

hair. For the old man had married his Irish cook, who had converted him. Then she went to heaven to receive her reward. The estate was entailed.

Dinner was announced. The old man looked at Luke. Luke returned the gaze calmly. The old man was disappointed. It was the duty of the chaplain to wheel him into dinner. Luke had failed to understand, and the nephew dutifully took his place, wheeled the old man out of the drawing-room, into the corridor, right to the head of the table, the huge mastiff walking gravely by his side. Luke was allowed to look at his uncle. He was a clergyman, and in his fiftieth year.

"Might I have one, sir?"

"Yes, one," said the old man.

It was a beautiful act of reverence to old age, or was it—mammion?

When the ladies had retired, the three gentlemen sat around the fire. There was solemn silence. Luke was not yet wholly subdued, although he had acquired the art of being silent for ten minutes; but a quarter of an hour was too great a strain. He addressed the old man:

"I dare say a good many yachts run in here in the summer and autumn months."

The old man was asleep.

"Did you see Stanley's latest?"

Luke said to the nephew.

"Stanley? Stanley?" coughed the clergyman. "Never heard of him."

"He has just returned from his tour through Egypt and the Holy Land. He accompanied the Prince of Wales."

"He must have had a jolly time. Franked all the way, I suppose?"

Luke saw the trend of his thoughts, poor fellow!

"I like Stanley," he said, "although he's as hard on celibate clergy as Kingsley."

"The awful fool!" muttered the clergyman.

"But then he had his five or six thousand a year, and no children."

The poor man groaned.

"Now," continued Luke, "I always pray for two persons—the Pope that invented celibacy, and the Chinaman that invented tea."

"So do I! So do I!" said his neighbor. "That is, I don't know about that Chinaman, but I like that Pope. God bless him!"

Luke watched the fire.

"Look here," the other answered, "it's all rot!"

"I beg your pardon," said Luke.

"I say, 'tis all rot," repeated his companion. "'Tis all L. S. D."

"I can't quite catch the subject," said Luke, "though I understand the predicate."

"All this rubbish about religion. Why, any man can be a religious in a thousand a year. Any man can be holy on two thousand a year. Any man can be a saint on five thousand a year. It's all this way. To be a saint you must be at peace with the world. Very good. But with five thousand a year, where's the trouble? Why, man, you can't have an enemy. You'd say boo to a fellow with five thousand a year, a palace, and a carriage? Pshaw!"

"I hope your excellent uncle has twice five thousand a year!" said Luke, consolingly.

But there came such a look of terror on the poor fellow's face that Luke changed the subject immediately.

"That's a magnificent St. Bernard!"

"A true blood! The monks gave him to my uncle!"

"That was kind."

"I suppose they thought St. Bernard would like it. He liked the English, you know!"

"I did not know. I'm deeply interested."

"I don't know much about these things; but I heard a clever fellow of ours say that St. Bernard gave the Pope of his day a rap over the knuckles, and that he opposed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception."

"Indeed! That must be a clever fellow," said Luke, sarcastically.

"Oh, yes! And, therefore, St. Bernard must be one of us, you know."

"I see. Any one that protests?"

"Exactly. Any man that makes a row against things as they are—"

"Eh? eh?" said the old man, opening his eyes.

The nephew was paralyzed. But the old man dropped asleep again.

"You were saying?" said Luke.

"Sh! No, sir, I was not saying."

"Well, you implied that you gather everything clean and unclean into the capacious sheets of heresy. I have noticed that a fellow over the water to one of your canons that it was a singular fact that in the Revised Version of the New Testament, whereas every rationalist and free-thinker is quoted, there's not a single Catholic writer ever mentioned."

"Of course not; of course not," said the nephew, who was watching his uncle anxiously.

"'Tis the tradition of your Church," said Luke, "and when the old men die—"

"Eh? eh? Who said I was dying?" exclaimed the old man, and dropped asleep again.

"For God's sake stop and look at the fire," said the alarmed nephew. "If he hears anything again 'tis all up."

"All right," said Luke.

So they watched the fire until the old man became restless again.

"What's his weak point?" whispered Luke.

"The view," whispered the nephew in an alarmed way.

Luke got up and went to the window. It was something to be proud of. As one looked down from the almost dizzy height, over the roof of detached villas, each nestling in its own dark-green foliage, and out across the quiet village to where the sea slept, stretching its vast peacefulness to the horizon, the words leaped to the lips: "Charmed magic easements, opening on the foam Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn."

