

under the counter he drew forth a bright, silvered glass reflector. He fastened it to the gas fixture and a stream of light was thrown on the statue.

"Mary, of the royal house of David!" he murmured, as he sank into his armchair and gazed on the marble. The flickering of the light changed the expression on the beautiful face of the statue and produced the effect of life. The old man's mind wandered back to the days of Israel and followed the destinies of the chosen people through the ages. He was recalled from his meditations by the voice of Rachel, his wife, who, alarmed by his long sojourn in the shop, had descended from the living rooms above to seek him.

Aaron Mandelbaum was an officer of the Synagogue and Rabbi Jacobs was a frequent caller on this pillar of Juda. He entered the little shop a few days after the artist's visit and his eyes instantly rested on the statue.

"Ho, Aaron Mandelbaum, what graven image is this thou hast set up under thy orthodox roof?" demanded the Rabbi, pursing his lips and ternerly regarding Aaron.

"That," replied Aaron, "is Mary, of the royal house of David."

"Vae!" cried the Rabbi, "knowest thou not she was the mother of Him whom the Gentiles call the Christ? Surely such a graven thing should not have room in the house of a Jew."

"I neither adore nor serve it," exclaimed Aaron, "it is a pledge brought here by a starving artist."

"Get rid of it, Aaron. Give it not house room," advised the Rabbi.

"Never will I part with it until its owner demands it," resolutely replied Aaron. "Is it not beautiful? The beauty of purity and goodness is on the face and, moreover, Rabbi, thou knowest she was of the Royal Palmist's line, therefore shall her image rest securely here. I have said it!"

The Rabbi, knowing well Aaron's strength of will, and fearing a break with the best friend and most generous supporter of the Synagogue, never again referred to the statue.

Time passed and the sculptor never returned to redeem his pledge. Many of the evening hours that had formerly been given to the perusal of the newspapers or the study of the law of Israel were now passed gazing at the statue and meditating on the fortunes of the chosen people. Aaron had often noted the effect that the beautiful statue produced on many of his customers. The loud and rancorous voices of the brazen and vicious were sometimes hushed to a whisper when their eyes rested on the pure white figure. Many times the weak and unfortunate had reverently made the sign of the cross, or brushed away a tear and had departed to return no more. Memory had carried them back to better and happier days and had awakened resolutions of amendment.

When little Rachel and David, Aaron's grandchildren, visited the shop they sat at the old man's feet, reverently regarded the beautiful statue and listened to his tales of Judith and Esther and Sara. While thus engaged one day the entrance of a portly stranger interrupted the old man's story.

"Mr. Mandelbaum, I presume? Some time ago, Mr. Mandelbaum, an artist pledged a statue,—ah, there it is! I'd know our poor dear Browning's work anywhere. Poor fellow! That man was the greatest sculptor the country has produced, sir. He died, sir, in Bellevue Hospital, of a complication of diseases, resulting from starvation. The miserable part of it was that we, his friends, who would have given the coats off our backs to help him, never guessed his poverty. It was another case of post mortem fame, Mr. Mandelbaum. After he had been laid away in his grave the connoisseurs discovered that he was a genius. Now to business. A friend of mine, a detective, told me of the beautiful marble in your possession and I determined to look it up. It is undoubtedly a valuable specimen of Browning's genius. The time for redeeming the pledge has, I suppose, long since passed, but I am prepared to pay you a good round sum for it."

"The statue would have been delivered to its owner at any time, my friend," replied Aaron, "but as he is dead I will never sell it. It is mine." No inducement that the stranger offered could induce Aaron to change his resolution.

On that evening the green baize doors swung open with a crash and a woman entered. She was young in years, scarcely out of her teens, yet her face had the dry, parched look of age. Its dead pallor was heightened by the rouge carelessly daubed on the cheeks. A battered hat rested on her masses of dishevelled black hair. Her great eyes had a hunted, hopeless expression.

