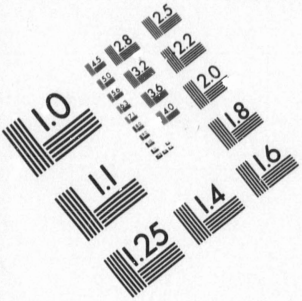

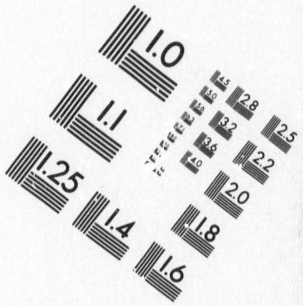

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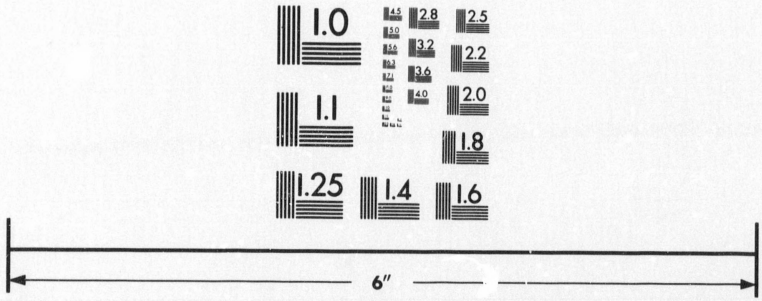

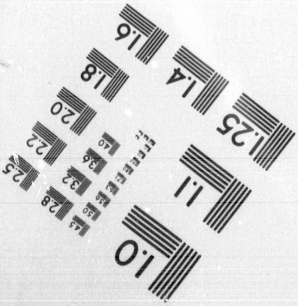

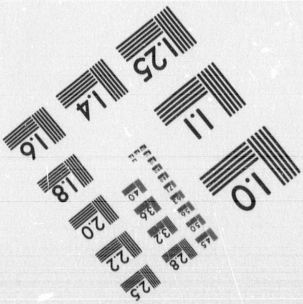

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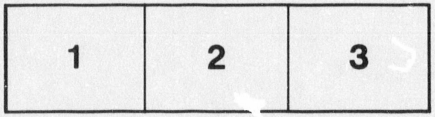

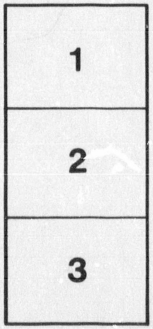

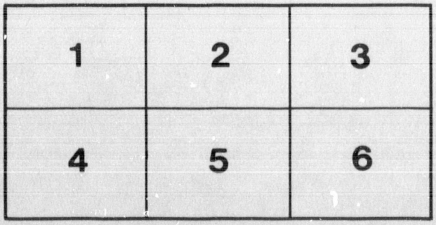

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"R." pseud.

STRAY LEAVES

FROM THE

DRAMA OF EVERY DAY LIFE.

Dedicated to

MY MOTHER.

By "R."

Montreal:

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1878.

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AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM.

I DO not think my little book needs a preface, for it contains but a few simple, unpretending life sketches, from which I hope many young people will derive both profit and pleasure. In a short time I shall submit a more carefully written volume to my friends' criticism, and hope that, if "Stray Leaves" meet with pleased and kind readers, my second effort will be cordially welcomed and enjoyed by all who admire and esteem courage, honor, justice and truth.

R.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Nellie, our Convent Darling	9
Happy Days	14
Deadly Nightshade	19
A Trustworthy Friend	27
A True Irishwoman	35
A Maiden's Triumph	47
Mother and Daughter	51
A Visitor from Boston	57
Contrasts	60
Explanations	63
Gabrielle and Mrs. Fordstaff	74
Reaping the Whirlwind	78
"Suffer Little Children to Come unto Me."	84
New Characters	87
Echoes from the Cloister	98
The Sea-side	100

A Brave Young Woman..... 104

Exchange of Opinions..... 109

True Love..... 114

Letters More or Less Confidential and Strictly Private..... 120

More Letters..... 123

The Tables Turned..... 127

Satan on Guard but Finally Overcome..... 131

A Shrivelled Leaf..... 152

Misereris Omnium Domine..... 156

True to Herself..... 157

Frank and Denise..... 167

"Yes, Dear, I do Love You"..... 177

Catholic by Name and Catholic at Heart..... 179

The Sublimity of Sacrifice..... 181

A Wedding Gift..... 183

"Ecce quam bonum"..... 186

A Man of Honor..... 188

The Afternoon of a "Vêture"..... 190

Two Years After..... 191

104
109
114
120
123
127
131
152
156
157
167
177
179
181
183
186
188
190
191

CHAPTER I.

NELLIE, OUR CONVENT DARLING.

A SHARP ring at the hall door and a wild rush up the passage and stairs roused Mrs. Fordstaff from a profound reverie, her flushed cheeks and brightening eye giving evidence that a welcome pair of little feet were making that delightful racket. In two minutes her noisy but beautiful little visitor was resting in her arms, tired and breathless and brimful of interesting school news.

"Oh, Auntie I'm so tired! and to morrow will be holiday! and I'm hungry, and it was splendid!"

"Don't talk so fast, pet, and tell me all about the play and music."

"One of the big ones sang a long long song, and then a little boarder, dressed all in white, came and asked the Bishop for a *congé*. And the Nuns kissed her and me, they gave us nice fresh maple sugar, too, Auntie, and Monseigneur put his hand on my head as he passed out of the '*grande salle*' and said '*soyez bonne petite fille.*'" For many

minutes longer little Nellie would have rattled on, had she not suddenly remembered dinner. Springing from her Aunt's kind embrace, she was presently chatting gaily with her French maid, and no doubt doing full justice to the goodies reserved for her by the faithful servant who had nursed her from infancy and loved her devotedly.

Dear little Nellie was indeed a little angel! affectionate, kind, sweet-tempered and lovely. We all cherished her as our pet and pride. And when He who loves all little ones called her early to Himself, we bowed to His holy will with anguished hearts, praying for resignation to the stern decree of Death. O God! Thou only seest the mourning heart! Thou alone!

Mrs. Fordstaff was a widowed lady whose husband had died in the third year of their marriage, and left her young, rich, and handsome. She had loved her husband with the admirable trust of a woman's generous nature, and she had been all the world to him. When he died, life seemed ended, existence impossible, the dreadful truth of her bereavement incapable of being realized; even her little child seemed to have lost power to arrest her thoughts. She loved him, caressed him almost mechanically, while her lone heart ached on without ceasing. She had never learned to turn to our

Lady of Sorrows; she had never been taught to share her grief with our *Mater Dolorosa*, nor seek the sympathy and love of the Virgin Queen of Heaven.

Day after day, in the long still summer afternoons, she stood by the grave of her lost Arthur, in the quiet, beautiful woods of Mount Hermon Cemetery, midst its loving mementos of the dead—weary, lonely, heart-crushed.

At last, one September day, there came a change, a great change in her life. She had been sitting nigh her dead love, sadly watching the leaves now flushing into red; the flowers around her, drooping and pale, foretold the close of the bright season. Sad, sad, gloomy and tearful, more sorrowing than ever felt that poor widowed heart. Vividly she remembered how, two years before, with a party of friends from Montreal, she and her dear Arthur had visited this mournful spot, walked lightly, perhaps, on the very earth now covering him. How could she bear the great surging wave of grief that seemed to rend her very soul as though it longed to release her from mortal agony! The sound of a child's voice reached her heart: "Where is dear Mamma, Adèle?" Little Willie's voice! Her son's and Arthur's! Rising from her knees Mrs. Fordstaff clasped her boy's hand in both of her own, and

gravely said: "I am here, dear, with Papa." Willie looked from Mamma to Adèle with wondering gaze. Already in his frank honest eyes, open brow, and cheerful smile, could be read the history of his future life.

"I want Nellie to come and see you," he said.

"Who is Nellie, my son?"

"The little girl in black who has no papa and no mamma."

Here Adèle explained that, while wandering through the cemetery with Master Willie, she had met an old acquaintance with whom the child in question was walking. Just then Césarée Noël and her young charge passed, halting at a little distance, on a sign from Mrs. Fordstaff.

"What a lovely child," involuntarily exclaimed Willie's Mamma, and Willie himself was busy coaxing the shy little stranger to come and speak to him again.

Very easily Mrs. Fordstaff learned from loquacious Césarée that Nellie was an orphan child from the Sisters of Charity, whom she had adopted, having no children of her own. "My husband is a carter," she continued, "and to-day he treated Nellie and me to a drive out here, as Petite was looking pale, and we think it right she should remember her father's grave."

"Her father buried here?" exclaimed Mrs. Fordstaff, noticing that they spoke French exclusively.

"Her mother was a French Canadian Catholic," Césarée quietly explained.

"The child's name?" asked Mrs. Fordstaff.

"Helena Lowval."

"Can she possibly be Maurice Lowval's daughter?"

"Oui, Madame, it is the name"

"Adèle," said Mrs. Fordstaff, "tell your friend to come and see me to-morrow, and let her bring little Nellie with her." Then kissing the strange little girl, she turned with Willie and his attendant to leave the place. Soon they were rolling along St. Lewis Road in a fine easy carriage, but not even after she had entered her home on the Esplanade could Mrs. Fordstaff keep for a moment from wondering if really little Nellie would prove to be the child of her cousin Maurice Lowval, and hoping earnestly that it might be so.

CHAPTER II.

HAPPY DAYS!

DEAR MAMMA,

We have a grand *congé* to-day (*congé* is French for holiday), so I have obtained permission to leave my companions and recreate myself in the study-room, writing to you and my dear ones in Boston. I am beginning to feel that my prejudices against convent-life were thoroughly unfounded. Tell cousin Kate that I am in no dark, gloomy prison. How little I dreamed of the sunshine of the heart that gladdens the spirit of teacher and child! Here, sometimes, I amuse myself watching the senior pupils at study, young girls seated each at her place with all the implements of mental labor before her. I do not say that her studies present no difficulties, but when she feels discouraged, one look at our patient teacher, and immediately whole mountains of inconstancy and fatigue sink away before that encouraging smile. Sometimes the presiding monitor draws forth the dreaded red-book

and lifts the recording pencil, when swift the sprite dissipation vanishes, and again all heads are busily intent on the studious pages before them.

Last week the Roman Catholic pupils were in retreat, as they call it. As I understand it, they had a religious revival among them. I spent that week with Mrs. Shippall, who made great efforts to amuse me, meeting, I admit, with marked success; and yet I was pleased to enter the old Monastery again: in my next letter, I will tell you all about Mrs. Shippall's hospitality. To-day I must tell you of Monseigneur's visit to us. His health is restored after a serious illness; joyfully was his convalescence hailed by his united children of "Notre Dame de Grâce."

The pale countenance of his Lordship bears traces of his recent illness, but there he stood, receiving with a smile of benevolence our heartfelt congratulations. His recovery was as sudden as his illness had been severe.

The little niece of our worthy Bishop addressed him in the name of all her companions, and the enthusiastic cry of "Vive Monseigneur," which interrupted her, showed plainly that all shared in the feelings she so eloquently expressed.

But suddenly a subdued expression steals over those youthful faces, beaming with pleasure; and

two hundred young girls sink gently on their knees to receive their venerated Pastor's blessing. Oh! dear Mamma, there is a solemnity in these peaceful Convent scenes more easily felt than described; and these feelings will follow us no doubt, when we shall no longer be able to join the school girl's "fêtes" at Notre Dame de Grâce.

The venerable Prelate blessed us with effusion of heart, and addressed us in a few kind words. He then prepared to withdraw; but our little companions had not forgotten that Monseigneur might have further favors in store for us. The silence was broken by a little voice, "the *congé, s'il vous plaît, Monseigneur!*" which was graciously accorded. No sooner had our honored visitor retired than cries of "Grand Congé! Vive la Liberté!" resounded on all sides.

You see, dear Mamma, that our studies are not monotonous and dreary, and life is quite pleasant inside the cloister. I enjoy more liberty than most of the pupils, as I am several years older than the oldest of the seniors. I am acquiring French rapidly, and like it very much. Italian, German, music, and drawing occupy nearly all my time, and at recreation hours I have often the privilege of a pleasant chat with the teachers to whom are entrusted such branches as chemistry, physics,

botany, astronomy, natural history and literature: I am becoming quite "savante." Dear Mother, if you were only nearer to me, how happy I could be! Educated in the Convent yourself, you will not need me to tell you that I am allowed to practise my own religion without interference.

Now, I will leave you, as the junior pupils depend on my teaching them a new game promised them by their teacher for to-day.

With much affection, dear Mamma,
I am ever,
Your obedient daughter,
RACHEL COMPTON.

Ursuline Monastery, Quebec.

Scarcely a fortnight has passed, dear Mamma, and how different everything seems in the cloister. Death has passed through the Community and snatched from the sorrowing inmates, one of the dearest of the young Nuns.

Yet why should we weep for the favored soul that has just winged its flight to a better world? Tears are uncalled for. Let us rather envy her happy lot, and pray that our last end may be like unto hers.

The Sister who was buried this morning was aged but twenty-four. Her companions in religion called her, "l'enfant gatée du bon Dieu," so pure, so

favored of Heaven, was she during her short life. When kneeling over the little chapel vault, we will remember the dead, the thought of one so "early blessed" will be before us, an incentive to further efforts, that we may meet her on a happier shore, there to join in the everlasting hymn of praise to the Almighty Creator.

You will find I am growing very serious; you are right, Mother. And yet though I am more sedate, I am at the same time gayer, and when occasion offers, laugh more heartily than ever. To-day, I shall write no more, for I feel sad when I recall the solemn church-service this morning. I hope Frank gives you no trouble. I have acquired the accomplishment of teazing among other desirable qualities, and when Margaret Randall comes to see me at the parlor, I quite enjoy the effect of Frank's name on her. She is too well-bred to show any feeling by either feigning indifference or looking conscious, but her delicate pale face flushes, and her calm, holy eyes almost reproach me, when I ask her innocently if Frank sent his photograph for me? etc., etc. What a daughter and sister she would be for you and me, Mamma. And I never knew Frank to care for any one so much before.

Bell for tea "goes ringing merrily."

Good-bye, dear Mother.

RACHEL.

CHAPTER III.

DEADLY NIGHTSHADE.

Gertrude Shippall is not what one would term a beauty. Her eyes are bright and blue, but some of her lady friends find their expression somewhat free and bold. Her mouth is large, her lips not at all perfect nor her nose classically cut; but she has a brilliant complexion, and lovely curling hair, and in these last-mentioned charms, no doubt, lay her claims to be called handsome. Her voice is a somewhat deceitful one, neither sweet nor soft but lazy and, some would say, "caressing."

Without much intellect of a high order she possesses a certain tact and knowledge of small things, quite invaluable to a woman in society, who has determined to seek and find favor in the eyes of her gentlemen friends. Every one admits that in matters connected with the adornment of her person she is completely and thoroughly an artist; choosing so well the colors suitable to her delicate bright skin, adopting styles of dress which admirably suit

her perfect little form; her hair, too, she arranges in most becoming fashion, while keeping strictly to the prevailing rules of good taste and Parisian elegance. Gertrude Shippall stands before you, reader, a born flirt, a finished coquette, a most imprudent matron.

Upton Shippall was very proud of his gay little wife. He was pleased at her success in society; in his great noble heart there was no room for jealousy. Balls, concerts, picnics, they attended together, and no one was more openly admired nor received more unremitting attention than this blue-eyed little woman, whose almost baby ways pleased so much and excited no suspicion of flirting capabilities. Dangerous little syren! Young girls trusted her, young men adored her, older ones petted her, and mothers freely allowed their daughters to associate with her. Sometimes a wise person, and often an envious one, would remark casually that, "Mrs. Shippall drives very frequently with Payne Street, more often that is quite proper," or "she waltzed twice or three times successively with Jack Hunt," and, "then you know, dear, at that last bazaar she and young Stoneveigh were together every evening, much to Josephine Drellett's annoyance." But the Shippalls were wealthy, and gave splendid entertainments, while their lavish hospitality and well-

known love of pleasure made them everywhere very popular, therefore, when anything was whispered about Gertrude's imprudence, it was whispered very low indeed, and very few pretended to hear the warning.

Unfortunately there are many women like Mrs. Shippall, though, perhaps, with less facility for enjoying the unchristian game of subduing others to their caprices, or breaking hearts for a selfish amusement.

Andrew Stoneveigh was one of the finest men it is possible to meet. He wanted but one thing to make him perfect, had he possessed the gift of Faith the great mistake of his life would never have occurred. Nobly intellectual, gifted with rare judgment, honest, industrious, a devoted son and affectionate brother, he was born to shine among men and lead them through paths of science and religion. Alas, that I must say it, he met a woman who embittered his life, shadowed his virtue, and sent him, God forgive her! further from the true fold. Ah! women of society! Women all over the world! Do you ever consider how a wanton smile or careless gallant manner may destroy faith and contentment in young confiding souls!!!!.....

Well, Andrew's mother, ever watchful of her son, soon noticed that something amiss was arising

between him and the young girl whom, some months before meeting Mrs. Shippall, he had asked to be his wife. He seemed uneasy, unquiet, embarrassed in her presence, and Joséphine Drellett, the *fiancée*, was growing pale in looks, and sometimes very sad was the expression of her large, dark eyes. Their wedding was but three months distant, and yet when any allusion was made to it in presence of either betrothed, no smile or blush betrayed happiness on either side.

Andrew had a very intimate friend, Payne Street, whom he trusted as a brother, and loved as such, and one day as it so happend, Payne was sought as a confidant by four persons.

He had lunched with Mrs. Shippall and her children, and when the little ones had gone away, he followed his hostess into her luxurious little morning-room.

"Oh Payne!" she said, when they had seated themselves, "I wish you would bring young Stoneveigh here this evening. I have some splendid waltzes from Montreal which my sister, Mrs. Vergné, sent me; he has such exquisite taste in music, I want his opinion of them."

"Gertrude why can't you leave Stoneveigh to his *fiancée*. I'm sure you are making her very unhappy."

"She must be very easily made miserable if playing waltzes for Andrew can hurt her feelings."

"Remember, Gertie, that, only we are cousins, and have known each other so well, I would have cut your acquaintance long ago. Andrew is my friend, I don't want him made a fool of; then he's not like the other dandies and popinjays—"

"Payne Street included?"

"Payne Street included—who haunt your presence continually. He is worth them all put together; or rather a whole city full of such fellows are not worth a speck of the dust he's made of."

"Now, Payne, don't be so obstinate! I have no sinister designs on your precious, perfect Andrew! I just want his criticism of a little music. And then, I am going to make a speech to-night to him, just to let him see that some one besides the romantic Josephine can be poetical;"—she here drew a sheet of paper from her pocket and said:

"Listen, Payne, it will be moonlight to-night, most likely a glorious night, and I'll step gracefully to the window, and, lifting the curtain, gaze solemnly out at the beauteous vault."

"Surely you are joking, Gertrude, you—"

"Listen, sir, to my burst of enthusiam." Lightly and very gracefully she crossed to a window, which opened out on a small, iron balcony, and drawing

back an imaginary closed curtain, she began in grave subdued tones: "How often a feeling of intense admiration and awe steals over me when I reflect on the immense intervening distance between our earth and those stupendous fiery worlds above us! Should not indeed a view of the celestial vault strike terror into the hearts of the wicked, and fill the just with exultation and joy!"

"I am ashamed of you, Gertrude Shippall."

"Why, I think I never was so sublime in my life before! What is it you don't like?"

"Like! What could I admire in a relation of mine actually rehearsing to make herself ridiculous!"

"Thanks, *mon cousin*, I see I was not perfect in my elocution; now listen again."

Payne tried to remonstrate, but was coaxed into silence and made to promise "no interruption." Gertrude continued:

"From age to age, those sentinels of the sky preserve their places unchanged."

"Stuff."

"How, stuff?"

"Go on."

"I said unchanged eh? guiding the Indian in his bark canoe, and pouring down floods of light

which brighten his path through the grand old forest."

Payne Street burst out laughing at last: "Gertie, Gertie! Are you crazy this afternoon? Why, what man would listen to you talking such nonsense for ten minutes?"

"Nonsense! Isn't astronomy a favorite study of mine? have I not pined in secret for one who would share my rhapsodies about the stars?" Unable to keep serious any longer Mrs. Shippall sat down and laughed till Payne Street got nervous and suggested "water." "No," she laughed, "stars," and greater than ever became her mirth.

With some effort she recovered gravity at last and commenced looking at her paper on "Stars," but Payne made a sudden movement and declared an eclipse due, meanwhile he possessed himself of her essay and pushed it carelessly into his pocket.

"You are rude, Payne, but happily I know the effusion by heart, and need the scribbling no longer. If you listen to the rest, I'll tell you a secret that concerns some one you would like to star with yourself."

"Something concerning Margaret Randall?" enquired Payne with interest.

Oui, mon bon ami, she smiled mockingly, and continued uninterruptedly: "They have seen

nations and empires swept away. They are silent witnesses of death and destruction, yet they still smile on calmly and serenely."

"As you stop speaking, I may infer that you've no more to say, Gertrude. Where did you pick up these sentences? I know you are not strong in rhetoric. Do you remember our old schoolmistress?"

"Yes, and how good you were to me, dear; you did my exercises, dragged me home in winter on a sleigh when we could avoid Papa's cariole; you were a dear old fellow. You'll send Stoneveigh up this evening, won't you?"

"If I dragged you on a sleigh as a child, does it follow that I must drag my friends to you now to be slain without mercy?"

"Oh! that sounds witty, and if I understood it I'd laugh. There goes the door bell—visitors, I suppose." Here a servant brought two cards, and Mrs. Shippall exclaimed: "Dear Mrs. Glint and Miss Terrenon."

Dear Mrs. Glint was a lady whose presence "lent no enchantment to Payne Street's visit," unless the "distance" was very great indeed; therefore he did not enter the drawing-room with Mrs. Shippall. We will accompany him.

CHAPTER IV.

A TRUSTWORTHY FRIEND.

Payne Street left the Cape and sauntered carelessly to the Terrace, looked at the river a moment and entered the post office, where three letters awaited him. Two were business letters, the other was evidently from a lady. It will please my readers of the fair sex to know that he opened the last-mentioned epistle first. To his surprise it ran thus:—

"Miss Drellett's compliments to Mr. Street, requesting the favor of a visit from him this afternoon at three o'clock.

"Thursday morning."

Dated the day before, and of course it was too late. "But," thought Payne, "I can go and apologize for my seeming rudeness." And quickly he turned in the direction of Josephine's home. Meeting Andrew Stoneveigh was a matter of every-day occurrence to Street, yet, when he suddenly almost received Andrew in his arms from Morgan's music

store, he felt embarrassed. Mrs. Shippall's oration and Miss Drellett's note nestled side by side in his pocket, and here was his unconscious friend, shaking hands with him and exclaiming: "Ah, Street, I found a magnificent waltz for your cousin."

"She will be grateful," Payne answered, with such evident constraint, that straightforward Andrew, flushing slightly, remarked: "Am I taking too great a liberty in offering a lady music?"

"No, Stoneveigh, why do you ask so silly a question?"

"I imagined you answered me strangely. Where are you going?" And he passed his arm through his friend's, evidently at leisure to accompany Payne in any direction.

"To Lavigne's," replied Payne, "I want a song for Miss Drellett; she likes French chansonnettes."

