

scruple to praise it, since the praise, for once, does not belong to me. There will be many future occasions, I hope, when I shall serve the Signor with my united efforts; but today, when my brain lacked invention, I was not too proud to accept aid.

"Aid from whom, then?" asked the surprised Senator. Cesare, without more ado, narrated the whole story, adding, as in defence of his own action:

"Truly, I think the boy is not without wit; and, besides, his grandfather is an honest man, and my good friend—Pasino Canova, the stonemason of Possagno."

Possagno was a little village lying at the foot of the Venetian Alps, where they slope down into the plains of Treviso. The very next day, Falleri made his way thither, sought out the workshop of the stonemason, and inquired for little Antonio.

The boy came out to him at once, and stood in the door with a chisel in his brown hand, and his thick hair and ragged little-shirt all powdered with the dust of the workshop. The Senator greeted him kindly, spoke of the pleasure that San Marco's lion had given to him and his guests, and asked to be shown some more of Antonio's work.

"I work for my grandfather," said Tonio, in a sober tone. "We have to earn our livelihood, Signor, and to make things that our customers wish for. It is when I am at leisure that I make other things to please myself, as I made San Marco's Lion."

And eagerly, yet quietly, he brought out for the Senator's inspection some of the little images he had moulded in clay, or cut out from odds and ends of stone. Falleri examined them all, put a question or two, and then, suddenly turning to old Pasino, asked for permission to take the boy to Venice with him.

"If he, indeed, has talent, Torretto will show him how to develop it." At the name of Torretto, the most famous sculptor of the day, Tonio's heart gave such a leap that it seemed about to fly out of his body. He could scarcely believe that he was not dreaming. But Giuseppe Falleri, the Senator's young son, who had accompanied his father, came up to him, and gave him a friendly pinch, which assured him that he was awake. He and Giuseppe had had many a game together in the courtyard of the "Palazzo," and now, while their elders talked, they strolled away in the sunshine together, their arms about each other's necks, and their tongues going at a great pace.

"You shall come and live at the 'Palazzo,' when you are not at Torretto's," declared Giuseppe. "It is true that I cannot model and chisel as well as you do, and am not particularly interested in it, but there are many other things that we both like, and can do together. I shall ask my father to let you come back with us this very day."

"I am not sure," objected Tonio, "that my grandfather will be able to spare me." But it seemed that the Senator and the stonemason in their talk together had come to an agreement about that, though the parting was not without tears, and though Tonio, on the way across the plain towards Venice turned again and again to look back at the little village, with its low white roofs crouching in the shelter of the hills and the vines in a sunny row climbing the slopes beside it.

Possagno seemed to be following with its eyes the receding figure of the little bare-footed boy who had been born and bred in it, and for whom the great world outside it was surely, no fit place.

Years rolled by. Many things happened. Great and far-reaching changes came to pass. The terrible storm of strife and revolution that had so long been brewing had broken in all its fury over Europe, and had gradually subsided again, leaving the world weary of warmakers.

Italy had had its full share of the troubles, and the proud Republic of Venice had suffered severely at the hands of the Austrian and French conquerors; but places so small and unimportant as Possagno had enjoyed comparative peace, and looked little the worse for all that had come and gone.

On a warm sunny day in the early autumn of 1819, four years after the fall of Napoleon, Possagno himself was making holiday and everybody in it was wearing his or her best clothes and a cheerful face.

The great sculptor, Antonio Canova, whose name was known throughout the civilized world, and on whom Popes and Emperors—as well as the President of the new Republic of America, far beyond the seas—had showered honors, had been building in his native place a "Temple of Art," in which to house his statues, and today he was celebrating its completion by a feast to his workmen and to the entire village.

All day he had come and gone among the merry-makers, mingling in the mirth and increasing it by his own quiet cheerfulness; and now, in the hour before Vespers he walked with his friend, Giuseppe Falleri, in the loggia of his villa, and talked of the years that lay behind him.

There had been that happy time in Torretto's studio, when he was learning dutifully all the master

could teach, and growing into the master's favored and trusted pupil, never forgetting that he had ideas of his own which he must work out in his own way, inspirations which he must follow.

And that other happy time when, through the kindness of some good monks, he had obtained a studio of his own—that vacant cell which they had lent him in their monastery, and into which they themselves would often come to watch him at his work. Then the life at Rome, in the beautiful Papal City, where in Pope Clement XIV., a great patron of the arts, had given him important commissions, and where he had been able to bring his widowed grandmother to live with him in his grand quarters, and to provide her with every possible comfort till the end of her days.

Even in the troublous times, Antonio had contrived to go on working, patiently making beautiful things, and drawing men's minds, as far as possible, away from strife and bloodshed, towards the Arts of peace.

He had traveled, visited Germany and England; and, soon after the fall of Napoleon, had gone as envoy to Paris to negotiate for the return of some of those great works of art which Napoleon had carried out of Italy. His fame had traveled farther still, for his bust of the great President Washington stood in the State House of Raleigh, in North Carolina.

