

THE UNFINISHED LETTER

By Richard Grant

Father Reginald King sat at the table in the simple room that served him as dining room, reception room and study. He was knitting his iron-gray brows over the letter that lay before him, and the expression of his face was not one of anxiety nor of annoyance. It was the fourth time he had studied those six pages of energetic penmanship and the problem which they held forth was still no nearer solution.

"I parted my dear old Father, the much loved and trusted, and I am afraid, the solely tried Father King of those mischievous boyhood days of mine," ran the second page of the communication. "It is to be the greatest day in my life, save one, and that, the day of first Mass, is really only the fulfillment of the promise of this one. Yes it will soon be his greatest day for me, and it is to you, dear Father, to the help and kindness you have shown me, the counsel you have given me and the faithful prayers you have offered up for me that I owe, under God the coming happiness that is all in all to me. And I have so many hearts upon having from the post of duty for those three days — for no one else could do so — I realize that. Do come, dear Father King!"

The letter came from young Eddy Gray, the orphan lad who had been his favorite boy, once the liveliest and noisiest youth in a parish where liveliness and noisiness were by no means rare or undeveloped. And it was Father King who had first taken the young soul in hand four years ago. He had remembered their first meeting. It was the very day he had arrived at the little country mission. There had been only a barn for a church in those days, and no rectory at all. He had driven miles before the vicar and having at last reached the scene of his future apostolate, had alighted weary and hungry, at the first house he came to. He had been so enthusiastically received there that he had remained to himself and had not been in the house at the time. Only three-quarters of an hour later, however, Father King and his hospitable entertainers were startled by hearing sudden excited shouting, and finding the vicar, the vicar's wife and a trap drawn at express rate along the sandy road.

They started to their feet and rushed to the door. Father King's buggy, filled with terrified boys, was careering along at terrific speed, the horse having suddenly taken fright and bolted. Tightly gripping the reins and with a pale face as death but set determined, Eddy Gray was flying out of the door, his hands, endeavoring to guide the snorting, excited animal into the dense green scrub opposite the house, so that the wildness of the flight might be successfully broken. And he attained his object. Strong arms were immediately by to seize and calm the trembling animal as he stood struggling in the thick fresh undergrowth, and it was into the arms of the buggy's owner that, danger once over, the high spirited little creature fell, a dead weight in momentary collapse.

Of course, the prank had all been Eddy's doing. He had managed to harness the horse to the trap again, unseen by authority, and having induced a delighted throng of mischievous fellow-eyes, had set gallily forth. "And as I got 'em into the mess, I had to get 'em out again," was his matter of fact view of the incident. Father King and he were firm friends from that evening.

Their friendship had grown with the years. Of a decidedly manly and thoroughly vigorous disposition, Eddy's plety soon became as vivid and as solid as were the other and lesser realities of life to him. And it was the momentous day of first Communion that to the pure and generous soul of the ardent boy there came the secret whisper that first sounded in the apostles' ears. Thenceforward he and Father King were closer, fonder friends than ever.

But he entered the ranks of the Third Order ere he went to college. "You will remain our brother still, St. Dominic will be a Father to you, and yours is a true Dominican vocation in a wider cloister; that is all," were the comforting words of his dear old novice master, as they said good bye.

So it has proved. And nowhere had the saint of convents and apostles been so true a Father to you, and yours is a true Dominican vocation in a wider cloister; that is all," were the comforting words of his dear old novice master, as they said good bye.

For long his annual travel had been to spend his brief vacation with the Fathers that very priory in which Eddy was to be ordained. He had friends in all of them, two of the five had been his fellow novices in bygone days. Latterly, however, his increasing duties and his devotion to his mission had gradually curtailed these days of rest, reducing them finally to the mere thought and memory of the pleasant place.

