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The True

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Witness

Vol. LIX., No. 16

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1909

PRICE, FIVE CENTS

THE STAGE NUN HEROINE.

VERY POOR IMITATION.

The Nun of the Stage, as of the Novel, is Unreal.

(By Augustin McNally, author of "The Catholic Centennial as a Newspaper Man Saw It" and "Plain Facts About the Stage.")
Celibacy, the involubility of the confessional, the despair of the immersed nun, and that more romantic phase of cloistered joy, namely, the supposititious instance of a professed religious suddenly awakening to the material fact that she has mistaken her vocation have been favorite topics of dramatists of all countries. Expert writers for the stage, men of quick wit and brilliant artifice, have succeeded, now and again, in building a tolerably interesting drama from an incident indirectly associated with a penitent's remorse or real or affected. The most modern instance is Mr. Louisa's N. Parker's artful play of "The Cardinal"—but none, not even the brilliant dramatists of France in the day of Corneille and Racine, have achieved permanent victory with the love-sick, and consequently unreal, nun as the central figure of a theatrical portrait. Long after the Roman empire was dissolved, theatrical draughtsmen were attracted by the halo of the vestal virgins, and during the period succeeding the Reformation (1548) those pens that had built sacred drama for the famous French society, Confrerie de la Passion, turned to the convent for their heroines. Though a very few of these representations were effected with dignity and reverence, the greater number were designed with a view to propagating the impudent cry of the boulevards that animal felicity laughs at locksmiths and convent walls. Only the most fragmentary allusions are made to them, in dramatic literature and he is a daring manager indeed who attempts to offer a modern audience a play with a professed nun as the central figure.

POOR ADAPTATION.

Such an attempt was made last week at Daly's Theater by a reputable management, and while it was presented with dignity and artistic finish as far as the acting of it was concerned, it proved to be the most unconvincing play of the autumnal season, excepting only Mr. Zangwill's dream of an amalgamation of the clans set forth in "The Melting Pot." "The White Sister" at Daly's is by no means the entertaining bit of fiction by Marion Crawford. It is poor adaptation, and in the process of adapting the fine portrait reverently traced by the dead novelist has been overlooked. But Mr. Crawford's nuns are never life-like, never real. They are coy lapwings in the wrong nest. This one is the most unreal of all, and the dramatization has accentuated the fiction. The result is a forlorn maid, attired in the habit of a white nun, and a brilliant theological discourse between a chivalrous young fellow and a learned prelate of episcopal dignity called Saracinesca. The officer—the "story rumeth thus"—when the action of the play begins, is supposed to have been killed in an engagement.

MOTIVE OF SACRIFICE.

To drown her sorrow at his departure his promised bride "takes the veil," and—most excellent compassion upon herself—requests to be known as Sister Giovanna, the feminine form of her dead lover's name. With that name and the eternal motif that was behind it she was certain to make rapid and permanent progress in the way of perfection. Why not? She had a lover in heaven, didn't give a continental for anybody upon the face of the earth; she had sacrificed everything "ad maiorem Dei gloriam." You really pity this white-robed maid when you have heard of her great courage, her contempt of the earth and its fireworks, for you know that what she thinks courage and what her friends believe to be a sacrificial act, is nothing more than the petulance of a good-looking female bereft of her handsome and pledged husband. Of course, she would forget and she would deny herself the natural curiosity of a worldly young woman. It would never enter her mind to doubt the story of Giovanna's death—not she! A garrulous old maid walked into the reception room of the hospital to which she was attached and calmly hinted that Giovanna might still be alive. And here, Giovanna says to herself, I should be brave. I should still forget. The next moment Giovanna entered the room, and the lovely Giovanna was seized with a general paralysis of her five senses. The momentary master of the novices. He announced that the pair should have an amicable understanding, or, as Giovanna plaintively put

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JESUITS OPEN MEDICAL COLLEGE.

ALWAYS IN THE VANGUARD.

