

was, in his opinion, of getting Father Francis there, for Eileen's sake he must make the effort. He knew that minutes were valuable. He was glad that he had carefully overhauled his craft before putting it up for the day. He was almost breathless when he reached the aerodrome. Flinging himself against the heavy doors, he opened one complete side of the long, low-lying building just as the sun disappeared below the horizon.

There before him, gigantic in its proportions, marvelous in its power, rested the white-winged aeroplane, alert and ready. He switched on the runway so that the air-craft could glide gently out onto the field with as little jar as possible. When he could safely lose his hold, he sprang to his seat and instantly the thunder of the engine filled the air with its tumult. Imperceptibly at first, then in little bounds, the aeroplane rose. Higher and higher it soared till it gleamed like a golden cross in the sunset's afterglow.

From the window of her father's room Eileen saw, and into her eyes, that had been straining for the first glimpse of his flight, flashed a sudden hope. She dropped to her knees. "Winged spirits of God, aid him," she prayed.

Higher up than he had ever been, with the exception of his first flight that day, Lieutenant Carter bent every energy in an effort to catch the drift of the air currents. He knew full well just how far his gasoline supply had been exhausted by the previous trip, and realized fully that the success of his present undertaking depended upon the manipulation of his machine. At his present height there was no horizon, and far out into space the sun that had been invisible from the earth hung like a burnished ball. The view was panoramic. Scores of miles were before him but one.

And twenty miles without a mishap to bring to the dying colonel the last rites of his Church. He thought of Eileen, waiting—waiting. What of peace or disappointment would his return hold for her? The engine was behaving perfectly. Every fiber of its tested steel and canvas was drumming and throbbing. He looked at the tubes on the gasoline tanks and saw that everything there, too, was running smoothly. He must bend every energy now to speed. Here he was in his element. He took advantage of every favoring current of air, and mile after mile slipped by.

Soon the monastery lay before him. From his height, its quadrangular form and surrounding walls lay dark against the ground like a well executed drawing. He swung wide on his wheel and the aeroplane swept down in a little air drift. Shutting off power by degrees, he allowed the craft to flutter down in ever shortening circles, until it landed with a resistent bounding motion in the open field that swept away to the north of the monastery.

Father Francis, out in the grounds saying his Office, saw the huge bird-like machine slipping down the sky and knew the man that steered it was Lieutenant Carter. He hurried toward the gate to admit him. The few moments spent in reaching the gate were filled with the tremulous hope that perhaps faith had come to Carter, as he had promised him, in the name of St. Paul, it would.

But the lieutenant's first words dashed that hope and explained the cause of his second visit that day. "Colonel Hammond is dying, Father Francis. He has called for you, and I have come to take you to him."

"Colonel Hammond dying!" cried the priest. "Impossible! What has happened to him?"

"A stroke of some kind. It took him very suddenly."

"My poor old friend! And he was apparently so strong and hearty!" exclaimed Father Francis slowly and sorrowfully. Then, pulling himself together with a start: "I'll be with you in a minute, my son."

"But, Father," called the lieutenant after the priest's retreating form, "I have only my aeroplane. You know the bridge is down."

"So I hear. It is well you brought your aeroplane. We shall lose less time," answered Father Francis without stopping.

Here quite unconsciously, Father Francis shot the first ray of faith into the heart of Lieutenant Carter. The airman had approached fearfully, prepared to argue with and convince an old man that the means of travel he offered him was safe; that no harm could come to him if he trusted himself to his care. But there was no need for his arguments. He found a soldier in the service of his Master, a man willing to brave anything, even the untried element of the air, unquestioningly in the performance of his duty, one as certain of his enlistment in a heavenly service as he, Wynton Carter, was of his in an earthly one. Self-arguments raced through his mind until, when Father Francis joined him with that contemplative look of the priest who carries the Victim, he felt a curious desire to cry out, "I believe in you and your mission. I believe in the faith you profess."

In all his striving after Eileen's religion he had never experienced such a sensation. Involuntarily his heart framed an earnest prayer that it would last, that there would be no fading of the glow of the enthusiastic feeling. Mechanically, he pointed to the passenger's seat in the aeroplane and, silently, Father Francis took it.

