

# THE PILGRIM OF OUR LADY OF MARTYRS

---

XIX YEAR.

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## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE CATHOLIC MISSION IN BRITISH HONDURAS.

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### CHAPTER VIII.

*(Concluded.)*

**I**N July Father Parisi started to visit the Belize River, near whose banks are living more than 3,000 Catholics. This is the portion of the Mission, which is the more toilsome both because of the difficulty of the journey as well as on account of the want of all those things which are required for properly supporting life. As we are without roads, the journey has to be made by river, which in many places has hardly sufficient water to carry the light skiffs called pitpans, which traverse it. Ten or more days by water are required to reach the end of this mission, during which time the missionary is being carried up the river in an open pitpan. About twenty settlements have to be visited into which our Catholic population is distributed. In all these there are certain little stations, which are called chapels and afford hospitality to the missionary. As soon as he enters the settlement all meet together in the chapel, hear Mass, receive the Sacraments and settle with him all their spiritual affairs. The missionary spends there two or three days, according to the number of Catholics, and when all has been properly arranged, he goes on further. Generally the missionary spends two months a year in visiting

these people, but this year Father Parisi remained with them three months, to give all the opportunity of ordering their lives in a Christian manner. And, indeed, great was the fruit of this visitation, since he baptized seventy-seven children, gave Holy Communion to several hundreds and by his exhortations moved eighty-two, who were living in public concubinage, to receive the Sacrament of Marriage.

About this time the Superior of the Mission visited the northern district, administered the Sacrament of Confirmation, blessed a chapel at Laguna Seca and with solemn rite opened a new building at Orange Walk to be used as a school.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was in a special way promoted by the institution in all our churches, of a Mass with singing before the Blessed Sacrament, exposed on the First Friday of every month, together with the Via Crucis in the evening, followed by special prayers in honor of the Divine Heart and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. To provide also for the good of youth, the Sodality of St. Aloysius was inaugurated, which was well calculated to promote piety and, by securing their help in serving the altar, to add to the beauty and decorum of the divine offices.

At the end of July all the Fathers came to Belize to celebrate their Founder's feast, and to confer together about the interests of the mission.

In August, good Brother Richard Quinn died. In him the mission lost a schoolmaster of the kind much needed in our colony to bring up Catholic youth. The labors and hopes of the tillers of the soil were this year spoilt in the North of the colony by the invasion of an army of locusts. His Excellency, the Governor, implored our assistance, to use what authority we possessed to induce the Indians to destroy this dreadful pest of the crops. Father Di Pietro made a ready response to the Governor's wishes.

Many times His Excellency showed himself kindly disposed towards us, but especially when an occasion of helping the Sisters in their work of teaching offered. To start the fund for building an academy for girls, to receive a higher education, he gave them £100 sterling. This very year a public

exhibition was given by the girls educated by the Sisters before a select audience. It was deservedly received with much applause, and showed that a higher education could be given in our colony without need to seek it in Jamaica or elsewhere.

1885. Through the Divine mercy, many buildings and institutions were this year established. And first of all in Stann Creek, by the help of Father Parisi, the Church was repaired and a parochial school built. A very pretty chapel was also opened in the village of Mullins River. The Catholics of this settlement were the first in the mission to have a resident priest, and, though few in number, yet being much attached to their religion, they made a collection among themselves and at their own expense built their chapel. A new house was also erected in Punta Gorda where the Residence, which since the death of Father Genon had been closed for want of missionaries, was thus re-opened. The Superior of the Mission considered the establishment of this Residence very necessary, as there were not only the Caribs of the place and of the neighboring village of Redcliff to be served, but also Indians and Americans dwelling in other neighboring settlements to be attended to. For, already, certain Americans from the United States had come to settle near Punta Gorda, and later some Indians from the Republic of Guatemala came and established themselves among the mountains near the same town. Hence, more than two thousand Catholics were living in that district, who needed their own priest to administer to them the Sacraments and look after the education of their children. This work was well carried out by Father Parisi, who for five years labored strenuously among them and restored the spirit of religion.

Meanwhile in Belize, Father Henry Gillet, who had a facility for newspaper writing, imported type from America; and in the month of June, began a periodical called *The Angelus*, which was to be published monthly. Written partly in English, partly in Spanish, it was intended to refute error and to give people correct information about Catholic affairs. The effect produced was excellent. It has continued to appear regularly every month, and the other newspapers of the town

have rarely dared to attack the Catholic religion or public morality. It still continues its issue, after twelve years, without a break and has been of great service to the Mission.

In the same year, the number of Missioners was increased by the arrival of Father Molina, who knowing thoroughly well the Maya Indian tongue, was a great help to us. The northern part of the colony was the first to receive his aid : for since nearly all the inhabitants of that district are Indians or Spanish Indians, they speak or understand that idiom. He preached therefore missions in Maya through the different villages and with great fruit to souls. The harvest was especially abundant in San Estéban, a village of 700 souls. For all without exception came to Confession and Communion, some after many years, and no one remained in a state of concubinage, where before many were infected by this vice.

