

## AN AWAKENING

Every morning as Francis Montgomery passed the corner of Mohawk and Fourteenth streets a little girl clad in rags said to him, "Paper, sir?" For two years on each workday morning the child was there at her post until Montgomery began to consider her a part of the busy street and noticed her more each time. At last, one morning as he went by, the little newsboy was not there and the cold business man felt as if something were lacking from his usual program, as if some light in his life had failed to shine that day. He missed the pretty picture she made as she stood there with her dark auburn curls flying in the wind. She was very small and thin and the dark eyes seemed all the darker and bigger on account of the extreme pallor of her skin.

Constantly throughout the day there arose her image in his mind. Then he would find himself thinking of her. Where was she? Was the child ill? Why was she not there? If he only knew where she lived he would go to see her, he thought.

But the sharp ring of the telephone suddenly interrupted his thoughts and taking up the receiver he wearily answered, "Hello!" "Hello," came a man's voice over the wire. "This is John Harrison; say, Frank, you're a lawyer; will you come over to the court house with me today?"

"What for?" queried Montgomery. "Well, I've got a case on and I'd like to have you there, Frank. That's all. Will you come?" "Yes; at what time?" asked Montgomery.

"About two o'clock. Thanks. Good-by." "Good-by," said the other man slowly. Then he glanced at his watch and found that it was just half-past one, so he settled down to work for a half hour. But at two prompt he met John Harrison and the latter's wife at the court house. They went in.

Montgomery looked for the defendant. The door opened and in walked a little girl. To his astonishment it was none other than the little newsboy. Montgomery experienced a strange feeling coming over him and said weakly to Mrs. Harrison, "Jane," for he knew her very well, "is that child the defendant?"

Jane Harrison nodded assent. "Do you mean to say John is going to prosecute that baby?" "Why, certainly," said Montgomery. "Why not?" "Jane," said Montgomery, "she stole at least ten dollars' worth of groceries from John's store last night and you know she will end in the electric chair if that is not stopped now. It is for her own well-being, I think!" But before she had time to finish, Francis Montgomery had risen from his seat and was racing up the aisle toward the judge.

"Harrison! Harrison!" he cried, "don't do anything to her. I'll bail her out. Don't send her to jail!"

The entire room turned its eyes toward him. The little prisoner's tear-stained face was looking beseechingly toward him.

John Harrison turned around saying with a snarl, "Well, Frank, I never saw you so excited. Be seated."

"I'm serious. I mean it! Let the child go, I say. I'll pay the fine," shouted Montgomery.

"All right, Mr. Montgomery," said the presiding judge, "I accept your kind offer. John," turning to an officer, "release the girl."

The officer obeyed, and instantly Francis Montgomery was beside the little prisoner.

"Come with me, child; come with me," he said kindly, lifting the child to his arms and then bearing her out of the room amid the astonishment of all present. When he had gone from the sight of the wondering court room Montgomery said to the child: "First of all, my child, tell me, where do you live?"

"In Cobb's alley, near Sycamore street," said she.

"And then," continued the man, "with whom do you live?"

"With my mother and three little brothers, sir. Our papa was killed last year and mamma has no money to buy us food or clothes, and last night Jimmie was so sick and hungry and so was we all that I just couldn't help takin' those things from that man. I know 'tis a sin, but I just couldn't see the little feller die 'cause he was hungry, so I just took the stuff. I suppose God's mad at me 'cause I was bad, but, O, I couldn't help it!" she ended with a sob and buried her face on his shoulder.

"There, don't cry, little girl. I understand. First we'll buy all the nice things to eat we can and then we'll go to your home."

"Oh, thank you, mister," she sobbed.

In about an hour Francis Montgomery and his little friend drove up in his big car to a shabby-looking tenement in Cobb's alley.

"That's it, mister! That's where I live!" said the little girl, climbing out.

