#### AUGUST 1, 1908.

" Come in !" <sup>6</sup> Come in 1 The door opened and the caller en-tered. It is no other than Dr. Mathers just arrived from England. Father Salvini, without even turning

his head, looked over the letters and muttered thoughtlessly: "Just a min-ute until I have assorted the letters and then I will listen to your tale of woe." A few minutes later the priest rose

from his chair and, turning, was com-pletely taken by surprise when he beheld Charles Mathers before him. "Good heavens, Charles! How/are you? Welcome home! I'm so glad to

see you." Father Salvini clapped him on the shoulder and sized him up from foot to head. Charles had improved wonder-fully in looks and had gained in avoirdupois, and was withal really a handsome - erect, manly and distinguished man looking.

It did Father Salvini's heart good to look upon the young surgeon. "When did you arrive, Charles ?" he

asked, inquisitively.

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one.

And am I really the first person you

see in Billing in Billington ?" "The first, Father."

"The first, rather. "Now are you sure Charles that some one else—some fashionable young lady— was not at the depot to meet you ?" the

priest asked laughingly. . "No, Father. I came here unknown

to any one." "Well ! well ! then I see that you have not vet given your heart away. Surgery and love do not mix well, my boy-eh?" laughed the jolly priest, good-naturedly. "How did you like England, Charles?"

"Very well, Father. But I am glad to get home again. Have you heard any more of Mrs. Atherton?" He had come expecting to find her in Billington. Where is she?" he asked again.

"Charles, I do not know. No one has heard of her since the day she escaped from the nun's carriage. At first we thought she had been the victim of foul play, but a package found in her room the day after added a new chapter to the story. You see, the day she left was a busy one at the convent and little atter tion was given the nun's story of Mrs Atherton's strange leave-taking. The Superior thought that she probably met a friend down town and had gone to her home for the day, but, when the night closed in and her bed was still empty, the hearts of the nuns sank." " Was she ever known to have stayed out at night before ?" Charles asked

nervously.

'No. It was this that aroused the Sister's suspicions. The next morning however, one of them came across a letter in her room addressed to the Super ior. It contained \$100 in bills, accompanied by the following note :

" ' May God reward you all for your goodness to me ! I am leaving Billington to-day-perhaps forever. Please accept the enclosed for the poor and the orphans, and never cease praying

#### MAE ATHERTON.' "

The young doctor's hopes sank gradually. He had expected to return to Billington and help provide for the woman who had been a second mother to him. But now his plans were all dashed

to pieces. "And is there no one here," he asked, " who saw her leave or to whom she en-trusted her secret ?"

'No one Charles. For some weeks we searched for her and could not dis-cover the slightest clue to the strange mystery. I think probably she's gone off somewhere to spend the remainder of her days in quiet. Billington never did seem the same to her after those terrible reverses. Did you hear of them, Charles ?"

"Yes, Father. Mrs. Atherton wrote and told me all, and—yet her letters were so cheerful."

"She always put the best side out. From external appearances no one would ever have thought that woman a sufferer, but God knew the leaden weight of her cross. Did she write you again after the Neville affair ?" "No, that was the last letter I re-

grew uneasy and wrote you. Your letgrew uneasy and where the second seco

pected back from England shortly, and thought it best to broach the matter in time. Dr. McCracken, you know, has the confidence of thousands in and around Billington. He is a fine type of man-thoughtful, honest and sin-cere, and it is a good chance for you to swing into the current of the best practice in Billington. What do you think of the proposition ?" "I think it is glorious. Who would

ever have thought that I should be the recipient of such good fortune? It all seems like a dream !" "Well, my boy, you have lost a friend in Mrs. Atherton, but God, you see, has

found you another." "Did you say anything definitely to

Dr. McCracken about the matter ?' "Yes, I went so far as to say that I thought you would probably accept his offer

with her eyes glued on the window op-posite. The next monent it was thrown "Oh, I am so glad you told him. Then the position is open to me, and I am to be the assistant of the great suropen and a man entered the room.

prised, but by no means frightened the child hid behind the big newel post at Charles' young face lit up with a smile. It was really the happiest mo-ment in his life. He felt elated that the foot of the staircase. The newcomer glanced around the room and paused as if to hear some sound. After that he Dr. McCracken should have thought of Dr. McCracken should have thought of him. He had never anticipated such a surprise; he had left London in a somewhat discouraged state of mind, but now the clouds were drifting away and here there is a state of the state of th pulled out a little dark lantern from his pocket and, opening up the slide, sent narrow cone of light toward the little afe. He got down on his hands and knees, and, drawing some heavy instru and he was the participator in a new ment from his pocket began to pick the lock of the old-fashioned safe. For more than five minutes he kept this up, and fresh dawning. He was to begin practice under the most auspicious circumstances It spoke volumes for Dr. Mathers, and presently, with a grunt of satisfaction he pulled opened the door. The child the people were pleased to know that the great surgeon had placed implicit confidence in the young man. Every one predicted smooth sailing for the had remained as motionless as a statue during this performance, but as the thief latter. And they were not disapreached for the bag of money a sudden