It was Thursday before St. Dominic's that Father Reginald had put off replying to Eddy's letter as long as he could, but it had to be done, and strive as he would, pray and think as he would, he could find no modus operandi whereby he could leave his parish for the better part of a week. Clearly his people could not remain unheeded upon a Sunday — or on a Saturday evening either, for that matter — for his Apostleship of Prayer and his Children of Mary comprised a large and very devout number of the parishioners. And one of Father King's favorite texts, both for meditation and for sermons, was that sentence of Pere Lacordaire's: "No one can tell what the loss of one Communion may be to the life of a Christian." No, his people must have someone.

And the difficulty lay exactly there. If that someone were not to be Father Reginald King, whom could he possibly arrange for it to be? His parish, being a missionary tract, was wide, his nearest clerical neighbor was more than twenty miles away. And he was out of the question, being in exactly similar circumstances, working single-handed in a large district like himself. Father McLane, thirty miles off in another direction, was tied to his post in the same way. And so on.

"No, it can't be done, I'm afraid," he reflected ruefully as he laid the young doctor's letter before the portrait of St. Dominic he always kept by him. "Of course, I might have asked the Bishop, as a special favor, to send a substitute here. But in a diocese like ours, with so much work and so few to do it, one hardly likes to do it. Well, well, well!" — and he laid pen to paper determinedly, though the furrowed brow and the lines of the sensitive mouth indicated a strong and tender emotion seldom discernible to the casual onlooker.

He wrote steadily for three pages, never lifting his eyes from the sheet, save once to let them rest on the image of the Crucified, while upon its ebony cross, the solitary ornament of his room, he traced an engraving of the great Mother. At last he threw down his pen.

"There, now, the worst part of it is over," he murmured, his eyes fixed on the wild luxuriance of his all but tropical garden. "Poor boy, it'll be a disappointment to him — I wonder, now, to which of us it would have meant the most. Ah, well, St. Dominic will be beside him to aid and comfort him, and he'll hardly let me do it. Well, well, well!" — and he laid pen to paper determinedly, though the furrowed brow and the lines of the sensitive mouth indicated a strong and tender emotion seldom discernible to the casual onlooker.

He rose suddenly, leaving the bare white room through its open garden door and passing into the scented wealth of a "y" without. Making his way thoughtfully down the mossy paths, he came at length to the great white gate, set in the strong, painted fencing he had helped Eddy and his uncle to erect on his first summer — how long ago!

did not dream you were hereabout. Do come in and tell me all about yourself." "Why — is it, can it be my dear old friend Father King? Well, I am a little chafed, but I'll try to be as plain as I can. Thanks, your hospitality is really excessive, do you know, my dear man? I laughed the other.

The two had been warm friends at college and had corresponded for some time later at St. Dominic's. But Father White's health, never very good, had ultimately broken down and Father King had been changed from one curacy to another with such frequency that he had at length lost sight of one another.

"So you are in charge here," went on the unexpected guest as they entered the house. "What a lovely place — what was it like when you came? For your church, I must congratulate you upon it, even before I have made more than a bowing acquaintance with its exterior. Do you know," he went on, as they seated themselves at the breakfast table, "I think you'll have to do your own dear Father, that I arrived here, that is, at the station of Warra-Warra adjoining, only yesterday? I came to spend my three weeks' holiday with Father Christie, your new neighbor, a friend of mine. And do you know —"

"Father Christie will have to make up his mind to be robbed of part of your stay," interrupted Father Reginald, who had been listening intently. "I have been here before, the idea came to me that perhaps my saint would represent me, simple and unbecomingly though I am, at Eddy's ordination, for, as I remarked, there, the ways of saints are mysterious. And having heard your story, Father, I can only say again; the ways of saints are truly mysterious and — and so kind."

"As mysterious as God's love for us," agreed Father White, and his kind words were marred of Christ! — Richard Grant, in The Magnificat.

your gate, my leader stopped and turned to ward me. "His face was wonderful, wonderful. A soft light from within seemed to illumine it, and I have never seen so beautiful a smile as that with which he looked at me. I had dismissed some little time previously, out of respect — for I knew that time that this was an ordinary incident. I was certain that there must be some special service I should be privileged to render. And now I know what that service is, since you have told me the favor, as you style it, which I shall have the honor and the great pleasure to do you.