"There, Pop, that's the last of my old belongings," she cried, throwing a small gold medal, with a faded and soiled blue ribbon attached, on the counter. "The relics of former gentility," she added, and the light, forced laugh that followed had little of mirth in it.

"Now, you miserable old skinkflint, you, I want enough non' to hit the pipe just once more and then—and then, when the tide is near the flood, I'll slip off the dock and that'll end the whole miserable story," and there was a sigh and a catching of the breath that sounded like a sob. Aaron picked up the medal and as he examined it the girl continued: "I've fallen,—fallen so low that there is no hope for me in this life or in the"—her eyes, that had been wandering restlessly around the shop, had rested, when she paused, on the calm, pure face of the statue of the Mother Most

Chaste. They were held there, and bending her body she rested her elbows on the counter and her chin on the palms of her hands; but her great, awe-stricken eyes never left the marble figure standing out, in the glare of the light from the reflector, against the dark background of the shelves. When she ceased speaking, Aaron glanced at her, regarded her silently for a few moments, shrugged his shoulders, and then moved softly towards the front of the shop. The noisy tick of the timepieces and the far-off roar of the streets were the only sounds that disturbed the stillness of the place. Slowly—slowly but surely the hard, callous lines on the girl's face softened, the hunted, hopeless look was gone from the beautiful dark eyes and they became suffused with tears. A drop rolled, unheeded, down the face and fell on the counter.

"Mother of God," she murmured in the tones a little child uses in talking to its mother. "Mother of God, I wonder if your Blessed Son would forgive me, have mercy and help me so wicked as I am?"

"With the Lord there is mercy and with him plentiful redemption." In deep, earnest tones the words of the royal palmist flowed from Aaron's lips. Inured by forty years' experience to every phase of wretchedness and misery and vice the girl's prayer had touched his heart. She heeded him not but continued:

"O Mother, Blessed Mother! I cannot be the little girl who drove with father and mother from the farm to Mass, in the little church at Homedale, every Sunday. I cannot be the little child who was so light hearted, so happy—the sunshine of the house's father called me. All these terrible things that have happened since I left home must have been a nightmare and, by-and-by, I'll hear mother call and I'll wake up in my little room at home and hear the cows lowing and see the cherry tree, covered with blossoms, peeping in at the window—and O merciful Jesus, forgive a poor, miserable sinner." The little face was bowed to the counter and sob after sob shook her frame. Aaron waited patiently until, from exhaustion, she ceased weeping and then approaching her gently raised her, put into her hands the medal and a piece of money, and said:

"Girl, it is written that the Nazarene, Him whom you call the Christ, said to the sinful woman, 'Go, and sin no more,' and this I say to you: may the God of our fathers strengthen you."

With bowed head, like one dazed, the girl walked towards the door. She halted at the threshold and after a long look at the statue, passed out into the night.

Although two years had passed there were but few changes in Aaron Mandelbaum's little shop. Aaron, it is true, was feebler and lent more attentive ear to his good wife Rachel's counsel that he should retire from business and pass his remaining years in ease.

He was debating this subject in his mind, one day, when a woman entered the shop. Her eyes, dark beautiful eyes, Aaron noted, rested on the statue that still remained in its compartment on the shelf. Pausing before it a moment her lips moved in prayer and then turning to Aaron, she asked:

"Do you know me?" Aaron scrutinized the pale face of the woman, marked its calm, sad expression, but failed to recognize her.

"Do you remember an unfortunate girl who called here one evening, two years ago, to pledge a medal and—"

"I do, I do!" interrupted Aaron. "I am that girl. Through God's infinite grace and mercy I fled from the awful life I had been leading and returned to the home I had disgraced. My poor mother had died, but my good old father was living, and he took me in. He has gone to his reward and, having left me well provided with this world's goods, I feel that I should devote my means and what remains of me of life in doing penance for my sins, and how better could I please God than by helping the fallen? I have submitted my plan to those in authority and they have given it their approval. I am seeking a house, hereabouts, to fit it up as a refuge for my fallen sisters. In it they shall be free to come and go. Its discipline shall be mild. Its sermons shall be preached in parable and by example. Oh, Mr. Mandelbaum, with God's help and the assistance of Our Blessed Lady, Refuge of Sinners, more souls will be saved from destruction even as mine was saved. Will you assist me in my work?"

