

leave the empty rooms to a night's hard work.

In the relief of the delayed release from work he forgot entirely the stack of unsigned letters, also his promise to a tired-eyed little wage-earner! However, broken promises were not the rungs by which the Mackey fortune had been made and when he had settled down for a quiet smoke by his cheerful fire in the dignified bachelor apartment he strove to call home, the evening paper served only to remind him of Miss Donovan and his promise to her. Her name, in glaring headlines on the front page caught his attention and as he read the account of her spirited protest to the mayor of the town for his neglect in not safeguarding the school children at the Michigan Avenue crossing, pride fanned his new-born love into a vivid flame.

"By Jove," he cried to the empty room, "I'll do more for her than merely signing that formal letter. I'll send his Reverence a check that'll put a stop to his worries about that suburban school," and drawing out his check-book he made good his word then and there.

It was with a new sense of pleasure in the power of his millions that Vincent J. Mackey studied the bit of paper which was to do so much good not only to the town but to a certain young person who, unknowingly, had woven her charm into the secret pattern of his inmost thoughts. The potency of his check-book had assumed such a hold over him that he had come to feel that money alone would purchase happiness. Satisfied by the generosity of his gift to the priest, the day-dreamer by the fire gave himself up to visions of Rosemary Donovan wearing the Mackey diamonds at no very distant date!

The next morning, before the haze of sleep had quite cleared from his brain, his man brought him a telegram from the mill-boss in Oconto. The message demanded his immediate presence and after a hastily eaten breakfast and a few hurried directions to the faithful George, the lumber king was enroute for Wisconsin. The check went to the tailor's in the pocket of the vest he had discarded.

Ten days packed to the last moment with readjustments and the judicial hearing of the disaffected lumber-jacks' story, the affairs of Miss Rosemary Donovan rather into the background of his thoughts so that it was not until the elevator was bearing him with the swoop of an eagle to the tenth floor of the "Green Bay Lumber Company" building that Vincent Mackey's conscience awoke from its slumbers. With fumbling haste he inserted his pass-key into the door of his inner office and entered—a mausoleum of remorse! Deadly inaction brooded over the dust-covered tools of high finance. From the little mirror in its curtained recess accusing eyes seemed to peer at "the Boss" and the chill of Miss Donovan's absence penetrated the fog surrounding his heart. Of what use was high finance if romance did not boost it along? The lumber king strode to the plate glass door that admitted him to his "kingdom" and glared forbiddingly at the dismayed undersecretary.

"Where is Miss Donovan today?" was the breath-taking question—not the usual "How's business?" and the meek young man answered humbly.

"She's not been in for several days, sir. I've attended to the personal letters as best I could—would you wish to give any dictation this morning?"

"No, certainly not! Just get in—but you've not told me where my stenographer has been these several days!" Do you have any opinion as to her whereabouts?"

"None whatever, sir," replied the secretary formally and resumed his perusal of the lumber market reports.

Vincent Mackey turned on his heel with a fine command of his temper and was just putting the receiver of his private phone to his left ear when a "rap-rap" upon the hall door interrupted him. Surprised he called none too pleasantly, "Come in!" And he turned to meet his pastor!

"I stopped in, Mr. Mackey," explained the priest seating himself on the edge of the chair offered him, "only to ask if you were aware of the sadness which has overtaken your stenographer during your trip up north?"

"Why, no, Father. I have had no home-town news as yet having just run in to the office from the train this morning. What is Miss Donovan's trouble?"

The steady-going heart of the millionaire threatened to suffocate him before the priest answered the unsuccessfully indifferent questions.

"The little sister was run over a few days ago by an automobile at the school crossing on Michigan Avenue. The result of her injury is not yet known, but she is at Mercy Hospital, suffering intensely, they tell me. Perhaps you might care to comfort her poor mother in some way?"

Automatically reaching towards the gaunt costumer for the hat and coat which he had thrown on a chair he spoke as one in a trance.

"Did you not get the nasty note I sent you the day I left town?"

"Such a letter has never reached me," replied Father Ryan.