For a moment neither spoke, and, after a slight attempt at their usual comfortable chat, they parted, ill at ease, Stoneveigh almost angry with Payne, and Payne much grieved for his friend.

Josephine was at home, and received Payne and his song with a sweet sad smile. When her visitor had explained the impossibility of an earlier call, Josephine, without further preface, spoke: "You are Andrew's dear intimate friend, Mr. Street, therefore mine. Tell me, for both our sakes, if it be

true that our engagement is becoming wearisome and tedious to him?"

In her earnestness Josephine had approached her visitor and stood before him with calm dignity, awaiting words that must decide the misery or comfort of her life. Beautiful, intelligent, virtuous, impulsive, and thoroughly refined, what a contrast she formed to her whom he had lately left! What could Payne answer? He knew that his friend, as yet, was faithful to the trust reposed in him by the woman before him, but he knew, too, that Gertrude Shippall had determined to hurl him from the high pedestal of rectitude and sport him through society as a slave to her will. There was a long pause before Josephine spoke again:—

"Your silence is eloquent, Mr. Street, I thank and understand you."

"Miss Drellett your question surprised me."

"We will speak of other things, please; forget my question." Then she went on, without seeming effort: "I went to hear Margaret Randall sing at the French Cathedral last night. What a beautiful voice she is gifted with. I saw Frank and Rachel Compton join her after the service. Frank makes no attempt to hide his admiration of my friend, and, since Rachel's holiday from the Convent, the three

are constantly together; he will leave for home in a few days."

Payne heard Josephine, without quite understanding what she said, but the names "Frank Compton and Margaret Randall" kept ringing in his ears. Could this be Gertrude's secret? Margaret whom he esteemed, respected, loved, whom he hoped to make his wife, on the eve, perhaps, of matrimony with another, and that other Frank Compton, a man whose morals were more than questionable!

"Were you ever in our Cathedral before, Miss Drellett?"

"Never. It seemed a vast edifice compared to St. Matthew's Chapel."

Some few remarks on the weather, the churches, etc., then followed, and Payne Street took his leave with "Frank Compton and Margaret Randall" still sounding in his cars. He roused himself at last to a recollection of things about him, looked at his watch, found it near five, and resolutely set out to say a few words to Stoneveigh. Not finding him in John street nor at the "Cercle" he determined to seek him at home. Here, too, he was disappointed, but Mrs. Stoneveigh had seen her son's friend pass the window, and she admitted him herself, saying: "Andrew has gone to Point Levi on business with

a man who called for him, but come in Mr. Street, I have been wishing to see you for some days past. Come with me into Andrew's office, we shall be secure from intrusion there."

When they had been seated for some minutes, Mrs. Stoneveigh, with evident hesitation, began: "My son's conduct is grieving me, and I hope you will not be displeased with me, Mr. Street, for censuring that of your cousin. I do not believe Mrs. Shippall realizes how very miserable she is making others—cruelty is not usually a feminine attribute. If any one can save my boy from foolish deeds, you have that power, exert it I beg of you, advise my son! You know how much more innocent he is, in some respects, than other men. He is my son, yet I could not speak to him of possible evil in a woman he admired." Warmly, eloquently, the widow spoke, till tears coursed down her cheeks, and Street felt a thrill of compassion in his heart for this lone woman and her only son.

"You have been so kind to my daughters, so thoughtful for my comfort and pleasure, you are almost dear to me as a son. Lead my boy back, I beseech you, lead him back to Josephine, his promised wife, and I will bless you! I, a widow, will bless you and pray for you always."

Just then a latch key sounded in the hall door, and in a few seconds Andrew stood before them.

His mother's agitation surprised him. "Mother dear," said he, putting a strong arm round the anxious, tearful woman, "what does this mean?" He evidently waited for Payne's explanation.

"We were talking of you, darling. I will leave you with Mr. Street"—So saying, Mrs. Stoneveigh left the room.

Impulsively Street spoke:—"Andrew, take these, put them in your pocket, promise me on your word as a friend and a gentleman not to look at either till we meet in my office at ten to-morrow."

"What is the use of such mysteries, Street? I dislike such things, and—"

"Have I ever deceived you?"

"No, but you know how very much I dislike anything like secrets and mysteries, where there is not some very important reason for either. You seemed embarrassed when we met in St. John street, and now I find you with my mother, looking uncomfortable, and the good old lady in tears."

"Patience, Andrew, till to-morrow. Have you any engagement for to night."

"No, that is—with slight hesitation I thought of calling on your cousin."

"Gertrude told me to send you up. But, beware of my cousin, Andrew, she is a most unprincipled flirt."

"Payne! You speak in this way of any lady, and that lady your cousin and intimate friend besides!"

"Well, Andrew, I'm not engaged to Josephine Drellett, nor is Gertrude your cousin."

"I don't understand you."

"You will to-morrow."

"Let me go without further talk Andrew, only, when Gertrude talks poetically of stars to you to-night, and should you find yourself inclined to forget your allegiance to Josephine, think of the papers I gave you a while ago, and don't let a silly woman have it to boast that a man like you, Andrew Stoneveigh, could be captivated with her shallow mind and artful ways."

"You speak very excitedly, Payne, and of one whom I esteem most highly. She is so free from guile, and her mind seems so pure and childlike, I feel irresistibly attracted to her. Josephine never attempted to prevent my visiting the Shippalls. Had she done so, Payne, of course, though it would deprive me of some good music and pleasant hours,

I would have allowed my *fiancée* to have her own will in the matter."

"Josephine is too sensitive and well-bred to attempt such a thing. Why, your mother would scarcely meddle in the matter. Let me go, now. Shake hands, and come to my office at ten to-morrow."

CHAPTER V.

A TRUE IRISHWOMAN.

Margaret's cousin, Kathleen Fitzgerald, had eyes so blue, a smile so sweet, a voice so charming, a figure so graceful, added to exquisite, though simple, taste in dress, that it was a pleasure to see, hear, and converse with her. She was a native of Limerick City, and was very proud of her fine old home, and no greater pleasure was there for her than to hear her "green isle over the sea" fondly spoken of or praised by the many warmhearted countrymen of her own whom she met in Canada. And often in St. Patrick's church she knelt with beating heart and moistening eye as she looked around on the large congregation, and noted the devout people coming to hear the Word of God preached to them in a foreign land, and often by foreign tongues. Her father had been called to the States on important business, and of course he could not come so near Quebec without paying a flying visit to the old historic city to see Margaret, the only child

of his dead sister. He remained but a few days in old Stadacona, visiting with pleasure the many points of interest and time-honored institutions to which his delighted niece introduced him and Kathleen. From the Citadel they looked down on the grand St. Lawence and its surrounding splendor, mountains, hills, valleys and villages, and the ancient Isle of Bacchus (Orleans.) They drove to Montmorency Falls, pic-niced at the Natural Steps, and indulged their love of beautiful sights to the utmost. Some of the "Regulars" were in camp, too, at the Island of Orleans (on the Noël property) so, with a choice party of friends, Mrs. Randall and her relatives started on a fine cool August noon for the "Bout de l'Isle." They spent their time most pleasantly, enjoying the large-hearted hospitality of one to whom Beaulieu village owes its birth, its progress and its popularity.

And then Edmund Fitzgerald consented to let Kathleen spend some time with her relations. He was much pleased with Margaret's daughter and thought her companionship would check the wild impulses and somewhat careless impetuosity of his own generous, noble-natured girl. Kathleen, too, was sure that she and Margaret would have a glorious season together, so the handsome, wealthy old gentleman returned to the old land without his darling.

Mrs. Randall soon perceived that Kathleen was not so devout in her demeanor at church nor so prudent in expressing herself as was her own child. This naturally grieved her. A wise woman, she had long known spiritual sloth to be a most pernicious evil—a vice from which flow numberless miseries. Kathleen loved to visit the churches and admire paintings and statues to be seen there, and listen, delighted, to the exquisite music sometimes heard in them; but her thoroughly Catholic aunt detected in her manner a laziness of spirit, negligence and carelessness with regard to all things of God and heaven, with a loathing and repugnance to taking any pains towards acquiring all Christian virtues.

Frequently she thought of candidly remonstrating with her joyous visitor on the subject, but she feared to awaken disgust instead of interest, for she felt persuaded that this sloth engenders a numbness of soul with regard to all the divine precepts, and a malice or aversion to all sanctity and professors of it too often accompanied with a rancor or indignation against all such as seek to bring one to God.

One day when it was raining very determinedly, and there seemed no prospect of the sun's reappearance for an unlimited space of time, Margaret proposed to Kathleen that they should learn a vocal

duet together. Kathleen assented gayly, and throwing aside the silk patchwork with which she had been occupied, she said: "Yes, Maggie dear, let us learn that lovely thing your friend Frank Gannud and Kate Breaker sang last night."

"You mean the 'Hymn of the MoravianNuns' or 'Pulaski's Banner'."

"Yes, their voices blended so pleasantly together. What a rich beautiful voice he has, and how powerfully passionate is hers. Her heart's feelings seemed roused, as her rich thrilling tones rose and fell. Your voice, cousin mine, is most beautiful, and equally rich and well-trained, but I find that it is only in church that you give any intensity and pathos to what you sing."

"That is so keen and fine an appreciation of your singing, my love," said Mrs. Randall, affectionately, to her daughter, "that I could kiss Kathleen for the deep praise it conveys. How beautiful it is, dear girl, to show gratitude to the Giver of all gifts by using our talents in His service!"

Kathleen's head tossed slightly; she was too thoroughly a musician not to understand the inflections and expression of even a voice in ordinary conversation. She felt that she was ever so delicately rebuked for her love of profane music.

"Let us study and rehearse the 'Quis est Homo'

from Rossini's 'Stabat Mater,'" said Margaret, "it is difficult and will keep us well employed."

Kathleen interrupted. "We had so much sacred music last Sunday evening that I think we could confine ourselves to opera or profane melody for our prospective entertainment to-morrow night."

"Just as you like, dear, then we can try over 'Take Thy Banner:'" so saying our amiable heroine seated herself at her grand Chickering piano, and began the symphony. Meanwhile Kathleen, instead of singing, turned suddenly to Mrs. Randall and questioned: "Do tell me, Auntie, of what are you thinking?"

Too truthful to shirk replying veraciously, Mrs. Randall shrank from saying: "of you, child, and your evident shortcomings."

"Don't ask me, dear," she replied, crossing the room and putting her arm affectionately around Kathleen.

"Then it was of me, and not very flatteringly, either," retorted the niece merrily. "Now, Auntie, I will just sit here on this ottoman at your feet and insist upon open confession." Then Kathleen closed the music book on the piano and catching Margaret suddenly by the shoulders, wheeled her off the piano-stool and landed her laughing and protesting at her mother's knee.

"Now, Maggie, listen to the lecture I'm going to get."

"But, Kathie, I won't lecture you," smiled Mrs. Randall.

"Ah! But your must Auntie, you are so good and Maggie so perfect that I wonder I can feel so heartlessly indifferent to religion with your good examples constantly before me. I love good, admire it, and all that, but—"

"Well, niece, dear, if you want to know what I was thinking, it was this: that nothing is more destructive to the life of Faith than a desire of associating with the fashionable world, and of participating in the vain amusements of theatres, balls, assemblies, public spectacles, idle visits, vain compliments and frivolous conversations."

"Dear Auntie!" exclaimed Kathleen, with well-acted horror and exaggerated indignation, "what a frightful lot of things you hurled at me in a few brave breaths! Why I am almost overwhelmed."

Mrs. Randall and Margaret could not help being amused with Kathleen's drollery, but, like a prudent and adroit monitor, Margaret's mother did not let so good an opportunity of admonition escape her. Tenderly laying her slender white hand on Kathleen's shoulder she said:

"I do think, dear, that you are gradually becoming careless about holy things."

"Now, Auntie, I always hated long prayers, and still I don't think I am ever very wicked."

"Ah! but sins of omission, darling, are terrible evils in the soul. Neglect of prayer and other religious exercises, keeping away from the Sacraments, stop up and turn away from the soul all channels of Divine Grace."

Margaret felt somewhat surprised at her mother's plain-speaking and thought perhaps her absence was desirable. So she left her kind parent and young cousin together and went to attend to some home duties.

"I do not wish to seem unkind, Auntie," said Kathie, "but let me remark, too, that there are many Christians who scandalize me continually, and whom I may thank for my remissness. Just look through society. I could name you dozens, women especially, who pray, frequent the Sacraments, give alms, practise austerities, etc., and who, nevertheless cease not to live *in themselves—for themselves, and with themselves.*

"What do you accuse them of, puss?" said Mrs. Randall, pleased to see her effort to rouse Kathleen successful.

"Now there's Mrs. Draw, Auntie, hasn't she her

particular humors, pretensions and inclinations, vanities, oddities and singularities? Then there's Mrs. Greddell, so averse to suffering and unwilling to be forgotten."

"But, Kathie, you are unmerciful in—"

"Please, Auntie, let me finish. Your frequent visitor, Mrs. Merrid, is a thoroughly detestable woman; never willing to *want* anything or deny herself the liberty of judging her neighbors."

"You must discriminate, Kathie; you are speaking of devotees or Christians enslaved by self-love and consequently ignorant of *that* life which has God for its object, namely, the life of faith, the interior union of the internal man with Jesus Christ."

"While I listen to you, dearest Auntie," answered Kathie, "I feel quite capable of doing numberless good deeds; but after all I don't try to make mischief, tell falsehoods or give scandal in any way."

"No doubt, pet, you neither murder, steal nor commit shocking crimes, but, my own girl, believe me this vice of sloth is the more dangerous because that, like the rest of the *spiritual* sins, it lies deeper in the soul, and is easier overlooked by such as will not take pains to think and examine well the state of their interior."

"I would like you to speak plainly, Auntie.

Although I do not usually care for very grave conversations, I feel quite anxious to hear you say all you think on this subject. I admit my lukewarmness."

"Bravo, darling! I like your candor, I consider it a guarantee for your future efforts to improve."

"Tell me why you attach such dire importance to spiritual sin?"

"Because, my dear child, carnal sins are more easily discovered, their guilt carries with it a greater shame in the eyes of men, which makes it fly in the face of the sinner and he cannot disguise it, but spiritual sins are more heinous in the sight of God, though not much considered by men, and often not regarded at all."

Mrs. Randall thought her remonstrance had been long enough, and turning towards the neglected music books said kindly: "We have had a very serious talk, dear, will I call your cousin and let you resume your musical recreation once more? Don't imagine for a moment, my own sweet-voiced niece, that I have no ear but for sacred music. I prefer it, certainly, but when you sing 'Home they brought her Warrior dead,' you have no more appreciative listener than I."

"Indeed, I noticed last week, dear Auntie, that when young Gannud sang 'The Bridge' you seemed to admire and love the song."

"There are so many beautiful melodies adapted to nonsensical and sometimes completely ridiculous words, further, I might add words of questionable delicacy, that it is a pleasure to hear real poetry."

"I feel very much interested in your critiques of music, but, Auntie, please me by returning to our original theme, *spiritual sloth.*"

"I don't object, but I fear I am unworthy to rebuke you, dear one."

"Unworthy! oh don't say so! Already I feel invigorated in faith, and have acquired double strength and energy by associating with you and our truly virtuous Margaret. Her conversation and yours constantly excite in my soul solid and pious reflections."

"I rejoice to hear it, Kathie love."

"How I wish dear Mother had lived!" exclaimed Kathie, after a few minutes of silence between both ladies. "I would have been a very different girl perhaps with her kind love to guard me. Papa has never interfered with my wishes in regard to religious matters. He is very strict in the performance of his own duties. He attends church regularly, and his most intimate and esteemed friends are his own Minister, Rev. Mr. Story and his dear little wife."

"They are your best friends too, dear?" suggested Mrs. Randall interrogatively.

"Yes, indeed; Rebecca Story is my dear, dear friend. For all that, Auntie, we never have discussions or controversies about religion."

"Doubtless you love each other sincerely, yet perhaps a friend of your own faith would have been a fitter companion for you. Difference in creed must create a void that no affection or friendship can bridge over."

"I have sometimes felt a certain constraint in Ruby's presence. She came into my sitting-room one day and found me on my knees before a picture of 'Our Lady of Perpetual Help.' I had felt lonesome and sad after Grandmmama's death and funeral, and had just recited a Rosary for the conversion of sinners and repose of the dead."

"You were not ashamed, Kathie?" said Mrs. Randall anxiously.

"Thank God, no! Ashamed of recourse to the Mother of God! Auntie! Auntie! why think so ill of me?" Kathie both looked and felt grieved. Every drop of Catholic Irish blood in her veins seemed to burn indignantly at the implied suspicion of cowardice to profess her faith.

"I see, my own dear child, that your pride in the true faith is great. Some day, soon again, we will resume our chat, but, as I caught a glimpse of Philip crossing the road, I know it must be luncheon time; let us go and see what Margaret is about."

As the tall, stately dark-eyed aunt and her beautiful niece left the drawing room Kathie was saying, "We will relinquish the subject for the present, dear Auntie, but you've shown me the disease, I shall expect to be taught the means of cure, even should the remedy be unpalatable."

CHAPTER VI.

A MAIDEN'S TRIUMPH.

Frank Compton was in love, he admitted it to himself with misgiving and hesitation. To travel all over the world, to spend summers at gay watering places and winters in gay capitals for several years, had been his life. And now he met his fate in quiet little Quebec at last! He had come with his sister from Boston, to place her at the Ursuline Monastery for a few months, and on the steamboat from Montreal a chance acquaintance had introduced him to Mrs. Randall and her daughter, Margaret. He could not explain the thorough worship he at once felt compelled to give to this modest little maiden. He scarcely saw her shyly-raised eyes, but her musical laugh, cheerful smile and melodious voice won his attention completely. When he became further acquainted with her he felt more than ever determined to seek her affection, and to make her his wife. Of her aversion or possible indifference he thought not. All his life, petted and caressed by every body, he had never had occasion

to doubt his powers of will and fascination. Gradually a real friendship seemed to spring up between them; and his sister's intimacy with Margaret seemed an encouragement to him.

Meanwhile Margaret and Margaret's mother had other thoughts on this evening when Gertrude Shippall had determined to make one bold attempt to chain Andrew Stonevelgh to her will, if not forever at least for a time—long enough to display her own power and unrivalled science in the arts of flirtation.

Margaret knelt at the little oratory which adorned one part of her pretty bedroom. She was preparing her mind and heart for Holy Communion. She had resolved that no longer a creature should obscure her mental vision of the Saviour. She loved Frank, loved him with a great, sincere, abiding affection; but strength of mind and firm religious principle helped her to avoid a marriage with one who shared not her faith. None but a woman can appreciate the extent of Margaret's sacrifice. There is but one vocation which realizes the needs of the womanly heart more completely than the honorable devotion of a true Christian maiden, for the companion whom God has destined to be her stay through life.

Love is divine in its origin; therefore, love is one

of God's great powers. Love of home, of parents, of children, of husband, are noble impulses and instincts of that nature which the Creator breathed into our being. With awe, let us say it, the sublime passion of Christ the Redeemer was love, pure love for man. He loved, He saved us. He watches, loves and saves us still. How great art Thou, dear Jesus !

Margaret sought her couch at last, feeling fortified and refreshed by her meditation and resolution. And where was Frank ? the handsome hero of her girlish dreams—the man to whom she had almost been wedded. Ask not, reader ; many, alas, of our young men pass their days making money to spend at night in frivolous pursuits ; nay worse, squandering wealth with lavish hand, spreading misery, want and wretchedness through all ranks of society. Parents sometimes trust the guidance of their daughters to very unworthy husbands.

Sunday morning's sun shone brightly and pleasantly into Margaret's room, as she rose, and dressed herself for early Mass. Mrs. Randall sat in the library awaiting her daughter, and giving some necessary instructions to one of the maids. She came forth and met Margaret as a gentle step and soft enquiry of "Where are you, Mamma ?" fell on her ear. "Good morning, darling," she replied, kissing her sweet child, "are you quite ready ?"

"One glove to put on," and Margaret returned her mother's fond salute.

To St. Patrick's church they went, and joined the devout worshippers in that immense congregation.

After Mass had ended, and most of the faithful had retired from the sacred edifice, Margaret still knelt at the Communion table, with a new feeling flooding her young breast. So bravely and completely had she resolved to sacrifice human love to Catholic principle that already her soul seemed to taste the reward of its abnegation. She seemed to have founed perfect security and comfort in the Sacred Heart: almost ecstatic peace flooded her innocent young life. Happy maiden, in whom the vital spark of Divine love was quickened by the Eucharist.

CHAPTER VII.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

Mrs. Randall had just returned from vespers and evening prayers and laid aside her outdoor dress. She was very happy this Sunday evening, and she looked very young and handsome in her dark crimson wrapper. That morning with her sweet child she had received into her grateful heart the Divine One "who doeth all things well" and loves His creatures with an Almighty affection. She had quite made up her mind to the final sacrifice which she thought necessary for Margaret's welfare and happiness. In her prayers she had earnestly besought from on high strength to bear her trial, and comfort for the poor human heart which cried out against losing its one earthly treasure. Poor Mother! little dreamed she how great her trial was to be. And Margaret, secure in her sense of duty and peace, knew not what deep pain she was about to make her kind parent suffer. Early taught to look to Heaven for all good things, for help in every undertaking, for comfort and guidance in

times of trial, she firmly believed that her mother would be made supremely happy by her recent decision. When first the great knowledge of her vocation had come to her, she had dreaded to mention it; it seemed almost too sacred for words; but prayer and meditation having strengthened her in her intention, she resolved to let "dear Mamma" share her secret. "She will be so delighted, so blessed," thought Margaret; and, without a suspicion of causing sorrow, she went with a full hope of approval to her Mother's knee.

"Dear Mamma," she said, seating herself on an ottoman at Mrs. Randall's feet, and taking her hand caressingly in both her own: "will you be surprised to hear that I have a secret for your ear to-night? Something that must change our future lives?"

"No, darling, I have been expecting your confidence for some time past. I see I was not deceived; my daughter comes to me for sympathy at a critical period of her life, and, with God's blessing, I think I am prepared, love, to hear you."

"Your voice trembles, Mamma, and your eyes are filled with tears. Do I grieve you?"

"No, no! my pet, but—" she could speak no further. Memory, with one swift glance, carried her back to an evening, twenty-two years before, when she herself sought her father's presence, to tell him

that she would soon leave his cottage and loving care, for the richer and more splendid home of the handsome Englishman who had spent the summer in their quiet Irish village. How the dear old man had wept; how his loving old hand had trembled on her head, though he unhesitatingly blessed her, and approved of her choice. And, now, here was her own daughter, ignorant, as she herself had been, of the pang, the bitter pang of realizing that one's child is one's own no longer!!

Margaret knew not what to say to calm her mother's burst of emotion; she found it strange that the news she was bringing should be so tearfully received. At length, with some effort, Mrs. Randall put aside her feelings, and tried to smile.

"So Payne has spoken to you"—Then noticing Margaret's evident astonishment at her question she added: "He stopped some time with you in the drawing-room after we returned from High Mass. I thought he might have seized the opportunity to have an understanding with you, dear."

To describe Margaret's profound surprise would need a more graphic pen than mine, "Payne," thought she, "he only wanted a copy of Mozart's Twelfth Mass and an 'O Salutaris' for one of his friends," then aloud: "Payne has said nothing to me on the subject, Mamma."

