

## A Night in the Sick Ward.

It was 7 o'clock in the evening, and the hospital bell clanged loudly. The portress went promptly to the door, and found there a youth of 19 years, whose flushed face and eyes that burned in their sockets like living coals told at a glance their story of desperate illness.

"I want to see the superior," said he.

The superior was called, and the young man, who had been given an armchair, handed her a letter, a communication from the principal physician on the hospital staff, requesting the superior to admit the bearer and place him in an isolated ward, as he had every symptom of the dread smallpox.

Now, at the time at which we write, there was no municipal hospital in the city, nor was there what is called a "pest house." All diseases were sent to the Sisters' Hospital, and were there, as is always the case, humbly and properly treated. The reason why the Sisters' Hospital had an isolated smallpox ward was as follows: There was no hospital in the city, and the authorities had contracted with the Sisters to care for the marines, or the river men, who worked for the government. Some ten months before a packet had come up the river and was stranded in low water. Eight or ten hands, all negroes, had remained on board, waiting for the water to rise. Idling away among them, and all were stricken. Application was made at the Sisters' Hospital, and in pursuance of their contract the Sisters accepted the cases, prepared a ward entirely apart from the hospital proper, and appointed the nurses to care for the loathsome disease. Several of the men succumbed, and under the religious care of the Sisters their deaths were holy and happy. The majority of the number got well, however, and the ward had been cleaned out and fumigated, and had been vacant for some time. But here was an occupant, and no time was lost preparing a clean, comfortable bed for him. He was conducted to the ward and told to prepare for a hot bath.

"There is no use," said the young man, "for me to take the remedies, for I will die to-night. I only came here to see a priest."

"But," said the Sister who was placed in charge of the patient, "the priest does not live at this hospital. He has finished his duties here and gone to the parish house, and will not return until early morning, when he will say Mass. We shall bring him to you as soon as he comes."

"But it will be too late," said the young man. "I shall not be living then. I must see him to-night."

"Why the doctor did not say you were in a dangerous condition," said the Sister. "Had you not better submit to treatment and wait till morning?"

"I beg you," said the patient, "I implore you, to send for a priest. I assure you I will be dead in the morning. I am dying now, though you do not know it."

He did not seem in the slightest danger of immediate death, but his manner startled the nun, in spite of her convictions. She spoke through the tube used for that purpose (for she, too, was isolated) to the superior, and urged her to send a messenger for the hospital chaplain. The superior rather reluctantly complied, thinking the request somewhat unreasonable, yet wishing rather to err on the safe side.

When the nurse told the young man the priest had been sent for, he was greatly relieved, and when the Sister bathed his feet, and saw that he had remedies and went to bed, he turned to her and said:

"I want to tell you why I want the priest. I am an orphan since I was twelve years old, and am bound out to a farmer, who sends me to the market every day with a load of produce. This morning I came in as usual, and was taken with this sickness. Some friends brought me to the doctor, and he gave me the letter I brought here. When the doctor told me I was going to be pretty sick, I told him I knew it, but that I wanted first to see a priest."

"Well," said he, "I'll send you where you will see a priest and all your religious needs will be attended to. I'll send you to the Sisters' Hospital." I was glad to come because I believe in Catholic teachings, and was afraid I had waited too long before."

"Then you are not a Catholic?" exclaimed the Sister, in amazement.

"No; I am not of any religion. The

people I live with have no religion, either. But I want to tell you something before I die."

Here the Sister smiled, for, while the young man was flushed and feverish, there was no other visible sign of the disease, and, least of all, of death.

"You don't think I will die? Well, time will tell. There is something within me that speaks louder than words."

"But how did you come to want a priest so much?" said the Sister, feeling strangely moved.

"I had two friends, Catholic boys of my own age. We met every market day, and they took me to their church to Mass. It was a poor little place, their church, but the priest was a fine man; and when he spoke it went to my heart, and I liked to hear him. And when church was over the boys explained what the priest said about saving your soul. I often thought about it, but had no chance to ask any one. About three weeks ago this priest told the people that the crowd was getting more than the little church could hold, and he wanted to build a new church. And he said every dollar would go into the fund and get God's blessing. 'And besides,' said he, 'I will pray every day at my Mass for those who will make their offerings to the building of God's house, that they may have as their reward a happy life and a holy death.'"

