moor. Let that pass; what odds to any how tall or wide I be? There is no Doone's door at Plover's Barrows, and if there were I could never go through it. They vexed me so much about my size, long before I had completed it, girding at me with paltry jokes whose wit was good only to stay at home, that I grew shamefaced about the matter, and feared to encounter a looking-glass. But mother was very proud, and said she never could have too much of me.

The worst of all to make me ashamed of bearing my head so high—a thing I saw no way to help, for I never could hang my chin down, and my back was like a gate-post whenever I tried to bend it—the worst of all was our little Eliza, who never could come to a size herself, though she had the wine from the Sacrament at Easter and Allhallowmas, only to be small and skinny, sharp, and clever crookedly. Not that her body was out of the straight (being too small for that, perhaps), but that her wit was full of corners, jagged and strange, and uncomfortable. You never could tell what she might say next; and I like not that kind of woman. Now God forgive me for talking so of my own father's daughter: and so much the more by reason that my father could not help it. The right way is to face the matter, and then be sorry for every one. My mother fell grievously on a slide, which John Fry had made nigh the apple-room door, and hidden with straw from the stable, to cover his own great idleness. My father laid John's nose on the ice, and kept him warm in spite of it; but it was too late for Eliza. She was born next day with more mind than body—the worst thing that can befall a man.

But Annie, my other sister, was now a fine fair girl, beautiful to behold. I could look at her by the fireside for an hour together, when I was not too sleepy, and think of my dear father. And she would do the same thing by me, only wait the between of the blazes. Her hair was done up in a knot behind, but some would fall over her shoulders; and the dancing of the light was sweet to see through a man's eyelashes. There never was a face that showed the light or the shadow of feeling, as if the heart was sun to it, more than our dear Annie's did. To look at her carefully, you might think that she was not dwelling on anything; and then she would know you were looking at her, and those eyes would tell all about it. God knows that I try to be simple enough, to keep to His meaning in me, and not make the worst of His children. Yet often have I been put to shame, and ready to bite my tongue off, after speaking amiss of anybody, and letting out my littleness, when suddenly mine eyes have met the pure, soft gaze of Annie.

TO BE CONTINUED.

WHEN SHOP KEPT

By Maud Regan.

In the days of its glory "Mulvey's Emporium" boasted two windows, whose contents might have been classified as representing, roughly speaking, on one hand the necessities, on the other the luxuries of existence.

Through the first, one glimpsed such homely provision for the inner man as sides of bacon richly streaked, baskets of potatoes, and bushel-measures of onions; such defensive weapons against the insidious advances of soot and grime as mops and brooms and patent pails; such matters of personal adornment as rolls of "linsey-woolsey" and webs of checked gingham, while over all in varicolored festoons hung garlands of fingering yarn and Berlin wool to be wrought into scarves and mittens and stout little socks by deft, toil-worn fingers that were seldom still.

Naturally, this was the window appealing most forcibly to the age and experience of a locality where strained ends were only brought to meet by miracles of economy and management, supplemented by wondrous patience on the part of Mrs. Mulvey when untoward circumstances interfered with the prompt settlement of an account.

As must have been already apparent to the reader, hers was not a fashionable, nor even a particularly prosperous, neighborhood. True, the street on which the "Emporium" fronted was dignified above the tracks by the name of "Avenue," and there adorned by the imposing residences of "our leading citizens." But the intersecting railway was a species of social equator, south of which its decline was gradual but sure, till far below Mrs. Mulvey's domain the ragged end of the street ravelled off into lanes and alleyways traversing the low land which lay along the river bank. "Hayward's Flats" was, I believe, the postal designation of this ultimate refuge of the "submerged tenth," though on account of the preponderance of the colored element it was more familiarly known as "Nigger hollow."

You might reasonably inquire why, with such a clientele, Mrs. Mulvey found it expedient to devote a window to the luxuries of life, but not to do so would be to ignore the children with which the neighborhood swarmed. That glorious window was the Mecca of many a childish pilgrimage.

Bright young eyes gazing through its dimpled panes viewed with rueful wonder the proceedings of parents, who, possessed of actual coin of the realm, stoically sank in bacon, in onions, yea even in scrub brushes, the price of wild orgies of peppermints.

What heavenly glimpses it offered all the year round of white and red "bullseyes" of proven though all too fleeting succulency; of lemon sticks, whose delightfulness was perhaps less poignant, but certainly more enduring; and how cunningly with the changing seasons the little old woman added fresh and timely enticements!