"Well, dear, I am glad he is to be happy, and I

know Mrs. Street will be pleased beyond words to express. She loves you already as a daughter."

"I daresay Mrs. Street and Payne will be pleased, but why should my entering the Ursulines affect them so particularly?"

Absorbed in their conversation, they had not rung for light, although the room had gradually become quite dark, so Margaret failed to see the blank amazement in Mrs. Randall's expressive face. She had not moved nor started ever so slightly at the words—"entering the Ursulines." So unexpected was the announcement that she was fairly petrified and unable to speak. The habit of self-control had become so much a part of her nature that she quickly surmounted her feelings.

"Get me a glass of water, darling; tell Norah to bring me my rosary and lights."

"Mamma is certainly not well," was Margaret's thought, but, accustomed to obey without question, she procured the water, and gave the servant her mother's order.

"Leave me now, Margaret, I want to be alone a short time," said Mrs. Randall; then kissing her daughter affectionately she led her quietly to the door.

Wondering at this abrupt dismissal, Margaret mechanically went to her own room, and there sat

down to think over the unsatisfactory interview she had just had with her mother. "She is greived that I should enter the Ursulines," ran her thoughts, "Mamma has always liked the Grey Nunnery so much. But when she knows how earnestly I long to follow in the footsteps of our Venerable Mother of the Incarnation she will become reconciled to my choice and see that I am most fitted for a cloistered life."

Left alone in the sitting-room with Norah, Mrs. Randall seemed quite incapable of either speech or action; she neither swallowed the water nor took her beads from the attendant. Norah discreetly busied herself with some imaginary duties in the room, for she quickly noticed Mrs. Randall's strange manner. She loved her kind mistress, and had often been the confidant of her troubles, or of good news. Seeing that her presence was scarcely noticed, she quietly approached Mrs. Randall and said: "May I go now, Madame?"

A burst of tears, sudden and, to Norah, terrifying, was the unexpected answer. Amazed at this seemingly overwhelming sorrow, "Shall I call Miss Margaret to you, Madame?" ventured at length poor, horrified Norah.

"Leave me, Norah," was the reply, "and let Miss Margaret know nothing of my weakness, 'twould grieve my pet without lightening my trouble."

Not more than half an hour later, mother and daughter met at the dinner-table. Both seemed equally happy, and Mrs. Randall's countenance was as serene as that of Margaret, but it required a supreme effort of will on Mrs. Randall's part to seem calm and self-possessed before her child. She had borne a violent and totally unforeseen disappointment. Knowing Margaret's deep Catholic spirit, she felt convinced that Frank Compton would never obtain her hand; but Payne Street and Margaret had known each other almost from infancy, and she, an intimate friend of his estimable mother, had fondly hoped to see him united to her daughter. So little had she expected Margaret's decision that she had often spoken to Mrs. Street of the pleasure it would give her to welcome Payne as her son. Both mothers approved of and hoped for this marriage between their children: sometimes even, they had laughingly alluded to the prospective dignity of "Grandmotherhood" awaiting them Both had been more than once tempted to hasten matters, and bring the young folks to an understanding; but good sense and religion kept them from it; they awaited the will and pleasure of Providence, and looked completely to Heaven for guidance. Ah, mothers, be warned by their good example, and force not the inclinations of your daughters!

CHAPTER VIII.

A VISITOR FROM BOSTON.

Claire de L'Ange liked Quebec very much, though she had spent but a few weeks in the good old city. At the moment of which I write she was sitting in the nursery of a fine house on the Ramparts with little Robbie White on her knee.

Spring had come, as usual in Canada, with a sudden and beautiful brightness over nature. The day was fine, warm and delightful; the view from the window extensive and grand. With her was her friend and hostess, Stella White, knitting industriously a baby's jacket. While chatting gaily and pleasantly with her guest, she entertained her in a hearty, unceremonious way that made Miss de L'Ange feel quite at home. Stella's husband and Claire were cousins, but, long before Gregory White's marriage, the de L'Anges had left Canada to reside in Boston, so the two ladies had not met before.

"I have invited a few people to meet you this evening, Claire, and hope you will be favorably impressed with Quebec society. Among others Margaret

Randall, a particular favorite of mine; clever, gentle, pretty and accomplished. But, though I see Mrs. Shippall very often, and invite her frequently to my 'at homes,' I admire neither her character nor manners."

"You are speaking Stel of two ladies whose brothers I met in Ottawa last winter—Lawrence Evarts and Philip Randall."

"The very same, but, now I think of it, did I not hear something of a flirtation between you and Philip? Was there not a little sentimentalizing between you?"

"No, no, Madame! Nothing of the kind, I assure you, although rumor busied herself energetically with my affairs. You may think how much interest we excited when I tell you that Selina Pleshshar, my intimate friend, engaged to Philip, assured me that several girls called on her for no other purpose than to warn her of my being a sad flirt; and one bright-eyed little Canadienne remarked sagely: 'comme toutes les Américaines.' Thank goodness, I am heart free! I did think myself in love once, four years ago. I was sixteen then, and just out of school; but, before I could really form a decided opinion on the subject, the hero of my girlish fancy left Boston, taking with him a fair young bride. I never met any one I liked so well

since, and here am I, at the frightfully advanced age of nearly twenty-one, still unmarried."

"Almost an old maid," laughed Mrs. White.

Here little Robbie having listened attentively to all that had been said, burst in indignantly: "Woo are not a old maid! woo has no peccatles! woo are not one bit like Mith Cutler!"

Robbie meant spectacles of course; a little boy only three and half years old may be excused for difficulty in pronouncing so big a word, even though he may quite as well distinguish the difference between forty and twenty as an older man. What more his discerning and wise little brain might have tried to make his tongue express we must be resigned to ignore, as just then his auntie (as he called Claire) was summoned to meet a visitor in the drawing-room, and Master White escorted by his old "Nursie" went out to have a glorious time among the cannons, dreaming, no doubt, of the good time coming when he, with a bright sword in his hand, would have all the cannons fired off at once, to see what a loud noise it would make. His military ardor was great, equal to that of many a brave volunteer, and I expect his knowledge of the reality was fully as adequate. He told Nursie with glistening eyes that she should have a gun, and a pistol, and red coat, and hold all the powder in her apron!!!

CHAPTER XI.

CONTRASTS.

Alone in her mother's drawing room Elise Durgagné sat thinking profoundly of the next day's duties, and the grand ball at which she would in a few days make her first appearance in society. More than a year had elapsed since she had left school *a finished young lady;* but German and Latin were thought necessary for her welfare, so she studied dutifully and ardently for six months under Herr Krumpp's able direction. Then it was discovered that calisthenics, singing and riding demanded her attention. No housekeeping lessons, oh no! that would have been so prosy and shockingly tiresome.

Thinking of the next day's duties she would immediately after breakfast go to Importers & Co. to see the new goods, especially flowers,—she wanted flowers badly, then call at Morgan's to find the last new German song, then meet Jules Setrain, and after a walk on the Terrace—Elise had got just so far in her important meditation when in rushed her sister Laure and cousin Joseph, Laure calling out as shrilly and excitedly as possible: "Guess who's married! just guess who?"

Judging from their amazement, one would have supposed that an escaped nun, a terribly old maid, a very horrible old bachelor, or some unlikely monster was the subject of their thoughts. But when they had told all their news it amounted to nothing more than a love match: William Gubbins, a clever but not rich young lawyer, had married Bertha Poole, equally as clever and as poor as himself.

Elise could not believe it: "Who told you, Laure?"

"Cousin Charles met Harry Johnson on the Terrace, and he was groomsman. And they had no wedding trip and no veil, only a bonnet and opera cloak and silk dress."

"Scanty drapery, Laure," said Jo. "I'm not surprised they weren't inclined to travel far. Was it a case of two faces under one hood, or did they wear the bonnet alternately? or—"

"Shut up, sir," from the fair student of German and Latin. "Let Laure finish her story."

Laure continued: "Just imagine, to live in two rooms and keep only one little girl for the work and Will's office too."

"Rather a vague assertion of yours, Laure."

"Don't bother us, Jo, you know what she means. Poor Bertha! Two rooms and no wedding trip. But I suppose their uncle, Edmund Heath, will do something for them."

A servant coming to light the gas, conversation flagged for a moment, to burst out a few minutes later with renewed vigor. Had William broken his neck or Bertha met with some frightful accident, sympathy and compassion would have been lavished upon them; but oh! how the world moaned, grieved, groaned and sighed over this dire catastrophe: two young and happy people willing to face life, hand in hand together, without one or both being plentifully supplied with hard cash—that panacea for all woes in the nineteenth century.

Alone in the twilight sat William and Bertha, knowing little and caring less what their wise and wealthy friends were saying of them. Blessed in each other's sincere affection, strong with the energy inspired by youth, love, principle, and religion, their hearts were full of real happiness. Bertha's fair face lighted with sympathy as her husband spoke ardently of his ability to make life easy and pleasant to his "dear little wife." While she laughed at his fears that the cares and trials of a housekeeper would be too much for her, with only the aid of one small servant engaged at a trifling cost from a charitable institution. Bertha laughingly declared that a modest establishment like theirs would not need great effort to keep comfortable.

CHAPTER X.

EXPLANATIONS.

When Cesarée Noel, according to Mrs. Fordstaff's request, called to see Adela with Nellie, little Willie was proud and happy to the full extent of his great little heart. A little sister! If mamma would only keep her! They travelled over the house and had a real child's holiday.

Meanwhile Mrs. Fordstaff was listening to Cesarée's account of Nellie's history. She could not doubt that this was her cousin's child. He had been married to Virginie Printemps by a Scotch Presbyterian clergyman, and settled his wife in a quiet village not far from Quebec. Unhappily he soon found that a little country girl married in haste was not just fitted to present to his sisters and friends, therefore, as Virginie was rebellious against study or work, her husband's admiration of her bright Canadian eyes and inherited French piquante manner soon began to lessen. Naturally and inevitably Virginie, whose relatives were all Roman Catholics, began to suspect her husband of wishing to make

her go to church with him. In this she was mistaken, the fault of her husband's neglect lay with herself. Had she tried to cultivate her really quick intellect and gradually adopt the manners and habits of those with whom Lowval associated he would have honored and loved her all the more. She had consented to be married by another than the Curé of her native place, and afterwards opposed her husband in every thing he tried to do for their mutual comfort in society. What a foolish little girl she had been and still was! As a Catholic she had been taught respect for the Church and obedience to her husband. First, she should have been married by her own priest, and then obeyed all lawful and honorable demands of the man she had chosen for a life companion. She reversed matters, and suffered accordingly like many other giddy girls. The young woman who calmly and resolutely puts aside the strict decree of her pastor, on the very threshhold of her young wifehood, seldom, I may say never, meets peace and happiness in her married life. And what does he expect—he for whom she neglects the teachings of her childhood? Will the woman who defies Divine Law always be subservient to the will of a man—and that man the one who aids and admires her first public disobedience to the Church? Let the young Protestant suitor take heed ere he

press the young Catholic maiden to wed him without a Catholic priest to witness the ceremony that unites her to him for life. Vanity prompts him to say, no doubt, "She loves me, it is the strongest proof of her attachment!"

Putting aside completely the question of right, high principle, or religious rectitude, think what a struggle and sacrifice it must be for her to go before a minister of a different faith, shamed at heart, as one who must submit even before marriage to the will of a stranger. Abashed before relations and friends at her own weakness, can tender looks or fond caress ever eradicate the deep-rooted shame or soothe the sore pain which that humbled girl must suffer!

"She loves me so much," thinks the bridegroom proudly to himself; yes, she loves you, and you repay her with cruelty and ingratitude!

Mixed marriages, as they are called, are seldom productive of even moderate happiness. But in some cases the young wife may feel more confidence in her future lot, having secured the promise that the children she bears and nurses, she may rear and educate in her own faith. Her husband believes that the Roman Catholic religion is equally good as his own—where is the sacrifice for him?

But matrimony presents its highest and most glo-

rious features when people of one faith unite themselves solemnly in this great sacrament for mutual strength and support through life. Should death divide them, grief is tempered by religion, and prayers are offered for the loved departed. Should they lose a dear child, here again religion soothes the parent's agony! And the little one is laid in consecrated ground, where, later, father and mother will lie beside it. In the sublime union of prayer and Communion of Saints of the Catholic Church there is a power to soothe every grief and reach every agony of the human heart.

Miss Printemps was but sixteen when she married, and at seventeen she was mother of little Nellie. For a time after their daughter's birth Mr. and Mrs. Lowval seemed quite the lovers of a year before. Nellie was baptized by the good old Curé, and Virginie's sister, Gabrielle, was godmother with her cousin Philéas Ledru. Mr. Lowval once more spoke of bringing his wife to town, and declaring his marriage formally to his friends. But Virginie was very intractable, and made herself so hard to please that even his pride in little Nellie could not make Lowval's visits to his wife a source of pleasure, especially as Gabrielle Printemps now lived with Mrs. Lowval, and another servant had been added to the household for Baby's comfort.

Maurice was rich, and did not mind spending money for the welfare of his dear ones; but his refined nature and high-bred courtesy made him shrink from the rude, though well meant, remarks of poor ignorant Gabrielle, who, like most uneducated persons, was very bigoted and aggressive in her religious speeches.

One stormy night Maurice drove out to see his wife and daughter. He had caught a violent cold the day previous at the skating-rink, but heedlessly ventured to scorn the warning of a feverish headache, labored breathing and general feeling of indisposition. Instead of remaining at home with his cousin Mrs. Fordstaff, he thought to spend a few days with Virginie and Nellie. On reaching his country home he quickly threw off overcoat and mufflers and joined his wife in her bedroom, where she and the maid Philomène were preparing "Petite" for her night's rest. He kissed his wife and child, and, with a good humored "bon soir" to the nurse, enquired "Have any teeth come yet?"

"Monsieur badine," returned Philomène, respectfully, with that rare civility for which French Canadians are so remarkable. Then she placed every thing required by her mistress where it seemed most convenient within reach, and left the room.

Husband and wife had a pleasant hour together, Nellie's beauty and good temper gladdening their hearts. At last, after good nursing, Miss Petite went off to the land of angel dreams, and was tucked into her cradle by the loving hands of both her parents

Not till then did Maurice Lowval speak to his wife, of what had been his intention for some time past.

" Genia," he said, " I have taken a house for you in town and, next May, you and little Nellie will be with me all the time."

Virginie looked the surprise she did not speak, and, raising herself from the arm which had been clasping her, she waited for further news.

" Are you not pleased, darling? I have spoken of you to my cousin Mrs. Fordstaff, and to my sister Louisa. I told them all about Nellie and you and Gabrielle. So, next Monday, I hope you will be ready to drive with me to my sister's. We will have Ledru's large covered ' cariole ' and sleep at Louisa's, so baby Nellie can come on the voyage without fear of cold "

Virginie had left her husband's side completely, and had seated herself on a low rocking chair ; she had also snatched her knitting from the mantelpiece, and seemed very industriously inclined. Maurice was pained by her open aversion to his plans for their future life. He was an honorable, upright,

good man, and had been foolish but once—that was when he let a pair of bright eyes run away with his reason, and married much below his own station in society.

"What objection can you make to my plan?" asked Lowval.

"I do not want my child taught to laugh at her mother's religion," somewhat crossly returned Virginie.

"But, little woman, who will meddle with us and our child?"

"Your cousin, your sister, who do I know? All the grand ladies of your acquaintance. I hate them all. I want to live here always with Gabrielle."

"But, darling, think how foolish all this is. People are beginning to suspect that it is not business alone that brings me to Lorette, especially since Gabrielle came to you, and since Nellie's birth, too. What reason could I give for living away from my family. Your father was not willing you should marry me, being a Protestant, so we had to leave Cacouna or part. But now, my love, for your sake and Nellie's and my own, we must take our proper position in the world, and leave off romancing. We fear your father's anger no longer, since Gabrielle came to you with his blessing. Virginie," he continued, in a voice full of noble emotion, while he suddenly approached his wife and took her forcibly on

his knee, "did I not allow you to have our little one brought to the village church, and was she not christened by your pastor? Do I not often dine with Catholic ladies and gentlemen in town? Am I not very fond of French society? You will meet my friends, and associate with those whom you prefer. What reason have you to doubt me?"

A long conversation ensued, and at last Virginie cheerfully consented to all that her husband proposed. Seeing that "Petite" still slept soundly, Mrs. Lowval called Philomène to stay with baby, that she and Maurice might have supper in another room. In that room Gabrielle awaited them, as well as supper, and both felt for a moment a certain chill; both knew that she abhorred the idea of living in the city. Nothing was said of their new plans on this occasion; they chatted about all sorts of news, that of country and town combined, and soon after ten o'clock they all retired to rest.

Now, reader, the woman Césarée must tell her story, which we translate at once into English: Mr. Lowval came to town on Friday morning, and went straight to his sister Louisa's house. She and her husband, Alfred Grant, were still sitting at the breakfast table.

"Why, Lowval," exclaimed Alfred Grant "what brought you here so early? Shake hands, old fellow;

seems to me you're out of breath." Standing up to salute his brother-in-law, something in the latter's looks arrested his attention. Maurice Lowval's cold had taken such hold on him that he could not speak, and his sister, a nervous little woman, immediately made him a hot punch of brandy and water. Stimulated by this, for a little while, he seemed better, but he grew so rapidly worse that recourse was had to a doctor; Mrs. Fordstaff was sent for, but, in spite of loving care and anxious friends, on Saturday morning Maurice lay dead in his sister's house from "congestion of the lungs."

Ill news travels fast, and before Monday Nellie's mother knew that she was alone in the world, with no comfort, no support. Mrs. Fordstaff at once thought of the little Canadian wife, and despatched her trusty servant Dan to bring the widow to her, but Virginie had always been known to the people as Mme. Printemps, so Dan came back alone. For this lonely trip Gabrielle was to blame, she had met Dan, had spoken to him and had sent him off the track of those he wished to find. She told him Madame Lowval had gone to town on Friday afternoon, *en route* for Montreal. When he left her she returned breathlessly to her half-crazed sister, and worked on her imagination in such a way, that the poor grief-stricken woman really believed a

plot was being concocted to destroy her peace and rob her of her child. They said no word of their intentions to the servants, but paid them liberally, and, with the assistance of Nellie's godfather and a well-filled purse, they were soon on their way to town. Gabrielle would not give Virginie a moment to think. They drove across the ice-bridge to Point Levi, slept there that night, and next day were in Cacouna with father, brothers and other relations. For a while Virginie was allowed to indulge her grief undisturbed; but when Baby Nell became troublesome and the money in the purse decreased the sisters began to think that they had acted hastily. Then Gabrielle's fears were suddenly aroused for Nellie's mother, who began to cough most alarmingly. Poor Baby Nell was soon an orphan! Mother lying almost unregretted in Cacouna's quiet little churchyard, and father coldly, grandly buried in Mount Hermon cemetery at Quebec.

Of course, Cesarée's recital was not without effect on Mrs. Fordstaff. She wept very often and grieved in her kind heart for the poor young mother, hurried so heedlessly from those who would have cherished her and her child for sake of him they had lost.

"Where is Gabrielle now?" she questioned, "how did poor little Nellie come to be in charge of the Sisters of Charity?"

"Gabrielle is with me, Madame, she sews beautifully and works embroidery for many ladies. One room I give her at a dollar a month. She boards herself; she lives in Quebec to be near, "la Petite." For when old Father Printemps got into bad humor one day, and wanted to let Nellie go to the States with a rich lady who had spent the summer in Cacouna, Gabrielle got frightened and left her father's house never to return. Through the kindness of some ladies, Nellie at two years of age was taken by the good Sisters of Charity. One day my husband and I decided that a child would make our home gayer, so we thought of Gabrielle's niece, and, with her help, we persuaded the kind nuns that we would take good charge of their orphan. They are very particular about the homes to which they confide their little ones."

"Could I see Gabrielle?"

"Easily, Madame, if Madame wishes for sewing or other work I can let her know." Cesarée wondered in her simple way that so fine a lady could cry on hearing the sad history of a stranger, and when Mrs. Fordstaff bade little Nell goodbye, with kiss after kiss, her wonder increased. "These English people are hard to understand" thought she "they look as cold, yes, as frozen as ice, yet they have deep feeling and sometimes show it."

CHAPTER XI.

GABRIELLE AND MRS. FORDSTAFF.

Gabrielle came to Mrs. Fordstaff next day; vaguely she suspected that Providence had brought little Nell to the arms of those who had an equal right to the child as herself. She had no wish to let her pet go from her own vigilant guardianship, but experience had taught her the wisdom of doing nothing hastily, and she determined to see Mrs. Fordstaff and judge of matters for herself.

When Adèle announced to her mistress that Gabrielle was arrived, Mrs. Fordstaff's heart began beating rapidly with hope and fear. The account given of her visitor by Cesarée led her to expect a bigoted, ignorant, stupid country lass, who would be impertinent, perhaps abusive. She was surprised to meet a bright-eyed, intelligent-looking and tastefully dressed young girl, who bowed respectfully, and stood up at her entrance, waiting to be addressed.

Mrs Fordstaff did not hesitate, she went forward and, extending her hand to Gabrielle, said with emotion.

"I thank you very sincerely for your kindness to my cousin's child, and I want to help you to make her future bright and happy."

Of course, the two women spoke French, but, as my readers may not all understand that language, I confine myself completely to English in detailing their conversation.

"Madame, is the cousin of Mr. Lowval?"

"Yes, the cousin with whom he lived, the cousin whom he loved as a sister. Will you and Nellie come and live with me, Gabrielle?"

This unexpected question startled the girl. The lady on whom she was calling was so different to what she had expected. Cesarée had told her how kind she was in manner, gentle in speech, and how truly she seemed to sympathize with her sister and little niece in their bereavement; yet she was not prepared for the abrupt, hearty, and generous offer now made her. She was thinking: "If they wanted to get Nellie from me, they could do so by law, and need ask no permission of mine; and if these grand relations of my poor sister's husband intended to make a Protestant of little Nell, I should not have been asked to remain with her." Then aloud she said:—

"You know, Madame, that I am poor and uneducated. I should be a servant."

"Oh no!" hastily returned Mrs. Fordstaff, "Nellie's Aunt could not occupy an inferior position in my house."

"Excuse me, Madame, I will explain what I meant. Nellie does not know me as her Aunt, she calls me 'Belle.' If Madame will let my little girl, like her mother, come to church with me, I will live here and be her 'gouvernante.'"

"But, Gabrielle—"

"There is no other way," interrupted Gabrielle, "and I cannot come otherwise."

It was useless to argue, so Mrs. Fordstaff arranged every thing to her own satisfaction, and some days after Nellie was formally installed, to Willie's unbounded delight, in the home of her father's cousin. Gabrielle was her nurse and special attendant, and faithfully and lovingly discharged her pleasant duties.

Time passed. Willie was a fine active lad, a promising pupil at the High School, and "Petite" went daily to the Ursulines. On the memorable day of the Bishop's visit, she was nearly ten years old, and was considered very much advanced in study for so venerable a little lady. Mrs. Fordstaff had grown to love her as her very own, and no quantity or quality of marbles, hoops, kites, tops or other boyish treasures could tempt Willie away from "sister," when she wanted a playmate.