Aaron, without replying, hurried to the rear of the shop and opening the door, called:

"Rachael! Rachael!" His old helpmate responded promptly to the call, and for an hour these three were deep in consultation.

The result of their deliberations was that Aaron consented to sell the old house to the visitor at an extremely low price, provided the refuge should be known as "The House of David."

The statue that had played so important a part under its roof was to be enshrined in the little chapel and Aaron expressly stipulated that he should have free entry to the chapel, at any and all times, to visit "Mary, of the royal house of David."

* * * * * You certainly would not recognize the old building. The little show window has given place to a beautiful stained glass window. The baize covered doors have gone, and the doors of oak, beneath the little gothic porch, are always open to the weak and erring. That which was formerly the shop is now the chapel, and on a pure white altar rests the beautiful statue of Our Blessed Lady. On the floor

above are the bright, cheerful refectory and sitting-room, and on the top floor the dormitory, with its rows of cots covered with spreads as white as driven snow. Oh! what a contrast to the vile hovels of vice and misery in the same street, and that very contrast is a valuable aid in the work of rescue. Mother Ann, as the beloved foundress is lovingly called, and her devoted assistants, have snatched many a brand from the burning. She is loved alike by those who have found peace and by those who have not found it yet.

You should have been in the refuge on the eve of the feast of the Assumption. Mother Ann had called for flowers to deck Our Lady's shrine. During the evening and far into the night they came. Flowers of all varieties, brought by hands that were calloused and hardened by toil, purchased by money laboriously earned, every cent of which, so expended, was a prayer from the heart because it meant self-denial and sacrifice; flowers brought in by soft hands, glistening with jewels, purchased by the wages of sin. On Assumption day Our Lady's altar was a bower of beauty. In the quiet afternoon, when the light streaming through the stained glass window cast its glow along the little aisle, two figures passed down towards the altar. Mother Ann supporting the tottering old man, Aaron Mandelbaum. He was paying his accustomed visit to Mary of the House of David.—William Harper Bennett in Donohue's Magazine.

REVERENCE IN GOD'S HOUSE.

Reverence in the church is required of everyone because of the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. He is there in His Divine Majesty in the adorable Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and as no subject can be unmindful of the presence of his king, no one can be unmindful of the presence of the King of Glory, Our Lord. There should be no talking in the church or whispering either in the pews or in the aisles, in the front of the church, or in the choir, or in the back of the church, or any gossiping in the vestibule. The church is not a market place nor a news stand, but a place to adore our Lord, to pray, to receive the sacraments. The church, to quote the sentiments of a Paulist Father, is the best place to show good manners, a fact which a few persons seem to overlook. For the sake of the minority a few hints are given: If there is a crowd going into the church, don't try your utmost to elbow everybody else and increase the general discomfort. Take it easy. Don't aim a blow at the holy water font and immerse the whole hand. Dip the finger in lightly and then sprinkle yourself alone, not the others standing around you. Walk quietly down the aisle to your pew and take the most convenient seat therein. Don't lay siege to the end of the seat and hold it against all comers. We should like to see that "don't" printed in large and very black letters. Never disturb your neighbors by your prayers. They should know their own. Be attentive to the priest at the altar. A silent good example is most telling and most edifying. Never spit upon the floor: it is in exceedingly bad taste. In going out, after at least a short prayer of thanksgiving, take your time. Don't leave God's house in a great hurry. Try to postpone any prolonged meeting with friends until you are outside. During confession hours never deprive any one of his or her place. It shows but a poor spirit in which to receive the sacrament of penance to rob one of what belongs to him. It is not at all forbidden to allow another, who for some necessary reason must hurry, to go ahead of yourself.

