

LAURA'S PRAYERS.

Surely there is no greater earthly boon than peace. Our dreamings of Heaven are all founded on peace. The blessed rest peacefully on their laurels in the sight of the Lamb. "Grant them peace and rest eternal" is the mourning heart's prayer for its loved ones, who have passed through the shadows of time into the never fading brightness of eternity. No happiness of earth is complete, indeed it cannot exist, without the crowning gift—peace. This richest of blessings is the reward exceeding great, accorded to those who devoutly honor and love the Blessed Heart of Jesus, as is instanced in the following narrative:

Laura Weston had made, as all her friends admitted, a brilliant match. There was but one shadow obscuring the sunshine of her happiness. Oscar Belmont was wealthy, had won distinction in his political career, and, as all predicted, had a great future before him, but he was not of her faith. Alas! her resolve on entering society after having graduated at a convent school, had been so firm never to endanger her faith by contracting an alliance with one outside of the pale of the Church; but love, the great conqueror of unguarded young hearts, had overcome this determination. Had she trusted more lovingly and humbly in the protection of the Sacred Heart rather than in the strength of poor human resolve, the result might have been different.

She had a luxurious home, hosts of admiring friends, and a devoted husband. Surely her happiness was complete! For a brief period, yes—bliss unalloyed and plenteous seemed accorded to the trusting young heart. But ere long a tiny, but sombre and threatening cloud obscured the horizon.

Belmont was twitted by his friends about his Catholic wife. Did he not know that such an alliance would prove an obstacle to his attaining eminence in his political career? He was even now losing prestige. The young man felt the full force of his friends' apprehension. He became moody and irritable; there must be a change, he thought, he could not sacrifice his career for a woman's whim. What mattered a form of belief provided a man were fair and honest in his dealings, and was it not the bounden duty of the wife to submit to her husband's just demands?

Laura observed the change in her young husband with sinking heart. Was love's fair dream to pass so quickly? How blissfully had their evenings hitherto been spent, in sweet converse, in the forming of rose-tinted plans for the bright future; now he sat abstracted and gloomy, scarcely noticing her presence, and the thousand loving attentions by which she sought to cheer him.

"Oscar, dear," she one evening inquired, "what is the matter? you seem so depressed. Will you not confide your troubles to me? No heart can sympathize with you as deeply as mine."

"Laura," answered he abruptly, "I will confide the trouble to you, for you alone can end it."

"O, then, dear, cheer up, it is all ready ended, if I can banish it. Speak, what could have driven the sunshine from our happy home?"

"Your superstitious creed, Laura," and to his bewildered young wife he poured forth indignantly, the evil to his prospects wrought by her religion. Laura recoiled pale and tearful; "and now speak," he continued vehemently, "will you give up this vile religious system, which threatens to blight my prospects in life forever? Believe what you will but give up the practice of this superstition, and if you must have some religion, why there's the Episcopalian, it is thoroughly respectable."

"Oh, Oscar, have you forgotten your promises to me before our marriage? You guaranteed me perfect liberty in the practice of my religion and—"

"I know, I know, Laura, but I had no idea that it would be such a drawback to me. Do you wish to spoil my career?" he asked sharply.

"No, Oscar, neither do I wish to imperil the salvation of my soul."

"Bosh! that's all sentimental nonsense. Never mind beliefs, look for actions square and upright."

"But, Oscar, actions must be based on religious motives and controlled by them."

"There is no use bandying words. Will you assist me to secure eminence in my career or not? Let me have your decision."

"Not, dear Oscar, at the price of my salvation."

"Can't! Are you not by every law human and divine bound to my interests?"

"Not when there is a question of obedience to the law of God. No, Oscar, I shall never prove a traitor to conscience, much as I love you, I must at every cost, remain faithful to my God."

"Fool that I was to trust a Catholic!" were the bitter words with which Belmont rushed from the apartment.