Francis Montgomery followed her, picking up in his arms the many packages from the back of the machine. The child ran in and waited for the man. Oh, what a squallid sight met his eyes! In a dirty, poverty-stricken little room, stretched out on a mattress on the

floor, lay a little boy, pale and wan. In the other corner of the place sat two other little boys ragged and forlorn looking.

"Them's my brothers," said the little girl. Then addressing one, "Frank, where's mamma?"

"I dunno where," replied the lad. "Well, mister, you'll wait for her, won't you?" said his sister to Montgomery.

"Why certainly, child," he answered. "But first let us have supper."

The little girl helped him to set out the eatables he had bought and soon the four children were eating as fast as they could. Montgomery sat watching the busy little diners when the door opened and in came a tall, gaunt-looking woman.

"Mamma," cried the children, crowding around her, "look what the nice man got us."

Not seeing Montgomery, she queried, "What nice man? Whom do you mean?"

"Why him, mamma!" said the children, pointing to Montgomery. The woman turned her eyes toward him and immediately a look of alarm and surprise overspread her face.

"What—are you here?" she exclaimed. "How—how, O, why did you come?" she stammered. The man was equally affected.

"Why—my—O, Meg, O, it is terrible that—" he stammered. "Yes, it is terrible that we should meet under such circumstances," she interrupted, growing calmer.

Suddenly the man dashed forward and, throwing himself on his knees before the woman, he cried: "Meg, Meg, dear, my daughter, can't you forgive me now? Won't you give me a chance to redeem my former unkindness to you?"

Then his voice broke and tears filled his eyes. Margaret looked at him for a few seconds with a sad pensive look, but then she threw her arms about his neck, sank to the floor and wept on the man's shoulder.

"Daddy," she whispered, "you must forgive me—my wilfulness. Let us forget and forgive now, dad. We were both wrong."

"Yes, my daughter," said Montgomery. "But let's forget it now. From now on all will be as well for you as I can make it."

Father and daughter sat for many minutes in each other's embrace, regardless of the dirty floor or anything else, while the children gazed with wondering eyes.

Finally they arose, and Margaret said to her children, "Darlings, this is grandpa. Come, you must kiss him."

Immediately the children crowded about him lovingly, while Margaret watched with beaming eyes. Especially the little girl clung to him.

"Meg," said her father, "tell me their names. You mustn't forget that I am a stranger."

"This one," said his daughter, placing her hand on the little girl's head, "is little Genevieve. Jenny, I call her; and that one is James or Jimmie. Then that's Francis or Frank, and the smallest one is Alfred or Freddy."

The old man laughed. "The three gentlemen are strangers, but Jenny and I are old friends, aren't we?"

"Oh, yes, grandpa, dear," said Jenny. "How glad I used to be when you'd give me extra pennies when you'd buy my paper. Oh, but grandpa, I'm so glad you are grandpa."

Everyone laughed. At last the old man said, looking at his watch, "Well, well, it's getting late. We must be getting home. Come along, the car is outside."

The children followed him, but Meg stayed to gather up a few trinkets. But soon she appeared, got into the auto and in a short time they had left the slums far behind and had arrived at Montgomery's beautiful mansion on Wabash avenue.

"This is your home, kiddies," said the old man as he led the way into the house. They all followed, admiring and wondering at their new home. The servant who opened the door stared in amazement at the crowd, but soon the old housekeeper told her that was old Montgomery's daughter and her children who had come.

"When Meg was eighteen," she told the maid, "she married a young Catholic and became one herself. The old man not only raved because she married beneath her, but because she married a Papist, as he called his son-in-law. Of course he disinherited her and poor Meg and young Esmond went to live elsewhere. That's the last we ever heard of her. We thought maybe she was dead. I think old Montgomery regretted what he had done, 'cause he was always sad after Meg went, but now, seeing she's come back, the old house will be bright and happy again I know."

Then she hastened away to see the children and their mother. Meg and her children lived happily with old Montgomery, but their material joy was greatly augmented by a spiritual event. On Christmas eve, as they were all gathered about the Christmas tree, little Jenny said slowly, "We must all go to Mass tomorrow and thank the Christ-Child for being good to us."

