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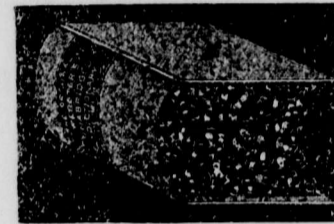
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THE DUTY OF GOOD EXAMPLE.

Use your endeavor to walk honestly towards them that are without. (1 Thess. iv. 11.)

The holiness of the Church, my dear brethren, is for us who belong to her a thing so evident and clear that we can no more think it necessary to prove it than we can think it necessary to prove that the sun shines in the heavens. The practical and imperative way in which the Church enforces holiness of life on each and every one of us is something with which we are so familiar that no shadow of doubt can enter into our minds as to its necessity. The means of grace which she offers to us, and of which she even requires us to make use, the sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord Himself which she gives us, the penances she imposes upon us by way of fasting and abstinence, the warnings which she is ever giving us of the condemnation which will fall upon impenitent sinners, these and ten thousand other things make the sanctity of the Church so well known that it is not so much an article of faith as a thing which we see with our own eyes and which falls under our own experience.

But there are those who are without these advantages. There are many around us, our near neighbors and friends, who are outside the Church, not through their own fault, but by birth and education. These are not in possession of those means of knowing the Church and her sanctity of which we are possessed; and in order to have this knowledge they depend to a very large extent upon ourselves. I wish this morning to call your attention to the responsibility which rests upon us on this account, and to one or two practical ways in which we are accountable to God for what that responsibility involves.

Now, that we lie under this responsibility is a truth not very hard to see. For, as I have said, those outside the Church are ignorant of the doctrine and practices of the Church. From their earliest years they have had utterly false and erroneous information given them about the Church—an information so false and erroneous that they do not think it necessary or even right to make inquiries. How, then, are they to have the truth brought home to them? What way is there of spreading the light? Almost the only way, and certainly a way so necessary that without it all others are futile and vain, is that those who are called Catholics should lead such lives as the Church requires of them. Now, if we do not do this we are of course responsible to God, as every man, be he Catholic or be he Protestant, is responsible to God for his whole life and every action in it. But more than that, a special responsibility in this time and in this country lies at the door of every Catholic man and every Catholic woman. Every Catholic man and woman who does not lead a good life is a stumbling-block and a rock of offence standing in the way and preventing many poor souls from seeing and embracing that truth which is necessary for their salvation; and those Catholics whose way of living forms such a stumbling-block will have to give a strict account to God not merely for their own sins and for themselves, but also for the souls of others whom they have ruined.

Now, I am going on this account to ask you some questions which I hope you will answer honestly and conscientiously. And they will be questions about matters on which the world outside is competent to judge; and, therefore, if we fail in this respect we shall meet with its condemnation, and become hindrances to the knowledge of the truth.

First: There is nothing of which the business world thinks so much as truth, uprightness, integrity in business matters. To pay debts promptly, to do work squarely, to execute contracts faithfully—these are some of the marks of an honest man. Now, in view of what I have said, ask yourselves, is this way of acting the mark of all Catholics? Will a man who wants to get a house built, who is looking for a trustworthy clerk or assistant, choose out Catholics in preference to others, because he knows that they are worthy of trust? If this is not the case—if the being a Catholic is no guarantee of trustworthiness—you will have to answer to God for the bad effect your dishonesty has upon those outside.

And now a question for women. You all know in what virtue consists the glory and honor of women. You all know what the world expects of women. You know, too, how much the Church makes of modesty and chastity, in what honor she holds them, how strict she is in inculcating their necessity. Now, one of the effects of genuine modesty and chastity is to overawe and overpower the approaches of the unclean and impure. There is a majesty in virtue which lays low and keeps at its level vileness and impurity. Is every one who comes near a Catholic girl or woman conscious of this influence? Is there something about every Catholic girl and woman which makes it clear to every dirty fellow that he must go elsewhere if he wishes to find a victim and a means of satisfying his disgraceful passions? It ought to be so, for the soul of every Catholic girl and woman, over and above the majesty of natural virtue, is the abode and dwelling-place of the grace of God. And if you are true children of the Church such will be the effect your presence will have.

Well, my brethren, ask yourselves these questions: answer them honestly; and, if you find that you have done

wrong, amend, not merely for your own sake, but for that of those outside.

LADY JANE.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE JEWEL-BOX.

The next day after Raste's sudden departure, Madame Jozain sat in her doorway looking very old and worn; her face was of a settled pallor, and her eyes had a dazed, bewildered expression, as if she had received a heavy blow that had left her numb and stupid. At times she put her hand to her head and muttered: "Who would have thought it? Who would have thought it? His mother, his own mother; and I've always been so good to him!"

Suddenly she seemed to have lost her interest in her business, her customers, and even her domestic affairs. Her little store was more untidy than any one had ever seen it. When a neighbor entered to buy a trifle, or to gossip for a few moments, Madame made an effort to appear cheerful and chatty, but that it was an effort was evident to all. At last one one asked if she were ill.

