleasant companion, notwithstanding an exaggerated opinion of his own genius and a corresponding tendency to undervalue the good qualities of others. Like many men of his class, he was disposed to emphasize his opinions or his predilections by means of laying wagers—not that he was a gambler, but only addicted to a national habit, often inveterate and developing strange freaks of temper and fancy, especially at election time.

There was a dash and a gaiety about young Ogilvie that offset his manifest foibles of character and imposed upon superficial observers. Stephen Hayes was one of those who found himself unable to penetrate this seemingly generous surface. He would have been better pleased to have seen his daughter favorably disposed toward the open and admiring suit of this other friend, but for one consideration—the question of religion. Whatever young Ogilvie's religious leanings were, in reality very little, the fact that his people were all strict Presbyterians were powerful enough to sway himself to at least an outer conformity with the same severe creed. But the fact that Della Hayes was a most devout and uncompromising Catholic only seemed to add additional spice to his romance of love.

Once only did he venture to sound Stephen Hayes as to his feelings over the matter, and the reply he got was by no means encouraging. It was a subject on which the old man would leave his daughter entirely free, he intimated, inasmuch as it was peculiarly one that concerned her own welfare. Ogilvie had not dared to hint anything of his feelings to the girl herself. He was shrewd enough to perceive that, as matters stood, young Clinton was more in favor than he was. Yet, being of a sanguine and egotistical temperament, he, by no means, despaired of reversing these conditions. Although a tacit rivalry existed between the two young men, they presented all the outward amenities of good-humored friends and men of common-sense. With Robert Clinton this was an easy task, for he was large-minded and religious and had all that bonhomie which a generous nature and cultivated manners impart. With Ogilvie it was not so. Repression of his real sentiments was a task that often tried his powers of politeness to the straining point, and it was an effort to curb the impulse of envy or passion to reflect that any exhibition of his real feelings would be certain to cause such unpleasantness as to make his presence undesirable at the home of Stephen Hayes and so shut him out from all chance of achieving his desires.

With the preternatural instinct which jealous rivalry often seems to acquire in some mysterious way, he had guessed at the very obstacle which he knew must give his suit the one hope of success in the end. He knew the weakness of the Clintons in regard to family standing. Never had he heard either Stephen Hayes or his daughter mention the word wife or mother. He had been suddenly struck with this circumstance, as by a flash of inspiration, one day while pondering over the situation and the obstacles which he ought to pursue in order to make some headway toward the attainment of his absorbing ambition. Men of his kind never abandon a clue once they believe it is a safe or probable one.

Ogilvie's circle of acquaintance was wide. It included men who had travelled over part of the known globe. Among others he knew one or two who had visited the great towns in Ireland in pursuit of trade. One of these, Dick Morrissey, he met one day as he was lounging in the smoke-room of the Grand Hotel. An Irishman he happened to be—one of those shrewd, inquisitive ones who overlook no circumstance of note which distinguishes one locality from another. Men of this kind, who visit every place where business is likely to find an opening, never fail to pick up all the local gossip they can hear and all that goes to make up their great delight—a racy story. This particular specimen of the race had taken up, amongst other lines of business, an agency for American churns, and, relating to Ogilvie, with all the gusto which imparts so distinct a flavor to the successful "drummer's" conversation, his experiences in the market-places of the southern Irish city, told of his odd adventure with the titled dame who sold milk therein.

"Lady Kitty" Hayes, and the clever way in which he had tricked her into believing that he was bestowing on her a magnificent bargain in the shape of a patent churn, when in reality, it was a sample of an unworkable invention rejected in the American market.

"Such a character I never met before in all my travels," exclaimed Morrissey, as he brought his story to a close with a chuckle of delight at the recollection. "And what do you think, but the old skinkint actually puts up to be one of the Irish aristocracy! Think of her there, sitting behind her churn, selling pennyworths of milk every day, from dawn to dusk, and having everybody call her 'Lady Kitty'!"

"A freak certainly, I should think," replied Ogilvie, amused at his friend's vivacious word-picture. "If ever I go to Ireland I would go out of my way, I think, to have a look at such a curiosity. Had the old lady no other name than 'Lady Kitty'?"

"Yes; her name was Hayes. I heard all about her from shopkeepers about the market. She had a husband away back in the fifties, but her power of tongue was a thing the poor fellow couldn't stand and so he left her there and went to this country, and brought their only child, a little girl, with him. From that day to this she never heard from him and, of course, never will. People over there say he's settled down here somewhere and doing well, and that the girl has grown up a great beauty."