December invariably brought its plaster-of-Paris "Sandy Claus," gloriously diamond dusted, to preside over the ranks of the barley-sugar menagerie; over candy eggs through whose glass portholes one gazed down vistas of dazzling verdure; over china dolls with shiny-painted locks and round vermilion cheeks and factory cotton torsos apt to exude sawdust in moments of agitation.

The first stirring of the sap saw its wonders augmented by the introduction of skipping ropes and "injy"-rubber balls, both painted and plain (the latter in better repute as bouncers), and of marbles and glass alleys to be staked on those games which Johnny Mulvey often condescended to umpire from his throne on a Windsor chair beneath the wooden awning which hospitably overarched the street.

It was always on the cards that he might reward the victor or console the vanquished by the bestowal of some small matter abstracted from the glorious window in full view of the smiling "little woman."

Even to write of this window is, after all the years, to experience afresh my childhood's ancient difficulty in withdrawing myself from its fascinations. Often in bygone days I have seen harassed mothers snatch ragged, wistful-eyed mites away from the hungry contemplation of its glories. To an action which seemed then all cruelty and impatience, time has lent a gentler aspect. It may well have been but a writhing upon the rack of circumstance, a fretting beneath the goad of those wistful young eyes mutely demanding the impossible when pennies were so few and so precious.

Meanwhile "the little old woman" to whom by devious ways we have come at last, awaits us in the shop, very ruddy and wholesome as to cheeks, which suggest a winter apple; very neat as to silvering hair, banded smoothly back from a broad, low brow; very white as to handkerchief, folded fichu-wise over a decent black merino; very blue and candid as to eyes, which beam pride and tenderness upon her Jovelike lord sitting yonder in the sunshine and passing his days in gilded ease.

A double-leaved door gave entrance upon her domain, which to jar ever so slightly was to set atinkle a particularly merry and musical bell which summoned the proprietress from mysterious back regions, unless indeed Johnny's dinner was in course of preparation; in which event the customer might possess his soul in what patience he could muster. Probably because most of her waking hours were set to its music, the "little old woman" was bracketed in some childish minds with the fabled lady of Banbury Cross. The analogy certainly did not extend to her fingers, where only one slender golden thread remained to speak of a day nearly forty years gone whereon Johnny had distinguished her beyond all mortal women.

It was easy to see the fascination he must have had for her youthful eyes, clad in the Queen's scarlet, and with the glamour of the wars still upon him in those halcyon days of their courtship. At sixty-five he was still an imposing figure with his waving snow-white hair, his handsome, clear-cut face, his tall, erect figure, and those flashing hazel eyes which seemed to speak of resolution, of energy, of purpose. If our experience of Johnny mainly belied its promise, we must judge him leniently as one of the square pegs for which through most of his days fate provided only a round hole. In fact, I sometimes think of him as a belated knight, who in another age and setting might have cut quite a splendid figure. Of what he might have achieved had the "little woman's" needs been the slaying of giants instead of the tying of parcels and keeping of books, we are vouchsafed a glimpse on the never-to-be-forgotten evening when two drunken coal-heavers burst into the shop demanding with rough profanity the liquor which they declared to be secreted on the premises. Their loud, menacing tones penetrating to the dim back regions brought forth Johnny in Berseker fury. To thrust his wife behind him, to confront the burly offenders, to insert a powerful hand in each collar, to knock their heads smartly together twice, and thrice, and finally to fling them through the open door and out to the pavement, where they lay ingloriously sprawling, seemed but the work of a single moment. And then the thoroughly frightened "little woman" was crying against his coat sleeve while Johnny towered above her, the light of battle still in his eyes, his great hand patting her head reassuringly, his deep voice booming out with such comfort as this: "There now, jewel, don't you be frightened. 'Tain't worth your while crying for the likes of them."

Since Johnny's death I have met a very ancient pensioner who served with him in India and who told me a tale I see no reason to doubt, of something splendid in the way of a rescue which Johnny achieved there, and which should have meant a Victoria Cross if every one had had his due.

Possibly in the first instance, Johnny, like Othello, was beloved for the dangers he had passed; certain it was that the "little woman" never outlived her pride in having been chosen by such a hero. "He could have had any one he liked—but 'twas me he married, after all!" To which, with a gallantry and sincerity that did him infinite credit, Johnny would reply: "And t'was the finest day's work I ever done."

