

erect form seemed to assume a more commanding height, and his voice had a cutting sarcasm in its startlingly distinct tones.

He described Madame Bernot's pitiable condition: drawing so accurate a picture of her sufferings that Margaret started, wondering how he knew. He told of the little knowledge which the invalid had of the outer world, and ended by suggesting that if her evidence must be obtained, it might be taken in a guarded way so as to keep for her all knowledge of the purpose for which it was required.

His suggestion was adopted, and the case was adjourned till Madame Bernot's evidence could be obtained. Margaret at last was permitted to return home. She was hysterical, and she would have the servants to accompany her in the carriage which the coachman hastily brought.

Hannah Moore and Annie Corbin were both unaffectedly weeping because of the distress of their young mistress.

TO BE CONTINUED. HARBORLESS.

BY M. E. FRANCIS.

"Begging letters! More begging letters! Really they become a perfect nuisance. It is enough to support well known old-established charities, without being pestered to subscribe to all sorts of new fangled concerns. Here, Katie, you can take these to light the fire with."

Katie, the rosy cheeked, blue eyed, little Irish housemaid, gathered up the papers, grinning; and her master, putting on his hat and coat, sallied forth to "business." The circular which had particularly excited his ire was thrown down with a heap of other odds and ends in the corner where Katie kept her sticks and shavings, and there it lay for a day or two till she chanced to take hold of it as the handiest thing with which to light her pantry lamp.

"Musha, bad luck to it; it's damp! Maybe them that wrote it was crying," said Kate, jealously, as it snoudered and flickered and went out again.

"What have you got there?" asked a friend who had come in to see her. "Wan of them beggin' letters that masher does be so wild about," returned Katie, making up for her previous disappointment by striking two matches together.

"Let's have a look at it!" cried her friend, who thought the chance of reading a master's letter was not to be despised, even when the document in question was of so uninteresting a description.

She smoothed it out and perused it in silence. Katie peered over her shoulder, heedless of the fact that the lamp was turned up to its fullest extent and was smoking and flaring in an unpleasant not to say dangerous manner.

"It's wrote rare nice, isn't it?" she said after a pause. "It 'ud be a good thing, that Night Refuge. Wouldn't it melt anyone's heart, ye'd think, to be readin' that about the poor girls that has no homes and doesn't know where to lay their heads, the creatures! Mustn't it be awful to be ramblin' about in the dark an' the cold and have nowhere to turn to? An' look what she says here about the sort o' places some o' them has to live in, an' the wickedness an' all. Oh, glory be to God! Us that has good homes may be thankful!"

"Speak for yourself!" said her friend, and she threw back her head with a jerk. Katie saw that she had tears in her eyes.

"I know plenty about all that," she said.

"You, Rose!" ejaculated Katie, aghast. "Yes, me," said Rose. "My home, if you can call it a home, is just that sort, and my father and mother—well, I don't think they could be beat by anyone for badness! When I began to go to school I learned different from what they was teachin' me, and the nuns was awful kind to me; but I had a time of it all the same I can tell you, and many's the night I spent in the streets, afraid to go home. If it hadn't been for the nuns, I don't know what would have become o' me. They was that good I can never tell you, and after a bit they got me from home altogether—I was pretty big then—and found me a place. And here I am now."

Katie stared, horrified at the revelations. Rose was not at all the sort of person she would have credited with such antecedents. She was a tall, good looking girl, who wore a fringe on all occasions when her mistress could not see her, and had a hat with a drooping feather for Sundays, and a great deal of jewelry—inexpensive, perhaps, but showy—and was, more over, engaged to an exceedingly smart young man. Katie had made her acquaintance a few months previously, when she herself had only just come from Ireland, and looked on her as a most fashionable personage and a prodigy of cleverness. It was rather alarming to find her so intimately acquainted with matters which to the little housemaid's childish mind, appeared to concern people of quite another stamp.

