

locked it in a drawer of her writing-table. Then she took up the bill and went over its items, every one of which she had, to use a vulgar phrase, "jewed down." Not without a sigh—for people do not instantly overcome bad habits, least of all penurious people—she altered the sum total of the bill to the figure her awakened conscience told her it should be. This done, she wrote a short note, in which she said she had erred in her previous calculations, and that she would call in a day or so about some work she contemplated for Miss Haydon, hoping her delay in settling a very just claim would be overlooked. The note she enclosed, with the bill and its amount, in an envelope and touched an electric button twice, that being Margaret's signal.

Margaret hurried to the room, her face smiling, her eyes red. Miss Bond had often noticed those red eyes before, with a half contemptuous thought that Margaret's hay fever was perennial.

"Margaret"—she spoke so gently that the girl flushed with pleasure—"I wish you would take this note to Miss Haydon with my compliments. It is only a step, you know; and when you return come directly to me. I have something to say to you."

"Luella has been instructing me about the luncheon—"

"Bother the luncheon!" interrupted Miss Bond; and she continued, in a milder tone; "What I have to say is of more importance than green and white luncheons."

Again alone, her mind reverted to those words of Luella that, more than aught else the girl uttered, had brought her roughly to a true knowledge of herself. Poor, despised Margaret had made Luella love the Church, and "if all Catholics were like you, I'd hate it." In a way she had considered herself a missionary of the faith. For this reason, she had schooled herself to believe she had cultivated the St. Jude set—St. Jude's being the fashionable Protestant church of Belford. If she did not make converts—and she did not—at least she removed prejudices, she had taught herself to believe. She had even taken credit to herself that Luella went to Mass instead of to the particular meeting-house she had been wont to frequent. "The girl must think to herself that if I, who am, socially, head and shoulders above any one else in Belford, am a Catholic, it must be the true religion." She thought of this now with a bitter laugh to herself, and told herself that she was a snob.

The girl, too, had spoken of confession as one of her mistress' privileges. How often did she enter the tribunal of mercy? It could not be said she was a Catholic who altogether neglected the practice of her religion. About three times a year she knelt at the altar rail; and, though a slight indisposition had been made to stand in the way, she was quite regular in her attendance at Mass. Neither could it be said she was indifferent to the faith. She was simply a woman who had permitted weeds to flourish in her soul; a woman who had no true knowledge of herself till rudely awakened to a consciousness of her defects by the insolence of a servant. And it was a proof of the innate goodness of her heart that, far from feeling angry with Luella, she approved of her, and felt she could beg the girl's pardon for the scandal she had given—a thing she never did, unless a changed demeanor be a way of begging pardon. It must not be supposed that this new manner she cultivated was without lapses; for lapses there were, but they became more and more infrequent as time went on.

Her humbling meditations were interrupted by the return of Margaret, breathless from rapid walking.

"Miss Haydon was very pleased, ma'am, and she bade me give you this," she said—handing her mistress a sealed envelope.

Miss Bond made a motion with her hand for Margaret to remain, and proceeded to read the letter the dressmaker had enclosed with the receipted bill. The letter in a manner was a postscript to Luella's rating. It thanked her for the payment of the bill, and apologized with evident sincerity and simplicity for having misjudged Miss Bond. "I thought you niggardly and hard-hearted, Elizabeth—I may call you

so again—and I have sinned by my rash judgment."

Miss Bond's mind flushed back to her convent school days when she and Julia Haydon had been bosom friends and classmates. Reverse of fortune came to the Haydons, and Julia was left with a little brother dressmaker to me all these years! God forgive me!" she said. For the second time that day she sighed; this time for her sins.

"Margaret, sit down," she said. "Ma'am?" stammered Margaret. "Sit down; I wish to talk to you."

Margaret looked about for the least comfortable chair in her proximity; and having found it, seated herself on its edge, and smoothed her long white apron on her knees, with nervous hands.

"Margaret," said Miss Bond, thoughtfully, "I heard to-day that you have an old and sick mother." "I have, ma'am," said Margaret, in alarm; "but indeed she'll never trouble you, ma'am—not in the least."

Miss Bond started in her chair. These reiterated confirmations of the character Luella gave her had somewhat the same effect on her consciousness as that which is produced by a blow on the nape of the neck; and for a moment or two she stared before her in a dazed manner ere she said:

"You think me a hard mistress." "No, no, ma'am; indeed and indeed I do not!" ejaculated Margaret.

"But fault-finding, very hard to please, Margaret?" she persisted. "And who wouldn't be with a greenhorn like myself? And I doubt that's what I'll always be. And, then, the weather is sometimes trying to a lady like you."

"But your mother—why did you never speak to me of her?"

"But sure, ma'am, why would I be troubling you? And I'd a mind for my place," faltered Margaret.

"You thought that I would send you away if I learned your mother depended on you?"

Her voice sounded hard and unsympathetic, not that she was either at the present juncture. She was only striving to repress her feelings.