But it was the peace, the Sabbath

peace of a Sabbath evening in England, that stole on the senses, and wrapped them out of the bare, bald present into the music and magic of the past. And, irresistibly, Lisnalle and all its loveliness rose up before the mind of Luke. It was now an infrequent and faint picture. Luke had blotted it from his everyday memory. He had said good-bye to his own land forever. After his last visit when everything looked so old and melancholy, and every white cottage was a sepulchre, he had tacitly made up his mind that his vocation was unquestionably to remain in England, work there and die there, and he only awaited the expiration of his seven years' apprenticeship to demand an *execut* from his own Bishop and affiliation to his adopted diocese.

"Yes," he said to himself, "everything points that way. I have found my metier. I must not throw it aside. I have no business in Ireland. I should be lost there, and we must not bury our talents in a napkin."

But somehow, standing in this broad bay-window, this long, summer twilight, Lisnalle would project its bareness and sadness across the calm beauty and the snug prosperity of this English village. He tried to blot it out. No; there it was, floating above the real landscape, as a mist floats in the air, over a sleeping lake. And he remembered that force argument he had with his own conscience, as he rocked on the boat the afternoon of the great day when he said his first Mass.

"I was right," he said; "if I had remained at home, what should I be now? A poor, half-distracted professor in a seminary, or a poor, ill-dressed, ill-housed curate on the mountain, and see what I am!"

And Luke lifted his watch chain and thought of his greatness.

"Eh? eh?" said the old man, waking up finally. "What did you say?"

"I say," said Luke, promptly, "that there is not in the world except perhaps at Sorrento or Sebeulco, a view to equal that."

"Ha! did you hear that, George?" chuckled the old man; "did ye hear that?"

"Yes, sir," said George; "Mr. Delmege has been raving about it the whole evening."

"Mr. Delmege has excellent taste," said the old man; "here, George, the ladies await tea."

He took occasion to whisper to Luke.

"I wish the Bishop would send you here. I have endowed the mission—a hundred a year. And you should dine with me every day. Eh?"

"It would be delightful," said Luke. And as he walked slowly, step by step with the yawning mastiff after the armchair of the host, he pictured to himself a home in this delightful village, with books and pen and paper, crowds of converts, a quarterly article in the Dublin select society, an occasional run to the city or to Aylesburgh to preach a great sermon, correspondence with the world's literati, then ecclesiastical honors, and beautiful, dignified age. Alas! and his Master's mind was weaving far other destinies for him; and swiftly and suddenly this vision of the priestly Sisyraite vanished.

Next day the old man broached the subject again. He had set his heart on having a resident priest at Sea-therpe. Luke referred him to the Bishop; but he more than hinted that the project would be exceedingly agreeable to himself.

"Dear me!" he said, as he returned to Aylesburgh by the morning train, "how swiftly we pass to extremes. It's a seesaw between the 'upper ten' and the 'lower five.' Who do I prefer? Hardy a fair question. But if I had the prospect of that horrid prison before the mental landscape, and Primrose Lane, would lie be the brighter? Who knows?"

He drew the subject around deftly that evening after tea. The good Canon was anxious to enter into, and guide rightly, the strange, emotional nature that was thrown into his hands. But he confessed himself at fault. He had studied every phase of Luke's character, he touched every mood, and reluctantly had come to the conclusion that the fine spirit would never go far wrong, yet never reach any great height. The very instinct that forbade the former would debar the latter. And the Canon thought the time had come for a change. Luke had made some vigorous efforts to escape the thralldom of too intellectual society; but the tolls were around him, and an evening at home or at one of the quiet Catholic houses was intolerably dull. Where would all this end? The Canon often asked himself the question; and asked the same question of the flowers he placed and replaced around his Master's throne; and asked it of the white flames that sprang up around the altar; and sometimes paused in his walk, and held his breviary open without reading it, and stumbled at certain verses:

"*Homo, cum in honore esset, non intellexit.*"

"Does that apply to my young friend?"

"*Decident a cogitationibus suis; secundum multitudinem iniquitatum eorum, expelle eos; quoniam irritaverunt te, Domine.*"

"Dear me! dear me! God forbid!"

"How did you like Seathrope?" he said to Luke at supper.

"Very much indeed! What a quaint old place the mansion is; and what a quiet old fellow the proprietor!"

"Yes! the Church is not making much headway there," said the old Canon.

"It needs a resident priest," said Luke, "one who would give all time and attention to the possibilities of the place."

"Yes! It would be a nice mission for a young man of energy who could keep his head."

"I don't think there's much to tempt a man to insane things there," said Luke.

"Except the worst danger—loneliness and the *taedium vitae*."

"Yes; but if a man has his books,

and his pen, and his work cut out for him—"

"Quite so, if he is a strong man. But if he be a weak man, it is certain danger."

