

in contrast with Protestant devotion. Protestant churches are simply meeting houses, and the principle attraction is the preacher. If he is eloquent and stirs the feelings his hearers are greatly pleased and satisfied. This is mostly human—a sort of man worship which does not reach the depths of the soul. But in the Catholic Church the Real Presence is the chief point of interest, and it imparts life and warmth as well as a deep solemnity to the devotions. It is that blessed truth that comes home to the heart of the convert with extraordinary freshness and power of attraction. He loves to approach the altar and commune with his Saviour and receive Him into his very heart and heart.

HER CONVERSION.

"It makes a charming picture undoubtedly. Of course one cannot, as an artist, fail to be struck with the ritual of the Romish Church, and as a matter of fact, if one believed in Revelation there is no other possible Church for a sensible person to belong to."

The speaker was Miss Clare Wynne, an artist by profession. She was essentially a product of the latter end of the nineteenth century. In no other era could she have flourished as she was certainly doing at present. The child of well to do people of the upper middle class who had, however, no very strong religious convictions, she had been highly educated as far as her mind went, but her soul had been subjected to a spiritual starvation which resulted in her becoming what she termed a "free thinker."

She was twenty-two now, a bright, winsome, well-set-up girl with a mild, sweet expression of countenance that was utterly at variance with her pronounced views and self-will, for she was terribly self-willed.

Her companion was a man who towered above her in height and was proportionately built. He was not particularly handsome, but had a pleasing face and a manly, erect carriage. He was Clare's affianced lover, Ernest Ward, the son and heir of a country gentleman of large fortune, and he worshipped Clare with all the strength of his mind and body. He loved her with an intensity of love that does not fall to every one's share, and treated her with a reverential tenderness that even she, with all her advanced ideas of woman's equality with the sterner sex, could not but accept as the recognition of her feminine frailty. In theory she repudiated the idea of receiving those small attentions and that delicate courtesy which a chivalrous man delights in paying to womanhood; she flattered herself that she would have been better pleased had Ernest met her upon more equal terms, but we doubt nevertheless whether she would have obtained the satisfaction she fondly imagined from such a course of procedure.

The betrothed pair had just left the church of the Immaculate Conception in Farm street, London, where Ernest had been assisting at Benediction, and Clare had been feasting her aesthetic soul on the beauties of the ceremony. They were going to Clare's studio to view her latest picture intended for the Royal Academy Exhibition. Ernest was looking troubled, as well he might, for the following reason.

Twelve months previously he had become engaged to Clare Wynne, and now in the meantime he had, during a tour abroad, become convinced of the claims of the Catholic religion to be the only true one. To be convinced with him was a near preliminary to being received into the Church, and so to day, the feast of Our Lady's Nativity, found him in real truth a sincere Catholic. All his thoughts were now for Clare, but his prayers and efforts for her conversion even to Christianity had been so far unavailing.

The studio was reached, and Ernest gently divested Clare of her hat and jacket, she submitting with a very good grace for one of her vaunted opinions. She had chosen "The death of St. Agnes" as her subject, and well had her talented brush done its work.

"Isn't she lovely!" she cried, drawing aside the curtain which hid her now finished work, and Ernest gazed at it long and rapturously. "What inspiration prompted you to choose that subject?" he asked at length. "If you were a Catholic in heart and soul as well as being the little genius you are, it could not have been done better."

"Oh, flatterer!" exclaimed Clare, but with a heightened color that certainly did not indicate displeasure. "Why should I not take that subject as well as any other from mythology? It is just—she broke off suddenly as a look at Ernest's face revealed if not actual displeasure at least a certain disappointment. "I beg your pardon," she said, "I am treading on your pet corn now, am I not? But you know, I quite forgot that you believed all these—these things." She had been going to say "fables" from sheer force of habit.

Ernest had recovered. He put his arm round her slender waist and drew her over to the large window. "Poor little heathen," he said. "If you could only share my happiness to day!"