They cut his young wife to the very heart. Alas! her idol was broken. From that fatal hour peace fled from the Belmont mansion. Laura mourned despondent at the tomb of her buried hopes—her lost love. Her husband seemed ill at ease in the once happy home. His words were bitter and taunting. She slowly and painfully learned to shrink from his presence.

The roses fled from her cheeks, her eyes were heavy with unshed tears. Life had become a burden. How would it all end? An unsatisfactory marriage is quickly remedied by those who find divorce an available means of

undoing a false step, an undesirable alliance. It became evident to the lonely wife that her imperious husband was meditating something of the kind.

On a beautiful summer evening, she sat listlessly turning the pages of a favorite work, while the tears coursed slowly down her wan face. A card fell from the book, and as she stooped to pick it up, her eyes fell upon a representation of the Benign Heart of Jesus, with the consoling device, "I will give peace to their families." The words seemed glowing in starlit radiance. "Peace to their families!" Peace O, blessed peace, that had fled from her fireside for months, now drear and sorrow-laden. Peace to their homes! This was the promise of Truth Eternal. It would not deceive her, as the vows of man had done. Suddenly hope revived in her heart. She was determined to hold the sweet Heart of the best of Fathers to His promise. She immediately placed on the shrine in her boudoir a beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart. She prayed with all the fervor of her soul to the Prince of Peace, to Him Who had come from His throne of beauty in the highest heaven to bring peace upon earth. She prayed and hoped, not in vain.

Day by day her husband relented and ere many months had passed the love he had borne his young wife, and which still glowed faintly beneath the scathing flames of ambition, revived. He became again considerate, gentle, loving. Nor was this all. The prayers of his dear wife were more powerful in promoting his interests than all the schemes of ambition. He found that her religion, far from being a drawback, had been a help.

"All our success depends," as she was wont gently to assure him, "on the blessing of heaven."

Peace now wielded her fair sceptre over Laura's home, but the Heart of Jesus is the most generous of hearts. It would do more—and it did. The proud young statesman although he lingered long on the threshold of the Church entered at last, to the ineffable joy of his faithful wife.

A PATHETIC STORY.

Of the Sad End of One Who Loved Gold Overmuch—A Lesson for Honest Tellers.

I should like to set my simple, but touching story, in vivid form before the readers of the Catholic Union and Times, so as to give them, and all honest tellers, a true picture of the state of sweet content that ought to be the portion of every man who is reconciled to his lot, and earns honestly enough money to supply his essential wants.

The illustration must, however, be in contrast to the career and ending of the unfortunate man whose fate supplies the text of this article. The individual in question was an Irish Catholic, and as a young man he came to Canada in the early fifties, without cash and friends. It was, perhaps, his misfortune to settle in a part of Ontario largely peopled by Orangemen from the counties of Cavan and Fermanagh, and other parts of Ulster, wherein the very name of a priest was abhorred and even threatened with pains and penalties should he enter the district. It was a bad atmosphere for a young Irish Catholic to inhale, and as a natural consequence the person in question weakened in his faith, fell more into the ways of his Protestant employers and friends although he never lost entirely the germ of Catholicity he carried with him from Ireland.

Barring the dry goods and other personal belongings which he carried on his back, he had no means to make a start in life, but through strenuous effort and rigid saving he quickly earned a few hundred dollars, and that small capital he lent out to needy farmers and others who paid him a liberal interest. In this way in course of time, he accumulated considerable wealth, and was sometimes designated "the Rothschild of the locality."

Meanwhile the greed of gain and the inherent passion for more gold were growing stronger and stronger within him, and all the other essential realities of life seemed as nothing in fact of this one overmastering desire. In hislandings, even when payments were guaranteed by mortgages and other securities, he met with dishonest borrowers, and made financial losses. He naturally grieved over this; and, in a word, his life became perfectly miserable. He was not what might be called an out-and-out miser, but the greed of gain had mastered him completely, so that social existence or any kind of diversion had no balm for him unless it contributed to increase his bank account.

