

of Christianity, was he seeking Constance, while she had never named him to her best friend? Well, her old teacher was not afraid to break the ice. She sent the portress for her young friend.

"Constance, you can do something for me if you will spare me an hour or two. Sister Charlotte will bring up your supper and I will be free at 6.30 o'clock."

"Surely, Sister dear. You know I am always glad when you want me. The bright eyes were as direct and confident as ever. The business was soon dispatched, and a moment of silence fell between them as they sat together in the soft spring twilight in the prim little dining-room reserved for secular guests.

"Constance looked up expectantly. "Who is Mr. Warder, my child?" The nun's tone was incisive, peremptory, and she kept her eyes on the girl's face. Was there a faint rising of color? The light was not good. Perhaps Sister Gertrude was mistaken.

"Our head master's distant relative; a very wealthy man, who gives all his time to philanthropy and education. He holds no office, but he is a sort of power behind the throne. He has travelled everywhere, has many good ideas and enjoys working them out."

"What is this man to you, Constance?"

"A very kind friend, Sister," said the girl after a slight pause.

"But you know he hates religion."

"I know nothing of the sort. He has never discussed his opinions with me. If he hates religion, why should he serve a Catholic, and, with a quick lifting of the head, "one who has never feared to keep her flag flying?"

"But why have you never mentioned him to me? Don't you know that his attentions to you are a matter of comment?"

"I must at least have named him among those who supported Mr. Gray's choice of me two years ago. But for Mr. Warder I would not be where I am. As for his attentions, it is like his irreligion—gossip pure and simple. He is not married, it is true, but, after all, I am only a working woman, and if he sought a wife she would be in the circle to which he has been born."

Was there a faint wistfulness in the girl's voice? Sister Gertrude saw that it was not wise to pursue the subject further.

"You know, Constance, the retreat begins Wednesday week. I shall look for you at it."

"When have I failed to attend as much of it as possible, Sister? This year, fortunately, it comes during our spring vacation, and I can have it all."

It is disagreeable to be suddenly confronted with a spiritual mirror and compelled to gaze into it. But Constance had a brave soul, and she would not flinch.

"What is this man to you?" The question rang out insistently as she sat alone in her room in the dark, overlooking the tranquil bay which mirrored a starlit sky.

Presently her answer came without flinching. "I would have him for my lover. He is a gentleman through and through, a scholar and a man of position." She flushed hotly, face to face with a desire which was of the brain as well as of the heart.

"And why do you want him and his high place?" Conscience was imperious now.

"Because I love him, and I love also the heights on which he can set me. And, oh, my God, though he hasn't the faith, I know the things said against him can't be true. I know I want to win him for Thee and to use what he can give me for Thy honour."

She was kneeling now, and the voice was gentler in its next demand. "But if you cannot have him on your own terms?"

"I have never failed yet in anything I set my heart on."

A sharp knock. Constance rose quickly, turned on the electric light and took in two special delivery letters. One bore the home postmark. "Two hundred dollars for Johnny's operation, and you know these specialists cannot be kept waiting."

The girl sighed as well-tried patience must sometimes, but she wrote the required check and enclosed it in a brief note before she looked at the other letter, at whose handwriting her heart bounded. It was an invitation from Frederick Warder to join him and his sister in a box party at the Grand Opera the following evening.

She deliberated. If his occasional calls at her abode and his evident pleasure in meeting her elsewhere had become a subject of comment, what might she not expect if she were seen with him as a member of a family party?

A woman used to men's admiration generally knows the signs of that which is not merely a passing fancy. "I may as well see it to the end. He knows I am a Catholic and no weakening."

Presently she mailed two letters at the nearest box. "It must be well with one," she mused, "on those heights, untroubled by the strain of daily labor and insistent money demands."

Half a dozen of her Sodality friends looked up from their places in the orchestra circle the following evening with smiling recognition as she sat throned above them beside Frederick Warder, and a few days later her prompt appearance at the opening of the retreat caused interested glances. But Constance was unperturbed as ever,

and handsomer in her suit of sober brown, which brought out so beautifully the exquisite fairness of her skin and the golden glints in her hair.

"It must have been a rash judgment about Mr. Warder," whispered Mrs. Wallace penitently. "Constance would never—" But the Mass bell was the signal for silence.

He was a strenuous son of the great Loyola, this preacher of the retreat, with the keen sight and the sure hand of the expert spiritual surgeon for weak and diseased conscience. Yet there was little of terror or denunciation in his instruction. He preached Christ, the crucified, the risen. He demanded conformity to Christ's example in every life, the first place for Christ in every heart.

To Constance it was like a fresh revelation. She saw Christ as He walked among men; she heard His voice. Was He really first in her heart?

"Oh, father, I hope it is not wrong, but I wish Our Lord had not done quite so much for us nor set so high a standard," she murmured after her brief confession. She was not a stranger to the priest, and he marvelled at the outburst in one usually so self contained.

