giving her to us. She will reach Tsi nan to-day on the afternoon boat. This letter is dated a week ago. Had our lazy mail carrier been a few later she would have found no

one there to meet her.' As he listened John anxiously watched the priest's face, thin and haggard for all its boyishness, wondering why this was not good news.

"We are poor, very poor," Father Labarge continued, after a long pause, "We have headly properly food for

have hardly enough food for two, and whatever comes she must

John was greatly relieved. So this as what was troubling Father La-I can eat less, much less !"

he said stoutly.

With real admiration the priest smiled into the stolid contented face of the catechist. Already he was living on what was starvation diet for a growing boy, because it was famine year in northern China, and, though generous to a fault, their people were too poor and too hungry to have more than a pittance to give

away.
"And Father, perhaps she knows how to cook. Of course I don't mean that you don't, but-but, why, that's what women are for." he stammered ter: then hastened to add: you will get stronger if you have better food. And your mother might help us pay, if you ask her. Do you remember you said once that per-haps she would? She knows that are not as strong as you were at t. She'd be glad to think that there is some one to be good to you.'

Yes, she knows all about my The bishop made me write winter. I am afraid I shall have to ask her for money. I can't allow you and this old woman to suffer. But, John, my mother is not rich, and she has many charities, each dearer to her than anything else in the world, I know well that all she sends us will come out of her living, not out of the part of the income she gives

away."

Father Labarge sat twirling the bishop's letter for a while before he continued hopefully, to himself, rather than to John:

erhaps the doctor is right, and I could grow strong if I had better food. Somehow, I can't cook. John can't Practise only makes us more incom-And each time he sees me petent. And each time he sees me the Bishop threatens to send me doctor who first put this mischief into his head. I might be kept there for months, or even years, away from these dear people and this field, white for the harvest and so poor in laborers! It would break my heart to go -though I often dream of being home again, just for one hour, just to look more into my dear mother's

That there was a possibility of Father Labarge being sent back to France John had not known. He was deeply distressed.

"Oh, Father, you won't leave How-chow!" he exclaimed.

"Never, John, of my own will, or without an aching heart!" Then, abruptly changing the subject, he said in a matter of fact way: "We shall give the old lady my room and move my books and papers out of her way. Henceforth I'll spread my bed beside yours on the kang in the back room. We must be very good to her John. She will be homesick and lonely, you know, so far from

But Father Labarge did not go at once into the house to make the weak and weary than any one guessed. Every least effort cost him heroic effort. And John, lazy by nature, was only too glad to crouch down on ily at the cloudless sky. Presently he broke the silence which had fallen over them, saying in a hesitating, wistful way, unlike his habitual un. emotional stolidity:

"Father, this old woman who is coming—I wonder if she is anybody's

Father Labarge's tender heart was touched, and he laid a caressing hand on John's shoulder. The boy could not remember his own mother, and this was not the first time he had said something which showed that deep in his heart was a hunger for the love he had never known.

"Yes, John; I forget to tell you all the Bishop said. She has two sons. Both are settled in life and she is carrying out a project which has long been her dream. So you must be a son to her and fill the place of those she has left behind."

Before noon Father Labarge set out towards Tsi nan, four miles away. Though very miserable, he was too courteous to allow John to meet the courteous to allow John to meet the old French woman. To protect himself from the heat of the midday sun he carried a large umbrella of strange unearthly shape, the worse for much use; but he could not shield himself from the dust which lay several inches deep in the road and almost blinded him whenever a car jogged past. As he dragged himself along heart was oppressed with the fear which grew on him day by day ; that he would be sent to Europe to recuperate. During his four years of work in China he had seen several men break under the strain of hard work and poor food; a few had gone home and never yet been allowed to return ; others, and these he envied, had toiled without respite until the Master Himself had come to take them home to rest forever. He was troubled, too, about the woman thrown upon his hands by the Bishop. She would doubtless be a care in

natured, as good people of a certain type are, in China as elsewhere. She might become discontented; she might be a gossip; she might be meddlesome; there were a dozen menaoing possibilities.

On and on Father Labarge trudged,

the day seemed to lengthen endlessly before him. When, at length, he neared Tei. Tsin vehicles of every description passed him frequently, and soon his clothes were brown with dust, his eyes smarted, and his lips

ecame parched.