"I dropped on my knees instinctively, and he raised his hand in blessing. I kept my eyes fixed upon him, but it was so brilliantly sunny of a sudden that I seemed to become dazzled for a few seconds. When I came to again, the friar was gone — no trace of him upon that long white road that runs so straight for miles. And the next thing was your welcome, Father."

There was silence for a full minute. Then Father Reginald leaned across the table, and lifting the unfinished letter of that morning, he placed it beneath the statue of his great Father St. Dominic who meanwhile, seemed to smile upon him even more benignly than usual. Then reverently he bent and kissed the feet of his sainted patron.

"This morning, as I was thinking that unfinished letter which I intend to keep here always, the idea came to me that perhaps my saint would represent me, simple and unbecomingly though I am, at Eddy's ordination, for, as I remarked, there, the ways of saints are mysterious. And having heard your story, Father, I can only say again; the ways of saints are truly mysterious and — and so kind."

"As mysterious as God's love for us," agreed Father White, and his kind words were marred of Christ! — Richard Grant, in The Magnificat.

hope and contrition — and began the prayers of the Church for the dying. Still came the soft muttering and whispering of the good bed intervals. At last came a faintly distinct cursive and my poor penitent, with a strong effort, said quite distinctly: "Have mercy on poor Jim," and I stopped and whispered, "Pray for him when you see God," and he looked at me, I saw he understood.

It was an incredibly touching scene — a dying man praying for another dying man — one penitent, one obdurate. LIKE THE MALEFACTORS ON CALVARY

I began the solemn prayers of the Church: "Depart, Oh Christian soul in the name of God the Father; now, broken only by the death rattle. The breathing came faster, the sweat stood on his forehead; I raised my hand for the last absolution and as I said the final words the poor crushed creature gasped for his soul to his Maker. The attendants waited a few minutes then they drew the sheet over the white face. I turned to the other bed. An aged man stood beside it.

"Are you a relative?" I said. "No, my father," was the reply. "What religion does your son profess," I asked. "He isn't any that I know; we are Methodists." "Is your son baptized?" I said. "No, we don't baptize. I don't think he cares enough for any church to join it."

Just then the injured man started in his bed and tried to speak, and I saw from his eyes he was conscious. "I was in his Church," he cried, "his Church is the only religion; don't you see him there? That's what he is saying!"

LIKE THE TWO MALEFACTORS ON CALVARY

By Rev. Richard W. Alexander in the Missionary

Clang! clang! clang! and the hospital ambulance with its galloping horses dashed through the streets on a hurry call. Everywhere the sight of a horse was given them by the throngs in a few minutes that life and death hung on the swift and unobstructed path of these rushing horses. I stood at the hospital window to wait for their return, for I had heard the accident and I knew I would be needed. "What is it?" I had asked the office employee.

"Two men with crushed skulls, Father — a fall of slate where they were working. They may not be alive when the principles which move the ambulance reach them."

"Poor fellow," I murmured, "and what about their desolate homes, their wives and children — and most of all their immortal souls?"

I stood there waiting for a concourse of patients, but stertorous breathing; both were blissfully oblivious of their suffering for the time being. They had come to bring sin as a trophy to the Feet of the Divine Saviour! I looked at the man, I saw the lips growing white — I knew he was dying. I began the "Our Father," and his lips tried to frame the words. I began the act of contrition, and his agony grew visibly, but the words of prayer came in snatches from his lips. I said the "Credo," he tried to follow me. He was conscious. I raised my hand, I gave him the last absolution, and — quickly — like the last spurt of dying candle, the spark of life went out.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS PIUS X.