"Well, not exactly," she answered uneasily, "but I might as well be. The fact is I'm fretting about that boy of mine; he took it in his head yesterday to go away to his uncle's ranch. I miss him very much. I can't get along without him, and I shouldn't wonder if I should go too."

When Pepsie asked what was the matter with "Tante Pauline," Lady Jane answered, as she had been instructed, that Tante Pauline had headaches, because Mr. Raste had gone away and was n't coming home for a long time.

"Madame Jozain is fretting about her son's going away," observed Madame Fernandez to her husband, looking across the street. "She's been sitting there all the morning so lonely, so sad and miserable that I'm sorry for her. But there's some one coming to see her now. A stranger, and so well-dressed. I wonder who it can be."

The new-comer was a stranger to Madame Fernandez, but Madame Jozain welcomed her as an old friend; she sprang up with sudden animation and shook hands warmly.

"Why, Madame Hortense," she exclaimed, "what chance brings you to my little place?"

"A happy chance for you," replied Madame Hortense, laughing. "I've come to bring you money. I've sold the little jewel-case you left with me the other day, and sold it very well, too."

"Now, did you? How good of you, my dear! I'm so glad—for the child's sake."

"Would you believe that I got twenty-five dollars for it? You know you said I might sell it for ten; but I got twenty-five, and I think I could have sold it for more, easily. It is sold silver and an exquisite thing."

"Yes, it was of the best workmanship," sighed Madame.

"But I must tell you how I happened to sell it for such a high price. It's very strange, and perhaps you can throw some light on the matter. One of my best customers happened to come in last evening—Mrs. Lanier, of Jackson street. You know Lanier, the banker. They are very rich people. She was looking over the things in my show-case, when she suddenly exclaimed as if surprised:

"Why, Madame Hortense, where did you get this?" I turned around, and she had the little jewel-box in her hand, examining it closely, and I saw that she was quite pale and excited.

"Of course I told her all I knew about it: that a friend had given it to me to sell, and so on. But she interrupted me by asking where my friend got it, and all sorts of questions; and all the while, she was looking at it as if she couldn't imagine how it got there. I could only tell her that you gave it to me. Then she asked other questions, so excitedly that I couldn't help showing my surprise. But I couldn't give her the information she wanted, so I wrote your name and address for her, and told her to come and see you, and that you would be able to tell her all about it."

During Madame Hortense's hasty and rather confused narrative Madame Jozain turned an ashy white; and her eyes took on a hunted expression, while she followed with a set, ghastly smile every word of her friend's story.

"At length she found strength and composure to say:

"Why, no wonder you were surprised. Did n't she tell you why she wanted to know?"

"I suppose she saw that I was very much puzzled, for after looking at it sadly for some time, she said that she was a mystery how it came there; that she had given that little casket to a schoolmate ten years before, while at school in New York; that she had had it made especially for her, and that her friend's initials, J. C., were on it."

"Dear, dear, only think! Some old schoolmate, I suppose," said Madame Jozain hastily.

"Then she asked me if I would sell her the little box; and I said certainly I would, that it was put there to sell. Seeing how anxious she was to get it, I thought I would put the price at twenty-five dollars, although I did n't much think she'd give it. But she never said a word about the price; she paid it in a dazed way, took your address that I'd written for her, and went out, carrying the little casket with her. I suppose she'll be here to-day or to-morrow to see you; and so I thought I'd hurry down and tell you all about it."

"And your commission?" said Madame Jozain, with a visible effort, as the milliner laid the money on the table.

"Oh, par exemple, Madame Jozain! As if I would! No, no; we're too old friends. I cannot take pay for doing you a little favor. And, besides, I'm glad to do it for the dear child. She must be a great anxiety to you."

"She is!" returned Madame, with a heavy sigh, "but she has some property in Texas, I believe. My son has just gone there, and I'm thinking of going too. I'm very lonely here."

"Ah!" said Madame Hortense, surprised. "Why, you are so well placed here. Shall you go soon?"

"Before very long," replied Madame, who did not care to be more definite.

"Well, come and see me before you go."

Madame Hortense drew down her veil, and rose to leave. "I'm sorry I can't stay longer to chat with you; I'm busy, very busy. Now, mind, be sure to come and say good-by," and with a cordial *adieu* the little milliner hurried down the steps and out of sight around the corner.

For some time after her visitor had gone, Madame Jozain stood quite still in the middle of her little shop, with her hands pressed to her head and her eyes fixed on vacancy. At length she muttered to herself: "She'll come here; yes, she'll come here! I can't see her; I can't tell her where I got that box. I must get away at once. I must go out and find another place. There'll be no more peace on earth for me! My punishment's begun!"

Then Madame hurriedly put on her best gown and bonnet, and calling across to Lady Jane, who was with Pepsie, she said she was going out on business, and that she might not be back for some time.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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