SO AS BY FIRE

BY JEAN CONNOR

CHAPTER II. BARBARA'S PATIENT

"And there—there was no letter fully on her pillow. She had been in bed three days now, for the red stain on the handkerchief had weakened her sadly.

"No," said Barbara, "none yet. But I'll go down again this evening

Oh, no, you needn't, you needn't," said the sick girl, wearily. "I know you hate to go to the quarry-store,

bby dear."
"Oh, I don't mind it so much now the men are not there—there is a preacher at the Union Hall, and they e all crowding to hear him. He is a new sort out here. Wears a long black gown, and has a cross stuck in his belt and has sworn off marrying, Daffy Mills says, so he can just travel around and preach and pray. Told the men how he had been in China and Japan and out among the canni bals and everywhere. They call him Father. Queer, ain't it?" said Bar-bara, with her little odd laugh. "Father Lane."

"Oh, then he is a priest!" said Elinor with a catch in her breath. "Priest or preacher, it's all the same, isn't it?" said Barbara, as she twisted up the coil of red golden that had tumbled down in her brisk

race over the hills. Oh, no-they are not-not the same at all," answered Elinor, quickly. What's the difference?' asked Barbara, jabbing her broken comb into the rippling tresses, knotted now in her usual careless style.

A great deal," answered Elinor. "I cannot explain it to you, Bobby, because I'm not very much of a Cath-olic myself. But mamma was one and she made papa promise I should be one, too, so he did his best. I went to Catholic Sunday school and church whenever I went anywhere, and I wouldn't be anything but a Catholic for the world, and if I were Would you?" asked Barbara.

So that he would help me-help me to die," answered Elinor, with a shudder. "Oh, I know what dying is! I saw papa, and I'm afraid, I'm afraid. Last night I woke up in the dark and I felt so cold, so queer, Bobby! My breath didn't come right and my heart was jumping-and I thought I was going to die, too, before-before the letter could reach me. and that I might never never see

"What's the good of thinking things like that?" said Barbara. "I'll make a bed up on the floor and come down here and sleep to night."

Oh, if you would, if you would

Rosecrofte after all."

"Oh, if you would, if you would, Bobby," said the sick girl gratefully. "And if you don't mind—I get neryous lying here, Bobby-will you look in the corner of my trunk, and see if the black box is all right. Papa told me to be careful of it, very careful, and last night I had a dreadful dream that it was gone. It holds all dear mamma's papers and letters, and the certificates of my birth and baptism all that proves I am mamma's child. And there's money there—all that is left of papa little insurance. I got \$200 when he died."

'It's all right," said Barbara, as humoring the sick girl's nervous fears she looked in at her poor little trea-Everything is safe, and I'll lock it up again as you can see. Now for goodness' sake turn over and go to sleep. I won't listen to another word or you'll be coughing up blood again," and Barbara turned her back resolutely, and with her little thin face resting on her hands stared out of the window, a pang in her heart—a strange, chilling pang such as she had never felt before.

For Elinor was dying-dying slow ly, but surely, as both Barbara and Rip, croaking harshly on the ledge beneath the window, knew.

And down in the black raftered

kitchen the old grandmother croaked in still harsher tone. 'She'll be dead on our hands before the month is up. It is all your doings, ye Weasel. You would have her instead of the quarry men that would have gone off to their work the morn and given no trouble. And now there will be wak. ing and burying and all sorts of work. And who's to pay for it? For the girl has neither kith nor kin to call

in, its plain. Who's to pay, say I?"
"You needn't worry," said Barbara slowly, and there was a somber light in the cold gray eyes. "There will be money and kin both, if half she

tells me is true."
"Eh, what—what is that ye say?" asked the old woman, shrilly. And then more to quiet her grandmother's sharp tongue than for any faith she put in Elinor's hopes, Barbara told the sick girl's story, the old crone listening with greedy interest kindling her sunken

"And do ye believe it?" she scoffed. "Do you believe all this grand story, ye young fool?"

'No," answered Barbara, "I don't —I don't believe that anything good or lucky ever happens. But she does. or lucky evernappens.

