

BROTHER TO A SAINT.

BY ELLEN M. SWEENEY.

Andy McGonigal was drunk again. That sounds as though it were a rare occurrence, but it wasn't.

Every one in Saratoga—for they are as particular as to names on Eleventh Avenue as on Fifth—knew that Andy was at it again, and every one from the little caddies that hung around the stoop to "Blind Joe" who lived on the top floor back, was sorry for his sister, Mary.

It was only last week that she had boasted that she had made him decent; but, alas! for woman's faith and man's unrepentable thirst, he was "at it again."

It was not for want of care or want of prayer that Andy was the wreck he was. From the first streak of day until midnight Mary sewed incessantly on "pants"—for the bulk of the sweater's work is done in these tenements—that Andy might have a roof over his head, a hot dinner nearly every day, and a good, well-mended coat on his back in which to go to Mass; but he never used it for that purpose.

A prezzed, a pickle, and a cup of "calico" was Mary's meagre meal every morning after 5 o'clock Mass. The prezzed "kept so well," the pickle was "so fillin'," and the tea was the one little luxury that the poor soul allowed herself. Her hard life of unremitted toil and continual disappointment of reforming the brother she loved so tenderly left its mark on her shrunken frame, her hard knotted hands, and large jointed fingers.

Those poor fingers were kept so busy! By constant application for six days in the week she could earn at "finishing" thirty-nine cents a pair, and could do three pairs a day, thus bringing up her income to the meagre sum of seven dollars a week. As for Andy, he was always "looking for a job," but seldom got any farther in his search than the "Owl's Retreat" next door, out of which he would be systematically ejected at the timid questioning of his sister, "Is Andy within?"

There was no mistaking Mary's nationality. Slight as her accent was, it proclaimed her birth amidst Gotham's teeming population. Her heart was warmed by the intense glow of perfect faith and loyalty to the Church of her fathers. There was nothing, however, of the wholesome Milesian comeliness about Mary except a perfect personal cleanliness. Her small face was drawn, and too old for her thirty-seven years; her thin hair was smoothly parted, drawn tightly back from a too high forehead, and twisted into a walnut at the nape of her neck.

But for all that her face was strangely attractive; it was so peaceful, so serene, so quietly strong. Her eyes were Tenyson's "homes of silent prayer." They were her own redeeming feature, and were large and softly dark, confiding as a dog's, and like a dog's, full of a dumb wistfulness.

Island. But no, while there was a roof over her head, Andy would share it; while she could earn a crust of bread, Andy had the larger part of it. Father Ambrose and his active sympathy, her daily Mass and weekly Communion—for she received every Saturday morning—were the bright spots in her otherwise dark life. She had all the passionate devotion and loyalty to her pastor that characterizes her warm blooded race.

But sometimes for weeks he did not see her; for a parish of twelve thousand souls needs a rector's constant supervision.

One day in the middle of the winter word was brought to him that Mary was sick and had sent for him. He hurried down there, expecting to find her laid up again from the effects of one of Andy's spree; but he found her very ill indeed with pneumonia.

The flush of fever on her worn, sunken cheek made her almost beautiful. Her eyes shone like stars as she grasped her friend's hand in her burning ones. As usual, his very presence soothed and calmed her. He begged to know if there was anything he could do for her, anything at all he could do to lessen her trouble.

"O Father! I have never a bit of trouble now if Andy would only keep straight. But then, she went on, her labored breath coming in great gasps, "God must send me some trouble. It would be worse if I had nothing at all to suffer for His sake." Then, after a little pause, "It's Andy's soul I'm thinking of continually."

"Think of yourself now, Mary, for once. Andy will have to work out his own salvation."

"Ab, Father dear! If I may make so bold, Andy has no one but me. And in your sermon last Sunday night you said that prayer was a bridge from earth to heaven. Sure, I'd make my body a bridge for him, if he could but walk on it into that Land of Promise. What's my pain, and my work, and my days and nights of trouble, if they won't buy heaven for my brother?"

And Father Ambrose, used as he was to the heroism of poverty, familiar with the pathetic courage of the poor, felt his eyes fill with tears in the presence of such a noble example of vicarious suffering.

What could he do but pray with and for her, this lovely soul that walked on a plane but little lower than the angels? "I'll offer up my Mass for you tomorrow, Mary," he said as he rose to go, "for the—"

"Where's your gun, Andy," said his host, who was smilingly agreeable as long as the coin in Andy's pockets held out.

"This is as good as a gun," said Andy, laying bare his large, sinewy forearm, that looked formidable enough until it was remembered that champions do not "train on mixed ale," whatever they may do after they have proved their staying powers in the ring. Andy's flabby muscles offered no menace to the foreman; and yet when the latter entered the place, and after a few hot words on either side, Andy let fly from his shoulder a well-directed blow between the eyes, the foreman dropped like a log.

In a moment the excited crowd announced "he's dead."

It was fully a minute before Andy could take in the fact, and when it did enter his dulled brain he dashed out of the place turning toward Eleventh Avenue, and just caught hold of the rear platform rail of a freight train pulling out, and was carried off faster and faster toward the West and liberty.

