MARK WINSTON, POSTAL CLERK.

BY HOMER MARCELLUS PRICE.

In the early eighties I was a railway postal clerk on one of the principal lines of the South. I was a "helper," and had as "clerk in charge" a man much older than myself. How much older I never knew, for that was one of his tender points. The family Bible of his tender points. and the Blue Bock at Washington only could give information about his age. However, he was old enough to have received a Yankee ballet square in the face at Chickamauga, and it had left a deep scar on his face. He was, and is, one of the few absolutely true men to be met in a lifetime. His name here will be Mark Winston, but my old friend, now in the superintendent's office, signs a different one to the month-

ly pay roll.
We left our eastern terminus one night with a very light mail. We were running on the through southern were running on the through southern fast mail and made few stops, as most of our exchanges were made by the "catcher" service. Our distribution soon finished, we lit our pipes, and Mark commenced a war story. That story was never finished, for it was interrunted at the next story by the analysis of the commenced at the next story by the commenced at the next stor terrupted at the next stop by the entrance of two post office inspectors We were much surprised at their business when we learned they were going to "block the mails," to test-let us

call him—Ben Craig.

Ben was a postal clerk running on a small line connecting our through train with another trunk road fifty south of us. His point of connec tion with our line lay some forty miles further on, and he made the trip every night. He handled considerable mail, as this was our outlet for New Orleans. "Blocking the mails means the

placing of any number of decoy or test letters in the ordinary mail. letters contain marked money, and have been previously post marked along the line, from which they are supposed to have originated. Of course all points of irregularity are carefully covered. The decoys are placed in discriminately through the mail that the clerk suspected of dishonesty e terminus of his rur the mail is hastily examined by an inspector, when the clerk is not present, and if any of the decoy letters are mis sing the clerk is arrested and searched The work for the marked money. The work test "is now used instead of "decoy, but I use the latter word because of the universal employment at the time this incident occurred. "Test" is really the better word, for there is no effort made to decoy clerks; but they fall, if fall they must, by handling no unusu ally tempting mail. When depredations occur in the dispatch of any cerone clerk after another is tested until all employes handling this mail have been tried, unless some poor fellow is apprehended before the test is completed. It is, therefore, simply a test, as much to ascertain if a clerk is honest as it is to catch a thief.

We all knew there was much complaint about letters to the Louisiana state lottery being rifled. The great gambling institution was then running at full blast in the Crescent city, and the mails had not yet been denied it as a means of communication. postal car in the South was burdened with its mail, and money was sent in ordinary letters by the thousands. If any employe had a drop of dishonest blood in his veins here was a chance for it to be made manifest. Mail originating on and coming over our line had, it appeared, been made the special prey of some dishonest clerk. Our line, we were informed, had been tested thoroughly and given a "bill of The same has been done with the line running into New Orleans, and each clerk had stood the test. Every one that could possibly this muil had been tested except Ben, and it was clear that Uncle Sam's secret service men expected that night to close inspection case No. 7312 by his arrest.

The decoy letters were put in th mail we were to turn over to Ben. I noticed how sober was Winston, my clerk in charge, as he went to the car door and looked out for some time at the peaceful scenes of hill and valley, forest and field, as they swept by in th pale moonlight. Above the rattle of the train came only the occasional bark of an awakened farm dog or the whis tle of an engine as it approached the country lanes. Suddenly Mark turned and said rather cynically, I thought