1886. The year opened with the solemn blessing of the corner-stone of a new college for the Sisters. The girls who attended the Sisters' private select school had so increased in numbers, that it became absolutely necessary to have a new building, and that in such good style and so solid as to deserve the name of a College. The money, which was partly received as a loan and partly borrowed, was soon forthcoming ; and after the plan had been examined and approved, the corner-stone was laid on 21st January, in presence of a large gathering of the people, who congratulated the Sisters on the happy success of their labors.

1887. Yellow fever, hitherto hardly known in our colony, appeared this year in Belize in a sporadic form, beginning in the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy. In May one of the girls of their academy was attacked by the fever. She died in twenty-four hours, tended by the Sisters with the greatest care, in sentiments of great resignation and desire of Heaven. In June, one of the Sisters followed her, and this death had a serious effect on the fortunes of the College. It was necessary to leave the house for a time and all the inmates had to pass a month in an island called St. George's Cay, after which, recovered from their alarm they returned, quietly to continue their studies.

In this same year was begun the Meteorological Observatory under the name of St. Joseph's which has continued up to the present time to publish every month without fail its monthly observations, together with an annual summary.

1888. The last event of the year, which is especially worthy of mention, was the erection of the Mission into a Prefecture Apostolic by a decree of Propaganda dated 16th of May, 1888. The causes which led to this change in the state of the Mission were the following :

Since 1879, the Vicar Apostolic of Jamaica, knowing the great difficulty there was in coming to this part of his Vicariate, even to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation, especially since the line of steamships between Jamaica and British Honduras had been broken off, had asked Propaganda to communicate the faculty of administering that Sacrament to the Superior of the Mission ; and, by rescript of the same Congregation, dated December 4th, 1879, Rev. Father S. Di Pietro, the then Superior of the Mission of British Honduras, had been authorized to give Confirmation to the Catholics residing within the limits of the Colony. But, understanding later, that not even communication by letter could be regularly kept up with this part of his Vicariate, for want of steamship, in 1888, he proposed to Propaganda during his stay in Rome a complete separation, by the erection of British Honduras into a Prefecture Apostolic independent of Jamaica. The Superior of the Mission was consulted about the same matter and his reply was to the like effect, showing the great difficulty there was in communicating with Jamaica, and the need of a separation. Convinced, then, of the urgent necessity of this separation, Propaganda, by a decree of the 16th of May, 1888, detached British Honduras from Jamaica and erected it into a Prefecture Apostolic, and by another decree of the same Congregation, approved by Pope Leo XIII, Father Salvatore Di Pietro was named Prefect Apostolic from 10th of June, 1888.

#### CHAPTER IX.

1890. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which for some years had flourished in the Colony by the establishment

of the Holy League with its Promoters, its Central and Local Directors, by the consecration of all families and by the celebration of the First Friday of each month with High Mass and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, morning and evening, in all the Residences of the Prefecture, in this year made yet further progress by the consecration of the whole Prefecture to the Sacred Heart and a general pilgrimage of some Catholics from each of the districts to Stann Creek, where the Church has been dedicated to the Sacred Heart.

In this same year, the Prefecture was increased in numbers by arrival of some Indians from Coban, who wearied with the vexatious annoyances which they suffered in Guatemala under a liberal government, crossed the River Sarstoon, the boundary between that Republic and the Colony, and placed themselves under the British flag. In the beginning they were but few, but encouraged by the good success which attended the first comers they soon increased in numbers; and now they are reckoned at more than 800, who are living between the Sarstoon and Temash Rivers. From their first arrival they gave proofs of being animated by a true Catholic spirit. Before building any other house, they raised a church under the name of St. Peter the Apostle, and at once placed themselves under the direction of Father Piemonte, the resident priest of Punta Gorda, to whose district they belonged. They took advantage, also, of the first visit which the Prefect Apostolic paid them, to solemnize marriages and to receive other sacraments, including Confirmation; and so they have continued till the present time, ever making progress in the moral, religious and material order. When they came they brought hardly anything with them and were half naked; they were without houses and necessary household furniture; now after seven years they have a well-established village with Church, School, Village-hall, etc., and all the various families, which are reckoned at more than 170, have good houses, decent clothing and abundant food, due chiefly to their freedom from vice, and especially from drunkenness and concubinage. Their being isolated from other, so-called civilized, races is the main reason why they have kept such good principles among them.

In July, smallpox, since 1856 unknown in our Colony, was introduced from the Indians of Icaiché, into the North of the Colony, beginning with Isla and extending as far as Orange Walk of the New River. The Government was notified and at once took precautions to prevent the spread of the disease. A commission with doctors, nurses and hospitals to isolate the infected was formed, and the two Fathers of the Residence of Orange Walk, Fathers Molina and Silvin Gillet, offered their services to assist, ministering not only to the spiritual but also to the bodily wants of the sick, giving them medicines and the other things of which they stood in need. This laborious work was continued day and night for a month, in visiting the various settlements attacked by the contagion. All those who died of small-pox, who were many, received the last Sacraments; and the Government thanked the Fathers very highly for their valuable co-operation in stamping out the germs of the contagion.

