

And Callendar answered: "So just pulling out of upper yard. Too late to stop her. What's the matter?"

Callahan struck the table with his clenched fist, looked wildly about him, then sprang from the chair, ran to the window and threw up the sash. The moon shone a bit through the storm of sand, but there was not a soul in sight. There were lights in the roundhouse a hundred yards across the track. He pulled a revolver—every railroad man out there carried one those days—and, covering one of the roundhouse windows began firing. It was a risk. There was one chance maybe, to a thousand of his killing a night man. But there were a thousand chances to one that a whole train load of men and women would be killed in side of thirty minutes if he couldn't get help. He chose a window in the mechanics' section, where he knew no one usually went at night. He poured bullets into the unlucky casement as fast as powder could send them. Reloading rapidly, he watched the roundhouse door; and, sure enough, almost at once, it was cautiously opened. Then he fired into the air—once, two, three, four, five, six—and he saw a man start for the station on the dead run. He knew, too, by the tremendous sweep of his legs that it was Ole Anderson, the night foreman, the man of all others he wanted at that instant.

"Ole," cried the despatcher, waving his arms frantically as the giant Swede leaped across the track and looked up from the platform below, "get Buck. I've got a runaway train going against 59. For your life, Ole, run!"

The big fellow was into the wind with the word. Buck boarded four blocks away. Callahan, slamming down the window, took the key and began calling Rowe. Rowe is the first station east of Jackson; it is now the first point at which the runaway cars could be headed.

"R-o, R-o," he rattled. The operator must have been sitting on the wire, for he answered instantly. As fast as Callahan's fingers could talk, he told Rowe the story and gave him orders to get the night agent (who he knew must be down to sell tickets for 59) and pile all the ties they could gather across the track to derail the runaway. Then he began thumping for Kolar, the next station east of Rowe, and the second ahead of the runaways. He pounded and he pounded, and when the man at Kolar answered, Callahan could have sworn he had been asleep just from the way he talked. Does it seem strange? There are many strange things about a despatcher's senses.

"Send your night man to west passing siding and open it for runaway cars. Set brakes hard on empties in there, so as to ditch runaways if possible. Do anything and everything to keep them from getting by you. Work quick."

Behind Kolar's O. K. came a frantic call from Rowe. "Runaways passed here like a streak. Knocked the ties into toothpicks. Couldn't stop them—impossible."

Callahan didn't wait to hear any more. He only wiped the sweat from his face. It seemed forever, before Kolar spoke again. Then it was only to say: "Runaways went by here before night man could get to switch and open it."

Would Buck never come? And if he did come, what on earth could stop the runaway cars now? They were nearing the worst grade on the West End. It averages one per cent. from Kolar to Griffin, and there we get down off the Cheyenne hills with a long reverse curve, and drop into the canon of the Blackwood with a three per cent. grade. Callahan, almost beside himself, threw open a north window to look for Buck. Two men were flying down Main street toward the station. He knew them: it was Ole and Buck.

But Buck! Never before nor since was seen on a street of McCloud such a figure as Buck, in his trousers and slippers, with his night-shirt free as he sailed down the wind. In another instant he was bounding up the stairs, three steps at a jump.

"What have you done?" he panted, throwing himself into the chair. Callahan told him. Buck held his head in his hands while the boy talked. He turned to the sheet—asked quick for 59.

They look old now. The ink is faded, and the paper is smoked with clear, ditch the runaways. BUCKS.

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It was 8 o'clock that morning—the 20th of December in small letters, on the West End—before they got things decently straightened out; there was so much to do—orders to make and reports to take. Buck, still on the key in his flowing robes and ruffled hair, sent and took them all. That he turned the seat over to Callahan, and getting up for the first time in two hours, dropped wearily into another chair.

The very first thing Callahan received was a personal from Pat Francis, at Ogallala, conductor of 59. It was for Buck.

"How way? How cried the cowboys?" Harvey Reynolds, heaving as he ran, rushed out the door and up the track, his posse at his heels.

But it is one thing to order a concert opened, and another very different thing to open it, at two in the morning on Dec. 20th, when the men know no more about track cutting than about logarithms. Side by side and shoulder to shoulder the man of the law and the men out of the law, the rough-riders, and the railroad boy, pried and wrenched and clawed and struggled with the steel.

I have been at the front, I come from the front, and when I say the front, I do not mean ten or fifteen miles back from the front, in large cities. I mean the first-line trenches. I have been in the trenches almost two years, only a few hundred yards from the German lines, in first-aid stations. I was at Verdun for five or six months, and five or six months at Verdun is a very long time. You can hardly imagine how long even a week is at Verdun. When we were called, I remember the staff officer told us, "Leave your horses, your baggage, behind. You cannot stay more than 21 days at the front. So come just as you are." We came just as we were, and we stayed five or six months. And it was certainly hard, but I am glad to have been there.

