

MR. KALBFLEISCH.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN, LL. D.

ON THE WHARF.

The news of the robbery reached Mr. Kalbfleisch just as he was stepping out to head the grand march, at the ball, to the music of "Die Wacht am Rhein."

When he was told of it, he rushed down to the market. Two policemen were guarding the spot. Mr. Kalbfleisch behaved as if he were mad. He looked at the empty closet and moaned.

"All gone!" he said. "All gone! Verloren ist verloren. Ach Himmel!" He was in despair. Mr. Kalbfleisch felt that his money gone, there was nothing worth living for. And it was all gone!

He listened to what people said, but he paid no attention to it. His hard savings were gone!

He would never get them back again, he was sure.

Mr. Kalbfleisch had no religion, and in this loss there was no consolation. He had never been a miser; he had always been generous when he had money, but he felt that without money, he could not live. He did not believe that the detectives could get his money for him again.

After his statement had been taken by the magistrate, Mr. Kalbfleisch, his fine clothes all disheveled, wandered down to the river again.

What was the use of living? he said to himself. It was very well for Catholics, like Charley, to talk of religion; but he did not see anything left for him on earth, when his money was gone.

He looked at the river, took off his coat and diamond pin and laid them on the wharf. He paused a moment, and hastily writing on a card very unsteadily in the dark these words, "For Charles O'Meara," he stuck the pin into the card, and put both into the pocket of the coat.

Fear seized him then. If what the Catholics said was true, he was about to cast himself into hell. And at that moment he felt it must be true. But he could not live without his money. He made a spring forward and reached the edge of the wharf.

WHERE'S CHARLEY.

Mr. Kalbfleisch felt there was no hope for him in Heaven or earth. He had loved money above all things, and the object of his love had disappeared.

He had, out of good nature, helped the O'Meara boys and given donations to the Little Sisters of the Poor. These were the only good deeds he had done. But the Little Sisters had prayed for him, and he was to be rewarded for his kindness to the O'Mearas. In another moment, he would have taken the plunge into the dark waters of the river. In another moment, he would have cut himself off forever from God.

He felt his arm grasped. He turned and saw dimly through his blood-shot eyes Willie O'Meara.

"What are you going to do?" asked Willie, breathlessly, for he had been running. He had just been sent out with a message to a steamer which lay in the bay, and as he jumped out of the boat and ran along the wharves, he saw Mr. Kalbfleisch.

"It's none of your business," said Mr. Kalbfleisch, trying to shake him off. "Let me go!"

"I won't!" said Willie, holding on to the butcher's thick arm with both hands. "You mean to kill yourself, sir! There's a policeman under that gaslight in the slip. I've only to call out, and he'll nab you. You know what that means? Under the new law, here in New York, they put any body in jail that tries to kill himself. Come along!"

Willie was very nervous; but he tried hard not to show it. Mr. Kalbfleisch hesitated. He was more afraid of jail than he was of the dark waters before him.

"Let me go!" he said. "I've nothing left in the world. My money is gone—lost—stolen!"

"Is that all?" said Willie. "You can make more. I'll help you—Charley will help. Don't leave us, Mr. Kalbfleisch; we haven't any father now."

Mr. Kalbfleisch covered his face with his hands and groaned. Willie gently forced on his coat and vest.

"Come home," Mr. Kalbfleisch shuddered. The policeman approached them and looked at them curiously. Mr. Kalbfleisch rose and let Willie lead him homeward.

Once there, Willie bustled around, made some strong coffee, and by dint of talking incessantly and promising that the New York detectives would certainly find the thieves, he at last succeeded in getting Mr. Kalbfleisch to bed.

So soon as the butcher began to snore, he went to his own room, pocketing with much content the key of Mr. Kalbfleisch's room.

He knelt down and thanked God and his Blessed Mother for permitting him to do the service he had done for Mr. Kalbfleisch.

But where was Charley? Willie realized at once that his brother was not in bed. It was plain, too, that he had not been in bed. Where was he?

Charley seldom went out at night—and he was never out as late as this. Where was he? Willie knit his brow and wondered.

A NEW FRIEND.

Charley lay in Chambers Street Hospital, unconscious. The occasional

moan only gave evidence that he was alive. He had been taken there in the ambulance, as soon as the policeman had found him in the market. The doctors were very kind. His clothes were searched, but all they found was an envelope addressed to Charles O'Meara, a rosary, and a little money.

Early in the morning, when Willie was searching for him, and he was still unconscious, two men visited the hospital. One was a detective, the other a tall, stout, good-natured-looking man with an Irish accent.

He examined the occupants of the different beds. Just as he approached Charley's, the boy opened his eyes.

The man looked at him, and then turned hastily to the nurse. "I would have sworn," he said, "that this was the face of a dear old friend. But he's only a boy. Those eyes! They are like O'Meara's."