Another calamity, which befell the Mission in Belize, was the unexpected death of Lady Moloney, the much esteemed wife of the new Governor. Coming with her husband on the 17th of August, before the Yellow Fever had quite passed away, the newly arrived family was after a few days attacked by fever. The maid-servant was the first to fall sick, but was promptly sent to a healthy island and her life was saved. Lady Moloney was the next to sicken and then the Secretary, both of whom died. On the third day of her illness, Lady Moloney, feeling that her end was drawing nigh and being a fervent Catholic, begged with much insistence to receive the last Sacraments. Scarcely had they been administered, when she entirely lost her senses and after twenty-four hours, assisted by the Father, the Sisters and her disconsolate husband, she gave up her precious soul into the hands of the Creator. As the body could not be brought to the Church on account of the quarantine law, the obsequies were performed in Government House, and, followed by a great concourse of people, the remains were laid to rest in the Cholera cemetery. The Governor, overcome by his heavy sorrow, went to pass some days with the Fathers,

as like a true Catholic, on such an occasion, he could find his only consolation in religion.

#### CHAPTER X.

1892. Whilst apostolic works were going on within and without the Mission, Father Piemonte was laboring in the South among the Indians of San Antonio and Sarstoon, with no less enthusiasm and success. Since his coming to the Mission in 1882, this Father had worked with much zeal and activity, first in Orange Walk where he built a school and in San Estéban, a new Church ; then, after his return from Europe, where he had been to make his tertianship, in Punta Gorda, of which Residence he took charge after Father Parisi left. He was a worthy successor of that Father and gave a great impulse to religion among the Caribs of the southern coast, founding schools in all the chief settlements of his district, establishing congregations, reviving the Catholic spirit among the poor Caribs, raising churches in Redcliff and Monkey River and a handsome residence in Punta Gorda. But where his zeal and influence over the people was still more conspicuous, was amongst the Indians of Sarstoon, who had recently come from Guatemala to settle in the Colony. Knowing the yielding character of those poor people and the extreme poverty to which they had been reduced through the vexatious exactions suffered in Guatemala, he took on himself to be their director not only in spiritual but also in temporal affairs.

He began by begging for them clothes, with which to cover the almost entire nakedness in which they arrived, then by aiding them in putting up their huts, organizing their plantations of maize and plantains, which gave very good results ; and next, with the help of good Mr. E. Kuylen, agent of the house of Cramer to whom the lands belonged, he formed a regular plan for the settlement, got them to name as Alcalde the one whom he considered the most intelligent and the best among them, and directed their work of building a church large enough to accommodate all the inhabitants of the place, who already were counted as over 800. By the fatherly way in which he

thus guided these simple Indians, who were incapable of managing in a fitting manner their affairs, he won them over to enter the married state and completely put an end to concubinage amongst them. He induced them likewise to receive frequently the Sacraments of Confession and Communion, and disposed them for Confirmation, as hardly any had yet been confirmed. Then he asked the Prefect Apostolic to visit them, and on that occasion, the Father had the consolation of seeing about 400 of them receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. As regards their temporal affairs, by the industry of the people and the guidance of the Father, those Indians who arrived in the Colony in extreme poverty, now have sufficient means to live in peace and comfort according to each one's state and condition. The last work of Father Piemonte in the South was the new church of Punta Gorda, which, in spite of difficulties, he succeeded in building and blessing by the end of the year.

But the event of most interest and which changed the state of the Mission, was the erection of the Prefecture into a Vicariate Apostolic. It was brought about during this year and the beginning of the next. To conclude then with this interesting incident we must give all its details, which may serve as authentic documents in the history of the Mission. From the preceding year, the deceased Cardinal Simeoni had written to the Prefect Apostolic that it had been proposed by a prominent English authority to the Congregation of Propaganda that it was necessary to give a Bishop to the Catholics of British Honduras who form the majority of the population, seeing that the Anglicans who are but a small fraction have their Bishop, and he wished very much to know the opinion of the Prefect, and if they could count on the funds to maintain the Bishopric with proper dignity. The Prefect Apostolic, not wishing to compromise himself in a matter of so much importance, called together all the Fathers of the Mission except two, who had to remain in their stations to administer the Sacraments, and having proposed to them the question, the majority of the Fathers were agreed, that it was very desirable that there should be a Catholic Bishop of British Honduras so as

not to remain behind the Anglicans and to sustain the position due to our Catholics.

On the 4th of January, whilst in his voyage across the ocean, the Prefect, Father S. Di Pietro, S.J., was named, in the Consistory held on that day, Bishop of Eurea and Vicar Apostolic of British Honduras. The newspapers were the first to give the notice, so that when on the 30th of January, 1893, he arrived at Belize on his return from Rome, he was welcomed with a grand reception as one already named Bishop; and after a few days came the Bulls of the erection of the Prefecture of British Honduras as a Vicariate Apostolic and of the election of Father Di Pietro as Bishop of Eurea and first Vicar Apostolic of the Mission. Having no other resource except to obey, as commanded in the Letter of election, he began at once to think about the Consecration.