Carter climbed to his place, and after a series of noises the craft rose on an easy incline. Father Francis felt his whole being thrill with com-

plex emotions as he mounted the air with the God of the four winds on his bosom. Years and human frailty fell away from him. He felt no fear, only exultation and ecstasy. His heart glowed like a seraphim's beneath the golden pylon, and his thoughts soared aloft into celestial regions. Carrying the Blessed Sacrament to the sick or dying had always been to him the duty that brought him closest to God and to humanity. That God should call into service the latest invention and triumph of man to discharge so sacred a duty emphasized for him this nearness, and his Magnificat rose, heartily and humbly.

Did the frail craft know it carried its God that it behaved so beautifully, or was it upborne by angel wings? Seemingly it rode only favorable currents of air, solid as marble columns to its weight. There were no lurches, no irregularity of action on the part of the engine to draw the priest's thoughts from things holy to danger and self.

The sky was darkening perceptibly as they neared the fort. In its vast depths the first star was gleaming and flashing. Carter was gratified to think that he had made the trip exactly as he had calculated. They would reach the fort before night fell. He coaxed more speed from the high powered, air-cooled engine and gave expert attention to the manipulation of his machine. Five miles sped into eternity in as many minutes, and soon the lights of the fort sprang into view. He swooped downward and headed low over the shimmering spot. The sound of the swollen, rushing waters came up the wind, and across it struck the sharp, arresting notes of the bugle.

At the sound, Father Francis started and spoke for the first time during the trip. "God grant we shall be in time," he said.

"Unless the attack was very severe we should be. We have been scarcely twenty minutes returning," replied the lieutenant.

"Twenty minutes!" exclaimed the priest. "It seems only five. Verily man has wings."

Carter made no further comment. He was busy trying to analyze the new and strange sensations that had beset him at the start of this journey with Father Francis, and were with him still. Was this faith?—faith strong enough to lead him all the way—this feeling of a Presence other than the priest's on a trip through the air—this sudden stirring of belief in the divinity of the priest's mission?

The lights of the fort were very near now. Carter made a wide circle and brought the aeroplane closer to earth. Carefully he sought a drift of air down which to glide. He shut off his power at the proper moment and, gently circling, flutered down to earth, landing with his precious freight within fifty feet of the aerodrome just as darkness was clasping the earth. He left the aeroplane standing and hurried with Father Francis across the parade ground. It took long, athletic strides to keep up with the priest, so anxious was he to reach the bedside of the dying man.

As they walked, Carter thought of the soldier toward whom they were hastening. His deeds were a proud nation's boast. Men considered it an honor to serve under him. He was intellectually great as he was morally and physically brave, yet his faith in his Church and the efficacy of its sacraments was as simple and trusting as a child's. More than once these facts had appealed significantly to Carter. To night they thundered the awakening of a slumbering faith.

It was quite dark as they crossed the colonel's yard and ran up the steps. No one seemed to be downstairs, and they gathered from this that the colonel still lived. When they entered the sick room, a little gasp of joy escaped Eileen and a look of unutterable relief and peace crossed her features. Her father caught the look and his eyes dark with the last shadow, followed the direction of her glance. Into them came a swift radiance as they fell on Father Francis.

At the sight, Wynton Carter felt crumble down in some rude cavern within the fabric of his self-sufficiency, all his long hesitation and foolish doubts. They fell never to rise again, struck down like St. Paul before a flash of light from heaven. Something higher, grander, holier came to settle itself on the riven foundations. A holy elation grew in him, suddenly, without knowledge, without conscious volition, he found his whole being thrilled with an ecstasy of prayer—the prayer of a man who had found the faith.

After a few moments, when they entered the room for the administration of Holy Communion, he no longer stood apart, but fell on his knees and worshipped the Incarnation continued among men with glowing faith and love.

For some moments there was stillness. Bravely Eileen held back the tears for fear of disturbing her father's thanksgiving. Carter, acutely conscious of her struggle, longed to take her in his arms and comfort her.