"That's the boy's name," said the nurse, referring to a slip of paper in her hand.

The visitor looked at Charley again. "No body could deceive me in the face of an old friend. Will he live?"

"Oh, yes," said the nurse. "He is only stunned. We'll send him home, but we don't know where to send him. I'll ask him now where he lives."

"I say," said the visitor, after a moment's thought, "I'll take him to my hotel. I haven't any child of my own, and if this is O'Meara's boy, I ought to take care of him. Can he be moved?"

One of the doctors was consulted. He said yes. The visitor left his card—

MR. C. DAWSON,

Westminster Hotel.

A cab was called. Charley was dressed and put into it. But all the time he did not speak.

"We'll go to the newspaper office another time, Mr. Osborne," Charley's new friend said to the detective. "I'd like to see the *Herald* presses at work to-night, but just now I'd rather look after this boy. Tell the hospital people that I'll be glad to see the boy's friends when they come. Poor fellow! He's had a hard blow."

Charley, seemingly unaware of what was going on, leaned back in the cab. Once at the hotel, Mr. Dawson put Charley into a large and comfortable room and went for a doctor. He came, shook his head and prescribed.

On the next day, Charley was better, but he could not speak; he smiled in answer to Mr. Dawson's questions, and tried to answer them, but he could not. He was too weak to hold a pen.

The doctor said that perhaps if he were taken out into the country, a purer air might help to build him up. The boy had suffered no permanent injury, he said; he was only shocked and weak.

Mr. Dawson was impulsive. He had no doubt that it was his friend's son he had found while seeing the sights of New York, which, among the poor and the vicious—are terrible sights. Mr. Dawson, having adopted Charley on the impulse of the moment, was exceedingly interested in the boy. Unlike most impulsive people, he was constant to his fancies.

"I'll take him to the Riorians," he said. In two hours after he had made this resolution, he and Charley, in a luxurious palace car, were rushing towards the pretty cottage on the Hudson, where the Riorians lived.

The Riorian family consisted of the father, mother, Agnes and little Clara. Mr. Dawson had known the father and mother in Ireland before he became rich in California, and, as they had been kind to him, he remembered it. He had built this cottage for them, on condition that he should have a room in it as long as he lived.

It was built in what the architects call the Queen Anne style. It was large, yet cosy; warm in winter, cool in summer. A small farm surrounded it. Just beyond, between two hills, where the turquoise blue of the Hudson shone, was a Catholic church and school. Painted on a tile in the front of the house was a picture of the Sacred Heart. Peace reigned within. Each day the Riorians wondered why God had, in His goodness, seen fit to make them so happy.

Mr. Dawson had telegraphed to Mrs. Riorian. The room was ready, and, as Mr. Dawson opened the door, with Charley leaning on his arm, a pleasant sight met his eyes. In the ruddy glare of the grate-fire sat Agnes and Clara. Agnes held a steaming cup of tea in her hand, and the toast diffused an appetizing smell through the room. Pussy and Clara looked on. The light falling on the intent faces of the children brought out the golden tint of their hair, and deepened the shadows around them.

"Well, pets!" The children and pussy jumped up. The children were kissed by Mr. Dawson, who also smoothed pussy's back. Charley was then introduced. Clara stared at him with wide-open eyes. Agnes gave him the hand that did not hold the steaming cup. A big chair was wheeled up to the fire, and Charley sank into it with a sigh of weariness.

Mrs. Riorian, a woman with a sweet face and a neat white cap on her head, such as she had always worn at home in Ireland, entered, bringing tea on a tray. Agnes, in a very neat and careful way, buttered the toast. Mrs. Riorian then brought out some raspberry jam from a little cupboard, a round table was drawn up to the fire, and Mr. Riorian having come in and said grace, they had tea in the twilight.

"I want you to make this boy talk," Mr. Dawson said, laughing. They all

laughed, too; and Charley even smiled. Mrs. Riorian, who made it a rule always to have something pleasant to tell at the tea-table, told them that a little boy with a crutch had brought her a bunch of flowers and then sung a little song. He said his mother was a widow, and that he sold flowers and sung to help her along. He lived in New York, but came into the country every day for flowers. Mrs. Riorian said that she was so pleased with the boy's polite manner that she had given him half a dollar and all the dahlias in the garden. He had sung his song over again, and Agnes had learned to play it on her violin.

After tea, Agnes took her violin from its nail, and, holding it upside down after the manner of the little Italian boys, played and sang—

"Flowers are sweetest
Plucked in the morning,
Hardest and sweetest,
Plucked in the morning."

"No, no," said Mrs. Riorian. "You did not catch it, Agnes. I'll sing it with you—"

"Sweetest are flowers
Plucked in the morning,
Sweetest are hours
When we are working,
Each leaf and spray,
Give them to Heaven,
First of the day—
Give them to Heaven,
Kneel down and pray!"