"If you are called to choose between the two standards, my child, you will never be able to plead ignorance as an excuse for a wrong choice. But, very gently, "you will not make a wrong choice."

"Father, pray that He gives me my heart's desire. It is for His honour."

"I will pray that you may see His will and do it. That is safer, my child."

Sister Gertrude held for a moment at the convent door. "Constance, I feel the test is coming. I would rather die than see you fall."

The girl kissed the nun silently and passed out under the budding elm trees. She carried the fragrance of the lilies with her and the vision of Him Who rose again. Was Christ first in her heart?

"They have both spoken of the choice and the test. What do they know of Frederick Warder? Then Constance remembered uncomfortably his rumored connection with a publishing house whose sole mission seemed to be the sending forth of books subversive of religion. She had heard it but yesterday. There might be no foundation for it. "I will ask him when we meet again."

She had not long to wait. His card was brought her a few moments after she had left the dinner table.

Constance had chosen her city home with a private family of refinement, so there was nothing to offend the fastidious taste of Frederick Warder in the quiet library in which his young friend joined him.

He was nearly fifteen years older than she, and he had not moved to the city since she had been born. He contemplated to-night with the unreasoning impulse of love's young dream. He understood Constance fairly well also. "Not a mere money or society seeker," he had judged. "She is too fine for that. I believe she loves me for myself, but she loves power and place, and so do I; so it is an even thing. I could not love her if she was not fit for me. A Catholic! She hasn't had a fair chance for development. She will outgrow her creed in her life with me."

He thought Constance had never before looked so fair and stately, and there was a withdrawn and mysterious air about her which gave the finishing touch to her charm. The consciousness of a fateful moment was on both, and there was no preliminary talk for talk's sake.

"Constance, you know you are the woman I love and would make my wife, and I believe you love me enough to trust me with your happiness."

The mystic eyes the mantling blush as he raised her drooping face for the betrothal kiss were eloquent answers, but she went white at his touch and stayed him with gentle hand.

"It is true," she murmured; "but there is another claim. You know I am a Catholic."

"And what is that between you and me, my dear one?" he smiled. "I wouldn't care if you were a sun-worshiper."

"But is it true," still withdrawn from his claiming hand, "that you hate Christianity and work against it? That you are the mainstay of the Trisauls Company?"

The man's face changed fearfully. "If you mean am I a hater of the unnatural self-suppression, the abeyance of reason before impossible doctrines, which Christianity means in its fulness, an uncompromising opponent by word and book of everything which stands between men and all the joy they can get out of the only life they have any certainty of, I must answer yes. As for your own private belief and practice, Constance, his voice softened, "so long as you love me I respect your mental freedom. I could not, of course, have you creed perpetuated in my family. But, dear girl, you are far from your full mental stature yet. When your eyes are cleared you will know that this Christ, this resurrection myth—"

"Hush, you speak of my God! Shall I argue with you against the honor of your father and the virtue of your mother?"

Was this Constance Russell, the lover of place and power?

"This Christ," she went on with blazing eyes, "your Maker and mine, your Judge and mine?"

"Constance," he cried, "will you let Him part us? He comes first who has set only hard paths for your feet! And I have been your friend

and I hold even now your future in my hands."

From afar she heard the voice of Pilate: "Know you not that I have power to crucify you and power to release you?"

"God has ordered it so. Do what you will. I cannot stand with him who stands against my God."

"Oh, Constance, I was ungenerous. But He never conquered me before. I want to raise you above work and care, but I cannot have Him in my home life or my love."

"Then you cannot have me."

"Good-bye, Constance. If ever you change your mind—"

"Good-bye, Mr. Warder." He was gone.

She was kneeling at her window again, her eyes upon the rippling waters. But she saw them not. Instead she saw a garden in the Orient, with the dew dawn over the palm trees and a Shining One come forth in His strength and beauty from the tomb, whose seal had broken before Him and whose guards lay at His feet as dead men.

She grew faint with the joy of it. "Oh, Christ, Thou hast proved me. Thou art first, and there is none beside Thee."

The glory faded, but the joy stayed on, though she saw before her the wreck of all her hopes and dreams for this world.

"I will tell Sister Gertrude tomorrow. She was right. The test came, and through God's mercy and her prayers I have not failed."

For the Mass which closed the retreat next morning the priest came forth in black vestments. "Remember Sister Gertrude in your communion," he said. "She passed away very suddenly last night."—Katharine E. Conway in The Republic.

REFORMATION WAS INSPIRED BY BASE MOTIVES

James Gardner, C. B., LL. D., in "Lollardy and the Reformation in England."

The Protestant requires some historical justification for his religion; and at the outset of the separation from Rome, every generous feeling goes strongly with the heroes and martyrs of the old faith. Never was a new principle introduced in more revolting form than that royal supremacy which has governed the Church of England ever since Henry VIII's days. Royal supremacy is in truth, a rather ambiguous doctrine, which has been disliked by pious minds down to the present day; and even if we acknowledge that it contained within it a hidden seed of good to be matured in after ages, we cannot pretend that its enforcement at the outset was anything but a wilful destruction of the best existing guarantees for public morality.