A PRIEST'S FIDELITY.

"I was wonderfully impressed with the fidelity of Catholic priests in answering sick calls a short time ago," said a gentleman who dropped into the club as a visitor. "It was on one of the Northern roads last autumn, and at a certain station a Catholic priest came into the coach and dropped into a seat with me. After a few minutes he asked me if I would allow him to sit next the window for a short distance. 'The fact is,' said the Father, 'I want to throw off a note at a mill we will soon pass.' Of course I accommodated him, and when we approached the mill he leaned out and tossed a note, bound about a piece of stick, upon the steps of one of the little cabins in which resided mill employees. He smiled when he saw a little girl run to pick it up."

"You see," said the Father, "there is a sick man there and he has sent for me to come. It is eight miles from where I live and there is no road except the railroad through the woods and around the ponds and lakes. It is only three miles from the junction on beyond us here. I tried to get permission to have the train stop, but it is late and the summer travel is heavy and they would not stop there. I can get a man to bring me back on a hand car."

"So the Father went along to the junction, and as I had to change cars there and had a few minutes to wait, I saw the outcome of the trip. The track foreman and his men had gone away on a work train and would not be

back till night. The junction is a very deserted place, the depot and one house being all there is to it. The depot is manned by a force of one, who is baggage master, express messenger, ticket seller and key manipulator, so the priest could not find a railroad man to help him. But he had the permission of some one in authority to use a hand car on the track. The reverend gentleman mounted the platform, pulled off his coat, loosened his collar and bent to his work. He had been called to administer the last sacrament of his Church to a man supposed to be dying away out in an Adirondack lumber camp, and he had sent word that he was coming.

"I watched him till he pumped the heavy old hand car away up around the bend in the road, and when my train backed up the branch and I went forward about my duties it was with a higher idea of the priesthood than I ever possessed before.—Catholic Review.

DISCOURAGEMENT.

The progress of spiritual life is slow with most of us. We go along day by day, and it seems as if we had advanced but little since the day we began. It seems to us as if we were still standing at the starting-place, with the goal as far off as ever. The good resolutions which we made when we began to serve God are not forgotten, neither are they broken. But the same evil influences are all about us, tempting us and luring us on to commit sin again, as in the days of our wickedness—those sins which we renounced years ago, and which we have renounced many a time since. And the older we grow the fiercer, perhaps, become those temptations. We think it may be that now we ought to be free from them; that as we have stopped sinning, the desire, even involuntary, of sinning again ought to leave us. And because temptations continue we imagine that sin is within us and that we must purge it out. So we try to make a general confession. The result is not satisfactory, and we fret and worry and delude ourselves with the belief that we are wholly evil, and that we have made no progress since we started. We have fallen into the error so common, especially among pious people, that conscience is sin.

The truth of the whole matter is this, summed up in a few words of Holy Scripture: "My son, when thou comest to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation."

God wishes us to purge our souls as well as to strengthen them, and He allows us to be tempted that we may have not only the merit of resistance, but also the strength which comes from repeatedly engaging in battle with the enemy. For the more you fight, the greater will be your experience in the battles to come; and the more victories you gain, the more easily will you gain those which God puts in your hand.

The whole man is to be purged and cleansed. Nothing defiled can enter heaven. So if you have put yourself into the hands of God, you must let Him do with you what He pleases. He has His ways and means, and His ways are not your ways. So He allows Satan to tempt you as He allowed him to tempt St. Paul and Job, and indeed all His chosen ones. He has chosen you, and He asks you to be patient while He works out His purpose in your soul. Look, therefore, on the temptations with which you are beset as so many chances by which you may resist, and so advance. Indeed we would not bid you to ask anything else from God but grace to overcome. With each temptation that comes there is a grace tenfold stronger, which is for your use. Use it, then, boldly for the honor of God and the good of your soul. And do not be discouraged if these temptations last as long as your life in this world. Do not get discouraged in the Christian life and be tempted to say, "I make no advance, because I am not free from temptation." But rather in the midst of your trials say with St. Paul, "I have fought the good fight; there is laid up for me a crown of just ice in heaven."—Sacred Heart Review.