"I am very happy," Clare pouted with a pretty shrug that was more indicative of the spoiled child than of the strong-minded woman of many rights. "Well let us sit down here," said Ernest, pulling up a lounge, "I want to talk to you seriously," and

talk seriously he did, putting before her the responsibilities which had come to him with his new religion. Clare listened to it all with comparative calmness till there came the question of the promise that would be exacted from her of allowing any children of their marriage to be brought up as Catholics. "I could not possibly promise such a thing. I have been very liberal; you know I believe in entire liberty of conscience and creed, and so how could I, acting up to my convictions, how could I allow my children to have their minds biased and their souls trammelled with your so-called religious teachings?"

"No, Ernest, my children should be absolutely free on that point. If when they grew up they chose to conform to any religious belief I should not prevent them so doing, but I must positively decline to allow what you call religious principles to be dinned into them from their infancy."

Ernest listened to this with a face which was ghastly in its pallor. It meant only one thing to him, and that was—a parting for ever from the one woman he had ever loved or could ever love.

"You will think it over, Clare, my darling," he begged, "because as long as you are in your present frame of mind we—I—"

"We can never be more than what we are to each other," she interrupted, rising and looking at him coldly.

"Listen, Clare," he said, taking hold of her small wrist and trying to draw her down to him. "Can not you see what it means to me?"

"It means a lot to your imagination, doubtless," she replied, scornfully, drawing away her hand. "Here you bring me quite a supposititious case and make all this fuss about it. But I have stated my opinions and am not likely to alter them in any way." Slowly she took the diamond ring from her finger and held it out to Ernest, but the hand that offered it trembled a little.

"Take it," she said. "Our engagement is at an end. You are free."

"I can not take it, Clare. Don't look at me like that, dearest. Keep it at least till to-morrow."

She turned and deposited it on a small tray, saying coldly:

"It is all the same to me."

Two minutes later Ernest was gone, and Clare had thrown herself on one of the big rugs on the floor, a heap of sobbing humanity. The next morning's post brought back his ring to Ernest Ward.

The Royal Academy Exhibition was over, and Clare Wynne's name was in everyone's mouth. She had been congratulated on her extraordinary success until she was tired of hearing about it. Her own youth and beauty, in combination with her talent, were freely discussed in the public press, but praise or adverse criticism were alike thrown away upon her. She felt that all was vanity and affliction of spirit, and to no one could she turn for comfort.

Ernest was gone she knew not whither, and her heart was filled with bitterness against him. She tried hard to find solace in her work, but though she had her moments of forgetfulness, she could not obtain any permanent relief.

"I have nothing to live for," she would cry out sometimes, and then she would dash down her brushes and weep tears hot and vexatious.

Then again she would resume her work with a feverish energy. She was determined that her fame should spread to all quarters of the globe.

"He will hear of it," she would say to herself. "He will see that I am quite independent of him."

It was during this time that she turned out some of her best work, and Ernest heard of it, as she had thought. Poor Ernest!

Two years had winged their way into eternity when one day Clare received a letter from a distinguished Catholic nobleman, asking her to undertake the work of painting the walls of a convent chapel with certain subjects which he would choose.

Clare, who was somewhat run down in health, thought that a few months' sojourn in Devonshire would do her good, so she accepted the commission.

Never would she forget the impression which her first contact with the nuns and convent made upon her.

It was towards the close of autumn, and the trees and hedges displayed a glorious wealth of crimsoned foliage; as she neared the convent, which lay at some distance from the town, a sweet-toned bell rang out upon the peaceful air—it was the Compline bell, she was told.

She could see the gray spire of the convent chapel rising above the circle of trees which hid the rest of the conventual buildings from sight, and she began to feel a soothing calm stealing upon her wearied soul.

In the space of a week she became wonderfully at home with the nuns, some of whom were sent to her, especially during their recreation hour, to talk with and entertain her. When the light waned she would take a book and sit in the small chapel railed off from the sanctuary for the use of externs, and, pretending to read, would fall into deep trains of thought, whilst the nuns in gentle, plaintive tones chanted the Divine Office.

Often, too, she remained for Benediction, and at last was so impressed with the evident sincerity and deep devotion of the nuns that she admitted to herself that this religion which they practised so assiduously was, if not true, at least well founded.