Splendid Outlook For Catholic Students.

It has long been the intention of the Jesuits to establish a university complete in every department. The beginning was made last year with the law department known as the Lincoln Law School; many young men as soon as the announcement was known left other institutions of the city and went to the Lincoln Law School to be under the direction of the Jesuits. But last week another move forward was made when the completion of the affiliation with the Illinois Medical College was agreed upon and that institution became the medical department of Saint Ignatius College. Father Burrows as president of St. Ignatius will appoint the professors and dictate the policy of the school. Thousands of students flock to Chicago every year to study medicine but hitherto they have had no college where their faith and morals would be safeguarded. In opening this new department the Jesuits will accomplish the double purpose of giving the Catholic student a thorough course in medicine and at the same time look after his spiritual direction.

DEAN IS EMINENT PRACTITIONER.

The school is under the management of Dr. J. F. Burkholder, who is known in the profession as not only a man of great administrative ability but is the author of a work on the brain which has been highly praised in a recent review by Prof. Henry H. Donaldson of the Neurological Laboratory of the University of Chicago. The Illinois Medical was recently officially examined at the request of Dr. Burkholder by the Association of American Medical Colleges and was pronounced as thoroughly equipped and prepared to do the work in most advanced methods. Young Catholic men throughout the middle west, who are seeking an education in medicine can enter this college with the absolute assurance that they can enjoy all the advantages of larger colleges and at the same time be safeguarded in their religious belief, and that at the end of their professional studies they will be better equipped for their life work than if they had attended any other medical college in the city of Chicago. Last year every one of the eighteen graduates of the school passed the rigid state examination. No better proof can be given of the efficiency of the school.

Mission in the Eastern Townships.

Danville, Oct. 11, 1909.—Rev. Fathers Leclerc and Garant, C.S.S.R., of Hochelaga, and Rev. Father Holland, C.S.S.R., of St. Ann's Church, Montreal, have just finished a most successful mission in our village. There are about thirteen hundred Catholic families in the parish, forty of which are English-speaking. It was for the latter that Father Holland spent a week in our midst giving three sermons a day and going on Sunday afternoon after closing the mission to Asbestos, the zealous parish priest not wishing to leave his four English families without their share of what the missionaries were willing to do. The church at Asbestos was not large enough to contain all the parishioners, so that the women, numbering over five hundred, listened to the inspiring words of the Redeemerists last week, and the men are crowding the sacred edifice this week at the evening services. About two hundred men, all French-Canadians, occupy the pews, at the 4.45 Mass and about three hundred assist at the 8 o'clock Mass every morning. Thirty-nine men took the pledge of temperance for one year, and as many boys took it for life at the close of Father Holland's sermon on Sunday afternoon, after which the farewell discourse was given, and the missionaries blessing followed by the Papal benediction imparted to the kneeling worshippers. A solemn Te Deum, followed by the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament brought the delightful season to a close.

We hope to see the Fathers again next year in Danville, when the population will have increased by the addition of a new chair factory, the construction of which has just commenced. Our village has just the blessing of a Brother's school, a convent, and a zealous pastor who spares no pains to please his people and lead them to God. A brass band has just been started in the village. It counts forty performers, and before long they expect to give a good account of themselves.

RELIGION OPENLY ATTACKED.

MAGAZINES BELITTLE FAITH.

These Popular Journals Should be Rebuked by Catholics.

One of the biggest money-making enterprises in America to-day is the popular magazine, says the Catholic Universe. Our Catholic people are doing their share to support it, and, as usual, get little recognition in return. A recent venture, taking a new lease of prosperity, states its policy as follows: "People are interested in two things—their job and release from the weight of life through pleasure and entertainment. This embraces nearly all the wholesome and proper things for men and women." This is fair warning to Catholic parents who take this magazine into their homes that its appeal is strictly worldly, leaving God and His interests entirely out of consideration.

