

better, he was to come as sexton to Father Locke's church.

A man in a bed nearby had been an interested spectator while all these events were taking place. He was a morose individual, rarely speaking to anyone.

He broke the silence one day by addressing the priest, to the surprise of all present.

"I wish to speak to you, sir," he said, as the Father passed his cot.

The priest paused. The man was not a Catholic, and he did not interfere with patients of another persuasion.

"You were the Padre in the village of Goldenhill in the south, fifteen years ago, were you not?" he inquired jerkily.

"Yes! But I don't remember seeing you there."

"Hardly," the patient replied cynically. "Well, listen to this tale, and see if you can give me a solution to the mystery."

"You had a wonderful vessel presented to you by old Mrs. Lacy, who joined your Church?" He went on.

The priest nodded. "It was studded with diamonds," the patient repeated, as if saying a lesson.

"It was in a safe. That safe was attacked in vain. You did not know that! Well, a ruse was planned—by me. You were lured up the hills one night on a bogus call to old Gray."

He ceased to observe the effect of his words. The priest was too astounded to speak. The level voice continued:

"You were shadowed by me—yes, I don't mind you knowing it now! You stopped in a listening attitude several times. I may as well tell you that I meant to knock you on the head, kill you if necessary, in order to get possession of that key, as it was known you always carried it on your person."

He paused, exhausted. The priest held a drink of water to his parched lips and waited for him to continue. As the patient remained quiet, Father Locke asked him quietly: "Why did you not strike or attack?"

"How could I, when you had a guard?" He lay back with closed eyes.

"A guard!" exclaimed Father Locke. "What guard? I was quite alone."

"No, you were not"; the dying man said, looking at him fixedly. "There was a wonderful young man keeping step with you all the time. Some light surrounded you both, certainly different from, though not unlike the most powerful electricity. I tell you, it would require a platoon to approach and attack under such conditions. One man could hardly attempt it."

"It must have been the Angel of the Blessed Sacrament who accompanied me on that journey—all unknown to myself," Father Locke murmured gravely.

"I guess it was something strange," the patient whispered. "Anyhow, I gave up robbing after that incident. I suppose I'm finished now?" he concluded, gazing questioningly at the priest.

"You may not have long to live, but why not profit by this wonderful experience?" the priest asked him.

"How?" laconically asked the patient. The Father explained, and eventually took

this poor erring soul under instruction. He was a well-educated man, and had no difficulty in grasping the truths of the Church.

"I understand it all now," he told the Father afterwards. "That night you were carrying the Blessed Sacrament in your breast you saw nothing, you believed without seeing. I, a robber, meant to attack you. In my search for the key on your person, I would certainly have come across the pyx and perhaps desecrated the Sacred Host. The Invisible Heavenly Guard stood by to prevent this sacrilege, and then, in course of time, made us meet here. Why is this? What have I ever done that God should show such mercy and pardon to me, a wretched sinner?"

"God's ways are not our ways," the priest responded gently. "You must have done some good act in your life to merit this blessed ending." He concluded. "Think, what was it?"

"Some good act?" murmured the dying man. "No—still," thoughtfully, "perhaps you would consider this a good act, though I only did it out of a sense of chivalry."

"Once I was working in the gold fields. 'Twas a rather rough camp. Some nuns—Sisters—came one day to solicit alms for poor folk they took into their homes. Wishing to save these ladies insult or annoyance, I bade them remain outside, while I went in and begged for them. I gathered a goodly sum in their bag, and, when I returned with it to them, one of them told me that God would repay me in my hour of need." He has done so—blessed be His name forever!"

These were his last words. He died that night, and O'Brien, now installed at the church, insisted on "burying him decent," to wit, providing a coffin, having his body spend the last night above earth near the Blessed Sacrament in the mortuary chapel and following him to the grave in state, as chief mourner, with Father Locke.

"How well I wouldn't have the good luck, Father, ever to see the Angel of the Blessed Sacrament," he said, mournfully.

"Few of us, in this life, behold that Invisible Guide," the priest answered, reverently.—Nell Gay, in the *Newark Monitor*.

**MUSIC EXAMINATIONS**

Miss May O'Byrne, L.T.C.L., music teacher, Invercargill, has been very successful in the June Theory Examinations of Trinity College of Music, London, having 100 per cent. passes. The following are the marks awarded:—

Senior Division—Kathleen Elbert 85, Myrtle Mitchell 69.

Advanced Intermediate—Nonie Gibbert 82, Thelma Whitaker 72.

Intermediate—Orr McLeay 81.

Advanced Junior—Marjorie Barty 92, Beth Thomson 91, Jean Marshall 81.

Junior Division—Kitty MacPherson 100, Margaret Sangster 94, Jack Grenville 88, Winifred Thom 88.

Preparatory—Compton Given 99, Ina Fraser 98, Gilbert Mary 98, Leslie Marlew 98, Cecil McLeay 98, Nola Scandrett 95, Thelma Beadle 93, Mamie Galbraith 93.

**HINT TO TRAVELLERS**

**TAKE A RUG AND "BAXTER'S"**

A man who has done considerable travelling in New Zealand gave valuable advice the other day to some of his friends. He said that he always carried a good rug with him in case of a chilly night, and the other article that he found most useful was a bottle of Baxter's Lung Preserver. This remedy was invaluable in warding off coughs and colds.

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