"Lord!" said Katie, sitting down on the edge of the sink. "Bless us and save us!" here the lamp chimney gave a warning crack, and she rushed to avert the impending catastrophe. "Was your mother so terrible bad as that?"

"Never your mind," returned Rose, apparently repenting of having said so much, and she got up and put on her hat. "I can't sit here all night."

Good-bye. I think Tim is on the look-out for me."

With that she departed, leaving Katie still meditating as she sat on the edge of the sink. She was fresh from her mountain-side, the odor of peat smoke being, so to speak, still in her nostrils, the tan of the Irish sun yet golden on her round, wholesome looking little face. Her few months' residence in the big, clamorous manufacturing town had not sophisticated her. She was still given to carrying lumps of coal in her apron, under the idea that they would soil her no more than turf. She frequently tumbled up or down the stairs (which were luxurious not often found in Irish cabins), and she infinitely preferred potatoes and butter to any kind of meat at dinner time.

As for her innocence—one can but say that it was the innocence one might expect in an Irish child who had lived her sixteen years in a lonely hillside village, with a good, simple mother to watch over her home, and to tell her beads for her in absence. She knew that evil existed, but it had never been near her, and she could no more have reckoned up nor understood the dangers and iniquities of a great city than she could have told the composition of the big clouds that lowered in the sky.

The paper which she had been reading spoke of the sin and danger surrounding young girls in the very town where she lived—it made her shiver to think of it—and of miserable homes where children learned evil from their own parents; and Rose, instead of being surprised and horrified, had said quite calmly, that she had had experience of such things!

All at once Katie's own home rose up before her: the straggling white washed cabin with the monthly roses blooming outside, the noisy, happy and well, perhaps not over clean and tidy group of little brothers and sisters tumbling about the doorway; "Da," in his shirt sleeves smoking his pipe, her mother lifting the big bubbling pot off the fire—"Now childer, come in, an' have a bit o' supper."

And down went Katie's hand, and off tumbled her cap, and up went her apron to her eyes.

"Bless the girl!" said the cook, suddenly appearing at the pantry door. "Home-sick again, I suppose!"

For ill-endowed for such a way. Ill stored in strength, in wits are they.

In pain, in terror, in distress. They see all round, a wilderness. —MATTHEW ARNOLD.

The roses at Katie's home, monthly roses they were, had left off blooming, and the roses on Katie's cheeks—oh, poor little thin cheeks! why there would have been scarcely room to cultivate them if any were to be had! She had been very ill, she had had a fever in fact, and was now just discharged from the hospital.

It was growing dusk on a December afternoon as she made her way to her late master's house. He and his wife had gone away for Christmas, and though Katie's services were no longer required—her place having been filled up—she had permission to stay there until she could obtain another situation. But when she arrived, though she knocked and rang persistently, for almost an hour, there was no response, and a milk boy going his rounds, informed her, with a laugh, that she was giving herself useless trouble, as the servants had gone off that morning. "They won't be back till to-morrow, you bet," he observed pleasantly. "They 'ud be at their bags in their 'ands, and one of 'em locked the door, and they was both real smart. Goin' pleasin' somewhere, most like."

Katie managed to hold up her head till the lad had moved off, and then she sat down on the door-step and cried. Poor Katie! what was she to do? With the exception of the little hand-bag which she carried, all her belongings were in the house whose doors were shut to her; she had even, with the thoughtless generosity of her warm little Irish heart, bestowed the very few shillings in her purse on a woman who was leaving the hospital at the same time that she was, and who had told her a pitiful tale of want and weakness. She had deemed herself secure of finding food and shelter, and behold! she was an even worse case than the miserable creature she had assisted.

Suddenly, looking up, she beheld a figure approaching through the gloom, and presently Rose stood before her. Katie sprang to her feet with a joyful exclamation, and the other started back in amazement.

"Katie! what are you sitting here for? And," peering into her face, "what is the matter with you? How bad you look—cryin' too! Whatever ails you?"