Some anxiety was soon felt on Nellie's account, for a flushed cheek and tiresome little cough began to make its unwelcome appearance too often. But as the family physician attributed it to nervousness or slight cold, simple "tisanes" were the only remedies used. But when the day of her First Communion came, little Nell's dress was not whiter than her little face; and her large eyes were lustrous with prophecy of approaching death! Yet they who loved her most saw no danger.

CHAPTER XII.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND.

Gertrude Shippall sat quite stunned by a note which had just been handed to her by a servant, it was as follows :—

"My Dear Mrs. Shippall,—I sent your books to Miss Randall on Saturday evening, and no doubt she is by this time deeply immersed in the contents of one of them.

"I am at a loss to understand a question in your last letter. I have always thought that my company helped you to kill time, or that I afforded at least a convenient subject for you to exercise your facile pen on. I take it, you have been simply indulging in the pastime of what you call "scribbling" as a relaxation from heavier literary work. I have too great esteem for you to imagine for a moment anything more serious, and I may add, though hardly necessary, too little conceit in myself to think that I could inspire in you 'une grande passion' !!!

"Remember you have said you would not for the

world interfere with another's husband or lover ; I cannot act contrary to such good teaching.

"I think I have explaimed myself sufficiently, and cannot think of any other course except to consider this letter the last scene of the comedy and drop the curtain.

"Accept, dear Madame, the assurance of my highest esteem.

"Yours respectfully,

"ANDREW F. STONEVEIGH."

April 30th.

Mrs. Shippall's feelings after perusing Stoneveigh's letter were not in the least enviable. Flushes of indignation suffused her face, and for a moment she felt the full shame of her position. Accustomed as she was to easy conquests, or at most conquests which carried no sting to her conscience, she trembled, and almost cried in the anguish of her spirit. Scorned and disdained in her youth, in her pride! Had Andrew spoken these words to her, they would not have seemed so harsh, she might have thought him annoyed or impulsive. In any case spoken words never wound like written ones. There is a calm stab in coldly written words that cuts deeper than the tongue. And this woman's quivering lips and burning cheek betrayed how keenly she felt

the rebuke of a noble nature like that of Stoneveigh, though he had expressed himself with rare delicacy. She admitted to herself "with rare delicacy," for she now realized how much she had encouraged him to believe that he had inspired her with a "grande passion." Poor misguided woman! for the first time in her life she had experienced a serious interest in any man. Let us hope that some noble though dormant impulse in her soul had been awakened by his lofty character and pure principles. "How shall I meet him again?" she thought, and wave after wave of painful emotion heightened her color and increased her miserable sense of degradation.

With Mrs. Shippall we have no more to do, dear reader, only to hope that she is radically cured of her vain thirst for power and admiration. She still lives, and to outward seeming is gay as ever, but never, never can she forget that in Andrew Stoneveigh she had met all that she found noble and worth loving in man, and that through her own imprudence and folly she had lost all claim to his friendship.

Interrupted by the sound of a light footstep in the room adjoining the one she occupied, she called: "Are you there, Rachel?"

Rachel was there, and answered promptly "oui, ma chère." She was proud of her progress in

French, and spoke it on all occasions with intimate friends. As she entered Mrs. Shippall's bedroom, where that lady was sitting, she looked the personification of heath, wealth, and happiness.

Blooming cheek and sparkling eyes were hers, and most expressive was her arch face. She wore the well-known Ursuline plaid, but her necklet, brooch, earrings and comb sparkled lustrously with a million brilliant rays.

"I have been trying how diamonds look," she answered to Mrs. Shippall's enquiring glance at the splendid jewels adorning her person: "we never have an opportunity of wearing them at the Convent."

Mrs. Shippall's attempt at an answer was a failure, and happily tears at last somewhat relieved her overcharged breast.

"Rachel, leave me," she at length found voice to say; for her young friend had gone to her side at once, and tried to soothe the grief she could not understand, though too well-bred to enquire its cause. Rachel, in her own way, was somewhat clear-seeing, and she guessed that Gertrude's sorrow was one which permitted no intrusion.

"Rachel, see that no visitors come to bore me; I will rest, so that we may be in good humor for Mrs. White's soirée to-night."

Mrs. White's "at home" was a great success, and

Rachel next day carried pleasant souvenirs into the cloister with her, and amused some of her companions very much with her lively criticism of people and things.

Claire de l'Ange met many old acquaintances and made some new ones, and thoroughly enjoyed the evening's entertainment, to which her own bright cheerful presence added much *éclat*.

Payne Street and Margaret Randall each felt constrained when they met: Payne because he thought of Frank Compton, and Margaret because her mother's chance word had revealed to her the fact that Payne loved her.

Andrew Stoneveigh, too, went to Mrs. White's party. He shrank from meeting Gertrude, but he had been early taught to subdue, at least outwardly, all inner feeling, and he had determined to atone to Josephine for his dereliction from his duty to her; so bravely he went to dare the worst, and, if need be, atone publicly to his *fiancée* for his want of constancy to her. Andrew was a perfect gentleman, Mrs. Shippall well grounded in the requirements of social etiquette; therefore they met to all appearances as they had always done. Gertrude's friends found her complexion unusually bright and her speeches kinder than usual. Could they have known the almost angry heart-throb that quickened

her pulses and sent color to her cheeck, none present would have wished to share her position. Andrew Stoneveigh was paler than usual: " works too hard," said some of his brother merchants, " making money and losing his health." Careless crowd; knowing so little! caring less!

Gertrude neither sought Andrew's company, nor avoided it. This was a thoroughly safe course, and just the one pursued by the man who had hurt her feelings so deeply.

Yes, Mrs. White's party was a brilliant success. Successes are ever replete with misery and anguish to some one.

CHAPTER XIII.

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME."

What a beautiful sight is that of hundreds of little innocent children assembled to make their First Communion! Robed in spotless white, wearing the best and finest garments their childish wardrobes can afford. Wearing them not for empty show, but so that their exterior may shadow forth a perception of their purity and innate rejoicing on a day so solemn and triumphant for the whole Catholic world.

Fathers willingly devote their hard-earned wages to suitably prepare the little communicant; mothers work lovingly to fashion and perfect the darling's dainty raiment. And in the homes of luxury what lace, fine linen, and costly presents are lavished on God's chosen little one!

But in that sad house where a widow sits mourning for the father of her treasures; where it is a continual struggle to give them bread, or clothe them to resist the rigors of a changeable Canadian climate; ah! there indeed the "First Communion" is still welcome, but, poor orphan child, where can your

lone, grieving parent find help to beautify her bright-eyed boy or sunny-haired daughter for the great event?

Frequently I have heard people say: "Why should the poor dress in white? Can they not feel as fervent, perhaps more so, in everyday garb?" I grant that faith and piety need no outward adornment; but the feast of childhood, the one great festival day in many sad young lives, should be a fact long remembered. On an occasion of such joy, when the poor can by no effort of honest industry help themselves, should not the rich give some of their wealth, and those who have a competence give a trifle?

On the morning of little Nellie's First Communion none but happy faces and eager helping hands surrounded her. And the little Ursuline chapel held many of her friends, who had come to hear the sweet voices of nuns and pupils ascending like incense to the throne of God, whence Christ stooped to earth to embrace humanity.

Nellie was very happy, and after mass, assembled with her little companions in the refectory, she enjoyed the nice breakfast there prepared for them. Then the enviable little band of children chatted with each other, exchanging pictures, statues and such like gifts, as souvenirs of the great day.

From Willie, Nellie received a very handsomely bound "Following of Christ;" from Aunt Louise, finely-framed pictures of "Ecce Homo" and "Mater Dolorosa;" while Mrs. Fordstaff had actually purchased a chaplet for Nellie, and had given it to Gabrielle to be blessed by a Jesuit Father. And Belle, as she was still called, presented her sister's child with the crucifix her dying mother's lips had pressed. It was a small silver one, the gift of her husband on the day of Nellie's christening.

Happy child! ere she could soil the white robe of her innocence she was called to meet in Heaven the Saviour who had blessed her pure soul with His sacred presence. And before the little communicants had assembled in that same chapel to receive Confirmation one of their number prayed for them from among the choir of angels in heaven. Little Nell was buried beneath the chapel floor on which they stood, but her beatified spirit with celestial smile shone on them from the home of God.

CHAPTER XIV.

"NEW CHARACTERS."

Denise Nadet stood on the quiet beach at Cacouna, quite alone. It wanted several hours yet to bathing time, and at the hotel every one was preparing for dinner. Alone and unobserved, she could now execute the wicked design that jealousy of another's superior virtues had suggested and nurtured in her evil heart. How she exulted in the anticipation of the trouble and horror she would see in Fred. Dayton's grey eyes and the mute misery of Helena Watervale's glance. Wild thoughts of securing the rich man for herself passed swiftly through her excited mind, quickly dispelled by the memory of quiet determined words uttered the evening before by her own lover as she drove with him to Rivière du Loup: "Denise, I shall love you forever, but do not be so coquettish; some day you will make me jealous and goad me into doing something terrible."

"Would you kill a rival?" she tried to say gayly.

"No," he answered, "I blame no man for admiring

you. But, you, Denise, you I could kill, did I doubt your constancy."

As she stood watching the incoming tide, she resembled anything but a selfish, cruel, wicked little girl. She was small, plump, graceful and soft-voiced. Her hair curled into fanciful heaps on her scheming little head. Her eyes were dark, and by many considered very expressive; but they were untruthful eyes, suggestive of cunning and stealth. Her tongue was so active in flattery, so plausible in compliment, that many overlooked the warning conveyed by her glittering, cruel, calculating eye. "Alone and unobserved," she thought to herself, as she slipped part of a torn letter under the end of a small boat that lay stranded on the sand; and she placed a stone upon the paper to make sure that accident would not allow it to be carried off. "I will manage," ran her thoughts, "to bring Fred. Dayton here, and then he will never insolently tell me again that there lives but one woman with whom he could spend a life-time of trust and love. Miss Helena, too, with her grand ideas about engaged lovers! No waltzing, boating, driving or fun for her when the admirable Fred is away."

And Denise almost clapped her hands with delight at the prospect of the mischief she was about to work. She walked quickly along the beach, for

she heard voices from the opposite direction to St. Lawrence Hall, and it was not her interest that any but the one whom she wished to separate from his intended wife should chance to spy her carefully-placed letter.

"What brought them here at such a time?" she murmured to herself, and almost immediately her brother's voice answered the thought: "Tiens, Denise, I guessed you would be romancing on the beach, so I brought Elise to meet you; now then kiss each other, and have the rapturous meeting over at once, so that we may ascend those steep stairs again in time for dinner."

Scarcely heeding his "moquerie" the cousins, Denise and Elise, saluted each other with many repetitions of "ma chère" and "quand on pense," etc., kissing, of course, many times, like most girls who are intimate, and meet suddenly at some pleasant place after a few days' separation.

Two other ladies stood watching the performance, and listening to Jules Nadet's playful remarks. One was a tall, ungainly faded girl, late from New York and its horrid caprices of dress, manner and speach, her name was Wilhelmina Ernestina Barrett. Chignon, curls, rouge, etc., nothing was wanting to proclaim that she challenged "all comers" to flirtation. Her sister Clementina Florence was less

disagreeable in style, and several years younger. She wore her hair mermaid fashion, and evidently stood in need of a few lessons in grammar, for each time the sea breeze blew her perfumed and crimped tresses across Jules' shoulder or face, she exclaimed: "What a nuisance these hairs is! always blowing on you, Mr. Nadet!"

"Charming," said Jules, though wondering inwardly "why the mischief she didn't wear a net, or plaits, or something!"

"Now, Denise, hadn't we better return to the Hall, as Miss Willie and Miss Florry Barrett (introducing them unceremoniously as he spoke) must be fatigued from their shaking on the cars."

The ladies thus presented to each other bowed and shook hands. Then all turned to the hotel, and with commendable speed soon climbed the steep and long stairs leading from the beach to St. Lawrence Hall; there they separated to meet no more till dinner time.

Denise remained a very short time in her room, she was always quick at her toilette, and was unusually so on this day. She left her mother on the plea of looking for her little nieces, Stella and Fanny. She found them (as she had expected) in the hotel parlor, safely sitting with Helena Watervale and Fred. Dayton; but she was surprised to see

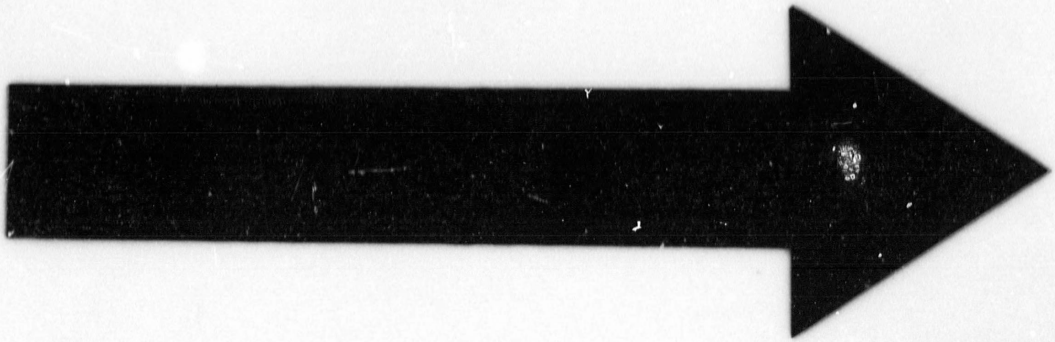
Herbert Pleshshar at the piano, for she had not heard of his return from Europe. He had come with the same train that brought Elise, and to him Jules owed the good (or bad) fortune of Miss Barrett's acquaintance.

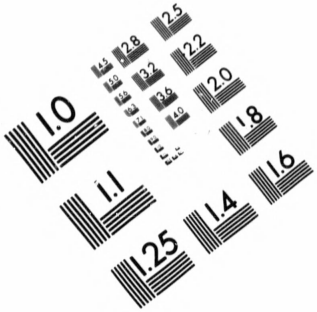
With a glad cry of surprise Denise went quickly towards Herbert, saying, "Why didn't Jules tell me you had come?" And as he stood up eagerly to meet her, Helena gave an almost terrified glance towards them both, which was instantly noticed by the ever jealous eye of Fred. Dayton.

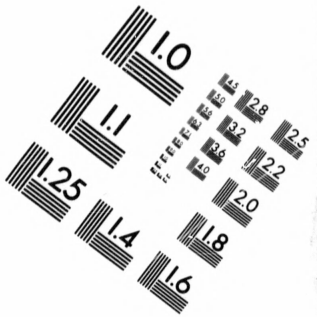
Immediately began an animated conversation between Denise and Herbert. Operas, scenery, pictures, books, artists, statues, music generally, they left few subjects untouched, and seemed wonderfully gratified with each other's society. Denise had been to Boston and Philadelphia, and once to New York, and having had some experience of that city's gayeties, her imagination quite enabled her to seem conversant with all that Herbert Pleshshar, had seen and studied. Suddenly, she addressed Miss Watervale: "Don't you, think, Helena, that Europe has improved Herbert wonderfully?"

"Mr. Pleshshar looks well," curtly replied Helena.

Denise continued, "I never see you and Helena, Herbert, without thinking of the jolly time we spent in Quebec two years ago. Do you remember that







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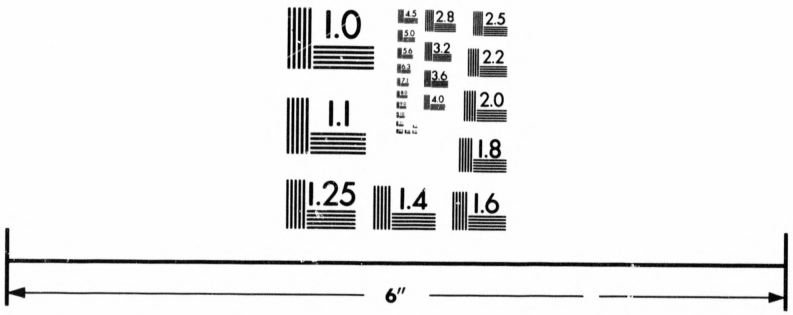

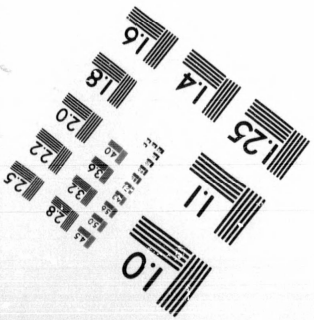

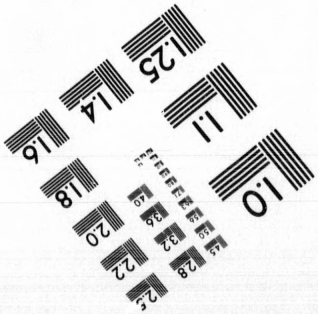

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a friend of ours persuaded you to attend an Irish bazaar, and what praise and compliments your liberality evoked." Then she turned smilingly to Fred. Dayton, "That was before we all had the pleasure of meeting you, sir."

"Remember the bazaar!" said Herbert, "not in the least; I've met so many girls, and gone to so many 'fancy fairs,' that I've no distinct recollection of any one of them."

Herbert had not forgotten the bazaar to which Miss Nadet alluded. At that bazaar he had met Helena Watervale and admired her very much, but, after a short acquaintance, their friendship had almost ceased. Had no one remarked the matter, his fancy might have died a natural death, but he had attempted to renew his attentions to Helena, and met with no success, therefore allusions to the matter angered him, and Denise noticed with satisfaction that he and Helena looked ill at ease.

In paradise, the arch fiend was not more cruel nor vindictive than the fair-haired graceful girl who was now trying to sow the seeds of doubt and hatred in the mind of a noble man, whose only failing was jealousy. Of course, jealousy is a frightful defect; but no man is perfect; so, as Fred. Dayton possessed more than his own share of virtue, he needed some flaw in his otherwise wonderfully cor-

rect character to show his humanity. Time checks and punishes jealousy, as it punishes and checks all other wickedness.

"Follow me out on the verandah," said Denise to Herbert, under cover of a few low chords on the piano, then aloud: "Au revoir, tout le monde," and she disappeared from the room followed in a few seconds by Herbert. Denise was almost brusque in her movements; she did every thing quickly, and never took time to reflect on the full consequences of any action. Exceedingly capricious and fond of squabbling, nothing gratified her so intensely as a quarrel between relations or lovers, and now when the newly arrived "beau" overtook her, she said to him: "Come with me, like, "un bon garçon," to the beach. Mamma is down there, and we will help her up with her book and umbrella."

"Certainly, but where is your hat?"

For answer she called a child, that was playing about the grounds, and, kissing her, enquired: "May I have your hat, petite, for a short time? You can run about in the shade." As little Rebecca Rice did not dream of refusing, she perched the small ornament on her curly head and started off once more for the beach, accompanied most willingly by her old friend. Well matchel pair! they were inconstant, untruthful and deceitful, yet very much attached to each

other. By some strange anomaly neither trusted the other, and yet Denise would almost implicitly obey Herbert Pleshshar. And though he never thought of her for a wife, a word or a smile from her often had made him untrue to himself or false to his friends. Little did Raymond Acton understand the nature of the little *fiancée* he had chosen, and of whom he was ridiculously fond and absurdly jealous. He thought her unconsciously fascinating, and guileless as a child. She flattered his vanity, pretended to worship him like a hero, and, manlike, the siren voice of adulation turned his brain, clouding his judgment. The very contrast between them made her wonderful in his eyes. He was very tall, had no love of dress, display, or money. She was extremely small, had almost a passion for dress and luxury of all kinds. She loved show and worshipped money. Walking along by Herbert's side she did not stop a moment to think whether or not her present promenade would please her affianced husband. Like all men who have seen much and travelled continually, Raymond Acton was suspicious of any one who, like himself, had seen life and the world, and understood its follies, frivolities, and weaknesses by experience. He found it quite natural to associate with fast men himself, but Denise he wished to have free from contact with any evil. He had often

advised her to be more discreet and less demonstrative to Pleshshar, but she, with seeming childishness, asked him, "Why?"—He could not wound her delicacy by an explanation.

Now, Denise had left her mother sitting in their private room at the Hall, so her well-acted amazement was quite a marvel of histrionic ability. It must be noticed here that the little hypocrite was a fine actress, and could feign all sorts of pretty and graceful feelings.

"How dreadful that we should be here together alone! she exclaimed. Where can Mamma have disappeared to?"

"Shall we search the bathing house? Or 'tiens' (to use your favorite exclamation) perhaps yonder slip of paper contains her 'regrets,' etc."

"What slip of paper?" questioned Denise. "Don't keep poking your cane into the sand, it makes me nervous; and stop whistling, you know how it irritates me? That boat belongs to Fred Dayton, and—"

"Fred Dayton! Then, beautiful Demoiselle, perhaps we have come in time to save one of his "*billets-doux*" from the sporting wave or the briny deep." Stooping down, he leisurely picked up the torn letter, and at once began to read what seemed the final part of a farewell or sentimental love-letter—

"course we shall meet as heretofore,

in a friendly way, but there will be no need of special appointments. There is no need of further correspondence, words do not come easily to me.

Respectfully yours,

HELENA MARY WATERVALE."

"Denise," said Herbert, as he looked up with flushed brow and almost angry gesture, "we know many things, you and I, and it seems to me we both can be certain that design, not accident, placed this scrap where I found it. Give me a good jolly waltz in the drawing-room this evening, and drive with me to the boat to-morrow afternoon, in payment for the services I see you except me to do for you."

"Well, Herbert, I see Europe has only sharpened your intelligence. Save me a heap of bother and explanation, and be satisfied to know that I want to separate Dayton and Helena."

"For what purpose?"

"Fun."

"Fun?"

"Yes, fun!" she answered, looking steadily at her amazed questioner.

"Well if human misery be a woman's fun you shall have the fun you seek. I hate that conceited Dayton. When you reminded me before her of my

former liking for Miss Watervale you roused all the bitter dormant mortification I went to Germany and elsewhere to deaden. I thought myself cured, yet a word from you and a look at her, destroyed my security at once. Cured I am of one thing—my love!"

The young couple thus coolly preparing to make a young woman suffer returned to the hotel and after dinner met, ostensibly for a game of croquet but in reality to settle the speediest and most pitiless way of dealing with their proposed victims.

CHAPTER XV.

"ECHOES FROM THE CLOISTER."

Ursuline Monastery, Quebec.

"In my last letter, very dear Mamma, I gave you so much worldly news that I'm sure you will think me quite giddy and unsettled in my ways. Fear not for me. I am working steadily to perfect myself completely as a companion for you in a few months. You will regret to hear that Mrs. Fordstaff buried her adopted child last week. We were told by visitors at the parlor that little Nell's death was so great a blow to her nurse that the poor creature's mind is quite unsettled since. Do you remember that we knew a family named Printemps in Cacouna, and often bought berries from the twins, Léa and Sévarine? Their eldest sister, Gabrielle, was nurse and maid to 'Petite.'

The whole Convent seems to have mourned the sweet child so lately a communicant and not yet confirmed. She sleeps near us, in the outside chapel, and we will always remember how our dear Chaplain was moved to tears on the day of the in-

terment. Little companions robed in white, bearing lighted tapers in their hands, stood around our darling's coffin. Mr. Grant wept, yes positively wept, when the body of his little niece was lowered into its last resting-place.

