

AUNT HILDA'S PORTFOLIO.

Written for the CARMELITE REVIEW by
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I - A SCAPULAR.

CONTINUED.



HAT broth has put new life into me. Miss Judith, how comes it you are so kind to a good-for-nothing like me?"

"Well, Mr. Craig, it's only neighborly, but it is true that I do feel very kindly to you. I chanced to hear that you were very determined about having your child christened last spring and when I found you were ailing I was very much concerned. I know that our men are oftener weak than wicked."

"That's a true word, Miss Judith. When Mrs. Baizley brought me that Scapular you could have knocked me down with a feather. I was invested with the Scapular when I made my first communion and my mother always gave me a new one as the old wore out. She died a year ago, and I clung to the Scapular she gave me last. I was very sick last month, after a spree, and when I got better I found my Scapular was gone. I suspected that my mother-in-law had done something with it, but I knew her better than to ask her for it: I suspected that she knew I missed it. When she brought me your message I was very much astonished. The first Scapular that I ever wore, you gave. I was in your first communion class, and I always remember how earnestly you told us never to lay it off and that, in wearing it, we announced ourselves as the children of the Blessed Virgin and that she would protect us. When I began to drink I often thought I would tear it off me. I felt myself a hypocrite, but the thought that she is the 'refuge of sinners' and I needed her prayers, stayed my hand and I held on to it because of my mother, and respect for the Virgin Mother."

"Blessed be God, Craig, His mercies are

wonderful. How long since your last confession?"

"Well, I haven't been since I was married, that's four years ago."

"God is very good to you, and I see you are not ungrateful. I'll tell you what to do. There will be fewer at confession this afternoon because so many went for yesterday, the first Friday. Take the car and go down to St. Andrew's, tell the priest that you are a sick man, and that you wish to make a beginning. Remember there is more joy in heaven over the sinner that doth penance, than over ninety-nine just that need not penance. It is now two o'clock and you can be at home before sun-down; there is a little car-fare."

Craig would have declined the crisp note that Miss Judith pressed into his hand, but she cut him short with:

"Have sense, man, I know how sickness runs away with money. I don't forget the joy I felt one day, when lying ill, I found the five dollar bill some good soul had put between the leaves of my prayer book."

Pious aspirations for Craig bubbled from Miss Judith's lips as she waited on her customers, who came and went, until at eleven o'clock she closed the shutters she had opened at seven in the morning.

Midnight surprised her on her knees mingling her petitions with grateful thanks for "the sheep that was lost and is found."

Tuesday brought Mrs. Baizley.

"Craig had another hemorrhage Monday morning, and Mrs. Craig asked Miss Judith to come over."

Kitty was hastily despatched for the priest, and Miss Judith, carrying the basket sacred to such occasions, was soon in the sick chamber. To arrange a neat altar was the work of a very few minutes. The necessary articles stood ever ready in Miss Judith's room, and in her neighborhood were often in demand. Loving hearts kept Miss Judith supplied with the loveliest flowers. The donors knew well that Christ or His poor would be their destination. To the sick their fragrant beauty were promises of paradise. A bunch of rare roses lay beneath the crucifix. In a half hour the Sacred heart of Jesus lay lovingly within the sick man's breast, "and there was a great peace."

Extreme Unction was administered and the invalid left to repose. When Miss Judith