The patient paused a moment, as if hesitating about his next communication.

"And what else?"

"Well," said the young man, "I had one friend of my own, and I walked up to the priest after the Mass, and I said to him, 'Father, this is all I have, but I hope you won't refuse it because I am poor and not of your way of believing. I'd like to see that church built.' He looked into my face, took my hand and said, 'My son, you will not die until you are of our way of believing. I shall pray for you every day at Mass that you may become a good Catholic.'"

"I didn't tell my two friends anything about it, but when I found myself getting dead sick this morning I put the horse and wagon in the hands of people that I know, and when the doctor said I should come here, I was determined to see a priest first of all and find out the way to die in the true faith."

Just here the messenger announced through the speaking tube that the chaplain had arrived, and was about coming to the patient. The Sister told the young man, and he was overjoyed.

She went to the room adjoining the ward and met the priest, to whom she briefly told the circumstances.

The chaplain was soon at the bedside of the patient. A few questions brought out the fact that he had never been baptized, and as he insisted, with a pertinacity that was remarkable and impressive, that he was going to die, the chaplain, after asking a few questions, baptized him.

"There are some other sacraments," said the young man, "I heard them talked about in the church. Can't I be anointed, and could I receive holy communion?"

The chaplain was amazed. He questioned the young man and obtained a detailed account of his life, and, after instructing him for some time, proposed waiting until the morning, as there was no apparent danger, and he would come a little earlier to say his Mass. It was now after 11 o'clock.

"Father," pleaded the young man, "I want so much to be an entire Catholic; it will be too late in the morning. Something tell me so. Won't you do everything before you go?"

The priest hesitated, and then, unable to withstand his own conviction that here was a most extraordinary case, told the patient he would anoint him and give him the Holy Viaticum.

Most reverently did the poor youth receive these sacraments. When all was over and the priest was about to leave, he suggested some aspirations that might comfort the patient during the night. Finally he said: "I will see you early in the morning. Good night, my son."

"Good night, Father, and goodbye. And I thank you from my heart."

The priest did not speak, but left the room.

The Sister sat quietly at a distance from the bed, her hands in her hands. The clocks chimed out midnight, and then the small hours. Every now and then the young man would repeat aloud the aspirations the priest had suggested over and over again. About 3 o'clock he was silent, and the Sister went over to the pillow, hoping he had fallen asleep. One glance told her he was not. He was looking at the ceiling with a fixed gaze, and his hands were clasped in prayer.

She repeated the prayers for the departing soul, and within the brief hour he had passed away in his baptismal robes to the presence of his Father in heaven, who had won this gentle soul, and by ways men can never understand brought him through the dark valley of death surrounded by all the graces of redemption.

The Sister closed his eyes, folded his hands over the crucifix that lay on his breast, and softly left the room, breathing a "De Profundis."

It was nearly 5 o'clock as she passed the great timepiece in the corridor, and although it was so early, she saw the familiar figure of the chaplain advancing toward her.

"I could not get our patient out of my head all night," said the priest, "so I have come early. How is he this morning?"

"He is with God," reverently said the nun. "He died at 4 o'clock."

Was it because he was a lonely orphan that our Father in Heaven opened His arms and gave him this intuition of death? Was it the clean, honest example of those Catholic working boys that made him think of his soul? Was it his own humble charity that prompted him to help with his mite the building of God's temple? Or, most of all, was it the divine efficacy of the holy Mass wherein his name was mentioned, that procured this happy death?

We know not, we dare not say. But we know that all these things are tremendous forces impelling the soul towards a glorious salvation. Let those who read ponder over this true story—Rev. Richard W. Alexander, in Catholic Standard and Times.

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## Defamer of Saints Called to Account.

(From Catholic Columbian.)

