

Suddenly he bethought him of his friend Jacques. He had noted that morning how unusually early he looked when he stepped into the cage, his little electric lamp seeming to throw queer shadows over his cold, grey eyes and stout nose. Something new was up, something beside the old, and that was had enough. He had heard him growl out that morning that he was going to work till midnight. Christ-like he would be there, no, he would meet the Knights of Columbus at the club; he wouldn't meet anyone, unless he chose to meet him at his drill, and that was in a pretty ticklish place just now; but if anyone cared to risk his head, he was welcome. Sandy accepted this doubtful invitation.

Jacques Sutton was driller No. 1 in that coal mine, the largest in the world, No. 2. And if Sandy was proud of being a mere door-keeper in No. 2 what was Jacques not? But he didn't do. Only disgust rankled in his heart against him for making in general, and for one woman in particular; weariness of life in general, and hatred of his own particular life. What was the use of living anyhow? He hated everybody, everything—except his drill. No trouble there; only beautiful work, with the rapidity and precision that only dead, polished metal, working by steam, electricity or compressed air, can do. His drill was a bit of perfection, tireless and like himself to-night, sleepless.

How well she works! Never had she seemed so full of life, so responsive to his eye and touch. And it soothed his anger that she so steeled with power and force, was yet so obedient to his will; for Jacques was a man who could not be trifled with. Any weaker force that opposed him he would crush, if he could; any weaker force that yielded, he would cherish, if it were cherishable.

He is now five feet in from the passage, where the ceiling is stayed up by steel and stone. He has done more work last three days than any two drillers, for he has worked night and day. Was it to vent his anger, or test a new invention—an invention of his own which added effectiveness and speed to his drill? For he loves his machine, the only unchanging companion of the long day or night! All the same, day or night, in that dark region, where the blessed light of the sun never comes. Often as he works near the glare of the electric bulbs, the wind and damp chilling him through and through, he thinks of the beautiful world above. To-night, somehow his mind keeps running in such places. The damp and cold without are not so chill as the damp and cold within.

"Hello, old man! Fehw, but its dratly like here! This is a queer old corner you're get into!" cried Sandy, "ain't ye goin' home to night?"

"Not before 12. I'm testing my new drill. Isn't she a beauty?"

"I heard about her," said Sandy, wondering how he was to introduce his subject. "I heard about her at Miss Smith's." He had set himself a pesky task. It was easy to manage doors; there is some swing to them; but a man! "She gave me this, opening his coat and showing a bright, new badge fastened to the tattered lining with a silver pin. Jacques raised his eyes for a moment only, and Sandy saw by their gleam that it was the whole mine was lined with badges, it would make no difference to him. What could he do?

"Whir—r—r—whiz—z—went the machine, and Sandy readjusted his cap and prayed for light to take the right track. Jacques' face was completely hidden by his hat.

"I sent her a Christmas present. I s'pose she has it by this time. I'm goin' to see her tomorrow."

"Whir—r—r—whiz—z—went the monstrous machine!" Was he cold or warm or hot? Was he near the right track? If he only knew!

"She told me she was so happy las' Christmas—"

"She did!" "A pair of fiery orbs were fixed on Sandy for one instant, then nothing could be seen but the top of a hat.

"Whir—r—r—whiz—z—went the machine. He must make 'em up. But was he warmer? Was he getting nearer?"

"She made a pretty ba'ge for some one that's mad at her. He oughtn't to be mad at her."

"Humph!" snorted something. Was it the drill or the man?

"She is so good—to everybody what gives—her a—"

"Whir—r—r—whiz—z—went the machine. How provoking a machine is when you want to carry on a conversation! If he would only lift his head! Was he doing his self-imposed task well? If she were only there to help him!

"I told her I'd take the ba'ge tomorrow!" an' anny one u'd-know—"

"Know what?" snapped voice and eyes.

"Know—know—know. You know, Jacques, that—that she's—allays—kind to me," despairingly. "And she wants to make up, I know she does," desperately.

"Whir—r—r—whiz—z—went the machine. He had done it now. Jacques would squelch him for interfering, and she would never forgive him; for she had not told him she was sorry; he had just guessed it. Neither had she told him she wanted to make up. Oh, what could he do! Yes Jacques was mad! My—oh my, he was hot enough, now!

