

once he said, glancing, with a smile, at the lamp before the picture :

"That must have been the light which guided me here. It was like a tiny red spark in the darkness. But it answered the purpose. Had I not seen it I should have wandered on in the drifts, or have gone down an embankment."

"If you hadn't found your way here, somehow," said Leonard, "you wouldn't have been a living man to-morrow."

"A very little thing to save a life," said the stranger, rising and going over to examine the print. "Will you permit me to inquire," he added, involuntarily addressing Mary, "what this picture is intended to represent, and why you burn a light before it?"

Mary, summoning up all her convent lore, gave as clear an account as she could of the significance of the picture and her reasons for burning the lamp. The stranger listened attentively, asking many questions. He read over "the Promises" more than once, and returned to the subject of devotion to the Sacred Heart with a persistency which astonished Tom Leonard.

"What had men got to do," he thought, "with all this religious business. The women were the only ones who had time for that."

Unconsciously, however, he learned a great deal, no less than his guest.

The inclemency of the weather detained the young stranger for two or three days under that humble roof. During his stay he conversed more than once with Mary upon the subject of religion, examining her beads, her prayer-book and a catechism, which last he jestingly begged from her as a memento of his visit. Perhaps it was because of the lamp which had saved his life, but he talked most of all of the Sacred Heart.