

send a carriage for Aleck's wife—it would be best for all, if she went under his protection; the Doctor stoutly insisting that he would not appear with her, and so risk Rosine's good name as to have her ushered in with such a—he was about to say something very wicked, but his father's one stern look, which he kept for great occasions, and Rosine's affectionate, "Don't, Ned," silenced him. The card was sent, with the Colonel's expressed wish, that she would be ready at eight on the night of the ball, when he would call for her. Laura unhesitatingly took the note and card at once to her mentor, Sister Agnes, her only counsellor, one might almost say her only friend. She was quite secure as to her advice, she could not tell her she ought to go. She became pale with astonishment when the good Sister said, "You will go, of course."

"O," she replied, with almost a scream of terror, "don't tell me that! I must!"

"Not if it were your duty, my dear?" she inquired. "I can conceive of a case in which it might be one's duty to enter into such an arrangement, and this looks very like a painful self-denying duty," she added, as Laura's face suffused with crimson and the tears fell upon her burning cheek.

"Don't, Sister, please don't tell me it is my duty," she said, pleadingly.

"Not if it is the truth?" replied Sister Agnes. "You see by this note the Colonel and his lady wish to introduce you as their daughter; should you refuse? How would your husband wish you to act under the circumstances? These are the questions you must answer for yourself. I own it is rather anomalous to hear a *religieuse* advocate ball-going," she said playfully, "but in this case I can see no excuse you can give for not complying with Colonel Hartland's request; your conscience would not keep you away, only your own will, your own dislike to meet those with whom your husband has been associated; you must break away from this feeling some time, and why not now?" While she was persuading Laura, Lieutenant Greenwood and sister were announced; they had called in behalf of a large family of orphans lately brought under their notice. The card of invitation was in Laura's hand, and the Lieutenant laughingly remarked that she had the same "bitter-pill" with themselves.

"Yes," said the Sister, playfully, "and I, a nun, am advising her to take the potion pressed upon her by Colonel Hartland."

"Ah," said Dora, "then do go; you will find plenty of disaffected ones; I will keep you company in hating the whole thing most heartily; we only go because our father wills it."

Laura's courage revived, she saw through her reluctance, and resolved to conquer it; the note of acceptance was despatched without further hesitancy.

## A HARD QUESTION.

[FROM AN AMERICAN.]

A MAN called at the office of Lawyer M'Ginn the other day, and after introducing himself, said:—

"Mr. M'Ginn, I want to state a case to you. A little while after the war broke out, I concluded that as a citizen I had a duty to perform in behalf of my bleeding country. I had heard the call to arms, and my soul was filled with a fierce desire to strike a blow against the enemies of my native land. In a short time my resolution was taken. Arranging my business, I embraced my family, buckled on my accoutrements, shouldered my musket, breathed an aspiration for my country's success, and with a firm resolution to defend the right at all hazard, marched to the recruiting station where heroes were gathering for the fray, and there bought a substitute for 275 dollars. I give him my musket and my blessing; I told him not to dishonor me by cowardice, but to face the foe as I would have done, and sent him to the front, while I returned to my family, and wondered what would become of freedom but for the bravery of her children."

"It is a wonder," said Mr. M'Ginn.

"Yes, sir. Well that substitute went to the war. In one of the fights he was shot in the leg, and it had to be amputated. He bore it like a man, I couldn't have done it better myself. And then he came home to stay. Now, of course, when a soldier has his leg shot to pieces he is entitled to a pension. And the point I want to get at is, who is to get that pension, the substitute or me? Now it strikes me I am the right man to have it. Who is this man? He is my agent. He represented me. Virtually he was me. When he fought in the ranks it really was me fighting; it was really I that lost the leg, therefore it is actually I that am entitled to the pension. Doesn't it strike you that way?"

"I dunno," said Mr. M'Ginn. "There's something in the way you state it. You are entitled to the pension as the principal in the transaction, and the substitute also is entitled to it as the man who lost his leg. The Government is obliged to pay both of you the same pension; but as it can only pay one of you, the question is which one shall it pay?"

"Jes so; and I say it ought to pay it to me. When I handed that man 275 dollars then he got his full dues."

"I'll tell you how you can get at it," said Mr. M'Ginn. "If that man really represented you, you would have been dead in the eye of the law if he had been killed, and if he should die now your friends would be justified in burying you."

"That seems to be straining the thing a little."

"Not at all. Well, now, I'll get you that pension if you'll agree to creep into a coffin and be carted out to the cemetery, and hustled into the grave, as soon as that substitute dies."

"I guess I won't accept. I'll drop the matter as it stands. The man has consumption and chronic liver complaint."