Jacques suddenly wheeled round and bent over something nervously. Now, only a broad back was to be seen. Who could summon courage and talk to a back? Suddenly a look of terror leaped into Sandy's eyes. With the force of a man he threw himself against the stool on which his friend tilted, and sent him sprawling across the track, then darkness closed over him.

Jacques, after a few moments, picked himself up, hardly knowing just what had happened. He gazed about in a dazed sort of way. What was it? Where was Sandy? Where was his drill? Who could answer? He ran to the telephone nearby and summoned help. When the men came, he explained that a block of coal had fallen from the ceiling, and had blocked up

his little corner; that Sandy was under it, or behind it.

With strong willing hands they went to work. The creak of the pick axes was low and then broken by some one calling, "Sandy!" But no answer came. In a few hours the monster block was out. Behind it they found Sandy, who smiled at them feebly. He was un hurt but almost suffocated. Tenderly Jacques wrapped him in his great coat and carried him to the nearest car.

As they stood at the foot of the shaft, waiting for the cage to take them up, Sandy said, "I hope I didn't hurt you when I pushed you out. I saw it coming, I knew I couldn't get out over the drill, but I thought I could get you out of the way. You were so near out," looking up into a face now all tenderness.

Jacques pressed his arm, while a tear rolled down his grimy face. How pleasant, how sweet life seemed now! Why even that water that incessantly trickled down the sides of the shaft, sounded like sweetest music. Strange, he had often thought it dismal.

In a moment the cage descends. Jacques lifts Sandy upon it, and supporting him with one hand, he grips with the other, the iron bar above his head. It takes only a few seconds to ascend the straight shaft, one thousand feet deep, but he has many thoughts in those few seconds.

"You'll come home with me, to-night Sandy. You'll have to live with me now: you saved my life, you know."

Sandy clung closer and whispered, "And by and bye—she'll come, and we'll all live together? Sandy was an orphan and longed for the luxury of home life and somebody to love."

"And by and bye—she'll come, please God, whispered the driller, but Sandy had to strain his ears to hear.

"What made you turn round—turn your back on me that time?" asked Sandy after a pause.

"I turned to remove a cartridge from my revolver," whispered the driller.

"One for Jack?" whispered Sandy, crestfallen.

"No. Never mind. It's all over now."

The cage stopped with a jerk, and the two stepped out. The clear blue sky, moon-light and starry, greeted them, while over the sharp frosty air came the distant chiming of midnight bells, calling to the world; "Peace on earth to men of good will!"

THE MONEY CRAZE

CARDINAL GIBBONS ON STANDARDS OF HONOR IN AMERICAN BUSINESS LIFE.

Business life in this day is all absorbing. We are running the risk of carrying our enthusiasm for doing things too far past the sensible mean, where ambition to succeed and industry are still compatible with a certain commendable enjoyment of the things of this life that are good and pleasant, writes Cardinal Gibbons in the Van Norden Magazine.

Some of the modern seekers after wealth will sacrifice anything rather than be known for what they are. Clear and palpable dishonesty itself is shielded behind barriers cleverly constructed by the brightest minds in the country. Men of the highest standing in the financial world are guilty of acts as members of corporations which they would scorn to commit as individuals. This statement was made to me by the late Mr. James G. Blaine. I believe it to be true. The money craze, with the corruption it has developed in this country, is, to me, the greatest of the evils we have to face.

Not only is it true that men of the highest national standing take part in transactions in their capacity as members of a corporation which they could not be induced to take part in as individuals, but it has come to be true that the greater, the richer, the more powerful the corporation, the more the individuals composing it trust the corporation itself to the front, shielding themselves behind its great bulk.

BUSINESS LEAGUE RESPONSIBILITY.

When men turn themselves into a business league, their responsibility is so over shadowed that their individual responsibility is, seemingly, lessened. This is why many men, in their corporate capacity, assent to measures from which as individuals the dread of public opinion or the dictates of conscience would cause them to shrink.

No friend of his race will quietly contemplate the grasping avarice exhibited by such heartless monopolists. Their sole aim is to realize large dividends, without regard to the paramount claims of justice or Christian charity. They are filled with a sordid selfishness which is deaf to any cry of distress. Intolerant of honest rivalry, they use all sorts of unlawful means to drive from the market competing industries.

They endeavor even—often, it is feared, with success—to corrupt our National and State Legislatures and our municipal councils.

CONTROLLED BY CORPORATIONS.