The Catholics of Belize, who had taken so much interest in the whole matter, determined, in a general meeting, that the Consecration ought to take place in Belize; and one of the Fathers, Father Henry Gillet, well fitted for the purpose by his activity, was sent to the United States and charged to beg three of the neighboring bishops to come to Belize for the consecration of the new Bishop. The Father fulfilled the mission which had been entrusted to him perfectly, and, on the 11th of April, 1893 he arrived by the steamship from New Orleans with the three bishops, that is, with the Right Rev. Thomas Becker, Bishop of Savannah, as Consecrator and Right Rev. Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Bishop of Mobile, together with Right Rev. Thomas Heslin, Bishop of Natchez as Assistant Bishops.

When all arrangements had been made, on the 16th of the same month and year, in presence of all the Catholics in the city and of many of the chief persons of Belize, the imposing function of the consecration of the new Bishop took place with all the solemnity possible. The Bishop of Mobile preached an eloquent sermon on the occasion. After the ceremony was finished there was a grand lunch, at which were present the Governor, Sir Alfred Moloney, and some seventy of the chief gentlemen of Belize.

In this way, then, the mission, which began with only two

Fathers in 1852, was transformed into a Vicariate Apostolic, served by a titular Bishop, nine Fathers and two Lay-Brothers—twelve in all, in order that animated with the spirit of the Apostles they might wholly devote themselves to the sanctification of the Vicariate.

1894. The mission was separated from the English Province and joined to the Province of Missouri, U. S. A.

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### HER STEP-MOTHER'S MINIATURES.

THE story had just reached its conclusion, when Edith Somerville and another lady were announced, and owing to the gentle chorus of applause with which it was greeted by her other guests, Mrs. Lumley failed to catch the name of her cousin's friend.

Theodora Marchant noted this with complete indifference; during her struggling art-student life she felt it mattered very little what she was called.

"But in the years to come, when I have *made a name*," she thought with proud anticipation, "I shall insist upon everyone who meets me being made aware of it."

Her hostess had long since attained to that enviable position, and over more than one illustrated interview with the celebrated Mrs. Walter Lumley had Theodora conjured up a future for herself in which the public would be interested in *her* house, *her* tastes, and *her* personal opinions.

Of the social gulf which lay between her hostess and herself no one could have been more sensitively aware; the contrast afforded by her own proud awkwardness and Mrs. Lumley's dignified condescension was very marked; as marked, indeed, as the difference between the shabby lodgings she had just left and the beautiful drawing-room in which she now found herself. "My ultimate goal," thought Theodora, settling down into a soft, deep chair, and letting her eye wander with satisfaction round the walls. In spite of high expectations there was no sense of disappointment. Mrs. Lumley's discretion in the collecting of works of art had not been exag-

gerated. Theodora envied Edith such a cousin. None of her own relations, she complained, were in the least interesting or talented, neither had they ever been of any use to her. She had always believed herself clever enough to hold her own amongst more cultured people than those with whom early associations threw her. "The breaking away," as she described it, after a time became inevitable; it was also, comparatively speaking, easy: finding her way into a higher circle proved the difficult task, and taxed her ingenuity beyond its limits. She was despairing of ever getting acquainted with "the right people" when Edith Somerville's girlish infatuation opened out a simple way.

They had taken to each other at first sight, Edith complacently observed, and Theodora's consent to her statement concealed the mental reservation that there would have been no "taking" on her side save for the celebrated cousin in the distance.

"I want to introduce you to Christina Lumley. You and she will have so much in common, and you will meet everybody who is anybody at her house."

It was this prospect that rendered the long confidences and silly little shopping expeditions bearable, and on the strength of her forbearance Theodora became "my dearest friend" by the time Mrs. Lumley returned to town and her cousin wrote to ask if she might bring her in to tea.

"It's the beginning," thought Theodora. "I have no doubt about their liking me when once they know me, the only difficulty hitherto has been to get my foot inside their doors . . . but I expect one has to feel one's way gradually," she added, not finding herself quite so much at her ease as she expected in the new environment. "I must be a watcher, not a player, just at first."

She pulled herself together and listened to the conversation going on around her.

"Dear lady, before we go please let me see that miniature you were speaking of," pleaded a tall, handsome woman, with a well modulated voice.

"That is Lady Julia Stoweton," whispered Edith, "she does"

art criticisms for the *So and So Gazette*," naming one of the best evening papers.

"Then a miniature that she wants to look at will be well worth my seeing," replied Theodora, rising and moving after the distinguished lady.

"It is in my sacred corner," said Mrs. Lumley, leading the way to a polished walnut table, where, set in exquisite order, pearl rosaries, porphyry crucifixes, velvet-bound gold-clasped missals and valuable relic-cases caught Theodora's eye.

Their owner lingered over them lovingly, touching one or two, opening a book which had belonged the Curé d'Ars, telling the history of a holy water stoup which her son had rescued from a second-hand shop in Rome.

"But you are only tantalizing us with this delay," remonstrated Lady Julia.

Mrs. Lumley smiled. "One naturally moves slowly towards the highest point. You must remember that I regard this miniature as the summit of eternal art."

Theodora leaned forward, all eagerness for a glimpse of its contents as a leather case was opened and handed to her ladyship.

It passed from one to another of the group.

"Quite marvellous!" said each in turn, "what a wonderful woman she must be! When one thinks of the way it was done!"

"Is it not, indeed, a treasure worth possessing?" asked Mrs. Lumley, "the embodiment of every virtue."

