

LIFE AMONG THE LOWLY IN THE MODERN BABYLON.

THE CHILDREN OF LONDON.

(By Miss May Quinlan, in London Tablet.)

(Continued.)

Carrots' relations were not of good repute in the quarter, but being children of this world, they ought to have prospered. However, these are evil times when vice itself is often a drug in the market. And as there was little to eat in the tenement and many a mouth to fill, it was obvious that something must be done. So Carrots was told off to supply the family larder. And having first nominated a trusty locum tenens to hold the baby, she with the bright eyes and the tangled hair would saunter off to gaze abstractedly at butcher's meat or to hover near a vegetable stall. The net result of such foraging expeditions was satisfactory, in as much as Carrots had the consolation of seeing her family grow sleek and fairly comfortable-looking; and for this she took some credit to herself. She had never been taught to thieve. But having been endowed by nature with the deftness of touch and the quickness of eye that go to make a pickpocket, Carrots stole all she could and her conscience blamed her not. Conscience! what did the child with the Rubens hair know of conscience, or of moral values? Did not the human element compass her mental vision? Was not her life steeped in it? And she herself, was she not girt around with the brutishly human? There were no commandments where Carrots came from. She lived in one of the plague-stricken areas of our city. The adjoining tenement was marked out as a place of rank iniquity. As she sat on the steps she watched, day by day, the lost souls that went in there. Yes, with the baby in her arms and the sunshine in her hair, little Carrots sat listening and watching. And perhaps she recked not as yet that the sword of the Avenger was already unsheathed and that the tenement even now was accursed: sealed with the doom of Sodom.

A CHILD'S DEATHBED.

I was pondering these things when a woman came along a crowded thoroughfare and touched my arm. Her hair was dishevelled and her eyes red with weeping. "E's dyin'," was all she said, "Won't yer come?" So I turned and went with her. First we threaded our way between wretched-looking people, who hurried along in their rags, across the busy main road, with its stream of traffic heading for the docks; past public houses, where idlers loitered with dull listless eyes, or canvassed the merits of the favorite; then down a side street where, facing one of the foulest courts of that evil quarter, stood the tenement we sought. So we went up the dirty flight of stairs and into the stifling sick room. It was crowded. Factory hands were there with rough, bare arms; dockers with unshaven faces; a newly arrived soldier in khaki and numerous women, grimy and ragged, from the neighboring tenements. All of them had come "to see the child die," and each one's gaze was rivetted on the feverish little form that lay tossing in delirium on the tenement bed. He was four years old, with great hazel eyes, and softly rounded cheeks. But the cheeks were thin now, and the hazel eyes staring wide, unseeing and unconscious, while ever and anon the baby lips moved in incoherent curses.

This child was dying. This human thread, which had scarcely been unravelled, was about to be cut off—although the Master had repented Him of His work.

Then a woman touched me from behind. It was the child's mother. "Won't yer say a bit of a prayer?" she said hoarsely, whereupon I knelt. Presently the same voice spoke again.

"Ain't yer goin' ter say none?" "Let me join in yours," I answered, recoiling from the prospect of conducting a public prayer meeting.

"Dunno none," said the woman. She reached over to a nail on the wall and detached what looked like a framed set of rules. This she thrust into my hand.

"It's printin'," said she, "an' we ain't no scholars."

Meanwhile the people had shuffled down on their knees—clumsily, as if the movement were unusual—and bent their heads in the presence of approaching death. A hushed silence had fallen on the tenement room, a silence which was only broken by the drunken father, who sobbed in maulin grief, and the unearthly mutterings of the child tossing in delirium. And thus with a throbbing heart I read aloud the printed prayer that lay under its thick coating of dust.

The prayer finished, each one rose and stood watching in silence. The tiny patient was now quieter, and the mother in a broken voice was whispering to me the doctor's verdict, when suddenly, as if damnation were at hand and the child stood among the lost, he sprang up in bed.

The baby eyes were wild with terror; he glanced around in horror; and with a piercing shriek that rang through the evil tenement, the dying child called down a wild curse upon us.

In that instant the earthly veil seemed to be rent asunder; laying bare the awfulness of eternity. The women crouched down—shrinking back—dizzy—as they might from the edge of hell; while a trained look of fear came into the men's eyes, and an inarticulate cry died in each throat. A fough factory hand near me sank down on her knees, and with a sudden movement she raised a bare arm above her head, as if to avert a blow. Then with a stifled cry for mercy, she stretched out both her arms; for in that tenement room there stood an outraged Deity. And to me it seemed as if a voice were heard, coming from all the corners of the earth: "Woe be to him through whom the scandal cometh. * * *"

It was a cry that sank into each guilty heart. Instantly the stricken people knelt and prayed aloud. Rough, untutored words they were, but they welled up warm from throbbing human hearts to plead for the child who now stood to his judgment.