"I wender if every man does have I don't usually think so, but if Ben Craig has received his and sold out I'm not so sure. You seem to be certain of your man, gentlemen, he said to the two secret service men, "and I own the evidence is against Still I've known that boy a good while, and it's hard to believe him a thief. He has been poor enough to be one, but I haven't always noticed that poverty and dishonesty went to-When he first came to Chattanooga to go into the service as a substitute, he didn't have a thing but sickly wife and a pretty nearly blind baby girl. 'Subbing' is a mighty poor business to make a living at now, and it was much worse in those times especially at Chattanooga. He could make a few dollars only when some clerk laid off, and that old gang thought too much of the almighty dollar to lay off for anything except

death or a broken leg."
Here Wineton told a story about the nearness," as he called it, of one of the old timers on the Atlanta route, and finally came back to Ben's case shell Baptist church mouse, I tell you.
The only thing in the world he had in the way of collateral was some stock in a busted iron mine in Alabama. He tried to sell this to me is how I hap-

pened to know it. I offered to loan him money on it if he would keep the stock—I had all of that kind of paper I wanted. He declined my offer, which was the only one I ever heard of being made for this boomed and busted stock. All through his poverty he was cheerful, and we rather liked him. True, we didn't know much about him, for he kept aloof from the boys and acted rather mysteriously, some of them thought. But I always believed it was his pride and his poverty got mixed, and you may look or some strange things when that con dition happens, unless you get on the inside and know your mane.

A reverse curve nearly knocked Mark "off his pins," but, steadying himself against a pouch rack, he went

"Last summer was the hardest times I ever saw. The bottom had dropped out of everything, and Ben just held on because he couldn't get anything else to do. One morning I was in the chief clerk's office correct ing my 'scheme,' when he came in as usual to see if there was any work for him; and, as usual, there was nothing. He was nearly in rags, and a sadder looking man I never saw. After he was gone I asked the 'old man,' as we called the chief, about Ben, and he said not a man had taken a day off in over three weeks, and he couldn't see how There was going to the fellow lived. be a reunion of old rebel soldiers up at Knoxville next day, so I just thought I would go up and yell a little with the boys myself. My run was due out that night, so I went to inform Ben to take it out for me. I followed him home about two blocks behind, and there he went, with his head down and never looking round, to the poorest part of the old town. When he came to the door in answer to my knock he had the baby in his arms, with her eyes all bandaged up so she couldn't see a wink. They thought I was the doctor, but when Ben told her it was Mr. Win stow, she put her arms up and I leaned over and kissed her. She sorter hugged me like and said 'I love 'ou, It kind o' staggered Winston.' me at first, but Ben spoke of a little triffe I had sent her by him last Christmas, and then I knew. Children don't forget.

The old fellow was silent a moment, but brightening up, said: "Well, I had a fine time at Knexville—old General Frank Rebel Cteatam was there and I stayed longer than I expected Ben made four or five trips for me, and when I returned I went down to his home to get my mail key and my traps, and met the doctor coming away from the house. I stopped him and inquired about the child's eyes. He said the case was a peculiar one, and he feared he was unable to do anything more for her. In fact, he had told them that morning that an early operation was absolutely necessary, and he had re-commended Dr. C., of Atlanta, as the one man to do it. The operation was a very delicate one, but he had no doubt but that this great oculist could save But it would be expensive her eyes. and he didn't think Craig could afford t. Said 'twas a pity, too, for she was a beautiful child, and sweet as a rosebud. I remembered he said rosebud, for I thought he used a good word.

When I entered the house it was plain Ben and his wife had been cry When the child heard my voice ing. she said she wished she could see so she could look at Mr. Winston, for she had never seen him. But I thought it was just as well she couldn't, for maybe she had some kind of an idea about how I looked that the real thing might have startled her. I remained only a moment, and beckoned Ben out of He got his hat and said he would go up town with me. As we walked along I asked him if he needed the house ould go up town with me. As we alked along I asked him if he needed elp—charged him to tell the truth. Vell, gentlemen, with that child's hole future at stake he said no. Now, never had one of them little fellows whole future at stake he said no. Now, I never had one of them little fellows of my own, but I sorter realized what it would mean to have one like that, with nothing in life but darkness and blindness, when a few dollars stood in the way of its getting its eyes all right Put me in that fix and some fellow trying to loan me money, and the only question I'd ask would be, how big is your bank account? I wouldn't be studying whether I could pay it back or not. But Ben did, and he wouldn't take a cent. And what do you reckon he was going down town you reckon ne was going down town for? Well, sir, to turn in a purse containing \$300, which he found on a coach seat at the other end of the run. To save the price of a bed he had been sleeping in the cars in the yards at Nashville, and 'twas there he found the purse. Half of it would save his child's eyes, and he never seemed to have thought of it; but I did, and came near telling him so when he asked me if it would be right to accept a reward. Said he didn't think so a first, but since the doctor's visit to his house that morning he didn't know. Well, of course, nothing came of it, for only stingy people lose their pocket-books. Ben's got the letter yet, thanking him for his honesty."

