

after Father Pat was in her room ministering to Mrs Carroll.

But Joe's mother did not die. The ministrations of Father Pat seemed to affect the body as well as the soul, and on the following day she was much improved.

Joe will be married in June, but Lieutenant Miller is not the lucky suitor. Mrs. Carroll experienced a change of sentiment on her recovery.

"Dan Jackson's a true-hearted boy," the good woman is often heard to repeat, and she is not the only member of her family who thinks so.

Dan laughs when asked about the trip. "Well, I had to get Father Pat there in some way," he says.—Catholic Fireside.

THE STORY OF CHRIST

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BLESSED ARE THE POOR

Jesus sat on a little hill in the midst of the first apostles surrounded by hundreds of eyes that were watching His eyes; and some one asked Him to whom would be allotted this Kingdom of Heaven, of which He so often spoke.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Luke leaves out the words "in spirit," seeming to mean the poor and nothing else; and many people after him some modern and malicious have understood him to mean the simple-minded, the silly.

When He spoke, Jesus was not thinking either of the first or the second. Jesus had no friendship for the rich and detested with all His soul the greedy desire for riches, the greatest obstacle to the true enrichment of the soul; Jesus was friendly to the poor and comforted them because they had less comfort than other people; he kept them near Him because of their greater need to be fed by loving words.

Jesus never gave any sign of admiring that intelligence which is solely the intelligence of abstraction and the memory for phrases. Purely systematic philosophers, and metaphysical sophists, gropers in nature, devourers of books, would never have found grace in His eyes.

The Pure of Heart are those who have no other wish than for perfection, no other joy than victory over the evil which hunts us down on every side. He who has his heart crammed with furious desires, with earthly ambitions, with carnal pride and with all the lusts which convulse this ant-heap of the earth, can never see God face to face, will never know the sweetness of His magnificent felicity.

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART: FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD

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These peacemakers are not the meek of the second beatitude. The meek refrain from answering evil with evil; the peacemakers do more, they return good for evil, they bring peace where wars are flaring up. When Jesus said He had come to bring war and not peace, He meant war to evil, to Satan, to the world, to evil which is wrong, to Satan who is Death, to the world which is an eternal battle.

BLESSED ARE THE MEEK: FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH

The earth here promised is not the literal field of clods, nor monarchies with built-up cities. In the language of the Messiah, "to inherit the earth" means to partake of the New Kingdom. The soldier who fights for the earthly

earth needs to be fierce; but he who fights within himself for the conquest of the new earth and the new heaven must not abandon himself to anger, the counselor of evil, nor to cruelty, the negation of love. The meek are those who endure close contact with evil men and with themselves—often harder to bear—who do not break out into brutish rage when things go badly, but conquer their inner enemies with that quiet perseverance which more than sudden sterile furies shows the force of the soul.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. The afflicted, the weeping, those who feel disgust for themselves and pity for the world, who do not live in the supine stupidity of everyday life, who mourn over their own unhappiness and that of their brothers, who grieve over failures, over the blindness which delays the victory of light—because light for men cannot come from the sky if their own eyes do not reflect it—who grieve over the remoteness of that righteousness dreamed of again and again, promised a thousand times, and yet always further away through our fault and every one's fault; those who mourn over an offense received instead of increasing the wrong by revenge, and who weep over the wrong they have done and over the good they might have done and did not; those who care little about the loss of a visible treasure but strain after the invisible treasure; those who mourn, hasten with their tears the day of grace, and it is right that they shall some day be comforted.

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER JUSTICE: FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED

The justice which Jesus means is not the justice of men, obedience to human law, conformity to codes, respect for usage and for the established transactions of men. In the language of the psalmists, the prophets, the saints, the just man is he who lives according to the will of God, because God is the supreme type of all perfection. Not according to the law written by the Scribes set down in the Bible, diluted by Talmudic casuistics, obscured by the subtleties of the Pharisees; but according to the one simple Law which Jesus reduces to one commandment, "Love all men near and far, your fellow countrymen and foreigners, strangers and enemies."

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY

He who loves shall be loved, he who gives help shall find help. The law of retaliation is nullified: for evil but remains valid for good. We constantly commit sins against the spirit and those sins will be forgiven us only as we forgive those committed against us. Christ is in all men and what we do to others will be done to us. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. If we have pity on others we may have pity for ourselves; God can pardon the evil which we do to ourselves only if we pardon the evil which others do to us.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE SONS OF GOD

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makers will have conquered the earth and they will be called the true sons of God, and they will enter among the first into His Kingdom.

BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HAVE BEEN PERSECUTED FOR JUSTICE'S SAKE: FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

I send you out to found this Kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven, of that higher justice which is love, of that fatherly goodness whose name is God; I send you out therefore to fight against those who uphold injustice, the servants of materialism, the proselytes of the Adversary. They will defend themselves when attacked and to defend themselves they will attack you. You will be tortured in body, crucified in soul, deprived of liberty and perhaps of life; but if you accept this suffering cheerfully to carry out that justice which makes you suffer, this persecution will be for you an incontestable title to enter into the Kingdom which you have founded as far as was in your power.