The publishers of what is known as the Grand Rapids Furniture Record got a surprising jar from an Indianapolis merchant a few days ago for an insulting story entitled "The Leap Year Legend," which appeared in their paper, "The Woman's Record," in the April issue.

This publication is made of reading matter for house keepers, and is sent out through big furniture houses all over the country to be given away for advertising purposes with the complements of the local store. The Feeney Furniture and Stove Company of Indianapolis made a contract for the "Woman's Record," and have been sending out a large number among their customers in Indianapolis and the surrounding territory. The volume is a very neat one, and ordinarily contains good, clean, wholesome reading matter. The April number, however, contained a most objectionable, and for Catholics, a most scandalous, sketch on the first page. In this sketch St. Bridget is represented as appealing to St. Patrick on behalf of the nuns in her convent, for the privilege of proposing to men. It is written in the most absurd style, and in a manner most offensive to the Catholic sense of reverence for their saints who led such holy and spotless lives.

When George Feeney glanced over the Woman's Record and read this vile stuff on the first page he resolved that not one copy of the scandalous and insulting publication should reach his customers. By his direction the following letter was addressed to the offending concern:

Indianapolis, April 6, 1908. The Grand Rapids Furniture Record Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., Gentlemen:—Enclosed herewith please find invoice which we are returning to you as it will be impossible for us to use this month's issue of the Woman's Record. We do not care to insult our customers by handing them a magazine containing such an absurd article as the "Leap

## SOCIETY DIRECTORY.

ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY.—Established March 6th, 1886; incorporated 1883; revised 1840. Meets in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander street, first Monday of the month. Committee meets last Wednesday. Officers: Rev. Chaplain, Rev. Gerald McShane, P.P.; President, Mr. W. P. Kearney; 1st Vice-President, Mr. H. J. Kavanaugh; 2nd Vice-President, Mr. E. McQuirk; Treasurer, Mr. W. Durack; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. T. P. Tansey; Asst. Recording Secretary, Mr. M. E. Tansey; Marshal, Mr. D. Campbell; Asst. Marshal, Mr. P. Connolly.

ST. PATRICK'S T. A. & B. SOCIETY.—Meets on the second Sunday of every month in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 Alexander street, at 8:30 p.m. Committee of Management meets in same hall on the first Tuesday of every month, at 8 p.m. Rev. Director, Rev. J. K. Loran; President, Mr. J. O'Donnell; Rec. Sec., J. J. Tynan, 222 Prince Arthur street.

C.M.B.A. OF CANADA, BRANCH 26.—Organized 13th November, 1883. Meets in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander street, every 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month for the transaction of business, at 8 o'clock. Officers—Spiritual Adviser, Rev. J. P. Killoran; Chancellor, W. A. Hodgson; President, Thos. R. Stevens; 1st Vice-President, James Cahill; 2nd Vice-President, M. J. Gahan; Recording Secretary, R. M. J. Dolan, 16 Overdale Avenue; Financial Secretary, Jas. J. Costigan, 504 St. Urban street; Treasurer, F. J. Sears; Marshal, G. I. Nichols; Guard, James Callahan. Trustees—W. P. Wall, T. R. Stevens, John Walsh, W. P. Doyle and J. T. Stevens. Medical Officers—Dr. H. J. Harrison; Dr. E. J. O'Connor, Dr. Merrills, Dr. W. A. L. Styles and Dr. John Curran.

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Year Legend. Some of our best patrons are the followers of St. Patrick and St. Bridget, and would quickly resent such a legend. Had you attached the author's name to the article, we would give him some authenticated information concerning both Saints and also the origin of Leap Year. Reliable writers say St. Bridget was only twelve years of age at the time of the death of St. Patrick; hence could not have entered a convent at that early age, much less be guilty of the insulting maneuvering which you have attributed to her.

The magazines are here awaiting your disposal, as we cannot use them. Regretting very much that you should put such a spot upon an otherwise attractive little book, we are,

Yours truly,  
Feeney Furniture and Stove Co.