"I've been that ill!" said Katie, beginning to sob again. "I'm on'y just come out of the hospital, an' I was to come here till I got another place, the masher said. But the servants is out—the two of them—an' a boy is after tellin' me they won't be back till mornin'. Oh dear, oh dear, what'll I do? I haven't a shillin' in my purse either. Rose, couldn't you ax yer missus to let me sleep with you just for the wan night?"

"I was comin' to ask you to do the same for me," she said. "You're just out of the hospital, are you? Well, I'm just out of prison—"

"Prison?" cried poor little Katie, falling back against the wall.

"Didn't ye know?" returned Rose, laughing again that ugly laugh of hers. "It was Tim let me in for that. He'd got into trouble with the accounts

at the place where he was cashier, an' he says to me, 'Tim lost altogether if ye can't raise a few pounds for me. So I gave him the bit of money I had, and that wasn't enough; and then I went and pawned the missus' blankets off the spare beds. I wasn't, of course, but she was too quick for me, and so I was run into prison. And now I am on the streets—with nowhere to go and nowhere to turn to—"

"Wouldn't Tim do something to help ye?" gasped Katie.

"Tim!" cried Rose. "Aye, I've been to look for Tim, and they tell me he's bolted. Not a word to me, mind you, after all I've done and suffered for him. I tell you, if I could raise the courage for it, I'd drown myself straight off. I thought o' that this afternoon, but I couldn't do it. I haven't come to that yet, but maybe I will in time."

"Oh Rose," sobbed Katie, and her innocent arms clung round the other's neck. "Rose, don't talk in that way. Sure there's—there's God an' the Holy Mother lookin' after us. Let's think a bit. Is there nowhere we can go?"

"Nowhere without money. I can go home to that beautiful home of mine, I s'pose; and after father has blackened my eyes and mother has run away with the clothes of my back to pawn them for drink, they'll maybe give me a bit to eat and let me lie down in a corner. But you!" said Rose, detaching the clinging arms not ungraciously, "you must come with me, you poor body. You must say good-bye to me now and for ever—and I go back there. I'll not be fit to come near you again."

Katie wept and wrung her hands, and rooked herself for a few minutes in silence. Then all at once she gave a little scream.

"Rose, Rose, the Night Refuge! Don't ye remember what we was readin' about, the last time ye come here? It was to be opened immediate, the papers said. Thanks be to God that I thought of it. Let's run there this minute. But street was where it was to be, it said. Come on, now, and let's get there at once."

"They won't take me," said Rose. "they'll have nothin' to say to a girl as has been in prison; but I'll take you there, and welcome."

"Oh, they wouldn't be as hard as to turn ye away," cried Katie, eagerly. "Ye must tell them how it was, you know, an' about Tim, an' what a terrible home ye've got. I'm sure they'd let ye in, Rose, if they knew."

"Perhaps they would—or maybe help me to find a decent lodgin' somewhere."

And so, clinging to each other, they began to tread the streets.

III. If rest is sweet at shut of day. For tired hands and tired feet. How sweet is rest at rest for aye. If rest is sweet!

—ARTHUR SYMONS.

"I can't find it," said Rose, when they had wandered for some time up an down—street. "I can't see anything that looks like it. What shall we do?"

"There's a girl over the other side o' the street that seems to be waitin' about—let's ask her," cried Katie, who would not give up hope.

They crossed and spoke to the girl in question. A slight little bit of a creature, not much more than a child, with a round, baby face, and wandering, startled eyes.

"I'm lookin' for the Night Refuge, too," she said. "I—I'm a stranger here. I was never in the town till last week. I was born and brought up in the Work house, and came out to service then. But the missus was that hard I couldn't stand her, and so I'm run away. I thought it 'ud be easy to find a place, but I haven't got one yet—and I'm so cold and hungry!"

"Who told you about the Night Refuge, then?"