Since the "little woman" so cheerfully accepted the labors entailed by her glorious destiny, it seemed no one else's concern to add that as it was "the finest" so also it was the last. One gathered that the direction of practical affairs fell almost immediately into her capable hands, and that she would have been well content to have lived out her days on the little Kerry farm to which she came a bride had not the roving spirit marked Johnny for its own. The piping times of peace suited him but ill. He chafed restlessly beneath the monotony and inaction—he, who came suddenly to pass such endless, contented days beneath the awning with no other occupation than a pipe or a paper!

So it was that he and the "little woman" consented to try their luck in the Eldorado overseas, to which Johnny's thoughts so persistently turned. Perhaps beneath her easy compliance was an underlying sense of the wisdom of putting the ocean between them and the recruiting sergeant, of whose possible return and baleful influence over her warrior-husband she lived in constant dread. For with marriage had come an entire change of attitude toward those warlike recitals in which she had gloried as a maid. The most stirring tale could thereafter rouse her to no more enthusiastic response than a dry. "I don't see what call there was for you to be fightin' England's quarrels." Which left Johnny mute and abashed.

Whatever fortune brought them to America, it was certainly a happy one for our neighborhood. How people managed to be born, to marry, to be ill, to die, before the advent there of the "little woman" it is difficult to imagine. That all these things still go forward though her shutters are up and her small bell silent, proves more conclusively than many sermons how, without the best of us, the world still goes its way.

Above her counter used to hang a work of art to which she would proudly refer as the "oil painting." With this masterpiece an impecunious sign painter deeply involved in her books had discharged past indebtedness, and curiously enough, considering the moral it was supposed to point, established a claim to future leniency. It represented an ill-favored dog of no recognizable breed grinding between his wicked paws a very large and benevolent collie, and beneath it ran the explanatory line: "Poor dog Trust is dead — bad Pay killed him."

While admiring the tactfulness and poetry with which this allegorical masterpiece conveyed its lesson, Johnny was apt in moments of confidence to opine that if the collie's "spunk" had been at all proportioned to his inches his doom might have easily been averted. But though dead theoretically, practically "poor dog Trust" had a phenixlike aptitude for rising again, when special cases seemed to plead for special indulgence.

It was a poor neighborhood but a sturdily honest one, where a needy housewife would more readily forego the necessities, than miladi of the avenue the luxuries of life when the chances of payment were uncertain. So when an account remained unsettled, it was safe to assume that illness or lack of employment was at the roof of it, and natural, too, for the "little woman" to send unasked the weekly marketing and await her pay till "entirely convenient."

The candy trade must always, I fancy, have been a losing one, since when fate dropped a penny into one grimy little fist it became the custom for half a dozen wistful-eyed, out-at-elbow tots to accompany the favored one to the emporium and to gaze hungrily while Mrs. Mulvey lifted from its shelf the glass jar containing the desired sweet. This mute attack upon her sympathies invariably resulted in the moneyed and the penniless meeting with equal favor. In fact her whole attitude with little people was such as deepened one's regret that no child had ever come to divide with Johnny the empire of her heart.

I can not recall the exact period at which the state of Johnny's health became a source of anxiety to the "little woman"; but I have heard that it was universally ridiculed by the wives of the neighborhood, as but another manifestation of that system of "coddling" which had established a pernicious precedent to which husbands are apt to refer. Johnny's erect form and bronzed countenance seemed sufficiently reassuring, and as none of us had ever witnessed those "weak turns" at which his wife vaguely hinted it was with a sort of amused curiosity that one fine spring day we beheld the pair wending their way northward to Dr. Barlow's office.

Our curiosity, Johnny, upon his return, was genially willing to appease, and it transpired that there was after all some ground for the "little woman's" fears—something seriously amiss with that stout heart of his, a leaking valve or some such matter. "An' he says," concluded the patient with portentous gravity; "that I'm to take life aisy—to avoid excitement and violent exertion." Then some one choked and covered the incivility with a hasty cough. Such advice as applied to Johnny, who had followed this course unbidden through all the years of our acquaintance, was not without its element of comedy.

"Well, if that's all there is to it you'll live to bury the whole of us," said Jim Bray reassuringly. And such, indeed, might well have been the case if only Johnny had not been sitting in the soft spring sunshine just outside the shop door on that fateful May morning when the fire broke out to the south of us in "Hayward's Flats."