Such are some of the glimpses of child life that I have seen in the courts and alleys of the metropolis. Such are among the lurid pictures, which once seen can never fade. Such is the situation before which the mind pauses.

Is Christianity then a farce? If so, then in pity let the children die. For a farce more grim was never penned in the lowest depths of hell.

But, if not? If Christianity be a reality, and the Redemption a fact; if human life be sacred, and the soul of man immortal, then surely it were time to cast off indifference and to fight the good fight, if we would save the faith and the morals of this generation.

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The Socialists dream of a state of affairs when there shall be no properties or superiors. All fortunes shall be equal; the means of production be at everyone's command. Each shall work at his own trade, and shall give the produce of his work to society, which, after having collected all the products, will then distribute them between the individuals.

It is a foolish dream. One cannot conceive of such a civilization. There will always be men who will work more than others, men who will acquire more than others; men who will enrich themselves where others will go to ruin. Equality is impossible. French Socialists do not want any army or frontiers. They dream of the fraternity of all men, hoping blindly that the temperaments of different nations will harmonize.

There are several schools of Socialists in France. There are the Revolutionary Socialists who desire the downfall of the existing state by violent measures; then there are the Socialists like Jaures and Millerand, who willingly accept participation in power so that they can attach more value to their doctrines. But all the wrangling schools are strongly anti-religious. In recent days in France we find them always leading the battles against the Church. They say, "The Church is a power which oppresses both conscience and intelligence; we must crush it."

Just lately we have seen a proof of this. At the Congress of Free Thought which was held in Rome, France was represented very largely by Socialists. Every Socialist municipality sent delegates. It is known, of course, that this congress was held expressly to organize the fight against the Catholic Church. Most of the French Socialists are Freemasons, and no one denies that freemasonry is anti-religious. At every Socialist meeting the fight against religion is represented clearly at the head of the programmes.

We do not doubt the sincerity of their sentiments. Catholics know their doctrines, and at the elections they will not have a Catholic vote. They have the workingmen's votes in certain towns, because they flatter their passions, promise them happiness and excite them against the clergy.

To prove what I say I could cite numbers of anti-clerical reunions which were given every day at certain points of the country by the Socialists. I recall one particularly which took place two years ago, when M. Combes wanted to apply the law against the religious orders. His best and most reliable helpers in the execution of this law were the Socialists. Combes commanded an attack on the convents by the army, but everywhere the Socialists were the first to do his bidding. At the same time the Socialists organized large manifestations in all parts of the country against the Church. In many places they invaded the church buildings and tried to forbid the celebration of the religious ceremonies. In Paris many were wounded in such attempts. In one church, just outside Paris, they struck the women and children. At Nantes, one Sunday, according to custom, the priests and the faithful marched in procession through the streets of the town carrying the Blessed Sacrament. The Socialists organized a counter procession and a veritable battle ensued in which one person was killed. At Lyons a similar conflict took place and a death resulted. At Reims they struck a class of little girls, who were in the act of making their First Communion. It was the beginning of a revolution, which ceased when the Catholics declared they would defend themselves against these disgraceful attacks.

You see, we have every reason to believe that the Socialists are enemies of the Church. It is scarcely a year since, during a strike in the North of France, they threw a priest into a river. The poor man was simply passing quietly along the road, but they treated him brutally, just because he was a priest.

There are undeniable proofs of the socialistic spirit, taken from their programme on the occasion of the last legislative elections, in the month of May, 1902. The Socialist party launched an appeal in favor of its candidates at the time of the elections. Here it is:

"In the shadow of the sacristies our enemies are gathered and conspire. The Church, directress of the movement, put the deceitful and Jesuitical duplicity of its methods in its organization. The stockbrokers, traitors to France, enriched by mercenary marriages with the daughters of big Jewish bankers or American monopolists, have opened their safes."

"The Socialist party opposes all religions, all dogmas, all church"

that deny the unlimited right of free thought, the scientific conception of the universe, and a system of public education exclusively founded on science and reason.

"Thus accustomed to free thought and reflection, the citizens will be protected against the sophisms of capital and clerical reaction."

The Socialists had also in their programme: Suppression of the Vatican; separation of the Church and State; abrogation of the concordat; rigorous enforcement of the law against the associations; suppression of all religious congregations; seizure of their property; monopoly of instruction and suppression of the budget of public worship.

In another article I will give certain texts from existing socialistic programmes. They will show that the Socialists are publicly and avowedly the enemies of Catholicity. They fight it in their books, in their newspapers, in their political programmes and public reunions. They want to dischristianize France. And they are everywhere the same. We shall see that they contribute to all anti-religious laws and that they often inspire these laws.—Louis Bard, in the New World.

AMID THE GRAY KENTUCKY MOUNTAINS.

