

for a time, but it broke at last—her affection was gone, and during the last year of her life she lived with the Grey Nuns. As I told you she died three years ago."

"After her death I fell even lower if that were possible. This den," he cried with a fierce look of disgust, "is one of the worst in the city, and the bears out there are almost as human as the men who frequent the house—as myself!" and he fell into his chair with a groan.

It was some moments before I could steady my voice sufficiently to speak. Surely this man could not be all bad, if he were thoroughly hardened he would not speak as he had just done.

"Your life has indeed been wrecked," I said sadly, "but my dear Charley, all is not lost. The spirit of faith cannot be altogether dead within you, you are full of remorse, of contrition, and you know that is all God requires for pardon."

"Dave it's impossible," he cried in a despairing tone, which smote my ears more heavily than anything I had yet heard, "I have made my bed and I must lie in it. But, my God, the thought of dying in this way—!" He shuddered as he spoke.

"A hundred times," he went on, "have I been tempted to plunge this into my heart," and he drew from his breast a beautiful Spanish stiletto, "but there's something here that I believe would turn the point of the blade." He threw open his shirt and disclosed a brown scapular hanging on his breast. "I can't kill myself while I have this on me, and I can't bring myself to take it off."

I saw that there was still hope for him, and continued to urge him to make an effort to give up the life he was leading.

"For the sake of your mother's memory, and for the sake of him whose image is here," drawing from a leather case a small but exquisitely carved crucifix, which I always carry with me, give up this life, "You can't despair while you look on this."

He gazed at it steadfastly a moment, took it in his hand, reverently touched it with his lips, and then exclaimed, "Pardon, Lord, pardon," and dropping on his knees repeated the Act of Contrition.

Rising, he clasped my hand "Dear old friend you have been my good angel—

and with the help of God I *will* change my life. I will go to confession to-night, and tomorrow —"

"To-morrow, old man, you'll come to Ottawa with me, and I'll find you something to do. Good-bye, for a few hours. I know I can trust you to yourself until to-morrow."

He followed me to the street, still holding my hand, for his fingers seemed loth to leave mine, when we reached the door he said.

"Good-bye until to-morrow, Dave! God bless you, dear old friend! To-morrow Montreal shall see the last of Bunco Charley!"

At seven o'clock the next morning I was breakfasting leisurely at the St. Lawrence Hall. I had just received a despatch from the Superintendent telling me that "the boss" coiner had been arrested as he stepped from the boat, so that I was in the best of humor.

Glancing over the *Gazette* which lay beside my plate, my eye suddenly met a paragraph that almost petrified me.

"SUICIDE.—Charles Carbery, better known as Bunco Charley, the keeper of a low saloon on Commissioners' street, committed suicide at an early hour this morning. He was found by his assistant-bar-keeper sitting at a table in a back room, his hand resting on the handle of a handsome dagger, the blade of which had entered his heart. The coroner's inquest will be held at 10 o'clock."

Though naturally strong-nerved, I had to grasp the table firmly in order to keep my seat. Charley Carbery commit suicide after his promise to me last night! What were those last words he spoke? I thought they sounded strangely at the time. "To-morrow—Montreal shall see the last of Bunco Charley!" Did all our conversation only nerve him to the deed he had not courage for before? No! it was the half-dead embers of his faith that kept him from it then, and that faith was burning brightly when we parted. But perhaps despair came back upon him. No! Despair and perfect contrition cannot live together—and if Charley Carbery did not make an act of perfect contrition yesterday afternoon, then I don't know what contrition means. That act of contrition was never shammed. And!