

## Our Boys And Girls.

HELEN'S VOCATION. — "Papa, I want to be a nun."

The speaker, a bright, fair-haired girl of more than common beauty, threw herself on the hearthrug at her father's feet and laid her head on his knee. The curtains were drawn and the lamps lighted in the cosy little drawing room, and Squire Warden had settled for a comfortable chat with his favorite child his darling Helen.

"Now, Helen," he said, laughing and derisive, "what new fad have you got in your whimsical little pate? You a nun! why you are never still five minutes together — you're too fond of pleasure. You a nun," and again he laughed. A keen observer would have detected a note of anxiety in voice and laugh.

"Come, papa, be serious," said Helen as without looking up she caught his hand and placed it on her head. "I can't talk much about these things, they lie too deeply for words. But, indeed, I feel I must be a nun, and, if you and Bella will spare me, I should like to go soon."

"My dear child!" said he, surprised. "You who only last night was the belle of the ball, the cynosure of all eyes, dancing like a fairy, flirting like a —"

"No, papa, not that," interrupted Helen earnestly. "Well, it looked remarkably like it," said her father testily. "Why everyone has coupled Sir John and you together for the last six weeks. Yesterday I was afraid if you were not really engaged."

The girl's face became one glorious glow as a certain scene of yesterday came before her — a kind voice pleading for her hand, her one apparent cruel answer. Oh! she was right in ending it and declaring her position.

"Sir John is very, very good, but I never intended to marry him. I told him so last night."

"Then you refused him?" said her father.

"Yes, papa, we were never anything but good friends."

"Rubbish, friends indeed!" said her father angrily. For the moment he could not control himself. Here was his silly whimsical Helen throwing away the best chance a girl ever had. Sir John, a good Catholic — young, well bred, handsome — what could girl want more? Then more calmly, "My dear Nell, you are only a child, and I am sure Sir John will forgive your inconsistent conduct. You have encouraged him in every possible way, and you would not wish me to consider my little girl a flirt. Not only I, but all who have seen you together. As to your religious vocation, believe me, my child, it is but a whim, born of a moment, and will soon pass away."

Helen rose and faced her father. "No, papa, this vocation is no whim of a moment. I made the resolution to offer myself to God on my First Communion day, and though I have not talked about it, the resolution has increased with my years. As to Sir John, I never encouraged him, and he is too good and kind to think so for one moment."

Her father looked at her — was this little whimsical Helen, this self-reliant, determined woman of tonight. Pshaw! the mood would not last. He was silent for some moments. Helen knew he was displeased. "And where do you want to go — what order? Have you formed any plans — consulted anyone?" said he after a time.

She hesitated a moment. "Father Plevas has known of it for some years," she said faintly. "I want to join the Poor Clares, if they will have me."

"No, indeed, you shall not," he almost shouted. "An active order would be bad enough, but a contemplative! You, to hide yourself behind a grille — bury yourself. No, it is too much," he jumped to his feet. "Put the fad from you, Helen — for you shall never be a Poor Clare."

She burst into tears. "It is no fad, papa dear, but a desire strong as life itself. Oh! you must let me try," she replied.

He put his arm round her. "Listen, Nell. I am a good Catholic, I hope, and I reverse all the good nuns to whatsoever order they belong. But I don't believe in your vocation to a contemplative life one bit, and I shall never give my consent. Remember I am your father and next to God you owe me obedience."

"Next to God," whispered Helen, tearfully. "Let me hear no more of this now, but dry your eyes and be my smiling little Nell once more. I don't want you to marry Sir John if you do not love him, but I do want you to be a bright, merry

hearted girl. Leave Poor Clares and the rest to the sorrowful ones of the earth — of whom there are enough and to spare — and do you content yourself with your innocent amusements and the love of Bella and myself, until such time as you meet some good man and true, who will be your — what do your romanticists style it — smiling a little, 'affinity' isn't it? You have been reading too many lives of the saints lately and they have muddled your brain. Now go, my child, and get to bed early, a good sleep will benefit you." Kissing her "good-night," Squire Warden led her to the door.

"All a fad, a childish whim, I must try to divert her mind — yet if there should be anything in it — stuff and nonsense! Poor Clares indeed — that, in itself, shows she has no vocation. Why, she'd be dead in six months — she so full of life and spirits." Tears came into the strong man's eyes. "Oh God! anything but that — a living grave. If only her mother were here. Bella has little or no authority over her. My winsome little Nell," and he sat down and covered his face with his hands.