She believes her grandfather is going to forgive and forget all the terness in his hard old heart-that he is going to send for her and take irl he has never seen or care for all these years into her de mother's place in his home. That she is going among roses and trees everything beautiful forever believes it all." Barbara drew a long, resolute
"I am going to let her die breath

And with this declaration, against which even flerce old Granny Graeme felt there was no appeal, Barbara sped off to the nests in the hollow to find the fresh-laid eggs for Elinor's

All through the afternoon she coddled and watched and scolded by turn, for Elinor had grown restless and nervous as the rainbow of hope darkened in the shadow creeping slowly but surely on. It was Bar-bara who built up the airy dream

castles now.
"If you are going to give up like this you won't have the strength to travel when your letter comes—as it may any minute. It's nearly a thousand miles from here to Rose. crofte, you know; we measured it on the railroad map last week. But you will go in a parlor car, of course, and may be some of your folks will meet you half way. And it will be almost summer time there, I suppose, and

you can just live out doors."
"Oh, yes, yes, I will." The sick girl caught feverishly at these shining hopes. "I will stay out under the big oaks. And the roses will soon be in bloom, and the honeysuckle. Papa

"And they will have horses," tinued Barbara, "and you can ride and drive whenever you please. believe I would rather sail, said Elinor; "just drift down the beautiful shining river, Bobby. It would seem so much easier."

Would it?" asked Barbara 'Well, I'm not much on drifting. I'd rather ride ride fast and hard on galloping horse that could go like the wind. But you can take your choice. Thats the lot of rich people; they can drive or drift just as they

"And dress as they please," added Elinor, roused to interest again "Bobby, when, I go to Rosecroft I don't think I'll ever wear anything but white. I'm so tired of dull, dingy clothes. Of course I can't put on colors yet because I am in mourning for poor papa, but I can wear white, soft, cloudy dresses and pretty white ribbons. And flowers! oh, I will always have flowers—big bunches of them on my breast or in my belt. Oh, if the let ter would only come! Sometimes I feel as if I must get up and go anyhow. I have the money, you know. Just go and tell grandfather who l am and say to him, 'I have come home.' But papa would not hear of that. He told me I must wait-wait until I heard from them-wait until they called me back to my mother's home. And they will, they will! Don't you think they will, Bobby?" asked the trembling voice wistfully.
"Of course they will," said Barbara

lying without hesitation, like the remorseless little pagan she was. if you will promise to keep still and not worry, "I'll go down to the postoffice to see if the letter is there

now. And shaking up the pillow from which poor Elinor could scarcely lift her weary head, shading the lift her west window through which the sunset light was streaming in a golden flame, Barbara started off on her

It had only been three brief weeks since Elinor's coming, but the last triumph of retreating winter had bare arcades of the forest, over the breeze swept hills, spring was step-

ping softly, as yet a fair pale vestal uncrowned and unthroned. But her call was in the air, and all the mighty forces of the sun and soil and stream were gathering lovally to her standard. Beyond the stern zone of the pines, the oaks and the maples were in bud, the grass where the late snows had lingered the "burn" as Barbara's old Scotch grandfather had christened the little stream that bounded his eaped and foamed over the rocks.

But the "Resurrext" sounding through the waking woods found no echo in Barbara's heart. All was re volt. flerce, dumb, despairing revolt against the law to which all human ity must bow-the law of sorrow suffering, death. Elinor was dying and battle for her as Barbara might with all the flerce energy that the sick girl's belplessness had wakened there was no hope. And for pagan Barbara there was no light in the darkness, no star in the night. Death was only shroud, coffin, grave, the black hideous end of all to which young life clings. The awful horror of it was upon her as she sped over the springing grass and under the budding trees, past the brown fields upturned for the spring planting, by the Dutch gardener's, where rows of white hyacinths and Annunciation lilies were in hothouse bloom to the quarries that gashed the mountain-side with black clefts and yawning chasms, and crushed all green growing things under mighty

heaps and stretches of broken stone Barbara had always hated the quarries since they were opened in the mountains six years before, bringing drill and blast and harsh discord where all had been sweet stillness and peace. But the works had grown with every year. A score or more of little cabins dotted the rocks, there was the quarry store, with its post-office, the Union Hall, a rough, board building used for all public purposes, and where the "preaching" or three day's mission to the quarry hands was being held now. It was after 6 o'clock and the store, to Barbara's great satisfaction, vas quite deserted.