THACKERAY ON THE CHURCH.

William Makepeace Thackeray, the famous novelist, seems himself to have felt at times the heart hunger after communion with the world-wide Church which has led so many of his countrymen into her fold. This is how he expresses it in one of his later works:

There must be moments, in Rome especially, when every man of friendly heart, who writes himself English and Protestant, must feel a pang at thinking that he and his countrymen are isolated from European Christendom. An ocean separates us. From one shore or the other one can see the neighboring cliffs on clear days: one must wish sometimes that there were no stormy gulf between us; and from Canterbury to Rome a pilgrim could pass, and not drown beyond Dover. Of the beautiful parts of the greater Mother Church I believe among us many people have no idea: we think of lazy triars, of pining cloistered virgins, of ignorant peasants worshipping wood and stones, bought and sold indulgences, absolutions, and the like commonplace of Protestant satire. Lo! yonder inscription, which blazes round the dome of the temple (St. Peter's), so great and glorious it looks like heaven almost, and as if the words were written in stars, it proclaims to all the world that this is Peter, and on this rock the Church shall be built, against which hell shall not prevail. Under the bronze canopy his

throne is lit with lights that have been burning before it for ages. Round this stupendous chamber are ranged the grandees of his court. Faith seems to be realized in their marble figures. Some of them were alive but yesterday: others to be as blessed as they, walk the world even now doubtless; and the commissioners of heaven, here holding their court a hundred years hence, shall authoritatively announce their beatification. The signs of their power shall not be wanting. They heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, cause the lame to walk to-day as they did eighteen centuries ago. Are there not crowds ready to witness to their wonders? Is there not a tribunal appointed to try their claims; advocates to plead for and against; prelates and clergy and multitudes of faithful to believe them? Thus you will kiss the hand of a priest to-day, who has given his hand to the friar whose bones are already beginning to work miracles, who has been the disciple of another whom the Church has just proclaimed a saint—held in hand they hold by another till the line is lost up in heaven.

THE POPE'S REPLY.

In the address which he recently made to members of the Roman nobility, who called upon him to pledge their fidelity anew to the Holy See, Leo XIII. answered, in his characteristically trenchant and thorough fashion, an accusation that American Catholics have at different times being called to meet. That accusation, plainly stated, alleges that they who render allegiance to the Pope cannot be trusted to prove loyal to their country.

In repelling such an absurd accusation the Sovereign Pontiff asked what profit there could be in this false charge, which does not make for concord of minds, but, on the contrary, for dissension; which far from promoting the public good, shakes the State's solidest foundation, to wit, religion, and which profits no cause but the selfishness of sectarianism. Italy is not by any means the only land which has learned by bitter experience the truth and force of these Papal statements. Russia, not many years ago, waged war upon its Catholic subjects, charging them with disloyalty to the Empire, and the result was that anarchy grew apace and paused not until it assassinated the Czar. Germany was only too glad to recede from the position of hostility to the Church in which Bismarck and Falk placed her in the early seventies; and during our own A. P. A. experience more than one clear sighted Protestant did not hesitate to point out to those of his countrymen who were giving aid and encouragement to the proscriptionists, that they were pursuing a course which threatened society, the state, our liberties, and our cherished institutions with the greatest injury, if not with destruction.

Leo XIII. puts the matter pointedly and plainly when he says that whenever Catholics in any country are charged with civic disloyalty because of their fidelity to their religion and the Holy See, the only ones who profit by such truthless accusations are selfish sectaries and the enemies of Jesus Christ.

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