Amongst the pictures which were to adorn the walls she left to the last that

of a full length figure of Our Lord showing His Divine Heart, with the inscription written below, "It is all love and mercy." This, Clare felt, was to be her masterpiece, and she threw her whole heart and soul into the work. As it grew under her hands she loved it. She was irresistibly drawn towards it, and the words which she was to paint beneath it constantly recurred to her mind.

"It is all love and mercy!"

One evening Clare had put the finishing touches to her work, and standing at a distance she was examining it critically. The Mother Prioress came up gently to her side and said softly, "It is beautiful. What must the Reality be?"

Clare gave a start. The Reality! Yes, surely there was a Reality somewhere—surely there was more than the emptiness and weariness which at times weighed upon her so heavily.

She turned suddenly, and, clasping the wondering nun in a close embrace, said in piteous tones: "How happy you are—you believe in Him. I believe nothing. Oh, do help me—help me to believe, too."

"Dear child, He will help you Himself. He is all love and mercy," said the nun.

"Come here and tell Him all."

Clare, who had burst into tears, suffered herself to be led before the Tabernacle, where, sinking down on her knees, she prayed as someone has prayed before: "O God, if there be a God, help me to believe."

And there is the still shadow of the sanctuary, with only the light of the little crimson lamp shining upon her, she bowed her beautiful head in very submission.

Not many weeks later the artistic world was all astir with the news of Miss Wynne's "going over to Rome." Knowing as they all did what her opinions were, surprise was the order of the day.

"However," remarked one spitefully—and the sentiment was echoed by many—"there is a very potent factor to be considered—Ernest Ward."

Ernest read the news. He was in Africa, and the paper he saw was nearly a month old. Without losing a day he started on his return to England.

Clare had given him up. For months she had heard nothing of him. She thought he was lost to her, but it was an immense relief to her to think that some day he would know of her newly-found happiness.

One day she had been out, and on returning found a small parcel directed to her in a hand that set all the pulses of her heart throbbing wildly. With eager trembling fingers she opened it. Something dropped out and rolled upon the ground.

It was her engagement ring, and in the covering she found Ernest's card. She did not send it back this time.

The next day a well-known step, minus perhaps some of its former confidence, was heard coming up to her studio.

"Ernest!"

"My dearest Clare!"

That was all they said, for words would not come. We need not chronicle the rest. Be satisfied, dear reader, with the assurance that the ending of this little romance was a perfectly happy one, and be assured that a picture of the Sacred Heart occupies a prominent position in the house of Mr. Ernest Ward and his artist wife.—Catholic Fireside.

TOLD BY ITALIAN PEASANTS.

The Italian peasants have a great fund of legends concerning Christ and His saints. This is one of them:

One day Our Lord and St. Peter were passing through a street where a fine house was building, and a young man at work upon it was suspended by a rope so that he should not fall. But the rope was insecure; and, as he turned to look at those who were passing before his eyes, he fell and walked on without speaking to our Lord.

Soon they came to a wild place where there was a dangerous ravine. An old man was seen coming toward them; but his foot slipped and he fell down the side of the precipice. St. Peter was sure that he was dead; but the next moment he re-appeared, hardly hurt at all. And yet his fall had been a worse one than that of the young workman.

St. Peter's heart was heavy and he said to our Lord:

"I cannot understand why You saved the old man, whose life was nearly over, instead of the young man, who had so many years before him."

"I will tell you," answered Our Lord, sweetly and simply. "The young man's soul is Mine, but that of the old man does not yet belong to Me."

At those words the eyes of St. Peter filled with tears.

"And that is why," said the good old peasant who told the story, "he weeps every time when his festa comes around. He was sorry because the good young man had to die, and because the old man had not given his soul to God."—Ave Maria.

"To Err Is Human."

People like to talk about attractive things in advertising. In a company recently the proverb above quoted, and which appeared at the head of one of a well constructed series of advertisements of Hood's Sarsaparilla, was so much discussed that we doubt if any one there will ever forget the source whence it came. Messrs. Hood & Co. are using these proverbial advertisements on a very broad scale, and they are attracting discussion and favorable comment everywhere.

Worms cause feverishness, moaning and restlessness during sleep. Mother Graves' Worm Expeller is pleasant, sure, and effectual. If your druggist has none in stock, get him to procure it for you.