Ah! dear mamma, it seems to me that Frank and Margaret must not marry. Nothing but pain and anguish seems to be the result of life-unions between Catholic and Protestant. Mrs. Fordstaff acted nobly in carrying out her cousin's wishes that his child should grow up in its mother's faith; but what generous affection she must have felt for the dead to be worthy of such perfect confidence and trust. Few women could have imitated her, no man would have done so. And then, who knows what family trials or other vicissitudes may have been spared to little Nell by her early flight to Paradise.

Do you remember that sweet song, 'The Rose-bush,' we once heard sung by a dear friend and sweet singer? It haunts me these days, and reminds me continually of Nellie's adopted mother.

My letter to you must be short, as I have enclosed a long one for Frank.

Lovingly, dearest Mamma,
I am, as ever,
Your daughter,
RACHEL."

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE SEA SIDE."

The morning after the day on which Denise and Herbert had decided to interfere materially with the "course of true love" was a gem of Cacouna mornings, one such as seldom blesses that spot of sea-coast, even in summer. It was warm, clear, sunny, and with just enough of wind blowing to encourage the hope that the races in the afternoon between Indians, in bark canoes, would be exciting and pleasant. At St. Lawrence Hall all was life and animation, preparing for the annual races and general fun, kindly imagined by the gentlemen for the ladies' pleasure, but the lion's share of enjoyment, as in most amusements, fell to the lot of the lords of creation. Nevertheless some uninterested people seemed scattered through the groups, occupying the numerous verandahs of the hotel, and finally a number of young people decided that they would go off to the Indian beach, and see what progress the baskets, fans, bark boxes, etc., commanded the day before, were making towards completion.

Quite a merry party walked away through the village, chatting and planning fun for a week to come. A concert, too, was to take place in the evening, so that pleasure-seekers were happy, at least in anticipation.

Helena and Fred were among those who sought the Indian encampment, and Helena's little friends, Stella and Fanny, were close beside her. When they reached the beach, a lively scene was soon presented; young girls going in and out of the huts, young men setting up coppers and small coins for the Indian boys to shoot at with their bows and arrows. Quite a number of visitors, resident for the summer in the village, were added to the groups from the hotel.

Helena noticed a young squaw seated very sadly in one tent with her "papoose" held tightly in her arms. A second glance showed her that it was no squaw, but a white woman that faced her.

"Oh, Fred," she cried to Dayton, who stood outside, watching the gay children under his charge, "just see what a sorrowful face is here, and I'm sure that woman has no Indian look." The old squaw and another who occupied the tent with the object of Helena's interest now began muttering softly to each other in their own tongue, casting looks of displeasure at mother and child and at Helena. "We speak English," spoke the white squaw with scarcely

a move of her pale lips, but with what seemed to Helena a beseeching look.

"Could I do anything for you?" asked Miss Watervale. "Let me see your little child."

She took the infant tenderly from its mother and, spite of Fred Dayton's remonstrance, held it for some minutes, kissing it gently ere she restored it. "He is sick," said the mother, "he will die!" and into her mournful eyes came a longing, wistful expression of grief. "I will come again," returned Helena, "and see if I can bring something to do your baby good." She left money with the sick boy's people, and with a sweet smile and grave "good-bye," turned to meet Denise Nandet and Herbert Pleshshar coming towards the hut she was leaving. Quite a bright look and pleased expression beamed suddenly from Helena's calm eyes, and she accosted Herbert with: "I'm so glad to see you, Dr. Pleshshar. Will you please me by looking at a sick Indian child in this hut?" Herbert followed her with a quiet step, and did as she desired.

"Poor little chap," he pityingly said, as he examined the little sufferer. "We will not let him die."

Meantime Denise was trying to captivate Fred Dayton's attention, but she might just as well have expected an oyster to sing, as Fred to notice her.

She was the incarnation of all that he dreaded and disliked in woman. He suspected her of being much worse than she actually was. Girls to whom too much liberty is given by their mothers nearly always act imprudently, and are blamed for many things of which they would scorn to be guilty.

CHAPTER XVII.

A BRAVE YOUNG WOMEN.

Andrew Stoneveigh had never known how nearly he had been to crime till on the morning when he met Payne Street, as appointed, in the office of the latter. Humbled and ashamed he felt, and quite awakened to the danger of the game he had been playing. Flirtation is called a game, but it is difficult to dance on red hot ploughshare without injury, and more difficult to escape moral contamination in flirtation—Lucifer's perfected human trap of this century. He thought of Josephine, and her extreme maidenly reserve in not alluding to his unflattering conduct to her, and he resolved that she should never again be troubled in her most sacred feelings in the trust she had placed in the man to be her husband. Full of repentance, and anxious to atone for his conduct to her, he resolved to call on her that evening and make full confession of his fault hoping in this way to prove his contrition.

What was his astonishment when, on his return,

home, he found a note from Miss Drellett, as follows:

"DEAR ANDREW,

I am going to Europe on Saturday next with my cousin Mrs. McDonald and her husband. We expect some friends to spend to-morrow evening with us, and shall be happy to see you with them.

Your Friend,

JOSEPHINE.

Wednesday morning."

Slowly Andrew folded up the dainty perfumed missive, and then he felt the real depth of the words "it might have been." Quite well he understood that he was free, that Josephine Drellett was taking the initiative step towards breaking off the engagement that had been the light and hope of his life: a virtuous wife! God's best gift to man. The treasure had been almost his, he had not grasped it, and now it was too late, it was lost to him forever! Too late he appreciated the qualities of his betrothed, he had found her distant, calm, and undemonstrative. Her eyes, had they been lighted by the warmth which frequent communion alone can give, would have been holy as a seraph's.

Andrew's answer to Miss Drellett was brief:

"DEAR JOSEPHINE,

I shall be most happy to be among your friends on Thursday evening.

Affectionately yours,

ANDREW."

Plunged into very miserable and heart-burning thoughts, Stoneveigh walked on the Terrace that evening, instead of calling on Miss Drellett. The spring had come so quickly that it seemed wonderful to believe that a month before he had driven to the Island of Orleans on the icebridge. What a pleasant drive it had been! His sisters and Josephine had enjoyed it so much. Many little events crowded on his memory, all reminding him of Miss Drellett's fine character and inestimable worth, and now his life was as much changed as the aspect of the St. Lawrence and St. Charles before him. Soon his friend Street made his appearance, looking as much disturbed as himself. From habit they walked together, but each scarcely spoke to the other. At last, after smoking in complete silence for a little while, Stoneveigh exclaimed, "It's all over, Payne."

"Yes," answered Payne absently, "but I expected some other verdict."

"Another verdict! What can you mean? I am speaking of Josephine and myself."

"Oh! pardon me, Andrew, I was thinking over Judge Smith's decision in court this morning. Have you quarreled with Miss Drellett?"

"Quarreled! How little you understand my Josephine's character." He then told his friend all that was in his heart, and finding the crowd increasing around them, they left the terrace to seek a quieter promenade on the pavement surrounding the grounds of the Parliament House. As they walked back and forth to and from the ramparts they caught occasional glimpses of the harbor through the cannons. A few stars peeped tremulously forth from the pure May sky; the moon seemed doubtful of her presence being needed, the evening wind through the trees in the Seminary garden made scarcely a sound, missing its expected playmates, the leaves. Everything seemed uncertain, and poor Andrew's spirits were very low indeed. A voice he knew suddenly struck his ear, and Payne said to him: "I think Miss Drellett and her father are coming this way, they have probably had tea with Mrs. White." The two young men distinctly heard the young girl answer, in reply to a remark from her father, "I fear he has not been prudent," and by instinct Andrew knew they spoke

of him. He courteously stood aside to let Dr. Drellett and his daughter pass, but Josephine's womanly intuition guessed by his quiet acceptance of her decision that he was deeply wounded. She stopped to say, "I expect you both, your friend and you, to-morrow evening. Mrs. Freighum, from Chicago, is stopping with us, and we expect to have quite a musical treat."

Payne had joined Dr. Drellett, and without seeking for such a result Josephine found herself in Andrew's charge. Neither spoke for some minutes, till Stoneveigh could bear his misery no longer:

"You have cast me off, Josephine."

"Oh! don't say 'cast off,' Andrew, I had no idea of such a thing; we will still meet on friendly terms, but we shall be engaged no longer."

Much conversation followed between these two who were so dear to each other. But conscience on one side, and wounded delicacy on the other, kept them widely apart. Josephine could not dream her youth's dream again, and Andrew's noble sentiments made him feel quite powerless to explain anything to the woman he had for a time neglected.

CHAPTER XVIII.

EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS.

Kathleen one day told Margaret that she was getting discouraged with herself: "I wish, dear cousin," she said, "that you would tell me how you always seem to do the right thing in the right place, and at the right time. I cannot imagine how you became so perfect." Then she added, like an afterthought, "but I suppose you were born a saint."

Margaret returned: "Perfect! far from it, Kathie; but one has so many means of attaining human perfection, that despair must be banished. The cause of God must not be given up. Surely, dear, you would not be so cowardly as to fly from the least pain or labor in the service of God."

Kathie lifted a beautiful pair of longing eyes to the face of her earnest cousin, and replied: "No girl ever had so many opportunities, means and time for doing good, and yet, Maggie, no girl has been so idle as I unfortunately am becoming. I am conscious of great *dissipation of mind*, turning away from the things of God and running after creatures."

"Still, dear Kathie, you are not a flirt, nor a flatterer, so I think you need not reproach yourself much in that way."

"Oh! I didn't mean *men*," said Kathie, with a disdainful and proud toss of her head, "I mean frivolities in general. If I don't dance waltzes, redowas, and all these things, I'm afraid it's not altogether through obedience to the church; I never could understand why so many of my friends could endure the freedom of them. At Mrs. Mallett's last week I saw a young gentleman from Europe, Mr. Murray, address a few words to our hostess, and then they both crossed the room to where Andrew Stoneveigh and Mrs. Shippall were sitting. She presented the newly-arrived stranger to them, and in a few minutes after, when the 'Blue Danube waltzes' were playing, I noticed Mr. Murray and Mrs. Shippall among the whirlers. How could she allow a stranger such liberty?"

"Dear Kathie, society allows many strange familiarities, but a woman's sense of delicacy should teach her to avoid anything of the kind. Gertrude defies every one's taste or opinion, and I regret to say has many imitators. Your mention of Mrs. Mallett reminds me that Mr. Donvel called to see you this morning. He seemed greatly disappointed at your absence."

During the above conversation the two girls had been occupied with some needlework for a poor woman in whom they were interested. They were sitting in Mrs. Randall's pleasant sewing-room, and just as they were speaking of Mr. Donvel, Mrs. Randall entered the room. Kathleen immediately rose and placed a low rocking chair for her Aunt; an attention which was rewarded with a gentle caress.

"You were speaking of Mr. Donvel?" said Mrs. Randall to both girls.

"Yes," answered Margaret. "I was telling Kathie how disappointed Mr. Donvel seemed at not meeting her. I consoled him by asking him to play whist with us this evening. Are you grateful?" laughed Margaret, tapping Kathleen very gently on the cheek.

"Yes, for small favors," returned Kathleen with a slight blush, and seemingly careless laugh. "We are not going to the theatre then with the Lebruns?"

"Margaret and I are not going, Kathie, so I thought you would not go without us."

"I only said that to teaze you, Auntie darling. I knew you would not dream of going to the Music Hall to see the 'Black Crook.' Now then, Miss Marguerite, I'm going to the sewing machine, so if you have something ready for me, let me have it

while I'm in the humor. I think, Auntie, I'm very often good but not for very long."

The noise of the machine made conversation unpleasant, if not impossible, for some time. Then Kathleen held up a small garment triumphantly, with "Patch quilts avaunt! you were never like this!"

"I think we've had sewing enough, Mamma," said Margaret a little wearily. "I'll go and copy 'There's nothing like a fresh'ning breeze' for Philip."

"That's just my opinion," said Kathleen "Bring your desk in here to this pretty little crimson table, and I'll fold my hands comfortably, take a horizontal position on the lounge, and perhaps, Auntie, you'll give me a few hints about whist."

"Which means, no doubt, that you and Mamma will talk about Mr. Donvel."

"Just as Auntie pleases," said Kathleen with a mock air of resignation, as she ensconced herself cosily and satisfactorily on the aforesaid lounge.

"If I want to make blots, scratches, erasures and nondescript hieroglyphics of all kinds, I had better try to do my copying here," said Margaret.

"Go, then, where less admiring and especially less engrossing surroundings will not attract your attention from crotchets and quavers."

"Kathie," exclaimed Margaret in heroically tragic tones, "think of my books!"

"Ah! yes, I know they may entice you. But they are dumb! They boast not the human voice divine."

"Fortunately," retorted Margaret, as she went off to the library.

CHAPTER XIX.

TRUE LOVE

Kathleen's silence told Mrs. Randall more eloquently than words that her niece's mind was about to be made known to her on an important subject. She knew that Archer Donvel had understood her tacit acceptance of his attentions to her niece, and she hoped that his suit would be favorably looked upon. She had written to Kathleen's father, and told him of the young man's prospects, character and evident admiration of her niece, asking for his counsel. The fine old gentleman answered gallantly: "I have complete confidence in you, and know that Kathleen is as dear to you as your own child. Still I think Kathie will trust me when her heart speaks. Then my darling may choose a husband in any land she wishes. I have means to live near her, and 'wherever she is, is still Erin to me.'"

Thus Mrs. Randall saw with interest and hope that Kathleen was always pleased with Archer Donvel's presence, and that no other gentleman was

welcomed with the slightest look of anything but polite indifference.

"Archer will be here this evening, Auntie," said Kathleen suddenly looking up; and finding Mrs. Randall's earnest gaze fixed full upon her, she blushed vividly, adding: "I call him Archer, because he says he loves me very dearly, and asked me to drop the more formal 'Mr. Donvel.'"

"Loves you very dearly, child; when did he tell you so?"

"On Tuesday morning at Morgan's music store." She went on, "He couldn't help it, Auntie. We were looking at music, and among other songs Margaret choose 'My Queen.' She went to play it on the piano, while I took up a second copy to look at the words. Archer looked over my shoulder, I was sitting, he standing. You know the lines begin:

'Where and how I shall earliest meet her,
What are the words she first will say?'

And so forth. As luck would have it, on the counter some one had left a copy of Kathleen Aroon. Archer directed my attention to it, just as Margaret came along, humming softly, 'By what name shall I learn to greet her?' I don't know how it happened, Auntie, but without a word I understood that I had been conquered at last, and shall probably not be an

old maid after all." And Kathie burst out into triumphant song:

> 'And the stars shall fall,
> And the angels be weeping,
> Ere he cease to love, ere he cease to love me.
> Ere he cease to love me, his Queen, his Queen,
> Ere he cease to love me, to love me, ah! his Queen.'

"Yes, dear, I think Archer Donvel quite capable of a constant, abiding affection for the woman whom he will select for a wife. I will tell you, darling, that I consider your lover a perfect man of faith."

"I know he is very well-behaved in church," said Kathleen, "but is he very devout?" she added, with a half-disappointed expression in her splendid eyes.

"My dear niece," laughed Mrs. Randall, really amused, "you seem to consider righteousness a real calamity, What is there so very dreadful about a good man?"

But Kathleen did not return her Aunt's gay smile. She was evidently troubled. "I always found Archer so mild, kind and courteous," she said at last, "a man of veracity, generosity, simplicity, and sincerity."

"Decidedly you describe our friend well, Kathie; he is all that you say, an invaluable friend, a wise counsellor, and an edifying companion."

"Why, Auntie," exclaimed Kathleen, roused to

pleasure at the earnest and sincere praise bestowed by her warm-hearted and undemonstrative relative on the man she was learning to love, "you speak very warmly of Archer's worth and fine qualities, what kind of a wife would be perfect enough for such a paragon?"

"His temper is even, his conversation ever cheerful and easy. And I have known him midst the variety of calamities incident to human nature, always ready to assist his neighbor. As I said before, he is a man of *Faith*, not a 'devotee,' or, as our old country women call them, 'voteens.'"

Kathleen's face had undergone a transformation during Mrs. Randall's eloquent speech. Her eyes beamed with tears of joyful affection, and her flushed cheek showed the delicate emotion of her soul. So seldom did her aunt praise the young men of their acquaintance, that she felt doubly gratified at the high esteem and profound regard she evinced for Archer Donvel.

"I shall try to deserve Archer's confidence, and fit myself to be a help and blessing through life."

"I delight to hear you say so, Kathie. Remember always that the life of the good Christian is a perpetual warfare; he must fight his way to heaven against a set of cruel, deceitful and obstinate enemies, who will never let him alone, either in life or death."

"Auntie, you make me shiver with your description of such eternal warface. How is it possible not to succumb to such determined assault?"

"Not *eternal* warfare, since death ends it, but we are sure of victory if we do not fling down our arms, and desert to the enemy."

"How good I feel when near you, Auntie; you say all sorts of truthful things about faith and religion without looking cross, stuck-up or, superior to every one. You rouse one up out of slothful indolence, and spur one on to labor in earnest for the securing of our eternal happiness."

Before Mrs. Randall could make any reply, visitors were announced, and a note was brought in inviting both ladies to spend the following Thursday with Miss Drellett.

Thursday evening arrived, and Dr. Drellett's guests were assembled all in a flutter of curiosity and excitement: "Why this sudden trip to Europe?" "Will Stoneveigh come?" These questions were repeated on all sides until Andrew made his appearance, which he did, late. As he entered the room where all his friends were watching for him, Andrew felt a sudden chill though him, and when he recovered his self-possession, and had been courteously received by his host and hostess, he heard Margaret Randall with her beautiful expressive voice sing-

ing "Under the Daisies." In after years Josephine Drellett always heard the song with a sorrowful heart and weary regret.

A voice enquired of Andrew: "Have you heard Mrs. Freighum sing: 'Ask Me No More.' It is a splendid song, and she makes the most of it."

"I like the music well enough, but I don't admire the sentiment of the song," said Andrew, in reply; he had had enough of coquetry, and could not appreciate Tennyson in his present mood. Then some sweet happy voice sang something about, "blue eyes" and "cruel fate, tearing asunder hearts like these." In another frame of mind Stoneveigh could almost have smiled at this love-ditty, but now he felt almost as much moved to tears as the youngest and most sentimental young lady in the room. He could not, as usual, declare that he admired manly songs and sensible ones, not soft nonsense. Poor human heart, without proper guidance how frail a bark art thou on the ocean of life!

CHAPTER XX.

LETTERS, MORE OR LESS CONFIDENTIAL AND STRICTLY PRIVATE.

My Very Dear Helena,

I hope you will not imagine that I have been neglecting you. This has been a very busy summer for me. I am preparing to enter the convent in a few weeks. Congratulate me on having quite reconciled Mamma to my temporal separation from her. We were to have paid a short visit to Cacouna and bid good-bye to all my favourite nooks and corners on the beach, but my brother has come to spend a little time with us, so I cannot decide on leaving home. We have had several short though pleasant trips. We often drive out to Sillery and spend the evening there. What a delightful spot is that on which the Presbytery is built, and then at the foot of those terrible hills, how pleasant it is by the river side. Last week we drove early out to Mrs. Smythe's pleasant home, and fancy one coming back just at midnight! Of course we passed, first Sillery Church burying-ground, then Mount Hermon Cemetery, afterwards a haunted house, and finally the old Cholera burying-ground, near St. Bridget's Asylum. We had Denise Nandet with us, driving from Sillery into Mrs. Shippall's, and what do you thing was the

subject of conversation? Ghosts! I must admit that I heard of a remarkable one that night.

I gave your kind message to Mr. Stoneveigh, but since Josephine left Quebec he seems to take no interest in anything; so I doubt if he will exert himself enough to raise energy for even a day at the seaside. I know positively his engagement to Josephine is at an end; I only hope he will have strength enough to bear it. I esteem him so highly, and would give much to be able to console his mother. Poor Mrs. Stoneveigh looks very wretched. You remember, Lena dear how much we always loved her. Have you forgotten our warm argument one day on "devotion to Mary?"

Yesterday we had a sail down to the Island of Orleans, it was one of the pleasantest days I had spent for some time. And I almost forgot to tell you that I spent a night at St. Anns (Bonne Ste. Anne), at the Convent. You see that Philip has determined I shall feel his presence. He continually exhorts me not to "feel gloomy," not to look on the "dark side of life," "the Convent is not as black as it's painted," etc.; he is just as great a teaze as ever. Rachel Compton is visiting Mrs. Fordstaff, her brother Frank is in Quebec with the Shippalls, and I'm sorry to say he and Denise Nandet are carrying on what is called a grand flirtation, but

indeed, Helena dear, I can see no dignity or womanhood in such conduct.

Do not think, friend I have trusted, that Frank's conduct pains me through any lingering affection I might have for him. It is not that, but Rachel is almost a Catholic, and when she is brought into contact with Catholics like Denise I tremble for the result.

Your account of the sick child in the wigwam interested me very much. Dr. Drellett says he is delighted to hear that Dr. Pleshshar succeeded in effecting a cure, for it is a rare disease of which you described me the symptoms and effects, and seldom is treated to a satisfactory issue. Your welcome fans, baskets, ear-rings, etc., were duly distributed among our friends, and all declare themselves delighted with your thoughtfulness.

No doubt Denise will bring you all manner of kind messages, she returns to Cacouna to-morrow. She will bring you a card of invitation to Philip's wedding, and I am happy to tell you that Mamma is much pleased with my dear brother's *fiancée*.

Hoping for a long letter,

I remain, dear Helena,

Your Affectionate Friend,

MARGARET,

Child of Mary.

CHAPTER XXI.

MORE LETTERS.

BOSTON, Sept.

DEAR MRS. FORDSTAFF,

Since our return to this dignified home of ours, I have thought long and frequently of the serious conversations we so often held on the Roman Catholic religion, and I must now tell you that I have decided irrevocably to join the Sisters of Charity and follow the example of our mutual friend, Margaret Randall. Dear Mamma shows no disposition to oppose my resolution, but Frank is quite violent and abusive to me. To begin with, he has taken a great dislike to Quebec, and insists that if I must make a fool of myself it shall be among our own friends. I cannot repeat, nor would if I could, all the unkind things I hear. I said unkind, but perhaps poor Frank is only thoughtless.

The de l'Anges are going to Montreal next week, and will perhaps pay Mrs. Gregory White a visit in Quebec. Claire told me she had heard of Denise

Naudet being seriously ill of typhoid fever, but did not know whether or not she was out of danger. Will you tell me all about it, dear Mrs. Fordstaff, in your next letter?

I enclose Willie some droll pictures to add to his interesting collection, and some rare stamps for his album.

With kind regards to your dear sister, and affectionate remembrances to my many dear friends in Quebec,

Believe me, dear Mrs. Fordstaff, to be

Your Very Sincere Friend,

RACHEL COMPTON.

BOSTON.

MY DEAR PLESHSHAR,

I have heard of Denise Naudet's illness, and want you to end my suspense about it. I feel very remorseful about my conduct to that young damsel, and am ready to make any amends an honorable man has in his power towards restoring her to the good graces of society. I have met Raymond Acton, and he is very angry with his late *fiancée;* strangely enough he is quite civil to me, but will never forgive her for the late gossip about her and himself. He must have had a very sincere attach-

ment for the silly girl, and I have concluded that when she could secure the affection of a man like Acton there must be some good in her; therefore, like a good fellow, ask her to marry me, and I'll come down as soon as you settle it, and carry her her off from your Papist city.

