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FATHER CLEVELAND; OR, THE JESUIT.

By the Authoress of "Life in the Cloister;" "Grace O'Halloran;" "The Two Marys," etc., etc.

From the Boston Pilot.

"Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave
This viperous slander enters."—Cymbeline.

CHAPTER IX.—VIVIAN AND HIS WIFE PROMISE TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT WITH THE GREAT BANK THAT NEVER BREAKS.

"Mamma, here is Uncle Edward," shouted out, in tones of the greatest delight, two or three childish voices as the personage in question, now a great favorite with Maud's little ones, approached Myrtle Cottage. Sooth to say the good Priest never came empty handed, either there would be a rosary or a prayer book, a few pious prints, or a parcel of *bon-bons* for some one amongst them, so that now no one was so welcome as the good Father.

"And now tell me, my boy," said Father Cleveland to his namesake, to whom he had taken a great fancy, "tell me what Mass you went to yesterday—it was Sunday, you know?"

"I did not go to church, Uncle. Papa took us all to the pantomime on Saturday night, and said we must not be getting up early the next morning."

"No reformation yet," thought the good Father: "aye, and it will be a weary task this endeavor to effect a change." Everything in Maud's little establishment was the very soul of disorder. She did not at all recognise the maxim, "Everything in its place, and a place for everything." What a bringing up for these wretched children, he thought, and he sighed as he looked at the six unconscious little beings.—He had not yet seen Vivian, though he had called many times at the house; he was purposely keeping out of the way, Father Cleveland felt assured of that, and accordingly questioned Maud upon the subject.

"The servant told me your husband was not at home, Maud, is that quite the truth? I have not asked the children, lest I should betray them into telling a falsehood."

"He is simply not at home to you. He hurries out of the way whenever he hears your knock; he says he cannot bear listening to sermons—never could—so thinks it best not to see you." She paused a moment, then resumed,—"It is good of you to come to us, but your path and ours lie so far apart, Edward—your have taken a flight so far above us, there is no help—you must leave us as we are. I know well why you come here." As Maud spoke a weary look passed over her face, she knew—none better than herself—how lamentably she had been deficient in all her duties as daughter, wife, mother, and mistress—in every state of life Maud Vivian had failed.

"I am going to New York, Maud; it is more than possible, my dear sister, that we may never meet again; take a high view of things, look upon yourself as endowed with an exalted mission—you are a wife, be it yours to lead your husband on, instead of putting an obstacle in his way; you are a mother, and the high responsibility of training the souls of these little ones for heaven is yours; you are a mistress, and should be a model to those beneath your charge."

A light laugh broke from Maud's lips, for, unfortunately, at that moment, her untidy servant-girl entered the room.

"Forgive me for laughing," she said, when the girl had retired: "but, in the name of conscience what do you think I could do with such a girl as that, even if I concentrated in my own person all the tues under the sun?"

"Afford her the benefit of a good example, Maud."

"It would be of no avail, she is incorrigible, quite; I see what you mean," she continued, somewhat satirically. "I saw just now that your eyes were wandering over my cap; it is not quite clean, to be sure; and my place is vastly untidy as well, and the children not as they should be; but we are very poor, Edward, poorer than I chose to let you know we were when you first called, so that is why you see me in a dirty cap, and the children not neatly dressed; but I can tell you, that I had that girl from a lady who is the very antithesis of your humble servant, a lady whom you would admire inasmuch as you think unfavorably of me. She could make nothing of the girl: found her idle and disobedient, though, if Mrs Harding has a fault, it is on the side of good nature, for, she is a most indulgent mistress."

"And why did you take her with so bad a character?" inquired Father Cleveland.

"Because there are so few servants to be had; the girls of the rising generation are running mad; either over-educated, which makes them

look down upon and unfits them for decent household service, or else seeking after work at sewing machines—at these they may earn from five to seven or eight shillings a week at most, this will not support these girls, of whom there are hundreds in London and the suburbs, and the result is that they fall away under the numberless temptations which abound in a great city and its environs. And this is one of the causes which are now militating seriously against the rising generation, turning out a good and respectable race of servants; they seem to think honorable domestic service a disgrace; but the long and short of it all is, they want an amount of liberty which, of course, no master or mistress in the possession of their senses dare to encourage."

"It may be partly as you say, Maud," replied Father Cleveland; "but yet I must start again with my first idea. I do not, of course, take things *en masse*, for there are exceptions to every rule; but I still come back to my original opinion, which is, that if there were better mistresses, there would be better servants."

"There, now, please don't say another word on the subject, for we shall not agree together, I know. Of all classes the domestic servants can afford to give themselves the greatest airs, and can most easily get employment. Fancy, indeed, the haste with which they'll come and give notice if they feel in the least offended; but an accomplished lady, who is out as a governess, must put up with many a difficulty before she dare think of such a thing—or a poor soul who has got to go out as a companion—it is only because you don't really know how the case stands that you are so prejudiced."