The Grand Rapids concern replied by disclaiming any intention of insult to the followers of St. Patrick and St. Bridget, and making the claim that the article was written by an Irish Catholic named Walsh in his "Curiosities of Public Customs." "The absurdity of the legend," it said, "like all legends, is apparent to any thinking man or woman, for it is quite certain that neither St. Bridget nor St. Patrick would use the stage 'brogue' quoted in the legend itself, and adds that it does not believe that the followers of St. Patrick and St. Bridget would resent the publication, in which the Grand Rapids Company showed its complete ignorance of the Irish character."

It is needless to say that the letter from the publishers of the scandal was weak, evasive and reeking with absurdity. We don't know who "Walsh, the devout Roman Catholic" is, or whether he is a native son of Ireland. But we doubt very much if any person entitled to those appellations inflicted such an injury on his faith and race. Even if he did, it speaks very badly for the judgment and common sense and decency of the Grand Rapids Furniture Company to send broadcast such a loathsome abomination as the story that appeared on its front page in its April issue.

Mr. Feeney did right. He has shown a public spirit which is commendable. If other merchants would

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take the same step under similar circumstances there would be less vilification of things that pertain to our holy faith, less ridicule and burlesque hurled at the Catholic Church, and the Irish race through the medium of such publications.

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## Synopsis of Canada North-West

### HOMESTEAD REGULATIONS

ANY even numbered section of Dominion Lands in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, excepting 8 and 26, not reserved, may be homesteaded by any person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years of age, to the extent of one-quarter section of 160 acres, more or less.

Entry must be made personally at the local land office for the district in which the land is situated.

Entry by proxy may, however, be made on certain conditions by the father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of an intending homesteader.

The homesteader is required to perform the conditions connected therewith under one of the following plans:

(1) At least six months' residence upon and cultivation of the land in each year for three years.

(2) If the father (or mother, if the father is deceased) of the homesteader resides upon a farm in the vicinity of the land entered for, the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by such person residing with the father or mother.

(3) If the settler has his permanent residence upon farming land owned by him in the vicinity of his homestead, the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by residence upon said land.

Six months' notice in writing should be given the Commissioner of Dominion Lands at Ottawa of intention to apply for patent.

W. W. COILY, Deputy Minister of the Interior.

N.B.—Unauthorized publication of this advertisement will not be paid for.

## TRULY A STRUGGLING MISSION

In The Diocese of Northampton. FAKENHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

This Mission of St. Anthony of Padua was started by me nearly three years ago by command of the late Bishop of Northampton.

I had then, and I have now, no Church, no Presbytery, no Diocesan Grant, no Endowment (except Hope).

I am still obliged to say Mass and give Benediction in a man upper room. Yet, such as it is, this is the sole outpost of Catholicism in a division of the County of Norfolk measuring 25 x 20 miles.

The weekly offerings of the congregation are necessarily small. We must have outside help for the present, or haul down the flag.

The generosity of the Catholic Public has enabled me to secure a valuable site for Church and Presbytery. We have money in hand towards the cost of building, but the Bishop will not allow us to go into debt.

I am most grateful to those who have helped us, and trust they will continue their charity.

To those who have not helped I would say: "For the sake of the Cause give something, if only a little." It is easier and more pleasant to give than to beg. Speed the glad hour when I need no longer plead for a permanent Home for the Blessed Sacrament.

FATHER H. W. GRAY, Catholic Mission, Fakenham, Norfolk, Eng'd.

P. S.—I will gratefully and promptly acknowledge the smallest donation, and send with my acknowledgment a beautiful picture of the Sacred Heart and St. Anthony.

(EPISCOPAL AUTHORIZATION)  
Dear Father Grey,  
You have duly accounted for the aims which you have received, and you have placed them securely in the names of Diocesan Trustees. Your efforts have gone far towards providing what is necessary for the establishment of a permanent Mission at Fakenham. I authorize you to continue to solicit alms for this object until, in my judgment, it has been fully attained.

Yours faithfully in Christ,  
F. W. KEATING, Bishop of Northampton.

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