Most of the popular magazines follow this policy, but none of them stops with it. The one quoted above the American Magazine, of New York, has during the past year been practically offensive in two series of articles, one by Professor Thomas of the University of Chicago on "Woman," and the other by Ray Stannard Baker on the "Spiritual Unrest."

THE AUTHOR PRESUMES.

In his October contribution Mr. Baker says: "There is something infinitely pathetic in the effort of the old Jews to maintain their religion in New York, and in less exaggerated form one may see the old Catholics, Methodists and Roman Catholics struggling desperately to preserve all the old conditions and customs of their churches." Mr. Baker nowhere gives name or date or authority for his presumption that the Catholic Church is in the same boat with the other religions. Altogether he has mentioned in the course of his investigation having visited only two Catholic churches, and he testifies that both of them were crowded. But he seems to find a special delight in throwing the name "Roman Catholic" into his accounts of the desperate straits of Jews and Protestants and insinuating in a general way that the Catholic Church is sharing all their ills of decay.

For instance: "A few Jewish congregations in New York have bought out and rearranged (as synagogues) abandoned Protestant or Roman Catholic churches." We have not the data at hand to denounce this with the short and ugly word, but we would want to see sworn proofs before believing it of even one Catholic church in New York City.

SHAMELESS MISREPRESENTATION.

Again he says: "A world-wide liberalism is shaking ancient institutions—old walls are everywhere tottering." The Roman Catholic has his modernist, the Protestant his higher critic and the Jew his reform movement." Mr. Baker likes this statement so well that he publishes it twice, in both the October and September numbers of the same magazine. It is the greatest misrepresentation. The October "Missionary," published by the Apostolic Mission House, says of it: "To class modernism among Catholics with higher criticism among Protestants and the reform movement among the Jews is about as fair and accurate as to class the plague of San Francisco in 1909, where a few rats were infected, with the Black Death of London in 1348, where nine out of every ten men died."

Catholics have too much at stake to let this sort of thing go unrebuked. Pastors and parents must safeguard the mind of impressionable youth, and every Catholic is obliged to "make straight the way of the Lord" for non-Catholics who are hungering after the divine life. Loyalty to the Church and the true missionary spirit alike call for action. William Randolph Hearst appears to have been terribly upset on returning from Europe lately to find that his editor, Brisbane, had roused the Catholics of New York by attacks on the Church, and is now exerting himself to placate Catholic opinion. Similar good results might be expected if every reader of this wrote to the American Magazine demanding for Ray Stannard Baker's detraction of the Church either proof or retraction.

A unique ceremony took place at Cork, on Sept. 10, when the Golden Jubilee of two brothers in the Catholic priesthood was honored by a presentation from the Bishop and priests of the diocese to the Right Rev. Monsignor Shinkwin, Dean of Cork, and Very Rev. Canon Shinkwin, P.F. Bandon.

AGAINST CO-EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

IS IT DESIRABLE?

Strain is too Great, Therefore Children Become Unfit.

"An ex-Pupil" has replied to a recent article by Anglican Canon Rawnsley in The Morning Leader on the co-education of boys and girls with the following arguments: Amidst all the controversy that has recently raged round the question of co-education, one is constrained to ask if any of those so blandly theorizing about the system and generalizing as to the good work done by mixed schools had ever known anyone who received their education at one. Only those essential unpts in the scheme—as scholars, are qualified to speak of its blessings. So that we must look to the rising generation to either laud co-education as a thing desirable above all other school systems or sound its death knell. There are many struggling in the world to-day who would willingly raise their voices at its last obsequies—so many, one may venture to say, that the hymn of praise sung by the advocates of co-education would not be heard above the din. Co-education spells half-education to the boy impressed into the system. The wisecracks of the present may easily assert that woman is man's equal in brain power up to a certain age, and may point a conclusive finger at a list of clever girls and women who have beaten men at their own game. All this and much more theorizing of a like nature, however, proves nothing. Unfortunately, it is a corner-stone in the founder's yard, and hence the boys suffer. Girls are most certainly not equal to boys of the same age in mental strength or mental activity, and because of a few exceptions which merely prove the rule, they are forced to run in double harness with those who are far stronger. As a consequence, both boys and girls suffer. It is the pace that kills—in co-education in a double sense. Girls suffer because the pace is too fast; boys because it is too slow.