"Yes, dear, we will," said her mother.

Then said the little girl again, "Grandpa, won't you come with us to Mass and receive Communion with mamma and me?"

A look of alarm crossed Mrs. Esmond's face, but it was almost

instantly replaced by one of joy by the old man's answer. "Sure, little Jenny, I'll come to Mass," he replied, "and I'll receive my first Holy Communion with you, too."

"You receive Communion? O grandpa, you're not—O are you a Catholic, grandpa?"

Margaret listened, breathless with excitement. "Yes, my child," he said, "I was baptized this morning and tomorrow I'll make my first Communion."

Meg and the children rained kisses and tears of joy upon him. Then they sat there for a long time in silent happiness before the fire. Finally, Jenny said, "Grandpa, I used to get tired saying 'Paper, sir,' but if I'd never said it, I'd never known you or had you for my grandpa or, most of all, you'd probably never become a Catholic."

"I know, dear, I wouldn't. It was your 'Paper, sir,' that was the means of bringing me at last to you and the true faith," he answered, drawing her nearer to him—Exchange.

"GATE OF HEAVEN"

Ellen Malloy bent over her knitting, straining her eyes to catch the last of the rapidly fading daylight. There was only half a row left to do on the gay little woolen garment that lay upon her lap. It was a sweater for Eugenia's eight-year-old John and she was anxious to finish it before supper.

A fine old figure was Ellen as she sat in her rocker by the open window. A peace well-earned reflected itself in the clear grey eyes and rested like a halo upon the white hair, which crept, in spite of frequent brushing, from beneath the snowy cap. There was hint of humor about the corners of the shrewd mouth, and the broad forehead and firm, generously formed fingers that wielded the flashing needles bespoke capability.

The kettle on the kitchen stove was humming merrily when Ellen folded her knitting, rose from her rocker and gave vent to a sigh of satisfaction. "Well," said she half aloud, "Tis done, and I'm glad of it. He'll have need of it for a while yet before the real warm weather comes and I've made it plenty big against his growing by next fall."

She had scarcely finished speaking when a "honk-honk" sounded in the near distance. Ellen turned about, shaded her eyes with her hand and peered into the gathering gloom. Two giant eyes were approaching along the highway from the north. In their wake came a flurry of dust and another shrill honk of the horn. In a second the motor had vanished around a bend in the road. A moment later its lights reappeared in the grove of trees, where windows began to shine brightly from the big house of stucco and brick.

Ellen sighed again and went inside. Absently she made ready her solitary supper; tea of liquid amber, honey with comb as white as the clover that had yielded it, bits of golden butter and flaky biscuit fresh from the oven. Yet she ate sparingly. The meal was left almost untouched and Ellen set methodically about the task of dish-washing and putting things to rights.

Working on the sweater had brought back many memories to her today; memories of a small boy with tousled yellow hair, her John who on evenings like this had trudged by his father's side when he went to milk the cows and had carried his own diminutive bucket brimful from the barn. Afterwards there had come the story before bedtime, with the lithe, warm body clasped passionately in her arms. Ah, but God had been good to her when He made her a mother! Last of all were the night prayers. How well she remembered the pride and the sweetness of the first Our Father and Hail Mary! They had been wonderfully happy in those days. 'Twas only the old log cabin of her girlhood that sheltered them, but sure, thought Ellen, that was more than the Holy Family had. She and John and the child had enough to eat and a comfortable place to sleep. They were beholden to no man.

Two years that followed were hard ones, but she straightened with honest pride as she recalled them. The fever came that took away her man and left her alone with little John. But they managed somehow or other. Young John worked his way through High school and through college, too. Then it had been one rise after another for him until it ended in the presidency of the bank in the town nearby.

And John had married. At this point in her reverie a crease made by more than mere thought lined Ellen's smooth brow. If the gay little sweater had summoned a throng of memories, the two glaring eyes and the honk of the motor horn had called up others. And these last were not all present.