WRONG JOURNALISM

In the title of this General Intention we have translated the advice given in the French original, "la mauvaise presse," by "bad," in preference to "wrong," because the latter is less comprehensive than the former. "Wrong" applies to everything that is not right, whereas "bad" is wrong, rather than simply because it is badly put together. Moreover, as we are writing for Canadians, the subject becomes better suited to our local environment when it is depicted as "wrong" rather than "bad." There are few bad journals in Canada, but there are a great many wrong ones.

A bad publication — and in "journalism" we include here whatever is published in our day — is one that openly and professedly attacks the true religion or the Christian system of morals. Against such publications, whether periodical or published weekly or monthly, the case of bad novels or bad so-called histories and philosophies, the duty of all Catholics is plain. Not only should they refuse to buy or subscribe to such productions of the bad press, but they should do their best to refute the lies which they contain and to discredit the publishers of these lies. The negative side of this advice is already being carried out even by non-Catholics in the case of "yellow journalism." News items, approving or criticising his articles; above all, take an interest in them. To these practical hints we add one more: Pray for it. Pray that tolerably good but lukewarm Catholics may awake from their slumber and realize that no other work is so necessary as the propagation of Catholic ideas through the Catholic press. The least fault of the secular press is that it forgets God. We must not. We must take His view in everything and put that view along. It is always the newest and the best.

LEWIS DREEMOND, S. J.

THE DISCARDED MOTHER

THERE ARE MANY SUCH

Listen, you superior young people, to this little story from real life. There is a woman, a plain, homely old woman, without one vestige of culture or style, or anything that you consider smart, and that would make her interesting to you. Her eyes are faded, her hands are hard and work-knotted, her face is lined and wrinkled, her hair is gray and sparse, and she gathers it into a little knot, about the size of a walnut, at the back of her head.

She doesn't know how to dress or how to pick out the clothes that would best conceal her defects. She prefers to sit in the kitchen rather than in the parlour. She has no society, no small talk, and her grammar is not always beyond reproach. As the table she likes to eat with her knife, and drink her tea out of a saucer. She's just a plain, ordinary old woman. There are a few tens of thousands like her. Nothing to make you gaze at a second glance, or a second thought, unless you might happen to get a glimpse into her heart, and see there a tragedy that is as black and bitter as ingratitude and as wasted love and effort as can be made.

Years and years ago this old woman was a young woman, pretty and gay, strong of body and strong of heart, and filled with the joy of living. She was poor, and she had to make her money all of her own hands, but they both had youth and health, and industry, and ambition, and they set out working shoulder to shoulder to make their fortune.

They began hoarding in a couple of rooms, and with accurate care, and they began to buy a little property, but the young wife kept it as tight as a drum.

The mightiest weapon in the fight against bad or wrong journalism is, of course, the Catholic. Our brethren in persecuted France are awakening to this truth. Monsignor Richard, Archbishop of Auch, wrote in 1907 to the clergy of his diocese: "With how much truth have I been struck by the fact that the Catholic activity has gone somewhat astray during the last twenty years. We have wrought wonders of generosity in favor of our charitable institutions, in witness of devotedness to preserve our children from physical and moral harm; we have built beautiful churches and richly adorned them. But we have too much neglected the chief enterprise, the press, without sufficiently bearing in mind that, while we are spending our efforts and our money, the enemy, with his hidden press, either secretly dissolved under a fair outside, or openly hostile, was undermining and ruining our generous impulses. The Archbishop of Paris, Mgr. Amette, in concluding the Diocesan Congress of 1909, said that there circulated every day in Paris twelve hundred thousand bad papers as against three hundred thousand good ones, and then put to his eight thousand brethren this question, "Do you want this to continue?"

German Catholics won their battle against Bismarck, the modern Goliath. The question was asked through the Question Box: How much money do Catholics pay to have their sins forgiven? Father Welsh waited a minute and looking around the church for the smallest boy he could find, asked the quality of the paper to stand up in his place. "Little boy," said the priest, "will you answer this question for all the non-Catholics who are present, 'How much money do Catholics pay to have their sins forgiven?'" The little boy, some what nervous and embarrassed for a minute, shouted out to everyone could hear him: "You don't have to pay nothing; Confession is free, but you have to be sorry!"

