

sentment—at fifteen he was beginning to realise the condition of affairs, and to see how heavily burdened was the elder sister whom they all adored.

At 2 o'clock Mona had her kitchen tidied up, and gathered the whole eight around her for a talk. Ever since they could remember the Aldis children had kept Twelfth Night. It was a custom Aldis had seen carried out in some parts of Germany and France, and it had taken his artistic fancy, so he had taught it to Mona Lisa and Donovan. When not too much absorbed in his work he would take part in it himself.

Looking at the eager faces around her, Mona Lisa smiled. 'I have not much money,' she said, 'but I have a plan,' and she proceeded to unfold it. In the midst of great clapping of hands, the door was opened, and there entered a stout, comfortable-looking woman, followed by a fair-haired, manly young man.

'Ach Je!' said the newcomer, 'I want you, meine liebliche Blume. It is to the town we will go, mit meinem Fritz. Is it not so, mein Engelein?'

Mona Lisa's face was rosy red. 'How good you are, dear Mrs. Harter!' she said. 'I was just wishing I could go to town in preparation for to-morrow. There is so much to do, and so little time in which to do it.'

With the musical jingle of the bells they were off, after Mona had left the house and the younger children in the care of Vittoria and Don.

Aldis wrote late that afternoon, and just as the western sun was setting in a flame of scarlet and copper he reached for another sheet of paper, to find there was none. Should he stop? No! He had got to a most interesting period of German literature in the time of Charlemagne. He would work another hour or two while the subject was fresh in his mind. Rising from his comfortable seat, he walked to a closet that was built in the wall between his room and his eldest daughter's, and reached up to a shelf where there was a pile of writing paper; as he did so, a clear, boyish voice was raised in the next room, and he paused spell-bound.

'I tell you, Vit, it's a burning shame! There he sits day after day in that room, writing all that stuff that nobody will want to read, and everything in the house and on the farm going to rack and ruin, and Mona nearly worked to death; and none of us with proper clothes or anything else. It's a shame, I tell you!'

'It killed mother,' said Vittoria's voice, 'and it will kill Mona.'

'And then we'll all die in turn,' said the first speaker. 'I tell you, Vitty, the book is our tomb.'

There was the sound of an opening door that closed after the speakers, and silence reigned. But in the heart of Arthur Aldis there was a raging tumult. For the first time in eighteen years he had heard the truth. He had killed his wife by his selfishness, and now he was darkening his children's lives in the same way. Slowly he returned to his room. His dreaminess vanished. In the heart of the man, now that the veil had been torn aside, was an overpowering remorse and regret. Memory took him back to the first day he saw Margaret. How blue her eyes were, how straight and supple her figure, how sweet her low voice! She had given him everything, and in return he had laid on her a burden heavier than she could bear. How he had wasted his years in dreaming, shutting his eyes to all practical needs! Long he sat and thought, until his revulsion of feeling was complete, and then he arose. Well, thank God, he had it in him, if he would, to retrieve the past. Who was it who had told him in his younger days that he was a practical idealist? His mother! Yes, his mother, who understood him as mothers alone do. Then he had drifted west in search of health, and had gradually allowed the practice to lie dormant while he had given himself up to the ideal. With a gesture of disgust and scorn, he walked up to his writing table, gathered up the precious manuscript, and thrust it in the blazing fire. Renunciation, following on resolution, was now complete.

Ten minutes later he opened the door of the kitchen and appeared before seven astonished children, who with the quickness of childhood saw something new in both voice and mien.

'Donovan,' he said, 'I have had my eye on some splendid evergreens up on the mountainside—and not so far up that we can't get them. Bring an axe from the shed, and let us go and cut them down and surprise Mona when she gets home, by having the room ready for our Twelfth Night festival.'

The procession that set forth from the house a few minutes later was almost a rout.

When Mona drove up at 8 o'clock she was astonished to see the whole house lit up. What could it mean? The door was flung open, and she was seized by Aubrey de Vere, who whirled her across the kitchen to the living room beyond.