Only Daffy Mills, the sandy-haired manager, stood behind the counter measuring a quart of molasses for little Fritzie Worn, the Dutch gardener's twelve year old boy.

"Oh, back again, are ye?" greete Daffy, as Barbara entered in breath-less haste. "Well, it's no good

there ain't no letter come."

"Is the last mail in?" asked Ba bara, sinking down on an upturned box near the door.
"Yes," answered Daffy, "half an

hour ago. You're drefful anxious about that letter, seems to me, Wessel. What is it to you?" "None of your business," answered Barbara, sharply. "And don't call me by that horrid name, Daffy Mills.

"Miss-Miss-Miss Graeme," stam mered the young Fritzie, taking warning by this reproof, "you ain't a wanting to sell that crow of your's yet, are you?"

No, I ain't," said Barbara ckly. "I've told you a dozen quickly. times, haven't I ?"

"I'll give you \$2 for him now," said Fritzie. "Father says he knows how to split his tongue and make him talk almost like a parrot."

"You can't have him if you were to pay me \$20," said Barbara, who was in no mood for either friendly or business conversation this even ing. "Split the bird's tongue, you cruel little wretch! Not for your

It wouldn't hurt him much father says," continued the stolid Fritzie. "And I guess he'd like to Fritzie. "And I guess he'd l talk. I would if I was a crow. "Well, you can't have him, so that ends it," said Barbara' impatiently.

"Give me a pound of rice, Daffy Mills, and I'll go."

"Oh, don't be in a hurry," said Daffy. "If you will wait until Jake Brown comes back from the preach-

I'll take you home.' ing I don't want you." said Barbara

bluntly. 'And all-fired good preaching it is," continued the unabashed Daffy "I do like to hear it myself, but somebody has to keep store, so I let Jake go because he's a Papist on his mother's side, while our folks has allus been Baptist straight through I've allus heard these here Pope's priests preached in Latin, but this one gives ve plain English hard and tertainin' too," continued Daffy as he weighed out Barbara's rice. been most everywhere, the boys say, among the Injuns and Chinooks and cannibals. Was shut up in a cage with a wooden collar around his neck for three months in some of these heathen lands. And though there ain't much shouting or praying or mourning going on, he's a hauling the boys in hand over fist. There was a good fifty of them stay ed up there professing or confessing with him half of last night. I tell you the Sperrit is a stirring over this here place, sure. Why, Micky Blake come over this morning and give me 68 cents he had sneaked from the till four months ago. I tell you, when religion hits you like that it's a-sticking in. This here Father Lane is a winner, you bet. And he don't stop for nothing, either. Why, Jake says when he heard that To: Dealey's old bedridden mother was a crying and praying to see him he got on a horse and rode the good ten miles to Durham so the poor old critter could die in peace.'

'And did she?" asked Barbar who had been listening to this narbreathless interest Did he help her to die in-in

Well, she ain't-so to say-dead yet," answered Daffy. "But it's 'most as good as if she was. For Tom said there was no living with the old woman, she had got that crooked and cross and cantankerous, and since the priest has been to se her she has quieted down peaceful

The girl at our house is-is dying," said Barbara. "Do you think he would go and—and help

Daffy hesitated. The Road House, with its shadow, its blight, it flerceeyed, sharp tongued old chatelaine was not a place to invite venture, even from a missionary who had braved cage and cangue-

"She is his sort," continued Bar-bara, eagerly. "I mean she is a Catholic, or a Papist, or whatever you call them. And she said if she were very sick she would want a priest to come and help her to die." The speaker's voice trembled over the word as Daffy never had heard it tremble before. "And—and she is -dving now."

"Did the doctor say so?" asked Daffy.

