

punishment due to sin, and they have an intercessory value by which they obtain blessings, natural and supernatural, from God. Now the members of the Church militant all participate in the intercessory effects of the good works of the other members of the Church. The excommunicated, however, has no share in these, and in particular, cannot gain an indulgence. Secondly, he is forbidden the reception of the sacraments and attendance at divine service till he has been released from the excommunication. Thirdly, he cannot be buried in consecrated ground. No Catholic, therefore, can fail to see that excommunication is a penalty that carries with it terrible consequences. To incur a social stigma and to be made outcast from society is a sad calamity, but sadder far must it be for a Catholic—a sorrow's very crown of sorrow—to be placed under the ban of an excommunication, and be thus sent out from the Church, God's Paradise on earth, to wander an exile among heathens and publicans. *Bombay Catholic Examiner.*

A LIFE LESSON,

concealed under an old plank. In a day or two afterwards it was slacked and applied to the fences. It is a little thing, I know, gentlemen; and perhaps I lay too much stress upon it. But I cannot have any rational confidence in a man who will steal even a pin. I have made this communication from a sense of duty; the board can now act as it thinks best. But I cannot vote to place Mr. Elliotson in a position where so much is at stake."

After an hour's discussion, in which three or four members of the board spoke strongly in favour of Mr. Elliotson, and offered to go his security in double the amount required for the cashier, it was voted to let the choice of that officer lie over for a day, that there might be time for reflection.

Mr. Elliotson sat at his window, with his eyes fixed on the building where the directors were in session, his heart beating with an uneasy motion. He had been seated thus for nearly two hours, and was beginning to grow restless with impatience, when he saw the door open, and the gentlemen who seemed to him to hold his fate in their hands slowly emerge, and move, in little groups, lingeringly down the street.

Of these, two, who were among his warmest friends, approached his house. Now his heart became almost still, and he experienced a choking sensation. A few minutes would decide his fate. What was to be that fate? He scarcely dared hope for the best, and shrank from contemplating the worst. The two friends paused a short distance from his house, and stood for some minutes in earnest conversation. This was looked upon as a bad omen; the bearers of good news would not thus pause and linger. The poor man's suspense became terrible. At length the men separated, and one of them came towards his house with a grave and deliberate step. From the window, Mr. Elliotson could see his face. It wore a thoughtful, sober expression. His heart ceased to beat for a few moments, and the fluttered on wildly. At length the man's knock was heard at the door. Elliotson had scarcely strength to open it, and when he did so, he stood with knees smiting against each other, looking into his friend's face without the power of utterance. To relieve this suspense, which he saw to be very great, his friend said—

"There has been no election of cashier yet."

Elliotson leaned against the door for support.

"None? Why not?" he was able to ask.

"I will tell you."

"Walk into the parlor," Elliotson had now presence of mind to say, and he stepped back while the director entered. When alone, the latter said.

"I regret to say, that an unexpected objection was made by a member of the board, which would have defeated your election, had a ballot taken place. I therefore moved to have the election for cashier postponed until to-morrow; and I have come to talk to you about this objection."

"What is it?" asked Elliotson in a husky voice.

"It touches your character; is, in fact, a charge against your integrity as a man."

Philip Elliotson drew himself up calmly, while his eye became bright and steady, and his lips arched and firm.

"I am ready to meet all such charges," he said, with much dignity of manner. "I know not a single act of my life that I would fear to have canvassed. What is the allegation?"

"Some five or six years ago, there was an addition built to this house?" said the director.

"There was."

"Do you remember the fact that a load of lime was thrown down, late one afternoon, at your back gate?"

Mr. Elliotson thought for a moment, and then said—

"Yes, I remember it very well."

"Do you likewise remember taking two or three pieces of that lime for your own use, and concealing them in an out-house?"

"I do." The blood mounted to the cheek of Mr. Elliotson.

"You were seen to do this, and it is now brought forward against you, and urged as a reason why you should not be given the appointment of cashier."