"I sent you a check for three thousand dollars to use as a start for your new school in the suburbs. Miss Donovan had been telling me of your reasons for wishing to

rebuild and I—reluctantly promised her—poor girl," he interrupted himself to exclaim, "What must her feelings be?" and the eyes that so long had been bent upon columns of figures now gazed out of the window which framed for him a girl's lovely face lined with grief because he and his fellow citizens had not cared for the dozens of helpless little ones daily exposed to the carelessness of public traffic.

A grey mist aging the man before the very eyes of his visitor seemed to fall over the face of Vincent Mackey. The priest, familiar with the signs of real contrition, yet ignorant of the man's true feelings, gently recalled him to the present and its issues.

"Would you care to go with me now, Mr. Mackey? Perhaps seeing the little girl would ease your mind?"

The offer and the need for quick action brought Vincent Mackey to his feet. Putting the machinery of the office into the hands of the grievous-looking undersecretary, "the Boss" was ready to follow the priest and chafed inwardly at the older man's methodical movements. He could hardly resist pushing him into the depths of the Mackey limousine so great was his haste to set out on this errand of mercy. Father Ryan, unused to such rapid transit, anxiously gazed out upon the swirling faces of the pedestrians, with a priest's fear of missing some member of his flock.

Right in the heart of the little city stood the grim, grey stone hall of learning which was crowded to capacity with the sons and daughters of his people and as the luxurious car in which he rode approached Michigan Avenue the Angelus pealed out the message of the Incarnation from St. Stephen's high tower. It was noon and the tide of youngsters poured out of the open school doors. The grey-colored line could be seen blocks away and at the school corner traffic became fearfully congested because of it. Vincent J. Mackey was not able to escape the disagreeable process of having to stand in line with the trucks and florists' autos. Impatient of the delay he consulted his watch a half dozen times and took advantage of each chance to edge on a little further towards his goal. He peered through the wind-shield with the intent gaze of one slightly near-sighted, and the drama being enacted before him held him in speechless fascination.

In the centre of the street half a block away at the point where two car-lines crossed, stood a slight figure in a trim blue suit and snug fitting tam, and the great flow of vehicles and humanity was being held in check by some strange wand which the girl held in one up-flung hand. At the curb opposite stood a nun whose keen eyes watched the flashing motions of her assistant "traffic cop" before allowing the group of eager children behind her to cross the tracks. Until the last child was safely over the impatient line of chugging autos and clanging street-cars was held back by the magic of a girl's defiant signals and a nun's sweet bonhomie.

Then, gradually, the procession began and when Vincent Mackey's car was abreast of the bowing, smiling girl he found himself gazing with dumb appeal into the face of Rosemary Donovan! He sought recognition of her but she was far too busy returning the salutes of chauffeurs and motormen to notice a mere millionaire.

"I call that pretty plucky work," shouted the priest from the back seat not identifying the girl, and Mr. Mackey agreed with a nod. Words would have choked him just then because of the pounding his heart was giving his ribs. To think of "the future Mrs. Mackey" playing the part of a "common street policeman" was to the orderly mind of the bachelor almost an impossibility, yet his flaming love so warmed his heart that he felt admiration rather than censure for her act, which he knew must have been in behalf of the little hurt sister on her bed of pain.

The big limousine after a tedious detour caused by the hold-up drew up to the curb in front of Mercy Hospital directly behind a yellow taxi. The passengers from both cars alighted simultaneously with the result that Father Ryan was greeted joyously by none other than Miss Rosemary Donovan! The owner of the limousine suddenly found something wrong with the car which he drove more frequently than his chauffeur did. He hung around out of sight of the girl and the priest quite like a shy school-boy and in so doing he overheard some of the conversation. Miss Donovan was explaining her reason for using the position of a traffic cop to bring the men of the town to their senses.

"Why Father just think of it! Two children were killed and a third lamed for life, probably, at that dreadful crossing during the past year! When Theresa was hurt and my appeal to the mayor did no good I just took things in my own hands."

"Well, well, so it was you there in the street just now! Bless my soul, I didn't know you," laughed Father Ryan. "But how long do you intend keeping up your duties, my child?" he asked more seriously.