Mark exchanged mails as we thun-dered by a small town, and I took the pouch from his hands, thinking there was more of the story. Finally one of was more of the story. Finally one of the inspectors said "He did take his child to Atlanta and spend \$200 getting her eyes cured. That's one of the strong points against him. There was trouble on your old line then, Win ston, and you know we never could locate the thief and Craig did nearly all his 'subbing' right there. I appreciate the sentiment in this case, but our business is to locate riflers of the

take lottery money if a child's eyes were the stake. I hope it will never be played that high for me, for that four years of a hungry soldier's life seems to have dulled my ideals some what. Still, I don't believe Ben stole it, and my life on it, you will find your marked money on that

child's father. Mark was tying out the letters and packages and placing them in the pouch that would be given Ben at our next stopping point. He musingly continued as he worked: "She makes the trip with him sometimes-comes over to see her aunt at this end of the line, I believe. Been doing so ever since he got a regular run down here. I shouldn't wonder if she's with him tonight. Hope she is, for—well, no matter. Say," speaking aloud, "aid you ever see that young one?"

As we pulled up by the side of Ben's

car a few minutes later we saw him standing in the door with his child in Well, he didn't look like a his arms. thief a bit, but inspectors don't go much on looks. I went ever to Craig's car and he signed me for through Ne Orleans registered mail. As I left I heard him tell the child, "Throw a

kiss to Mr. Winston."
When I climbed back into the car Mark was murmuring something with God's name in it. It may have been a God same in the course—it might have been a prayer. He was the only man I ever knew that could say both with equal earnestness. All that night over hill and valley, through tunnel and across water gap the old train thundered as Mark and alone in the car worked and watched Winston continually waited. and for the first time, complained of the glare of the lamps on the catche cranes when an exchange was made but he said nought else. Just as morn ing dawned, when we were nearing the end of our run, the train stopped at a small station in answer to a red The telegraph operator ran signal. to our car as it stopped and handed me a telegram. Again we were on our our way, and Mark motioned me to open the message. He was deathly oale, and almost staggered. We both knew it had to tell of the night's result in some way, but why we should be telegraphed I could not see. My hand trembled a little, and my voice quavered as I read aloud:

"Winston, clerk in charge, Train No. 7. Decoys missing. Party arrested. No evi-dence found. Can there be a mistake redence found. Can Answer. Answer. "MEAD, Inspector."

As I finished reading the message I looked up bewildered to the letter case where Mark's hand was pointing, and there was the New Orleans mail, decoys, test letters and all, not tied out. To this day I do not know whether Winston left them intentionally or not. He never said, and I never questioned him. I have sometimes thought that he lost faith for a moment in Ben, and had silently determined to take no chances.

As we went into the office that morning to make our report the chief clerk was saying to Walt Savage of the Jacksonville route:

"No, you can never tell about this mining business. You see Craig came never starving to death subbing round here, until last spring some Yankees came along and took up that old mine he had stock in, and in two months it was paying dividends. He's got over \$1,000 out of it already, and here is his resignation from the mail service and he goes as secretary to the Wills Valley Iron Company the first of the month.

Mark was in a good humor all day, and the next and the next. I went out with a new man my next trip. Tha general order issued that day contained the following:

Before the thirty days were out the

real thief had been caught, and it showed that Mark could have trusted his friend to the utmost .- The Independent.

