

spoke to her pleasantly and told her I was now to be father to her, a spiritual father. She was about twenty-eight years old and rather attractive, but utterly ignorant of religion. She began timidly, but grew more at her ease as she continued: "Father, I am almost ashamed to ask an intelligent man to listen to a dream, a woman's dream, but the fact is I am haunted by it. I have tried to forget it. I have tried to make myself believe it was nonsense, but it is forever in my mind. At last my husband noticed there was something the matter, and he persuaded me to tell him. I did so with much difficulty only last week, and I saw it impressed him, too. He has been coming to your sermons, and the other day he said to me: 'Sarah, go up to see the missionary and tell him that dream. If there's anything in it he will know it,' and so I have come, Father, even if it is foolish."

"You did perfectly right, my child," I said earnestly. "Dreams are not always foolish, nor are they to be scoffed at. Sometimes the Lord will convey a great lesson in a dream. We often find instances in the Bible. Tell me your dream and I will explain it as well as I can."

"Well, Father, I must tell you a little about myself. My mother died when I was about sixteen. I loved her intensely, and that is the reason I have always defended Catholics about honoring Christ's Mother. I consider it a beautiful thought, for I imagine Christ's Mother to be a most lovely woman, one whom everybody could love. I have often prayed to her to guide and watch over me, although I have only the mistiest idea of where she must be. Well, I had to leave school when I was only in the eighth grade to take care of the house and my younger brothers and sisters. I never have received a religious training. I know nothing about religion, but I believe in the Supreme Being and I have a sort of private love for Christ's Mother. I have always tried to do what was right, although I know little of books, especially novels and light books."

"Now, this was my dream. I thought I died suddenly in the night. All at once I was walking along a level road, clothed in a poor black gown, spotted with stains. I knew I was dead, and my one thought was to find the road up to heaven, as I thought everybody went to heaven. As I went along I saw a beautiful road all ablaze with light some distance ahead. I felt thrilled and began to walk faster to get there. As I drew nearer I saw a tall figure at the roadside, just where the beautiful road began. He was very noble looking, with a long, full beard and a beautiful kind face. His eyes entered my very soul. He wore a sort of flowing garment, and as I attempted to pass him and enter the beautiful road he held up his hand and motioned me back. "You cannot go that way," he said. "Isn't that the road to heaven?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "but you have never done anything to get there, and look at your stained garments!"

"I looked down again. "Besides," he continued, "here is the Book of Life," and he picked up a large book and opened it. I saw my name in large letters at the top of a page, but the page was perfectly blank. Nothing had been recorded. "I was confounded. It was true I had never done anything to win heaven."

"Who are you?" I said. "He looked at me, oh, so kindly, and His beautiful eyes went to my very soul, and then He said in the sweetest voice: "I am Christ the Saviour."

"I stepped back overcome and remained silent with folded hands. A young girl clothed in white and with an angel at her side passed by. The Saviour raised His hand and motioned them onward, and they passed straight up the beautiful road. It seemed there were many on it now, but not so many as there were on a road in the valley below. I heard great crying and wailing and saw many people in rags all on that road, and I could not make out where they were going. Suddenly a tall lovely lady seemed to be coming down the beautiful road. She was veiled in white and had soft flowing garments. Her face was like exquisite marble tinged with rose color. She went directly to the Saviour. She did not even notice me, but whispered in His ear and immediately turned and went back on the beautiful road. The Saviour turned to me and said: "That was My Mother; she seems to know you. I give you another chance. Go back to life and do good and find out what will please Me."

"I thought I came to life again! Everything had disappeared. I was very cold, and yet a copious sweat covered my body. I could not move. I have never spoken of this to any one but my husband, and he told me to speak to you about it. I must, because it never leaves my mind, although it happened six months ago. Now, Father, what does it mean?"

She had grown animated, her cheeks were flushed, her eyes sparkled and she clasped her hands in the energy of her earnestness. I answered her as follows: "My dear child, God sometimes allows such things to haunt our mind both sleeping and waking, and it is for our good. You tell me you have no religion, never was baptized, and yet you had a good heart and always tried to do what was right; moreover, that you had loved Christ's Mother and defended her. Here has

been your salvation. That dear Blessed Mother, Christ's Mother, has interceded for you and God has given you another chance. It is very plain to me. Our dear Blessed Lady has taken you under her protection and has brought you near the beautiful road. What have you done since this happened?"