pointed. That very afternoon Charles called at resolution seemed to shoot through her frail frame. She reached over toward Dr. McCracken's office and an agree-ment was drawn up and signed. Some days later the sign on the office door the button, and, giving it a push flooded the room with light. The man jumped to his feet instantly and turned with an

was changed. It was now to read-DRS. McCRACKEN & MATHERS

In a week Charles took charge of his new duties and began life's up-hill fight. He was most fortunate from the outset, through the tips of his fingers. He looked around the room suspiciously as if to see some one else present but had good success with his cases and it had good success with his cases and in twelve months his name was on the lips of everyone. His rise was almost phenomenal. For five years he worked patiently and zealously with his senior no, he was alone in the room with the child. Strange to say, the little one partner, and, when the latter retired from active work, the whole practice fell into his hands and he was easily though still quite young, the foremost surgeon in Billington. she said.

TO BE CONTINUED.

### "THE LEAST OF THESE."

Father Clancy leaned back in the easy chair in his study and heaved a sigh o wholesome contentment. It had been a "Well," he said, finally, wondering all the time just how he should act trying day in many ways-as what Sun day was not ?-but the priest had borne all the labors and the petty vexations under such peculiar couditions, "what of it of the day with the patience and a cheer

fulness that came naturally to a cleamind in a sound body. While he sa shrill little voice rising. "Why, a great deal of it. That money belongs to there musing a little curly headed girl, about six years of age, rushed into the the orphans.

"Yes, " she answered, " to the poor "Oh, Father Clancy," she cried, please play house with Veronica." orphans who have no parents to provide The priest laughed and shook his head for them. decisively.

"Father Clancy is too tired to play A curious change began to come over the man. He remembered in a vage sort of way that he had a child who was an house just now. You may amuse your-self with this book for a while, " and he tossed her an illustrated volume that orphan. When her mother died five years before he had placed the little one lay on the table near by.

As the little one turned the pages he looked down at her with good-natured perplexity. Veronica was the adopted daughter of his brother. Henry Clancy, out of the lawseneed. n an asylum under the direction of the isters of Charity, and then he had gone his way, selecting crime as the easiest method of obtaining the money he needed to gratify his passions. But during these years the face of the child was out of the largeness of his heart had out of the largeness of his heart, had taken her from the orphan asylum the year before, and in that short time she wound herself about his heart with the silken cords of love. She had before him like an accuser, and a well-remembered voice rang in his ears in the night and at times when he least desired it. Now the whole thing flashed up before his mental vision. His long-continued silence seemed to irritate begged for the privilege of spending a week at the rectory, in spite of Father Clancy's laughing protests that he had no facilities for the entertainment of Veronica. young ladies. While he watched the child at play it "Why don't you say something ?" sh said.

"No, that was the last letter I re-ceived. I wrote her frequently after that, but never received an answer. I got up, went to his desk and took out of the money that belongs to the orphans? Why not ?" he said feebly, and this time his voice trembled in spite of himit a large bag filled with silver and bank-notes—the collection which he had been self. "Why not?" she echoed. "Why, if

taken up in the church that day for the of the or

## THE CATHOLIC RECORD

Once again he began to show signs of in the bright little eyes as she made her way slowly down the stairs, which was dimly lighted by the lamp in the hall-"What was it before that ?" way. Her purpose was quite evident. She was making for the switch which "I don't know," she said, with a bevildered look. "Where did you live before your name controlled the electric light. ecame Clancy ?' evident that she proposed a continuation of her newly-invented game of "Light "At the asylum." "He took her little hands in his own rembling fists. He gazed long and earnestly into the innocent face. Five and Darkness." The house was wrapped and Darkness. The house was wrapped in gloom, and she wished to see for her-self if a mere turn of the button would flood the place with bright light. Slow-ly she felt her way down the stairs, and exceeding the second twent the little

years make a wonderful difference, but the eyes and the features of the infant "Did you ever see my beads?" she carefully she reached toward the little button which would turn on the light. Just at that moment there was a click. sked with her curious lisp. "No," he answered. She pulled at a little string at her click, click-a noise evidently made by

some blunt instrument on the shutters outside the sitting-room. The child paused in wonderment. The sound was neck and drew up a rosary. "The were mamma's," she said : "I alway repeated, and presently the window was 'em.' thrown open. Veronica stood stock still

He recognized them, with a dart of ain. The man was on his knees now, nd the tears were streaming from his

'Oh, what I've lost !" he moaned.