"Solitude has always been the mother-country of the strong and the elect."

"Just what I have been saying," said the Canon. "A mother and dangerous desert to the weak."

Luke thought that there was an undercurrent of meaning in the Canon's words; but there was nothing to catch hold of or resent.

"I shouldn't object to a mission there," he said bluntly.

"Ah! I see you're tired of us here. Well, who knows? Meanwhile, you will well to visit the prison tomorrow. Tuesday is your day, I believe."

"Yes," said Luke. "Nothing has turned up there?"

"Nothing unusual," said the Canon, quietly. "There is a soldier, a countryman of yours, up for shooting his officer through the heart on the back-square at Dover."

Luke studied the gas jet for a long time when the Canon had gone to his room.

TO BE CONTINUED.

FINISHED IN HEAVEN.

Frank Coburn, whose friends believed he should be the happiest man in Chicago, was in a mental condition just the opposite of what their fond pride in him pictured.

The Friday afternoon following his masterly effort in making for his party a speech in a seminary, he had been an unusually hard fought spring campaign, found him alone at his desk in his private office, his head bowed in grief. Few would recognize in this dejected, solitary figure the genial, joyous Coburn whose ready sympathy and generous assistance had helped more than one struggling fellow along the perilous road to success, and whose own future seemed so promising; now, brightened as it was by the assurance of a brilliant career as a lawyer and as a political leader whose earnestness and honesty had won for him a following which many an older "boss" might well envy. Yet at a time when he might be the centre of an enthusiastic gathering in any of the clubs he frequented, he was alone, plunged in the deepest gloom.

Even as he had shared with any one the greatest happiness that had ever come into his life—his love for Margaret Dupres—so now he had no one with whom he could share his greatest sorrow—her death. Their mutual affection had been so pure and elevating that he was always loath to risk marring their happiness by sharing the knowledge of it with others, and so carefully he had guarded his secret that few were the privileged friends who knew of the part he had taken in the little funeral which wended its way to Calvary just two days previous.

The girl whose candid faith in him was his constant joy and inspiration had left him so suddenly he could scarcely bring himself to realize his loss. To her he owed the possession of his high ideals which won for him the esteem of his political foes as well as his friends, and the effort of the evening before, which the press described as a masterpiece, was to him but the outpouring of his soul in an earnest and well-merited tribute to her memory. It was eloquent without the usual impassioned appeals to prejudice; it was convincing solely on the merits of its own arguments; it was inspiring and alluring as it raised men's thoughts up to noble ideals of public service which few of them had ever realized could exist in the sordid, office-grabbing politics to which they were accustomed. He had felt very near her during those long two hours, when in measured, earnest tones, prompted by the sorrow recently borne, he argued for those principles they had often discussed together. Now with the excitement gone, and in utter weariness of mind and body, he missed the sweet comfort of her companionship, her admiration, her encouragement and a sense of his absolute loneliness expressed him.

A heart-broken sigh escaped him as he gazed at her picture which he held in his hand. If her life had not been one grand act of confidence in an ever-kind Providence, he would have cried out now in his bitterness that it was an unfeeling God who had taken her from him so suddenly. Her calm eyes seemed to read his thoughts and to plead with him again, even as they had always added her gentle persuasion when in an evening at home or at one of the quiet Catholic houses was intolerably dull. Where would all this end? The Canon often asked himself the question; and asked the same question of the flowers he placed and replaced around his Master's throne; and asked it of the white flames that sprang up around the altar; and sometimes paused in his walk, and held his breviary open without reading it, and stumbled at certain verses:

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"Yes; but if a man has his books,

assurance I now have of eternal happiness. I am too near the Sacred Heart and to His Blessed Mother, who smiles a welcome to me."

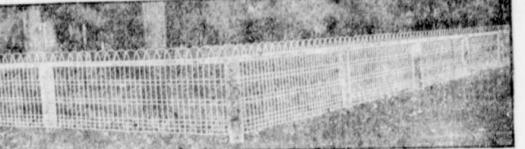
Then while he gently pressed her hand as it lay on the coverlet, her lips moved silently and he was able to hear only the concluding words of an inaudible prayer which he knew must have been for him. "Confident that Thou wilt not abandon him, I abandon his soul and body entirely unto Thee."

So absorbed was he in his sorrowful memories that he did not notice the passing of time until in the gathering twilight his tear-dimmed eyes were no longer able to distinguish the familiar features of the picture he still held in his hand. Rising suddenly he prepared to go home. Home? Should he go home, debating what to do and halting sadly how very little that name would ever mean to him now. Mentally he pictured that evening at home—the formal dinner with his married sister's family, and later the calls of political friends who would bore him with details of the latest wagers on the prospective election returns, when all the time he would be longing to escape to a solitude again till the first great agony of grief and loneliness had passed.