"Yes-just as much. He said he ouldn't do any good. And perhaps " Barbara was still young enough to catch at any whisper of hopeperhaps this preacher might-

"He might." assented Daffy, who found this new tone of appeal in the sharp-voiced Weasel most attractive. 'Twouldn.t do any harm to ask him, anyhow. The preaching will be over in about half an hour now. He gives it to them short and often, which is the right ticket round here. The boys wouldn't stand for a protracted meeting like the Methodys Takes too much provender," added Daffy sagely. "Why, after them there circuit riders had spent a good two weeks a watching with the mourners, there wasn't a cooking chicken for a mile down the Cut. So you wait, Weasel—I mean Miss Barbara, and I'll walk home with you if you'll let me." Daffy was leaning over the counter now, his keen but honest blue eyes fixed on the girl, who, with her faded sunbonnet on her lap, sat staring moodily out of the open door. "What are you so down in the mouth about this ere boarder of yours for anyhow?" he asked. "She ain't anything to you."

"No, she isn't," was the bitter newer. "You needn't tell me that,

answer. "You needn't tell me that, Daffy Mills. There is nobody in the world anything to me."

"There is somebody who would like to be, though," said Daffy eagerly." "I don't know why you are so mean to me, Weas—I mean when when I care for Miss Barbara, when—when I care for you so much. Durned if I can tell why it is, but my heart begins to pita-a-put whenever I see you coming. And just to have you setting there on that old soap box does me more good than taking in a five dollar

The sharp answer, that was as natural to Barbara as the prickle to the rose, died on her lips. In the chill new shadow deeping around her the light in Daffy's honest eyes seemed a gleam from some far off

sun, to which all young life turns.
"You are such—such a fool, Daffy," she said in a tone that softened the

rude words strangely.
"I guess I am, Weasel—there, I've said it again—but it's the name I've always known you by since the first day you came, a little white, cold, sharp-eyed kid to the store for a bar of soap. I gave you a sugar-topped bun, for I thought—I thought you looked sort of hungry, and you flung

'Yes," answered Barbara. wasn't a beggar—and I told you so."
"You did," said Daffy, with a chuckle. "Seems as if that ere sperrit and pluck of yours took me then and there, Weasel. For I had heard things, you know," Daffy spoke hesitatingly, as if he felt he were on dangerous ground, "and knew it was pretty tough on a pale, lonely little critter up at the Road House. Lord, you don't know how I used to long, those days, to take you in here behind the counter and give you a good warm feed. And that ar feeling has been a growing and growing on me, Weasel, till now—now—" Daffy drew a long breath as if he needed stronger voice-"now there's nothing on God's to work for and care for; and keep safe and warm and comfortable all your life. And I can do it. too. got \$2,000 saved, and going to put every cent in a machine 'vs been studying out here behind the counter of nights, a machine, for grinding stone. I'll be able to take care of you fine. You shan't stay around here, neither. I'll put you in a pretty house, all new bright and shining, where you will bloom like a rose."
"No, I wouldn't," answered Barbara,

and the cold gray eyes she lifted to Daffy had no answering light in them. I would be all thorns.'

"I'd risk it, by Ginger, I'd risk it," said Daffy, bringing his hand down with a great thump on the counter. "Thorn or rose, you are the only girl in the world for me. And it you'll say the word-"Weasel, if you only say the word-"

"What word?" she interrupted him with her little hard laugh. "That I will marry you, Daffy Mills, marry kept clothed and fed and you, to be warm? No, I won't," she said, firing up into sudden wrath. "I'll never marry any one for that. I'd rather starve, and freeze, and die. And—and —"she stopped suddenly as she caught the look you mean all right, but marry you-I'd rather die, I tell you, I'd rather rather die, I tell you, I'd

die! There!" She started to her feet and flung her faded sunbonnet on her head. "The preaching is over. I am going to ask the priest to come her head. with me to the Road House right now.'

TO BE CONTINUED

JOE'S VIOLIN

BY F. STANGE KOLLE, M. D.

Joe was poor. His father and mother had both died, leaving him alone in this great world to earn a living as best he could. Luckily his father had taught him a little about printing, so that he managed to earn enough to support himself by clean ing type and ink rollers and running errands for the printer who employed him.

Each week he gave up his wages to the lady with whom he boarded, keeping little for himself. This he would save for clothes and, once in a very great while, a book.