Just think, Pleshshar, of my sister turning Romanist! Isn't it perfectly terrible? And mother says no word against it.

Answer me by telegraph.

Yours forever,

F. COMPTON.

MONTREAL.

MY DEAR JOSEPHINE,

Are you ever coming back to us? Here it is late September, and you are still so far away. I arrived here yesterday, and am going to New York with some friends, but some scraps of news I heard on the boat coming up from Quebec made me resolve to write to you at once. Dear Josephine, Andrew Stoneveigh is dying, and I am sure you would like to see him once more. He is dying of exhaustion say the doctors, debility, over-fatigue, etc., but, dear cousin, don't you think your presence would ease his path to the grave? My husband was with him two weeks ago, and in a moment of emotion

he spoke to George about you: "She will never forgive me, I wronged her too deeply." There was a rumor some time since to the effect that he had become a Catholic, but it was an erroneous one.

This is a very short letter, I have no time to write longer. Andrew cannot possibly live beyond Christmas.

AGNES DRELLETT LEONARD.

QUEBEC, Sept.

DEAR COMPTON,

Received yours, etc. Come to Quebec at once; we'll have a talk. Denise is too weak to be disturbed yet with your proposals, etc.

Yours,

PLESHSHAR.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TABLES TURNED.

The best-laid plans do not always work out well. Denise and Herbert failed utterly, and Helena's act of charity to a suffering woman saved her, perhaps, a life-time of lonely misery. In one of their frequent rambles among the Indian huts at Cacouna Denise and Herbert, tired of walking, seated themselves on some rocks not far from the home of Pleshshar's little patient, not dreaming that their conversation would be heeded by its inmates. But Helena's name was well-known to Marie, the white squaw, and she listened attentively to all that was said. To her amazement the "proud lady," as she called Denise, was going to harm her benefactress. She determined this should not be, but failed to see how she could prevent it without implicating the man who had saved her boy's life, and whom she held in high esteem. At length her quick wits suggested a means. She would watch for the gentleman they called Fred, and ask him for advice. Unexpectedly Raymond Acton arrived at

the sea-side next morning, so, when the Indian woman next saw Fred Dayton and Helena, Raymond was with them. She said to Dayton: "Gentleman must not believe proud lady. Proud lady bad woman, tell lie about good woman." Here she pointed to Miss Watervale. Fred and Raymond were gentlemen, so any woman was secure of respect from them. "What is it, Helena? I do not understand what she means about Denise."

"Yes, yes," said Marie, hearing the name, proud lady, proud lady called that!"

With some patience at last the three from the hotel understood, as well as bad French, bad English, and many explanations could permit.

Raymond was exceedingly annoyed, for he knew the woman was calling Denise a liar, and Helena was frightened and Fred Dayton mystified. Little Stella was anxious to get away, so, taking advantage of the child's wish, Helena suggested a return to the Hall. Stella was allowed to chatter uninterruptedly as her three companions walked in silence.

And where was Denise? Of course one would naturally expect her to accompany Raymond Acton, but she had received some new "*toilettes*" from Europe and was preparing for a few days' trip to Quebec and Three Rivers, so she rubbed her eyes well for a few minutes and then assured her credulous lover that

she was suffering from neuralgia, and that nothing but complete quiet and Mamma's soothing presence could calm her excited nerves. Had he seen her some minutes afterwards, skipping about her room and giving sharp answers to her doting mother's remonstrances on her extravagance in dress he would not have found her so charming as she seemed when he met her later.

Helena had never spoken to Fred of Herbert's former attentions to her: with true womanly instinct she shrank from boasting of this or that conquest. But since Marie had warned her at the beach, she had decided to tell him all, and, if he were angry with her, well, she must bear it. She had not distinct notions of what danger threatened her, but she knew that Denise had nothing to speak of but Herbert, and though Marie screened Pleshshar completely, Helena felt that he must be implicated in the matter. So she asked her mother to come with her and her betrothed to Rivière du Loup falls, and thus they shunned company and had time for a comfortable understanding. Helena had no secrets from her mother; Fred knew this, and consequently felt no surprise when Mrs. Watervale said to him: "My daughter would like a drive to the falls this afternoon, Mr. Dayton, will you come with us? We wish to be quite alone, as Helena wishes to

speak to you about some very particular business."

"Certainly, I shall be but too happy to drive with you; do you know what Lena's wishing to say to me, Madam?"

"I do not, as yet, but she seldom makes foolish requests, and I suppose has good reason for this one. One is not secure from interruption or intrusion here."

The drive to Rivière du Loup was a very pleasant one; Helena spoke freely and unrestrainedly before her mother, and proved satisfactorily to Fred that she was truthful, honest, and constant; and her modest virtue was enhanced in his eyes by the knowledge that she, knowing his jealous disposition, had dared to try him by this means. What a lovely picture the mother, daughter and young man would have made, as they sat earnestly talking in the old mill. There is nothing so creditable to a young girl as fearless, open confidence in her mother; and what a happy mother is the one whose daughter loves her too well to deceive her—such a daughter must make a perfect wife.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SATAN ON GUARD.

Although Pleshshar was a very discreet, careful person, he one morning left his room door unlocked at the hotel, when his small writing-desk was temptingly displayed on a little table near the window. Children are sometimes not inquisitive, but, in general, like other people, forbidden fruit seems to promise them great enjoyment. Several children invaded Herbert's room, and the open writing-desk was soon on the ground, with its contents strewn in all directions. He arrived just in time to prevent much mischief, but Providence had willed that what he had planned to do deliberately should happen without his help. Little Gertrude Bertram carried off a stick of sealing wax and Helena's torn note. Miss Gertrude's older sister, with a slightly flushed face, returned the sealing-wax before dinner-time, on the piazza, but her mamma had kept the fragment of paper. Very little hands make very great mischief.

It is wonderful how quickly an item of question-

ably proper news is carried round a hotel, country place or even city. In the drawing-room that night every one was narrowly watching Fred and Helena and many were the remarks made upon the pair of unsuspecting young people. Denise had gone off to Quebec, leaving Raymond in no very amiable mood, and he was just ready to be annoyed by even trifles. Thus it happened that, when challenged to a game of billiards, he accepted very crossly, and of course lost the game—cross people deserve to be unlucky; though one must admit he had reason to be disturbed. His opponent, Gaunt Gaynor, lighting a third cigar, said to him: Queer affair about Miss Watervale."

"What affair?"

"Oh! I thought you knew, the letter of hers found somewhere."

"By whom," huskily enquired Acton, he was thinking: "Denise, Denise, is it possible the squaw spoke truth."

"I don't know, the story originated among the women."

Not wishing to show an interest in the matter, Acton yawned and suggested "post office," and off he strolled for letters he knew were not awaiting him. Then he could bear suspense no longer, and went in search of Fred Dayton, and carried him off

down the road, telling him what he had heard, and asking him if it were possible to stop the tide of tattle setting in so suddenly. He was longing to hear that Fred and Helena thought Denise incapable of treachery, but no such balm was supplied for his wounded trust. It was hard to arouse suspicion in the mind of such a man as Raymond Acton, but, once aroused, it was impossible to quell it again, till he had searched and proved a subject thoroughly. On leaving Acton he went straight to his room and wrote to Denise a formal question, demanding a speedy answer.

In a few days it was reported with great exultation that Raymond Acton and Denise Naudet were engaged no longer, because Miss Watervale and Acton corresponded secretly, and dear Denise "disapproved of it." So news is carried! Meanwhile Raymond followed his letter to Quebec, and there had a stormy interview with Miss Naudet, who, thinking Pleshshar had completely betrayed her, had no defence to make, and attempted none. Amply punished was she for her cruelty and malice. And she was the only sufferer by her own plot; for, as soon as Pleshshar heard of the reports circulating concerning a letter found "by the merest accident in the world, my dear," he accosted the restorer of the purloined sealing wax-with a smiling ques-

tion "What did you do with the paper Gertie took from my room. The unexpected query brought forth the truthful reply "Mamma has it:" but Mamma did not have it long for Herbert let her see very plainly that he would make a fuss (as ladies say) if he didn't get it right away. Once in his possession, Herbert destroyed it, and hoped no further trouble would result from it, and as he did not know that Marie had predicted the whole affair to the three most concerned, he thought Denise and himself safe.

Denise determined to return home to Ottawa, but her nervous system had received a shock it could not bear. Acton's fierce fury and sarcastic reproaches had well-nigh frightened her to death. She felt so ill and wretched that she knew not in whom to confide till all at once Margaret Randall's kind face seemed before her eyes, and she left Mrs. Shippall's just before lunch and started for Margaret's home. What small things change the current of our lives. Had Denise visited the young girl she set forth to see, good advice and christian counsel might have made her a different woman, but no doubt, the time of her repentance had not come; she had not merited, through sufficient suffering the grace of conversion.

Frank Compton joined her near the esplanade,

and soon persuaded her to go with him to hear the band playing. The evening was fine and bright, the music enchanting, the promenaders gay; so for a time Miss Naudet forgot Raymond and her troubles, and thought of nothing but Frank and the present. As the evening grew later, and the crowd greater, Denise and Frank left the esplanade and returned to Mrs. Shippall's, where they were both stopping. The house was very quiet, as master and mistress were out and the little ones in bed.

Frank asked Denise to play and sing for him; she declined, saying she was not going to spend the evening alone with him, especially as she had a headache.

"Oh! I'll cure you," said Frank. "I'll talk to you about Raymond Acton," and he began to whistle "When Johnnie comes marching home again," but stopped suddenly when he saw the great pallor that crept over his companion's face. "What ails you, Miss Naudet? Shall I get you some wine?" he continued, anxiously, for she sat down dejectedly on one of the hall chairs.

"It's that horrid whistling! I hate whistling! It makes me feel like screaming. Please, Mr. Compton, don't whistle before me again."

"Pardon, 'ma chère,' I should not have taken such a liberty, but I was funning."

Young people of different sexes, unless they be automatons, or very unlike humanity generally, cannot be thrown into each other's society for a few hours alone without each feeling for the other a certain degree of interest for the time being. Especially if the woman be a coquette, for then she invariably tries to fascinate and attract her companion, and if said companion be a man of the world, or worse, a fast man, the devil is apt to have a jolly laugh at the expense of absent parents and guardians.

Frank had passed into the stage of indifference or rather intolerance towards Margaret Randall. And since he had no particular amourette to kill time with, he amused himself trying to see how far he could make Denise forget Acton. He did not know yet of the broken engagement, and therefore thought his attentions to Miss Naudet would cause very little remark. Strange as it may seem, he was several weeks in ignorance of the matter, when Payne Street said to him one night at the club, "Caught Miss Denise's heart in the rebound, eh?"

"How? What do you mean?"

"Well, you're stepping into Ray Acton's shoes, going to carry Denise off to Boston."

"Why, Payne, I didn't think you talked nonsense."

"Then if you don't want to be the laughing-stock of the city, either admit you are in earnest, or leave Denise to her fate. Since her engagement is broken off—"

"Broken off! I knew nothing about it."

"Then you are a worse man than I thought, Compton," said Payne, with more truth than civility. "I consider an engaged man or woman as sacred from desultory love-making as if the church had joined them."

"You always were straight-laced, Payne; you would have suited Margaret Randall. A pair of prudes."

A random shot sometimes kills, Payne Street was wounded inwardly, but no one except his mother and cousin Gertrude knew his secret, so he cherished no resentment towards Frank.

Street and Compton had a long chat, and Frank felt anything but comfortable when he found out that his flirtation had resulted in publicly compromising him and Denise. He thought of himself first.

Next morning he announced to his hostess at the breakfast table that he must leave for Montreal at four that afternoon, and, with many expressions of gratitude for her kind hospitality, he begged permission to bid the family "good-bye" at once, for business would occupy him all day. Denise looked

pale, but Frank scarcely looked at her, and failed to notice it.

"If you were going home, Miss Naudet, I could escort you with my sister, but, of course, Mr. Acton's claims are more than mine."

Miss Naudet did not seem to hear a word, she was staring before her with a fixed look that had no intelligence in it. Frank spoke again, "Any letters for Montreal, ladies, or messages?"

"My head aches," Denise answered, putting her hand up to her eyes.

"Then I will not prolong my adieus."

"My head aches," she said again.

"How strange her manner seems, and how strangely her voice sounds," thought Frank.

"Then good-bye, and *au revoir*," he said, smilingly, with outstretched hand.

Denise laid her hand mechanically in the one offered, and murmured, once more, "my head aches," then, with a nervous start, "Good bye, Mr. Compton, and '*bon voyage.*'"

When Frank had gone, Denise went to her room and remained there till almost twelve, with no consciousness of time passing, with no thought more defined than, "I have a headache."

At last she dressed herself and left the house to lunch with Mrs. Fordstaff, stopping at the nursery

door, as she passed it, to let her hostess know she would not return till evening. At a short distance from Mrs. Shippall's she met Payne Street:

"Good morning, Mademoiselle."

"I have a headache," she said, and then, "I mean, I am going to lunch with Mrs. Fordstaff." Payne accompanied her to Mrs. Fordstaff's, and to almost every observation he made she answered: "I have a headache." Naturally he wondered at this repetition, and, meeting Dr. Drellett in St. Lewis street, he stopped him and said, "Come with us please, Doctor."

"I cannot, unless I am much needed; I am expected at the Hotel Dieu. What do you want?"

"When you get through at the hospital, come to Mrs. Fordstaff's," and Payne hurried after Denise, overtaking her easily, for she walked languidly along, with listless look, and none of her usual animation and quick way.

Raymond Acton was a friend of Payne's, and had been from their school-days at the seminary and at St. Mary's College, so he felt an interest in Denise, apart from the gentlemanly instinct which prompted him to help and protect anything weaker than himself. He feared that Miss Naudet was threatened with an illness, whether through Raymond's anger or Frank's desertion, he of course, could not tell, so he

went to Mrs. Fordstaff and told her what he feared. Through a fortunate coincidence Margaret Randall also had come to lunch with little Nellie's aunt, and was sitting with her in the breakfast-room when Denise and her escort arrived. Both ladies at once saw something strange in Denise, and when she said again to them, "I have a headache," three listeners were convinced that something was wrong. Without hesitation, Mrs. Fordstaff at once prepared a room for this unexpected guest, and easily persuaded Denise to go at once to bed. Dr. Drellett looked grave when he came to the young girl's side. She was flushed, and looked almost beautiful, with all the dainty frillings of refined taste at her throat and wrists.

"We are going to have some very serious nursing to do, Mrs. Fordstaff."

"What is it, Doctor? Must I send for Mrs. Naudet and her son? They are at Kamouraska since last week."

"We will write and say her daughter is ill, but do not alarm the poor woman. She is a very nervous person, and would be a very bad nurse. In a day or two we will be better able to judge of our patient's condition."

Gabrielle was still living with Mrs. Fordstaff, and when she offered to nurse Denise, her services were,

of course, accepted. Through experience her mistress had learned that no professional nurse could surpass her. Margaret also volunteered her assistance, and Payne was despatched to Mrs. Shippall's for necessary luggage belonging to Denise. Gertrude immediately wrote a note of regrets to Mrs. Fordstaff, begging to be excused from seeing Denise as her nerves were troublesome, and she feared contagion. Selfish and heartless to the last, a true coquette.

Rapidly Miss Naudet grew worse, and it was decided to ask for assistance from the Sisters of Charity. Eagerly the good Nuns responded to the call made on them, and for nearly two months four sisters were with Denise, two by night and two by day, for her naturally good constitution and perfect nursing saved her. During the quiet days of convalescence Denise had ample time and opportunity to see her past folly and repent of it, and frequently she made the pious attendants read to her some serious book, and she loved to hear them pray.

Many times during the days of her delirium or stupor Herbert Pleshshar had stood unnoticed by her bedside helping Dr. Drellett professionally. He alone could understand her fears that a certain letter would come, and be the cause of her death. He, too, deeply repented that revenge could have almost

made him base and dishonorable, and as he heard Denise's disconnected mutterings, and saw her tossing restlessly from side to side, he determined to make amends for the many bits of mischief he had done through life.

One day Denise said to the cheerful little Nun who was propping her up with pillows, "Will you read me again what I liked yesterday?"

"If it does not tire you," answered the thoughtful religious, then at a sign from Denise she drew forth a little book and read: "God is good and merciful. When we have forgotten Him, instead of forgetting us, He calls upon us and offers to lead us back into the right path. It is not amidst the giddiness and dissipation of the world that a soul can think of things heavenly and divine. Therefore God leads her into solitude, that she may think on His goodness to her and her ingratitude to Him."

Dr. Drellett was announced by Gabrielle, and came into the sick room followed by Mrs. Fordstaff.

"Well, my pet," said the physician, "are you getting better at last?"

Mrs. Fordstaff came gently to Denise with some beautiful hot-house flowers, sent by Pleshshar. "See those charming messengers," she said, placing them on a little table at the bed-side. "Dr. Pleshshar

waits down stairs for news of you, may he come up, dear?"

"No." The answer was sharp and abrupt, surprising both Mrs. Fordstaff and Dr. Drellett.

"As you please, dear! But may Margaret see you? Dr. Drellett thinks you are strong enough."

"Oh! yes, let Margaret come!" And by her sparkling eye and pleased look it was evident that Margaret was welcome.

The sisters who had delicately retired to an adjoining room, returned on the Doctor's departure. The reading was not resumed, as Margaret was gaily giving little scraps of news to the sick girl which could please without exciting her too much.

"Selina and Philip wrote to me from Ireland yesterday; of course they are charmed with every thing they have seen."

"And with each other?"

"Oh, that! of course. They will be a long time absent, perhaps till next summer, and they will spend Holy Week in Rome."

"What a privilege!" exclaimed the little nun who was preparing some trifle of nourishment for Denise.

"Yes, indeed!" answered Margaret, "but if I can not be with them in reality I shall join them in spirit from a quiet little Calvary I know and love. I came to tell you, Denise, that my entrance to the

Convent is fixed for the second of February, so get well quickly that you may be strong for May, when I hope to become a white veiled novice."

Margaret could speak before the nuns unreservedly; they were friends; she was known, like her mother, in all the religious communities for her eminent piety and love of the poor. Many and great were the charities they aided, and no one forgot, when concert, bazaar, or other good work was preparing, to ask Mrs. Randall's assistance.

"You are very happy, Margaret," sighed Denise, placing her hand affectionately on the one that her friend placed on the little table; and to the sister she said: "Read the lines that follow where we left off, they will just suit Miss Randall's thoughts; I'm sure she thinks herself a great sinner."

Sister St.— obeyed the young girl's request: "Therefore God leads her into solitude that she may think on His goodness to her and her ingratitude to Him. In solitude she will reflect on her sinful ways, she will weep over her failings, and when the voice of God whispers to her, 'My daughter, give me thy heart,' she will gladly and joyfully return to the paths of virtue. It will cost her a struggle, but her reflections will show her the vanity of the world to which she had given her heart; she will understand that creatures are nothing when compared to God."

"You see, dear friend, that God has given me this long convalescence in good company, in order to make me love Him," said Denise.

"Yes, dear; a fit of sickness is sometimes a great means of grace," was Miss Randall's gentle reply. "Had I not better leave you to pursue your own thoughts and enjoy this good lecture, or may I read you two letters of mine?"

Denise looked surprised. "Are they from acquaintances of mine?"

"Yes, dear, and I hope you feel strong, for they contain startling news, to say the least."

"I think you had better be laid comfortably on your back and rested from a sitting posture before I begin."

When Denise was settled to Miss Randall's satisfaction, she drew from her pocket two letters and showed the monogram on the envelope to the nuns, saying: "Isn't that very prettily done, Ma Sœur?"

"Yes, very neat, and the letters R. A. are very distinct. What a strange motto: 'My voice shall lead.' Were there any wonderful singers among your correspondent's ancestors? Perhaps St. Cecilia was of the family."

Margaret had mentioned the monogram so that Denise would not be surprised at the letter.

Sisters St.— and St.— were about to leave the friends alone, when Denise said:

"Remain with us, sisters, I have no secrets." Her face seemed somewhat less pale than before, but she was calm and perfectly emotionless. "Read Margaret."

NEW YORK.

MY DEAR MISS RANDALL,

I know that you are with Miss Naudet, and take the liberty of writing to you about matters that concern myself and Denise. No doubt you know that we are no longer engaged, but when a man has become accustomed to look forward to a happy married life with the wife of his choice, it is impossible to feel indifferent to the actions or fate of a promised bride, even if the engagement cease to exist. Denise, heartless and flirting gaily with Frank Compton, could only anger and humiliate me, but Denise suffering and perhaps dangerously ill gave me many regretful thoughts and sleepless nights. I acted perhaps hastily, and if Miss Naudet wishes to see me, whenever she wills it she will find me ready to do her justice by a full explanation and apology. This is a very delicate mission with which I entrust you, and hope from, your clear judgment and woman's clear insight into affairs of

the like difficulty, to help me to a better understanding with Denise. Let us be at least good friends. I trust you entirely, my dear Miss Randall, and

I remain,

Very respectfully yours,

RAYMOND ACTON.

Although Denise had said she had no secret, the attendant sisters had gone to the adjoining room, where Gabrielle habitually sewed, ready to do any thing required in the sick-room. They had prayers to say, and profited of Margaret's presence to leave Denise undisturbed in confidential intercourse with her. Thus the two young girls felt little restraint.

"Dear Denise, I thought it best to tell you at once about Mr. Acton's letter, and let you decide by to-morrow what you wished me to write in reply. I hope I have not pained or fatigued you," she added, anxiously, for tears were falling from Denise's eyes and one white hand was raised to her head.

"No, Margaret, these tears are drops of comfort and essence of inexplicable relief. I have thought of Raymond constantly during the last week, and wondered how I could send him a kind message without seeming to seek a renewal of our old relations."

"Don't speak any more, Denise, you are tired, I will come again."

"Don't fear that I shall be fatigued; Dr. Drellett says I may talk as much as I please. Now listen well, we will finish with this subject and not revert to it again. I should never have accepted Raymond Acton's proposal of marriage. I liked his money, position, and reputation; you know he deserved to be liked and esteemed for his own worth, but I was very blind in the old days. To make a long story short, I liked some one else much better, and was well punished for my inconstancy to Raymond by the treachery and inconstancy of another to me."

Margaret Randall knew that Denise meant Frank Compton, but she shrank from letting her see that she had guessed her secret. But once started to speak of her own affairs, Denise went on impulsively: "I have been very ill, Margaret, but Dr. Pleshshar, and not Raymond or Frank, caused me to suffer severe mental prostration."

"Selina's brother?"

"Yes, Selina's brother! You seem fated to know all about my affairs; now, let me tell you what we did to Helena Watervale." Followed Denise's version of the matter, and Margaret had heard so many renderings of the story before that she was not much astonished. She had thought Denise quite capable of deceit, and Herbert had been no favorite of hers.

Mrs. Fordstaff interrupted the conversation by

her entrance with a bouquet of flowers sent by Payne Street. Denise admired them very much and seemed gratified at Payne's kindness.

"How thoughtful he is, Margaret," and she wondered that Mrs. Fordstaff half smiled at Margaret's expressive face when she answered, "Oh, yes!" for Mrs. Fordstaff had detected Payne's affection for the young girl, who was about to renounce him and all the world outside the cloister: she guessed, too, that any allusion to him was almost painful to her delicacy.