"Until the millionaires and politicians think it best to station a policeman at that dangerous corner! Sister Marie has permission to help me save the lives of those blessed

children—we'll shame them yet!" And Rosemary tossed her tam with a belligerent air that was amusing. At least there was a twinkle of amusement in the eyes of Vincent Mackey as he stepped from the front of his car and tipped his hat.

"Are you no longer in my employ, Miss Donovan?" he asked with attempted gallantry, but the brown eyes of his one-time stenographer flashed such scorn upon him that he suddenly felt old and withered.

"No, I am no longer working for a man who breaks his promise—I am only waiting for Theresa to get well before going to enter the novitiate of the Sisters of St. Joseph."

With all the dear hopes of life and happiness lying in ruins before him, crushed by the words he had just heard, Vincent Mackey stood before the girl he had learned to love just in time to save him from the perils of egotism. Never had she seemed so necessary to him as at this moment of her final break with him and his interests. With all his soul he wished that he were again a little chap, who could bury his head in his mother's lap and cry because he could not have the things he coveted.

Seeing the light of an inspired vocation shining from the girl's eyes, his own fell in shame that he had even dared to think of her as his. Father Ryan sensed the awkwardness of the interview and suggested that they pay the visit to Theresa and resume the conversation later. With quiet grace the little stenographer fell into step beside her former employer chatting unaffectedly as if nothing unusual had happened while he strove to hide his seething emotions under a cloak of banter.

"Let me see the powerful weapon with which you just held up the unruly public," he said, pointing to the girl's left hand.

"A twelve-inch rule, the saints be praised! What ever gave you the idea?"

"Well, I had to show some sign of my authority, and a school rule seemed the handiest sign—every one recognized it and read aright its message to them for the safety of St. Stephen's little ones," defended Miss Donovan with heightened color.

Just then a low-voiced nun opened the doors for the priest who was always a welcome visitor in her house of aches and pains.

"Yes, Father," she said, "you may all see Theresa but only for a short time. She's resting nicely and out of immediate danger, but she must not be excited by too much talking."

Father Ryan went down the long corridor with the nun in attendance as he knew the sweet child would want to see her priest before any one else. She had asked for him the first conscious moment she had known after the cruel truck had knocked her down. Left for a few precious moments alone with Rosemary, Vincent Mackey used them to clear himself in her eyes.

"I am able to rejoice with you in your happy choice of a useful life," he lied bravely. "But I would like to tell you before you go away, perhaps forever, that I did not break my word to you that day. I cannot bear your mental accusation against me."

"You mean?" questioned Rosemary breathlessly.

"I mean," declared the lumber king, "that I made out a check for Father Ryan the very day you left my office, but for some reason he has never received it. I must trace it up."

"Letters are seldom entirely lost," mused Rosemary half-doubtingly, "it seems strange what could have become of it."

Here is my check-book—see for yourself my stubs will prove to you the truth of my statement," urged Vincent Mackey in evident distress of mind.

"Oh, I do believe you, Mr. Mackey," cried Rosemary quickened to compunction by the unusual humility of the lumber king. Her heart lay at the Feet of Jesus but for all that she was woman enough to catch the yearning note in the man's vibrant voice and she put one little unglowed hand on his arm impulsively and spoke with sweet earnestness.

"I am so glad my faith in you need not be spied. Now I shall go to my convent secure in the thought that my dear ones will have a good friend in you. Am I asking too much?"

Reverently the man placed his great hand over the one that still held the ruler and at the touch of the bit of yellow wood he smiled tenderly as he answered her plea.

"On the shores of Green Bay, not five minutes' walk from my mills, there is a cozy five-room cottage, which I own and used to occupy when I was merely the 'mill boss.' The house needs a tenant; would you be willing to let your mother and the little girl live there for as long as they wish so that I may feel that someone is near my mills who cares what is going on?"

"Green Bay," murmured Rosemary thoughtfully, "Why that is not far from my convent. How lovely, I could see Mother and Theresa once in a while. Oh, thank you, how can I thank you enough?"

Vincent Mackey slipped the ruler from the girl's hand and held it aloft in mock solemnity.