"Prejudiced, my dear sister! how you do run on. I really can scarcely get a word in: now, just stop a minute; you are getting quite excited," said Father Cleveland.

"No, I am not," continued Maud, though her flushed face very much belied the truth of what she was saying. Poor Maud, you see, was one of those impetuous persons, who often damage their cause even when they are perfectly in the right, by their hasty, irritable manner—yield her point she would not when she conceived herself to be in the right—nor give up her opinion one iota, you cannot fancy that such a character as Maud Vivian ever would. So she went on, "I heard it said lately that the girls who generally compose the servant class are good and innocent till they become household servants—that it is evil example in the families they enter that makes them what they are; that if watched over carefully, and bad books kept out of their hands, all would go well; that it is when they go out to service they become reckless; but are there not scores of families scrupulously careful, rather more so than I have ever been indeed; and here Maud shrugged her shoulders, for she saw her brother glance at the pile of miscellaneous literature which littered both sideboard and table."

"Yet, what do the girls turn out, very often, but a trouble and a scourge to their employers, we say, that many of them are become so bad, because as they get older their evil passions begin to develop themselves, they are no longer under the wholesome restraint and the discipline of the school; and when this is the case, I'll defy the most virtuous and gentle mistress of a family to keep them under restraint; but I see I make no impression upon you."

"It is a vexed question, Maud," replied her brother; "perhaps your words would carry more weight with them if things were different here, and he glanced at herself and her little ones."

"Ah! well, I am sure I can't make any promises at present," she replied; "you see Vivian does not like to put himself in your way, you are really so unlike to us, near relations as we are, since you became a Jesuit."

"Yet, dearest Maud, that should not make me less affectionate or tender of you or your interests; rather the reverse," he added; "besides, am I not still your brother? and religion should surely bind us together more closely instead of driving us asunder."

Maud shook her head sadly, declaring that she could not subscribe to that opinion; adding with a faint attempt at a laugh, "you are so very holy now that you would make little allowance for me. No, no, brother Edward, you go your way, as we will ours; you can do nothing but pray for us when far away."

A tear stood in Maud's eye as she said these words. Father Cleveland saw that she was a little softened; now, then, was the time.

"I must see Vivian," he said. "I wish before I leave England to place your eldest boy in College, and to make arrangements for your little Maud to enter a Convent; thus, your family will be materially reduced, and you will have fewer cares. I shall see you once again, but you will grant me one favor, Maud."

"Anything you please," she replied; "but hark! as I live, there is Vivian himself."

"You will not say that I am here. I insist upon that, Maud."

"As you will," she said; and, true to her promise, she admitted Vivian without a word.

Vivian looked exactly what he was, an easy-going, somewhat reckless man, and improvident in his habits; for having, after he had run through the small fortune he possessed on his marriage with Maud, entered a very precarious profession, he often knew what it was to have not one shilling in his pocket.

His somewhat fine features had become bagged by constant anxiety, and he started back as if he would fain withdraw, upon seeing his wife's visitor.

A striking difference, indeed, there was between the two men, the one old before his time, the other still fresh in manhood's prime, his handsome countenance unimpaired, his chestnut hair without a grey thread, his manner calm and dignified.

"Ah! Harry Vivian, how do you do? I am, indeed, glad to have had the chance of seeing you before I leave England," said Father Cleveland, holding out his hand.

"I beg to return the compliment, Father Cleveland; you are but little altered. I should have recognised you even without the sign of the dove, as we call the Roman collar, you have changed but little by time."

"Ah! Vivian, I have had the advantage of you," said Father Cleveland; "I have not, you see, had the trials of the world to contend with. Maud has not been very explicit, but yet she has told me enough to make me aware that you have many difficulties. I have made her an offer, and I want to speak to you on the subject, so that we are well met. To be brief, I will take two of the children of your hands for the present, if you will allow me to do so."

"Two of the children!" said Vivian. "My dear fellow, you don't know the trouble and expense children are; you'll soon be glad to send them back to us. No, no, I respect you too much to profit by your offer; what could you, a Priest as you are, do with children about your ears; it won't do, I tell you; it simply must not be thought of."

"I think you are on a wrong scent, Vivian," said the good father; "it certainly is not my vocation to bring up children myself, but I have expressed my willingness to Maud to send your two eldest to school, if you like to part with them."

"My dear Father Cleveland, I can assure you I feel deeply grateful for your kind offer; how can I ever make a sufficient return?"

"You can wake me a very rich return, Vivian, if you will," said the priest; "can you not divine what it is I am going to ask you?"

Vivian winced and looked significantly at Maud. Of all things in the world he hated being sermonized; as a boy he had always preferred flogging to preaching, and he was afraid he was now going to be well taked to about his delinquencies.