Kneel down and pray,
Give them to Heaven,
Kneel down and pray.

Short are the hours,
They fade like flowers;
Then, no work shirking,
All through the day,
Do what we can,
Not sad, tearful,
Wringing no man,
Hopeful, cheerful.

Not sad, tearful,
Wringing no man,
Hopeful, cheerful.

"Pretty and well sung," said Mr. Dawson.

"I wish Willie were here!" Charley had spoken! Everybody uttered delighted exclamations. Charley had been interested in the little song; the peace and contentment around him, to which he was unused in the crowded tenement house in which he lived, had made him feel happy. From the bottom of his heart he had sighed, "If only Willie were here!"

Then Charley told the Riorians and Mr. Dawson his little story. When he had finished, Mr. Dawson kissed him on the forehead.

"You shall be my son now, Charley, for the sake of your dear father, whose footsteps you have followed!"

VII.

THE TIN BOX.

When Willie, after three miserable days, during which Mr. Kalbfleisch had forgotten his great loss for an hour or two in the sorrow of his little friend, got Mr. Dawson's letter, he was almost mad with joy. There was a postscript to it, which made him turn with a radiant face to Mr. Kalbfleisch, who was in the room with him.

"Will you wait here for a minute?" "Yah," said Mr. Kalbfleisch. "Is Charley found? Wait! Yah. I wait? What good am I now, except to wait?"

Willie ran down to the market. It was Saturday. To everybody's surprise Willie went down on his hands and knees, and, his heart almost standing still with fear that he might not find it, thrust his hand into the rat hole in the dock for the tin box. It was there.

He ran home, as he said himself, "like a streak of lightning." "Like a streak of lightning," he cried, "what would you do if I told you Charley had saved your money?"

Mr. Kalbfleisch groaned. "Come now!—What would you do?" "Don't make fun. Ah, Himmel, I am sick at heart!"

"What would you do?" "Willie," said Mr. Kalbfleisch, solemnly, "I would believe that there is a God who listens to the prayers of you Catholics and the Little Sisters. Yes, I would!"

"Here it is!" Mr. Kalbfleisch opened the tin-box and counted the money in silence. Then he dropped it on the floor and cried like a child.

"Willie," he said. "I will do whatever you say with that money. You have taught me that friendship and your religion are better to live for than money."

"But there can be no true friendship without religion. Father always said so."

"So?" said Mr. Kalbfleisch. He was very thoughtful.

"How well you boys have paid me!" he said, when Willie had read Mr. Dawson's very full letter to him.

VIII.

THE REWARD.

Mr. Dawson built another cottage near the Riorians. There he, Charley and Willie live. Next year Charley will enter the seminary at Troy.

Willie declares that he will always stay with Mr. Riorian, and help Mr. Kalbfleisch to manage the big stock-farm Mr. Riorian has bought.

The last time I saw Mr. Kalbfleisch, he was carrying, with Mr. Dawson, Mr. Riorian, and Willie the canopy held over the Blessed Sacrament in the Corpus Christi procession.

Truly, God had amply repaid him for his kindness to two orphan boys.

THE END.

What Do You Take

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SILENCE.

Says a great saint grandly: "The Father uttered one Word: that Word is His Son; and He utters Him forever in everlasting silence, and the soul to hear it must be silent."

This saying comes to mind on the feast of the Transfiguration, when we read how our divine Lord charged His disciples, to whom on a high mountain apart He had just revealed His glory, that they should tell the vision to no man till the Son of Man should be risen from the dead.

We are living in a time of peculiar publicity. A man's house is no longer his castle. An army of reporters invades it, and the sayings and doings of family life are dragged forth to the eye of day, and paraded in the newspapers.

So far has the evil gone that people seem to have a sort of hungry craving to behold themselves in print; and long lists of names and descriptions of dresses appear after a wedding or a party, like the names of the rescued on a burnt steamship, or of the heroes returning wounded from the seat of war. A continual feast is spread for vanity and self-conceit, while envy lurks in the shadows, and carping criticism whispers at the door.

Far worse than this, men's characters are well-nigh set at naught. Some light mind and idle tongue starts a surmise; it runs on, and the next tongue makes it a suspicion; the third repeats it as a downright statement of fact. Nobody intends to tell a falsehood about it, but somehow it gets to be a falsehood, and the blame falls back, too often, where it has least reason to fall.

What character can feel itself safe in these days?

We may truly answer that no character is safe. There is no help for it except to put one's self wholly and humbly into the hand of God, bearing criticism and evil report as we would bear any other cross or trial, knowing that in His own time He will certainly overrule all for good.