Yes! It was a long and wonderful life that he looked back on; and now it seemed to him almost like a long dream, from which he was awakened by the draw of long breath, and flung an arm around his friend's shoulders.

"It is good to be at home again, my Beppo, and good to find so many here ready to welcome the returned wanderer and to show him kindness."

"It would be strange," answered Falleri, "if they did not welcome one of whom Possagno is so proud. And as for showing you kindness, have they not much kindness to repay?"

For Canova, famous for his genius, was famous also for his benevolence. He spent the greater part of the vast sums his work had brought him in practical acts of charity and helpfulness; and today he had assembled all the peasant girls of Possagno and the surrounding villages, and bestowed on each of them a sum of money sufficient for her wedding dowry. That was the sort of thing he delighted to do for the pure pleasure that benevolence gave him. So when Giuseppe spoke of Possagno's debt of gratitude, he laughed and shook his head.

"It is I that am in the debt of those to whom I do a kindness. It is the only pleasure that has not lost its relish for me. Not even from art do I get such delight nowadays. 'Tis God's way of showing me that all my brain and hands have been able to create is worthless compared with simple Christian charity and neighborly love."

"You are right in a way," said Falleri gently. "But God Himself is a creator; and you, who, in all your work, are inspired by Nature and by things as God made them, have surely done what was worth doing, and what you would not wish to undo."

The sculptor turned to his friend. In the evening light, his face kindled with the old creative joy, his eyes shone with the old fire of youth.

"Ah, yes! I value the gift God put in my keeping. I have been very happy in using it. But Beppo," he added, with a sudden whimsical smile, "I have never been happier than when I could combine a work of art with a work of kindness, as happened long ago, in your father's kitchen, when I changed a block of butter into a lion of San Marco, and heard old Cesare exclaiming that the saints had sent me to his aid!"—Catholic Fireside.

THE DIVORCE BILL IN PARLIAMENT

We do not recall ever having read in the South African secular press so able an indictment of the Divorce Bill as that which appeared in The Cape. In language of deep earnestness and with a courage and vigor that must command the respect even of those who would still further loosen the marriage tie among the South African people, The Cape appeals to Parliament to reject Mr. Van Hees' Bill for extending the grounds of divorce. The Southern Cross would not be faithful to its mission as the guardian of Catholic interests if it did not express the gratitude of the Catholics of the land to a secular journal which has stated the Christian and moral and social arguments against Divorce with such comprehensiveness and insight, and in terms of which Catholics themselves, who take the higher—that is to say the strictly religious view—will not cordially and gratefully approve.

There is indeed hardly a passage in this grand exposure of the spiritual, moral and social disaster of Easier Divorce to which Catholics may not, and will not, subscribe. Take for instance, this fine passage dealing with the proposals of Mr. Van Hees' Bill that the permanent and incurable mental or physical disease of one partner should entitle the other to a divorce:

"Can we afford to fashion our lives so that no more is expected of us than that life shall be made as pleasant and easy for us as possible, that anything that tends to stand in the way of our human desires and satisfactions be swept out of the way by the stroke of a pen and the enactment of Parliament? And it is marriage, of all the institutions of life, the very foundations of which are shaken by this new Bill, which calls for the exercise of just those qualities which the world is ready to sweep aside today. It is inseparable from self-sacrifice. It is full of difficulties. Upon the foundation of marriage is built the stability of nations. Marriage, undertaken in the right spirit, is the key which unlocks the door to national prosperity, to universal good. And yet, recognizing that it is in its spiritual and idealistic essence its greatest good exists, we are preparing to place it upon a lower level, where expediency and convenience are to nullify the idealism and negative the opportunity for the triumph of the man over the brutes of the field. For surely if a man is to prove his manliness—and a woman her tenderness, it will not be in the sunlight of happiness but in the hour of darkest need. When but in the hour of pain and sickness and desolation do we cling most closely to those we love? It is again the sign of the hand of the Divine upon us that the most thoughtless, the most depraved, rise on occasions of need and sorrow out of their dead selves to surprising heights of heroism. And yet a man and woman, bound to cleave to each other till the hour of death, are so little true to their higher selves as to chafe at the need for self-sacrifice and restraint and be given the opportunity to free themselves."

"How are we to reconcile the callous outlook of a woman who sees her man, the father of her children, stricken with a dreadful scourge and chooses another mate, with the idealism of the true woman? It fits in very well with the theory of the soulless jellyfish or protoplasm, but if man is, as he still asserts he is, akin to the Divine, it fits in ill with his aspirations."

Or again let us quote (if we may) this powerful passage on the effect of Divorce on the children of our South African homes:

"We have taken the home and family life as the stepping-off place into the world. We teach the child, in the shelter of the home, to love what is pure and good and beautiful. We fill his mind with stories of heroes of fair deeds; we teach it self-control, restraint; we prove to it that its greatest good is to be of service to others. And then, with little more than a stroke of the pen, we are able to strike away from beneath its feet the very foundations of its young life. The child finds then life has no solidity, no permanence. It has been called upon to exercise the very qualities its parents have failed to use. They have needed self-restraint, tolerance, forbearance, patience, a great sacrificing love to keep together the edifice of the home, and they have failed. And so, divorce made easy shatters not only the foundations of the home but the child's beliefs, its sheet-anchor against its own temptations and future needs."