"Immediately, this delightful medicine must be taken, Miss Naudet," cried a little voice outside the door, and Willie's mamma took from him a lady's card:

Mr. & Mrs. Naudet

"Just imagine, darling, they have come sooner than we expected them. Your mamma and brother! Prepare Denise, dear Margaret, while I speak to Mrs. Naudet a moment."

Denise had not seen her mother since her return to consciousness. In the first part of her sickness her doting parent had been with her constantly, but was called away by the serious illness of a married daughter, of whose household she for a time took

charge. Now she returned to her special pet, and almost feared for her own self control, for Mrs. Fordstaff had warned her that Denise was very easily fatigued and very weak.

"I will take care," she said, "not to excite my darling's nerves."

"I hope you left Mrs. Ruelle perfectly restored to health," said Mrs. Fordstaff, trying to quiet her visitor's agitation by making her forget Denise for a few minutes.

"Thank you, yes; Janet and her baby are very well, but," with real entreaty in her voice and eyes, "do let me see my child at once."

"Come then," said Mrs. Fordstaff, gaily. "Come, and see how well she is, too."

Mother and daughter! Is it not a close and tender relation! Denise till now, in her awakening from selfishness, had never felt the warm gush of tenderness that filled her heart. In her mother's arms, with her head pillowed on that faithful, loving, almost too loving, breast, she wept glad tears of affection and welcome.

"My darling, do not excite yourself," cried the delighted mother, while she could not contain the joy she felt at Denise's evident pleasure in their reunion. Ah! mother's instinct, what is there in creation to equal thee. In heaven alone the vital spark of affection's flame burns with undying fire.

After some minutes' rapturous bliss and exchange of mutually kind enquiries, Gabrielle came forward with Mrs. Fordstaff to conduct Mrs. Naudet to a bedroom, that she might relieve herself of her out-door wrappings; Margaret, at a sign from one of the nuns, understood that they feared Denise was too weak for further present excitement. She rose to leave, bidding the sick girl good-bye:

"I will come to-morrow again if you wish it, Denise." Then remembering that Mrs. Shippall had been very intimate with the young girl, she added, "would you like to see Mrs. Shippall?"

"Thank you, no, I would not; in future I shall choose women of more serious character for my friends. If Josephine Drellett were here or Rachel I would be pleased to see them."

"Josephine is expected home very soon. I am afraid she will not see Andrew Stoneveigh again. Dr. Pleshshar thinks a few weeks will end his life. Once more, good-bye, dear." The friendly embrace that followed was not like the cold conventional peck of society. A true feeling of esteem and gratitude was dawning in the heart of Denise for the thoroughly Christian women who were caring for her with holy charity.

CHAPTER. XXIV.

A SHRIVELLED LEAF.

Captain Dareall's twilight musings were very bitter. It was some months since Bertha Poole's marriage, and yet he could not learn to forget her. She had not jilted him nor flirted with him, but he had never taken her refusal as a final answer. Had not Mrs. Poole received him always with marked pleasure and treated his rival with studied coldness? What pains he had taken to spread the news of his uncle's death in India, adding thereto many hints of his altered fortunes. How well he had succeeded in duping these gullible Canadians with the idea of his increased wealth and position, and this girl through whom he had hoped to secure a fortune had absolutely thrown away her brilliant prospects and become the wife of the man he hated most thoroughly and sincerely. The handsome Captain was ugly as a demon in his rage. A brother officer came whistling into his room and caught the fiercely muttered words, "I hate them both."

"Hate whom, Dareall?"

"Some one you don't know, Neville, so rest easy, old fellow. Isn't there a concert or something at the Music Hall these times? Let us go there for an hour."

"I came to bring you there, though it's very early. I want to be introduced to Maria Reigh. You don't seem inclined to encourage her evident preference for you; so I fancy she will be just pleased to get some beau, now that Charles Desgrappes is gone. She seems jolly and chatty, and, as I sometimes find conversation a bore, I want some one to drive out and escort generally, who can talk enough for herself and me."

"She's too old for you, Neville; take my advice and keep away from her; she seems determined to marry some one, and you'll be an easy victim, I fear."

"Now, look here, Dareall, you are better looking than I am; you waltz, talk and flirt more than I ever attempted to do. You boast of knowing women so thoroughly too, then why did you let some one else marry Miss Poole when you liked her so well yourself?"

"Neville! you really cannot be so 'naif' as you pretend! Why, any fellow could see that I was just fooling away time where Miss Poole was concerned. You know surely that her mother's parties were very entertaining; good rooms, good lights, fine women, excellent wines and suppers."

And often is hospitality thus repaid, either by unkind criticism or questionable praise. Yet so many women force their husbands into unlawful extravagance, and so many daughters coax their parents into lavish display in order to be thought fashionable, "Fools make feasts" which wise men laugh at and selfish ones enjoy. But no one is blinded by the attempts at style, and, in the end, when failure in business or some other calamity assails spendthrifts. the very guests they most wished to secure will say, "They lived beyond their means," and no sorrow or sympathy is felt for them.

Dareall went on: "I am not a boaster, but I think Gubbins was accepted *faute de mieux*.

"Speak English," grumbled Neville, "I can't abide that habit of showing off French sentences."

"Well, if Maria Reigh doesn't anger you I suppose you must be deeply smitten, for I vow she throws a little of every language into conversation, and—don't look savage when I add—scarcely speaks her own correctly. Come along then, I'll present—I hope you will escape as luckily as Desgrappes."

Let us not follow them to the Music Hall, reader, we know exactly how they will act: arriving when the evening's performance is nearly over, disturbing everyone, listening to nothing that passes on the stage, looking bored, stupid, *ennuyé*, sleepy, yawn-

ing; then having (as they think) made heroes of themselves, they will chat with slow utterance and audacious eye to a few giggling, simpering damsels. Alas! that officers of the army should sometimes study to appear as unlike men, and as like simpletons, as insipid talk, impertinent staring, and unnecessary eye-glasses can make them. "Too hard on the military!" Not so, indeed. What comes of this luxurious idleness and studied attentions to our sex? Blighted hopes, wasted lives, cruel heart-burnings, sometimes life-long remorse and misery.

CHAPTER XXV.

"MISERERIS OMNIUM DOMINE."

The time was quickly coming when Andrew Stoneveigh had to bid adieu to mother, friends, and life—to life and Josephine! How sad an event it was in calm Quebec life. He was esteemed, admired, I may say loved, by all who knew him, for his strictly honorable dealings with his fellow-men in business, for his unvarying respect to all women, for his great talents, social attainments and cheerful temper. Sad, indeed, was the day of his funeral; and the crowds of people who testified their respect for his memory by following him to the grave proved how society acknowledged and mourned the loss of a good man. Andrew was very young, but was already quoted as an authority in matters of grave importance, where justice and honor required a clear insight into difficult questions. Undoubtedly a great man was lost to us when Andrew Stoneveigh died, one more great sorrowing heart was added to the innumerable suffering ones in the vast community of grief's sisterhood. Josephine will never marry.

CHAPTER XXVI.

TRUE TO HERSELF.

Denise was well; the nuns still came to see her at short intervals, but she had been pronounced quite recovered by her physician, and in a few days she would be allowed to drive out in Mrs. Shippall's carriage. She had also been permitted to see a few visitors, among whom came Miss Drellett. Calm, composed and pale, Josephine went among her friends with a mien so dignified that none dared intrude on her sacred sorrow. And now she was so welcome to our convalescent's chamber that Margaret playfully declared that she must devise some means of regaining her lost empire in the sick room. One day Denise felt inclined to be very quiet, and she asked Josephine to read for her while she closed her eyes and listened. Denise had made very decided resolutions as to her future way of living, and her daily pious meditation had become quite a habit and pleasure.

"You have chosen a very severe-looking chapter, Denise, dear," said Miss Drellett.

"Dear Josephine, very mercifully I escaped death when I was totally unprepared for it, and now I think that each day I must do something to prepare for the reality. But am I selfish in exacting this lecture from you?" said Denise, earnestly.

"I assure you," said Josephine, smiling, "that I like grave subjects for reading much better than any other, but I thought a novel would interest you more."

"Yes," said Denise, "I have read dozens and dozens of novels, but I hope to have more sense in future." And it flashed through her thoughts: "read of so much plotting that I became a base plotter myself."

Josephine read: "In turning away from God, the soul has sinned, and what is sin? What is it in the sight of God? Sin is that which God abhors. It is a direct contradiction to His Holy Will. One mortal sin changed the brightest celestial beings into hideous demons. Sin expelled our first parents from the garden of Paradise, and death was the punishment inflicted on them and their posterity for that one sin.

"Consider all the miseries, misfortunes and calamities which constantly follow the children of Adam. Terrible are these punishments of sin! But what are they in comparison to that eternal punishment eserved for sin in another world.

"But nothing can give us a clearer idea of the nature of sin than to behold the Son of God dying on the Cross. Oh! who can behold a Crucifix, and think of Calvary, who can consider that emblem of our salvation, then go deliberately and commit a mortal sin?

"Sin is not always punished in this world; God sometimes allows the wicked to prosper and the good to suffer; hence the necessity of a general judgment, that God may manifest his justice to all.

"On that day when the sun shall have risen for the last time, there will be joy and thanksgiving in Heaven; and on that same day, which shall be followed by no night, there shall be groaning and gnashing of teeth in hell.

"When the last trumpet has sounded the dead shall arise from their tombs; then the happy souls from above will descend to be re-united to their bodies, and those who are eternally damned will be forced to return to find a new torture in their now hideous bodies.

"There shall be creatures more dazzling—"

"That's me," said Mrs. Fordstaff, entering gaily with Dr. Drellett.

"You are here, my pet," this to Josephine from her father, and she kissed the old gentleman affectionately, saying: "I think, dear papa, you came

just in time, for Denise had fancied so serious a reading, that I began to wish for an interruption."

"Why," said Mrs. Fordstaff, "you were saying 'dazzling creatures' as we came in, and I thought it must be some very poetical selection. Dr. Pleshshar called a few minutes ago, Denise; he is very anxious to see you. May I call him to the library?"

"Let him come," said Denise, with an inward resolve to face the worst and be brave. She looked very charming in a very pale, soft grey morning dress faced with pink, her hair carelessly brushed into a silk net; she had grown very pale and thin; but as Dr. Pleshshar entered the library some minutes after, where Denise had gone to meet him, he was struck with admiration at some undefined change in his friend's face; the chastened, refined look of one who had borne suffering had replaced her former vivacity and *piquante* expression, and Holy Communion received frequently during her illness had softened the steely brightness of her eye.

Denise received Herbert with a dignified manner so totally unlike her usual reckless abandon of ceremony, that for a moment he felt annoyed, but, after a moment's reflection, he said:

"You are not glad to see me, *ma chère*, and yet I hope that I have two items of interest to discuss with you."

"*Ma chère*" grated somewhat on Denise's ear, but she had only herself to blame for the familiarity, and it would have made matters worse had she tried to check Herbert in words.

She sat, cool and self-possessed, and allowed Herbert to continue. He told her all about the letter, and that Helena Watervale and Fred Dayton were married and seemingly happy. She felt heartily glad that Herbert and she were morally free from any sin against the newly-married pair, and she said frankly to him:

"I wronged you, Herbert, and I regret that I should have thought you capable of helping to dissolve my engagement to Mr. Acton. I am glad, too, since no one has suffered, that our plot restored me to freedom."

"You did not love Raymond?" said Pleshshar.

"No," she said, rising to leave the room. "I am still an invalid, you will excuse my leaving you abruptly."

"Denise!" interrupted Herbert, "I cannot analyse the feelings your strange conduct arouses in my soul. We were the best of friends, and now I seem less than a stranger to you. What have I done to deserve this change?"

They were standing very near each other, her color was rising and falling rapidly; she could not

speak. In what words could she tell this man of the newly-awakened womanly delicacy in her breast. And if she spoke would he believe and understand her? If it be possible to realize purgatory on earth Denise had that knowledge for a few seconds; she suffered amply for her coquetry with Herbert. The struggle in her mind was fearful. While Pleshshar was absent and seemingly deceitful, it was easy to resist him, but here he was, looking so fond of her, speaking in the caressing tone she had always liked! How true it is that "habit becomes second nature;" Denise felt it now. She had habitually met Herbert with careless freedom, and almost yearned to say some kind words to him again. She suddenly heard Gabrielle singing softly, in an adjoining room, "*Douce Reine, Vierge Marie,*" and, with a supreme effort of will, she answered Herbert:

"Do you hear that hymn, Dr. Pleshshar?"

"I hear a woman's voice somewhere," he went on impatiently, "what has that to do with you and me?"

"This it has to do with us," she waved him from her with her hand and slipped back a little distance. "It reminds me that we are Catholics, Herbert Pleshshar, and I have been a very neglectful one. The soul is weak, and of itself can do nothing,

but we have a powerful protectress in our beloved Mother Mary. Dear Herbert," here Denise impulsively moved forward again, placing her small hand on his arm, while her upturned earnest eyes gazed at him with triumphant inspiration, "let us, in imitation of our Immaculate Mother, lead pure and holy lives, and though *she* had no passions to combat, she will aid us in overcoming ours."

Herbert Pleshshar, though not a devout practising Catholic, had been well instructed in his youth by a pious mother; therefore, with courtesy and religious instinct to enlighten him, he felt at once the immense distance Denise had placed between himself and her. So noble and imposing is modesty and virtue in a young maiden or woman of any age, that even unscrupulous men involuntarily do homage to its worth and supremacy.

Gabrielle went on singing her simple hymns, and never knew that two immortal souls had been helped toward true happiness by her untutored, though remarkably sweet, tones.

Denise's excitement had culminated in a burst of tears, which Herbert attempted not to check: as a doctor he knew they were not hurtful; as a gentleman, he dared not intrude his sympathy; as a friend, he honored the courageous enthusiasm of the young girl before him.

When Denise had regained her composure, Herbert put aside the book of engravings in which he had for a few moments tried to feel an interest.

"Denise," he said, "I understand you perfectly. I shall remember in future that we are Roman Catholics, and that if we believe our religion to be perfect, we should lead perfect lives. If," he continued, after a pause, "you wish to return to your room, accept of my arm, and I shall help you to the door. I asked Mrs. Fordstaff to allow me to see you alone. I hope she will not blame me for detaining you too long."

"I hear Margaret's voice," said Denise, "I think she and Josephine are coming to us." Her friends entered the library, accompanied by a chatty little acquaintance, whose conversation alwa s seemed to amuse her hearers.

"Denise, darling," was greeted almost boisterously by Kate Stainer, and kissed till Dr. Pleshshar suggested himself as a substitute for superfluous caresses. "Oh, you dreadful man," cried Kate, in evident amusement, while shaking hands energetically with Herbert. "Did you see that new song, Margaret, 'Only a Lock of her Hair.' Oh, you must learn it! you will sing it beautifully. There is to be a very grand concert next March."

"On St. Patrick's night, no doubt."

"Yes," returned Kate, "and I am determined to go to it, even if I must risk getting crushed to death going into the Music Hall. What are you laughing at?" she suddenly asked Herbert.

"Indeed, I wasn't laughing," protested Herbert.

"I'm sure you smiled," retorted Kate, "and I want to know what amuses you so much."

"Then, Miss Kate, you shall know; it seemed to me you made a wild and sudden bound into the 'Irish concert,' and I could see no connection with it and our present meeting."

Denise had seen Herbert and Kate often together, and knew they would quarrel comfortably for any length of time. In some moods, she might have laughed at them; but just now she felt weak and nervous, and she tried to catch Kate's attention by saying:—

"Were you at St. Patrick's concert last year, Miss Stainer?"

"Yes, and enjoyed it immensely. Owing to the kindness of some gentlemen, we had very good seats, and I never saw a greater crowd in my life before, nor so well-conducted a one."

Pleshshar having noticed Denise's fatigue, once more offered to conduct her from the room, and was gratified to see that she did not shrink from accepting the necessary assistance of his arm. "We are still

friends," he thought, and some half-defined feeling of good resolutions and good deeds to be done by him for Denise's sake seemed to float before his mental gaze. How subtle and powerful is the influence of woman, whether for good or for evil. Denise felt happy, and most grateful to Herbert for his very kind and very respectful attention to her. Years after, when she was a happy wife and mother, she had not forgotten the moment, when in her heart of hearts she had felt that a few brave sentences had evoked in herself and Dr. Pleshshar a sense of the obligation resting on each to uphold the standard of strict purity, which bore for its glorious emblazonment the name Catholic.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FRANK AND DENISE.

Once more we find ourselves in Mrs. Fordstaff's house. In her spacious and richly-furnished drawing-room are assembled with her Frank Compton and his sister Rachel, Josephine Drellett and the kind old Doctor, Herbert Pleshshar, and Payne Street. They all seemed very happy, and a glance at their dresses will perhaps explain what is about to happen. The gentlemen first as they are standing are all in morning costume, Frank looks handsome as ever; Dr. Drellett smiles benignly on all, Herbert and Payne Street are chatting gaily with Rachel and Josephine. Mrs. Fordstaff wears a heavy purple silk, richly and tastefully trimmed with costly lace; while the two young girls are in spotless white; they look almost as bride-like as the young lady just entering the room, resting on her mother's arm. Who is going to be married? you ask, my patient reader, who but Denise!—and to whom and by whom, you wonder. To Frank of course, and by a dear old Catholic priest, whom we all love; and there you see him now,

coming to join the wedding party, supported by the strong arm of the bride's brother.

This seems to be a very sudden termination of affairs; but Frank is entirely to blame, for he found it impossible to bear suspense about the letter it had taken him three days to write; and he came to Quebec and went in his own direct fashion to Denise herself. Disappointment had been useful to him; he could not marry Margaret, and had been thoroughly enraged and vexed with her when this fact made itself plain to him; but intercourse with so noble a woman had formed his judgment, and Rachel's patience with his harsh words and ungenerous treatment at the time of her embracing the Roman Catholic faith had also educated him in the knowledge of true religion. He felt that his past life had not been creditable to him; but, he argued with himself, "Denise was engaged once, and flirted with many fellows, so she will be lenient to me, and not expect a full-blown saint." And he thought, with truth, that she liked him well. How far he was from knowing the transformation his little friend's soul had passed through! It may seem strange that he could wish to marry a Catholic, and yet deter Rachel so violently from becoming one. I shall not attempt to explain what is beyond my understanding. So Frank came to Quebec, and heard from Mrs. White

that Margaret had entered the Ursulines; and then he went to Payne Street's office, to find him absent, and thence to Dr. Pleshshar, at the home of Margaret's mother. He was courteously received by the kind widow, and they chatted long and earnestly about Margaret, Denise, Rachel, and others. Mrs. Randall gave him willingly the photograph he asked for, and, as he gazed on Margaret's lovely face, her sweet, earnest, holy eyes seemed to magnetize all the good in his nature, and approve of his resolve to make Denise a happy, respected little wife. Herbert arrived shortly, and was overjoyed, and as much astonished, to meet Frank. Then bidding Mrs. Randall good-morning, the young men left the house, intending to call on Miss Drellett, to ascertain from her whether or not Denise was still at Mrs. Fordstaff's; for Dr. Drellett had suggested change of air, to no great distance, and as April was not a travelling time, or fit season for an invalid in the country, it had been decided that she should spend a little while with Josephine; but Fate, or rather Providence, had willed it that Denise and Frank should meet unexpectedly, for just outside St. Foye's toll-gate Josephine and Denise were driving along in the warm spring sun, enjoying the brightness of the day. Frank's quick eye caught sight of Dr. Drellett's equipage, and he unceremoniously hailed the ladies. Of course the

coachman stopped, and in a few minutes Frank had persuaded Josephine to alight, and on plea of leaving town soon, and having many messages for Miss Naudet, he took the place she had vacated. For a time the drive was a silent one, and Frank felt puzzled. As Denise seemed confused and blushing, he thought, "she knows all about my letter;" but then he, so practiced in sentimental scenes of all descriptions, saw unfeigned *mauvaise honte* in his companion, and he decided that she knew nothing of his designs on her future life.

"How very quickly the spring is coming," said Denise, and, as Frank did nothing but stare at her in a sort of helpless way, she added: "How are Mrs. Compton and Rachel?"

"Very well, thank you, and how are you, my dear little girl?"

"My dear little girl" felt uncomfortable under the steady and enquiring eyes fixed upon her; but she managed to converse with seeming ease till the sleigh stopped at the house of Mrs. Fordstaff.

"Will Miss Drellett meet you here?" enquired Frank, as he lifted his companion completely in his arms and placed her on the doorstep.

"I hope so," and a dash of her old spirit seemed revived, "unless you carry me forcibly off to the North Pole."—She half resented the cool way in which he seemed to have taken possession of her.

Frank laughed; he understood quite well that the determination of his mind showed itself in his manner, so he said:

"I want to tell you a great piece of news, Miss Naudet."

The servant summoned by the door bell now appeared, and gave them admittance into Mrs. Fordstaff's hospitable dwelling. Denise led the way to the drawing-room, and there their hostess was sitting in a comfortable arm-chair, listening to her little son's performance on the piano. Mrs. Fordstaff looked the surprise she felt at seeing Frank, but greeted him kindly, enquiring: "Are Mrs. Compton and Rachel in Quebec with you?"

"No," said Frank, lifting Willie in his strong young arms, "they will come next week, I hope." Then he delighted the boy's heart with: "Old fellow! how are you getting on at the gymnasium now?"

"Mamma doesn't let me go there any more," said Willie.

"Learning music instead, eh?" said Frank, with a sort of contemptuous poke at Willie's music book. Why do you dislike the gymnasium, Mrs. Fordstaff?"

"Well, Frank, I think unless Willie is to be a prize-fighter, which I doubt, there is danger to him

in this excessive straining and training for strength, and especially so at his age. You seem to despise music very much, as a manly accomplishment; I think, when my son finds himself among boys, he will know how to defend himself; and when he is older, and wise enough to wish for ladies' society, music will be more serviceable to him than gymnasium triumph."

Frank was getting slightly impatient of the conversation, as fencing, rowing, boxing, etc., were, or had been—for he was getting a little "lazy" he admitted to his friends,—the chief delights of his life, and he had somewhat excelled in these pursuits; whereas music, in its higher aims and glorious perfection, had ever failed to charm him. This may seem strange when it is remembered that Margaret Randall had been so dear to him; but her voice had never attracted him, though he admired its richness, flexibility and power. He certainly admired such dashing songs as: "Good Rhein Wein," "Red, White and Blue," "Our National Defenders," boisterous music that confined him solely to the company of men, cigars, and brandy. But sacred music always bored him, unless there was some lady to escort home from a practice or religious service; and sentimental ditties he found more comical than most comic songs.

"Well, Madam, you know best what education is most to your liking for my favorite; so we'll not discuss this thing any more. I have to leave in the train to-night should certain matters not arrange themselves to my satisfaction, and should I remain for some time in your pleasant old town, we will discuss music *versus* gymnasium fully."

Then Willie remembered that it was time for him to join some schoolmates he had promised to meet, and he went with out-stretched hand to bid Frank goodbye and then to Denise, offering to carry her jacket, cap and "things" up to her room, or send Gabrielle to her assistance.

"I will go upstairs myself, dear," said Denise, "I want to see Mamma a moment." Willie kissed his mother with a good will, and left the room with Denise.