One day he met an old fiddler on the street. It was cold and his hands were blue and stiff, and yet the sweet, sweet music came from the instrument he knew so well how to play. For hours he had been in the one spot playing tune after tune, but everyone passed him by, too busy to listen, too cold to stand still. Joe's kind heart went out to this poor, gray haired man. In an instant he stood by his side listening to music that seemed to

far, far up above.
In his pocket he had 12 cents. If he could get 13 more he could buy the book for which he had long wished. His little ink-stained hand had turned the coppers over and over. The longer he waited, the sweeter grew the music. At last he pulled out the hand and dropped all the money into the trembling hand of the old musician. Merrily it clinked and fingled as the thin, cold

sound like his mother's dear voice

said Joe, crowding his hands deeper into his empty pockets and hurrying

"Home! Home!" he heard the old man sigh, as he disappeared in the crowd on the street. Land night his little attic room seemed brighter and warmer to Joe and his poor little treasures were worth their weight in gold. Often he thought of the street musician, wondering ing what had become of him. All night the soft, plaintive song of the violin rang in his ears, at last lulling

nim off to sleep and dream.

The next day he met the fiddler again. His music seemed even sweeter than before. The old man recognized los at once and thanked him nized Joe at once and thanked him again for his kind offering. Day Her day the boy managed to meet him until they became friends. Each story to tell, which made them like each other all the

Soon Joe changed his attic quarters and took a room with his musical friend so that if, in the cold winter days. his playing earned him little money he would be cared for in the warm, though bare little home. During the long winter evenings they would read together or Joe would practice on the violin, for the old man was

After a while he could play very well indeed, and his friend saw bright prospects for the lad. Night after night he played, first carefully, then more freely, until finally the san sweet notes, that he loved to hear so well, came from the chords of the old violin, as he drew the bow to and

People passing by would stop to listen when Joe played, wondering at the delicate melody so much like the human voice. Every little while the voice of the teacher could be heard softer and softer and finally die out like a sweet, low breeze of song.

A whole year passed and winter had come again. Joe was still prac-ticing at night, while the old man sat by and listened and smiled. the day the boy set type and at night his time was still spent with his aged friend who came out to play in the streets if the weather would

On Saturdey night each placed his earnings in the same box and out of this all their expenses were paid. Joe luckily, by hard work, had added to his salary, while the fiddler received less, for his fingers grew so stiff at times, that he could not play But Joe always cheered him by saying :

See, I can earn enough for both of us, and by and by I shall play well enough to earn extra money at night and then you need not go out to play at all."

Already the neighbors were talk ing of the boy's genius. Soon he would try his first night at playing. Proudly the old man guided him in his earnest efforts, but, alas, his own fingers were unable to perform the same delicate work any more, and he grew saddened when thinking of the ooy's burden in supporting him.

One day he went out as usual to play. It was cold, blustery, April weather. The streets were wet and slippery and people were glad to stay indoors. Nevertheless the old man played on and on, now getting a penny, and now an odd nickel, until at last tired and trembling, he sank down on a step near by.

Thus Joe found him after a long

search and carefully led him back to heir little home. There was tea all ready and a warm blaze in the little stove in the corner.

You have been very very kind to me for many weary days," softly beautiful by the corrosive whispered the poor man, "and Joe, a purely pagan philosophy. I have helped very little.'

"Never mind it," cried the boy anxiously, for he had never before seen his friend so weak. " You have repaid me a thousand times by teaching me to play and to-morrow night I shall go out and show you how well you have fulfilled your your task.'

Ah, 'tis little I did," went on the other, slowly, "for the music was in your heart. All I did was to bring it out to gladden others as you have gladdened me. Now play to me a few of the old, old tunes and I'll go to sleep."

Saddened Joe played—played as never before, while the old man listened and smiled and finally fell asleep. It was past midnight when Joe laid the violin down gently and slipped into bed. The music still rang in his ears as on the very night he had met his friend for the first time, and, half awake, he dreamed on into sound slumber.

Once he awoke. His friend was muttering softly in his sleep. "Joe," he said. "Yes," whispered the boy. he said. "Yes," whispered the boy.
"Keep it and prize it as I have for all my life and it will bring you many a glad day. It's all I have to give you—but you gave me all and now it is my turn." Then the voice was still and when

Joe awoke the next morning the voice of his friend was silent for ever. He knew now what the old man had meant and carefully put

the old violin away.

The next day he took out the violin and carried it to work with him, for fear something might hap-pen to the gift of his old friend. The printer saw this and wondered why

clinked and jingled as the thin, cold hand dropped it one by one into a ragged pocket.

