

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE.

C. F. STREET, M. A.

CONTINUED.

These marvellous operations, brought about by man's ingenuity and study of electricity, have been adapted to our earthly affairs and relations with the kingdoms of this world.

Now, my dear children, I have endeavored to plainly set before you that beautiful, comforting and edifying doctrine which the Church celebrates on the "Feast of All Saints"; a doctrine especially encouraging to us living in a world where there is constant sorrow, pain, mourning and mortality.

You, who have come to the house of God this morning, to be partakers, for the first time, of the bread of life, are engaging in a solemn and beautiful act of devotion.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass having been duly celebrated, the faithful having solemnly partaken of the Feast and the Mass after Communion being ended, the congregation and pupils were dismissed with the blessing of the venerable celebrant.

The congregation, including the nuns and friends of the pupils, as well as the children, were much impressed with the solemnity of the divine service of that morning and on the interesting truth which the preacher had earnestly and plainly explained to them.

Mabel returned with her uncle and aunt to their home, where a dainty breakfast was prepared for them. She was very happy that day, and devoted a portion of it to the composition of a letter to her dear mamma, telling her all that had taken place at the convent on that morning and of the blessings she herself had received.

During that month she was particularly attentive to her lessons, and gained much praise from the teachers on her progress; she was looked upon as the brightest child of her class-mates, who would carry off several prizes to be awarded at the time of the Christmas examinations.

On the 7th December, 1891, a letter was received by Mr. O'Neill from his sister, conveying the sad news that her husband was very ill. He was taken with a severe attack of "la grippe" at the beginning of November, which he had thought would soon pass away after careful nursing, but instead of this favorable change, as expected, it had entirely prostrated him and he seemed to be completely broken in health.

The doctor had been constantly attending on him, but his medical services had produced no beneficial results; his recovery now appeared to be almost an impossibility. Poor Jesse! He was constantly talking, according to the letter from his wife, about their darling child and longing for her return. The doctor thought it advisable to hasten Mabel's return, believing that her presence and childish entertainments might help to cheer up her poor father who was terribly depressed in spirits.

The morrow, being the "Feast of the Immaculate Conception," 8th December, and being a holiday at the convent, Mrs. O'Neill did not communicate the sad news to her niece until the evening of that day; she thought it better not to disturb the poor child's joy on that beautiful and cheerful festival. Like "All Saints' Day," the "Feast of the Immaculate Conception" is beautiful and edifying in its meaning. It illustrates forcibly the deep interest which the heavenly Father has

in the welfare and happiness of His children here on earth, and in their redemption and holiness; it shows how provident and careful were the preparations for the Incarnation of His Son and the redemption of mankind.

Thus the Blessed Virgin Mary was never defiled by sin, either original or actual, mortal or venial, otherwise she could not have fulfilled her mission as the Mother of God.

On the morning of the 9th December Mabel, after embracing her aunt and uncle and bidding them farewell, left for her home by an early train. Although she was sorry to give up her studies at the convent and be separated from her loving and generous benefactors, yet the thought of going home filled the poor child's heart with unspeakable joy.

When the train drew into the depot of the town of B— in Vermont, Mabel quickly discerned in the crowd her loving mother anxiously gazing towards the egress of the car, awaiting her arrival; she was quickly at her mother's side, and the two were conveyed in a cab to their humble home, made more humble by the dire visitation of his sickness.

Mrs. Simon perceived with pride the great change which had taken place in her daughter's appearance and manners during the six months' absence from home; she found her improved in every respect, and listened with much satisfaction to the account of her first Communion and the expressions of her earnest piety.

The next morning Mabel arose early and quietly prepared herself to go to the dear old church and assist at the early Mass, in her native place. Her mother was surprised to learn from the domestic that her daughter had gone out, but was pleased when she returned to hear of the good work to which she had been devoting her time; she had gone to the House of God to offer up special prayers, during the celebration of the morning sacrifice, for the recovery of her dear father's health, and had begun, on that morning, a novena for him.

The 25th day of December arrived; and it was a sad Christmas to the silent family, for there had been no change for the better in Mr. Simon's condition. Mrs. Simon and her daughter went to early Mass to take part in the celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of the Saviour of the world. They knelt before the altar to receive the divine sacrament of the Precious Body and Blood of their Redeemer, firmly believing that in those sacred mysteries their divine Saviour was really and truly present; then they offered up their petitions for the beloved one who was at the point of death at their home; they prayed earnestly to their Lord to give him grace to understand the truth, to strengthen and increase his faith and to save his soul, even if it were not the divine will to restore him to bodily health.