Strange tales are afloat about the Kentucky mountain people. Exaggerated newspaper reports, and the fancy and imagination of their readers, paint them in the color of blood. The most atrocious crimes are daily committed, not only in the slums of populous cities, but even in otherwise quiet country towns, and hardly any attention is paid to such reports; but let a Kentucky mountaineer, under the fery sting of his "mountain dew," pull his No. 45 and send a bullet crashing through the bones of his slower adversary, and the journals of the country will, under scarce headlines, give most gruesome details of "another bloody mountain feud."

It is true there have been foul murders, cowardly deeds; but let it be said in defence of the mountaineer, the perpetrators of the majority of these crimes were outsiders, or they were instigated and paid for by men who do not call the mountain their home. Deduct also from the list of crimes the fatal escapades of the numerous imported coal miners, and you will easily reduce the home-bred murders to two causes—feuds and illicit distilleries.

Outside of these two causes, the mountaineer is a most peaceful and congenial citizen. He is not looking for trouble, and if you let him alone he will certainly not pick a quarrel with you. He is a man of small ambition, and the glitter of gold has little attraction for him, especially if it has to be earned by hard and constant labor. He is frugal, and can not understand why any man should be dissatisfied with such good things to eat as corn-bread, bacon, potatoes, beans and molasses. The vanities of life have no strong grip on him. A fifteen dollar pistol and a thirty-five dollar Winchester rifle are his most cherished articles of wear. He will come to town on a ten-dollar mule, and will wear about seventy-five cents' worth of clothing, but carries forty or fifty dollars' worth of guns. He has two dozen chickens, tied together by their legs, hanging head downward, on either side of his mount. These chickens are speedily turned into money, the money is turned into whiskey and cartridges, and on his way home he lets everybody know that he has loaded both himself and his guns.

The mountaineer's home is truly home-made. A plain, rough log cabin, the cracks open in summer and stuffed with clay or moss in winter, with a big stone chimney on one side and a door on the other, is his residence. More fashionable residences in the neighborhood of towns and railroads are fitted with openings to let the air and light in on warm days, and a few even boast of one or two glass windows.

What is the religious status of the average mountaineer? It is hard to tell. His ideas on religion are rather hazy and contradictory, consequently he prefers to hear you speak rather than to assert his own opinions. It is interesting, however, to hear them talking religion among themselves. They have listened to so many different propounders of the Gospel, one contradicting the other, that they assume the right to discriminate between the truths laid before them, each man being his own theologian. They like to argue the question of the forgiveness of sin with an without penance, the salvation of all men or only a part of them, the resurrection of the body or the beatification of the soul only,

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etc. If one gets stuck in his arguments he will attempt to substantiate his assertion with a falsified Bible quotation—and when this does not convince he will get angry and call his opponent a fool.

The average minister of the gospel excels neither in refinement nor superior education. Any man who can prove to the Conference that he knows his Bible is authorized to preach. Few can make a living out of preaching. They simply follow their former trade and preach, amateur-like, whenever an opportunity presents itself. The mountaineer has not much use for a "learned" preacher; he wants one who lives and speaks like himself, and who is not likely to exert any authority over him. The more mistakes he can point out after the sermon the better he likes it. In other words, he hates to be a mute listener.

I have listened to their sermons and to religious discussions outside the church. I have tried to coax them into a conversation on religion, but have never succeeded in getting any definite doctrine out of them. You will never hear them say: "Our faith teaches us so and so," or "Bro. Jones said so and so," or "Old Squire Hancock used ter say," etc., etc.

Still this condition of uncertainty does not prevent them from growing rather enthusiastic during a sermon. A friend of mine relates that one day she stopped in front of a meeting house in Williamsburg, when the preacher, in a frenzy of religious excitement, threw his Bible up against the ceiling, shouting at the top of his voice: "Hurrah for Jesus Christ!" And another lady told me she was present when the preacher, having worked himself up to that pitch where numerous pearls of sweat trickled down his face, took off his shabby coat, remarking that for him "comfort came before quality," and, with renewed vigor and less clothing, continued his oration. The good man was right, for about half his audience came without coat and shoes, and he surely was entitled to the same amount of comfort.

The Catholic priest whose lot is with the mountain people very naturally will try to find out what they know and think of the Catholic Church. In order to open to them the gates of truth, it is necessary first to dispel their false ideas of us and remove their prejudice.

What do they know and think of us? Very little. It is their firm conviction that the Catholics believe neither in Christ nor in the Bible, that they worship the Virgin and adore pictures, that they are a mixture of Mormons, Jews and Mohammedans, and that it is safer not to fool with them.