Mr. Elliotson seemed stunned for a few moments. He leaned his head down upon a table, and sat almost motionless for nearly a minute, while his friend looked on with grief. When he at length raised his head, his face was pale but calm.

"I am, of course, charged with being a dishonest man," he said, in a firm voice.

"That is the inference drawn from this act."

Mr. Elliotson arose, and going to his secretary, took therefrom two account-books. One of these he opened, and, turning to an account, laid it on the table before the director, saying, as he did so,

"The plasterer who finished the addition made by my landlord to this house was named Eldred. He dealt at my store, and settled his accounts once in three months. The addition was made in June, 18—. On the tenth of July, in the same year, you see, there is a credit to his account of fifteen cents. Now I will show you the day-book entry."

The day-book was opened, when the entry stood thus:—

"James Eldred, Cr: By lime used for whitewashing at the time he was plastering my house—fifteen cents."

"I took the lime," said Elliotson, after he had exhibited this entry, "thoughtlessly. It was not my property, and I had no right to it. But I did not reflect at the time. About a month afterwards, a thought of what I had done flashed across my mind, and startled me. I saw that I had been guilty of taking another's property for my own use; and immediately made this entry. In settlement, I pointed out the matter to Eldred, and he said it was of no consequence whatever, that I was welcome to the lime, and double as much more. He did not wish the deduction made from his account; but I insisted on its being done. If you will see him, he will show you this credit on the bill I then rendered."

"May I have these books at the meeting of directors to-morrow?" eagerly asked his friend, who was trembling with delight.

"Certainly. It is but just that this charge should be fully refuted."

"Then you may set your heart at rest about the cashiership. You will certainly get the appointment. But for this matter, you would have received every vote to-day, on the first balloting."

When the directors met on the next day, and the books of Mr. Elliotson were laid open at the entry just mentioned, Mr. Gage was confounded.

"I have not a word more to say," he remarked. "Mr. Elliotson has my vote. It grieves me to think that I have wronged so upright a man."

About a year after this happy change in Mr. Elliotson's external circumstances, Herbert, the store-keeper who had obtained nearly the whole of his country custom, and accumulated quite a handsome little property, died, and his widow attempted, by means of a clerk, to carry on the business. But, in the course of a few months, her friends advised her to sell out and be content with the amount of property left to her by her husband, which was enough for her support. As soon as this fact became known to Mr. Gage, the carpenter, whose mind had never felt easy about Mr. Elliotson, he called upon the latter, and said to him, after mentioning the fact that Mrs. Herbert wished to sell out.

But Elliotson shook his head.

"Depend upon it, you ought not to let this opportunity pass. I know that you can have all my brother's consignments again, for he has told me that he was sorry that he had ever taken them out of your hands. And I have no doubt but that you can retain every one of Herbert's regular customers."

"Perhaps I might. I believe with you that the opportunity is a very good one. But it is not in my power to embrace it."

"Why?"

"Capital is required, and I have nothing but my salary."

"How much will be needed?"

"At least four or five thousand dollars; besides a credit in purchasing out the stock and good-will of the store."

"Both of these, I think, can be supplied."

Elliotson shook his head again.

"If I will get you the money and the credit you need, will you take the store?" asked Gage.

"Certainly I will," was replied.

"Then you may consider the thing as settled."

And it was settled. Mr. Elliotson took the store, and went on with the business, quite as successfully as it had been conducted by the former owner. He is now in excellent circumstances. But there are two things that he cannot understand, and which puzzle him whenever he thinks about them. One is, the cause of the sudden reverse in his fortunes that visited him so strangely, and the other is the unexpected offer of Mr. Gage to put him in business again, with as much capital and as large a credit as he needed. He often sits and ponders upon these two circumstances, but they still remain shrouded in mystery. Mr. Gage is satisfied with making restitution in his own way, without exposing the part he took in running the merchant. He never alluded to the subject, except to his brother and to the board of directors, and they felt it to be imperative on them to keep the whole thing a profound secret.