"May I be permitted —," began a silver-haired, clean-shaved, benevolent-looking man, for whom every one immediately made way.

"He's *somebody*," mentally observed Theodora, but in spite of that certainty his name came as a great surprise.

"Mr. O'Sullivan! of course." His hostess went forward to meet him with the miniature, and Theodora studied with the deepest interest, the famous Irish artist to whose portrait painting she had long since given her whole heart admiration.

"This is what you were speaking of just now?" he asked.

"Yes, this is a specimen she has kindly sent me of her work."

For fully two minutes he gazed at it, saying nothing, then, delivering it back, "I could kiss the hands of the heroic lady who painted that."

Such praise from him, thought Theodora, was indeed worth having. Would she ever be able to elicit anything like it for any work of hers?

What could this miniature be of which everyone spoke so extraordinarily well?

When at length it reached her she could hardly believe her eyes; it was only *Our Lady of Good Counsel*—a copy, "a very inferior copy," she thought, of some cheap oleograph.

In the disappointment of that first glance she failed to notice the sweetness of the expressions, the tender drawing about the mouth and eyes.

Why should Mrs. Lumley boast of her possession of such a thing? What did the world-famed portrait painter mean by admiring it?

"Compared with her I have done nothing—nothing," he was saying. "Would it be possible for me to obtain one of her miniatures, do you think?"

"Oh, I think so," said Mrs. Lumley. "I do not know, but surely if *you* asked."

Theodora stared in utter bewilderment. How could Mr. O'Sullivan actually be anxious for a little daub like that?

Finding she was still holding it in her hand she passed it on to Edith hurriedly, and Edith, attracted by the velvet lining of the case, the watered silk ribbon, and the gold frame, broke into indiscriminate praise without a scruple.

"How perfectly lovely! It's really too sweet! I don't think I ever saw anything so beautifully done before."

There was no response. Some of the ladies looked a little shocked; only Mrs. Lumley, aware of her ignorance and desire to please, smiled indulgently. Edith saw that she had somehow failed to strike the right note and helped herself back to harmony with the others by repeating their phrases.

"Quite marvellous! She must be a wonderful woman! I mean the way it is done."

"Yes, the way it is done," her cousin hastened to assist her. "Of course *that* is what we all admire so very much."

"But how on earth *was* it done?" asked Theodora, directly she and Edith found themselves in the street.

"Oh! don't ask me. I'm all in the dark," said Edith, helplessly.

"So am I. After what they said I expected something at least original—a study of a face, called 'Symphony in green and gold,' or a landscape with red grass and purple trees—one of those bits of modern art that startle you and open out new possibilities; whilst hers—"

"Any child might have done it."

"Exactly."

"Perhaps it was—somebody's grandchild—that would account for their raptures."

"But not for 'the wonderful woman.'"

"I forgot that. Then, perhaps, she's blind."

"Or does it with her feet! But I am really vexed. I flattered myself that if I could not yet paint really well, at least I never failed to recognize *the real right thing*; and here there was too evidently some quality of which I could not catch a glimpse."

"Never mind," said Edith good-naturedly, "you liked the house?"

"Enormously. That fire-place and over-mantle were more delightful than anything that I have ever dreamed of. And do you say that Mrs. Lumley designed it all herself?"

"She did."

"How could the woman who created those charmingly fantastic green hobgoblins also possess that little daub of a miniature?"

"Oh never mind."

"But I do mind—so much that I should like to sit down on the nearest doorstep and howl. To be frustrated at my first start off into the real world of men and women. Don't you see?"

"I only see, after a long experience of artists, that one can never be prepared for what extraordinarily hideous thing they will admire next."

"If this had been what you call 'extraordinarily hideous,' " said Theodora, "I should not have been surprised. On the contrary then I am sure that I should have admired it too. It is the infatuation of the great man for the abjectly commonplace that baffles me."

"O'Sullivan is a darling!" said Edith irrelevantly, "remember that you are coming with me to his private view on the 29th."

When that day arrived Theodora's gratification knew no bounds. She found herself, at last, within the studio of the artist who for eight years she had worshipped at a distance, and longed to know.

It was said to be one of the finest studios in London, and his work was bold, strong, and above all, like the man himself, sincere. His admirers found him equally wonderful when from the far side of the room they studied his masses of color, and the breadth of his treatment, or when at close quarters they came to examine into the details of the work. Theodora gazed around—feasting her eyes. What interesting portraits they were! She felt herself in the presence of those great personalities: the society beauty, the famous soprano, the Duchess and her children, the General, a brother-artist, presentation portrait of an old master of fox-hounds on attaining his jubilee, enormous picture of the Prince of Wales for some great hall in India. Measuring the canvases with a practised eye she realized what work the covering of them meant. "The man's a giant!" she exclaimed. Then, watching her opportunity, she pounced upon a moment when he was disengaged to pour out to him her intense admiration; and encouraged by the kindness of his manner she even went so far as to tell him in exaggerated language of the influence which his portrait painting had had upon her life—how from him came her first inspiration to work seriously—to offer all her homage at the shrine of art.