Before going to Verdun I was stationed at Arras six or seven months—Arras with its beautiful cathedral falling to pieces! When we walked through the aisles—or what once were aisles—of the cathedral we were always afraid lest some huge stone would become dislodged and fall upon our heads and crush us. One can pick up fragments of stained glass all over it.

But indeed when I came to Verdun I saw much worse. Verdun was terrible, not only on account of the roaring of cannon all day long and all through the night, but on account of the terrible dangers encountered on all sides. I have helped many soldiers to die, most of whom were shot by rifles, the bullet making so small a hole it could hardly be seen; but too often the soldier has been hit by too often explosive shells. Then, indeed, it is pitiable. Well do I remember one day they brought in from a stretcher a man who had been wounded; they said they did not know whether he was dead or wounded, but brought him in as quickly as they could. I uncovered the body to see where the wound lay, and disclosed a headless body. Another time I was trying to help one of those poor wounded men off the stretcher to carry him to the ambulance and found that he had no legs—just his uniform, but no legs.

I have often been asked by soldiers, "What is the doctrine of the Church on war? How is it that the priest blesses soldiers that are going to kill each other?" The doctrine of the Church is for peace, but the Church knows that as long as there are men, as long as there are passions in men, war will be inevitable; and so when a war is declared, when a just war is to be fought, then the Church comes and says, "Do your duty in war, but try to lessen, by sooth, the calamities of war." Then the Church sends priests with those who are going to fight, to encourage them, and asks every one to do his duty toward those who are out there fighting for a just cause. That is the doctrine of the Church.

At first sight it would seem that the war has been the ruin of Catholicism in France and Belgium. Some would think that France before the outbreak of hostilities was atheistic and incredulous with respect to religion; that no religion will be left after the war. This is a great error. At first sight, indeed, seeing the churches bombarded, seeing priests killed by hundreds—I cannot tell how many have been killed in the war already, but one knows that between twenty and thirty thousand priests of different orders are at war at present—one could understand such a point of view.

But such a viewpoint is entirely erroneous and false as judged by experience in the war. Before the war the Catholic religion had been growing in France. There had been for the last ten, twelve, fifteen years or even more, a Catholic revival in France. And this war has increased this revival and brought out the true religious feeling of the nation, so that after the war religion will have a new strength and a new spirit. For war has certainly increased religion and devotion in France.

I remember the beginning of the war. At that time I was on a short holiday in a little village in Brittany, a most interesting spot and restful for all those who live in busy cities. At that time I did not dream for a moment that war would break out in a few weeks, and I was like countless others, for nobody in France believed it. One day while sailing near Brest—one of the great harbors that could protect a whole fleet if necessary—with a member of the French foreign office, a man who ought to know something about foreign matters, I remember him pointing to a man-of-war in the harbor. (The latter carried M. Poincaré on a visit to Petrograd.) Said my friend, "What is the use of such a waste of money for men in building ships for a nation that would never dream of declaring war?" And this only a few days before war was declared. We were not preparing for war, because we never thought war would be declared on us. However, when I knew from advance information from a private source that Austria-Hungary would declare war, I hurried home. A few days later came the posting of bills, and we knew that a general mobilization had been decreed.

THE PARTING
Then all of a sudden crowds came into my little church, not nervous but quiet and decided, full of faith and prayer. They came at all hours and all day long and some churches could not be closed for several nights so many people were there. In the morning on Sunday, at High Mass, I went up into the pulpit as was my custom every morning. I told my parishioners that I considered it my duty to leave, that my husbands, their brothers, fathers, their children were going to war; some were destined to fall in battle, and I considered that I could be more useful there at the front; I felt that I must be the father in fact as well as in name of those who had left their home to go and fight, and I am sure that my beloved flock understood my feelings.

So I went to war, thinking I would be sent to the front at once, but it was several months before I finally reached there. The number of priests volunteered as chaplains was so great that they could not all be admitted at once. Hundreds of thousands flocked to the army, not to be officers, but just to be permitted to go to the front and help serve the wounded and dying.

After a few months I was allowed to go to the front. I must say that the army corps in which I was serving was not considered one of the best in France, far from it. When I was about to leave Paris, my friends said: "Indeed, it is a good thing for you to go there. The French government was very wise to send a chaplain to that army corps; they certainly need one badly." Yet in that army corps I have helped hundreds and thousands to die, and not one, I say not one, has ever refused the sacraments I was offering. Some of them were unconscious—I cannot say for them—but all who were conscious accepted all that I offered as a priest and thanked me for it.