The revolution which Sir Thomas More saw impending, and vain would have averted, had long since passed through evil and good results to results in which we may fairly trust that good predominates over evil. But it is impossible to argue on this account that it was good in its inception. Nor even, if we dismiss from consideration the base personal motives of the tyrant by whom it was effected, can we comfort ourselves truly by the belief that it was aided by the enlightened zeal of others for a purer form of religion?

For, whatever may be said of the ardent heretics who contributed to that revolution, it is a great mistake to look upon them as the emancipators of human thought. Those who so regard them, as it seems to me, altogether mistake the character; and from this cause, besides other errors, they do injustice to the very noblest men of the day. They seem actually to look upon Sir Thomas More in particular, as two diametrically opposite persons strangely combined—the one a humane and liberal minded man, honorable, learned, enlightened, and the very soul of equity; the other bigoted and cruel, a hater and persecutor of all who differed in opinion from the Church. How two such absolutely contrary characters could be united in one man is something more than a paradox; it is a moral impossibility."

VOCATION

Many a parish during the summer months has been gladdened by the sight of some one of its young members who has returned with the oil and chrism of ordination still wet upon him to celebrate in the midst of his friends and people his first Holy Mass. During the last three months several hundred young men of our land have been raised to the sacred priesthood. How many a mother's heart has welled with holy joy, God alone knows; but surely there is not a single mother kneeling at the feet of her priest-son who has not thanked God for the good things He has done for her.

Now that many boys are leaving school and are looking about for some suitable life occupation it would be well for parents to make sure whether sufficient consideration has been given to the question of their vocation. There is no doubt that, considering the rapid and solid growth of Catholic life in our land, there should be a larger crop of vocations to the priesthood than is actually harvested. Also, there is no doubt that if the spirit of Christ were made to live in every home there would be a larger procession of young men marching towards the steps of the sanctuary. That there is a lamentable shortage of priests

in this country is a fact patent to all. There is not a bishop who is not calling daily for more laborers for the Lord's vineyard. There is not a pastor whose work is not impeded by reason of the fact that he has too few helpers. And surely we may take it for granted that God intends that there shall be a sufficient number of priests to take care of His people. If, then, there is a lack of vocations it is either because young men do not consider the subject with sufficient care, because they have not the heart to make the sacrifices, or, on the other hand, because vocations are killed off in the home by the spirit of worldliness and luke-warmness. Parents, therefore, should not only pray to Almighty God to send such a blessing upon each one of their children, but should try their best by example, instruction and encouragement to help those who have received the divine call to realize it.

It is passing strange how many Catholic parents seem to frown upon the idea of their sons entering the service of the Church. They almost look upon such a lad as one who throws away his chances in life. They seem to feel that the business of a man in our land-to-day is to heap up much money, or to make a great name for himself. They seem utterly to forget that true manliness consists in devotion and service to others. And it is this spirit of devotion which, aside from the divine consecration, makes the Catholic priest-hood the most efficient force for uplifting our ideals and making possible their practical realization in our daily life.

The same holdgood with regard to our Sisters. There is a spirit abroad amongst Catholics that a girl's place is in the world, not in a convent. Many parents look with disapproval on the growing-up daughter who gazes in disquiet towards the convent. And yet nowhere in the whole world is to be found the same measure of true peace, true happiness, and that spirit of self-sacrifice which makes life worth living. Only to women of the highest type does the religious life appeal. Almighty God seems to take a delight in picking the choicest blossoms for Himself. And surely those parents must sin heinously in the sight of God who expose the tender flowers of innocence and love of God to the chilling air of the world and pleasure-mad society. Are even Catholics unwilling to give God what He wants? Are even Catholics to begrudge to Him those whom He has chosen for Himself?—Rosary Magazine.

THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD

The church edifice means something to the Catholic people. Outsiders note that fact as we find in their writings and conversations. Says the Atlantic Monthly: "It is certainly true that the Catholic Church as a whole is in touch with her children during every hour of the day—not only through the many stated services, but more significantly when no bell rings an invitation, when altar and choir are deserted by the chanting priests. These silent intervals between Masses and Benediction are more fruitful of love and conviction to the traveler than anything else. For never does he enter a church—no matter how obscure, how remote, how unadvertised—that he does not find some man or woman kneeling before an altar or a shrine, lost in supplication. There is reverence and concentration enough in these private worshippers. They prostrate, they abandon themselves, clinging to heaven by the hem—they pour out their souls in adoration or in entreaty."

THE FLOUR THAT MAKES GOOD THINGS LIKE GRANNY BAKES

Honorius, and Deusdedit. The royal tombs at the time of the translation of the saints were removed to a chapel which was built at the end of the south aisle. Wulfric's church, Mr. Potts stated in conclusion, was really very interesting because there was no other instance in England of a round church before the Crusades.—New World.

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