"Hayes!" muttered Ogilvie, abstractedly, not noticing that his friend had finished his story and was waiting for some comment or acknowledgment of its merit as a narrative. "Hayes—Lady Kitty Hayes! An odd coincidence. Excuse me Morrissey," he said, aloud, as if awakening from a reverie. "Your story called up something else; don't think me unmanly. Come, let us have a bottle of fizz. By the bye, do you know anyone in Ireland that I could trust to do a little bit of private detective work for me—not a very important affair—a business matter merely?"

"Yes, I do—a right good man—a retired Scotland Yard runner. I've got his card in my pocket-book. He did a little job for me very neatly. Here it is."

One placid autumn morning, about two months after the occurrence just related, Father Pacificus received a letter from Father Noble, who had been attending a meeting of priests in Maynooth, telling him that the Bishop was coming from Rome to take possession of the cathedral and formally open it for divine service. Father Noble was much distressed over the matter. There was much to be done ere the building could be said to be in a fit state for such a purpose. He had vainly tried to raise £1000 on a fresh mortgage and the patience of private friends could stand no further calls upon their generosity. The jovial face of the good priest looked for a moment like a rich meadow over which was passing the shadow of a cloud on a day of sunshine. But the eclipse was only temporary. A look of resolution quickly took the place of the shadow and then a merry gleam lighted up the mischievous eye.

"I'll try her once more," he said aloud, snatching up his hat and his green wallet. "It's market morning, anyhow, and I'm sure to collect something from the people there."

Making his way good-humoredly through the chattering bustling crowd of hucksters and factors and noisy ballad singers and hot coffee vendors, the good priest went straight over to the space under the broad shed where "Lady Kitty" Hayes had held her stall for more than twenty years. He saluted the figure behind the churn with cheerful suavity.

A portly woman she was, rotund and large built. Her face, anyone could tell, had once been comely; and it still preserved that freshness of complexion and regularity of feature which in youth had won the heart of Stephen Hayes. But the heavy downward line of the mouth and the deep furrows hacked across the brow told of the struggles of avarice and care with the better instincts of femininity, and the set lines of the eyebrows, combined with the strong angularity of the high cheek bones, gave unmistakable indication of a temper fierce and querulous and despot.

"Good morning, Mrs. Hayes," began Father Pacificus in his suavest style. "I hope you are in a better disposition to-day than when I saw you last. You see I am not easily put off. Now I come to give you one more chance to show you are not unwilling to lend a hand in finishing the church so as to make it presentable to God."

"Indeed, then, you might have spared yourself the trouble, Father Pacificus," returned the dame, promptly, and with an asperity which suggested badly for the priest's hopes. "I've made up my mind, once for all, not to give a farthing toward any such work. I pay my Christmas and Easter dues, and pay when I'm going into the church every Sunday, and that's enough, in all conscience, for a lone woman, with no one to help her, to do. If the priests and the Bishops take it into their heads to build a grand cathedral, beyond the heads of the poor, struggling Catholics, that's no business of mine. I wasn't consulted about it."

The woman, sharp as her speech was, spoke correctly and in a tone that showed her early good training. She had none of the brogue that was on every other lip around nor any of the vulgarity of the solecisms or the hesitation about the use of proper expressions.

Father Pacificus was in no way discomposed by this trifling impulse. On the contrary, he smiled in his most winning way and began the process known as "soothing."

"Come, come, Mrs. Hayes," he wheedled; "sure I know you're only pretending you'd begrudge anything to God. Well, I know you're only too glad to have the opportunity to show how grateful you are to Him this day for all the good health and the good means he has bestowed on you. Sure the people who tell me otherwise don't know you at all, at all. Leave it to me to understand the women. Don't I know right well that when they say 'no' they always mean 'yes'?"

"There's one thing you don't know," retorted the shrew, more irritated than mollified at this method of attack. "You don't know how hard I've to work to earn a few shillings in the week. You haven't to be up at cock-crow every morning, winter and summer, nor to sit here all day long from dawn to dusk, only for the time you get to snatch a mouthful of food or drink, or to be out in the fields minding the cows and looking after their food and shelter when you ought to be fast asleep in bed. Troth, if I made a few shillings in my long years of work, I earned it too hard to be handing it out to you for fine things that nobody needs."

"And do you call that work, Mrs. Hayes—sitting down here knitting and reading the paper half your time? I only wish I had such easy times. 'Tis I'd be the happy man if I had your life."