"Oh, yes, the girl! He had married with all right. John and she had met during his school days. Her father was a big man in the college town. They were Catholics—of a sort. She was pushing and energetic and bound to get ahead. She was always nice enough to her mother-in-law, (she never failed to speak of her as such before strangers) but there had never been much of an understanding between them. Ellen was, as were, continually running into blind alleys

in her intercourse with this new daughter. It had not taken long to see which way the wind blew religiously. 'You've no picture of Our Lord or the Saints?' the elder woman had asked, with no thought of harm, as she was being shown through the neat cottage in town where the young couple had set up house-keeping.

Eugenia tossed her head, with just a suggestion of scorn. "No," she replied, "I couldn't find any I really liked. Most of them are so inartistic. They would simply spoil my decoration scheme, and besides my Protestant friends wouldn't understand. I think one ought to be broad in these matters."

Well, it had been a long story. The good God had prospered John Malloy. In the midst of the trees on the park way rose the big house of brick and stucco, with its quote Jerry Moran, the pious old caretaker, its "English windows, its Ectetallan gardens, and its haythen pitchers."

On the hillside close by a cozy bungalow built for her by her father, Ellen was rousing out her duties, filled with useful, homely duties. It was sufficient for her that she could be near her boy and enjoy his frequent visits. Often little John would come with him, and as she cuddled the child in her arms recollections of bygone days surged over her like a flood.

Meanwhile the pretty wife went her way. The bungalow and its occupant saw her but seldom, and her occasional calls were punctuated with half-hearted apology. Ellen knew that the child had been baptized, but she feared for the mother.

Then came the evening, just such a spring evening as this, when a white-faced messenger sped up the hill with the news of John's death. He had made a slight mistake at the wheel, and the car in which he was riding had overturned, pinning his underneath and crushing his life out. The accident had happened at the bend of the road, almost in sight of his mother's windows. He had died in the Church—thank God for that! His mother and he had made their Easter duty together not two weeks before. He had tried to get Eugenia to go with them—she had received Holy Communion but twice since their marriage. But she had laughed lightly and put him off. "There is plenty of time, dear. Anyway, you are good enough for two."

Ellen had rarely seen her daughter-in-law in the three years since John died, and never in church. Strange looking visitors came and went, some of them from foreign parts it was rumored. Always Eugenia invited her to the house for Christmas dinner, but Ellen felt awkward and constrained there; glad when the time came to return to her tiny home upon the hill. Sometimes little John danced into the bungalow like a ray of sunshine, and tonight she looked hungrily at the gay worsted sweater. She could scarcely wait to see him in it. She had heard the other day that John's wife had the pits of golden butter and flaky biscuit fresh from the oven. Yet she ate sparingly. The meal was left almost untouched and Ellen set methodically about the task of dish-washing and putting things to rights.

It was nearly bedtime. Ellen took her prayer book from the drawer of the sewing table and knelt before the statue of the Blessed Virgin in the corner. Eugenia would have disappeared of the statue; would have called it gaudy and inartistic. To Ellen it was very beautiful. These many years past she had poured out her strong soul to God as she knelt at its feet, and God had heard and answered. A climbing vine trained by her own loving hands, twined its way about the statue. The tendrils clung to Our Lady as if loath to let go their grasp, and delicate, yellow blossoms wreathed themselves into a crown upon her head.

Ellen opened her prayer-book to the Litany of Loretto. When she reached the petition, "Gate of Heaven," she lingered over it. That was what the Blessed Virgin was—the Gate of Heaven. She thought of those she loved who might be there now, please God. Somehow Heaven seemed close tonight. She herself would like to enter through that Gate. She felt very tired, very spent.

Suddenly the door opened, with a rush as if forced by the wind outside. Ellen dropped her prayer book, rose quickly from her knees and turned to close it. When she did so it was to find herself face to face with a flushed, flaxen-haired small boy, with eyes dilated and arms outstretched. Startled was she that she did not immediately recognize her guest. For a moment it seemed as if an angel from on high had come to her cottage. Then she opened her arms and the child fled to their shelter, sobbing out his trouble on her breast. "Granny!" he cried.