"From that Buddha-like calm which the "little woman" so jealously guarded, he was roused by a sudden clangor of bells to note a distant cloud of dust from which presently emerged gleams of tossing black, which were the galloping fire-horses; shimmers of red and silver, which were the trucks and engines; and horror of horrors!—straight in their path a little biur of blue and gold—the gingham frock and tangled curls of little Teddy Quin, petrified in the midst of his solitary game with the jack-stones Johnny had given him half an hour before.

A single breathless instant, and then splendidly oblivious of the medical men, Johnny rushed valiantly upon his fate; a towering, herculean figure endowed for the moment with all his old-time strength. There was a sudden spring, a throwing back of panting horses on their foam flecked haunches, a bare escape from the threatening hoofs, which in another second would have crushed full upon the golden head and baby form, and Teddy lay safe upon the board walk wailing vociferously.

But the car of the juggernaut sweeping onward dust-veiled toward the threatened district had claimed its victim—Johnny; Johnny, leaning panting against the house wall with strained livid face, which struck chill despair to the "little woman's" heart; Johnny, never more to be spoken of with the old tolerant smile; Johnny, who had crushed all the years remaining to him in one heroic moment. The damaged heart was strained beyond hope of patching—such was the verdict of a doctor hastily summoned in the place of Dr. Barlow, at the moment travelling abroad. After suggesting a few slight alleviations, he departed, leaving the short while remaining to Johnny for Father Ford and the "little woman."

Because of the difficulty of breathing he was propped with many pillows in the cavernous armchair where he had smoked so many winter pipes, and as the little clock remorselessly struck off the fleeting hours that brought no apparent change, the "little woman" began to hope, despite the doctor, that this "weak turn" might pass like others and leave her world unaltered. But toward evening there was a change, a swift, alert raising of his head, as if to catch a half heard summons, "Marchin' orders?" he said faintly. Then the "little woman" as the clasp upon her hand relaxed, knew that the Great Commander had spoken, and that she was alone.

The necessity of laying Johnny to rest with becoming honor was what first aroused her from an apathy of grief to arrange the details of a funeral whose grandeur is still remembered. Sadder somehow than the tolling knell, and sable plumes, and all the conventional setting of grief, it seemed when the leaves of the shop door were flung wide and the bell rang out its familiar, merry little chime as gaily as though Johnny were coming back.

The solemn cortege was augmented by the arrival of an unexpected mourner in the person of a nephew and namesake of Johnny's, who gave his address vaguely as "the States" and seemed disposed to take the direction of affairs in his own hands. He was a tall, dashing, fashionably-clad personage, handsome in a certain, florid style, with the blackest of eyes and the silkiest of moustaches, "for all the world like a wig-maker's block," as Mrs. Dempsey irreverently phrased it. Curiously enough there seemed no disposition on the part of the neighborhood to meet his half-patronizing overtures, so that his references to us as "the friendly natives" were from the outset wide of the mark.

Mrs. Mulvey tracing in him some fancied resemblance to Johnny, accepted passively, even gratefully, the elaborate cares and courtesies with which he ostentatiously surrounded her.

"Mighty attentive he is, all of a sudden," said Mrs. Quin, viewing these overtures with scant favor.

"It's very odd we never heard of 'my fine gentleman' all the years his uncle was alive," said Mrs. Dempsey, supplying the visitor with a name that clung.

"Where the body is, there shall the eagles be gathered together," rejoined Mrs. Steele, darkly prophetic.

As the weeks sped and "my fine gentleman" did not manifest that impatience to return to the favored land of his home, which would have seemed but natural to one holding there the great financial stakes at which he hinted, our vague suspicions took a more definite form. Could it be that he meant to trade upon the "little woman's" devotion to her departed husband and quarter himself permanently in the snug little shop, there to succeed to all Johnny's privileges and perquisites? For the deeper depravity of his real intentions, we were totally unprepared. I remember how the sudden unveiling of them shattered the peace of a mellow June twilight, such as always found Johnny seated on his Windsor chair beneath the wooden awning, agreeably inclined toward any sort of sociability that might offer, from the discussion of ward politics to the umpiring of a game of marbles.

Somehow, for all his graces, "my fine gentleman" seemed but a poor substitute for our lost friend, as he leaned against the door frame with the white hands thrust in the armholes of a spectacular vest and through handsome half-closed eyes surveyed the "yokels" (which, I believe, was his latest name for us) with a sort of indolent contempt.

