

abide with him the more satisfying would be his income.

It is not surprising that I heartily hated Church and all it implied; with a very special hatred for "Abide with me," in which I had been forced to lift up my voice hundreds of times before I was fifteen years old.

I was so unhappy in the house of Canon Barr that I decided I must leave or die; it did not matter which. To effect my release I pretended to have gone violently insane. It is not certain if I deceived the Canon, but I think I did. When the foolish idea first came to me, I did not realise what a strain acting the madman would be, or how I could make an end of the comedy. I just played my little part and trusted to luck.

I started moderately by doing foolish things, grinning at every one one minute and being cross the next; striking and slapping all who approached me. This brought the Canon down on me with his favourite implement of torture—a nice, smooth flour barrel stave with a handle whittled at one end. He thought it was a case of ordinary rebellion. But one blow from the barrel stave was enough for me; and its effect, I fancy, startled the old brute. I flew at him like a wild cat, kicked his shins, bit him on the hand and on the calf of his leg, and tore his gown to ribbons. Of course I was no match for the Canon and his barrel stave, and received unmerciful punishment; but I played the game, throwing ink bottles, rulers, books, anything that came to hand, in the old fellow's face, and overturning desks and chairs like a maniac. He called on the boys for assistance. I brandished a ruler and threatened dire vengeance in a loud hysterical voice against any one who dared approach me, and the boys