"Oh, yes, the girl! He had married with all right. John and she had met during his school days. Her father was a big man in the college town. They were Catholics—of a sort. She was pushing and energetic and bound to get ahead. She was always nice enough to her mother-in-law, (she never failed to speak of her as such before strangers) but there had never been much of an understanding between them. Ellen was, as were, continually running into blind alleys

The labored breathing of the sick woman cut the air like a knife as Ellen entered the room. The nurse on duty in the hall tried to bar the way, but she had been silenced with a calm, "I have a right to be here."

Eugenia Malloy's face was drawn and purple and her dark eyes wandered restlessly from place to place as if in vain search of some long-lost and dearly loved object. One hand lay upon the coverlet, and the brilliant jewels in their chased setting were in sad contrast with the thin fingers they were meant to adorn.

Ellen groped for a prayer. "Gate of Heaven, Pray for us," was all that came to mind, and silently she hurried it heavenward. "I have come to you, Eugenia," she said.

What passed between the two women during the moments that followed is known only to God and the watching angels. As the tides of eternity crept closer and closer to Eugenia Malloy she clung for protection to Ellen, and in the quarter of an hour that elapsed before the arrival of kindly Father Cleary the misunderstandings and the heartaches faded away.

Long after the people of the outlying farmsteads had gone to rest a soul sped upward through the warm, soft spaces of the night. Birds were stirring drowsily in the bushes along the roadside and the spring-time rain was falling.

In the grey light of dawn Ellen climbed the hill. She would have no one accompany her and she would return to the great house later, she had said. Despite the weariness of body there was joy in her heart. As she entered the living room of the bungalow the first rays of the morning sun were shining, green and yellow, among the bowers in Our Lady's crown.

Tired as she was, Ellen knelt before the statue. The prayer book lay where she had dropped it the night before. She gave no heed to it; she clasped her hands instead, and gazed intently at the face about her. The tears coursed freely down her cheeks and fell, one by one, upon the polished floor. Her lips moved. "Gate of Heaven," she whispered, "Pray for us!"—James Louis Small, in The Lamp.

GENESIS OF MORAL ANARCHY

LESSONS OF LAST EIGHT YEARS UNFOLDED

Declaring that man has created more moral and material ruin in the past eight years than history can point to in any other equal length of time, the Rev. P. J. Gannon, S. J., delivered a scholarly address on "Moral Anarchy" at the annual meeting of the Catholic Truth Society held in Dublin.

Father Gannon reviewed world conditions and emphasized the fact that the evils that have befallen men have been for the most part because they have failed to honor the commandments of God. He said in part:

"Since the Reformation there has been going on a steady decline of supernaturalism, a great and growing denial of spiritual values, an indiscipline of heart and will, ending in a widespread apostasy from God, which is the root cause of the madness and misery we behold. For when men forget God, they wander daily farther from happiness, and mistaking the very aim and object of existence, they scramble round the pig-troughs till they fall foul of one another in their struggle for the husks of swine."

The Omar Kayan of Fitzgerald is one of the most typical products of pre-war days, and in it there is a quaternary which seems to me to epitomize the profoundest yearning of the tired, voluntary world which has committed suicide. In it the old Persian singer is made to speak to his mistress thus:

"Ah Live, could thou and I with Him conspire,  
To grasp this sorry scheme of things  
entire  
Remould it nearer to the heart's  
desire?"

SHATTERING THE SCHEME

"Man would appear to have set out upon the first part of this programme—the shattering to bits. He has certainly gone nearer to shattering the scheme of things than ever before. He has created more moral and material ruin in eight brief years than history can point to during any equal length of time. Armed with the startling powers put into his hands by science he has laid flat with earth four ancient and powerful empires, and their fall has covered two continents with tombstones and desolation. Nor is the end yet. Equilibrium is very far from being restored. The shattering has been very thorough, but is not perhaps yet complete. And the remoulding has still to begin."