She took out of her pocket one of our little catechisms, torn and soiled. "I found this in the street," she said, "and I took it home, and for six months I have read it and I know it all by heart. I have even read it to my brothers and sisters. What must I do next?"

This simple, candid soul touched me. I asked her to wait a few minutes and I went for the pastor, who was in an adjoining room. I told him the story briefly, and he immediately came to see her. I introduced her to him, and with a few kind words left them together. It was time for a sermon in the church. On my return in about an hour he was just about dismissing her. He turned to me and said: "This is the most wonderful case I have ever met. She not only knows the words of that catechism, but seems to penetrate into the very depths of their meaning. I am amazed."

The next morning she was at Mass, and shortly afterward was baptized with her husband, brothers and sisters, who were thoroughly convinced of the truths of faith by her explanations and her example. They are now good Catholics. She has entered the beautiful road and will surely meet the smile of our Blessed Lord when death really comes to release her from this mortal pilgrimage. And it all came from a vision! Had we not better say it was a tender vision of the Saviour whose love for His creatures is beyond their understanding?"

THE APOLOGETIC CATHOLIC

The apologetic Catholic coughed behind his hand, thus registering conventional but none the less miserable confusion.

"My dear friend," went on his neighbor in the "L" train, "it's just this way. I can forgive the Catholic Church much, and as a tolerant man I do, but really her neglect of education during the 'Dark Ages' was quite inexcusable."

The apologetic Catholic sparred for time with another cough, but as there was a pause, he saw that something was demanded of him. "Of course," he murmured, smiling like a criminal at the judge who was sentencing him, "it is rather difficult to excuse, but—"

"Excuse?" spluttered his neighbor; "why, it is quite unpardonable. Certainly the function of any Church is the enlightenment of its people, and for the Church to neglect education in any age—well, you must forgive my saying so, but frankly, it quite turns me against your religion, don't you know?"

The apologetic Catholic ran his index finger between his collar and his neck, almost scorching it in the process, and looked despairingly at the passing L. station. Only three more and then 'downtown and freedom from the subject of religion. If his Church had only a stronger case educationally!

INTERFERING WITH EDUCATION

In his office the A. C. found his partner reading his paper. As he entered, the partner glared vengefully over the topmost line of print. "See the paper this morning?" he asked accusingly.

"No," said the A. C., "I was talking on the train down—"

His partner laid his paper open on his knees and marked a place savagely with his index finger. "You're a broad-minded Catholic," he said, "so you won't mind my speaking plainly. But here is an account of a new group of buildings projected by your Catholic University. Now, I don't object to your Church, not altogether; but really it seems to me it is going quite outside its field in this whole educational scheme."

He paused and the A. C. coughed just in time to save the necessity of a rejoinder. For his partner went on, emphasizing each point with a sharp rap on the crackling paper.

"Education is the function of the State, simply and solely of the State. Do you see any of the Protestant Churches interfering in education? Frankly, it looks to me like a patent attempt on the part of your Church to control the intellectual life of the country. The Church should always and everywhere confine herself to her own duties in which education is strictly not included. To speak quite plainly, the tendency of your Church to invade the educational field, now as in the past, quite turns me against your religion."

Religion was a frequent subject between them, and now as always the A. C. retreated leaving his flags and what Quaker cannon he possessed in the possession of the enemy.

TILTING WITH CHRISTIANITY

At luncheon, a customer from out of town led the conversation gradually to his pet subject of the hour, Nietzsche.

"Now Nietzsche," he went on, "had the glorious ideal of a man—a great blond demi-god, with power in his arm and steel in his heart. A man without fear and without the weakness of pity was the man of his heart. You're a Christian, I take it?"

The embarrassment of the A. C.

would have moved to pity any but a follower of the pitiless Nietzsche. For Nietzsche was a dreadful man to him. Had not the mad philosopher punctured terrible holes in the armor of Christianity? So 'twas said there was nothing to do but shy like a colt at a yellow roadster.