How Mary got through that night she never knew. All night long she spent on her knees, imploring the Sacred Host to forgive Andy, only to forgive him, and then it did not matter what the law did to him. Not for an instant did she contrast her present state of horror and fear with the calmness and peace of yesterday. She simply thanked God that he had been brought to a state of grace once at least, and she trusted blindly to the saving grace of that Communion to reach his sin stained heart even yet.

She offered no resistance to the officers of the law as they entered her two little rooms in search of her brother, and to their repeated questionings as to his whereabouts, had but one answer, "Only God knows!"

Two days afterwards she would have given her very life to know herself, for by a strange circumstance of fate the post-mortem examination brought out the fact, too strange not to be true, that the foreman had not met his death at Andy's hands at all. He was found really to have perished of heart disease, or, as the medical expert termed it, "he died of syncope ante cedent by a few seconds to the so-called murder." Witnesses bore evidence to the fact that the deceased had been out of health some time. His heart was found to be entirely empty, thus exonerating from the very serious charge the fleeing fugitive.

From the moment of this announcement Mary spent her time in looking for her brother. Day after day she hunted his usual resorts, but found no trace of him; night after night she spent praying for his return. To help her, though he had but little hope of his success, Father Ambrose had inserted in one of the big dailies a carefully worded advertisement; and even went further, and interested a young newspaper man in the story and had him make a stirring article out of it; but still Andy did not return.

The constant disappointment, hard work, and sleepless nights began to tell on Mary's enfeebled frame. When she found that she could not finish her three pairs of "pants" a day, and realized that her health, already undermined by the attack of pneumonia she had had, was ruined by her latest trouble, she bowed her head to the inevitable, and with her accustomed fortitude made hers the will of God.

standing the embarrassed condition of his finances, produced by the curtailment of his territory, he introduced many ameliorations, and did much for the advancement and improvement of the city of Rome and of its institutions.

But no one is so blind as he who, dazzled by his own selfish ambition, will not see; and such was Victor Emmanuel, the tool and figurehead of the arch plotter, Cavour, and of the irreligious, red vested revolutionist, Garibaldi.

The plain fact then is, that the Papal States were the best governed portion of Italy, an example to all the other Italian states. Consequently, another plea for robbery had to be found. It was found. A United Italy became the cry, and the appropriation of the Papal States was proclaimed to the world a national necessity; and upon this plea and that of "Might is Right" is the acquisition defended.

And so the States of the Church granted by Pepin and Charlemagne, extended by Matilda of Tuscany, protected through the ages by the sword of Catholic Christendom, and ruled over by the Sovereign Pontiffs for more than a thousand years, were more unjustly and iniquitously absorbed into the kingdom of Italy.

Morally speaking, the worst claim to another's property is the so-called right of conquest, which appropriates to rank robbery where the *casus belli* is small or entirely wanting. There was no *casus belli* as between Pius IX. and the King of Sardinia. Rebellion there was none; for the Pope was an independent sovereign, owing allegiance to no superior on earth, and whose sway had outlasted many dynasties in many lands. Annexation it was not; for annexation supposes some kind of consent on the part of the annexed, a condition which was entirely lacking here on the part of ruler and subjects. Sale or exchange there was none, because the insulting offers of an unscrupulous Government were spurned and rejected. For this atrocious act of deprivation there is but one name—robbery; and the King of Italy, the robber.

It is the tenacity with which Leo XIII. clings to his claim to the just heritage of the successors of St. Peter to be wondered at? Can history furnish a clearer and more incontestable claim than this of Popes to their temporal dominions?

"It was a national necessity," cries the would-be thought nationalist. "It is a *fait accompli*," says the careless observer. "The temporal power of the Papacy is dead and buried forever," declare the enemies of the Catholic Church.

And thus the non Catholic world pronounces on this the most stupendous piece of spoliation of modern times. But the millions of Catholics, whose hearts turn in sympathy to the Holy Father in the Vatican prison know better. The question of the restoration of the Church's ancient patrimony is not dead, but a living issue between the Catholic world and the despoiler; and the words of Leo XIII., quoted at the beginning of this article, prove how near and dear to his heart it is. The question is not dead, nor will the millions of Catholics the world over look upon it as dead, so long as the third crown rests in its time honored place on the Papal tiara.—"S." in Ottawa (St. Patrick's) Calendar.

Memorial to Father Hecker. St. Paul the Apostle's Church, at Columbus avenue and Sixtieth street, New York, is being decorated at a cost of \$60,000, the expense to be borne by Mrs. Josephine Hecker, widow of George V. Hecker, the flour merchant. Mrs. Hecker, with her daughter, Mrs. Locke, contributes the money as a memorial to the late Father Hecker, founder of the community of priests known as the Paulist Fathers. The task of decorating the sanctuary has been entrusted to John Lafarge. The decorations will be a setting for the high altar, designed by Sanford White. This altar is made of Mexican onyx.

Gained Very Much. My wife was afflicted with sciatic rheumatism for three years. Seeing an advertisement of Hood's Sarsaparilla, she concluded to give it a fair trial. After she had taken a few bottles she gained very much, and she continued its use until she was cured. Charles B. Abbott, Cullwater, Michigan.

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