

for the...
 girl replied...
 dear," the...
 ed the old...
 rious letter...
 bout? "The...
 er creeps to...
 nge look in...
 ars ago be...
 ge of it and...
 to be read...
 a birth-day...
 ? Read to...
 lay! It all...
 Only a few...
 cut). Then...
 rise." Then...
 .

MAURICE.
 the big bay...
 der. It was...
 a day in...
 all of warm...
 sunshine lay...
 ark red floor...
 -need, with...
 t—just bare...
 noidling...
 alive? "See...
 what a proph...
 I am, though...
 it proffeth...
 Mother...
 is still as...
 calmly pagan...
 as she brought...
 me up to be...
 Come and see...
 us, Father...
 Maurice, before...
 she goes again...
 to the land of...
 the idols. If...
 you can upset...
 her easy-going...
 philosophy, her...
 monumental...
 don't-care-ism...
 you will be...
 entitled to...
 my candid...
 astonishment...
 It shall be...
 lay at your...
 feet to do...
 with as you...
 please."

The whole letter, written in this non-sensical style, touching lightly upon things which Father Maurice knew must have turned into widely different channels the current of a gifted mind, aroused a certain curiosity in the young priest. He replied at once, and the following afternoon found him seated in Mrs. Ramsey's drawing-room. Listening to the sweet-faced, stately lady relating some of the incidents of her continental trip, Max Ramsey, a big, bluff, blond young man, with an engaging countenance, put in a word now and then that served to give his mother's more serious tale a tinge of the ludicrous.

At last they came to the point concerning which Father Maurice was most anxious to hear. "Mother doesn't understand it," he said, laughing at the suddenly thoughtful face of the woman opposite. "She can't understand it, she won't understand it."

"Pray try, to look at it with my eyes," said the mother. "He left the breakfast table in the morning—this is an honest fact—actually laughing at some preposterous dogma of the Catholic faith. At luncheon my boy came in and looked at me."

"Well, mother, he said, 'I've got it. I've always known I'd get it sometime, and it's come at last.'"

"His tone was so solemn—so—so un-likely himself—that he very nearly frightened me to death."

"Got what, got what?" I cried out. "The Catholic religion," he answered. "And she said, 'For heaven's sake, is that all? You scared me so,'" put in Max. Father Maurice was shaking with laughter. The way in which Mrs. Ramsey mimicked her own voice and actions was so true to life that he was forced to laugh at her and with her.

her face. It was well of just indeed, but those earnest words of his had sunk deeply into her heart, and the grave thoughtfulness of his mien when he spoke added to the impression.

She shook herself a little, as if trying by that movement to get rid of the feeling that perhaps she was one of those blind ones, who had not yet opened her eyes. "My very first and my very worst is non-belief in the power of prayer."

Father Maurice looked interested. "You see," she went on, eager now to qualify her position before this grave young priest, and speaking with an amount of earnestness that made her son look at her in surprise—"you see, I can't conceive of any Being—supreme or otherwise, whatever He is—wanting one of His or His creatures to bow down before it. Then, again, the Creator knows the mind He gave you. He knows all its workings and its wishes, doesn't He? Of what use is prayer in that case? He is aware of all you would say before you speak. And as to praying to the saints, why, it's ridiculous—can't see that at all, show me first the reason why of prayer. The rest will come."

"The reason why," said Max, "has been demonstrated to this lady by no less learned priests than Fathers Dupree and Schurman, to say nothing of Father McIntosh, who simply overwhelmed her with dogma!"

"Oh, dogma!" with a laugh. "I want practical proof. Show me the answer of one prayer. Then you can quote all the fathers of the Church to me. She spoke wildly, one could say ho-ly. The picture of a blind man groping in the dark, knowing things only by the sense of touch, annoyed her. Father Maurice, at those last words of hers, caught his breath. His eyes grew soft. He leaned forward. His face, over which some emotion rippled, disturbing its calm, astonished her. She listened.

"I am a priest four years," he said. "I had a mother once—a mother, Mrs. Ramsey, who never in all her previous life tasted the luxury you know. Her back was bent with work and age; her hands were horny and wrinkled—O God in heaven, bless those horny hands wherever they may be to-day!"