In Father Faber's notes of *Inward Peace*, he remarks how exceedingly sweet in the ears of the disciples our Lord's dear voice must have been, and how His favorite greeting to them was, "peace be to you." And then he says that inward peace seems to rise upward as from some depth in the soul; and that, strangely enough, it need not be forfeited by activity, but rather collect us for fresh activity; that it gives light also, and makes things clear in our minds, especially supernatural things; and yet it is forfeited by idleness to grace, or an undue interest in worldly matters. And we may remember how St. Francis de Sales once wrote to Mme. de Chantal that he had been so overwhelmed with press of work that he had been unable to make his meditation, and yet that his mind, by divine grace, had not lost its interior recollection nor continual union with God.

Mark, now, how Father Faber tells us this inward peace is to be gained. He says it is, first, by having few wants, and thus few irritabilities; second, by not meddling with other people's business; not setting them right; third, by not judging them; fourth, by some sort of exercise of silence; fifth, by looking after humility particularly. And he promises us, as the fruits of all this inward peace, gained by this method of self-discipline and mortification, a certain robustness (as he terms it) in the practice of virtues, a facility of realizing the presence of God, and a peculiar enjoyment of the very peace itself, "something beyond words to say—it is a touch of God."

St. Cajetan, the founder of the Theatines, was friend and contemporary of St. Philip Neri. Faber's spiritual father. His feast follows directly the feast of the Transfiguration, and his life is a direct commentary upon Father Faber's notes on inward peace. We are told of him that no idle or useless words ever fell from his lips, still less any which might appear harsh or uncharitable, but that his conversation was always regarding something which concerned either the glory of God or the good of his neighbor; and when he spoke he had a simplicity and simple dignity of speech which impressed every one with the greatest veneration. At the same time he was the most zealous observer and promoter of silence. And it came to pass with him that while ever at the service of the sick, the needy, and an innumerable number of penitents, even while carrying out these works his soul was absorbed in God, and often it seemed as if he had been thinking during his meditation only of the best way of helping his neighbor, so instantly would he fly to the relief of any one in trouble of mind or body, and on the other hand, it appeared as if amidst what many would have found an intolerable distraction, he only found a more perfect way of praying and uniting himself with God.

It is noteworthy that this blessed founder of the Theatines is one of the saintly men concerning whom some marked visible action of the Holy Ghost is related. His biographer tells us that in his childhood, a white dove flew down from heaven and settled on his head, while these words were clearly heard by all: "Peace be with you forever, O Cajetan!" Beware of losing it from whatever cause! And then, wheeling three times around his head, the dove disappeared. A holy priest interpreted this as follows: that the Holy Spirit of God had descended thus upon the child, to give him this great gift of peace, and the three gyrations signified that this peace was to be, with God, with himself, and with his neighbor. We shall see, says the

historian, how no one in this world ever maintained this blessed peace more perfectly than Cajetan, and that through his whole life.

Let us learn to-day two lessons—of charity and of silence. If one-half the time we waste in talking of our neighbors were only spent in praying to God for them, we would pass many an hour on Thabor, and see the world transformed into the image of our transfigured Lord; and were half the time we give to conversation, given instead to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, or in that inner temple of our heart where God's Spirit makes His home,—so often, alas! an unregarded guest,—we should hear in that deep silence the Father utter His one eternal Word, and the Spirit say, "Peace be to you forever!" and we should exclaim with the enraptured disciples: "Lord, it is good for us to be here!"—*Sacred Heart Review.*

GOD EXISTS.

The man who says there is no God is obliged in the same breath to say, "All men in all ages and in all countries have been wrong, and I alone am superior in intellect to all of them." In other words, "I have no common sense," for common sense is nothing else but the common and universal sentiment of the whole world.

A man who doubts the existence of God is therefore a man who has no common sense.

He is a man utterly void of right understanding. How, for instance, would he solve the plain and simple problem of the watch proposed by Fenelon? But it is more the heart than the mind that is sick among the irreligious men of this stamp.

They are almost always either men destitute of morality, or men who, having superficially adopted the spirit of dangerous books, have given up their religious belief, and having accepted doubtful assumptions against the faith, imagine that they have strong minds. For such as these one must have strong pity.

Real, steadfast, unshaken atheism is only to be found amongst animals. When man desires to live like the animals, he may well ape for a time their absence of religion.

"But at the least reverence, the mask falls, the man remains, And the beast vanishes."

How many have been atheists in words, and have suddenly changed when they have stood face to face with death!

A celebrated anatomist has said, "Give me the tongue of a dead dog and I will make it howl at atheists." "Give me," one might add, "the tongue of an atheist, and I will prove to its owner, by an analysis of the wonders it presents, that he is himself either a mad-man or a liar."

The surest way to believe in God, is so to live that we do not fear His righteous judgments and to live thus in practice with care all that religion teaches—to be a good and faithful Catholic.

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