After reaching the street he hesitated again—then in a few minutes he called a cab and gave instruction to the driver. He slowly sank into the cushioned corner, thinking to catch even a few minutes of needed sleep on the way, but the first touch of his hand on the tufted seat revived the sad recollections with a painful suddenness. It chilled him; involuntarily he shuddered. There was something in the touch of that cloth that suggested a pall! With it would always be associated his ride to the funeral, yet his mind wandered back now and lingered not with aversion but with tenderness on each detail of that journey, reverting again and again with gentle persistency to the Mass, so solemn, so mysterious, so beautiful. He recalled how lost in the contemplation of its beauty, he had imagined Margary was at his side, and joying it with him until the first touching words of the priest's eloquent tribute brought him back to reality. "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth!" Pondering now on the perfect appropriateness with which those words had been applied to her; a strange thought occurred to him. It roused him and he suddenly sat bolt upright, alert, interested, while into his face came a fleeting smile, half sad, half expectant. He was in no mood for company and town talk; he dreaded a whole evening of it. Why not—it was an odd fancy, but it suited his lonely mood—he had been with her in spirit all the afternoon—he would go now where she loved to go! Leaving out of the cab, he spoke to the driver who checking his horse, turned into a cross street, and quickly drove his patron to the church of the Holy Angels.

The church was in total darkness, but the great door opened readily, and once inside, the sanctuary lamp seemed to beckon him toward the middle aisle, down which he had often walked with Margary. He would go into her pew now—no, he could not bring himself to go there alone, but he would stay very near it in one across the aisle. He bent his knee reverently as he entered and he scrupled not at kneeling before the Presence she had adored, although, tired as he was, the position was a trying one. He thought himself alone, but a whisper broke the silence, and turning his head in the direction from whence the sound came, he discerned the figure of an aged woman in prayer at the last of the Stations of the Cross. She was dressed in a widow's garb, and judging by the earnestness with which she prayed, she found great solace in this act of devotion. He watched her intently, marveling at the faith which prompted such fervor, while she finished her prayer and made her way slowly and painfully toward the high altar. A few moments more she remained there prostrate—then she went away.

Frank heard the door close after her, feeling a sense of relief that now at last he was alone. Why he wished to be alone he did not know; he had not stopped to question the impulse which brought him here, and now he only knew that he was experiencing a strange serenity. In a recess at the left many votive candles were burning before the shrine of the Sacred Heart, and their flickering light threw a few gleams of brightness on the white marble of the high altar and made the little tabernacle doors shine like polished gold. What a fascination those shining doors had for him in the darkness! His eyes rested on them fixedly, his mind unconsciously meditating on the mystery therein concealed. It had always been a great grief to Margary that she could not believe in her wonderful proof of Divine love, and once, thinking to please her by showing a willingness to join in her devotions, he asked her what he should say as they knelt together at Benediction. Then she gave him a short, simple prayer—just as one would give a task to a little child, being careful not to expect too much from it. He was ever as docile as a child when Margary was with him, and he remembered that he had ever given her the best that was in his manly character, and he repeated her prayer now, longing that he might believe in all that the words implied, "Sweet Heart of



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Jesus, have mercy upon me: Jesus, my Saviour, I wish to console Thee. What a comfort and prayers must have brought to Margary as she knelt there so often at the loneliest hour of the day, believing, as she did, so ardently and trustfully! The words of the eulogy came back to him now with a beautiful significance. "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth." Ah, true she had loved it—at early Mass, at late Vespers—always with a devotion that never changed, except to grow more fervent. Could he bring his heart, filled as it was with earthly ambitions, to love it also?

The perfect stillness quieted his troubled mind, and he gladly yielded himself to its soothing influence with a sense of relief that was new and surpassingly sweet. Unconsciously he had accepted the tender invitation, "Come to Me, all ye who labor and are heavily burdened," and he was now enjoying the sweetness of the promised rest. Over and over again he repeated Margary's prayer, till it seemed like the elusive refrain of some familiar melody of happier days, and when as fatigue gradually overpowered him, his lips finally stopped forming the words, his sorrowing heart seemed to continue beating in unison with the sweet rhythm, as if loath to relinquish the balm which had brought its longed for succor. Forgotten now was the world. Forgotten, too, his hopes and ambitions, his bitter disappointment—even the grief which had so lately weighed him down. Peace—the peace which the world cannot give—flooded his soul and ele-

CONTINUED ON PAGE SIX.

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