Presently the dying man reached out his free hand and caught his daughter's. His gaze was dimming now, but there was everlasting love for her in its waning light. She laid her young cheek against his hand and wept silently. Across her smothered sob, Father Francis' firm low voice rose in the prayer for the dying.

Eileen's eyes were wet as she listened to Wynton Carter's recital of

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how the gift for which they had prayed had come to him. With her father's last breath, it seemed to Eileen as though her world had gone to pieces. But now it was being rebuilt—founded with faith, walled with hope and topped with love. Peace was in her eyes, and the vision of fair to-morrows innumerable, as Carter drew her to her feet and with his arm about her he led her out into the beauty and stillness of the night.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL WHAT SOME NON-CATHOLICS HAVE SAID OF IT

By Rev. Bernard O'Reilly, in Extension Magazine. That there may be no doubt of the fairness of Catholic objection to the Public School system, we submit the opinions of a few non-Catholic authorities. They are genuine friends of American institutions, and one may well believe they would not indulge in strong language were there not sufficient cause.

Dean Jones, of Yale College in his annual report to President Hadley, makes caustic complaint of the lack of preparation shown by candidates seeking to enter Yale, more especially on the part of those coming from Public Schools. The inferiority of the present High School training is emphasized in a statement by the statistical study of the scholarship of the schools which entered Yale last fall. He shows how in the large class then beginning Yale's course, only 128 entered without conditions, while, as he expresses it, "220 freshmen limped into college under conditions."

The testimony is not from one class of men, nor from one section. It is a general complaint. Dr. Eliot, President Emeritus of Harvard, tells us that "Public schools of Boston are not equal to what they were fifty years ago." Charles Stewart, ex-School Commissioner of Ohio, recently said that our popular education is superficial and does not develop mind or character. As he puts it, "our modern educational methods tend to make ware houses of the children's minds rather than factories; they accumulate but do not produce." The Educational Review gives what it terms a picture of "the deplorable condition of the Public Schools of St. Paul." The board of education of Chicago, after a study of the conditions there, says, "the fault is with the system in which the teachers were instructed and in which they are instructing others."

A STATUE WITH A HISTORY

On the sunset side of the City of Paris sits a dusky old church dear to archaeologists, yet more dear to the pious folk that love to come and kneel round its altars. For St. Germain-des-Prés holds a real treasure—a statue of the Madonna with centuries of history and pious association wreathed around it. Even the casual visitor strolling through that ancient pile and knowing nothing of its wonderful story, must be struck by the sweet old image—the repose of the mother love of our Lady, and the divine mysteriousness of the Child, with His right arm thrown about her neck and holding a little bird tenderly in His left hand.

No age but the Middle Ages could have wrought so devotional a statue, and to the thirteenth century we must go for the origin of this one. At that time the Abbey of St. Denis, near Paris, being in need of a statue for the new altar of its Lady Chapel, the Princess Blanche de France, daughter of St. Louis sought out a skillful artist—whose name, alas! is not so immortal as his work—to chisel in stone a statue of our Lady and the Divine Child. But she longed also to express the fealty which the House of France ever held toward the Queen of Heaven. In a moment of inspiration she commanded that the features of the saintly Queen Blanche should stand for the semblance of Our Lady, and that the Divine Child should wear the features of the son of Blanche, St. Louis whose picture as an infant was happily preserved. Thus, while rearing a shrine to Our Lord and His Mother, she perpetuated in the holiest and tenderest way the memory of another son and mother whose names will ever be as a benediction upon France.

During the five centuries that followed the statue was in great veneration, and amid all the vicissitudes of war it alone escaped hurt. But when the fury of the French Revolution burst forth, it was wrenched from its pedestal and carried as so much stone to the Musée Français. There it remained for ten years, entirely forgotten amidst the desecrated spoils of many churches.

In 1808 the altars of St. Germain-des-Prés were again prepared for the worship of God: but the sacred ves-

els and vestments had been stolen, and the whole Church was deplorably naked of ornament. However, the venerable Abbe Lavi, who had once been preacher to the royal court, and Vicar General of Aix, knew where the treasures of the Church had gone, and demanded leave to choose from the ruins in the Musée Français a suitable statue of Christ's Mother. His eye was at once caught by the beauty of the statue stolen from the Abbey of St. Denis; and, though he knew nothing of its history, he lost no time in securing it.