"Well, I'm going to have you buried, anyhow, when he steps out. That's the law."

"Then you must excuse me. I'll skip the county."

Mr. M'Ginn's warrior left the office suddenly, and has never put in an appearance since.

## ROME.

At present there is great misery in Rome, and the hardest thing for the poor is their rent. Formerly a great deal of city property belonged to religious orders, or to chapters who would scruple to raise the price of these humble rooms for the shelter of the indigent. At that time a lodging for a whole family could be had for five, six, or ten francs a month at most. But, since then, things have been ameliorated. The possessions of the clergy have been sold, and the new proprietors, themselves overpowered with excessive taxation, hasten to draw from these resources the greatest possible profit, so that in any quarter of Rome a little, damp, close cellar-room costs from 20 to 25 francs a month; on the first floor 30 or 35 francs; if there is a kitchen, a second room, the price goes up to 40 or 45 francs.

How can the people take lodging at this price? What follows? That several families occupy, in common, the same floor, or often even the same rooms, to the great prejudice of their moral and physical health.

They live there in a fearfully promiscuous manner; the rooms communicate, the beds are insufficient. What a source of depravity! The members of the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, when visiting a family whom they wish to relieve, before reaching the room which they occupy, are often obliged to pass through several rooms inhabited by a series of other families. Examples are cited of apartments of five or six rooms containing a small cityful of working-people.

The Government does nothing to remedy this state of affairs; even the works which are in progress are of but little advantage to the Roman population, the preference being given to laborers from Upper Italy.

In presence of these facts, it is therefore not surprising that the number of vagrants and of children half forsaken by their parents is constantly increasing; in the poorer quarters, as for instance that of the *Monti*, it may be said without exaggeration that their name is legion. They live thus without schools, idle, ragged, and exposed to every danger of soul and body. Under the Pontifical government this state of vagrancy was the exception; when a child was found thus left to itself, there was such a number of protectories, refuges, and institutions of all kinds that the only difficulty was to choose amongst them. Now all is changed; nearly all the religious orders are dispersed; despoiled of their convents, deprived of all resources, what can be accomplished by the few members who still remain, as if on sufferance, in their poor cells beside the churches?

The protectories which still exist, through taxes and impositions, and annoyances of all kinds, are forced to limit their beneficent action.—*Le Propagateur Catholique.*

## THE UNITED STATES AND THE SIOUX.

In the midst of the "Centennial" rejoicings, the United States have suffered a serious military disaster. The Sioux tribe of American Indians have cut to pieces and utterly destroyed five troops of cavalry with all their officers and the General commanding the expedition. This well-known tribe was peacefully settled in Kansas and Nebraska, till their lands being wanted, they were induced some eight years ago to move on, and settle in a new "reserve" called the Black Hills Country in the south-west of the territory of Dakota. This arrangement was effected by a solemn treaty in which the United States Government engaged to see that the lands thus allotted to the Sioux were respected. But Mr. Jay Cooke, of Erie notoriety, and some of his friends got up a project for a North Pacific railway which was to run close by the Sioux reserve, and an expedition sent to survey the country reported the existence of gold-mines. Incontinently there was a rush of settlers and prospectors to the Black Hills, and of course there were fights, in which the Sioux resisted or revenged aggression after the savage manner of their race. But they were quite willing to come to another friendly arrangement with the Government, and negotiations actually commenced, but were broken off on a refusal of the authorities to accede to the Indian demands. General Crook was then sent with a force of 2,500 men and some Indian auxiliaries, to compel obedience. He had a severe brush with the Sioux, who struck such terror into the hearts of his Indian allies that they all left him in order to defend their own homes, and the march was continued without them. General Custer was in command of the advanced guard, consisting of 12 troops of cavalry, and learning that the Sioux were encamped on the banks of a creek or tributary stream called Little Horn, he resolved to attack them. He divided his force into three bodies; three companies formed the reserve; four others were sent round under Major Reno, his second in command, to take them in the rear, while, with the remaining five, he himself was to attack in front. But the Sioux were prepared, and, when General Custer had got into a ravine, he was attacked on all sides, and every man perished, among them being the General himself, two nephews of his, and another relative; in fact, every male of his family. And if it had not been for the reserve, which came to its rescue, Major Reno's detachment would have shared the same fate. As it was, it cut itself out with very great difficulty. The inevitable consequence of this lamentable collision will, of course, be a war of extermination.—*Tablet.*

The well-known Shamrock Hotel has again changed hands, but under its present proprietor the prestige gained by it will suffer no abatement. It is now in the possession of Mr. Philips—a gentleman admirably qualified to conduct it in a style that will ensure its holding a first-class rank amongst establishments of its kind in Dunedin.