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# WHAT A MOTHER'S MEMORY

A true story by Rev. Richard W. Alexande Not far from the beginning of my

He asked me to help him in the confessional during a busy season, and I consented. "Many of my people are negroes," he said, "and I think you will not be sorry for that, when you make friends with them in the box."

"Negroes!" I said, "I have yet to discover their fervor! They are very emotional, are they not?"

"Not over much!" he replied, "they love to sing, so do the angels for that matter! Given fair instruction they

natter! Given fair instruction they are fine, reliable Catholics. I have no discount to make in comparing them with the whites. To be sure, they are a subject race, greatly despised by many whites, as well as feared and detested; whites, as well as leared and decested, others patronize them, spoil them, laugh at their foibles, and forget their strik-ing qualities. But taken all in all they are good people, a submissive race, and religiously considered are the fairest prospect for our Catholic missionary field, second to none!"

And we chatted about the blacks and

And we chatted about the blacks and their spiritual and other traits, till far into the night, incidentally comparing notes about their social and domestic qualities even their intellectual ones which cross their religious state.

The work in the confessional always consoling, was especially so with the negro-penitents that time, and it seemed to me I had the "lion's share" of them! In fact, few others came to me. I re-

fact, few others came to me. I re-

elled in their simplicity and sincerity, was heartsick at the sidelights of isery that were revealed. One evening I was pretty nearly done, nd was thinking of a well-carned ight's rest. Glancing between the I saw a man rise in the middle of the church. He looked towards my box and church. He looked towards my box and doubtless noted that there was no one else to go to confession. Then he left the pew, and made a genufication and started towards me.

Evidently, bending his knee was new to him, for it was anything but rubrical, but I could not help noticing a peculiar grace in his unrubrical reverse to the

but I could not help noticing a peculiar grace in his unrubrical reverence to the albar and watched him. He was under the full glare of the large central chandelier as he stepped along the middle aisle. I know a handsomely built man when I see one, and that negro, black as my cassock, was an ebony Appollo! Tall, well-knit, with a fine head, and broad shoulders the swing of his body was full of elasticity and grace! It seemed to me he was about twenty-five years old, becomingly and neatly clad. years old, becomingly and neatly clad but not stylishly. As he advanced, he but not soylishly. As he advanced, he kept his face turned towards my corner and I saw that his features were almost regular for a negro, and wore an expression that was grave almost odignity.

He halted square in front of me, for I

had drawn back the curtains of my box, and looked at me with a half smile of expectancy, and reverence, as if wishing me to say the first word.

Iy son, do you want to go to conn?" I said.

fession?" I said.
"Most suttingly, suh, I do for a fac'
suh, but I hardly know to go bout it,
suh." His voice was remarkably sweet
and deep and his accent strongly African, but I will not venture to reproduce his dialect entirely, which I afterwards found was that of the Cotton Belt.

found was that of the Cotton Bett.

I stepped out of the confessional and shook hands with my bashful penitent and invited him to the sacristy, for I saw he needed some instruction on the method of making his confession, and no doubt on other points of our holy Faith. And when I gave him a chair, and placed him at his case by a few kindly words I

come.

The pathos in that negro's voice would have put to shame the tenderest, deepest feeling expressed by a cultivated white man, and I too felt my heart swell in sympathy, for I knew he was telling a true, simple fact. He went

It stood out in the heart of the wild Bog of Allen,—a tipy cabin of a man's height with walls of mud, and a roof of red rushes and sedge. Fintan O'Farrell, the owner had inherited the dwelling from a long line of ancestors, who were now shrouded for eternal sleep in the little cemetery at Grangemore.

The man had married while yet young; and life had ebbed away gaily enough, until the wife of his heart came to die ere yet she had reached her prime. That was Fintan's first sorrow. But he bowed his head meekly. telling a true, simple fact. He went
on:
"Soon everything was quiet, and we,
too, poor little darkies, put our arms
around each other and wept ourselves
asleep. When it was daylight we were
taken on deck, given something to eat
and found ourselves sweeping out to the
occean.

ocean.
"We were taken to Charleston and there sold at auction to different I remember my purchaser

That was Fineau and meekly.
"God's blessed will be done!" he said.
"Twas He that gave her to me and He "We were taken to Charleston and there sold at auction to different planters. I remember my purchaser before he bid for me thrusting his fingers into my mouth, bending all my joints, trying my eyes, my teeth, my

"One man bid \$150, but I was sold at last for \$225, and was delivered over to this buyer. I was now a slave! I did not dare resist, but went passively

Their send an anger to care for fils own."

This angel was the wife of Manman Mulhern. She took Fintan's boy and girl to her heart as if they had been her own children, and cared for them till Nusla was able to keep house and Fintan could assist his father at the turf-cutting. did not dare resist, but went passively wherever I was told.

"How lonely I was, living in the silent country with three hundred slaves, tolling from dawn to dark. How I watched them, their strange ways, their poor cabins, their wild stories and their religion! How different from Baltimore! And, oh, how I pined for my poor mother! I never saw her again!

Almost the first thing that happened was a dispute about me.

"The family I was sold to was half Methodist and half Baptists, the father holding to the Methodists and the mother to the Baptists.

"They argued hot and strong with each other to possess me for their religion."

They apposed hot and strong with each other to possess me for their religion.

They apposed the Bible—lots of it. The

Description of the control and one processes of the control of the

Tell Nuala I had a beautiful dream a few nights ago. I thought I was at home, counting out sovereigns into her bib until it was not able to hold a single one more. Wasn't that grand, father? Don't you think it will come true? I always dream sharp. Next time I will send Nuala a letter, and something in it for herself.

Did you cut as much turf this year as ever? Wasn't it the bad year you had! Which of the Ryans did you get to give a hand in the clamping? When you see Danny Doolen, tell him I was asking for him.

Hoping you and Nuala are in the best of health, and a blessing I still enjoy—thanks be to the good God for all!

Your loving boy,

"May the Lord be good to you,

Spiritual cures at Lourdes are not less numerous nor less remarkable than the cures of bodily ills, but as a rule they remain hidden from the world. God, however, sometimes permits certain cases to become known, for the edification of the faithful. Thus it was with much pleasure we read in a French paper the following interesting account of a conversion.

of a conversion.

A Bishop whom we met at Lourdes,
July 27, 1910, related to us the follow-

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

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miracle: I satter is getting up." He had heard a crowd passing under his window, singing hymns. It was a pilgrimage of men arriving fram Rodez, their Bishop at their head on their way to the Grotto, their rosaries in their hands. This sight electrified him.

"Go and let your uncle know that I am coming to assist at his Mass."

Twenty minutes later, we were entering the Basilica of the Rosary, when I said to him: "Have you decided to receive Holy Communion?"

"But I must go to confession," he replied. "Well! find me a priest."

He remained for forty minutes with his confessor. He came out his whole face transfigured, his eyes red.

No words can describe the feelings of my soul at the moment when with my yown hand I gaye him Holy Communion.

Returning to Axum, then the capital, window, and the capital, when had leave him Holy Communion.

Returning to Axum, then the capital, window, then the capital, window, and the companyon was hand I gaye him Holy Communion.

Returning to Axum, then the capital, window, and the conversions already the strict of the biography.

Returning to Axum, then the capital, window, and the conversion of the conversions already to the final the conversions already to the found under that date in Allam Butler, whose learned notes add to the interest of the biography.

of health, and a bessing I still enjoy thanks between the control of the control