

mitted to go to school, though hers was a case in which school discipline might have been highly efficacious; she had not even been considered capable of enduring the usual process of mental instruction at home. Thus, her education, even that inferior part which relates to the understanding and the memory, was as vague and irregular as could well be imagined. She was however, an extensive though superficial reader; and those who conversed with her only for a short time, believed her to be a much better informed person than she really was. We have said that, with all her disadvantages, Isabel was not at all absolutely disagreeable. So far from this, she generally attracted attention in company by her easy and lady-like manners, and by a countenance which, perhaps, was less beautiful than interesting and expressive. Unassailed by any of these severe trials which put to test the real principles upon which we act, she had not made the discovery herself, nor had any of her friends made it for her, that she was in reality selfish and unamiable; for while every one ministered to her gratification, she had only to express gratitude, affect a little willingness to deny herself, and expatiate on her regret at being the cause of so much trouble, and all went on exactly as she wished—the trouble was incurred, the attempted self-denial was frustrated, and the kindness for which she expressed her gratitude was repeated and increased.

"What a lesson do we learn by a sudden reverse of this order of things!—a lesson, perhaps, the most severe that experience ever teaches; while at the same time, our dependence upon animal and selfish gratification, our irritability, impatience, and wounded feeling when these are denied, show us but too faithfully the living pictures of those passions of which we believed ourselves incapable, simply because indulgence had hitherto lulled them to rest."

This listless and spoiled child, the story goes on to say, is married, but having no mental resources to fall back upon, and no taste for the active duties of life, she seeks *artificial excitement*; the result is such as might have been expected—she loses caste and sinks into obscurity.

HOW PERVERTS ARE MADE.—Catholics in neglecting the practice of their religion by missing Mass occasionally, by receiving the sacraments less and less frequently, by mingling too freely with heretics, gradually fall away from the faith and become mere listless beings or skeptics as far as religion goes. No Catholic became a pervert all at once. He was led by degrees from one omission to another. Faith will die without good works, and to keep it alive we must constantly feed it with those good works. Those lukewarm Catholics that just barely keep within the pale of the Church must regard their faith as simply alive and nothing more; that the least breath of temptation will extinguish it; that it cannot be revived without a special grace of God. To be a Catholic we must be practical and in earnest.

#### OUR BOOK TABLE.

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