It is always commendable in a man to make efforts to raise himself from a position of servitude and penury, but the danger of utter neglect of other sacred duties of life sets in when the striver begins to regard the making of money his sole source of happiness.

Every desire or ambition, however, fair or legitimate, may become ruinous when by long indulgence, it grows ascendant in the mind and perverts the better qualities of our nature.

In the case we are discussing, the victim of inordinate greed had neither wife nor family to provide for, yet he had himself miserable by thinking of his hoarded wealth and the injuries he had suffered from dishonest borrowers.

The outcome of it was that he pined away his life and happiness and died a few weeks ago in an asylum for the insane in Toronto. It will nevertheless be consoling to Catholic readers to learn that in his later and sane years he associated himself practically with his sound religious duties, and strove,

as far as in him lay, to make amends for earlier coldness or indifference.

It is philosophically held that a peasant is more attached to his hut than is a prince to his palace, so also in the scale of wealth the possession of a few thousands may serve to unbalance the owner's mind as much as would the millions of the Astors and Vanderbilts. It is on record that millionaires have snapped the thread of life because they fancied that Fortune had not been kind enough to them, or maybe through sheer envy of a richer neighbor. Some monied kings have reckoned themselves poor because some inflated rivals held more of the world's goods.

From the immediate case we are reviewing, honest tellers who never attain to anything beyond a bare competence useful lessons may be drawn. The most important being the stern truth that the true principle of life and happiness does not proceed from the possession of money whether the fortune be large or small. The argument goes to show that the honest poor man, who is blessed with health and cheerfulness of spirit, and earnestness to pay his way, is far happier than the bloated magnate who revels in riches and sinful indulgences that pervert his moral nature and leave him a victim and a prey to all criminal follies, timidity and all the evils of the case. Another aspect of the case is the degree of contentedness that the hard-working man is able to derive from his allotted place in life. If he is of a buoyant temperament, of sober and saving habits, industrious and conscientious in the fulfilment of all moral and religious duties, he will earn the just esteem of his fellow men, and in that conviction he will pursue his way through life calmly and modestly; being all the surer that in keeping that course he will reach his destiny and the end for which he was created. Still it were well to lay more stress on the consistent and faithful performance of the obligations imposed by the Catholic Church for the true guidance of life and conduct.

If we apply the instance in hand we may reasonably assume that the ill-fated man who has just died, as above stated, might have escaped such misfortune if, in the middle years of his existence, he had been in closer touch with the sacred ministrations of the Church. If he had persistently clung to that infallible teacher, counsellor and guide, and listened to the saving voice of the zealous priest, he might have had supernatural strength to resist the evil temptation of falling under the yoke of the golden mammon, which certainly embittered the best years of his manhood, brought affliction of mind and final ruin upon him.

As already stated, it was his ill-fortune on coming fresh from Ireland to locate in a neighborhood wherein Catholicity was spurned and utterly detested by the bigoted and ferocious Orangemen who gloried in its downfall, and it is yet something to the credit of the deceased unfortunate that he lived for many years in that rancorous region, with nothing in his ears but constant abuse of his faith, and without chance of hearing Mass and partaking of the sacraments unless on rare occasions, when he had to journey far from his abode. Under such conditions, that he preserved even a fragment of the faith of his fathers, is due to the zeal of his teaching which Catholic Erin instills into the youthful minds of her children.

In the wide lands of the American Republic there must be numerous cases akin to the one described, as far, at least, as regards the peril to Catholic faith arising from rank religious prejudice and open hatred of the one true God. That it should be so, on the eve of the twentieth century, is a sad reflection on the intelligence of living generations of men professing Christian principles.

The retrospect and the forecast emphasize the tremendous task before the Catholic Church in this new world, in which the early seeds of Catholicity did not get a fair chance to grow and fructify before being overpread and jostled by the corrupting sowings and harvests of error and religious imposture. Verily, over the wheat fields the fraudulent pretenders have plentifully over-sown pernicious cockle. Catholic truth is, however, making headway fast, and in virtue of her divine mission, will yet succeed in winning back the strayed sheep to the one saving faith.—Wm. Ellison in Buffalo Catholic Union and Times.