Helen in the meantime ran up to her bedroom, and throwing herself at the foot of the little altar, was praying and crying in turns. "God keep me true to Thee," she prayed, "lest I betray the trust Thou hast given me, keep me true to Thee." But was it a fad as her father had said. Then what was a religious vocation! He said she was a child and owed him her obedience — so she did, but was not always God first? Ah, but had God really called her or was it merely a whim? Oh no, no, this was no whim, this resolution that had grown with her growth and strengthened with her strength. So she prayed on, "God keep me true to Thee — and make my way clear."

"Ready, Helen?"

"Yes, papa," Helen gathered up gloves and driving whip, ran down stairs, and joined her father at the hall door. A dainty little figure she looked in her dark blue riding habit, and tight-fitting hat, under which her wavy masses of golden hair glistened and shone in the sun. Her father looked at her admiringly. He thought her a little pale — due most likely to last night's emotional moments, but this was an improvement rather than otherwise.

"Watkins, Miss Helen's pony seems rather skittish this morning," said the squire, as the groom led the long-maned chestnut to the steps. "Yes, sir," said Watkins, "she's been like this some time now, sir, a little or'er food too, sir. I can't make her out."

"Is she safe?" said the Squire anxiously.

"Oh, yes, sir, quite safe sir, sure."

"Sure?"

"Quite sure, sir. I trotted her round the paddock a long time yesterday. Safe enough; sir, if Miss Helen don't use her whip and holds her well in."

Helen nodded brightly to her father as she mounted and took the reins from the groom.

"Careful, Helen," said he, as the animal plunged a little.

"Oh, we're alright," said the girl patting the pony's neck. "Jess and I understand each other — don't we Jess? I'll go on a little ahead, papa, and you can catch me up. I want to call in at the schoolhouse."

She waved her hand and cantered off, he looking after her lovingly. "She'll soon get over her disappearing moment when she sees how thoroughly I am against it," he murmured, as he turned to get his hat and whip. "What was it she said, 'God first,' well yes, of course, but I know He does not want my bright winsome Nell," then mounted he walked his horse slowly down the avenue, and through the lane leading to the schoolhouse.

Helen was remounting as he came in sight. She had been bribing the children with sundry coins and the promise of a great feast to say the Rosary for her particular intention during the next half hour. The mites, who loved Helen with all their little hearts, eagerly promised, and began before she was well out of the door. Her father caught the sounds as he came down the lane, and looked at Nell a little suspiciously.

"Miss Alverstoke keeps her children longer than usual at their prayers this morning," said he.

Helen laughed, blushed slightly, and they cantered on. It was a delightful September morning, healthful, exhilarating. A sharp ride soon brought them on the Downs, a long stretch of green sward leading to the Devil's gap, the highest cliff in Heltonbury. Squire Warden encouraged his daughter in her joyous sallies, delighted to see her in such spirits. Helen, as most sensitive natures are, was keenly alive to atmospheric influence, the ozone-laden air filled her senses, her spirits rose, and Wat-

kin's caution in regard to Jess, was quite forgotten. Touching the animal lightly with her whip she gave her her head. A minute later she realized the mistake and tried to pull her in. To no purpose, the light lash had maddened the pony, and before Squire Warden had discovered what was the matter, his daughter was almost out of sight. Putting spurs to his horse, he tore after her, calling to her to keep her seat. His heavy weight was against him however, and though he rode well, he and his horse were no match for fleet-footed Jess. On she dashed, her light burden swaying in the saddle. "She is making for the Devil's Gap," gasped the Squire, as Jess turned and tore along the cliffs toward their highest point. "My God! is no one in sight to stop her?" Five minutes more and horse and rider will lie maimed and lifeless on the rocks fifteen hundred feet below. The thud of the horse's hoofs is beating into his brain. "Merciful God," he cried in agony, "save her!" an afterthought — "Yes even so, save her for the Poor Clares."

Then a wonderful thing happened. Panting and covered with foam, Jess stood quite still on the very brink of the Gap — and Helen was saved. Two minutes more and Squire Warden was lifting the panting, trembling girl from the saddle, who managed to whisper, as she clung to him, "But Jess, papa, turn dear Jess round."

This happened ten years ago. Squire Warden is compelled to admit that a Poor Clare's vocation is not confined to "sorrowful ones of the earth," and that Helen is as bright and happy behind a grille as in his cozy drawing-room — indeed attributes her escape on that eventful September morning to the children's Rosary; he on the miraculous intervention of Providence — on his agreeing to her vocation. — The Rosary.