The forces making for life will ultimately prevail over the forces making for death. Out of the vast confusion some new order will arise. But when it does, it will still be a good deal removed from the heart's desire. For the root error of wild-eyed idealists is that they forget the words of Scripture 'We have not here a lasting city, but seek one that is to come!' The Civitas Dei is placed high upon Eternal Hills. It is there or nowhere. Millennial dreams are doomed to disappointment.

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"Hence the heart's desire will elude us always. And all who shape their course under the impression that they can compass it here below will reap always the bitter fruit of disappointment. They will destroy, but never build up. They will be broken by the hard facts of existence, will be forced in the end to claim with the sad Ecclesiasticus, 'This too is vanity and all is vanity under the sun.' I would like, however, to guard against misunderstanding. There are remediable ills in life, and we should endeavor to remedy them. I will even add that the dreamers of dreams are very useful, sometimes indispensable in this work. Nay I will even admit that the persons most responsible for violent revolutions, with all the evils they entail, are the hide-bound reactionaries whose one idea of policy is to sit upon the safety valve till the engine bursts and then shriek for more steam."

MUST RESCUE A COMMANDMENT

"One might trust oneself to the innate sense of justice of almost any nation on earth if it were permitted to know the truth the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. When the eighth commandment 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor' is rescued from the oblivion into which it has fallen, then, and not till then, can we hope for the peace of God."

"And this oblivion is the first feature of that moral anarchy which I call a world phenomenon, the first and perhaps the worst in so far as it makes a cure of the others nearly impossible. But the others also are numerous and grave. Roughly speaking the whole Decalogue has been abrogated, not merely violated by individuals, as was always the case, but set aside, derided or even inverted. Rationalistic critics were busy for years before the War in proclaiming that it was only a series of ancient taboos invented by Jewish lawgivers. And modern lawgivers and politicians ironically enough under the domination of Jewish financiers, have gone on making breaches in it, till today there reigns a confusion in the domain of even natural ethics which would have shocked the nobler thinkers of Pagan Greece or Rome."

"The theory of State Absolutism culminated in the philosophy of pre-war Germany, associated under different forms with the names of Nietzsche, Treitsche and Bernhardi. That philosophy has been pretty generally condemned, I am afraid, chiefly because it failed. Its condemnation would have been all to the good had it been sincere. But Kipling's line about 'the lesser breeds with the law' is the doctrine of the superego, an super race. While all Imperialism is Bernhardtism in practice. Hence the actions of those who condemn the doctrine most heatedly exemplify it, as much as, or more than those of their adversaries. After the Wilsonian sermons on the Mount came the Peace of Versailles; and the heart of mankind was broken."

THE ONLY CURE

"It will take generations for men to recover from this disillusionment. When will the world see that the only cure for its ills is the acknowledgment of divine law obligatory on all alike, the strong no less than the weak? And that rests on spiritual forces."

"The hope of a 'brotherhood of humanity' reposed on the deeper spiritual fact of the 'Fatherhood of God.' In the recognition of the fact of that Fatherhood and of the Divine purpose, which are central in the message of Christianity, we shall discover the ultimate foundation for the reconstruction of an ordered and harmonious life for all men."

"The fifth commandment says: 'Thou shalt not kill.' And what that today! Let our tombstones make answer. Matthew Arnold speaking of life in the days of perfect peace has written: 'Our vaunted life is one long funeral,' and these words have a literal truthfulness now which horrifies."

"The direct victims of our wars on a moderate estimate are between 11,000,000 and 12,000,000 men in the flower of youth. This does not include the unnumbered millions of indirect victims, innocent civilians blown to pieces, or sunk in ships or hurried to untimely graves."

"Since Herod slew the Innocents I cannot recall a deed more dastardly than that perpetrated in Weaver Street, Belfast, when a bomb was deliberately flung among

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