Once restored to honor in a Parisian church, the story of the statue could not long be hidden, and accounts of the many vicissitudes it had undergone were published in the various journals. The canons of St. Denis sent a deputation to reclaim it; but no eloquence or persuasion could be equal to such an occasion. The parishioners of St. Germain des-Prés were already so much attached to the beautiful Madonna that they protested strongly against its removal; however, the canons were allowed to make a plaster cast of the Madonna of St. Blanche; and this may still be seen, where the original stood so long, in the Lady Chapel of the Abbey St. Denis.

Thus in a church which few travelers ever visit stands a statue rendered dear by centuries of devotion, and doubly interesting to French Catholics because it perpetuates the features as well as the remembrance of two great saints of their country.—The Ave Maria.

LEGEND OF TRUE CROSS

Lot had escaped from Sodom when there appeared to him an angel holding three cypress cuttings in his hand. "Plant these," said the angel; "and if they live and grow, your great sin shall be pardoned. If they die, you shall be punished as you deserve. The water with which you refresh them must be from the River Jordan and must be brought fresh each day."

Here was a hard task, but Lot did not question its justice. Every morning he made a journey to the sacred river, bringing back the water for his precious trees, which grew and flourished amazingly.

One morning, as he was returning to Hebron, a beggar met him by the roadside and asked for a drink of water. "I can give him a little," mused Lot, "and then have enough for my trees."

But when the beggar's thirst was quenched, there appeared another, and yet another, until the water was gone. Then Lot threw himself down and groined his face in the sand and wept. When at length he raised his head, an angel stood near him.

"Why do you weep?" he asked. And Lot told him. "Be not alarmed," answered the heavenly visitor. "Obedience is acceptable in the sight of God, but charity is even more so. You served Him in succoring His poor. Henceforth, as your reward, the trees shall thrive without water. Your long penance is over."

Thus it came about that the cypress trees grew without the aid of Lot. And when one of them was old and mighty, the Cross of Christ was made from it; that He, the legend runs, "Who died for His love of mankind, might suffer on the Tree which was blessed by the grace of charity."—Ave Maria.

ENGLISH CATHOLIC KING

ETHELBERT OF ENGLAND WAS CONVERTED BY SAINT AUGUSTINE

The first Christian king of England was Ethelbert, who was baptized June 2, 597. Ethelbert was converted to the new faith by St. Augustine, the Apostle of England, who was appointed by St. Gregory the Great as chief of the missionaries whom he dispatched to England. Augustine and his companions had heard much of the barbarism and ferocity of the pagan English, and it was in fear and trembling that they set foot on English soil at Ebsfleet, between Sandwich and Ramsgate. They were agreeably disappointed for they were given a cordial reception by the monarch and his subjects. Ethelbert, the Saxon king of Kent, and his thanes met St. Augustine under a great oak at Minster, and there the missionary explained to the monarch the principles of the religion of Jesus. The king was soon convinced and was baptized. Many of his people soon followed his example, and on the ensuing Christmas day not less than ten thousand converts were baptized in the waters of the Swale, at the mouth of the Medway.—St. Paul Bulletin.

MEDIAEVALISM

Some people, with more gullibility than wit, speak of Mediaevalism as representing the standpoint of the Catholic Church against Modernism. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Catholic Church is at once most conservative and most progressive—conservative in regard to the essentials of faith and in this regard she comes into conflict with so-called Modernism; progressive in every other respect and thereby she schemes the charge of Mediaevalism. The Middle Ages can boast of many noble sculptures, and St. Thomas Aquinas was a deep and comprehensive thinker furnishing a key to the solution of many difficulties that lay then hidden in the bosom of the

future. But he had his limitations as well as the age in which he lived: in many respects the Church in her onward march of progress has left them behind. But in one thing she remains stationary, and will remain stationary to the end of time, i. e., in regard to the immutability of the articles of faith—and in this regard she is the enemy and counterpart of so-called Modernism.—The Guardian.

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