

He was profoundly touched, and the cold gray eyes which for years had never known the smart of tears, suddenly grew misty. He joined his hands and tried to pray, but no words would come. He had even forgotten the aspirations taught him in his happy childhood.

Then he saw his nephew mount the altar-steps and begin the Mass, and as he watched, the contrast between their lives presented itself before him forcefully. The priest was devoting his youth and talents to the service of the Most High, and was laying up treasure in the 'House not made with hands,' while *he* had wasted his best years in the feverish pursuit of riches and temporal pleasures which now had turned to dead sea-fruit!

After the Gospel, Father Langdon preached for a brief while, and every word of his discourse, which was so tender, earnest, and strong, sank deep into the hearts of the listeners. He spoke of that first Christmas nineteen hundred years ago, when the Christ-Child had given up all the wealth of heaven to take upon Himself the poverty and sorrows of this world, so that he might become the Friend and Saviour of suffering humanity. And as he talked, John Raymond awoke to a sense of his own folly in having forsaken this One True Friend, whose love was as lasting and unchanging as eternity itself, and his gray head drooped lower and lower until it rested on his folded hands, nor did he move again until the Mass was over.

Presently Beatrice touched his arm and motioned him to accompany her to the Crib. He did so and falling on his knees beside her gazed intently at the image of the Divine Infant in His bed of straw.

His sister's loving eyes wandered to him anxiously yet hopefully and with all the fervor of her nature she prayed, "Help him, Sweet Babe, — in the name of the love that brought Thee down to earth, help and save him!"

The prayer was swiftly answered, as all heartfelt petitions are wont to be. The scales fell from John Raymond's eyes; the lesson he had learned of the frailty of human friendship in that painful moment when supposed reverses of fortune had caused him to be shunned, now helped him to realize that under all circumstances the great saving love of this Child-King was his for the seeking; the holy words he had learned at his mother's knee