"You see, ma'am, it was this way," hesitated Margaret. "I wanted to keep my place, for my mother needs the wages; and I had a dread of being troublesome like."

"And," Miss Bond went on, "you have worried about your mother, and that has made you at times—not careless, but not in sympathy with your duties." She hesitated for a word to express herself; and now that it was uttered, she wondered if Margaret would understand.

Margaret understood, and her tears fell fast.

"Well, it's true, ma'am," she replied; and, believing the dreaded expulsion close to come, she added with heartfelt resignation, "The Lord be praised!"

"You poor, dear soul!" cried Miss Bond, no longer able to control her feelings. "But I deserve that you should think me so cruel."

Poor Margaret stared in unfeigned amazement.

"I never said that, ma'am, nor thought it either. Indeed and indeed I did not!" she exclaimed.

That afternoon Miss Bond went to confession. Intentionally she had never made a bad one—perhaps in reality she never had. But today she made the best of all possible good confessions, the kind in which the motive for contrition is love—love for God our Father, and for His children, all of whom without exception are our brothers and our sisters.

When Father Cudahy—"one of those priests we read about in good books," said the Belford people—opened the envelopes containing the donations for the much needed decorations of his church, one that was anonymous contained a sum sufficient of itself to pay for the desired altar. It was not long before he found out that Miss Bond was the donor.

Margaret's mother came to Belford to live; and the invigorating air, as well as the proper food provided by one who never ceased to be her friend, gave her new life; and no longer entirely dependent on Margaret, she helps by plain sewing to support herself.

The green and white luncheon was a great success. Luella outdid herself, and was well seconded by the heart-relieved Margaret. An honored guest was a Miss Julia Haydon, at which the St. Jude set would have rebelled had they dared. Miss Bond was too great a power for them to attempt to upset her leadership.

When, years after, a new church was erected in Belford for the increasing Catholic population, Father Michael Haydon called it St. Elizabeth's, in remembrance, perhaps, of a woman whose endowments to the seminary made it possible for him to extend his course of studies for the priesthood.

It was in the season of the Epiphany that Miss Bond, passing down a corridor, heard Margaret say to Luella:

"It would be a great honor for you to have the mistress for your godmother."

"I know it would. But I'd rather have you, Margaret; for it was you led me first to think of it," said Luella.

Miss Bond acquiesced with humility to the judgment of her maid; but when Luella came to be confirmed, she provided the frock and veil, and then she was her godmother.—Harold Dijon in the Ave Maria.

A CLEAN-CUT ISSUE.

Father Chiniquy is not alive to defend his own character. It is usually better to abstain from censure of the departed.—The Presbyterian Witness.

This is a deliberate attempt at drawing the proverbial red herring across the trail. Chiniquy's character, or rather his lack of one, does not cut any sort of figure in the case. A book of Chiniquy's has been shown in these columns to contain a slander, diabolical in its foulness and venom, against Catholic priests and Catholic women. This slander has been shown to be issued on what must have been deliberate misrepresentation of the plain rule laid down by the Church for the guidance of her priests in the tribunal of penance. The book which embodies this abominable slander is published under the auspices of Evangelical Protestantism, is distributed throughout the world by Evangelical Protestant agencies, is taken into the homes of Evangelical Protestants, and read by hundreds of thousands of Evangelical Protestants. Well, the Presbyterian Witness stands sponsor for the author of this book; in the face of the proof that was furnished in these pages of his deliberate lying, it gives him a certificate of character; it describes him, no longer indeed as "the dear old saint," but still as "the good old veteran." A man may lie and publish to the world the most shameless calumnies against his neighbors, and still be accounted "good" by the Witness, provided the neighbors in question are Catholic priests and Catholic women. But how long is this sort of thing going to last? Are Evangelical Protestants prepared to keep right on reading Chiniquy's abominable books? and is the Presbyterian Witness prepared to pat them on the back for doing so? This, we most respectfully beg to submit, is the real issue before us; and it is clean-cut. Chiniquy's book is on trial, not Chiniquy's character, save in so far as it is bound up with his book. Will Evangelical Protestantism still continue to endorse and to propagate Chiniquy's foul slanders against us Catholics, even after these foul slanders have been confronted with the true teaching of the Catholic Church and exposed in all their naked deformity? This is the question.—The Casket.

"SIGN WASN'T RIGHT. He—I wonder why Miss Elderly never married?"

She—Oh, I suppose she was born in the wrong time of the moon.

He—The wrong time of the moon.

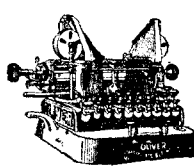
She—Yes when there wasn't any man in it.

NOURISHMENT FOR HER.

Marjory, getting well from typhoid fever, rebelled at regimen. "Eat your broth like a good little girl," begged the nurse.

"I won't," said the good little girl. I'm tired of nourishment. I want food.—Newark News.

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