Emotion choked him; he paused. "Her face was seamed and wrinkled and lined," he went on. "Humble she was and poor and a widow, and I—her only son—her only child. She gave me to God, proud of the giving, glad of it, yielding me back to Him who gave me. She prayed for me, Mrs. Ramsey. I was no wiser or better or more talented than the average lad of my years, heedless, indeed, and careless and inclined to levity. But she prayed for me. And her prayers must have touched the heart of God she loved in her pure way, for I made me what I am. After Christ, I am His priest by virtue of my mother's prayers."

"Well, on my ordination day she disappeared. There is but one explanation—she was afraid to hamper my career, she was so proud of me. My poor talents were so many sources of joy to her. She thought, maybe, the son she toiled for would be ashamed of his mother who had eaten bitter bread for his sake, and was bent with much toiling up and down another's stairs. Mrs. Ramsey, when you spoke just now I felt suddenly that here was a way—that God meant you for His instrument. Through your prayers He will give me back the one to whom I owe my life, my vocation. It must be an inspiration, mustn't it? How could you, wealthy, aristocratic, moving in the circles that you do—how could you come in contact with a poor little old woman? And I do not ask you to seek her. Just pray—that I may find her. God will, in His mercy, give to you what He has not given to me."

He had touched the woman's heart beneath her cold exterior. The tears were streaming down her face—tears she did not check or wipe away, though generally any emotion seemed an insult to the classic calm on which she prided herself. Max put his hands out to meet his friend's, and their fingers met warmly. His eyes, too, were moist. Father Maurice looked ashamed. "Pray forgive me—for making you feel so badly," he said. "I do not know why I said so much—it must surely have been an inspiration. Mrs. Ramsey, for—"

life as I am about this. I think you have bewitched me." "I think you have been soul-dumb," he answered. "Now that the language of the spirit is finding vent at last in rightful speech, it craves for its true food."

"Thank you—there is a good deal of meaning in that. Perhaps you are right. I have read somewhere about storming the citadels of heaven—well, if such a thing is possible, I must have weakened a few of the outer ramparts. I—I want more than an answer," she finished abruptly. "If, who am in darkness, seek the light."

She turned her eyes on her son, who smiled affectionately. The understanding that existed between these two was beautiful. On the son's part the love he entertained for his mother broadened a disposition inclined to aestheticism. It made him humanly, as an absorbing affection for another makes the narrowest masculine soul. It softened the woman's somewhat imperious disposition, prone to the arrogance her luxurious existence engendered. To Father Maurice the mere sight of her was a keen joy—so perfect was the sympathy between them. He looked from one face to the other, smiling now joyfully.

"I am glad to hear you talk so," he said. "Very glad. You are a few steps farther on the great road. Two months ago you would not have said that."

"Maybe not," she answered, adding: "Will you get in and drive with us a week? Perhaps, too, I can persuade you to have dinner? There is much I should like to ask you."

"Thank you, thank you," he answered heartily. "But I am on duty for the evening. Next week—let us say Thursday?"

Father Maurice, Father Maurice, pleased! An excited voice called his name, an excited gaze met his gaze as he turned at the call.

A man had halted in a hasty run past him and now stood in front of him, hat in hand. "Thank God, father, I met you here—was just going to the rectory. There's a poor woman run over up the street and she's being carried into the drug store. They ring up an ambulance, but she wants the priest. Quick, too, Father Maurice. I'm afraid she's pretty bad—"

It was the call no servant of God has ever heard in vain. Without a word Father Maurice turned and left his friends and was soon lost to sight in the throng. As they went along, the man, who attended the church with which Father Maurice was connected, gave him hasty but graphic details of the accident. The crowd around the drug store fell away as they saw the priest, and hats were lifted as he passed.

peated over and over the simple prayers for the dying—the prayers she loved. The ambulance surgeon came, but Father Maurice simply motioned him aside. She was going fast then, and one glance at the glazing eyes told the young doctor so. He looked in some surprise at the white face bent so tenderly above the dying woman—at the strong arms that held the shaking old form in their tender clasp.