"I believe the 'Late Lamented' died intestate," he said at last with a flippancy that aroused all our latent antagonism.

"Do you mean by that your poor uncle?" said Luke Dempsey in a tone of dry rebuke. "What need, I'd like to know, was there for him to concern himself with wills when there was only his wife to get everything."

"I am afraid you will find that your law takes a rather different view," replied this degenerate scion of the Mulveys with his tantalizing, superior air. "A third is, I believe, the share of an estate it allots a childless widow, unless otherwise provided by will. The fact is so well known that his failure to make one only urged a willingness on the part of my late uncle to abide by a provision, which he doubtless thought ample for the needs of one who, in the course of nature, can not long survive him."

Blank amazement sat on every face at the conclusion of this oration. So our vague distrust of the interloper was amply justified, and in his true colors "my fine gentleman" stood forth at last, the sorriest spectacle on which the scorn of the neighborhood had ever alighted.

"And where does the rest go?" some one rallying from the shock indignantly demanded.

"Why, to the next of kin. To *me* in plain terms—his only brother's son."

"Well, its hard to believe such a low-lived scally-wag can be kith or kin to Johnny Mulvey," was the answer, delivered in tones of concentrated contempt.

"Much obliged for your flattering estimate," retorted "my fine gentleman," ironically. "Fortunately I am provided with convincing proof, should the old woman permit the matter to be carried to court. Solely in her interest I should advise an amicable settlement."

I am sure there was not an able-bodied man present who did not yearn to settle matters out of hand by the ancient test of single combat, nor one of their wives who would not have turned Amazon in the interests of one whose hand and purse had ever been at the call of illness or distress.

"So that's the law, is it?" Mrs. Quin burst forth indignantly. "Then a mean thieving law I call it. If poor Johnny, God rest his soul, made no will, 'twas because he could never fathom such villainies as you've been plotting all the weeks you've been fairly eatin' her up with sweetness. He'd never believe it of one belongin' to him. Will! Isn't it will enough when they stand before the altar and endow us with all their worldy goods?" she concluded triumphantly.

There was an eager chorus of assent. What a sweeping away of landmarks, and a crumbling of the social fabric would ensue, if nephews from no one knew where were to complicate these sad situations with their preposterous claims!

"Don't we all know, and didn't Johnny say time and again, that she made it herself, workin' late and early? Not that it can be such a great fortune at best—she's been too open-handed for that. Law, indeed," said Mrs. Quin, angrily, "it's nothing short of roguery!"

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The "next of kin," with lowering countenance and muttered allusions to "libel," "contempt of court," and the difficulties in which rash partisans might involve both themselves and the object of their zeal, turned abruptly on his heel, while impulsive youth on the fringe of the assemblage accompanied his departure with such manifestations as the top gallery reserves for the exit of the stage villain.

This sudden disastrous turn in Mrs. Mulvey's affairs became a theme of vital concern and endless discussion, since a third of the meagre estate brought her nearer to the confines of poverty than any one cared to contemplate. The "little woman" herself looked upon her changed prospects with the sort of dazed acquiescence of one whom misfortune has evidently marked for its own.

"What would be the sense of carryin' the business to the lawyers? Sure, he has the whole matter at his finger's ends," was her apathetic rejoinder to such as urged her to give battle. Probably her great sorrow had endowed her with a species of sad immunity against fate's minor darts, for her attitude toward her own future seemed curiously impersonal and aloof.

Her single poignant regret was the impossibility under these changed conditions of erecting the towering obelisk which would fittingly commemorate Johnny's virtues. Now his single scant memorial must be the brief entry in the ponderous Bible where his father, and father's father, had, under the dual headings "Births" and "Deaths," kept faithfully through nearly a century Nature's great debit and credit account. The "little woman" had rather childishly deferred making this last sad entry as though to read Johnny's name upon the fateful page was somehow to make his death more real and credible.

Oddly enough, it was the impatience of "my fine gentleman" to realize upon his inheritance which precipitated a climax little to his liking. Confronted by the dismantling of her home and the sale of the little business, what written record could further emphasize the fact that Johnny had indeed passed from a world where such a nightmare train of disasters was permitted to crowd upon her defenceless age?