SWEET ST. FRANCIS.

The Seraph of Assisi—Beautiful Tribute From a Non-Catholic.

"Sweet St. Francis of Assisi! Would that he were here again." With these words of Tennyson's prayer the Rev. W. Hudson Shaw, M. A., fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, recently closed the fourth lecture in the university extension course on "Rome in the Middle Ages" in Witherspoon Hall. Mr. Shaw is a non-Catholic, and this fact, taken in connection with his international reputation as a scholar and lecturer, invests with peculiar interest his views concerning the life and work of the gentle seraph of Assisi. Mr. Shaw said in part:

"Francis of Assisi was—shall I be rash enough to say what I think? You shall assail me for it if you choose—Francis of Assisi was the purest-hearted, the most lovable and most adorable human being whom Christian history of eighteen centuries have revealed to us."

"What are the chief facts of his life?"

St. Francis was born in Umbria, in the little hillside city of Assisi, in the year 1182. Francesco Bernardone during his early manhood was simply the spoiled darling of his native city—gay, frivolous, lovable, generous, the leader of every mad revel, a richly dressed, fastidious, pleasure-loving cavalier strongly drawn to chivalry and knight-hood as his highest ideals. At 22 he fell dangerously ill and was brought face to face with death. It was the turning-point of his career. On his recovery he was filled with disgust of himself, contempt for his useless, selfish life. * * * At a sumptuous banquet given at Assisi about this time, Bernardone, master of the revels, sat silent and absorbed, and his friends rallied him on his moroseness. 'See,' they said, 'Francesco is thinking of the wife he is going to marry.' 'It is true,' he answered eagerly; 'I am thinking of taking a wife more beautiful, richer, purer than you could ever imagine.' The bride he meant was the Lady Poverty, 'widowed now,' says Dante in his 'Paradise,' 'a thousand years and more.' He began humbly by attending the outcast lepers, whose loathsome sores he had always abhorred, by restoring with his own hands the ruined chapel of Santa Maria Degli Angeli. In the plain below Assisi that tiny chapel still stands. I have knelt in it; it is to me the holiest, most sacred spot that Europe can show. 'There were dreamed,' it has been said, 'some of the noblest dreams which have soothed the pains of humanity.' There in the Portinucula Francis of Assisi heard the final call, and obeyed. On February 24, 1209, the words of the gospel for the day fell on his ears. 'Freely ye have received; freely give. Provide neither silver nor gold, nor brass in your purses; neither scrip nor two coats, nor shoes nor staff, for the laborer is worthy of his hire.'

"This is what I want," he cried. "This is what I am seeking!" On the next day he preached in the streets of Assisi. Within a few weeks his first disciples gave all their goods to the poor and joined him, and the Francis came movement, the greatest and purest religious impulse the world had known since the death of St. Paul, had begun its romantic career.

"Francis was not a man of splendid intellect or a learned scholar. He had no new doctrines to teach. His dogmas were extremely few and simple. His preaching was plain and unadorned. He conquered mankind not by his theology, but by his life—a life so purely selfless, so exquisitely gentle, so full of divinest compassion and tenderness that it must remain so long as the world lasts one of the unsurpassed glories of Christianity. It is entirely impossible for any human being ever to love his fellow-men, especially the disinherited, the outcast and the suffering, more devoutly than Brother Francis. He was burned up, as his biographer, St. Bonaventura, says, by divine love for every creature of God. The only malediction he is known to have uttered was against a fierce swine which had killed a lamb. From his Christ-like piety no man, however degraded, was shut out. 'Whosoever shall come to the brothers,' so ran his rule, friend or enemy, thief or robber, let him be lovingly received.' One day three bandits of evil fame, starving, asked help from a certain Franciscan, Angelo. He drove them away with anger and reproaches. Francis, hearing of it, reproved him sternly. 'I command thee,' he said, 'by thine obedience to take at once this loaf and this wine and go seek the robbers by hill and dell until you have found them, and kneel there before them and humbly ask their pardon, and pray them in my name no longer to do wrong, but to fear God.'