"She is my mother!" said the priest in answer to the curious look, and at that the man fell back, touched to the heart by the grief expressed in the simple words. The Catholic woman was on her knees, sobbing audibly.

Outside Mrs. Ramsey saw the crowd thinning rapidly away from the drug store, for excitement in the city is but ephemeral. She called the coachman to halt.

"Father Maurice must be in there yet," she said. "Go, Max. Perhaps we can help the poor creature, whoever she may be."

Max obeyed. He entered the store hastily, coming out a few moments afterwards and approaching the aristocratic woman who awaited him. Her somewhat languid expression gave way to a look of anxiety when she saw his face. She sat up quickly.

"What is it, Max? Something had happened?" "Your prayer has been answered mother dear. I shall stay here—perhaps I can be of some use to Maurice."

"Max!" "He has found his mother, he has found her at last."

"Dead dead. Go home without me. I shall come as soon as possible and tell you all about it."

Three months later Father Maurice was sent on his longed-for mission work. Two things he likes to remember of his last few days' stay in New York. One is the reception into the fold of Mrs. Ramsey, who found faith the day the crowd quended, and who is now among the humblest children of Mother Church. The other is his last visit to the little mound in Calvary cemetery where rests all that is earthly of his mother's form—Grace Keon in The Ruler of the Kingdom.


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not promote in the minds of sensible people the true progress of the race. Unfortunately at times there are some misguided Catholics who would exchange this divine birthright of the revelation of Christ for the changing, shifting, transitory vagaries of human error; but their number is always few and in America is reduced to the minimum. The Independent can, then, without any fear of being mistaken, immediately make up its mind as to the future of Modernism in the Church in America. It will have no future. The American Catholic has too much common sense, too much loyalty to even dream of substituting for the faith of the Church the vague, incoherent afterthoughts of those who would usurp the office of his legitimate religious teachers.—The Pilot.

WIT AND HUMOR.

Fair Soprano (having finished her trial)—Do you think my voice will fill the hall?
 Grim Manager—I fear it would have just the opposite effect.

"When my uncle comes to town," said the young man, firmly, "he shall be properly entertained. He shall never say that I did not do him well. He shall have everything that his money will buy."

Shopkeeper—Is there anything else I can send you, sir? What would you say to a piece of this cheese?
 Customer—I wouldn't care to say anything to it. It might answer me back!

"I diagnose all my cases from the patient's eyes," said a doctor, emphatically. "Now your right eye tells me that your liver is affected."
 "Excuse me, doctor," the patient remarked, "but my right eye is a glass one!"

Important Lady (who has been subjected to the child to a running fire of questions)—Is the skin of the fox any use?
 Child—Yes.
 Lady—What for?
 Child—For keeping the fox warm, of course.

Practical Yankee—Well, yes, sir, I give up to you. Shakespeare was a genius; but he didn't kinder seem to put it to a practical use. Never benefited civilization with a washing machine, nor a patent turnip-peeler, nor anything of that sort. Still, he was a smart man.

Lawyer—You say the prisoner stole your watch? What distinguishing feature was about the watch?
 Witness—It had my sweetheart's picture in it.
 Lawyer—Ah, I see. A woman in the case.


In the town of Ballingh lived a butcher, who was famed for selling tough meat. A countryman went in one day to purchase some.
 "Well, my good man," asked the butcher, "is it for frying or boiling you want it?"
 "Neither," replied John. "It's to make hinges for the stable-door."

Ginx was discovered in the backyard kicking himself.
 "Why this strenuousness?" asked one of his neighbors.

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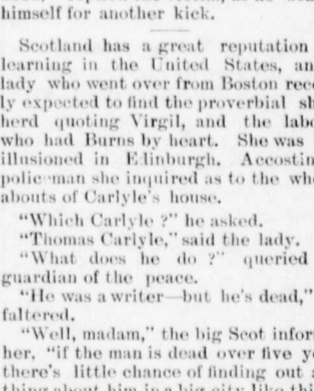


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