Frank, left alone with Mrs. Fordstaff, asked that lady in very irritable tones: "Is Miss Naudet quite recovered?"

"Yes, Frank, quite;" knowing well he missed Denise's old provoking nonsense, and careless way of teazing him.

"Then I'm sorry for it," he said, almost savagely, "she was a jolly little girl before, and now she's as severe as Rachel or—" he was going to add, "Margaret," but bit the end of his moustache instead.

"I think my little Denise is changed, but surely you didn't expect her to neglect Mrs. Naudet because you were here?"

Frank felt the rebuke to his vanity, but went on: "It is not that I wonder she is anxious to see Mrs. Naudet after some days' separation from her; the change is a puzzle to me. Hang it; (excuse me, Madam) I came to Quebec specially to see Denise, and may as well tell you that I want her to marry me." Mr. Compton was fast losing control of his temper, "I thought she liked me, and—"

"So she does, Frank," said the widow, and the best proof of it is her altered manner and embarrassment in your presence. Don't fling my albums and little treasures about in that absurd way; just keep cool, or you'll make me very nervous. I suppose you want to see Denise, then go to the library and I'll send her there." Mrs. Fordstaff rose to put her words into execution, but suddenly turned round to say: "Should you not see Mrs. Naudet first?"

"Dear Mrs. Fordstaff," answered her visitor, "I never in my life could do as every one else did. I must see Denise. I wouldn't have the courage to speak to her mother, and, besides," he added, energetically, "I want to marry her daughter, and prefer to see her first."

Mrs. Fordstaff left the young gentleman to himself and his musings for a few minutes, then returned to say, "Denise will meet you at once, Frank."

"You are a good woman, Mrs. Fordstaff, and I thank you sincerely for the tacit encouragement and sympathy you are giving me." Then he shook hands with his sister's friend, and ran quickly up the stairs, just catching sight of Denise going into the library; he was with her in a moment. She was very pretty, and smiled kindly at him when he sat down near her; but, though her manner was suggestive of a warm welcome for him, he felt that he could not dare to touch her hand or treat her with the freedom of an assured lover. He was piqued at this, yet felt a sudden respect for his prospective wife.

It would be useless to deny that Denise loved him. And of course she knew he wished to become her husband. Woman's intuitive knowledge of matters concerning herself helped her to this conclusion. While Mrs. Fordstaff had been saying, "Denise, dear, Frank would like to see you in the library," Denise had thought, "He loves me, and will ask me to be his wife!"

Then came the first question: "Are you pleased to see me, Denise?"

"Yes, Mr. Compton, very much pleased," answered Denise, very demurely.

"You certainly give no outward sign of inward delight. Now, Denise," went on Frank, with his rare, beautiful smile, "I came from Boston on purpose to see you, and to ask you to marry me; how can I possibly do so with you perched so solemnly away from me?"

This sudden and unique wooing nearly upset Denise from her seat near the window; a peculiar, throne-like arrangement made for Willie's delight some years before, which had always held its place among the severer furniture of the extensive library. Frank, seeing his advantage, made the most of it; as she turned abruptly to hide her blushing face from him, he very coolly crossed the distance between them and leaning on the arm of her chair, and taking her hands in both of his, said: "If you can forgive my cruelty in leaving you lonely and sad, and can say, through affection for me, that you will be my wife, I'll try to make you love me so well that you'll think me a paragon of perfection."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"YES, DEAR, I DO LOVE YOU."

In the very room where Pleshshar had felt the charm of her firm adherence to her new-born resolutions to flirt no more, Denise now felt the necessity of strength to guard herself against letting Frank know how dear he was to her. But the young gentleman was not easily put off, and, after some time, Denise acknowledged all her affection for him and honestly said:

"Frank, if you knew how vain, cruel, selfish, and calculating I have been, you would not dare ask me to be your wife."

"I don't think, dear, that I've ever been free from such delightful qualities; then why should I resent a little imperfection in you?"

"But, Frank, I was engaged to Raymond Acton for the sake of his wealth, and did not love him."

"So much the better for me, Denise, I have wealth and myself to offer you. Don't look grieved, puss, I may tease you a little surely."

"Teaze away, but, if you try to kiss me again, I'll run away from you, sir."

"Like all women — run away to be run after I suppose, a sort of challenge: 'Qui m'aime, me suive.'"

"Right well you know that you should speak to Mamma first."

"My darling, put aside all your scruples in the matter, I beg. I want you, and I'm sure Mrs. Naudet is too fond of you to deny you the husband of your choice. Do look at me, Denise, put your hands into mine; give me some encouragement to think you don't take me through sheer pity."

"Ah! Frank, had I known you long ago, how much better a girl I might have been."

Frank thought differently, but said nothing; she continued: "I must tell you about the affair in Cacouna."

"You can tell me nothing that I don't know, child. I've seen Acton, Pleshshar, Dayton and Street, and want no more squaw stories; and, besides, after we're married, we'll have plenty of time for talking about the past."

Denise, happy, loving, and assured of Frank's sincerity, threw her arms suddenly around her lover's neck, saying: "Yes, dear, I do love you, and will be your faithful, true-hearted wife."

CHAPTER XXIX.

"CATHOLIC BY NAME AND CATHOLIC AT HEART."

It is a pity that my reader should have been taken from the bridal party somewhat suddenly, and to be regretted that even now we cannot return at once. Still there are some explanations to give that will be welcome.

Mrs. Naudet was much pleased with Frank Compton's offer of marriage, and considered her daughter very lucky indeed. Then what a delight it was to her to watch her happy girl, full of health and spirits once more. Three weeks was a very short time to prepare for a wedding, but Frank could not be persuaded to wait any longer, and threatened laughingly to carry Denise off at once if any further opposition were made. So trousseau, presents, and all the paraphernalia considered necessary for a bride's happiness, were at once provided. To his great astonishment, Frank began to feel such affection for Denise as no woman but Margaret had ever inspired in him: Denise seemed to have become so like Margaret, with one quality superadded: her love for him. Insensibly his little betrothed filled him

with reverence for the Faith she professed. He now saw that "Catholic by name" and "Catholic at heart" were not always synonymous. And as he never had practised much religion of any kind, he began to think that he had better go to church with Denise sometimes. Thus, when Jules Naudet and he arranged the marriage contracts, and spoke of the religious ceremony, Denise was consulted on al points; and when at last the happy day found them assembled in Mrs. Fordstaff's parlor and the Very Rev. Father —— pronounced them man and wife, Frank and Denise looked with sincere affection into each other's eyes, reading therein mutual contentment and peace. Sacrifice and triumph! She had sacrificed her old love of self and power over men to a sense of true piety and dignified womanhood: her triumph was the reward of the only human love she desired, to bless her steps through life; and the assurance of a higher eternal love from our Divine Redeemer. Frank had sacrificed his bachelor pursuits, an easy, indolent, luxurious life, to honest integrity, and atonement for injury to the girl who loved him: his reward was an affection of which he had not deemed her capable, and a glimpse upward into the Eternal City whence flows the only stream of peace, security and love worth living for.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SUBLIMITY OF SACRIFICE.

Mother and daughter were about to part! Was there ever a mother who hesitated to give even life itself for her child! And Mrs. Randall was giving more than life for Margaret's happiness; she was giving the life of her life. Ah! glorious maternity, that brings woman to the foot of Calvary with the suffering Mother of a God.

Margaret in her little room had shed tears; but who could understand her mother's sacrifice! none but "Mary Immaculate!"

Margaret and her mother were spending their last evening together; the following day would separate them for all time. A cloistered nun, the darling, perhaps, of a community of refined women and religious ladies, Margaret would meet no more the tender caress of her loving mother, the manly, sincere tokens of her brother's affection. She must put home and its pleasures completely apart from the high vocation to which she felt called; save in prayer and Holy Communion, she must wait for eternity for a complete reunion to her dear, dear ones!

A fair young bride goes forth sometimes gaily from home and its million happy associations with an earthly bridegroom! But, for the most part, the young maiden devoting herself to God grieves for them she leaves; yet I ask you, Catholic reader, when you meet both some years later, whose face wears the happiest look? in whose eyes beams the purest light of contentment and peace?

We will not linger with Mrs. Randall; there are moments of life so sacred to a Christian mother, so burdened with love, sacrifice, and triumph, that no pen should dare describe them. These moments bring the finite and infinite so close to each other—love of her child—love strong to sacrifice self for her child, triumphant love for the great love bestowed by Jesus on that child. *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam!!*...

CHAPTER XXXI.

A WEDDING GIFT.

Mrs. Compton had not been present at her son's wedding, because her sister, Mrs. Keltor, was ill in New York, and required her presence; but she wrote Denise a most affectionate and welcoming letter, declaring that she was very anxious to meet the new daughter that was to take a place with Rachel in her heart; for it was now well-known that Rachel would enter the Convent of the Sisters of Charity in the following June. To Frank, she sent his father's Bible, which Mr. Compton, himself a Protestant, had inherited from a Catholic mother. The book had been carefully kept, and held many interesting family registers; and Mrs. Compton, Frank's mother, now enriched it for her son and new daughter with a few lines written in her own hand on the fly leaf:

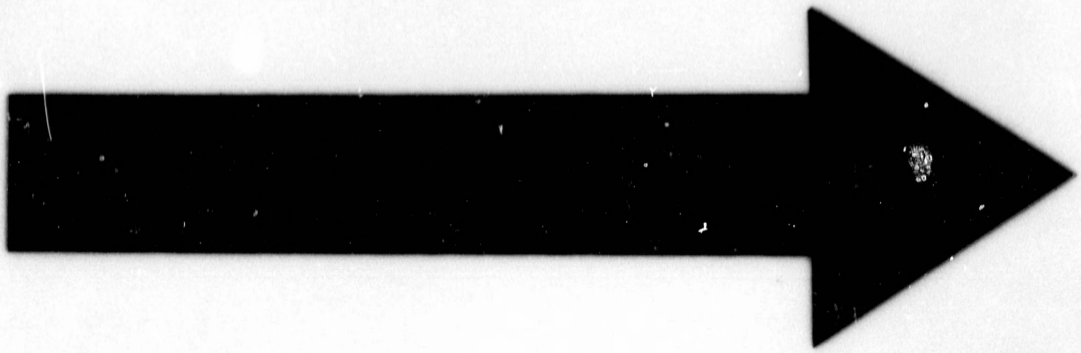
"Remember, love, who gave thee this,
"When other days shall come,
"When she who had the earliest kiss
"Lies in her narrow tomb!
Remember, 'twas a mother gave,
"The gift to one she'd die to save."

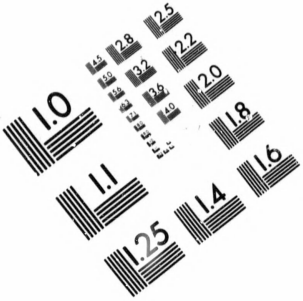
Denise felt all that these lines conveyed of love, trust and hope, tinctured with a shade of maternal fear, and often, often she read the simple words, so unpretending, yet so replete with feeling. Her husband respected her all the more for the tenderness she exhibited towards her own mother and for the esteem she manifested for his.

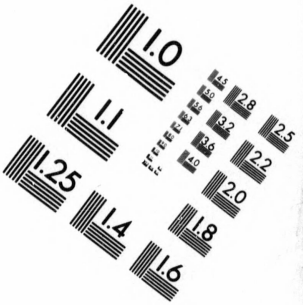
No, there was no wedding trip, dear reader; it was thought that as Mrs. Frank Compton was so anxious to see her friend Margaret take the white veil at the Ursulines, she would scarcely have time and strength to take a pleasant trip anywhere; therefore, Frank and wife established themselves at a quiet little country hotel, where they found all the ease and comfort that money and light hearts can purchase.

Payne Street had become somewhat reconciled to the thought of Margaret's loss, and as his mother wished very much for a daughter-in-law, and as Claire de l'Ange seemed to him a very fine young lady and most decided favorite of his own and his mother's, he was thinking very seriously of taking a trip to Boston, when the Comptons turned their steps homeward, so that he and Frank struck up quite a friendship for each other,—founded on mutual disappointment, it may be. From the day Payne had said to him, " You must be a worse

man than I took you for," or words to that effect, Compton had respected the fearless, manly fellow, and afterwards Denise had told him of Payne's kind interest in her on the first day of her great illness, thereby enhancing his opinion of the man's sterling worth. On the other hand, Payne saw that Frank had been just and honorable to Denise, and that he had determined to make his little wife happy. Respect for this hitherto careless man of the world had insensibly dawned in his feelings, and increased gradually as he saw that Mrs. Frank Compton was a very happy bride.







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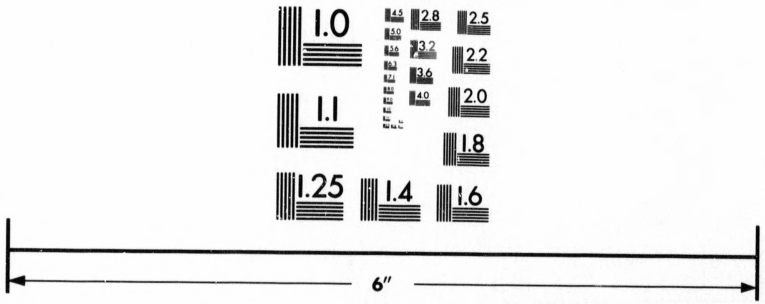

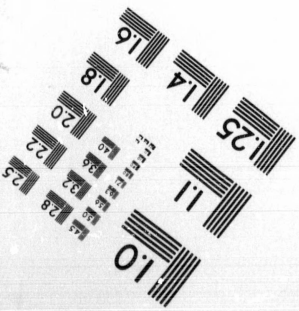

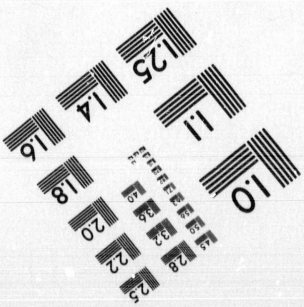

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CHAPTER XXXII.

"ECCE QUAM BONUM."

But who can describe the celestial rapture of the lovely bride of Jesus standing at the convent chapel grating, and answering the celebrant in sweet timid tones.

Then, on the silence, rises once more that voice, thrilling and powerful to move hearts, and the happy girl devoting her life to Christ sings her sweet rejoicing hymn, in the language of the church! As her pure entrancing notes die away in the nuns' mysterious sanctuary, a glad cry of praise and thanks to God bursts forth from the youthful invisible choir, and continues while the richly attired and graceful Margaret is conducted to the adjoining hall, beneath the "*Chapelle des Saints*," and disappears beyond the doors that close upon her.

Again the choir renews its canticle of praise, and Margaret reappears at the grating. Gone are all the bright trappings which a short time before so elegantly and brilliantly draped her perfect figure. She stands in the imposing garb of an Ursuline

novice, with a large white muslin veil thrown over her head in such a way as to almost conceal her whole person. After some short ceremony, this superfluous veil is removed and placed on the extended arms of two exquisite little creatures, robed in white and crowned with wreaths. These little attendants carry the veil to the other extremity of the interior chapel and deposit it upon an altar at the foot of the crucifix.

Meanwhile the "*Baiser de Paix*" concludes the ceremonies of a "Vêture." Happy Margaret, happy nuns and community! Your prayers and sacrifices are not lost upon outside Christians.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A MAN OF HONOR.

Mrs. Stoneveigh, two weeks after her son's burial, had sent a messenger to Payne Street, placing in his hands a packet which she had found among some valuable papers securely tied up, sealed and addressed: "To my trusty friend, Payne Street." Payne received it with slight wonder, thinking it contained, perhaps, old letters of his own; but on examination, he was startled to see that it comprised several letters, some mottoes, a photograph, and some faded green leaves. The leaves none but the dead could account for; the mottoes were sentimental quotations from well-known poets; the picture was one of Gertrude Shippall, and the letters were signed with her name! "Trusty friend" indeed was Payne! He understood Andrew's wish, and though he could not understand why they still existed, he quickly destroyed these proofs of his cousin's perfidy.

Among the pupils of the house of education in which Mrs. Shippall had spent her school days

there was one young friend of hers who had been sincerely attached to her, and who in later life had been obliged to earn her own living, owing to reverses of fortune which had suddenly overwhelmed her family. For old times' sake, and because Clara Black was clever, she had been installed as governess over Nettie and Loretta Shippall. It was this governess who wrote "Stars" and scraps of sentimental nonsense, and even letters in "cypher" for Mrs. Shippall, and which the latter, at first through mischief, at last in earnest, sent to Andrew Stoneveigh.

She had not counted on being overheard saying to Miss Black: "I want you to write me a few lines of poetry to-night, Clara, about 'hidden love' and 'suffering hearts."

Andrew had heard and guessed! Then followed, according to rehearsal, the scene and "Tableaux" of "Stars," and reading the paper he drew from his pocket, with curiosity, in Street's office, he was cured of love, and died of remorse. Not wishing to attach undue importance to the false letters, he had never returned them, yet feared to destroy them lest they should be sought for by Mrs. Shippall.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE AFTERNOON OF A "VÊTURE."

In the large Ursuline parlor, many ladies and some gentlemen were waiting to see Margaret and present their congratulations on her reception into the holy sisterhood. Almost all who have been introduced to the reader in the course of this narrative were assembled: Mrs. Fordstaff and Willie, Dr. and Miss Drellett, Mr. and Mrs. Frank and Miss Compton, Mrs. Gregory White, her husband and little boy, Mrs. Naudet and her son Jules, Payne Street, his mother and sisters, and many other friends. Several ladies of the Community were present of course while Mother St. —— received her visitors. Fate or Providence having called Judge de l'Ange to Quebec on business connected with private family interests he had come also, and had brought his darling Claire with him. It was quite evident to Mrs. White that Claire and Payne were very deeply interested in each other. Margaret's sacrifice seemed to have filled the measure of her joy and triumph, but we cannot explain these things, dear reader, nor

shall we attempt to analyze the feelings of a newly professed nun.

Rachel had been speaking to one of her favorites among the many kind *religieuses*, and in answer to an enquiry about Maria Reigh, she had answered: "I think, Mère, that she is now in Ireland; she married Captain Dareall, and left Quebec with him and his Regiment."

"And you, dear Rachel, will soon leave us for another Community?"

"With God's blessing, in June next," she returned with a happy smile. Then Margaret was left alone with Mrs. Randall, and none but the Almighty have ever known what words of comfort were poured into the widow's heart by her daughter; but she came forth to her home with a firm step and happy countenance, the triumph of maternal religious love was written legibly on every feature.

TWO YEARS AFTER.

Margaret has now pronounced her final vows, but all who saw her receive the white veil did not hear her solemn renunciation of earth's luxury before the good old Bishop. Frank and his wife were settled in Boston, and though not yet received into the church, Mr. Compton seemed steadily progressing towards it. His little daughter Cecilia had been

baptized by a fine old gentleman, Denise's director, who had become quite a friend of the Compton household. Owing to Master Georgie's birth, Denise could not leave home, and Frank never left his wife, therefore they exchanged kind messages with Margaret, but were not present at her profession. Mr. and Mrs. Street were still in Europe on an extended wedding tour; for Claire was married to Payne.

And we think that the following letter to Margaret from her cousin Kathleen must be an adieu, and that no one has been left out in our leave-taking.

KILDARE.

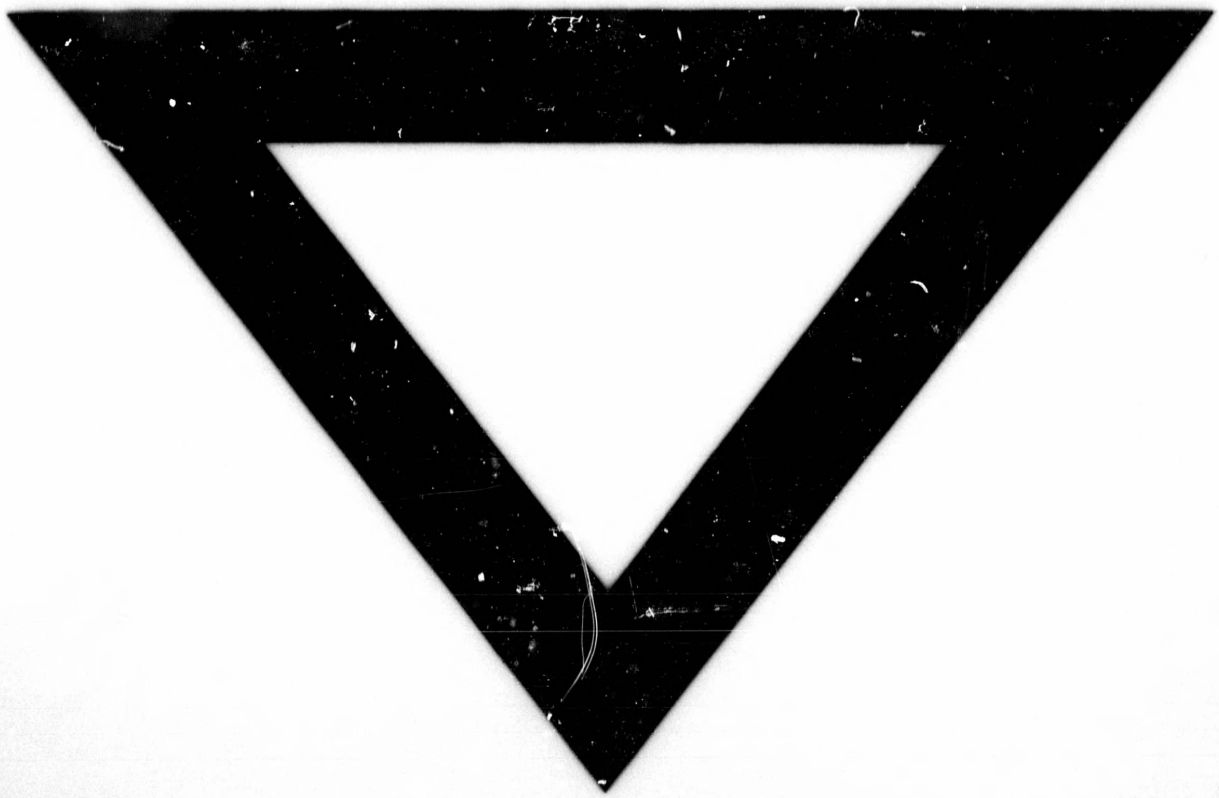
DEAR MARGARET,

I would willingly address you by the new name you have borne so happily during the last two years, but I cannot coax papa into recognizing it. I fear he will never forgive you for running away from us into a convent. He says Quebec will never seem the same to him even with your dear mother in it. Papa declares, too, that I cannot sing his favorite melodies and Ireland's songs in anything like your fervent and animated style. Just think of it! I a true Irishwoman born and you a cold Canadian! Yet you sing our old country songs better than I do! One drop of consolation I have in this ocean of wounded vanity: Archer thinks me a wonderful

woman, and, according to him, no nightingale ever equaled my sweet notes.

We will soon be with you and dear Aunt once more, and must leave this dear land perhaps forever. I shall not grieve, for Archer's home will be father's home too, and with these dear ones I shall be able to say: "'Tis home where the heart is."

Pray for us, dear Margaret, and know that a very happy, hopeful and light-hearted woman is

Your Cousin,
KATHIE.

"*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.*"