PACE TOO FAST FOR GIRLS.

Mathematics, a subject that the average middle-class boy is generally very keen about, is a hopeless stumbling block to most girls; and the dullard amongst the boys can laugh with assurance and relief at the absurd, yet pitiful, attempts of the weaker sex to cross the pons asinorum, or to master the subtleties of the Rule of Three. The master, seeing only a pupil who must be brought up to the standard required by an inexorable Board, and knowing nothing of the intricate mechanism of nerves within the quivering frame before him, rails at the stupidity of the girl unable to understand so quickly a maxim that the boys behind her have mastered and grown weary of. Sometimes the struggle ends, as I have known it end, not once or twice, but many times, in a passionate fit of weeping. The more brutal among the lads have hugged themselves in silent joy at the scene, while the girl, degraded and humiliated before all, blindly gropes for her seat—to be comforted by her female friends as best she may. The same story can be told with truth of the whole curriculum of subjects "taught" under the system. The lessons with the girls were the joy of the idlers and the horror of the serious-minded. To get through a lesson without the order "pens down," and the consequent wearying explanations of the girl in fault, was rare indeed. If it occurred, the cause would probably be found in the elementary nature of the work upon which—for the girls' benefit—we are engaged. To be kept back in this manner is a serious thing for those who have only their brains, backed by their education, to depend upon for their existence. The world is not such an easy place that anyone can afford to enter it in a state of unpreparedness.

NERVES SHATTERED BY STRAIN.

Canon Rawnsley, in his exposition of the system, declares that girls easily keep pace with boys. The answer lies in the fact that the boys meet their opponents on a lower plane. Since the girls cannot ascend, the boys must remain at their level, overjoyed (or perhaps disheartened) at the little exertion required in order to keep pace with them. The mixed-school boy spends most of his time in revision. When he has nothing better to do he gets amusement out of the efforts of the girl to do his work. Despite the assurance that the "bread-and-butter" belongs to a by-gone generation, one does not care to feel that the female generation to come will be haled as one to whom sentiment

UNDENOMINATION-AL INSTRUCTION.

CHANGES IN TEXT BOOKS.

All Reference to God and Religion Expurgated.

A writer in the London Tablet says: A fortnight ago we called attention to the increasing dilution of what is known as undenominational instruction. That is already in evidence here in England, but it does not yet afford us the curiosities which emerge from the straitened zeal for neutrality in France. In that country school books are being diligently expurgated, professedly in the interests of the non-Christian child, but really, of course, in the hope of de-Christianizing the youth of the nation. Some of the absurdities which have been perpetrated in this regard have been gathered together in an article in the Correspondant and these go to show with what grotesque thoroughness the savage anti-clericalism of the youth of the nation. Some of the absurdities which have been perpetrated in this regard have been gathered together in an article in the Correspondant and these go to show with what grotesque thoroughness the savage anti-clericalism of the youth of the nation. Some of the absurdities which have been perpetrated in this regard have been gathered together in an article in the Correspondant and these go to show with what grotesque thoroughness the savage anti-clericalism of the youth of the nation.

NO GOD FOR MODERN FRANCE.

