

Thus it was settled that only the farmer himself should know of the priest's identity, while he posed as a caretaker of sheep. Naturally of a light-hearted and joyous disposition, the young priest promised to do his best to play his role seriously and, to disarm suspicion, he began



by assuming an expression of stupidity which had often served him in his boyish pranks.

He had not been an inmate of the farm-house many days when its mistress, Madame Rochard, an exemplary Christian matron, who conscientiously discharged her duties as mother of a family, thought that, perhaps, her little shepherd might need to be instructed in his catechism. Early the next morning, she called him, saying :