

"Then you won't confess?"

"To *you*, certainly not."

"Then I'll *excommunicate* you."

"That you are quite at liberty to do if you like, but you can't *excommunicate* me, you know, so take my advice; and 'go to a nunnery, to a nunnery go!'"

And I suppose he *did* go to a nunnery, for he quickly vanished from my gaze, to my inexpressible relief."

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After him came another, and he carried a bag.

"If you please," said he, "I am collecting the offertory, be so good as to put your alms into this bag,"

"Not if I know it," said I.

"Why not, pray?"

"Because I prefer a '*decent bason*.'"

"But this is so much better, you know. No one knows what you put in, and besides it is in accordance with '*Catholic*' usage."

"And *Apostolic* too, isn't it?" I remarked.

"Well, I don't know."

"Oh, indeed! permit me to refresh your memory: was there not an apostle named Judas Iscariot?"

"Well, there might have been, perhaps, but I don't remember reading of him in the lives of the saints."

"No, he was one of the *sinner*s, and you will find the record of this thief in the New Testament: he carried the bag; he sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver; he was covetous, and he went to hell! So you see your bag is calculated to call up unpleasant recollections. Good day to you." And off he went, speechless.

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After his departure came another, ringing a bell.

"What's all that noise about?" said I.

"We are about to celebrate the mass in this church," he replied.

"Do you mean the Lord's Supper, commonly called Holy Communion?"

"If you choose to call it so, yes."

"Well, but I have not had even my breakfast yet."

"Oh, you must receive the sacred elements *fasting*!"

"What's that for?"

"It's the teaching of the '*Catholic*' Church."

"Is it necessary to salvation?"

"Of course it is; the *Church* cannot err."

"But I thought it was after supper Jesus took the