

it kind o' runs in the fam'ly. Now that precious boy has been an' wrote a tradejy at his age. Some say us he's a regular young Shakespeare.'

Mr. Pennison endeavoured to express interested surprise, and succeeded in looking horror-stricken. Indeed, he lost his presence of mind so far as to faintly ask what was the subject of the drama.

'It's "Robinson Crusoe," ain't it, Tommy?' said the stout lady. 'Tell the gentleman all about it.'

Nothing loth, Tommy fidgetted for some moments with his cap, wriggled his legs about, worked his features convulsively, and fixed the professor with such a stony stare that Pennison, who was utterly unaccustomed to children, feared he was going to be ill.

At last this strange boy jerked out:

'There's a pirate in it.' After a dramatic pause he went on. 'He comes to rob Robinson, but Friday's brother knows one of the crew and gets them all to mutiny, an' they hang the captain an' the mate.'

'They hanged the captain: very good, indeed,' said Pennison. 'An' then,' went on the young author, 'they all sailed away to find the treasure.'

'Ah,' said Pennison absently, 'where did they go to?'

'To the Spanish Main, of course,' said the boy.

'Oh, of course,' said Pennison humbly.

'There's a lot more,' said the boy, producing a dirty copy-book, which evidently contained the MS. of this dramatic version of *Crusoe*.

'—He speaks it fine, too,' said the mother; 'Do the "What ho!" part, darlin'.'

The youth had articulated in a sepulchral gurgle, 'What ho! my bully boys what ho!' when Pennison, suppressing a wild desire to throttle him, intervened, saying he did not care to have the interest of the play spoiled by listening to it in snatches, but would read it over at his leisure. And so he got rid of the mother and her child.

One of the two remaining clients was a widow. She was not altogether a novice, she said, and believed that the best products of art could be procured by collaboration.

She smiled upon Pennison, with a sympathetic smile and, under its influence, Pennison rashly promised to take the matter into consideration.

His sole remaining visitor was a little old maid, with cheeks like a ripe apple and gentle pale grey eyes. She had long cherished the idea of writing a three volume novel about a converted betting man who had taken to slumming work among his old associates. But, in order to bring out fully the horrors of her hero's unregenerate days, she wanted to be coached in the language of the turf. Pennison, who could not tell a cab-horse from a thoroughbred, professed himself—on the strength of a mental resolution to invest a penny in a sporting paper—competent to undertake the task of depicting the dreadful associations of the ex-bookie's unreformed days.

Having arranged the hours of attendance the little old lady produced a half-sovereign, and as he handled the strange coin Pennison felt that the tide had turned at last, and regretted that he had omitted to intimate to the other pupils that his terms were invariably in advance.

Then he sat down, with his head between his hands, to think the situation out. He was in for it, that was quite clear. How he was to get out of it was not so clear at all. The more he reflected the more his mind revolted from the idea of drumming literature into those dead souls. The thing was an utter impossibility, and the fat boy was the last straw.

But he had taken the little old lady's half-sovereign. He had crossed the Rubicon. He might as well cross the street and have some lunch at once.

On the way Pennison indulged in the luxury of a newspaper. His own economic problems had so occupied his attention for months back that he had lost sight of the progress of the world. It was a revelation to him to find that, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, war might be declared at any moment between half a dozen different countries. But it was consoling to learn that, though constitutional government was tottering on its base, the popular mind was firmly set against the dismemberment of the Empire.

He stole a quiet glance around to read in people's faces the whirling thoughts of the eventful age. But whatever agitation was pent up within their breasts, these people made no sign—beyond the exhibition of exceedingly good appetites.

In truth, it was a prosaic world, after all, and as he read on, Pennison's fertile brain looked out once more at life from a different standpoint. He had learned that a lean man waxes not fat upon his dreams, and, indeed, it was now borne in upon him that his dreams were over. The cold breeze of facts cooled him and his mind was calm and resolved. He eagerly scanned the 'Situations Vacant' columns, and determined to apply at once for several of the suitable vacancies.

He must, of course, return the old lady's money, or at least the unexpended balance, and then—well, Pennison never cared to look very far into the future.

So it was that Mrs. O'Grady had to inform fifteen indignant pupils that their professor had retired from business, and when the pupil who paid appeared, Pennison silently handed her a small paper parcel on the outside of which was engrossed in neat figures '8s. 10d. Balance due by me 1s 2d. Peter Pennison.'

The little lady put on a pair of pince-nez and scrutinised first the package and then the professor who stood in a moody attitude with folded arms. He looked much older than he really was, for hardship and hopes disappointed had left their marks upon him, and moreover, he wore his hair long from economic as well as artistic reasons.

'My gracious me! Mr. Pennison!' said the lady, 'What's all this?'

'It means, Madam,' said the retiring professor, bitterly, 'that I do not intend practising the profession of literature any longer. It means also, Madam,' he added, after a pause, 'that I herewith return my fee—minus, I regret to say—the sum of one shilling and twopence, which in a moment of—hunger, he was about to say, but substituted—thoughtlessness, I expended. The debt I hope to liquidate when—when—when I obtain some other employment.'