But sure, you're only joking, and all his means that you're going to make up now for former backwardness by a donation as handsome and big as yours for the new house of God."

This rejoinder, instead of conciliating, almost brought matters to a climax. Something like an apoplectic fit seemed to threaten the good dame for the moment. Her inflamed temper rose to such a height as to prevent all utterance. She gasped and seemed about to choke, got red in the face, and then as suddenly blanched. When she at last found utterance she spoke in a tone of deadly, set determination, and with her hands clenched on the edge of the huge churn over which she leaned, with her head thrust forward to give her words the greater emphasis:

"Before God, and as I am a living woman, I believe you would not have my life for one week if it was to save your soul, Father Pacificus. Come, now, I'll put you to the test and will see what all your blarney amounts to. By my cath, if you come and take my place here and sit it out selling milk from the time the market opens until it closes, just for one week, I'll hand you over fifty bright sovereigns for your grand, new church, Come, now; there's a fair challenge for you."

It was now the priest's turn to change color and gasp with astonishment. Here was a turn he could not possibly have anticipated. His usual gaiety for the moment deserted him. He stood looking at the earnest, hard face of the irate woman, without making any attempt at reply, for several seconds. Then he spoke quite seriously:

"I cannot take you at your word, Mrs. Hayes," he said, "because the matter is not one altogether in my own hands; but I will come back soon and give you an answer."

The lady of the churn had a triumphant look in her eyes as the priest turned away. In her own belief she had won a complete victory. Not a little perturbed was Father Pacificus, as he turned from the market, over this startling turn of events. He went back to the presbytery in a strange tumult of thought. Inside the house, he at once went to his room and knelt down in prayer. After a little while he arose and mechanically took up a book from the table and opened it. The volume happened to be the "Little Flowers" of St. Francis.

The first page on which his eyes rested chained his attention. They were those which related how two of the frati were hidden by their superior to go to the city and humble themselves by standing, divested of portions of their clothing, in the pulpit and confessing their sin of contumacy before all the people.

"He humbled himself, even to the stripping off of his garments and the ignominy of the Cross, for our sakes," he said to himself, as he laid down the book. "Why, then, should I hesitate at a little sacrifice for Him? Not a sacrifice will it be—a triumph, rather," he added, as he sat down to write to Father Noble asking him to consent that he might have a portion of the market right in the brief time yet remaining. It was folly to think of it; best he resigned to the inevitable, thankful that so much was possible, through agencies wholly unexpected, when only a few days before everything seemed hopeless.

The end of his week came; it was Saturday evening, and there was no appearance of "Lady Kitty" to fulfill her portion of the strange compact. The market servants began setting the place in order; the vendors closed their stalls and began to go home. Father Pacificus waited until the last one had departed. He lingered as long as he could and did not leave until the gate-keeper had politely informed him that the hour for closing had come. Then the good priest rose, rather downcast in mien, and took his way to the presbytery. It was supper-time and he was hungry.

He was glad to find that Father Noble was out on a sick call; he shrank from the idea of troubling him with the fear that filled his mind that some disappointment awaited him with regard to the money which was to be the reward of his humility. The day had turned dimly wet and chilly, and he felt a log fire sending out its welcome as he entered the supper room. It helped him to dispel the little shade of depression which had seized his spirits over the non-appearance of the other contracting party.

He had not quite finished his refreshing cup of tea when he heard the door-bell ring. Presently the solitary house-keeper came and told him there was "a slip of a girl outside who was in a great way to see his reverence at once."

It was a messenger who came from Mrs. Hayes. She had been taken suddenly ill and told the messenger not to leave the presbytery until Father Pacificus was seen and informed of her condition and asked to come to her bedside without delay.

"Lady Kitty," like many persons of hale constitutions, had all at once been smitten and had already begun to sink rapidly. A doctor had been summoned and had been able to afford her relief for the moment. But, as he told Father Pacificus in private outside the bedroom, she could not last more than a few hours. Acute pneumonia, contracted as she had been on her way down to the market that morning, had gripped her. "Those people," he said, "who have never known a day's sickness in their lives go off the soonest. They have usually no staying powers while poor creatures who have struggled for years with one phase of sickness or another may keep off death indefinitely."

She pointed to a little parcel on the table near the bed, as soon as she had got over a paroxysm of coughing after he had entered and closed the door behind him. "There is the money I owe you, Father Pacificus," she said; "you have earned it fairly; though I thought

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ground for returning a strictly affirmative answer.