### THE HOMES OF THE POOR.

Come away from the crowded centers

Of the city's throbbing life;  
The palaces grand on every hand,  
The noise and heat and strife;  
From the fever of pride and passion,  
That the grave can only cure,  
And walk with me in the twilight hour

By the humble homes of the poor.

Here the father comes home in the evening  
From care and from danger free  
As the little ones run to meet him,  
With their innocent shouts of glee,  
No hireling's hand has nursed them,  
Nor will guard them at night se-

For the mother is all to her children  
In the humble homes of the poor.

I love to walk in the twilight,  
Where I see through the open door,  
Some busy household duties,  
Some at play on the simple floor,  
No luxury makes them heartless,  
No idleness makes them impure;

The menace to souls where Mammon rolls  
Cannot enter the homes of the poor.

Come away from the hollow pleasures  
Of the ballroom and banquet hall;  
For the children's hour in the cottage  
Has joy that exceeds them all,  
Come away from the proud, for their riches  
Take wing and shall not endure,

Their pride will not weigh in the judgment day  
With the humble homes of the poor.

Catholic Home Companion.

Patent Report.

For the benefit of our readers we publish a list of patents recently granted by the Canadian Government, secured through the agency of Messrs. Marion & Marion, patent attorneys, Montreal, Can., and Washington, D.C.

Information regarding any of the patents cited will be supplied free of charge by applying to the above-named firm.

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81,714—Pierre Dansereau, Montreal, Que. Axle-nut.

81,795—Joseph Lafrance, Montreal, Que. Pipe-joint.

81,810—Chas. D. Spatee, Roseway, N.S. Bread slicer.

81,814—Clinton Geo. Sellers, Strathcona, N.W.T. Horse-shoeing frame.

81,820—Frs. Octave Schryburt, Quebec, Que. Welt machine.

81,822—Cephas Thompson, Fleming, N.W.T. Adjustable desk.

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PROVINCE OF QUEBEC,  
District of Montreal.  
No. 2976.  
Dame Josephine Leonard, wife common as to property of Damase Tardif, grocer, of St. Leonard de Port Maurice, District of Montreal, has instituted an action in separation as to property against her said husband, this tenth day of July, 1903.  
Montreal, July 10th, 1903.  
LEONARD & LORANGER,  
Attorneys of the Plaintiff.

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**A.O.H. LADIES' AUXILIARY,** Division No. 5. Organized Oct. 10th, 1901. Meetings are held in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander, on the first Sunday of each month, at 2.30 p.m., on the third Thursday at 8 p.m. President, Miss Annie Donovan; vice-president, Mrs. Sarah Allen; recording-secretary, Miss Rose Ward, 51 Young street; financial-secretary, Miss Emma Doyle, 776 Palace street; treasurer, Mrs. Charlotte Birmingham; chaplain, Rev. Father McGrath.

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## NOTES

**THE PRESS AND THE PRESS AND THE PRESS**  
Now that the great Pope and buried and that the times of the press have come to invent sick- they turn their attention coming concave. Already canvassed in every sense opinions, aims, aspirations, jealousies, conspiracies, combinations, external disputes, international foreign influences, and a able fiction that might remotely be associated minds with the election it is quite probable that of them will climb up to the edifice and find down the chimney hear- tions of the members clave, note the proceed- the entire world all that within the walled enc- ready it is amusing to ments of the press; they rise, are drawn from sources, and are believe thirds of the readers the world. About one of comments upon the entire and one that is the m- as it comes from the press and stands out with thousand of other over the world—is the Montreal "Gazette." To the coming election th-

"The cardinals now a Rome are men, moved tions and influenced by nesses of men. There is rivalry among them as will be selected to si- chair as head of the Ro- lic communion and wear and do the work pertain unique position. But th- wisdom and prudence ar- and their hopes and fear made public through the respondents. The ables may not be selected. A prudent man is sometime to one of conspicuous th- whoever, is chosen will capacity, and no ecclesi- this continent will have his vote to influence the

Naturally men have t- and impulses of men; b- case all such merely hum- tions are strictly subser- grand conception of a g- the Holy Ghost and a p- mission to His controlling "Gazette" says truly th- hopes and their fears are public through the news- ents." That is the point we are most desirous o- No report, then, by a p- pondent need be consider other light than that of