

Agnes continued in a low, shamed voice, "I did not believe in your confirmation; I thought that if you were tempted just when you needed it most religion would not help you much, but I'd trust you now at any time."

A mist came over Margery's eyes, as she said penitently, "Oh, Agnes, please don't say anything more! You know I did wrong at first, and it took me all that time to make up my mind to do right."

"But you did it, though," replied Agnes; "and I know it was dreadfully hard. I could not have done it. I never had a real friend in my life, but I hope you will be one to me, though I am so much older."

That was a turning point in both these lives. The tall girl with the sad face shook hands, on the corner of the street, with the little rosy, happy girl, and both were friends from that moment.

It is years ago now, but neither will ever forget where Mount Sorata is, although they will never know what an influence it had upon both their lives, in leading them to do right, the girl who tempted and the girl who was tempted.—*Mary W. Gillespie, in Parish Visitor.*

"OLD CATHERINE."

I had just arrived at the "dress coat period;" I was a collegian of good standing; a church member (I blush to say it); the oldest son of my parents; I bore my father's honoured name, and I was surrounded by all that love and wealth could give. My parents were not over-indulgent, but they were loving and careful, and they were, as I can now see them, when I look back from the height of the seventy years which I have climbed since then, true lovers of all mankind.

I was too young and flippant in those days to realize, as I did later, that my parents, while joining cheerfully in the recreations of the social world, with all the surroundings proper to their station, yet had for their less favoured fellow-beings constant thought and love, which they displayed unostentatiously and quietly.

As they did nothing "to be seen of men," so few knew the extent of their benefactions. Indeed, I, my-

self, little guessed all my parents' noble bounty.

One evening, when they were to give a large reception, and I had come down from my room dressed, as my sister Fanny expressed it, "to kill," I chanced to pass through an outer corridor just in time to hear one of the maids say to a woman:

"Outside! Go away now! The lady is engaged!"

On the impulse of the moment, I stepped forward, and almost shouted:

"Begone, beggar!"

The tottering step was stayed; an old, old face looked up at me; a thin, quavering voice replied to me:

"I mean no harm, sir. Long may you be spared to your noble mother! You are but young, and over proud as yet."

I almost tremble with shame when I tell you that *I stamped my foot* and repeated:

"Begone!"

"Her name is 'Old Catherine,'" said the maid.

"She is an impudent old beggar," I replied.

Turning suddenly, I beheld my father, whose face was whiter than his handkerchief. Seizing me firmly by the collar—me, with my eighteen years and my excellent record at home and in college—he turned me about with such force that I nearly knocked my sister Fanny down.

"To your room, sir!" he thundered. "Take off your dress coat and your evening adornments, and come instantly to my study."

I should as soon have thought of setting fire to our house as of disobeying my father. I skulked—yes, I am not ashamed to say that I skulked—to my luxurious room. Before my numerous mirrors, and beside my elegant dressing table, I divested myself of my new and beloved toggery, donned that night for the first time.

As I entered my father's study, my eyes sought the floor. I had not the courage to meet his stern, reproving glance. Thus it happened that I did not observe that my mother was also there—my usually radiant mother. At last, as I looked furtively up, I saw her face, and it seemed to turn me to

stone. The sadness, the *ache* which I read in her eyes I can never forget.

"Frederick," she said "old as you are, you must listen to a story from your mother's lips, as patiently as you did when a little child, if not as gladly."

"Will you not be late for your guests, mother?" I inquired.

"Silence, sir!" thundered my father.

"Frederick," my mother's sweet voice went on, seeming to chill me as if with ice, "long years ago there lived in a lovely home a pretty, smiling, happy woman, blessed with a devoted husband and a dear little boy.

"Years passed. God, in the great mystery of His dealings, took from this happy wife the husband, the almost adored. He was a young physician, and left no fortune. The widowed mother, to keep her dear boy at his studies, gave lessons in singing, and also embroidered plentifully for money. When the son was twenty, and was almost ready to begin the practice of his profession, a terrible attack of pneumonia injured his mother's throat so that she could sing no more. To verify the oft-repeated adage that troubles never come singly, an accident by fire disabled her right hand. Thus she could sew no more. Then the brave and noble son worked day and night in order to fit himself the sooner to take on his young shoulders the care of that beloved mother.

"He prospered. Not many months passed before life seemed to smile again upon him. He managed to meet all their expenses, but, of course, could lay by nothing.

"'Oh, if only my life and strength are spared, mother dear!' he would say, and she would sometimes reply: 'Oh, Clarence, if my life were only not a burden and a hindrance to you!' A warm and loving kiss would then be the reply, but it spoke volumes.

"One day, just at the holidays, as Clarence was laughingly telling his mother that he wished they had uncles, aunts and cousins by the score, in order that they might be invited to see what a good 'provider and 'head of the house' he made,