He cut her short. "I want to show you something far better than these," he said, drawing out a case from the breast pocket of his coat.

"Then you *were* able to get one!" exclaimed Mrs. Lumley, who had joined them.

It was another of "those extraordinarily common-place miniatures," to Theodora's indescribable dismay.

This time the subject was the Coronation of Our Lady, but she recognized it in an instant by the faulty, uneven touch. "No quality! no finish! what I should call hopelessly unconcentrated, done-in-odd-moments kind of work," she thought.

Mr. O'Sullivan held it out to her triumphantly.

"I have never in my life," he said, "done anything to equal that."

Theodora racked her brains to discover what he could possibly mean. She knew that he was a Catholic, and that he had never painted sacred subjects, but such knowledge offered an insufficient clue to his infatuation.

"What on earth do you mean?" she was on the verge of asking, but turned her question into, "Who is it by?" before it left her lips, hoping to arrive at some sort of understanding without having to confess herself so utterly at fault.

"It is by your mother, of course," said he, "how proud you must be of her!"

"My mother died when I was three years old."

There was pride in her voice, but a pride which in no way connected itself with the perpetrator of "the little daub."

Mr. O'Sullivan, however, had not heard, his attention being claimed by a late arrival.

"Your step-mother," corrected Mrs. Lumley, "did you not know she was an artist?"

"I only know that when my father met her she was copying some pictures at the Louvre. I had no idea that she found time to keep up her painting now."

The remembrance of her father's second marriage, the bitterness of her jealousy—unreasonable as perhaps it seemed, looking back across ten intervening years—her refusal to live at home, even to visit during the holidays, her application to

the study of art, all flashed before her in a moment—long-dormant thoughts awakened by the mere mention of her father's wife.

She had never seen her step-mother, never wanted to do so. "Young, pretty, and so charming," everyone had assured her. That only made it worse. "And so fond of Art. She will help you with your painting. You will be able to share a studio together."

"Many thanks," had been Theodora's proud reply. She was not of a temper to share a studio with anyone, let alone a step-mother! She boasted of never having yielded up her opinion concerning the pose of a model or the arrangement of the light. Perhaps she did naturally possess a little of the artistic temperament, certainly she had done all she knew to cultivate it by giving way to moods: sometimes, for weeks together, recklessly, defiantly, idle; at other times passionately absorbed, working all day, going without her meals, and lying awake at night to overcome some difficulty in the composition.

"The world *shall* recognize my talent," had been her cry, and she trembled now with envious emotion to see the great O'Sullivan displaying her step-mother's miniature to his illustrious guests. She would have given worlds to see him thus treasure any work of hers.

"*Why* does he prize it so?" burst from her before she knew to whom she spoke.

"Because of the way it's done," said Mrs. Lumley, quietly.

"I am afraid *I* shall never be able to admire that style of painting," remarked Theodora very stiffly, as she turned to go.

An hour later, in her own studio, before a large unfinished canvas, she gave vent to her disappointment in a torrent of tears.

What was the use of toiling day and night if *that* was what people who really knew admired? How vainly had she exercised her mind to keep her picture *together*, scraping it out from top to bottom, and running down the whole thing day after day for the last six weeks! If working bit by bit was

good enough, and patchiness no crime, her methods were a needless waste of energy and paint.

"Fool! fool that I have been!" she sobbed.

"I shouldn't worry, dear, if I were you," said Edith, coming in later in the evening when the mood had nearly worn itself away.

"But it *does* worry me—I can't understand."

"I don't think I ever do," said Edith, cheerfully, "in spite of Ruskin I never could admire *Giotto's Visitation* or *Cimabue's Madonna*, so why should you see anything in your step-mother's miniatures if you don't want to?"

"One can't compare her tu'ppenny ha'penny little daubs with the work of the old masters," said Theodora pettishly.

"I thought that Mr. O'Sullivan and Mrs. Lumley did. If you want an explanation why not ask them? Or if you are too proud let me."

"Unless one sees Mrs. Marchant at work perhaps it is difficult to fully understand," was Mrs. Lumley's explanation upon being appealed to.

"*That* I shall never do," said Theodora, throwing back her head, and settling her face into its hardest expression.

For years she had believed her determination never to set foot again in her father's house unalterable. It was impossible, she maintained, to forgive the wrong he had done her by his second marriage. But when she found within the cultured circle, which she had striven so persistently to enter, her step-mother everywhere spoken of with admiration and respect, her resolution faltered. Why not get to know her since it would be a link with them? It was embarrassing to have to confess that she had never seen Mrs. Marchant when the great people, with whom she was so anxious to be on terms of intimacy, congratulated her on the relationship. Honesty forbade her pretending to a friendliness which did not exist, and the awkwardness she felt, expressing itself in her manner—never one of the best—was apt to convey the idea of something worse than the actual situation.

Mr. O'Sullivan after having in the beginning declared himself "delighted to make her acquaintance for her mother's

sake," avoided her, she felt positive, upon discovering that his high estimate of Mrs. Marchant met with no response.

Towards the end of the year Theodora found herself pondering over the advisability of a reconciliation ; and when the usual kindly Christmas invitation arrived, the intimation that her father's health was thought less well of by the doctors, afforded her an excuse for accepting it.

