

tion and examination of conscience. I have not been since my mother died.

"Examination of conscience, of course; but you have your prayer book, and I will leave you alone. You can prepare yourself here just as well as anywhere else. I will go into the other room and look at all your pretty things; and you look through the sins against God, your neighbour, and self and I will come back and hear you. Make a good act of contrition; above all, there is plenty of time—you need not hurry."

The priest went into the front drawing-room, leaving the folding doors open, and the young man was soon asking himself the questions which the "Key of Heaven" suggested. Among the ornaments which decorated the disused room there were many which arrested the priest's attention. There were curious cabinets, a collection of coins, and the walls were crowded with pictures of more or less excellence.

The young man had almost finished his examination, when he was disturbed by an exclamation from the priest in the adjoining room.

"What is the matter, Father?" he exclaimed.

The priest, as pale as death, turned to him. "Who is that lady?" he said, pointing to a portrait of an elderly lady before him.

"Oh, that is my mother, of whom I spoke to you just now, and very like her it is."

"Why" said the priest, coming towards him, "that is the lady who brought me to this house."

"Nonsense, Father—why, my mother has been dead these three years, before you came into the parish."

"I can only say, and I could repeat it on oath, that the lady who

came to the presbytery and brought me opposite this house, and clearly indicated it, is the same as that depicted upon the wall. I clearly saw her face in the gaslight."

"It is very odd," muttered the young man, "but I think you imagined it. However, I am quite ready now to make my confession if you will hear me."

The sacred rite was soon accomplished, and when he had given absolution the priest prepared to return home.

"After this extraordinary meeting," he said, "let us know each other better. Come to Holy Communion to-morrow morning and I will give you breakfast afterwards. You can take me on your way to the City, for the omnibus passed my door, so that will save you returning home. Mind you are punctual—eight o'clock sharp, and I give Communion before Mass, so that you can make your thanksgiving during Mass, and when I have made mine I will join you at breakfast."

"Thank you very much, and good-night Father," said the young man leaving over the bannisters once more. "I cannot tell you what you have done for me. I shall turn up at eight o'clock without fail. Good-night again."

The priest went home, his heart full of that peculiar joy which is the privilege of priest alone—to be the instrument of the greatest miracle God ever works, the raising to life of a dead soul.

Next morning the priest duly cautioned his house-keeper as to the expected guest, and even in the sacristy told the serving boy there certainly will be a Communion before Mass, even if the few women who generally presented themselves were deterred by the November fog.