And, oh, wonder of wonders! Here was a royal throne, banked by the dark evergreens, on which sat Donovan, resplendent in regal robes, a gold crown on his head, surrounded by his court of laughing children. He waved his sceptre as Mona Lisa entered.

'It is my will, O Princess,' he said, 'that you should cut our bean cake on yonder table.'

Mona Lisa advanced to where lay the big cake, sent to them by kind Mrs. Harter. But, stay!—who was this new father who came forward and kissed her so tenderly, and took her wraps from her, and asked her if she was cold from her long drive? Was she in a dream, or was it real?

Impatient little hands were pulling at her skirt. 'Cut it, Mona! Cut the cake, and let us see who gets the bean.'

With a surge of bewildered, happy feelings, Mona Lisa obeyed, and ten minutes later an exclamation of delight went up as the big black bean, which foretold luck to the one who had it, was found in her own piece of cake.

Mona Lisa had never known such a Twelfth Night. Care and responsibility seemed slipping away from her, and when, two hours later, she told her father good-night—they two being the last to retire—a thrill of newborn hope and joy filled her heart as Aldis put his arm around her and kissed her pure forehead.

'My brave little daughter,' he said, 'I have burned it all—my great work—and henceforth my true great work will begin—to live for you and the others. It is the Star in the East, Mona, that has taught it to me.'—*Rosary Magazine.*

AN OLD SCOTTISH SEMINARY

One of the most affecting spots in Scotland to a Catholic is the old seminary of Scalán in Banffshire (says the *Catholic Herald*). Here in the trying days of the 18th century the lamp of faith was kept burning, and amidst innumerable trials and difficulties young men were trained for the priesthood and fostered in that spirit of fortitude and self-sacrifice so necessary to the proper fulfilment of their vocation.

The idea of a seminary was first broached in 1713 by Bishops Nicholson and Gordon, and its first establishment was an island in Loch Morar. The disturbances in the country caused by the rising of 1715 brought about the dissolution of the infant seminary, however, and re-establishment was not attempted till a year of two later, when Scalán was fixed upon as a suitable place in which the project might be prudently resumed.

The property was situated upon the estate of the Duke of Gordon, who, being a Catholic, was anxious to further the good work. It was his influence that made the establishment possible, and while he lived the seminary never wanted a friend.

From this time on until the close of the century Scalán enjoyed a practically continuous existence and had an important influence upon the fortunes of the reviving Church in Scotland. Although laid in ashes by order of Cumberland after the disastrous defeat of the clans at Culloden, its work was only temporarily interrupted, and it continued to be the centre of Catholic life in the Highlands for more than fifty years.

In 1799, for economic reasons, the college was removed to Aquhorthies by Bishop Hay. It is now little more than a memory, yet within its sacred walls were trained some of the most capable and painstaking missionaries of the eighteenth century.

Messrs. Dwan Bros., Willis street, Wellington, report having sold the lease, furniture, and goodwill of Hastie's Hotel, Feilding; Mrs. Quinn's interest in the Prince of Wales Hotel, Tory street, Wellington; Mr. R. J. Paul's interest in the Mount Egmont Hotel, Midhurst, Taranaki; Mr. Thomas Green's interest in the lease, goodwill, and furniture of the Post Office Hotel, Picton; Mr. G. H. Williams's interest in the lease, furniture, and goodwill of the Masonic Hotel, Blenheim; the lease, furniture, and goodwill of the Royal Oak Hotel, Pymont, Sydney, N.S.W.; Mrs. O'Neill's interest in the lease, furniture, and goodwill of the Club Hotel, Stratford; Mr. Bell's interest in the lease, furniture, and goodwill of the Wimbledon Hotel, Wimbledon, Hawke's Bay; the freehold of the Taueru Hotel, Taueru, Wairarapa. Messrs. Dwan Bros. also report having sold a freehold farm of 700 acres in Inglewood district to Mr. Hubert Collins (late of Rangiora and Kai-koura, South Island) for the sum of £8400.

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