Pennison's paying pupil took down her glasses and her natural kindness shone in her eyes.

'But, my dear young man, it can't possibly be that—that—'

And then Pennison felt prompted to tell the good old soul of all his struggles, and when he came to a sudden stop she broke in.

'Now, Mr. Pennison, you just put on your hat and come with me. I know the very place to suit you. My friend Mr. Lang is looking for a clerk, and you write a nice hand. I'm almost sure you would suit him. But,' she whispered, 'you had better go out and get your hair cut first. You know business people have their little fads, and they prefer the Puritan style to the Cavalier. Now you take this money and you can pay me back another time. My dear, I too had my dreams—once upon a time.'

Pennison got the job, and was able to repay his benefactor out of his first month's salary, as well as to reinstate himself in the graces of his landlady.

Sometimes in a rare slack hour a piece of manuscript is to be found between the folios of his ponderous ledger. But he does not idly moralise, and minds his work, for in his brief revolt he learned some useful lessons—amongst others that workers are not less useful than thinkers and more useful than dreamers; that ideals are most likely to be realised when they spring from the promptings of a kindly heart; and, incidentally, that literature may be a good crutch but a bad stick.—*Catholic Fireside*.

The Catholic World.

CANADA.—Presentation to the Archbishop of Ottawa.—The total presentations in cash to Archbishop Duhamel, of Ottawa, Canada, on the occasion of his jubilee, amounted to nearly £2000.

ENGLAND.—Resignation of Canon Fenton.—The resignation of the Right Rev. Mgr. Canon Fenton, of the rectorship of St. Thomas' Church, Fulham, London, S.W., has caused sincere and general regret not only among his own parishioners (says a Home exchange), but throughout the whole neighbourhood of Fulham, where he is held in high esteem by all creeds and classes. Previous to his nomination to the Church of St. Thomas Mgr. Fenton was appointed by the late Cardinal Manning to the responsible post of President of St. Edmund's College, Oldhall, Ware, to which he has ever been a generous benefactor. Cardinal Vaughan created him a Canon of his Cathedral Chapter, and also entrusted him with the collection of fund for the erection of the new Westminster Cathedral. To this task he set himself vigorously, journeying to Rome to obtain from the Pope both his encouragement and aid. He succeeded in a private audience in enrolling Leo XIII. among the founders of the Cathedral through his donation of £1000 towards the building fund, a title to which Mgr. Fenton himself has, by his own personal contributions, more than one claim.

Religious Reception and Profession.—At the Convent chapel, Nazareth House, Hammersmith, London, on December 8 (Feast of the Immaculate Conception), an interesting ceremony of Reception and Profession took place. The following took the holy habit of religion:—Miss Aimée Frost (Sister Edmund Joseph), eldest daughter of Dr. Frost, Beech Lawn, Newmarket-on-Fergus; Miss Annie Owens (Mary Columban), third daughter of Mr. Francis Owens, Deroor, County Tyrone; Miss Ellen Butler (Mary Marcella), fifth daughter of the late Mr. Edward Butler, Glenswilly, County Donegal, and Miss Annie Murphy (Mary Johanna), youngest daughter of the late Mr. Edmund Murphy, Inch, County Limerick. Sister Mary Theophilus, fourth daughter of Mr. John Fahy, Deerpark, County Clare, made her first vows. The ceremony was performed by the Very Rev. Father Dominic Ostendi, Provincial of the Carmelites, Kensington, assisted by the Rev. W. Burns, chaplain. Amongst those present were Mr. Harry Frost and Miss Fanny Frost, brother and sister to Miss Aimée Frost.

FRANCE.—St. Francis of Assisi.—The Institute of France offers a prize of 20,000 francs for the best literary production on St. Francis of Assisi and his Order, written in or translated into French and presented to it before December, 1902.

The Gutter Press of Paris.—The Abbé Klein, of the Catholic Institute of Paris, speaking recently at a public assembly in the Institute, said in reference to the tone of the French Press towards Great Britain and the insults offered in it to the Queen: 'It would be better to study England than to annoy her by offensive language and vulgar caricature.' The Catholic Institute is the Catholic University of Paris.

FRANCE.—The Conversion of England.—Father Daireaux, a well-known French priest of the diocese of Bayeux, has been trying since 1885 with the assistance of the priests of St. Sulpice and some friends to carry out a scheme having for its aim the Conversion of England. He had founded a Confraternity of prayer for bringing back England to the faith, and placed his work under the patronage of Our Lady of Compassion, and of Joan of Arc; but his apostolic heart and missionary zeal wanted more, and he has accordingly come forward again with two more proposals, which, we (London Tablet) feel sure, will appeal to English hearts. He offers, first of all, a free education to seven boys, whom he is ready to take, teach, house and board from the age of eight years until they are twelve. After this he hopes to have given them a sufficiently good beginning to enable them to enter a seminary with