"A woman in a shop. I went in to ask for a bit o' bread, and I says, 'can you tell me where I can find a place to sleep?' And she says, 'I don't know,' she says, 'unless they was talkin' of, the Night Refuge they was talkin' of, and she directed me here. And so I come, but I can't find it. Oh, isn't it cold? It's goin' to snow, I think. I'm starved every way. If we can find this place they give us a sup o' tea, d'ye think?"

"Let us find it first," said Rose, who was a practical person. "There must be a policeman somewhere about—he'll know." They stumbled up and down the slimey pavement till at last they descried a waterproof cape and imposing helmet shining in the lamplight.

"The Night Refuge," said the owner of these articles looking down at the anxious trio. "Tisn't opened yet, nor won't be, unless they can scrape up a bit more money. You'd best clear out o' this, my girls—waitin' about here won't do any good."

And he resumed his measured tramp, whistling softly to himself.

There was a moment's silence between the three girls—a silence which rendered all the noisome sounds around them more noticeable: shouting of drunken men in the distance, jangling voices of quarrelsome women, wailing of children, now and then a great coarse laugh sounded close to them as two or three figures reeled past through the gloom, and the tramp, tramp of the policeman's step came ever and anon. Suddenly a church clock boomed 9, and the hour was chimed, and jangled, and rung out in various tones all over the town.

"Nine o'clock!" said the little Work-house girl. "What's to become of us! Oh, why isn't that place open?"

"Wouldn't ye think that they'd find money enough for that?" murmured Katie.

"Money!" cried Rose. "No, child, they've no money for us. Who is to make 'em give it? Ha! They have to work houses fast enough. The law grabs it for that; but there's no law to make 'em save our souls. Good night to you both. I'm going home."

"Oh, Rose, wait, wait a moment!" pleaded Katie, piteously; but Rose shook her off, and walked away resolutely. Katie strained ears and eyes after her, listening to the creak of her steps till it was drowned in the sullen roar of the city, watching the tall figure till the darkness closed round it, and seemed to swallow it up. "Well, I'll stop here no more," said the work-house child. "I must get a bit to eat and a sight of the fire. I've a few pence in my pocket, and may as well spend them as starve."

She trotted off, her round eyes peering about, her poor little feet almost numb with cold. All at once she came to a great big shining mansion at the corner of a street, with colored lamps strung in a row, and the word "Bar" in fine gold letters blazing everywhere. All was so bright, and looked so warm and beautiful that the child stopped staring for fully five minutes. Then she saw a girl of about her own age spring up the steps and run within, and half involuntarily she followed her. The door opened as she pushed it, a sudden glare of light falling on her baby face; then it swung to again and she disappeared.

And Katie! Creeping about as much in the shadow as she could, starting at every sudden noise, shrinking from sight—oh, the horror to this mountain-bred girl of being alone in the streets at night! Meantime, far away in her home her mother was asleep with a smile on her lips, and her Rosary round her neck; and the little brothers and sisters were peacefully sleeping too. At their prayers that night having duly invoked "Blessed Mary, every Virgin" and "Blessed Michael the dark Angel," they had, one and all, fervently prayed for Katie, that God would watch over her, and send her "safe home." Was this how their petition was heard?

At last after wandering for a long time through various streets and alleys the unhappy little outcast came to a church. A Catholic church, as she could see for the light of a neighboring lamp fell on a statue of Our Lady in a niche over the entrance. Katie dragged herself up the steps—oh, if by good fortune it should be open. But no—

"Even the Lord shuts His door to me this night!" she murmured, and then she sank down on the threshold, and wept as if her heart would break. Presently, however, recovering her self a little, she crept on her knees close to the door, and peered through the keyhole.

She could just distinguish a faint glimmer of light within.

"He's there sure enough," she whispered to herself. "He's there—I've no need to be afraid; He'll take care o' me."

She kissed the keyhole rapturously, and laid her poor little thin cheek against it.

