

"When a man wishes to cut down a tree he lays the axe to the root. Your objection reminds me of the compassion of the French barber. His neighbor heard yelps of agony from his dog every morning at about the same hour. A humane old lady called to inquire the cause. 'You see, my dear madame, that I have one dog very beautiful but for his tail, that is too long. I must take some of him off, but I am one man merciful. I not like to cut him all at once. The dog is so leetle, and I just take of a bit, un small morecean every morning.'"

"Dear Aunt Hilda, that is wonderfully applicable."

"You are young, and if you will be brave and earnest, I can promise you that time and faith shall cure your wounds. Would you like to walk with me to the Church. I am going to make the Stations?"

"Yes, indeed, I love to go to Church in the twilight. I seem nearer to Our Lord when I can kneel in the shadow just under the lamp before the tabernacle."

When Aunt Hilda arrived at the Tenth Station, she glanced affectionately toward the bowed head of her golden-haired favorite as she whispered:

"By thy ignominious stripping, Blessed Lord, teach this, thy child, to detach herself from earthly love, and to soar to the liberty of the children of God."

Ethna, hearing a slight noise in the sanctuary, looked up and discovered one of the fathers enter the confessional close to the altar of the Sacred Heart. A lady rose from the shadow of the pillar, and raising the curtain, took her place on the penitent's side of the screen. When she re-appeared, Ethna succeeded her in the tribunal. The sins and miseries of humanity are often so inextricably intermingled that the sinner often finds it impossible to make a confession without, at the same time, laying bare to the minister of Christ the gaping wounds of the soul. Perhaps this is by a merciful dispensation of Divine Providence, since the good Samaritan, prompted to compassion by the sight of such misery, pours therein the oil of consolation and the invigorating wine of wise counsel, Marvellous institution of the confessional, through whose agency the representatives of the Redeemer raise the pusillanimous, stimulate

the slothful, and apply to the souls of all, the infinite merits of the God-man.

"I am so glad you brought me to Church, Aunt Hilda," said Ethna, as they walked home in the sweet June night. "I had not been to confession for an age. The priest was so kind and good, you would think he had known me all my life."

The experiences of souls are often similar, and the priest is like the experienced physician, who can often diagnose a case at sight.

On Monday morning Mrs. Bryce and Ethna left town for "Sea-Side Holly." Letters came regularly to Aunt Hilda for about a month, but after an unusual term of silence, Mrs. Bryce wrote.

"SEA-SIDE HOLLY,

"New Jersey,

"July 30th, 1883.

"DEAR MRS. ACTON,—

"How I wish you were still near enough for us to run in and unload our burdens on you as we did a month ago. I am very anxious about Ethna. She worked very hard after our return. Those people left the cottage in a horrid condition. When we had restored everything to its proper place, Ethna appeared overcome by exhausting lassitude. She would lie in the hammock by the hour with her eyes closed. Sometimes I saw tears raining down her cheeks when she seemed unconscious of them. She has been trying to forget that stupid Scotchman, I know, but there is always a busy-body on hand to meddle. A letter came yesterday from that gossip, Miss Gaid. She said that she had received a letter from Mr. Stuart, and that 'he sent his affectionate regards to Miss Ethna.' What blundering bats some men are. Stuart ought to know that such a medium of communication would be unwelcome. A book came by the same mail to Ethna, addressed in Mr. Stuart's writing. I think it was the copy of Milner I lent him. He promised to read it at sea.

"July 3rd,

"I laid this sheet aside yesterday to put my bread in the oven. I am taking Judith's advice and am trying to mind my own business. I shall send you a loaf of this baking to show you that I can bake good bread. Ethna did not come to me as usual when she returned from the postoffice yesterday, so I went to look for her. She