On and on he trudged, faint and weary, the sense of depression deepening every minute. A feeling of homesickness stole into his heart, as it was liable to do when he was partic ularly ill or tired. As a boy, because he was delicate, he had been his mother's care day and night; and ill, he always longed to creep into her arms, a little child once more.

He was thinking of her as he picked his way through the dirty street of Tsi nan, recalling little incidents of his boyhood that sometimes brought tears to his eyes, more often a merry smile to his lips. When he reached the boat landing he saw that among those waiting there were Mrs. Smith wife of the British consul at Tsi-nan and her son, a half-grown boy, wh he had heard, was going to England to complete his education. He spoke to them, a word only, and hurried to the end of the dock, ostensibly that he might be able to lean against one of the stout bamboo poles that flanked it. Homesick as he himself was that day, he could not bear the sight of Mrs. Smith's white, set face, or her

son's quivering one.

He had walked slowly from Howchow and had not long to wait. In ten minutes the boat came in sight around the bend in the river, and at that instant, chancing to glance again, toward the Smith's, he saw the boy cling suddenly to his mother as if he could never part from her. He quickly looked away, but a lump had risen in his throat and tears were

streaming over his cheeks. Already the boat was trying to make a landing, and impatiently he brushed his hand across his eyes so that he could see. A number of people stood by the railing of the upper deck and he scanned them one one; first, some American tourists noisy, curious, unmistakably rich two mandarins, smiling, dignified, in-scrutable; a fat Englishman who lolled over the railing as he chatted with a man much younger than himself : and next to them he saw a short stout, rosy-faced old women. She was tremulously waving her hand-kerchief and tears were pouring un-

need over her cheeks.

For one instant Father Labarge stared at her before he dashed across the still infecure gang plank; across the deck. The old woman's and in a moment he was folded close

in them like a little, weary child.
"Oh, Mother! Mother!" he sob bed -Florence Gilmore in the Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

CHARITY WITHOUT FAITH

Where is the need of dogmas in religion? Is it not enough to be kind to my neighbor, to feel for him in his troubles, to help him so far as I can? Can I not be good to my neighbor no matter what creed I pro less, or even if I profess no creed at

These questions so frequently asked nowadays, indicate a strange ignorance of human nature and of the history of the work of Christianity in purifying and elevating it.

In pagan Greece and Rome, just at about definite convictious and as eager for novelty as many persons are to-day, cruelty, sheer enjoyment of human suffering, attained gree of refined ingenuity which was not human, but diabolical. The martyrs of Christ, victims of that cruelty in all its extremes of malice and ingenuity, by their hereic loyalty to their Divine Master, helped to change the human heart and to ax. ercise from it the demon of cruelty. Dying in torture, they prayed for their torturers, like Him Whose witnesses they were. Their blood became the seed of Christians. They were loyal to Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ is God. They forgave and loved and prayed for their de-luded and brutalized torturers, because deep in their hearts was the lesson of charity which they learned from the example and teaching of the Son of God made man.

The mystery of the Incarnation established on earth the reign of love. Men learned to love one another when they learned that Jesus is the Christ, the Sen of the Living God. When God became man He raised human nature to a sublime dignity and grandeur. The death of the God man for us upon the Cross showed us the mysterious value and dignity of our souls. His lifelong example, as well as His emphati teaching, inculcated this lesson which He sealed with His blood. His own tender love for the poor, the ignorant, the outcast, the disagreeable, the unattractive, even for the enemies who sought His life, was explained and enforced by Him in ex-plicit and emphatic dogmatic teaching. The root-principle of all His teaching was the mystery of the In-

The true lovers of men, the true friends of mankind, were always those who remembered the words of the Master—words which He tells us view the Archbishep of Rouen had many ways, a help in none, unless the will repeat with all solemnity best something to say of a possible reconsider could cook. She might be ill. fore the whole human race on the ciliation between the Church and the

last day: "Whatsoever ye did to the least of My brethren, that ye did unto Me." Men loved one another use they believed that Christ is