"Watch over the children you still have left you with greater care, Vivian, than heretofore, and look a little to yourselves, for the evening is drawing on for all of us. I speak as a priest, you know, and therefore, you will not consider I am guilty of undue interference. I should be very glad to hear, when again the vast ocean shall separate us, that Maud and yourself are no longer unmindful of that there is a world beyond the grave, and that we were born for something more than merely to fret away life's hour upon the stage of the world, and lay up provision for that which is to come."

"Very true, Edward, very true," (somehow Vivian and his wife found it uncommonly difficult to address their relative by his ecclesiastical cognomen). "I will promise for Maud as well as myself; for as Shakespeare hath it—

"All the world's a stage,
And the men and women merely players."

I cannot turn Trappist, Edward, nor Maud a nun; but what say you, sweetheart," he said, addressing his wife, "shall we invest in the Bank which never breaks, and send something before us to be a passport to the better world, paying our first instalment into your brother's hands, before he leaves old England?"

"Exactly so," answered Maud. "Let my first step, Edward, be to own to you that you have been amply revenged for a certain little scene which took place between you and myself some twelve years since, and in which I was the aggressor. Pardon me, my brother, for you have outdone me in generosity."

"Maud," said the Jesuit, bidding her farewell, "a disciple of Loyola thinks not of the past. It is his duty to seek and to save that which has gone astray, too happy if the Providence of God bless his endeavors with success."

CHAPTER X.—THE SOIREE MUSICALE.

The Delmars were very musical people, and the lady of Brooklyn Lodge determined to throw open her mansion to all the amateurs with whom she was acquainted. The only person who made the charming art of music the means of furnish-

ing provision for life being the gifted Miss Lascelles; and as she was now all the rage at Toronto, having made what is termed a sensation, and well known as a teacher in several families of fashion and opulence, the rule laid down, that professional persons should be excluded from Mrs. Delmar's musical soirees, was overlooked in her regard.

That somewhat elegant residence of Mr. Delmar was brilliantly lighted up, and as the appointed hour drew nigh a gay assemblage poured into the house, thronging the marble staircase, and rapidly filling the large suite of rooms, two of which opening the one into the other, were devoted to the purposes of the evening. A gay coterie of young and fashionable women, amongst whom was Augusta Seton, had assembled, as the special friends of the hostess, some little time before the appointed hour, and were amusing themselves by talking over what they considered to be the merits and demerits of some of the unfortunate persons who were expected to be present that evening. However, beyond merely ridiculing a few peculiarities or style of dress of certain persons, nothing mischievous had passed; but who does not know that the love of satire may easily pass to something worse?

"Talking about good looks," observed a young lady who was on the eve of marriage with Guy Vernon; "what do you think of Helen Lascelles, she is very handsome, is she not?"

A very unqualified assent was given to the remark; but the subject was not to drop so quickly.

"She will become rich if she continues to receive such high patronage, especially if she has decided on singing at concerts. Do you know her?" inquired another lady.

"I do," exclaimed Miss Seton. "She is, you know, a bit of a favorite of our friend Mrs. Delmar, and has told her some sort of an odd story, which I partly overheard. I distinctly heard her say that she had changed her name, as her family had moved in good circles. Rather odd, is it not? what on earth could make her do it? because here in Toronto, you know, even supposing her story to be quite true, it is not likely, nay, most improbable, she would ever meet any person known to her family. I think, myself, that it is rather a singular affair from beginning to end; a very apocryphal story, to say the least of it."

"Well, it does seem rather strange; Augusta is quite right, is she not?" said another fair speaker.

"It may seem strange to us; but, after all, there may be a very sufficient reason why Miss Lascelles prefers to keep her real name a secret; interposed the person who had first spoken."

"Well, I'll tell you what, Bertha, I think we had better name you 'Charity,' you always try to think people in the right," replied Miss Seton.

"I do not see any very great exercise of charity in what I say, as far as Miss Lascelles is concerned," said the former lady; "I merely think that what seems strange to us may not be at all peculiar, if we knew the private reasons of Helen Lascelles for concealing her real name.—We should bear in mind that she has sung at concerts, and that many persons when appearing before the public assume another name."

"But you forget, Bertha, that Miss Lascelles came to Quebec with no such intention," replied another of the group. "And certainly governesses do not conceal their names under assumed ones."

Augusta Seton was a handsome woman, a beautiful brunette with aquiline features, but they wore a very hard expression as she replied:—"Ladies of position should be very careful how they engage her for their daughters, she is under a cloud depend upon it; we know nothing of the character she bore in Ireland and England; it was, doubtless, very bad."

"What on earth are you driving at, Miss Seton?" said Bertha Ainslie, angrily.