THE MONTH OF MAY.

Last Tuesday began the month of May, the month of Mary and the month of joy. Oatside the Catholic Church, of joy. Oatside the Catholic Church, the devotion we feel towards the Bles. sed Virgin is often misunderstood, al though to us it seems singular that such should be the case. For us, it is enough to know that she is the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Mother who loved Him, tended and cared for him watched over Him in His cradle, and stood beside His Cross. Besides, if we are the members of Christ, we comprehend that she is our Mother also. can echo the beautiful words of St Stanislaus Kostka, when asked why he loved her, "It is enough to say that she is my mother." We who have dearly loved our own patient earthly mothers; can we help loving and hon oring the Mother of Jesus Christ?

Let us then keep with joyous devo tion her month of May; hear Mas often, perhaps daily; daily say the rosary, visit the Blessed Sacrament and Mary's shrine. In receiving Holy Communion, let us try to think how she felt when, in her spotles purity and perfect love, she also re-ceived that Blessed Sacrament. Above all, let us strive to imitate her in her unfailing service of her God and ours remembering that in so doing "the simplest and most ordinary acts of daily life will all have their reward. -Sacred Heart Review.

We must never undervalue any

VICTORY WILL COME.

The Battle of the Catholic Church

The barque of Peter in the eighteenth centuries during which it has ridden the waves has passed through many storms. And at times the children of the Church, in spite of their knowledge that they are divinely protected so long as they heed the apostolic steersman voice, have felt the approach of emo tion not unakin to heart-shaking dis may

At the present moment minds and souls are not unaffected by the influ-ence of passing events. It may be in place, therefore, to dwell upon the truth that the Church which God has founded and in which His spirit dwells shall not, according to the Divine promise, fail until the world and all that are on it have an end. "Heaven and earth shall pass away." and Our Lord, "but My words shall not pass away." And one of His explicit words was that He would be with the Church all the days. be with the Church all the days, until

the end of time.
Catholics, then with His divine promise in their minds and hearts, may look out confidently upon the storms that rage around the Church, for they know that Christ is in Peter's boat and in His own hour will rise and bid the waves rest and the wind be still, as erstwhile He did upon the waters of the lake. Amid much that tries and trouble anxious souls there is always that anchor left. Nothing shall overcome; not even the gates of hell shall prevail against the kingdom which the Son of

God set up. Storms there have been, are now and forever will be; trial and opposition are our lot, as they were our Master's, but the victory is sure. Of the time or the manner it is not ours to forecast but the fact is ours to recognize and be thankful for. The victory will come, and the storms will blow by and the sea be still.

To day the loss of faith is a characteristic of the modern mind. But there has been infidelity before. It has had almost as many fashions as dress. As a recent Catholic writer puts it: "In the sixteenth century infidelity came with literature; in the eighteenth with philosophy; in the nineteenth it has come chiefly with Biblical studies. And he adds as a corollary of counsel to the foregoing indisputable state ment: "This, therefore, is the field in which the Christian apologist has to concentrate his forces. In others oc-casional battles will have to be fought -in philosopy, in history, in the physical and moral sciencestest in this generation will continue to rage oftenest, longest and hottest around the books of the Old and the

New Testament." Any one who takes note of the cease less output of critical Biblical literature in our times, says the London Catholic Times, will have no diffi-culty in admitting the truth of the conclusion this writer draws. And it is well for us Catholics that amid so much that requires sifting and care fully weighing to even approximately estimate its relative worth-it is well, we say, and should deeply console us that we can afford to wait, securely relying upon the Church and her infalli-

ble doctrinal authority.
Where some, eager to settle every difficulty offnand, will foolishly follow their own views, indifferent to, it may be neglectful of, the voice of the wit ness of truth, the Church's faithful chil dren will know how to possess their souls in patience, obedient to her teaching, submissive to her majesterium and confident that when errors and crude speculations have had their little day and settled down she will be found, as she has been ever found, un changed and untouched, holding aloft ch of truth that was lit by Jesus Christ and has been kept aflame for

,800 years by His indwelling Spirit. Faint hearts may take courage and strength. Systems and theories come and go. They are as ephemeral as magazine articles, which provide teatable chatter and amuse an idle hour. The thinker and the philosophic reader can run over in his mind a whole milky way of systems that now give little light and are of less value than one sparkling star. You can follow their course across the page of history. They were splendid and glistened in their day. Now their beauty and radiance are gone, and few care even to know their titles or investigate

their teachings.

