

ed so materially with money, and coached so faithfully in the classics?"

"Charlie McManus, the model Catholic lad? Of course I remember him. What has become of him?"

"He stands before you, Father. But he is no longer the model Catholic boy, but a most wretched, ungrateful scoundrel, who has insulted you most shamefully and—"

He was interrupted by Father Welsby, who took the young man's hand and shook it frankly and affectionately. "My dear Mac, let us go back into the sitting-room," he said as he took the young man by the arm.

## II.

"Father Welsby," began young McManus, "you cannot imagine how low, how mean, how abject I feel when I think of the way—"

"Now, Mac, none of that. For the sake of Auld Lang Syne, not another word about our bumping together in the street and the little comedy that followed."

"But—"

"There is no butting in my house. Tell me what you have been doing with yourself these fourteen years. By this time you ought to be a most successful lawyer."

"I ought to be; but alas! I am nothing but a vile, wretched dissipated spendthrift. I have squandered my talents, my money, my time, in search of pleasure, and I have found nothing but disappointment, misery and mental suffering. Ever since I gave up the practice of my religion, I have never enjoyed a moment of real happiness. My temper has been soured, my health impaired, my mind obscured, my will weakened. In fact, my whole existence has been poisoned. If I had the courage to burst asunder the heavy and loathsome chains that bind me to this heart I would—"

"You would make a good confession, my dear Mac, and repair the past and be happy, as happy as you were at Shaftsbury when you practiced your religion."