BLESSED ARE YE WHEN MEN SHALL REPROACH YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU AND SAY ALL MANNER OF EVIL AGAINST YOU FALSELY FOR MY SAKE

Persecution is a material attack through physical, legal and political means. The persecutors can take away your bread, and the clear light of the sun, and divine liberty; they may break your bones, but you must endure more than mere persecution. You must expect insult and calumny. They will condemn you because you wish to change bestial men into saints. Wallowing in the foulness of their bestiality, they detest the idea of leaving their filth. But they will not be satisfied to strike only at your body, they will strike also at your soul. They will accuse you of all crimes, they will stone you with slander and contumely. Hags will say that you are ignorant, ravens will accuse you of eating carrion, rams will drive you away as ill-smelling, the dissolute will cry out upon the scandal of your corruptness and thieves will denounce you for theft. But you must always rejoice because the insult of evil men is the consecration of your own goodness, and the mud thrown at you by the impure is the pledge of your purity. This is, as St. Francis says, "the perfect joy." Beyond all the graces which Christ gives to His friends is the grace of conquering oneself and other evils of God are not ours to glory in, because they come not from God; but in tribulation and in affliction we can glory because that is ours. All the prophets who have ever spoken upon the earth were insulted by men, and men will insult those who are to come. We can recognize prophets by this, that smeared with mud and covered with shame, they pass among men, bright-faced, speaking out what is in their hearts. No mud can close the lips of those who must speak. Even if the obstinate prophet is killed, they cannot silence him. His voice multiplied by the echoes of his death will be heard in all languages and through all centuries.

By means of the beatitudes, Christ fully explains who are fit to be the citizens of His new Kingdom. Those citizens are henceforth found and sealed; every one can recognize them. The unwilling are warned, the uncertain are reassured. The rich, the proud, the satisfied, the violent, the unjust, the warlike, those who mock, those who do not hunger after perfection, those who persecute and outrage, can never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. They cannot enter there until they are altogether conquered and changed, and have become the opposite of what they are now. Those who live happily according to the world, those whom the world envies, imitates and admires, are infinitely further from true happiness than those others whom the world scorns and hates. In this exulting beginning Jesus has turned upside down the human hierarchy; now as He goes on He will turn upside down the values of life, and no other revaluation will ever be so divinely paradoxical as His.

THE DIVINE PARADOX

Emasculated Gymnosophists and the cowardly sect of the Saturnists, these are serious-minded men who can understand plain facts but cannot interpret those facts but merely repeat and spoil them—have always looked with unfriendly eyes on what is called the paradoxical. To save themselves the trouble of distinguishing between sacred paradoxes and those which are only a fatuous amusement, they make haste to pass judgment on all paradox as nothing else than the overturning of recognized old truths; hence, false and—as they add, to clip the wings of vanity—as easy as possible to invent. One would suppose it seems to them more difficult to walk along the road already laid out, and to spell over line by line what was written before they were born by men who certainly had not their cowardly temperament.

But if these priests of the already-said would consider the few master ideas on which modern thought is living, or rather on which it is dying, they would discover that they are almost all over-

turnings, that is to say, paradoxes. When Rousseau says that men are born good but that society makes them bad, he turns inside out the accepted doctrine of original sin; when the disciples of progress affirm that from the worse comes the better; when the evolutionist affirms that the complex springs out of the simple; and the monist that all diversities are but manifestations of the One; and the Marxist that economic history is the basis of spiritual development; when the modern mathematical philosophers affirm that man is not as he has always been believed, the center of the universe, but a minute animal species on one of an infinite number of spheres scattered in the infinite; when the Protestants cry, "The Pope is of no account but only the Scriptures," when the French Revolutionists say, "The Third Estate is nothing and should be everything" what are all these people doing except overturning old and commonly held opinions?

But Jesus is the greatest overturner, the supreme maker of paradoxes, radical and without fear. This is His greatness, His eternal freshness and youth, the secret of the turning sooner or later of every great heart toward His Gospel.

He became incarnate to create men sunk in error and evil; He found error and evil in the world; how could He fail to overturn the maxims of the world? Read over again the words of the Sermon on the Mount. At every step it proclaims the desire of Jesus that what is low shall be recognized as lofty; that the last shall be first; that the overlooked shall be the preferred; that the scorned shall be revered; and finally, that the old truth shall be considered as error, and ordinary life as death and corruption. He has said to the past, benumbed in its death agony, to Nature, too easily followed, to universal and common opinion of mankind, the most decisive "NO" in the history of the world.

In this He is faithful to the spirit of His race which in its very downfall always found reasons for greater hope. The most ensnared people dreamed of dominion over peoples with the help of the Son of David. The most despised race felt that glory was promised them that believed itself the most loved; the most sinful was certain that it alone was to be saved. This absurd reaction of the Hebrew conscience became in Christ a revision of values, became a divine renovation of all the principles followed and respected by humanity.

Christ's first discovery is like that of Buddha, "Men are unhappy, all men—even those who seem happy." Siddharta to put an end to pain counseled the suppression of life itself. Jesus had another greater hope, and that only superficially a provisional and insufficient law, they have worshipped lying gods, they have thought they could find happiness in wine, in flesh, in gold, in authority, in cruelty, in art, in learning; and the only result has been that their suffering has become more intense. The explanation is that they have lost the path, that they must turn straight around, renounce what seemed good, pick up what was thrown away, worship what was burned, and burn what was worshipped, conquer the animal instincts instead of satisfying them, struggle with their nature instead of justifying it, make a new law and live by it, faithfully, in the spirit. If until now they have not obtained what they looked for, the only possible cure is to turn their present line upside down, that is, to transform their souls.

Our permanent unhappiness is a proof that the experiment of the old world has failed, that Nature is hostile, that the past is wrong, that to live like animals according to the elementary instinct of animals, only slightly furnished up and varnished with humanity, results in wretchedness and despair. Those who have laughed at or wept over the infinite wretchedness of man have seen clearly. The pessimists are right, those who denounce our boasting, those who scorn our strengthlessness, those who despise our ignominy, how can they be refuted?

Whoever is not born to wriggle contentedly in the worm heap, eating his particle of earth, he who has not only a stomach and two hands, but a soul and a heart; he whose soul is of finer temper because it has been so beaten upon, is bound to feel a horror of mankind. For hard, arid natures this horror changes into repugnance and hate; for others richer and more generous it turns to pity and love.

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