"Will you hand me down the big Bible, Mrs. Quin, ma'am?" she said wearily one evening to Teddy's mother, who, mutely sympathetic and feeling vaguely responsible for these woful happenings, was continually "running over" in the hope of being in some minor way helpful to the "little woman."

So small and frail and desolate she seemed, writing in the ponderous tome the "finis" to her life's joy, that Mrs. Quin had to brush a sudden mist from her eyes as the "little woman" closed the book, saying softly, "'Tis done."

Of what use in such desolation were the feeble platitudes of sympathy? Mrs. Quin dimly felt their futility as she stooped stiffly to replace a sheet of paper which had fluttered to the floor, when Mrs. Mulvey opened the fateful page.

"There is something you wouldn't care to be losin'. 'Tis likely an old letter from himself," for at the foot of the page she had noted Johnny's signature in the great sprawling characters of one to whom the pen had ever seemed a formidable weapon.

The "little woman" looked up with wide-startled eyes. "He never wrote me a letter in his life. We were never parted—before," she said with unconscious pathos. "Just look over it, dear, my eyes are not what they were. 'Tis likely an old receipt or some such matter."

But Mrs. Quin poring over the document with puzzled brows gave a sudden startled cry. "Why, 'tis your husband's will, ma'am," she exclaimed excitedly, as the full significance of the document and its bearing upon the pretentions of the "next of kin" came home to her with a shock of glad realization.

Witnessed by Dr. Barlow and his housekeeper, it bequeathed everything absolutely to his "dearly-beloved wife," and bore a date a little later than the one on which he had learned that his heart was an untrustworthy machine in hourly peril of breaking down.

It transpired upon the doctor's return that the expediency of settling these worldly affairs from which all his days he had held aloof would never have dawned upon Johnny, had not the doctor, with an astuteness we could not sufficiently admire, foreseen for the "little woman" some such contingency as actually arose.

To Johnny the whole matter wore an aspect slightly farcical, "seeing ivery dollar of it represinted her own airnin's and savin's," and he could by no means be brought to discuss the document with his wife nor to speak more definitely to Dr. Barlow of its bestowal than to say that "he'd slip it in a place where 'twould be convanient to her hand in case of anythin' goin' wrong."

For the further and final discomfiture of the "next of kin" the "little woman" was induced to make a will on her own account, and after carefully weighing the respective claims of many charities decided at last in favor of one which benefits old people "who have outlived their usefulness," a fate which she always held in especial dread.

This fate, it is comforting to remember, never befell the "little woman," busy and helpful to the last, though the daily duties must have often seemed curiously lacking in point and savor, and life sadly empty, which for more than two score years had crystallized about one central purpose. She can not have been far off seventy, that fatal year when the cholera decimated "Hayward's Flats"—too old, one might fancy, to play a heroic part. And yet of the three who fought through the worst of the epidemic shoulder to shoulder two survive, who in reminiscent moments grow huskily eloquent concerning the services of the one who fell.

"It might be yesterday," Dr. Barlow will say, "that she came to me in her rusty black frock and said, cool as good morning, 'I hear you're short of nurses, doctor. Ye may not think I'd be much help to you, but I've always been handy with sickness and I'm strong and active for my time of life. Ye may laugh, doctor, but all the world over beggars can't be choosers,' and she went on with that curious twisted way she had of smiling 'and ye can't afford to be as particular as if help was plenty.' But I was much nearer to tears than to smiles when the 'little woman' and I shook hands on the bargain and I said: 'You'll do.'"

"I can not imagine how he should have managed without her," Father Ford will answer. "Such courage! Such utter selfishness! For a woman of her age, her endurance was nothing short of marvelous. The worst of the epidemic was over before she succumbed. I remember her words to me the morning she was stricken. 'Sure you wouldn't fret for me, Soggarth Aroon, when God has been so good to me. I've always had a terror of rustin' out—but I've worn out instead.'"

"And then," Dr. Barlow will add, between puffs upon his stubby brier pipe! "she managed to tell you where I'd find one or two things she thought I'd be needing; a born nurse, sir!"

And a valiant woman," the priest will add softly.

"And as such her memory lingers, though wooden shutters have long spread their dark eclipse across the windows of the deserted "Emporium," where poor dog Trust lies dead at last, and the merry little bell, choked to its throat with dust and cobwebs, rings never more in welcome or good-by.

"GIVE ME WISDOM"

(From "Seedlings" by the Right Rev. Charles H. Colton, D. D.)