"I'll stop here," she said. "He'll take care o' me."

She crouched down in the farthest corner of the porch, and drawing her rosary from her bosom, began to pass it through her numb fingers. It was bitterly cold, and soon in fact, began to snow. Katie was weak from her recent illness, and worn out with fatigue; faint moans came now and then between her Hall Mary's, and long shivering fits shook her exhausted frame. But she no longer felt the awful fear of a little while ago; the church was in a bye lane, not much frequented at that time of night, and the small dark heap in the shadow was not likely to be noticed by any chance passer by; and, besides all these motives for confidence, she had a conviction that there, near Him, who watched within, she was secure.

And so, while the tide of city life swept round her, carrying away and dragging down so many, this one little wail was tossed high upon the shore, beyond the reach of its dark waters.

When the sun rose behind the hill-tops, and gilded the thatch of the lonely cabin over the sea, and the small brothers and sisters tumbled out of bed and prayed, as usual, with chubby hands clasped and eager eyes uplifted, that God would send Katie "safe home"—behold she has gone home already, and, thanks to their innocent prayers, perhaps, she was safe!

People, who read in the papers of the little Irish girl found dead in the church porch, with her rosary between her stiffened fingers, thought the story a touching one. Many were moved with compassion at the thought of the young life so suddenly cut off. But what of those other two, whose lives were lost in a far more pitiful manner on that same night, and for want of the same refuge that was denied Katie? One, it is true, of these poor young creatures had already taken a step downward, but it was her first, and had a helping hand been stretched out to her, she would have clung to it with all her strength. The ignorant feet of the other, which might have walked so blithely in the rightful path if they had only received kindly guidance, had stumbled into evil ways from the very first moment of their liberty. Who is accountable for this?

To whose charge must we place the loss of such lives as these—of thousands such as these, whose annals are un-

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written, the dirge of those innocent unsung? In this big, rich, beautiful land of ours, is there no one who will uplift a voice to prevent this wholesale massacre of souls?

Protection is surely as much needed for the guiltless as rescue for the guilty! There are, wandering about the streets of every great city, hundreds of hapless creatures—unfallen as yet—who have not where to lay their heads. We house our cattle, we fold our sheep, only these, the little ones of Christ's flock, are exposed to wind and weather, to the rough usage of their fellow-creatures, to the very breath of hell!

We Must Accept Correct Principles.

On all sides there is nothing but endless discussion concerning authority, and the rights of rebellion against anything that precludes the following out of one's own notions. One can hardly get a hearing, when religious principle is concerned, without being informed that this is the age of science—as if religion was not the mother of all science.

Where we get our principles there we must get our practices if we are, in the least, consistent. Why are we so fearful to admit all the conclusions, or rather the whole conclusion, from a fruitful proposition? If we are honest men we must "take" our politics, using that word in its popular sense, as we take our diet, and exercise, from Rome, or Germany, or America; from man, or woman, girl or boy, who reminds us of the right. Nobody disputes the existence of our physical power to act badly and the freedom of our will to say yes to the wishes of a depraved being. But if the heart and will are right they will follow the right path, no matter who points it out.

Thus intellectually and morally we are bound to take our rule of action from any one who suggests the correct view of our duty in the case in point. And for Catholics who believe that the Pope is infallible in faith and morals there can be no escape from such a course on the ground of human error. We mean, of course, when the Pope speaks officially. And we can challenge the world to prove that Rome has ever in a single instance officially proclaimed a wrong principle.

It is this infallibility, illustrated in all ages and sustained in every instance, that makes it safe and proper for anyone to harken to the Pope's voice and frame his action upon the principles which the Pope enunciates. Must we take our politics from Rome, is therefore an absurd question, and an inopportune one, because Rome simply enunciates principles which are binding on our consciences, and therefore, altogether in consonance with right reason. It is absurd to question the propriety of accepting correct principles.

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