During that day, whilst they were both sitting at the bedside of the invalid, watching and praying for him, he suddenly aroused himself from his state of lethargy, and in a low and solemn tone of voice said "My dear wife and darling child, if God will restore me to health, I will prepare myself to become a Catholic, but if I become weaker, will you send for the priest and beg him to baptize me and receive me into the fold of the Catholic Church?"

These words were indeed a surprise to the mother and daughter and filled their hearts with joy and hope. Mrs. Simon lost no time in sending for the parish priest and informing him of the change which had come over her dear husband's mind and the words he had spoken. The priest, after some consultation with the doctor regarding the condition of his patient, thought it wise not to delay the administration of the sacrament of baptism.

On Christmas day at 5 o'clock p. m. the priest visited Mr. Simon, and after some conversation with him, perceived that he was anxious to become a Catholic as soon as possible, and he was privately baptized on that day in the presence of his wife and daughter. Mr. McGee, a staunch Irish Catholic who had been a long resident of the town and one of the trustees of the Catholic Church, was also present, as sponsor.

Mrs. Simon's heart was greatly cheered by the change in her husband's spiritual welfare; it was indeed a happy ending of the gloomy festival which had begun so gloomily in her home. This deliverance of the soul of her poor husband from the bondage of sin might be a forerunner of some physical change; his faith and the awakening of his mind to the truth might be followed by a cure of his bodily malady.

As the Divine Saviour had said to the sick woman "thy faith hath made thee whole," and again to the leper "arise and go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole," so might he not say also to her poor husband similar cheering words.

The good priest did not lose sight of his neophyte; constantly did he visit him to offer up prayers at his bedside as well as before the altar during the celebration of Mass.

Mr. and Mrs. O'Neill learned of the happy event in the Simon's household, and were much delighted, especially on account of their darling niece. What joy it must have been to her, when her poor father at last became a member of the true Church, in which she had so recently found so much happiness; her simple prayers had been answered.

Mr. O'Neill was now so deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's household, that he concluded to go, accompanied by his good wife, to the town of B— and pay a visit to the Simons. He therefore wrote to his sister preparing her for their arrival during New Year's week, expressing the hope that they might be able to encourage her in her trials and cheer up her husband. They left their home on the day after New Year's and, en route, they stopped at New York; here Mr. O'Neill fortunately met an old friend, Dr. —, an eminent physician, who had been very successful in the treatment of patients prostrated by "la grippe."

On the evening of the 5th January, 1892, Mr. O'Neill and his party arrived at the place of their destination. On the following day they purposed to call at Mr. Simon's. The 6th January being the feast of Epiphany and a *fete d'obligation*, they began the day by assisting at the 8 o'clock Mass in the parish church; whilst reverently regarding the faithful who walked up the aisle to receive holy Communion, they noticed in the crowd, Mrs. Simon and her daughter approaching the altar. During the forenoon, Mr. O'Neill and his New York friends called on the physician of the Simon family, and after a brief interview, it was arranged that the two doctors should meet at Mr. Simon's during that day.

The visit of Mr. and Mrs. O'Neill naturally gave great comfort and encouragement to their distressed relatives. Mr. Simon, though very feeble, welcomed heartily his brother-in-law and was glad to tell him of his conversion and the peace and joy experienced since his baptism. He was very grateful when he learned that a doctor from New York City had accompanied him for the express purpose of making a thorough diagnosis of his malady and holding a consultation of his case with the local physician. During the afternoon of that day the two doctors met according to appointment. The result of their consultation was not discouraging to the patient's hopes; indeed, the New York doctor did not regard his malady as incurable, but felt sure that the change in the treatment of the invalid which he suggested and the new medicines prescribed would have an invigorating effect on the system of the patient. Poor Mrs. Simon had not felt so much happiness for a long time, as she did when the doctor said to her, "Cheer up, my good woman, your husband, I believe, will, by the blessing of God, be as well and strong as formerly in six months."