Thus prayed Solomon, and thus must pray every man who would hope to please God. It is a confession of spiritual blindness, an acknowledgment of defective reasoning, a declaration of weak and wayward will, and through all which we must easily go astray unless divine wisdom comes to our assistance and keeps us in the narrow road that leads to eternal life.

Hence, Solomon exclaimed to God, "Who shall know thy thought except Thou give wisdom and send thy Holy Spirit from above?" It is something which must come from God and hence must be asked and prayed for. It is not earthly knowledge, it is not human understanding; it is something far above all this; it is, as the Book of Wisdom declares, a vapor of the power of God, and a certain emanation of the glory of the Almighty God.

It gives to those who receive it something of its own transcendent qualities. For infinite wisdom is gentle, kind, steadfast, and such do they become in a degree commensurate with human capacity who are animated by its power. It is necessary that we have something of this heavenly wisdom and be guided and influenced by it; for the Scriptures tell us that God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom. It is, therefore, what we must strive to possess by asking it of God every day of our lives, for each day is a new start on the road of life, and each hour knows a fresh struggle with the obstacles that we meet on it. And thus the wise man acted, for he says, "Her have I loved and have sought her out from my youth; for it is she that teacheth the knowledge of God and is the chooser of His works." Wisdom enlightens and directs us if we put ourselves under its power. It shows us the difference between heavenly treasures and earthly riches, for wisdom itself is the treasure of treasures. It is of all knowledge the greatest and best. It is the justest conception of duty to God, our neighbor and ourselves for it teaches the four cardinal virtues on which all the others hinge, namely temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude. And so the wise man took her to live with him saying, "She will communicate to me of her good things and will be a comfort in my cares and griefs."

In all this we see how insufficient man is of himself, and yet how, confessing his powerlessness, he can be lifted above his natural weakness and accomplish great things for God! Our Divine Lord is called the Wisdom of the Father, because He is the living and active expression of the Godhead in His humanity. He is the Word telling of the Father's power. His goodness, and His love, His mercy and His justice, and in His own dealings with man He exemplifies all by what He says and does as He moves among them. And as He did, Our Lord bids us follow Him, saying: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." "Learn of me," "Follow me." And to His divine invitation the wise, the good and holy give heed, and with the grace of heavenly wisdom upon them they joyfully take up their cross, made up of this world's sorrows, trials, temptations, and manfully set out and follow in the wake of our Saviour.

It is God that draws them after Him for it is His grace to which they yield, and by being faithful to it, they rise higher and higher on the mount of perfection, and push on further and further on the road to eternal life.

THE "AMERICAN" CHURCH ABROAD

In every important center of travel on the continent of Europe we find advertised in the hotel corridors, in the papers and guide books: "The American Church. Services by the Rev. So-and-So, at such-and-such an hour."

By what right does a Presbyterian, a Methodist or a Baptist church arrogate to itself at home or abroad the title "American?"

It strikes Catholics abroad as a far-off echo of the noisy pretentions of the sect at home—who would be more American than the Americans themselves! Who would claim America and American institutions for themselves! Who would have in office none but Protestants! Who sounded the slogan "hands off the public schools"—whenever Catholics raise their voices against double taxation! Who would have the public believe that none but Protestants and infidels can be true Americans—that Catholics and the Catholic Church are not to be trusted.

How many travelling Americans attend "American" churches? Precious few. It has been our experience abroad to witness few Americans at all, barring Catholics, who attend church while abroad.

Here's where lots of money goes to support what is called "foreign missions"—to keep up a sham and to advertise a lie.

The thing would not be worth noticing but for the false impression it creates in the minds of some—even of the natives themselves.

Of course they are mainly engaged in the work of proselytizing—using money freely for this purpose.

As for religion—it is the dry-bones of the skeleton—and those, however fallen away, who once renew the living truth will have none of them.

So that these "American" churches abroad merely serve as snug bunks for some ministers and their families, who are much entertained, and for advertising purposes.

They worry us not at all—only we object to the term "American."—The Newark Monitor.

He who layeth up in his heart the good things he hath read, reposeth with St. John on Jesus' bosom.—Thomas à Kempis.

Those who make a boast of always saying what they think, do not, unfortunately, always take the trouble to think what they say. That is why they are notoriously those whose speech works harm. The truest, deepest, kindest thinkers do not lay any claim to putting all their thoughts into words.

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