"Let me keep this token of your belief in God's Providence. It is indeed a mighty ruler which has awayed the conscience of men, who like myself have been so taken up with making more millions that we

have not wisely spent the ones we had. This shall be my talisman—whenever I grow greedy I shall stop and consult it before I turn down some worthy petition." And as the girl watched him carefully bestowing her ruler in a huge pocket of his overcoat the priest beckoned them to come for a glimpse at the little sister whose sufferings had insured the safety of thousands of her kind.

THE HAIL MARY

Before we can propose our petitions and explain our wants to the Blessed Virgin we must gain her ear and attract her attention, says a writer in the Irish Catholic. This is accomplished by the first part of the Hail Mary, which contains a salutation and the praise of the Blessed Mother. We salute Our Lady by the same words by which the archangel honored her.

They must fall agreeably upon the ears of Mary, as the lingering echoes of a dear voice. And then we extol her greatness. We praise her. Praise is the tribute we pay to excellence. It is not flattery. Flattery comes from a mean and selfish heart. Praise flows from a generous and noble soul. Love has praise. Envy never praises; it belittles and censures.

A noble soul despises flattery; but it accepts sincere and honest praise. And so does our Mother delight in the praise of her children. It sounds sweet to her ears. That praise which we bestow on our Mother in the Hail Mary is not exaggerated, not pompous, not obtrusive.

It has the ring of sincerity. It proceeds from our love of the Blessed Virgin and from our admiration of her virtues. It is filial praise; sober yet glowing with the warmth of affection. It is couched in a few words, it is rich in meaning.

"FULL OF GRACE"

"Full of grace, the Lord is with thee" (Luke i. 28). What more could we say; yet how could we say it with less pretention? These few words recall the great privilege of Mary, gratuitously conferred on her by God, and also her personal merits. Our Blessed Mother loves to hear what God has done for her; she herself chants not her own glory, but the grandeur of God; "He that is mighty hath done great things for me; and holy is His name" (Luke i. 28). But God has lavished His graces on Mary; and He has given her the choicest and finest graces; He has given her a purity of immaculate brightness, as that of a star elevated far above the dust of the earth. He has not given her a measure of grace, but the very fullness of grace. He has heaped upon her His gifts and exhausted the treasures of His bounty.

But even more. Not only God's gifts fill the heart of Mary; nay, the Lord dwelleth there Himself. His power overshadows her. His luminous presence surrounds her. She feels His wonderful nearness. Her heart leaps with joy, more so than that of John, who also felt the thrill of the Divine presence. Mary was the living tabernacle, where God made His abode.

And, truly, God was with her. He was with her as a helpless babe, when she clasped Him to her loving bosom; He was with her as a growing child, when she held His little hand and guided His faltering steps; and He was with her when she held the lifeless form of His bruised body in her arms; He was with her in life and in death.

But our Blessed Lady was also with God. Never did she separate herself from Him. Her thoughts were with God. Her heart burned with everlasting love for Him. And she might well cry out with St. Paul: "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. vii. 38-39).—Mary deserves our praise.

St. Ambrose exclaims: "Mary ever Virgin, is the greatest wonder of God. Who has ever been more holy than Mary? She surpasses in sanctity the prophets, the Apostles and Martyrs, the angels, the thrones, the principalities, the seraphim and the union among all creatures, visible and invisible, there is no one equal to Mary in grandeur and sanctity; not one who like her was, at the same time, the servant and the Mother of God, a Mother and a Virgin." As a solitary star on the brow of night the glory of Mary shines forth. And rapturously we cry out: "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honor of our people." (Judith xv. 10).

Mary rejoices in our praise; because it is prompted by love and filial devotion and because it brings glory to God. "God is wonderful in His saints" (Ps. lxxvii. 87). Especially is He wonderful in the Blessed Virgin, who is the masterpiece of all His works. She is the resplendent mirror reflecting His beauty, as the surface of a placid lake reflects the splendour of the starry heavens.