"Are we going to barter this fair birthright of peace and domestic happiness which a rigid and honorable observance of the laws of marriage bring to a people for the loose and easy dissolution of the marriage bonds which have meant national and moral deterioration and disaster and a pitiful train of attendant ills and difficulties elsewhere? It will be a national calamity we should do all in our power to avert."

We do not think we will need to apologise for quoting at such length from our contemporary. To paraphrase The Cape's article would be to do an injustice to the vigor of its language, the earnest deliberation with which it has chosen the words in which it assails this social curse of Divorce which is making South Africa a rival of the United States in the cheapening of the holy bond of matrimony and bringing modern marriages perilously near the level of "free love." Here is what The Cape says on the Legislature's omission to recognize the spiritual, the Divine element in modern "civilization" in its relation to the marriage contract:

"If we are to ignore this quality in man, to build our lives upon a foundation of materialism and self-indulgence, in which idealism and spirituality are replaced by legal contracts and the whims of individuals, and the gospel of self and expediency replaces the idealism of the Gospel of Christ, what is left in life but blind chaos—unreasoning confusion? What incentive is there for us to do right—to choose the uphill, stony way because it is the right way? What incentive do we give our children to do right? What is there to urge the soldier to his valorous deeds, the unnamed martyrs to be faithful to a dying cause, to spur poor human nature to those deeds of sacrifice and renunciation which have shone as lights through the history of the world?"

It is surely something to the credit of South Africa that in the secular press of the land there is at least one voice raised with certain sound against this horrible evil of Divorce which is undermining the foundations of the homes of South Africa. Catholics of course press their protests against divorce along a higher plane than it can be carried on in the secular press. We oppose

divorce wholly and absolutely, because it is a profanation of a Sacrament instituted by Christ Himself which no power on earth has any right or ever can have right to tamper with. On the immutable law of God we take our stand. None the less we are appreciative of and grateful for the help of the secular press in showing the social and political dangers that must inevitably follow on the transgression of the Divine and All-Wise command.—Southern Cross.

GREAT ADVANTAGES

When Christ said that: "Unless your justice abound more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." He meant that unless your virtue be more genuine than that of those outside of the One Fold, you shall not receive your reward.

Why should this be? Because within that one integral form of Christianity the spiritual advantages are so far in excess of all other partial forms of Christianity that much more is demanded of its members. If much be given much will be required. Let us indicate merely and briefly one or two of these advantages. Of that mystical Body of Christ, the Church, we are members, and from His blood we draw that spiritual nutriment—grace—just as the branch draws its life from the sap of the tree.

We have the Sacraments—those channels of interior life, which follow us throughout our spiritual career—from Baptism, which lifting us out of the state of nature to the supernatural, gives an atoning merit to our every act to Extreme Unction, which consecrates every physical sense, eye, ear, nose, hands and feet of our sinful bodies.

Not only the soul and body, but the mind also is safeguarded by that criterion of interpretation which secures every dogma and perplexing text of the sacred books. So much for ourselves, but others too aid us; not only the intercommunication of sanctity from the Communion of Saints, but the participation in the good works and prayers of all the Faithful.

Furthermore, through the Sacraments, external nature becomes a means of grace to us, salt, oil, wax, wool and water, so that there is a hallowing power in the birds of the air and beasts of the field and even every clod of earth. Not only this, but there is also consecration in the chiselled stone of the altar—in every mood of religious emotion provoked by the voice of a musical instrument—in every sound of a blessed bell.

This brings us to speak of the Angelus bell in the towers of our churches, monasteries and convents. When it rings three times a day let us stop in the midst of our work, if we can, just as Our Lady stopped her work when drawing water from the well, to hear the Angel's voice.

But this may not be quite to the point—the one brief lesson worth teaching is this: That since we are part of this all-embracing economy of religion—the Catholic Church—with its exceptional spiritual advantages over all other sects of Christendom, we are bound to manifest

the fruits of these advantages by the good example, of practical virtue among our fellowmen.—The Missionary.

COMING NEARER
ANGLICAN CONGRESS IN LONDON POINTS TO REUNION OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH WITH ROME
A dispatch from London dated July 9th is as follows:
About twenty thousand delegates, bishops, priests, and laymen, representing, it is said, one-third of the communicating membership of the Church of England, will gather tomorrow, in Albert Hall, London, for an Anglo-Catholic congress. The Bishop of London is president

and leading bishops and laymen will preside over the sectional meetings. The avowed object of the congress is to restore the Catholic doctrine to practice in the Church of England and an announcement is made that confessions will be heard in the various London churches throughout the congress.

It is also announced that a box will be reserved in Albert Hall for Cardinal Bourne, who is the official head of the Catholic Church in England.

The growth of this reunion with Rome movement in the English Church has been remarkable in the last few years. It now comprises the most earnest religious workers in the English Church.—Union and Times.

Trials suffered with patience are worth a thousand times more than any other austerity.—St. Margaret Mary.

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