A CATHOLIC HINDOO.

By Embracing the Faith He Forfeited His Inheritance—A Student in Baltimore.

The Josephite, a publication issued from Epiphany Apostolic College, Baltimore, gives the following sketch of an interesting convert:

Two years ago Joseph Visvanatti left his home in Kathirama, Ceylon, to go to London, there to study at the University of London for the degree of A. B. He had already received the degree of A. at the University of Calcutta, and went to London to continue his studies, to see Western peoples and to observe Western customs.

His father was a wealthy planter, and his visit to London was made because his father desired that Joseph should enjoy educational advantages which are offered to few Hindoos, and those only of the wealthier class.

He was a true Hindoo, and all inherent ideas of caste and social position were strongly developed in him. Very soon after his arrival in London he was converted to the Catholic faith. Although he knew very well that this would entail the loss of much that he held dear, yet, through the influence

of Father Lawless, he abandoned the Brahmin religion. What he had feared came upon him swiftly. His father, upon hearing of his conversion, at once disowned him and refused to any longer send him money for his support. Through Father Lawless the young Hindoo was introduced to Lady Herbert, who befriended him and sent him to this country. He was received very kindly by Father Slattery, who placed him in Epiphany Apostolic College.

Joseph talks entertainingly of life in Ceylon and of the social customs in existence there.

"My father was of the caste known as 'Vellialas,'" said he. "This is the landlord class, and this caste ranks next below that of Rajahs or Kings. The Brahmins, or priests, form the highest caste in the social scale. My father owned large estates, but when I became a Catholic in London I was disinherited and entirely disowned by him."

Joseph is a strict vegetarian, and shares all the prejudices of his race against the destruction of any form of animal life. He would not kill even a fly or a mosquito.

"We have no right to destroy any life," he says.

He speaks in glowing terms of the natural beauties and advantages of his native land. He has a very poor opinion of our roads, our food and our fruit. He describes very minutely the superiority of level, hard packed Indian roads. He says that we have nothing equal to good rice and curry powder and that this is nowhere as well prepared as in Ceylon. He insists, too, that their mangoes, plantains, coconuts and oranges are real fruit—something of which he declares we know nothing.

He describes the Brahmin religion as one which has retrograded very materially and which is no longer as pure as it formerly was. The early Brahmin faith taught the existence of one God; now every caste has one or more gods.

There are eighteen castes in India, and by the law of caste a man remains forever in that caste into which he is born. He cannot escape this rule. If he happens to be born a "Pariah," one of the eighteenth caste, which corresponds to butchers in our society, a "Pariah" he must be until the day of his death. Joseph gives the names of the first six of the eighteen castes as follows: First, Brahman, or priest, caste; second, Rajahs, or caste of Kings; third, Vellialas, or landlords; fourth, Sudras, or assistants to landlords; fifth, Naivas, or climbers of trees, who pick fruit and nuts from branches of trees; sixth, Kovias, or household servants. This gradation continues until the eighteenth or last and lowest caste of butchers is reached. A man will always remain in the same caste, even if he rise by mental attainment far above the level of his fellows. For instance, if a pariah should study and become very well educated, so as to write very able books or scientific treatises, he would, nevertheless, live and die a Pariah.

As a result of the caste system there is no such thing as competition in Ceylon. No foreigner could ever become a Hindoo or embrace the Brahmin religion. Brahmins send out no missionaries. The only way in which a Hindoo could ever escape the rigid law of caste would be for him to withdraw from society and go away alone into the depths of the unbroken forest. As long as he remains in society so long must caste determine his daily life. But if he renounce society he may also renounce caste. Hindoos have a plurality of wives, and each planter generally supports several concubines.