"Thank you, sir. Come along, Clinton," said his questioner, turning to his companion. "There is no use in blinking the fact that I've been deceived and you have won the wager," he added as they turned away. "That rogue of a detective has been fooling me, but he'll smart for it if I ever come up with him, you bet."

Henry Ogilvie was the speaker and it was to his successful rival, Robert Clinton, the words were addressed. The last card in the game had been played by Ogilvie. He had not the smallest doubt that he could prove his tale to be true, that the mother of Della Hayes, the deserted wife, filled the lonely office of milk-lady in the slums of an Irish town, it would be the means of breaking off the intended alliance, because of the well-known family pride of the Clintons. So, in strict confidence, he imparted to young Clinton the dreadful secret—out of pure friendship, of course, and in order that he should not have his future happiness wrecked, as he put it. Robert Clinton, never suspecting the good faith of his pretended friend, thanked him for the interest he had taken in the matter but laughed at his story. It was entirely too like a romance. Ogilvie insisted on its accuracy and, as usual, offered a bet on it, with odds, with a proposal that both go to Ireland to settle it by personal investigation. The scene described above was the outcome. On the day following Father Noble received a letter signed "Henry Ogilvie," enclosing a check for £100, for it was one of the conditions of the wager that the loser should pay over to the pastor of the parish in which the market was situated half the amount of the money he had bet. Father Noble was curious to know why the gift was proffered and called at the hotel from whence the letter came to thank the donor and satisfy his curiosity, but in vain. Chagrined at his disappointment, Ogilvie had taken a packet for London and gone off that morning to seek in the whirl of life in the great city some leaves of the lotus to soothe his disappointment.

Hope began to smile once more for Father Pacificus when he heard the good news. A hundred pounds—and fifty that he was to receive as the reward of his strange ordeal! He could now start work on the gliding and decoration and final touches all over the dream building and perhaps have it at least complete by the time fixed for the Bishop's arrival. Time to pay the balance might be given—probably would—but there could be no concentration until then. This was the only thought to cloud the prospect of the crowning glory—that splendid vision which had faded so often before in other eyes at one time as hopeful as his own—a noble temple to God, beautiful in its adornments and in its moral beauty untainted by the reproach of worldly indebtedness.

With a little sigh he relinquished the momentary hope that such a consummation might somehow be achieved in the brief time yet remaining. It was folly to think of it; best he resigned to the inevitable, thankful that so much was possible, through agencies wholly unexpected, when only a few days before everything seemed hopeless.

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you would never dream of taking my outlandish offer. I made it just out of spite, like, thinking just to anger you and keep you from coming after me again. But God has punished me, I think, for putting such an indignity on one of His priests. Yet He was merciful in giving me time to repent and make some amends for my bad life. The doctor tells me I may not live more than a day or two. I have made no will, for I have no one to leave anything to—except my daughter, and I don't know whether she is alive or dead, or where she is, or anything whatever about her. Some say she is alive in some part of America and that she is rich and doesn't want money. Ah, but it was a cruel thing to take my child from me no matter how bad I was! God knows how I may have turned out if I had my child to care for and to care for me."

Tears stood upon the trembling lashes of Father Pacificus' eyes. He could not but feel for the heart-anguish of the miserable, forsaken woman. Cruel, indeed, it is to tear from the mother the child she has borne and nourished—an outrage upon the undying law of nature. But he did not know sufficient of the tragic story to enable him to say whether so awful a punishment was justifiable or not. He could only offer such consolation as humanity may find in the promises of God to the chastened and the penitent.

"I have been hard on the Church, too," she said, after a painful interval of sobs and choking spasms. "God forgive me—mean and miserly. Now, I must make up for my hardness of heart. Here is the key of that little safe over there built into the wall. When I am dead you will find all my money in that. I never put a penny in the bank for fear it would fall like Sadeir's. There's nearly three thousand pounds in notes and gold. I ask you to try to find my daughter and if she wants the money to give her two-thirds of it; if not, do with it as God directs you—give it to the Church or for charity, as you see best."

And so "Lady Kitty" atoned for her faults of tongue and temper. Quiet came to her at last and her end was blessed with the calm of forgiveness and hope in the love that she had long neglected—the love that is greater even than that of mother and child, of father and son. Her wish was carried out. Father Pacificus made inquiry into the story and found that Della Hayes had been happily wedded and wanted for nothing in this world. And, meanwhile, he had the cathedral completed in every beautiful detail—a free, unhampered and glorious gift to God—John J. O'Shea, in the Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

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