"Scarcely less wonderful than his all-embracing love was his invincible humility. He became the idol of the people; whole cities went forth to meet him as he approached, and he cared nothing for it, remained to the end guileless and lovely in thought as a little child. 'Why thee? Why thee?' a brother once said to him. 'Every-body follows thee; every one desires to see and obey thee, and yet for all that thou art neither beautiful nor learned, nor of a noble family. Whence comes it, then, that it should be thee whom the world desires to follow?' 'It is because the Most High willed it thus,' answered Francis. 'He chose me because He could find no smaller man nor one more worthless, and He wished here to confound the nobility and grandeur, the strength, the beauty and the learning of this world.'

"And now one final word. Is this life of Francis of Assisi, we are forced

to ask ourselves, anything more, after all, than a picturesque episode of medieval history, an old-world relic, beautiful as the faded traceries of a ruined abbey and of as little present utility? Has he any message to which our time is likely to listen? Let us be honest; he has not. To this age, which dreads, as Carlyle said, only hell, the hell of not making money, which has exalted the brute god Mammon, as no age, not even that of imperial Rome, ever exalted it before, St. Francis is unintelligible, he speaks in vain. But the nineteenth century is dying; ere long we shall be ringing in the new era.

"* * * * *"

"Meanwhile one trusts that in more lands than Italy, in other religions than his own, wherever tenderness and courage, purity and humility and Christ-like life are held in reverence, there are hundreds of thousands of men and women ready to re-echo Tennyson's prayer: 'Sweet St. Francis of Assisi! Would that he were here again.'"

A BOOK FOR LITTLE FOLK.

Catholic doctrine does not change, but there is at times room for improvement in the methods of communicating it to the youthful minds. There is heard at present a cry for a more simple Catechism. Several Canadian pastors severely criticize Butler's Catechism, the use of which is obligatory in Canada. Several other books have been suggested. To our mind the Catechism of the great Jesuit Deharbe is the best as to arrangement. But what will all the controversy amount to if no practical step is taken? Why not get up a petition, signed by all the priests interested, and bring the matter before the Bishops in conference. Next to this, let each one nominate a board of editors well fitted to give us the ideal Catechism, in which "words of learned length and thundering sound will be eliminated." Joaquin Miller recently answered some people who asked him why he always wrote in little bits of Bible Saxon words. This poet scorns big words. "I beg you," he says, "remember Shakespeare's scorn for words, words, words. It was the short Roman sword that went to the heart, not the long boastful one of the barbarian." If we get a better catechism than those in vogue, we shall have to render thanks to THE CATHOLIC RECORD of London. This able journal first raised the question, and has kept hammering away at it until now others are waking up and falling into line.—Carmelite Review.

Starved Nerves.

When the blood is thin and watery, the nerves are actually starved and nervous exhaustion and prostration soon follow. Feed the nerves with Dr. A. W. Chase's Nerve Food and you will impart to them the new life and vigor of perfect health. Face out and face smile the signature of Dr. A. W. Chase on every box of the genuine.

There is danger in neglecting a cold. Many who have died of consumption dated their troubles from exposure, followed by a cold which settled on their lungs, and in a short time they were beyond the skill of the best physician. Had they used Bickel's Anti-Consumptive Syrup, before it was too late, their lives would have been spared. This medicine has no equal for curing coughs, colds and all affections of the throat and lungs.

"A Cheerful Look Makes a Dish a Feast."

"Cheerful looks" depend just as much upon physical well-being as upon natural disposition and temperament. If the blood is disordered, the brain is starved, and no "dish is a feast," for the reason that the vitalizing elements do not reach the proper spot.

A step in the right direction is to purify the body by the use of a natural remedy. Hood's Sarsaparilla is Nature's remedy. It acts upon the blood, and whether the seat of the disorder is brain, stomach, liver or kidneys, the purifying process of this medicine is equally sure and successful. It never disappoints.

Great Builder.—Have used Hood's Sarsaparilla for indigestion, constipation and that it builds up the whole system and gives relief in cases of catarrh. WILLIAM E. WELDON, Moncton, N. B.

Sour Stomach.—My system was out of order. I suffered from headache and sour stomach. Took Hood's Sarsaparilla, my health improved and I gained 15 pounds. MAXWELL D. SHANAGAW, Colebrook, Ont.

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