But the Church lives on, ever carry ing out her divine commission to instruct men in those matters which her Lord gave her to teach. She is no coterie of changeling philosophers, no lumber room of exploded systems. She is the ever living and unfailing voice of God. Men upbraid her that she does not change. They insist that her doctrines are like everything else in this world-liable to be improved that her definitions are as pliable as scientific dicta. They forget-perhaps they do not forget, but simply deny-that her truth is from God. He gav it to her ! she did not make it. And so far as time and circumstances called forth from her explicit declarations as to its nature or its extent, His holy spirit brooded over her delibera-

tions and "led her into all truth."
"These things, especially in our day, cannot be too frequently brought to the mind of Catholics. They know, if others do not, in whose hands is the propagative to declars [Red]'s word. day, cannot be too frequently brought to the mind of Catholics. They know, if others do not, in whose hands is the prerogative to declare God's word. If now and again mental trial come upon them, and they ask for further light and are eager for greater haste and they are considered to the form of the Protestan Reformation, by Wm. Cobbett. Revised, with Notes and Preface by Very Rev. Francis Aldaria in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive the protection of the Protestan Reformation, by Wm. Cobbett. Revised, with Notes and Preface by Very Rev. Francis Aldaria in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to greater the protection of the Protestan Reformation, by Wm. Cobbett. Revised, with Notes and Preface by Very Rev. Francis Aldaria in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to declare God's word. If in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to declare God's word. If in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to declare God's word. If in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to declare God's word. If in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to declare God's word. If in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to declare God's word. If in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to declare God's word. If in large, clear type. As it is published at an expensive to be charged in Canada. If the province of the province to the province of the province to t and are eager for greater haste and fancy that fictions are dangerously growing toward fact, let them look over the long past and see how often storms have beaten upon the rock and how frequently men dreamed it would

And, lo, the storm went crumble. back and the rock was unmoved

So it has been! So it will be! We need not worry at one trouble or an-The Church knows best. Her voice speaks the truth. And we hear and heed it because of Him who said to her first apostles, "He that heareth you, heareth Me." Jesus, the Son of God, the Way, the Truth and the Life, is the same yesterday and to-day and will not change forever. are with those whom He has appointed to rule His Church we are safe and under their protecting rule we shall be guided unto all wisdom in the things of God .- Church Progress.

SHOULD KNOW BETTER.

It is astonishing to hear some Cath lics, who ought to know better, speak of their sick friends receiving the last sacraments. Now, it is a fact that the rites of the Catholic Church as administered to the sick, have a decidedly beneficial and soothing effect upon the The confession of past sins which haunt the sick man through the sleepless hours of enforced reflection, relieves the mind. The fear of retribution, induced by the thought of pos sible death, turns into hope after he has received the assurance of pardon, given, not in the form of friendly desires or pious sentiments, but as an efficacious remedy vouchsafed to man by God through the ministry of man, and always sure of being obtained so long as the sinner has a true sorrow for his offence. Thus, too, in extreme unction, the prayers which the priest pronounces as he anoints the different senses of the body remind the patient that even now, though his life is in jeopardy, he need not fear. A special sacramental grace is given him when earthly remedies have been pronounced as no longer availing or greatly doubtful. Then the sincere Catholic is made to remember that if the wisdom of God deems it for his advantage to live, he will recover in the strength of that last sacramental prayer, made in the name and power of Christ; but if not, he is

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