"Your father is feeling so extremely weak that he begs, if you can possibly contrive it, you will spare us at least a few days out of your vacation." Mrs. Marchant always wrote as though some other pressing duties claimed Theodora's time. There had never been a word of reproach in her letters, nor was there a hint of it in her manner of greeting, when, after nearly ten years, she and her step-daughter at last stood face to face.

The embarrassment was all on Theodora's side, and she endeavored to hide it beneath a volley of enquiries concerning the invalid; enquiries which scarcely seemed to need an answer, and to which Mrs. Marchant only offered one now and then, when an opportunity occurred of putting in a word. After half an hour's conversation, his daughter had gathered that Mr. Marchant's health was in a very precarious state, he might live for two months or he might live for several years, the doctors could give no decided opinion, and chiefly insisted upon his being kept happy and amused.

"He is resting now. We will go up presently, if you do not mind."

"Then, in the meantime, will you show me your studio?"

Theodora had resolved upon becoming humble in the matter of art. All the way down in the train she had been conning over her determination to learn the secret of success which it had been so forcibly borne in upon her that her step-mother possessed. The request burst from her, almost before she was aware :

"Will you show me your studio?"

Mrs. Marchant smiled.

"But I haven't got a studio," she said.

"Then where do you paint?" asked Theodora, succinctly. "I hear so much of your miniatures in town."

The color rose to Mrs. Marchant's cheeks.

"Oh, it is only dear Christina Lumley, and that kind old Mr. O'Sullivan who care about my little daubs!" That was Theodora's name for them! She felt the color mounting to her own face, too.

"They are not worth speaking of—all disconnected and patchy—just done in odd moments in your father's room."

"But, of course, he has a nurse?"

"No. He prefers to have me with him."

"Always?"

"Always." There was a suggestion of self-control, self-sacrifice and hidden strength in Mrs. Marchant's calm reply.

A light broke in on Theodora. The linen apron which at first sight she had mistaken for an artist's pinatore resolved itself into that symbol of long watching and patient ministrations, to which she could be no longer blind.

Her father called. They went up to his room; and in the presence of the invalid, the perpetrators of those "little daubs" stood out more clearly. Theodora lost no time in mastering the situation, and whilst she sat beside her father's bed, holding his hand and speaking to him softly, her eye took an inventory of all the details in the room, reading too easily the cause of the results. Mrs. Marchant's painting table stood beside the bed, the larger half of it devoted to a wicker cage containing two tame doves, which flew in and out at will, alighting upon her tumbler of water, sometimes upon her hand, occasionally pecking at the brightest colors in her paint-box. The hen seemed moderately well-mannered and inoffensive, the cock, with masculine intrepidity, took daring flights across the room, intent upon resting at least one foot upon the cork of a medicine bottle on the mantle-piece.

Mrs. Marchant began to rise, when "Wait a bit, love, let us see if he can manage it," from the bed restrained her. The dove did manage it—for one brief moment—and the next the bottle fell with a smash of glass and splash of liquid on the hearthstone below.

"Not the first time, either," thought Theodora, noting the readiness with which a duster was forthcoming, the broken glass collected, and the delinquent put back in his cage.

"I never could stand doves," said she, aloud.

"Sometimes the cooing gets upon your father's nerves, and then I take them away, and he has 'Queenie' for a change."

"Show her 'Queenie,' dear," said the invalid.

Mrs. Marchant carried away the wicker cage and in a few moments returned with a toy Yorkshire terrier, that ran round and round yapping for biscuits, scratched at the cupboard door, had to be led in and out of the balcony several times to bark at the dogs in the garden below, and could only be reduced to tolerable composure upon his mistress' lap.

"Rather too much noise, love, take 'Queenie' up," said Mr. Marchant, after ten minutes or so.

Mrs. Marchant went on quietly with her painting, but the little wet nose seemed liable to rise and nudge her hand to a false stroke.

"Ah, 'Queenie,'" she murmured, but without a trace of resentment, "that *was* a bad one."

Her husband wanted to see.

"Not so bad as that time when she licked it nearly all off," said he complacently.

"Which one was that?" asked Theodora.

"Our Lady of Good Counsel."

"The one that Mrs. Lumley had!"

It flashed across her now what must have been that story to which the other visitors had listened before admiring the miniature.

"Weren't you fearfully sorry?" asked Theodora.

"Sorry for the inevitable delay."

"All the best people in London order her work," put in the invalid. "She can't supply the demand fast enough. She sells them, you know, for charity—the Nazareth Home."

"Why not, at least, give up the dog?" suggested Theodora.

"Oh! but she is the greatest amusement to your father, and this does not often happen," interposed Mrs. Marchant

quickly, fondling the dog, lest either she or her master might feel hurt at the occurrence.

"So good to your father," everyone had told her. Theodora realized it now, and felt what she had been spared in not having to nurse him all these years. Evidently he was too ill to be capable of any sacrifice. But why, she wondered, did her step-mother attempt to paint at all, when she had to be continually jumping up and down for one thing or another?

An hour of it, as an onlooker, tried Theodora sufficiently to make her glad to settle down in a comfortable chair in the library and read for the remainder of the day.