A happy smile lighted up the fiddler's face. "Ah, kind boy," he sighed, "you are the first to pity me this cold day. My heart was low and I felt like giving up playing, but now I have enough to do me."

"I am very glad, sir. You'd better get a cup of hot coffee, sir, and go home, for it's too cold to stay here,"

printer saw this and wondered why the boy brought it to and from work each day, but Joe never said a word and the world is no longer a mere difference in doctrines and dogmas.

It is a difference in doctrines and dogmas.

It is a difference in doctrines and dogmas.

It is a difference in doctrines and dogmas.

The very fundamentals of Christian Revelation—a violent departure from the age old interpretation, and a flat denial of its supernatural message.

All America is asking to day why the boy brought it to and from work and the world is no longer a mere difference in doctrines and dogmas.

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minutes flew by and the men forgot their work. The printer came in, surprised to see his machinery lying still, and was about to scold his men when the soft music fell on his own

He approached cautiously, in order not to disturb the player and listen-ers. Softer and sadder the music grew, now gay for a moment, now low, now trembling, now like a storm. His heart went out to the delicate boy whom he had rushed about the heavy presses and type cases and he , and thus his men found him.

From that day on Joe became re-nowned. He had to give up his work at the shops, so great was the demand people to hear him play bright days followed. He of the Happy, the idol of his many friends Riches soon surrounded him, but each night he would steal away all alone, unpack the old violin and play softly to himself the first sweet, simple tunes he had listened to on that cold, dreary day when he gave his last penny to the old fiddler

GEMS OF CATHOLIC THOUGHT

FROM ADDRESS OF DR. MAC-MANUS ON OCCASION OF JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF BISHOP SCREMBS OF TOLEDO

I proclaim for you our pride in he possesses at this moment, in re-he fact that we have held fast to gard to the affairs of earth life. the faith as it was given to us by the Son of God nearly two thousand years ago; and the deep sense of un-worthiness which we experience in

that precious possession.

I ask you to join with me in the heartfelt declaration that there is nothing we prize above and beyond that splendid heritage.

And I will add to that declaration

my own thought, that no one of us can come to maturity and pass through the illusions and disapp ments of life, without arriving at the profound but simple conclusion that there is nothing worth while under the heavens but the Church of Jesus Christ.

That is, indeed, the lesson of life my friends-that all else shall fail. and all else does fail, but that peace and consolation of the sanc-

It may seem a strange thing to say in such a presence as this, but it has often seemed to me that one of the reasons why we Catholics are so frequently and so sadly remiss, is that we know so well that that peace does wait for us in the hush and the silence of the sanctuary.

It is so easy, we think, to turn and in the glamor and glare of the outside world.

But when the world had bruised and beaten us: when we have been seared and striped with sin: when our ambitions have proved abortive: wounded by, and when we have been for, the things we love: when the hollowness, and the sham, and the mockery, of modern life are intruded upon us at every turn, and in every human relation—then, if God be willing, we come creeping back, satisfied to the nethermost depths of our soul, that there is nothing worth while under the heavens but the Catholic Church.

And it is well in these dangerous days that we should not loose our hold upon that thought—which is for all time and for all eternity-by so nuch as a single second.

There is nothing beautiful in the world and outside the Catholic Church that is not being made less peautiful by the corrosive action of

So still and silent is the crash and collapse of creeds which once were Catholic, that the sociologist seeking a cure for the ills of society is not even conscious that the ruins of re ligion are falling all about him.

The walls and ramparts of doctrine and dogma make no sound when they fall beneath the battering rams of destructive doubt, and change and infidelity.

But a groan goes up to God from the stricken souls whose spiritual life is crushed and buried beneath the debris of the social structure. Men and women and children, who

walk the streets to night in the full flush of life, are dead and dving as they walk, because the bread of life has been withdrawn from them, which is the breath of life. Society is paralyzed and stricken

while it seems to vibrate with health

and vigor and excess of life-para lyzed in its moral functions, and stricken in its spiritual capacities. All things that are beautiful are being made less beautiful—the babe murdered in its mother's womb in wanton defiance of the dictum of by lack of what the world called ad-God; the child-mind poisoned by the vantage. They were truly better withdrawal of religious direction;

room of hell by the horror of di-If there is a single human relation which is not endangered to day as the result of insidious innovation cannot recall it.

the home transformed into an ante-

If there is a single Christian virtue which has not been given a new name and a new meaning, I am not aware of it.