And now we have gained access to our Blessed Mother; the first words of the Hail Mary have attracted her ears; she listens to its beautiful strains. And always we obtain a hearing with our Blessed Lady when we strike the sonorous sounds

of the Hail Mary. For it penetrates the very heavens and rings out above all other prayers catching and holding the attention of our Blessed Mother.

A PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

The second part of the Hail Mary contains a delicate tribute of gratitude to the Blessed Mother. Now, we know that nothing speaks more in our favor, gains more rapidly the affection of others, unlocks the hearts and wins sympathy so readily, than gratitude. He who is grateful is considered worthy of new benefits.

We never rue a gift conferred on an appreciative person, and we are willing to multiply our favors if we know that they are received with a sense of gratitude. Thus we also enlist the good feeling of Mary by our demonstration of gratitude in the Hail Mary. And such a noble, finely tuned, well-balanced expression of thankfulness! It is not as a full blown rose in glaring colors, but as a half-closed bud, revealing the daintiest tints and suggesting rich and glorious dyes.

Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. We bless the name, the memory of those whose hands we have received great favors. Mary has been to us a blessing and a source of many blessings. Ah, we do not bless the name of the unfortunate, ill-fated mother of our race! Sad memories cluster around the name of Eve! Woe has it brought to mankind. It spells of sin and death! It is a disastrous, ominous name!

But the name of Mary is a luminous name! It is synonymous with grace and life! It conjures up before our eyes the happy events of the incarnation and redemption. No evil has come through her! And rightly do we bless her name! To no woman do we owe as much as we owe to Mary.

And we acknowledge this debt of gratitude by calling her "blessed among women." Behold, all generations shall call me blessed (Luke i. 48). And Him whom she has given to us, her only begotten Son, we also bless. Gratitude will touch the heart of Mary, and will incline her to grant us what we ask and need.

Gratitude prepares new favors. There is nothing more repulsive, nothing which makes us more undeserving of future kindness and benevolence, than to forget and ignore past favors. Ingratitude will chill the kindest heart, and harden it against our petitions.

It dries up the foundations of generosity and clogs the channels of kindness. Therefore, aspiring to new graces, we first show ourselves thankful for what we have already received. Gratitude for kindness of the past softens and chastens also the selfishness which lies in every petition. No! we do not come to our Mother only to ask and receive favors; we come also to offer her the tribute of praise and of love and of gratitude. But must not a prayer combining these elements in such beautiful harmony be acceptable to our Blessed Lady? We now understand the efficacy of the Hail Mary and its high excellency as a prayer.

A PRAYER OF PETITION

But someone may object that this is taking things in a very human way. Be it so; but we are human, and can only represent heavenly things in our human way of thinking and feeling. Did not Our Lord condescend to clothe eternal ideas in terms and images drawn from our everyday experiences? If we wish to speak of the Blessed Virgin and her relations to us, we must resort to terms and illustrations that savour strongly of this earth, where we poor mortals are at home.

And, after all, Our Blessed Mother had a human heart; pure it was, sinless, foreign to everything low and mean; but withal human. And every noble and lofty human sentiment we may attribute to her. Nor will the Blessed Mother be displeased if we speak of her according to our poor stammering human fashion.

Following upon the prayer and thanksgiving by which we have honored Our Blessed Mother, our supplications will now be most favorably received. Let us now forget the glory of our dear Heavenly Mother, let us set aside her exalted position, let us close our eyes to her dazzling splendor; and let us think only of our misery and our needs. Let us pour into her ears the sad tale of our woe! There is a responsive chord in the heart of Mary thrilling to every human suffering. Mary has also borne the heavy weight of earthly life. She has been familiar with tears and sorrow. Her life-path was rugged and thorny; and her feet were sore and weary. She will understand our sighs and prayers.

The divine gift of liberty is God's recognition of man's greatness and man's dignity.—Archbishop Ireland.

It is a perception of the beauty of God, a delight in it, a desire after it, which distinguish the spiritual man from others. They may feel that God is great and right; he feels that God is beautiful. Hence it delights and soothes and refreshes him to think of God. It is a sense of the beauty of God that inspires devotion, that makes the Bible full from beginning to end of the aspirations of the saints of God, and enriches it with outbursts of jubilation.—Leckie.

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