MASS WITH AIRPLANE OVERHEAD
We have Mass in the trenches, and Mass in the trenches is one of the most devotional things I know of in the world. We dig a little hole, and to erect a little shelter overhead to protect the altar. We carry with us everything necessary to say Mass. The priest's robe, the altar cover, the chalice, the book, the candles and candle-sticks, the cross, etc., all are fitted into a wooden box 18x12 inches. The officers and soldiers will line up against the walls of the trench, hiding as much as they can, and if an enemy airplane is sighted, everyone has to disappear for a few minutes while the airplane hovers above—then Mass recommences. What faith, what piety, in hearing Mass under such conditions!

MASS ON CHRISTMAS DAY
I have said Christmas Mass often in my life, but never have I said such a devotional Christmas Mass as on Christmas, 1916. The first Mass was in a trench, a sort of dugout, with just enough room for the altar, and lined up against the walls were the soldiers and officers who had all come to confession the day before. When I turned, at the gospel, to speak to them, it reminded me of the Grotto at Bethlehem. Never had we celebrated Christmas so well as on

that night, with only a couple of candles to give a feeble light.
The second Mass (the Catholic priest is required to say three Masses on Christmas) I said in a sort of dugout covered with branches for fear of being seen by enemy airplanes. It was very cold, so cold indeed that my fingers became numb, but the soldiers stood through the Mass without moving, as if quite comfortable. The third Mass I said between two big guns. One had injured two. The wind was so high that I had to keep my fingers on the Host for fear it would blow away. Still one felt that it was Christmas.

After Mass I went up with one of the officers and ate my Christmas dinner with him out of a tin box. He spoke of his mother, he spoke of his sister, and he said that Christmas was not Christmas so far from home. I did my best to cheer him that lonely Christmas Day.

SHOT AT MASS
I remember one day a colonel and a captain, attending Mass in a trench were shot by the same shell. Do you know what was left of the colonel, one of the best and the bravest of men? We found just a piece of his arm, not larger than my hand, and of the captain just a leg. We put the relics together very carefully in a small coffin no larger than a child's coffin, and buried them.
Not only in the trenches but behind the trenches we have Mass for the soldiers, and when we can gather them into a church they come in crowds, for anything even for the recital of the rosary. I managed to have the rosary said every day for six months, for I knew the soldiers would be there, and knew that if I failed to get there the soldiers would say it without me.

And I am only one of hundreds and thousands of chaplains in the French army. Their example of charity, kindness, and heroism has been of great help in making soldiers come back to their faith.—Catholic Transcript.

WHAT ISAIAH SUGGESTS

What shall the New Year's resolutions be this time? Perhaps the old ones are still quite serviceable and need but to be taken down from the shelf where they have been resting since last February or March. With a little refurbishing no doubt they can be made as good as new. For last year most of our readers probably determined to take practical means to become prayerful, kind, cheerful and busy during the coming twelve months, and the happiness and peace they enjoyed through the year now closing can be quite accurately gauged by their own, by the measure of their success in keeping those resolutions. Wisely determining to resolve once more along similar lines, let those who are thus facing courageously the year 1919, turn to the Prophet Isaiah in search of fresh grounds for steadfastness and confidence and they will not be disappointed. He calls out, for example, from his fifty-eighth chapter:

"Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and homeless into thy house; when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not one of thy own flesh. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning and thy health shall speedily arise, and thy justice shall go before thy face, and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up. Then shalt thou call and the Lord shall hear, thou shalt cry and He shall say, Here I am. If thou wilt take away the chain out of the midst of thee, and cease to stretch out thy finger, and to speak that which profane thou; when thou shalt purify the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise up in darkness, and thy darkness shall be as the noon-day. And the Lord will give thee rest continually, and will fill thy soul with brightness, and deliver thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a fountain of water which shall overflow, and the places that have been desolate for ages shall be built in thee; thou shalt raise up the foundations of generation and generation; and thou shalt be called the repairer of fences turning the paths into rest."

In this striking passage is enjoined the practice of virtues that will do much to make the year 1919 a serene and prosperous one. For the many deeds of charity we do those in need will render our prayers so strong that abundant grace will be given us to avoid unkind and unprofitable words; from fervent prayer, too, will come the gift of being to others a source of joy and comfort, and persistent prayer will likewise win the virtue of cheerful diligence which so wonderfully strengthens and beautifies the character. It would be wise, therefore, to let the Prophet Isaiah suggest some of our New Year's resolutions.—America.

An important event in the annals of the Church and civilization should, if the times allowed, be celebrated this year. For it was in 1863 that Cardinal Lavigne laid the foundations of his Congregation of Our Lady of Africa for the conversion of the Mohammedans and the emancipation of their slaves. Although no celebration of the golden jubilee can take place, 1919 will be marked in the history of the congregation by the inception of an undertaking of far-reaching importance.

Discretion in speech is more than eloquence. When you doubt abstain.—Bacon.

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