Throughout the whole of the United States—and, of course, in other countries also—there is to day a continuous network of syndicates and trusts, of companies and partnerships, so that every operation from the construction of a huge steamship to the manufacture of a tiny pin is controlled by some corporation.

And, like the car of juggernaut, they crush every obstacle that stands in the way of their success.

The great question is, how shall we remedy the evil?

Undoubtedly correction will be found in the creation of a more intelligent and less complacent public sentiment.

A corporation should be regarded as the sum of the entire number of individuals composing it, and each member of that corporation should be held by the public to a full accountability for the public to a full accountability for the public and every act of the entire corporation, whether that act be great or small, important or unimportant.

It may take years to educate the public to this comprehension of the responsibility of the individual in the great monopolies, but the work must be undertaken by each one of us who calls himself a good citizen, if corrup-

CONVERTS AND CONFESSION.

As some well meaning non Catholics feel a great deal of needless alarm and anxiety about confession, it may be well to remark:

1. That we are bound to confess only mortal sins, that is, grievous sins which "kill the soul," by depriving it of the grace of God, which after self examination can be called to mind. Our venial sins, that is, lesser faults, which, "they offend God, do not kill the soul," we are not bound to confess although it is recommended to do so. Holy Communion, an act of contrition, or a fervent act of love of God, suffices through the merits of Christ, without sacramental confession, to cleanse the soul from the stain of venial sin.

2. That it is not required of us to mention each sin of the same sort or kind in detail, but the sins of one kind may be mentioned together; for example, the penitent may say: "I accuse myself of having been guilty of grievous disobedience to my father or mother, or of having given way to great spiteful anger, about so many times," stating according to the best of one's belief, after careful examination, the number; and thus also of other mortal sins. A circumstance which may cause a venial sin to become mortal, or a sin of one kind to become a sin of another kind must also be declared.

3. That if we are unable to remember the exact number of our sins, it is enough to state the probable number to the best of our recollection and judgment, saying: "I have committed that sin, about so many times a day, a week, or a month. In fact, we are bound to reveal our conscience to the priest as we know it ourselves, there, those doubtful as doubtful, and the probable number as probable; for God does not require impossibilities, but only what we can offer, namely, sincerity and ordinary diligence.

Confession is the healing medicine of the soul, and we must not wonder that in the Providence of God, it is somewhat bitter; yet we ought to be ready to use it for our soul's health, as we take a medicine for the good of the body, however distasteful that medicine may be.

If prisoners condemned to death were offered release on condition that they make confession of their misdeeds, in secret to one of the judges, who would be bound in honor never to reveal a word of what was confessed, they would easily overcome their natural dislike to self accusation in order to purchase life and liberty. So a Christian ought not to consider it too hard a condition of forgiveness to have to confess to any priest he may choose, who has the authority, called "faculty," from his Bishop to hear confessions, and who is most solemnly bound, not only in honor, but in conscience, by the law of God, to be ready to lay it for our soul's health, to the most sacred and inviolable secrecy with regard to what he hears in sacramental confession. The penitent sinner will not think it too hard to make confession of his sins if he only considers the punishment his sins have deserved, the sufferings which our Saviour underwent for his sins, the freedom of the slave, his rescue from the slavery of Satan, and his restoration to the friendship of God, and that a great folly it is for the sake of sparing himself a little shame here in confessing his sins to expose himself to eternal shame hereafter.

Jesus Christ shed His precious blood to the last drop, in the midst of the most cruel torments on the Cross, to provide for us sinners an over-flowing fountain of salvation in the sacrament of penance—the sacrament of reconciliation. To refuse to make use of this life-giving sacrament, on the plea that to confess to a priest is disgraceful to nature, is unworthy of a Christian.

Confession is not after all hard in practice as some not accustomed to it may imagine. With God's grace and the assistance of your confessor, added to your own good disposition, confession becomes surprisingly easy and consoling.

How many converts there are who though in alarm before making their confession have afterwards exclaimed: "And that that! Had I only known how easy it is, I would not have endured upon my conscience the burden of sin so long, put off my reception into the Catholic Church. Thank God now I feel an unshakeable peace, and Cardinal Newman feelingly observes on this point:

How many are the souls in distress, anxiety, or loneliness, whose one need is to find a being to whom they can pour out their feelings unheard by the world! Tell them out to those whom they cannot tell them out to those whom they see every hour. They want to tell them and not to tell them; and they want to tell them out yet be as if they were not told; they wish to tell them to one who is strong enough to bear them;

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