"We may all have our own opinions," replied Augusta; "if mine is not favorable to the previous character of Miss Lascelles, she has herself to thank for it."

"Decidedly, certainly," said some two or three in this coterie of frivolous fair ones; but, at the same time, there was a whispered "Hush" from Bertha, as the object of the malevolence and calumny of these ladies entered the room. We are sorry to say it of our own sex, but it is, nevertheless, true, that ladies can be great adepts in this unfortunate art of hinting away a neighbor's character; it is the most despicable way of backbiting possible, far worse than boldly coming out with the thing at once, for then it is probable that if the person be innocent, they may have a chance given them to justify themselves.

The unsuspecting Aileen entered the room with her innocent face wreathed in smiles, and advancing straight to the little clique who had so unmercifully criticised her, she kissed Augusta and Bertha, and shook hands warmly with the rest.

Was it her beauty and talents which had made her the object of their envy? or, had they spoken merely because they were of the class who love to say uncharitable things of those who have never injured them?

It was a mingled feeling, perhaps, under which they acted. They could not but look upon her with admiring eyes, and they loved her none the more that they were compelled to do so.

Amidst the galaxy of wealth and fashion and female beauty which had thronged to Mrs. Delmar's rooms that night, resplendent with jewels and arrayed in costly robes, she alone was simply and most inexpensively arrayed in a dress of embroidered muslin, looped up with sprays of apple blossom, with a white rose in her hair, a bracelet on one arm, and the small gold cross, to her a precious amulet, around her neck.

With smiles upon their lips, and soft pressure of hands, which were as warm as their hearts were cold, these ladies graciously received poor Aileen. Alas! she knew not their perfidy, recked not of the black despair that awaited her in consequence of their dark insinuations, but felt supremely happy, for her last action ere she left her home had been to write a letter to her parents, in which she meant later to enclose a large remittance, bidding them to look forward to the hope of soon joining her in her new home.

Shortly soft strains of delicious harmony floated through the spacious and brilliantly lighted rooms, and selections from the old masters, as from the most celebrated of our modern operas, entranced the ear.

At length Aileen sat down to the harp, first playing with a brilliant execution one of those difficult fantasias, the merit of which, if indeed it be a merit, consists rather in its intricate passages than in melody. Then she sang one of those sweet English ballads, which are equally pleasing to scientific as well as to unskilled ears—and finally, leaving the harp, she seated herself at the piano, warbling one of those beautiful airs in 'Norma' which few can listen to unmoved. This was the *chef d'œuvre* of the night—in breathless silence the whole company listened, and even every itself could not withhold the meed of rapturous applause by which the fair artiste was greeted as she rose from the instrument.

"You will see me to-morrow, after attending to your pupils, Miss Lascelles," said Mrs. Delmar as she bade her good night. And full of spirits, though languid and fatigued, Aileen returned to her lonely home—little recking that her fair fame was already gone, and her reputation blasted—that reputation so dear to woman, and which the slightest breath may sully—withered for ever by the dark insinuation, the ambiguous hint, and then the open slander of that, to Aileen Desmond, most dreadful night.

CHAPTER XI.—JUDGED AND CONDEMNED WITHOUT A TRIAL.

A story never loses by being repeated—an ill-natured hint, or a slanderous insinuation, like a snowball, increases in size as it goes on its way—and that which is at first merely hinted at, becomes very rapidly a slander of the first magnitude.

The morning following the evening of the *soiree musicale* was one of sorrowful import to the fortunes of Aileen.

In an elegant morning room in the house of one of the most opulent merchants in Toronto three persons were assembled at breakfast.—Everything bore the appearance of wealth, from the costly tea service of chased silver that stood upon the table, (which was spread with all those little accessories to attempt the appetite, in which rich persons so frequently indulge,) to the expensive articles scattered around. It might easily be seen that the little group consisted of a father and mother, and that the third party was their eldest daughter, a friend of Miss Seton's, and one of the foremost in pronouncing judgment against Aileen. She eagerly seized the opportunity afforded by her father laying aside the newspaper, and exclaimed—

"Papa, have you ever heard that Miss Lascelles, as she calls herself, is not Miss Lascelles at all, but has changed her real name on account of something that happened to her in England?"

"Aye, what, child?" exclaimed the rigidly virtuous paterfamilias, "what is that you say—who has told you this?"

"Oh! it is no secret, papa, but the talk of the whole town I assure you: it is supposed that something very wrong has occurred, which she has kept concealed from every one here, but she owed to Mrs. Delmar that the name of Lascelles was assumed; and people say, papa, that we ought to be very cautious about the encouragement we give her, for no one knows anything of her antecedents."

The gentlemen were for a moment silent, and sat tapping his good snuff-box as if lost in thought, whilst the lady of the house, a languid dissipated woman of fashion, exclaimed—

"This is really a serious business, William—we with other charitable persons have, foolishly