

"Their reason," he said. "T' brains and notions, ain't it, Mrs. Jaxon?"

"Quite so. Now put reason and service together, and see what you get, can you?"

"A service as we understands. Is that it?" burst out Stacey. "Knowing what un's about."

"Ah, you've got it!" delightedly. "It isn't a blind, haphazard sort of thing, this gift that we should render to God; but a wide-awake body, with all its faculties and powers developed and educated to the utmost of our opportunities. Instead of being content with a stupid, ignorant doing of His Will by chance, or leaving it undone by chance, we shall feel a steady desire to study His wishes and help forward His work. But there's a great deal more than that to be understood by this word 'reasonable.' I'll tell you only one thing now, and we can talk the rest over another time more fully. Of course it is reasonable that we, for whom so much has been done, should do what we can by way of a very poor return. The masters who pay you expect you to earn the money, don't they?"

"That's on'ey rect," Furniss declared quickly.

"Only right and reasonable. So when you lads stand up in Church to-morrow, these of you that are to be Confirmed, I mean, and declare that you will try to give up what is wrong, and believe what is true, and do what is right, you will be promising to give to God a reasonable service. Think of that when you answer 'I do' to the Bishop."

Rather wearily did Mrs. Jaxon walk home that afternoon. Delightful as was her work, she found it often very fatiguing too. And perhaps she experienced even a slight twinge of impatience as a door that she was passing opened and a rough head thrust itself out.

"Mrs. Jaxon, ma'am. And if o'd be so bowld, wid ye come in a minute, me lady?"

No mistaking O'Hara's voice. Mary tried to smile as brightly as usual in response. But she looked worn and tired.

"I mustn't stay long. But oh—what an improvement!"

She could not help the exclamation, for a more changed home she had seldom entered. The floor and windows were clean, the table was scrubbed, and even the red bricks of the floor looked almost tempting, whilst O'Hara himself had a more self-respecting aspect than she had believed his weak countenance capable

of assuming. Strangest fact of all, not a child was to be seen.

"It's joost hersel' as is the cliver 'un," the man declared with pride. "O'd the intintion to come and tell yer, ma'am on'ey when oi saw yer passing oi had a fancy as yer should see. We've bin man and wife now this month and better. And it's bin the happiest month o' me loife. And so it has, entoirely, ma'am."

And then, as he brought a chair, he proceeded to tell Mrs. Jaxon how he had only once during that blissful period had "a dhrop," a lapse from virtue which occurred on the wedding day itself.

"And the very next night if she didn't take me to a Temperance meeting, and make me soign the pledge. *And she soigned it too*, ma'am, though she niver had a drain too much in all her born days. No beer nor sperrits nor nothing comes inside these doors now, ma'am! In me soul I belave I'll be able to kape the pledge this time. And the childher they go to Sunday School, the darlints, and—and it's all owin' to you, ma'am."

"I hope you have said a prayer about that pledge?" replied Mrs. Jaxon, smiling at the compliment, which she felt to be quite undeserved. And then she took her leave, meeting Mrs. O'Hara upon the doorstep, and congratulating her, with a shake of the hand, upon the wonders she had already wrought.

But if Mary herself had not altogether appreciated the pleasant duty thus brought in her way, Ivy and May were still more rebellious.

"Movvy is velly late," Ivy reiterated more than once from her stand by the drawing-room window, whence she could see down the street. "I want her to sing to me."

"And me," echoed May, with the faint smile quite fading. Then there came a shout of "Here she comes!" and the maid opened the door to allow the babies to rush into the hall.

"Yes, I'll sing when I've taken off my hat," Mary promised. "Go and ask Sarah to get tea up, and I'll be back in a minute."

She was scarcely more. But the interval had been long enough to allow a change to come over the aspect of the scene. When Mrs. Jaxon returned to the hall it was to find her husband there taking off his hat and coat. She went up to his side and slipped her hand through his arm.

"There's a gorgeous fire in here," she said, leading him towards the drawing-