One day I met a man on the train who professed to be a "Seventh Day Adventist" and plied me with many questions when he learned that I was a Catholic priest. Finally he told me there was a Catholic from his town on the train, and he wanted me to meet him. The man came, but protested against being made a Catholic, saying that he was a Jew. My friend looked rather puzzled and remarked: "Why, I thought that was the same thing."

Not infrequently you can hear a man or woman say they wished so much to see a Catholic, and when you invite them to have a good look at you they will say: "Why, you look all right," or "You look just like any other man." They really appear disappointed because we have no horns or other marks that would make us look like the picture they have formed of us in their mind.

The celibacy of the Catholic priesthood is a hard problem for them. Why, oh why don't priests get married—especially the good-looking ones? It worries them a great deal. Of course they have the famous A. P. A. book, "Christ or the Pope," or have listened to evangelists or fake ex-priests detailing the frightfully immoral and corrupt ways of priests and nuns, and they can not understand why those don't marry. But here lives a young priest with a housekeeper old enough to be his grandmother, and no nun in sight. Why doesn't he get married? Oh, it's such a pity.

"Why do you preach in Latin?" they will ask. "Did you ever hear me preach in Latin?" "No, but Jane Cox told me she was in your church and she could not understand a word." Our High Mass was a Latin sermon for Jane.

There is no way of ascertaining the feelings and impressions of these good people when for the first time in their lives they enter a Catholic Church. They have heard such awful tales about the Catholics that it even taxes their courage to the utmost to go there at all. They enter with fear and trembling. Everything is so different from the meeting house. There is deep silence—no body talking and giggling, eating peanuts or candy "before the meeting takes up." The people come in, make deep genuflections and kneel down in the pews. What a surprise to the Protestant visitor! And then the altar, the Stations of the Cross, the statues, crucifixes, etc. They never saw such things. The sermon is preached in English—they were always told it was in Latin. And the priest speaks of Christ and the Bible just as if the Catholics believed in it. And how funny the priest dresses—a black gown with a night robe over it. Children ask why he wears a lace curtain. What makes them open their eyes and mouths in utter amazement, however, is the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Some think it is a clock that strikes just at the moment when the priest raises it over the audience; others believe it to be a charm, and that the priest can do with you whatever he pleases whilst holding it; and others, again, maintain that it is a spy-glass through which the priest inspects his audience before closing the services.

The priest, working in the mountains, is truly a missionary. He must be well instructed and able to speak in a clear and convincing manner. He must converse amiably with every one. It is wrong to imagine that one must be rough to handle the mountaineer. The priest is no deputy sheriff. The gentle ray of the sun melts the ice, not the blast of the roaring tempest. No missionary will ever succeed who does not love children. The hope of the Catholic Church lies in the youth. Give us the hearts of the little ones to mold and their minds to train, and they will be our missionaries in the future. Erect Catholic schools in the mountains, endow them sufficiently to enable the poorer class of people to send their children, engage a capable and virtuous teacher, and you will plant the seed for a rich harvest.—P. Ambrose Reger, O.S.B., in the New World.

A SMILE IN EVERY DOSE.

If your little ones are cross, peevish and fretful, give them Baby's Own Tablets, and they will soon be cheerful, smiling and happy. Worried mothers who use this medicine will find there's a smile in every dose. Mrs. N. Nathieu, Nonsbonging, Ont., says: "Before I began using Baby's Own Tablets my little one was always sickly and-cried day and night. But the Tablets have regulated his stomach and bowels, given him strength, and he is now good-natured and growing finely." Mothers need not be afraid to use this medicine—it is guaranteed to contain no opiate or harmful drug, and may be given with perfect safety to a new born babe. Sold by all medicine dealers or sent post paid at 25 cents a box by writing The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

SOLOMON'S SYSTEM OF SELF-DEFENSE. "Do you think it would be wrong of me to learn the 'noble art of self-defense'?" a religiously inclined youth inquired of his pastor. "Certainly no," answered the minister. "I learned it in my youth myself, and I have found it of great value during my life." "Indeed, sir! Did you learn the old English system or Sullivan's system?" "Neither, I learned Solomon's system," replied the minister. "Solomon's system?" "Yes. You will find it laid down in the first verse of the fifteenth chapter of Proverbs: 'A soft answer turneth away wrath.' It is the best system of self-defense of which I have any knowledge."

SOCIALISM AND CATHOLIC FRANCE.

"Neither God nor Master." This is the shibboleth—the Socialist programme, in a nutshell. We know in France that the Socialists are the implacable enemies of religion. We have no illusions whatever on that score. They declare it themselves, both sides, under the pretext of obeying their reason, of showing themselves to be men of science and admitting of no God. For them, Reason explains all, and every phenomena of nature is brought about by natural causes, although they cannot indicate them. The creation of man is not an embarrassing problem for them; in fact, they do not admit of any religious teaching. That good and bad are two distinct things they admit, but they claim that a man,

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