When Joseph was asked what the Hindoo idea of Christianity was, he replied the educated classes had a very high regard for it as a religion, but that they considered the Christ to have been a mere man, like their own Brahma. Many of the higher classes believe that Christianity would be better for the Hindoos than Brahmanism now is, but that its introduction would cause too great an upheaval in their social system by the consequent entire obliteration of the caste.

Joseph has lost his inheritance by becoming a Catholic. He is no longer a Hindoo, but a Christian. His own race would not receive him as an equal if he returned to Ceylon.

He is at present a student at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, where he is pursuing courses in philology, philosophy and political philosophy, and is a candidate at that university for the degree Ph. D. He is remarkably intelligent and studious, and is held in high esteem by his instructors.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

A Monastic Life.

Thou must learn to renounce thine own will in many things, if thou wilt keep peace and concord with others.

It is no small matter to live in a monastery or in a congregation, and to converse therein without reproach, and to persevere faithful till death.

Blessed is he, who hath there lived well and made a happy end.

If thou wilt stand as thou oughtest and make a due progress, look upon thyself as a banished man and a stranger upon earth.

Thou must be content to be made a fool for Christ, if thou wilt lead a religious life.

The habit and the tonsure contribute little, but a change of manners and an entire mortification of the passions make a true religious life.

He, who seeketh here any other thing than purely God and the salvation of his soul, will find nothing but trouble and sorrow.

Neither can he long remain in peace, who doth not strive to be the least and to be subject to all.

Thou comest hither to serve, not to govern: know that thou art called to suffer and to labor, not to be idle and talkative.

Here, then, men are tried as gold in the furnace. Here no man can stand, unless he be willing with all his heart to humble himself for the love of God.

HOPE HAD DEPARTED.

The Story of a Woman's Rescue From Great Suffering.

FOR YEARS HER LIFE WAS ONE OF MISERY—HER FEET AND LIMBS WOULD SWELL FRIGHTFULLY AND SHE BECAME UNABLE TO DO HER HOUSEHOLD WORK.

From the Enterprise, Bridgewater, N. S.

It is appalling to think of the number of women throughout the country who day after day live a life almost of martyrdom; suffering but too frequently in silent, almost hopeless despair. To such sufferers the story of Mrs. Joshua Wile, will come as a beacon of hope. Mrs. Wile lives about two miles from the town of Bridgewater, N. S., and is respected and esteemed by all who know her. While in one of the local drug stores not long ago, Mrs. Wile noticed a number of boxes of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in the show case, and remarked by the proprietor "If ever there was a friend to woman, it is these pills." She was asked why she spoke so strongly about the pills, and in reply told of the misery from which they had rescued her. The druggist suggested that she should make known her cure for the benefit of the thousands of similar sufferers. Mrs. Wile replied that while averse to publicity, yet she would gladly tell of her cure if it would benefit anyone else, and she gave the following statement with permission for its publication:

"My life for some years was one of weakness, pain and misery, until I obtained relief through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. From some cause, I know not what exactly, I became so afflicted with uterine trouble that I was obliged to undergo two operations. A part only of the trouble was removed, and a terrible weakness and miserable, nervous condition ensued, which the physician told me, it would never get clear of. I tried other doctors, but all with the same result—no betterment of my condition. The pains finally attacked my back and kidneys. My legs and feet became frightfully swollen, and I cannot describe the tired, sinking, deathly feeling that at times came over my whole body. I became unable to do my household work, and lost all hope of recovery. Before this stage I tried Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, but like thousands of other women, thought there could be no good in using them when the medical men were unable to cure me. At last in desperation I made up my mind to try them, but really without any faith in the result. To my great surprise I obtained some benefit from the first box. I then bought six boxes more, which I took according to directions, and am happy to say was raised up by them from a weak, sick, despondent, useless condition, to my present state of health and happiness. Every year now in the spring and fall I take a box or two, and find them an excellent thing at the change of the season. Other benefits I might mention, but suffice it to say I would strongly recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to all ailing women."

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