"Yes, I'm a Christian, but a broad-minded one, you know—"

"Oh, I see. Well, I believe with Nietzsche that what we need is men of blood and steel, none of your weak turn-the-other-cheek sort. Christianity has peopled earth with a race of cowards, don't you know. The law of non-resistance to insult, of patience under injury is the more terrible impediment in the progress of evolution. Every great advance has been made at the point of a sword, you will remember, and frankly, the opposition of your Church to war and to active resistance is sufficient to turn me against your religion."

Nietzsche and evolution in one breath. It was adding shrapnel to chlorine gas. The A. C. signalled wildly for the waiter, and the arrival of the check saved him the dreaded necessity of answering. But he rose feeling that that chap Nietzsche was a regular ecclesiastical battering ram.

THE CHURCH AND WAR

The headlines were announcing a tremendous, and probably highly imaginative, victory as the A. C. entered the uptown L. train and saw beside a neighbor who was wide-eyed over the news. As soon as he noticed the A. C. beside him, he abandoned the occupation of absorbing news for the more pleasurable occupation of dispensing it. Finally he said:

"Just think of your Christian nations cutting one another's throats like so many savages. What has Christianity done for the world's peace? It has made men a race of warriors and armed Christian Europe to the teeth. Here's Catholic Belgium and France, and Christian Germany, and Orthodox Russia firing machine guns and praying God to help them!" He was plainly growing excited.

"But," began the A. C., "look at the Church's action in—"

"Ah," triumphed his neighbor, "look at the Crusades! Holy wars? Bah! If anything has turned me against your Church it is her constant and unequivocal defense of war."

That night the A. C. and his wife dined out. Next to him sat the principal of a High school, a maiden lady whose taste in dress and subjects of conversation were equally bizarre and deplorable.

"So you are a Catholic," she said, in a tone that matched the lemon ice before her. "Well," he began, and he could have murdered the woman who penned their place cards, "you see—"

"Precisely," she went on. "There is a point I have always wanted some Catholic to clear up for me. You hold the Papal dominion is merely spiritual, do you not? How then do you account for the fact that the Pope has dared to dictate terms to princes and to force the pope to arbitrate? How have they dared to fling out their excommunications and their interdicts, to crown and to depose? Doesn't it look rather like unwarranted assumption of sovereignty?"

The A. C. watched his hostess with appealing eyes? She seemed on the point of rising, and if he could stave off—

"Of course, for our point of view—"

"For," continued the lady, fixing him through her lorgnette, "if anything could turn me against your Church, it is the unwarranted aggressions of its Popes."

There was a rustle, his hostess rose and the A. C. clapped his hand weakly to his heart, a saved man.

THE POPE AND ARBITRATION

Over the cigars the conversation waxed perfervid.

"I tell you," blustered a red-faced man, who in business hours handled the output of a baby-food factory, "Wilson is not the man to arbitrate this war. There is only one man who can do it, and that is the Pope. He turned suddenly to the A. C. "You're a Catholic, are you not?"

"Yes," assented the A. C., gripping his chair hard and staring straight ahead, "but—"

"Now I don't want to offend you, but will you please tell me why the Pope doesn't interfere? If he were to step in and force these kings and kaisers and czars to arbitrate, he would make people believe he really wants peace. Why not excommunicate a few of those high and mighty potentates and interdict a few of their countries? That would bring them to time. Instead, he never lifts a hand. I'll tell you plainly, I was quite well disposed toward your Church, but the failure of the Pope to terminate this war has turned me quite thoroughly against her."

They carried the A. C. fainting from the room. Within an hour he was no more, and the post-mortem examination revealed five severe twists in his spine. The doctors said that a sixth seemed imminent, but he evidently expired from the tremendous nervous energy which was called forward to make it. So he passed away; but from his obituaries as from his life, no one gathered that he was the product of a Catholic school. For our apologetic Catholic came of a family of "weak-kneed" Catholics, who, often to the astonishment of our separated brethren, habitually choose the "fashionable" school for their children.—Daniel A. Lord, S. J., in America.

KILLING THE CALVES

PUBLIC DEMAND FOR VEAL IS THE CAUSE OF THE HIGH COST OF MEAT

The increasing cost of meat and white flour has naturally led to widespread public protest in all parts of the country—and this protest in many cities and towns invokes the aid of food commissioners and health authorities in an effort to find the cause.