Next morning her father asked her to stay in his room. He hoped she would do some painting, too. There was a little colored print of Christ, aged twelve, found in the temple, which he wanted copied. "Your mother is rather slow," he said. "She will not be able to begin it for weeks to come."

"Under the circumstances," said Theodora, "I should never be able to do it at all."

"She takes sometimes as much as five months over one face," he continued, ignoring her remark, and Theodora with difficulty refrained from pointing out that he forgot to take into consideration the turning of his pillow, and the making of his broth, and the measuring of his medicines, and the thousand and one other trifles which kept cropping up to interrupt the artist's progress.

"Five months, indeed! it does not seem to me that she ever gets five minutes to herself." She was already for taking up the cudgels on the enemy's side. "What I have been spared!" was the thought that kept recurring to her mind. "No one but a saint would be able to do one stroke of work under such trying auspices!" She recollected, almost with shame, the quiet she had considered necessary in her own studio; how a knock at the door would disturb her equanimity and put her "off work" for the remainder of the day. Whereas her step-mother worked patiently, steadily on, from hour to hour and day to day, showing the little ivory to her husband as often as he asked to see it, which was very often, and never allowing

the sweetness of her temper to be ruffled. He took the greatest interest in her work, in his selfish, undiscerning way.

"I could not have borne," he said, "to feel that my ill-health was the cause of her giving up her painting."

Her patience was marvellous.

At the end of a week Theodora, watching her, would have given anything in the world for that miniature in memory of the sweet disposition.

"The way it is done ; but unless you have seen it for yourself you cannot fully understand."

"She paints with all the Christian virtues—not with ordinary colors."

"This is the summit of eternal art."

"I could kiss the hands of that heroic woman."

All the expressions that had puzzled her were quite luminous now. Of only one thing was Theodora still uncertain : did her step-mother *feel* it—as she would have done? Had she a mind above the copying of oleographs ?

To put the question to the test she one day made a reference to the time of Mrs. Marchant's Paris study, asking, as a special favor, to be allowed to look through a portfolio of her "Academies."

The contents surprised her.

"You were a master of line!" she cried, "and quality! What clever studies! I never can get quality in charcoal."

"Her brush work was highly spoken of too. Show some of your sketches in oils," put in the invalid, "I am sure Theodora will feel I am right in not allowing you to drop your painting."

"Don't you miss it all most *frightfully*?" asked Theodora. "If I had drawn like you, I think it would have broken my heart having to give it up."

She liked her step-mother none the less for the tear which fell on the spirited composition which she was replacing in the portfolio. The charcoal had not been sufficiently fixed, and a great blotch spread as proof that the tear had fallen, but Mrs. Marchant's voice did not falter as she answered brightly

“Since my marriage painting has been our chief employment—a joint labor. Your father selects the subject, and advises me as to its treatment and assists me with his opinion all the while the work is in progress. They only used to correct our studies twice a week at Julien’s, whilst now I get a score of criticisms a day.”

“My love, you’re making fun of me,” chuckled the invalid, but he seemed to like the joke.

“Tell me, you don’t really *like* doing those miniatures?” asked Theodora, when they were next alone together.

Mrs. Marchant thought—to be quite truthful—and answered bravely, “Yes, I really do.” Then added, “They are such an interest for your father. Since his illness he has been obliged to give up so much—my giving up a little seems to bring us nearer together.”

There was a pause. Presently Theodora burst out :

“Haven’t you thought me a perfect fiend, never coming near you all these years?”

“Oh, never that! I think I understood. It has been the greatest happiness to us having you now, and perhaps we have all benefitted by the long delay.”

“‘The tone of time,’” suggested Theodora.

“And I always knew you would come. I used to try to *paint* you here.”

Theodora puzzled over it. “I’m sure you mean something charming, but I can’t guess; please explain.”

“The constant little opportunities of making acts of patience and resignation to the will of God, I offered up for you—your reconciliation with your father, feeling I owed you a great deal for having come between.”

“So that your prayers for me have been the running accompaniment to all your work!”

“The only real value of any work is the *intention* with which it is done. Tony Fleury impressed that on me years ago—‘Les valeurs, les valeurs, toujours les valeurs.’”

“I want your candid opinion, Theodora. You are an artist, and must have seen so much good work. Even before you went away to study, I remember you used to say you never

failed to recognize *the real right thing*. Tell me, what do you think of your mother's miniatures?"

"I think they are wonderful"; and she was so far won over that she meant it honestly. The painting and the "way it was done" had blended themselves together in her mind, so that her praise was heartily given to the work complete.

"I can't say that I understand very much about technique," continued her father, "but what I feel sure of is that she spares no pains. I daresay even you may have learned something from watching her."

"I feel as if I had learned *everything*," said she.

It was a far gentler, humbler Theodora who bent to kiss her step-mother "good-by."

Shyly Mrs. Marchant slipped a little packet into her hand. "I want you to accept this 'Mater Admirabilis,' as it was over that you came," she whispered. "I always wanted to give you one, but was afraid to offer it to a real artist."

Beside her Theodora felt unworthy ever to take a brush in hand again.

"Please go on praying for me," she said, "dear, admirable Mother."

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