Even the poets are not spared from this kind of expurgation. Thus a selection of passages from Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, and even Voltaire was excluded by the same censorship, evidently because these authors were sufficiently retrograde to retain in their vocabulary the expressions, altar, prayer and God. English readers will learn with amazement that the writings of Voltaire are considered to be too deeply infected with the views of religion for the sensibilities of the children of France. Commenting upon this a writer in The Church Times said: "It would be psychologically valuable to know how these proceedings strike the generality of the French people. They seem to indicate a fanaticism as repulsive as any superstition; a waste of ingenuity better exercised in composing something new rather than patching what is old; also a hazy conception of fair and open teaching hopelessly at variance with the theory of the brotherhood of man. The sight of clever Frenchmen engaged in a futile attempt to place literature on the Index for containing references to religion is really more ludicrous than painful."

and feminine instincts will not appeal. It is the little touches of hysterical femininity and sentiment that, after all, makes the womanly woman; and growing girls are bundles of nerves quivering with feminine emotions. It is such subtleties that give the lie to the statement that what is true about the few is true about the many. A few clever women have certainly kept pace with the men, but this argues nothing in regard to the other thousands of the sex. And it is a pity that mothers send these tender little plants to be roughened by the necessity for "man." At a time when the future mothers of a nation are at that fearfully anxious stage between the maiden and the woman, while they are straining their physical and mental powers

AMERICAN FRANCISCAN IN CHINA.

MISSIONARY'S PATHETIC TALE.

Dreadful March Through Swamp on Way to Post.

A tale of hardship is told by Rev. Frederick Murphy, an American his-life to missions in Central China, in his letters to friends in Boston. A few months ago he left for his work, and on the land journey nearly died at one time from the effects of the strain of marching in the swamps and from the effects of the sun and elements.

Father Murphy was born in Canton, Mass., about twenty-eight years ago. At the age of fifteen he left Boston and went to Washington, and after finishing his classical studies there he joined the order of St. Francis in St. Louis, Mo.

THIRTY DAYS' TRAMP.

In a letter dated at Lao Ho Kau, China, August 2, Father Murphy says: "We reached here July 29, after a trip that nearly put me in my grave. For thirty days we tramped through the jungles and over the mountains of central China. There are no railroads here, nor even roads or streets. For forty hours steady we trudged along in a blinding rain. Wading through the great fever swamps up to our waists in water, jumping ditches, swimming rivers, sleeping on the hillsides or in the jungle was the order of the day. The rainy season was at its worst, the entire province was flooded, crops destroyed, famine threatened us, and the natives were hostile. They did their best to send us to the bottom while we were crossing the Yun River. We barely escaped with our lives. All our baggage, such as it was, was lost.

"I had not tasted food for sixteen days, except the wine and water at Mass. After days of travel, either in the rain or in the broiling sun of the tropics, I was worn out. On July 3 I was down with a terrible fever. No food, no medicine, no assistance of any kind was to be had. On July 4 my companions thought I would die. It seemed impossible that I could live longer. About 1.30 in the morning I received the blessing of my good Bishop, and in holy resignation offered up my life for the conversion of the people.

HORRIFYING SITUATION.

"All that day I lay on the ground in a miserable mud hut, a pig grunting and snorting about my head. Vermin were eating my body and filth was on all sides of me, and the air was pestiferous. "I was dragged where I now am. We do not need to go back to the days of the apostles for real missionary journeys—ours will compare with any of them, and the worst I am not telling you. The Bishop, who is a veteran in the mission field, declared it was the roughest journey he had ever made. For a Bostonian, in the twentieth century, it seems almost like a dream. "I am rector of a college and secondary here. Our buildings, of course, are but rough mud huts, yet what we lack in buildings we try to make up in teaching and scholarship. I teach, although I ought to be in bed, English, German, French and Italian, and we have the proud distinction of having the first and only college in China where all these languages are taught.

"The country is in the most primitive condition. My city here is one of the great cities of the empire in regard to the antiquity and nobility of its people, and is very interesting.

beyond reasonable limits at home work and day study, is it right that they should be humiliated in front of a class of boys—boys certainly of their own age, but much younger in mind! The advocates of the system in generalizing as they do are unconsciously cruel to a future motherhood. It is unfortunate that they cannot see the effects of their handiwork and wreck the scheme as at present constituted, before we have a nation of unfit boys and unwomanly girls.