"What, the money ?" she asked. "Something more precious than oney," he answered. "But I'll leave ou; that will be my sacrifice, my atone

He turned to her as he reached the

'Good night," he cried. "Good night

"Why," she exclaimed, "you are no ing without seeing uncle, are you? He hesitated on the threshold

Wait a minute she cried. "I'll call And the next instant childish voice rang through the corri-dor. A few moments later Father y was hurrying down the stair-way Clane buttoning his cassock as he descended, The child called to him before he ched the landing. "Uncle, here is a man who wishes to

Astonishment was depicted on the riest's face. He looked at the child ad then at the man and finally his gaze oath on his lips. He pulled his pistol from his hip pocket, and was prepared for a battle to the death. But when he sting understandingly on the halfgazed upon that little nightgowned figure the desire to fight seemed to ooze pen safe. He spoke angrily : "A thief—and with the orphans"

> "I have—a—child in the orphan sylum myself," murmured the thief, in roken tones. "I have not disturbed our collection.'

Four collection," Father Clancy looked at the man searchingly. He was evidently telling the truth. Still, such a person should not be at large. He was a menace to society. Reasoning it out this way, without any personal feeling, the priest She was the first to speak. She did so with a sound of reproach in her lisping 'You were going to take that money,' The man did not know whether to walked over toward the burglar alarm He reached up for the knob of the con laugh or cry. The situation was so novel that he lost his customary elever-ness in adapting himself to circumstanrivance. The thief stood motionle waiting developments. Suddenly Father "Now, don't deny it," she said in a voice of anthority. "I saw you reach in for the money." Clancy felt a plucking at his cassock He turned around and beheld Veronica The innocent little face was quite pale it the look of intelligence showed

horough understanding of the situation "Don't uncle," she cried. "Don't." "Why not?" he asked curiously.

"Because he has a child in the orphan sylum," she said simply Father Clancy looked the intruder quarely in the eyes. The man squirmed neasily under the prolonged stare. He noved a step-forward and laid his pistol n the table.

"Go ahead," he said hoarsely; "go ahead and ring. I'm prepared to take ny medicine.'

Veronica stood looking pleadingly into her uncle's eyes. Father Clancy, halt-ing, pointed to the weapon on the table. "Why did you do that?" "I didn't know I was breaking into a

rectory. I'm not trying to excuse my-self, only telling the truth. It's the first time I ever carried a pistol, tooand, I hope, the last." "Why," the priest exclaimed, "you

eem sorry.

The thief looked in the direction of Veronica before replying. Her return glance of confidence brought the mist to his eyes. He uttered two words. They came from his very heart : "I am.'

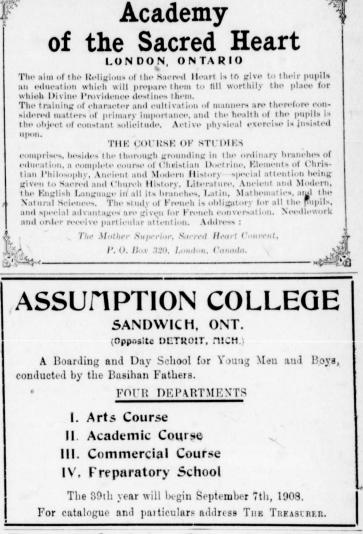
"You have reached the parting of the ways, my friend," said the priest firmly, but not unkindly. "Why not take the "Surely you don't intend to take right road here and now?

Veronica listened with wide-open yes. The next moment she saw her eyes. The next moment she saw her uncle fastening a stole on his arm, and seating himself in a chair in the corner of the room. After that her thief went

"Let me kiss the child ?"

never fear going down hill.

"Go ahead."



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such news from you. Hence you can easily imagine my surprise. I am sure easily imagine my surprise. I am sure we shall never see her face again. She was so good and kind, and it almost breaks my heart to think she's gone.

Perhaps even now she is wanting for "Never mind, Charles. You will have to make the best of it now. By the way, about a month ago I was the

means of bringing you had news, but I think I have something good to tell you now. Where do you intend prac-ticing?"

"I don't know, Father, but I would like to start up in Billington."

"A capital idea, Charles ! Yo couldn't start in a better locality. Bu listen, I have something to tell you." Father Salvini turned slightly in his chair. There was a merry twinkle in his eve, and he continued

", Who do you think called in to see me yesterday about yourself?"

About me ?"