Father Welsh made the boy's answer the occasion for telling his hearers, that even the smallest Catholic child knows more than the adults outside the Church, who get their information about the Church from books written by men who lie and malign the Church.

What Jimson Heard

The customer in the chair next to Jimson had just asked the barber why he didn't use CAMPANA'S ITALIAN BALM. The barber looked surprised and asked: "What for?" to which Jimson replied thickly: "Why, to keep the face soft and smooth. Up at my house my wife uses it. I use it, and come to think of it, the nurse uses it on the baby."

organs of undiluted Irish number about five hundred, three hundred of which are daily Catholic papers. This explains why the Catholics of Germany, who, before the press battle of the Kulturkampf, were not remarkably fervent, have gradually become models for the rest of the Catholic world. In the face of this achievement we may well ask what is the status of the Canadian Catholic press. Out of fourteen hundred periodicals published in Canada, only about fifty are Catholic. We have not a single Catholic daily journal in English. The combined output of Canadian Catholic monthlies is not equal to the daily output of Montreal's secular papers, nor is the combined issue of our English Catholic weeklies in the whole of Canada equal to that of the Montreal Daily Star. Thus Catholics, who are at least 41 per cent. of the entire population of Canada, are tremendously outnumbered by the secular press. During the course of our weeklies and monthlies are much more influential than the mere number of copies would indicate. They wield, in their somewhat limited sphere, what we may call a "big stick." Secular papers that would not be regarded as a flag at the secretly hated and despised papists, are tolerated therefore by the dread of exposure from a Catholic paper. But, on the whole, is our press either weekly or monthly, read by the man in the street? Is it a man-moving press, like the German, Belgian, Dutch, or French Catholic press?

There are four practical ways of helping Catholic journalism, four points insisted on by our valiant models, the German publishers. First, pay your subscription to at least one Catholic paper. Second, read it. Third, advertise in it. Fourth, write to the editor. Catholics, approving or criticising his articles; above all, take an interest in them. To these practical hints we add one more: Pray for it. Pray that tolerably good but lukewarm Catholics may awake from their slumber and realize that no other work is so necessary as the propagation of Catholic ideas through the Catholic press. The least fault of the secular press is that it forgets God. We must not. We must take His view in everything and put that view along. It is always the newest and the best.

LEWIS DREEMOND, S. J.

Obliged to Quit Business

So Dreadful Was the Suffering From Itching Piles After Twenty Years of Pile Torture Relief and Cure Came With Dr. Chase's Ointment

You take no risk and you make no experiment when you use Dr. Chase's Ointment for piles. Many doctors still cling to the idea that nothing but operations will effect a cure. But operations are expensive and dangerous, and often fail in their results. Some have been cured by Dr. Chase's Ointment after operations had failed.

Dr. Chase's Ointment truly has a wonderful record as a cure for piles and all itching skin diseases. Here is a case which was reported recently: Mr. John P. Marshall, 14 Barnes road, St. John's Nfld., writes: "For upwards of twenty years I was troubled terribly with itching piles at times so bad that I was obliged to lay up, unable to attend to business."

"I tried many treatments without benefit, until I accidentally read of Dr. Chase's Ointment, and bought at once a box and used it. I used only one box and part of a second one when I was completely cured, and have had no return of the piles. This was eighteen months ago, and, needless to say, I attribute this cure to Dr. Chase's 'Invaluable Ointment.'"

Many sufferers from piles have tried so many courses of treatments that they cannot believe that cure is possible. In order to convince the skeptical we have always willing to send a sample box free to anyone who encloses a two-cent stamp to pay postage. Dr. Chase's Ointment, 600 a box, at all dealers, or Estmanns, Bates & Co., Limited, Toronto.