The difference between the Church

and the world is no longer a mere

contents. And the creeds have been emptied of their contents in pursu-ance of the principle that every man has the right to make his own heaven

and his own hell. Not being sure of a heaven here after, he is busily engaged in trying to make one here on earth. In pursuance of that amiable purpose, he has made unto himself a graven

image, and its name is Man. Supernatural graces he has rejected in favor of a fearful and wonder-

ful thing called progress.

This theory of progress, as nearly as I can interpret it, implies that each of us contains within himself a set of tools whose names we do not yet know, and whose use we have still to discover.

By the use of these nameless, and

as yet useless, tools, each of us is to make of himself a nobler and a better

In other words, modern man has undertaken once more the difficult and heroic task of lifting himself by his own boot-straps.

And in order to keep up his cour-

age, and distract attention from the fact that he is making a frightful botch of the whole business, he stops every now and then and crows lustily over the achievements of the

There has never been a period in the history of Christian peoples in which the average man possessed as much miscellaneous information as

And there has never been a period in which so many men were cursed with so much misinformation concerning the nature and destiny of If happiness came from the mere

ownership of things, or the gathering of information, or facility in noving about, or in harnessing the forces of nature, this age of ours should be a veritable millennium of But the first man you meet who

has lost his spiritual way, who is seeking life's all-in all in the things of the flesh and the intellect, will give you an unfailing index to the dryness and misery of the age.

Modern thought concerning the

nature and destiny of man has resolved itself into a huge surrender of certitudes, convictions and opin If there is any one thing a man must not have, nowadays, if he would

retain his respectability, it is a sound conviction in regard to whence he came and whither he is going, and how he is to get there.

To have a definite idea of his des tination and of the ways and means

by which he may arrive thereat, is find solace, that we will tarry awhile to set himself down as a reactionary and a dangerous citizen.
Vagueness with regard to the here after has actually become the grand central virtue of the age.

The world looks askance at the man with a definite philosophy of life and whispers sadly that he narrow. To speak coherently of the soul in the presence of ladies and gentle men is the unforgivable social and

civic sin. To win frantic applause we must lapse into gentle imbecility, and gorgeous generalizations. It is precisely those among us who are vague to the point of idiocy whom we hail as our boldest thinkers and

our most indomitable souls. By some strange torture of reason and logic the world rejects the Christian Revelation as an impracti cal idealism, and then receives with cheers a substitute philosophy which fairly wallows in indecision and in-

coherence. In modern parlance the man who is utterly at sea is "broad' "liberal" and "sane," even though he maunder on with the inconse

quence of a lunatic. Whereas the luckless wight who is quite clearly convinced that man is born in Original Sin, dies, and goes either to heaven or hell; that God created the world, and that Jesus Christ was His own Divine Son-the unfortunate who holds to these truths and stands ready to defend them-that poor man is dwelling in the depths of intellectual darkness This state of affairs would be bad enough if its blighting influence fell

pleased to call intellectual. But the same vile habit of loose thinking and loose talking has descended upon the proletariat and the apostles thereof. The intellectual can go insane and

only upon the class which we are

the world be none the worse off. But when the average man goes insanesociety as a whole begins to gibber and make faces.

Time was when the peasantry of

the whole world was saved from the sins of their so called social betters and simpler and purer and wiser as a mass than the mass above which hastened to misuse the new learning. But there is no such thing as a simple peasantry nowadays.

And I am afraid of that specious

sophistication which goes hand in hand with sin-which means that I am afraid of a Godless education, of a poisonous press, and a low, corrupting drama, and a lying literature. It is the wholesomeness of the

common man that commonly saves society. As long as he holds fast to his duty as a father and brother, and son; as long as marriage is to him a sacrament; and home a holy place; there is hope, even though the entire rotten structure up above go to pieces. He may be dull, and still be sane—slow, and still superlatively good. But when he too goes mad, and seizes upon destructive social formulas—the cataclysm is just around the corner. Now it is pre