"Yes—about you." "I have not the slightest idea." "Well—it was one of the big men of the city, one of the shining lights in your profession-a surgeon. Can you not

Dr. McCracken ?" questioned Charles, interestedly. "Yes. That's the man."

say? I feel flattered." "Dr. McCracken is the greatest sur-

" Dr. McCracken is the greatest sur-geon in Billington to-day. His operations and consultations keep him unusually busy until late at night. He is getting to be an old man now, and he feels that he ought to have an assistant to help shoulder some of his responsibilities."

a very lonely Christmas." "Yes, Father, it was a lonely Christ-mas—probably the loneliest in all my life. I had never dreamt of receiving te walked over to a small safe that stood in the corner of the room and deposited the money there and closed the door. The little girl looked on with an intense interest. "What is that?" she demanded.

" That is the collection that was taken up to-day in the church for the benefit of the little orphans." "What are you putting it there for?"

"For safe-keeping," he responded. "Will it do the orphans very much

good, 'she asked in her innocent way. "Oh very much good,' he responded earnestly. "It will buy them food to eat, clothing to wear and beds to sleep

"When will they get it?"

"To-morrow, God willing," he replied. And then he gave the knob on the safe a final turn and arose and went about his duties. In the meantime it had grown dusk, and the housekeeper, coming downstairs, had pushed a button and turned on the electric lights in the apartment, which was half study and apartment, which was half study and half sitting room. In all personal matters Father Clancy was simplicity itself, but in the management of his household and his church and school he said

was the most progressive of men. The telephone, electricity and all of the modern contrivances for saving time and labor were in evidence about his premises. Veronica noticed the turning on of the light with childish glee, and when she discovered that another push of the button would extinguish the light, she "Yes. That's the man." was soon engaged in playing a game of "And he inquired after me did you her own which she called "Light and

darkness. Tea was served about 6 o'clock, and

and an hour or so after that Veronica was tucked away in bed in a little room off the second floor landing. Father Clancy retired early himself that night, and before 11 o'clock the house was in ulder some of his responsibilities." And did he mention my name in re-

and did he mention my name in re-gard to such a proposition ?" "Yes. That was principally his with her snow-white nightgown and cute reason for coming to see me. He had heard somewhere that you were  $ex_{\pm}$  landing. There was a mischievous look

you do, the orphans will have no roof over their heads, they'll have no clothes to wear and no food to eat.'

was the more self-possessed of the two

"What of it ?" she exclaimed, her

"To the orphans?" he muttered

"Is that so!" he answered with a sickly smile. "Yes, that's so," she replied. "And, more than that, you'll be taking the money that was given to the orphans by people who are poor themselves. They gave it in the collection to-day. I know it because uncle told me all about it tonight.

During this time the man had been reviewing his whole life. He wavered for an instant. It was one of those moments which are decisive, whether it be in a battle of armed men or in on man's struggle with his own conscience. It was a fight between the lower and

the higher natures. It was a test be-tween the natural and the supernatural. The man passed a grimy hand over his the man passed a griny hand over its tear-dimmed eyes, and his next action announced the result of the conflict. He went down on his hands and knees and put the bag of money back in the safe. As he closed the door of the little receptacle he turned to the child and

"Little one, you have won. The col-lection for the orphans will not be disvolume of eternity.

turbed." He started toward the open window,

"Good bye," she called. Something in the tone of her voice halted the man. He came back and looked at the child with searching eyes. The confiding glance that she gave him was strangely familiar. He grasped her

by the hand and cried excitedly "What's your name, little one?" "Veronica she replied simply. The mention of that name made him eel faint; he could feel his heart thump-

ing at his breast. "Veronica Clancy," she replied proud-

"He dropped her hand disappointedly. "Clancy ! Clancy !" he repeated me-chanically.

preparations for degrees and seminaries. Natural Science course-thoroughly equipped experimental laboratories. Critical English Literature receives special attention. First-class board and tuition only \$15000 per annum. Send for catalogue giving full particulars. "Yes," she said. And then, as an afterthought, "I only got that name a year ago."

down on his knees and began pouring the story of his wicked life into the ears SUMMER SCHOOL of the priest. There was a confused unintelligible murmur of voices for some moments. The priest blessed the kneeling man, and then both arose. Father Clancy walked to the window, which reached to the floor of the room, and, June. July and August leads into our Fall Term without throwing it open, waited for his strange visitor to pass out. any break. Enter any time. New catalogue free. Write The man hesitated. for it to-day. Central Business "I've one request." "What is it?"

College, Toronto. The largest, most reliable of its kind. H. Shaw, Principal, Yonge & He rushed over and gave Veronica a Gerrard Sts., Toronto.

onvulsive embrace. The grey mists of the sky were beginning to give way to the rosy tints of the morning, and the reflection lighted up the face of the departing thief as the priest exclaimed in his/cheery voice : "God bless you, and don't forget your purpose of amendment,"—George Barton in the Catholic Standard and Times.

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