

and so presuming when even you, you, Mrs. Finlay, condescend to pay court to them. Know you not that, by going after that man to ask his consent, you tacitly acknowledged his authority, and thereby acted in total contradiction to our principles?"

"But, mamma," cried Archy, "were you indeed in the Seminary? I'm sure it's a queer sort of place—very dark and gloomy, but very grand, I suppose?"

"Why do you think it must be so grand, Archy?" demanded his mother, with a gay laugh.

"Oh, because, because papa and Mrs. Harley and everyone says that the priests are so rich;—you know, mamma, they have more money than anyone could count;—I daresay they have it in great iron chests. Did you see any there?"

"Well, I cannot say I did, Archy," said Mrs. Finlay, and she laughed heartily at the incongruous idea. "I must take you some day to see the Seminary, in order to show you that it is neither very dark nor very gloomy, nor yet very grand; nor is there a chest of any kind to be seen, either wood or iron. People who talk in that way about the Seminary, and about the priests, know very little of either one or the other, and will not take the trouble to see for themselves. I had heard those absurd stories so often, that I willingly laid hold of the opportunity to examine for myself. I tell you, Archy, there is not a particle of grandeur, or of luxury, visible in what I saw: all is clean and neat, but poor and simple;—and as for the priests, Mr. Finlay," she added, turning to him, "it is in them I really see Christian meekness and Christian humility exemplified. With many these are but empty sounds, never reduced to practice; but it is not so with the Catholic clergy. I have never seen one of them yet who deserved to be set down as 'overbearing' or 'presuming.' If you would only give very little attention to their words and actions, their real words and actions, mind you, not what is attributed to them on our platforms, then your opinion would soon change."

"Really, Harriet," said Mr. Finlay, drawing himself up, and knitting his dark brows together, "really, you go somewhat too far with your silly advocacy of Popery when you recommend me to hold intercourse with these people. No, Mrs. Finlay, it is not in accordance with my principles, and you know it is not, to associate with Jesuitical persons. I hold themselves and their principles in utter contempt, and so, I think, should all who profess to love and respect the Bible—the Bible, against which these unhappy Romanists are openly arrayed. Oh, Mrs. Finlay, Mrs. Finlay! I grieve for your delusion. Would that your darkened understanding might be opened to the light of evangelical truth!"

"Thank you, Charles, thank you very much," replied his wife, resolutely repressing the smile which played about the corners of her mouth. "I do sincerely trust that God will reveal to me the light of truth;—but for the present, I think, we had better go to dinner."

It was then half-past five; but as Montreal is rapidly progressing in refinement and civilisation, of course its *elite* all dine at aristocratic hours; no family having any pretensions to elegance or fashion would think of dining at the old-fashioned hours of bygone days; so the dinner, which in old times was the mid-day meal, is now transferred to the evening, that is, in all houses where good style is affected.

"So passed the day—the evening fell,  
'Twas near the time of curfew bell."

Ay, and long past it, too, for the hall-clock had struck ten when "the little world below" were all summoned to the upper regions; and, as the servants moved upstairs one after another, Alice whispered to Bridget, "Why, where in the world are we all going?"

"Why, to worship, to be sure: to family worship."

"Family worship!" repeated Alice. "Is that the Rosary, or what is it?" But Bridget could not answer, for just then the dining-room door was opened by the cook, who led the van, and in they all marched, rank and file.

Mr. Finlay was seated at the table, in awful dignity, with a large folio Bible before him; Mrs. Finlay sat in a rocking-chair at a little distance; Archy was playing with his favorite dog—a shaggy animal of the Newfoundland breed

—and Cecilia sat at the table, right opposite to her father, looking as grave and serious as himself. The servants glided into their several places with mechanical regularity; and Mrs. Finlay, seeing that Alice looked somewhat puzzled, and stood alone in the middle of the room, made a sign to her to sit down. Mr. Finlay looked at her with keen scrutiny, but "never a word spoke he." Opening his Bible, he began to read in a deep, solemn voice, and of all the chapters in the Bible, what should he read but that one from the Apocalypse wherein is described the seven-horned beast. Alice listened, and listened, and wondered as she listened; for, though perfectly familiar with all the practical and didactic parts of the Scripture, from hearing the Gospels and Epistles read and expounded by the priests, she had never been initiated into the high and mystic revelations of the favored apostle. But she was not long left to ponder on the meaning of what she had heard; for, the chapter ended, Mr. Finlay began to explain it, according, as it would seem, to his usual custom. What was Alice's surprise when she heard him solve the enigma to the effect that the beast of whom St. John spoke was no other than the Church of Rome, his seven horns the seven hills on which the city of Rome is built, and so on. Then, again, he turned to the account of the scarlet woman, given by the same mystic writer, and her ladyship was also identified with the same Church—God help her! Then worthy Mr. Finlay closed his book and went on to descant upon the minute points of resemblance in each cast. Mrs. Finlay glanced at Alice, and was amused to see the blank astonishment with which she gazed on Mr. Finlay, drinking in his words, albeit that they were of "learned length and thundering sound."

After giving what he considered a triumphant exposition of the passages in question, proving beyond all doubt that St. John could have had nothing else in view when he painted those mysterious portraits, but the manifold abominations of the Romish Church, Mr. Finlay pushed back his chair, and knelt, facing his congregation, who, of course, followed his example. Alice pulled out her beads, and was beginning to say her own prayers internally, when Mr. Finlay happened to look towards her. Stopping in the middle of a moving petition, that all men might be freed from the galling trammels of superstition, he commanded the beads to be put away.

"Ah, then, why, if you please, sir?"

"Because, my good girl, we don't practise any such mummary here. Put away the beads and repeat the prayers after me."

"I can't, sir," said Alice, stoutly; "they're not our prayers, and I can't say them."

Mr. Finlay looked most unchristianly angry; but he bit his lip, and went on with his extemporaneous prayer, and Alice, very quietly, said her Rosary, blessing herself at every decade with as much devotion as though at home at her Uncle Dinny's fireside, and not a Protestant within a square mile of her. But the best of it was that Archy espied the beads, and having watched Alice for some time, he burst into a loud laugh, whereupon his father again stopped, to express his horror of such unchristian levity.

"I can't help it, papa," said Archy, still laughing, "when I see the little girl there—the newcomer—counting over her beads, and her lips moving all the time, and she looking so pious. If you want me to keep from laughing you must send her away, or else take the beads from her."

"Fie, fie, Archy!" said his mother, reproachfully, while his father turned an awful look on Alice, and saying, "The boy is right; I ought not to have permitted so great a scandal," he ordered her sternly to put up her beads. Alice obeyed; but moving over into a corner and thrusting her fingers in her ears, so as to shut out what she did not choose to hear, she went on a little longer with her own prayers, Mr. Finlay pretending not to notice her. But quiet did not reign long, for when Archy looked again at Alice, the sight was fatal to his gravity, and his mirth was then contagious, for mistress and butler and coachman, cook and housemaid, all burst out laughing, and in the midst of the general uproar, Mr. Finlay took hold of Alice by the shoulder with one hand, and snatched her beads with the other. Himself he thrust out into the hall and banged the door after her, then flung the beads into the fire which burned in the grate.

"Our worship has been strangely interrupted," said he,