Of course the butchers always come forward with a plausible reason. "This time it is claimed that the demand for veal causes the killing of calves which should be allowed to grow into regular beef. Every time you buy veal you contribute to increasing the high cost of meat," says the President of the Master Butchers in a recent convention. "The little calf which is cut down in its youth by the butcher's hand to supply the public appetite for veal would have contributed to a hungry world four hundred additional pounds of good, sound meat if it had been allowed to live just eighteen months longer."

So far as the bakers are concerned, it is easy for them to find an excuse for a small loaf at a larger price in the increasing cost of wheat. While the bakers have decided for the present not to do away with the five cent loaf, at the same time they very strongly urge the purchase of the ten cent loaf by consumers.

While these excuses and protests seem serious to some people, they have a somewhat humorous aspect to men and women who know something about food and what is needed to keep the human body up to high efficiency. As a matter of fact neither of these food commodities are necessary to human existence, or even human happiness.

There is more actual body-building nutriment in a shredded wheat biscuit pound for pound, than there is in veal or white flour bread. In shredded wheat you have all of the rich body-building material which Nature has stored in the whole wheat grain, prepared in its most digestible form.

Most persons eat too much meat and this imposes a heavy tax on the eliminating organs, such as the liver and kidneys. White flour bread is all right provided one makes up the deficiency in the proteids by eating other foods with it. In shredded wheat biscuit, however, you have a complete, perfect, well-balanced food which contains everything the human body needs, including the outer bran coat of the wheat berry, which serves the useful purpose of keeping the bowels healthy and active.

No housewife who knows shredded wheat and its food value need have any concern about the high cost of meat or white flour bread. Shredded wheat biscuit is always the same price and always the same high quality. Two biscuits served with milk or cream and fresh fruit make a complete, perfect, delicious meal at a cost of only three or four cents. Being ready-cooked and ready-to-serve it also saves the housewife all the kitchen worry and bother of preparing a meal.

MILTON'S DEBT TO THE CHURCH

In his essay on "Eugenie de Guerin," Matthew Arnold has told us of the ennobling and inspirational effect of Catholicism upon the character of the individual and upon the character of the work which that individual performs. It is true, he could not understand the real essence of Catholicism, the real reason for its nobility; but he does say that in it there is something heroic, august and imaginative while in Protestantism he finds to a great degree "something provincial, mean and prosaic." He contrasts the effect which this elevating influence of Catholic atmosphere and traditions has upon the life and writings of Mlle. de Guerin with the effect of Protestantism upon an equally sincere and pious lady of a non-Catholic sect. In the acts and expressions of the latter there is not the vision or sense of beauty or depth of feeling that the former always shows.

In a not too sympathetic review, this attribute of Catholicism has again been dwelt upon by a recent writer in speaking of the work of the great English poet, John Milton; the poet who, he says, "Teutonized the 'versi scioliti' imported from Italy." The great source of Milton's inspiration, so we learn, was Catholicism. "It is this sympathy (with Catholicism and the Medieval) which explains the presence in Paradise Lost of an Anselmian theory of the Atonement. It is this sympathy which accounts for the strange intermingling of allegory with the historicity of the poem; an allegorizing tendency which is scarcely inferior to that of Gregory the Great or Guillaume de Loris, and which stirred Addison to utter astonishment."

"It is not necessary," this critic goes on to say, "to believe with Monsignor Barnes that he was a Catholic at heart and died in that faith, in order to realize his indebtedness to the old religion. His grandfather was a Catholic and his brother became one; and the fragments of emotional sympathy still lived in the determined intellectual opponent of the Papacy." (The British Review, December, 1915, p. 443.)

Chateaubriand in his "Genius of

Christianity" has cited M. Iton's poetic efforts as an example of the happy effect of Christianity upon the genius of the world. And now we know that the essence of this thought and inspiration came from that pure form of Christianity the Catholic Church. Catholics should learn to understand the beauty and nobility of their religion, not alone in a spiritual sense but from a natural viewpoint. They should seek, too, to reveal this beauty of their Church to those who live about them. It is an obligation which should not be allowed to pass.—N. Y. Catholic News.

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