It was necessary that Mr. O'Neill and his friend should return to their respective duties by the morning train of the following day. Their visit, though short, had been most beneficial and brought hope and joy to a home which had, for a long time, been troubled and wretched. Mrs. O'Neill urgently begged Mrs. Simon to allow her daughter to return with them and resume her studies at the convent. After much serious consideration she concluded that for the dear child's future happiness, she must give her consent. The grief of the loving mother, on being again severed from her only child, was alleviated by the favorable change which was evident in the state of her husband's health. The New York physician had made a second hurried visit to the town of B— in Vermont to see his patient, and was satisfied with the progress he had made, but advised a change of climate and scene, so soon as the season of spring began.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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A TIMELY SUGGESTION.

Failure to comply with the prescribed time with the Easter obligation does not acquit the negligent Catholic from the duty of going to confession and Communion as soon as possible afterwards.

A GREAT CHARITY.

The good work which is being done everywhere by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is made evident by a report issued by the Revue General of April. The following summary of the good done is made by the Literary Digest of 28th of May:

The society expended in works of charity in 1895 and 1896, each year, nearly \$2,000,000. The report for 1896 shows disbursements as follows: France, \$436,787; Germany, \$143,761; Austria, \$114,718; Spain, \$138,731; Great Britain, \$147,031; Holland, \$252,153; Italy, \$53,702; Canada, \$56,000; the United States, \$258,649; Mexico, \$52,970; Belgium, Brazil and other countries, \$377,142.

"Be Ye Perfect."

It is no humility to aim low in the spiritual life. It is no pride to aim high, if we do it out of a desire to glorify God. Who knows what graces He has lost, and may be losing at this moment, from want of aspiration? If faith, hope and charity had wrought their perfect work in us, if the seven gifts had been spread like sails to catch the breathing of the Spirit, of the Sanctifier, we should not now be far from the kingdom of God. But how many spring-times and seed-times have we lost, how many summers have passed without a harvest, how many an autumn without a vintage! We are standing at the foot of the mountain of beatitudes. The disciples of Jesus are going up company by company. The poor, the simple, the unlearned, and the mourners and the despised are going upward, speeding with a wonderful strength and sweetness? Shall we be left behind? Aim higher and higher.—Cardinal Manning.

You May go to Hong Kong and to Mass.

Some one's enquiry, in the Liverpool Catholic Times, if there is a Catholic Church in Hong Kong elicited this answer:

"I was in the priest's house, Rev. Pietro Gabardi, Missionary Apostolic, and was introduced to a Portuguese gentleman; he was a marvel indeed, and spoke English like a native. Part of our conversation was in Italian. He was reading from a Spanish book, and spoke Chinese A. I. The priest informed me there were seven thousand Catholics in Hong Kong, two thousand of whom are Chinese, and at 6 o'clock Mass this morning it was a godly sight to see the old Chinese women as devout as Irish women, the men with their pig tails, the little altar-boys, and, above all, the European priest with a pig tail. In this strange community, to hear the *Domine non sum dignus*, the same as in the little chapel at Dunston on Tyne, would fill the heart of the hardest heathen with admiration for the Catholic Universal Church, of which I am so proud. At the Cathedral is a Seminary for native priests, of whom I saw many. At Canton there is another Cathedral to beat anything to be seen in England."

Another answers that "in every insignificant village in the Far East there is a Catholic church and a priest."

There is danger in neglecting a cold. Many who have died of consumption dated their troubles from exposure, followed by a cold which settled on their lungs, and in a short time they were beyond the skill of the best physician. Had they used Pickle's anti-consumptive Syrup, before it was too late, their lives would have been spared. This medicine has no equal for curing coughs, colds and all affections of the throat and lungs.

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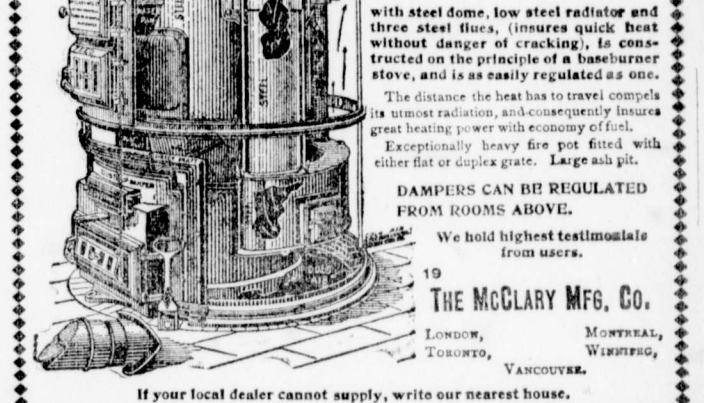
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