When men lose their faith in Christ, their charity grows cold. When they cease to be inspired by the sublime example of the love of God made man for us and for our salvation, their hearts shrink up into the poor petty narrowness of selfishness, individual, tribal, national. This is the lesson that men may read upon the very surface of his-tory. The thoughtless irreverence which regards our Divine Saviour as teacher is very near to the coldness and hardness of heart that shows it-self in blind and bitter hatred of the It is true that even in societies

which have been robbed of the price-less treasure of faith in Our Lord, there remain a kindness and charity. such as were unknown in the pagar the momentum of long centuries of faith and of true Christian love. Our philanthropists are living upon the accumulated capital of ages of Christian charity in the hearts of heir forefathers. Even while they are foolishly tearing up the roots of that divine flower of love, the beautiful old Catholic tradition still whispers in tones that grow fainter day by day, and warns them that even love itself demands clear knowledge and strong conviction. It is one of the strangest notions of this age, that the most urgent of our needs may be trusted to a mere irrational sentiment as adequate foundation and motive. Politics, literature, art, having nothing inspiring or cheering to tell us about human nature, its apacities, its aims, its destiny, since civilization became apostate from Christ. They tell us nothing except that man is unlovely and unloveable Philosophy and pseudo-science aim at making this lesson of pessimism absolutely irrefutable in universal in its grip upon the human mind. Then come the poor forlorn sentimentalists, asking us to go back again to the ages of charity without remembering that they were also ages of faith and that the heart of man craves realities not dreams. Amid the stern realities of life, we need a greater reality to raise our hearts above petty, sordid details of selfish well-being. If we are told, as the best wisdom of the world, that there is no such thing as a higher reality, then talk about charity and devotion to the cause of human progress ceases to have meaning.

Without faith in Jesus Christ there can be no real lasting love among men.—St. Paul Bulletin.

GOOD OUT OF EVIL

A part of the French press predicts that one outcome of the present war will be the establishment of better relations between the Catholic Church and the French Republic. If this prediction should be verified, it will be the realization of the fondest hope of Leo XIII, who strengly urged the Catholics of France to be loyal to the Republic. Many of them, instead of acting on this advice, did their best to identify the Catholic religion with the cause of menarchy. They there-by strengthened the hands of the foes of the Church in France, who were quick to avail themselves of the political power they acquired through the failure of French Catholics to adopt the wise policy advocated by Leo XIII.

The penalty the Church in France had to pay for this failure is known of all men. In addition to the ruth less confiscation of Church property and the banishment of thousands of members of religious orders, there are at the present moment some twenty-thousand French priests on

the firing line as private soldiers. The heroism displayed by the latter has won for them the admiration of many of their countrymen, who a few years ago denounced them in the bitterest terms. The war itself has had the effect of sobering the French people, who are beginning to take more serious views of life. In this frame of mind they are more susceptible to religious influences than they were before the outbreak of hostilities. Many of them are asking whether their country, which had grown great when it was known as the "Eldest Daughter of the Church," and his fellow atheists desire, the great spiritual power that for centuries moulded the French character.

Archbishop Frozet of Rouen, in re-ferring to the various evidences of this alleged mental attitude of his countrymen, says in an interview published by the Paris Gaulois: "The people of Rouen, even those who do not practise religion, cling to its forms and ceremonies. This spirit has grown wenderfully since the beginning of hostilities. . . Ad-mitting that war is frightful, that beautiful youth and dear lives are destroyed, yet the blood thus shed will weld together forever the French conscience, which until now has been divided by too many misunderstand-ings. Even now I receive letters from my priests who are at the front assuring me of the firm confidence that has sprang up between them and their comrades—that is between the people and the clergy. Such ar understanding cannot melt away the day after victory, because it is based the solidarity of sacrifice for the Fatherland and in the most deeply rooted traditions of the heart of the

French Republic. He expressed the opinion that Benedict XV. is willing to do everything in his power to bring about such a reconciliation. It is asserted that French legislators, to quote the Archbishop's words: "en-lightened by the immense growth of religious feeling in this supreme crisis, will not deprive victorious France of the great moral benefit she has spontaneously acquired. And I am convinced that at Rome there is the disposition and the readiness to make an end of all sorry and re-

It may well happen that good will come out of the deplorable necessity that caused France to plunge into the present war. She had set her on the downward path to athe It is not too late for her to re trace her steps. The new spirit of which the Archbishop of Rouen speaks may induce her to do so. —N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

A TRUCE OF GOD

The London Daily Chronicle pub ishes a despatch from Rome stating that Benedict XV. is endeavoring to induce the belligerent States to suspend hostilities during Christmas-tide. It is to be earnestly hoped that his Holiness' efforts to have even temporary suspension of the whole-sale slaughter now going on, may be crowned with success. The Father of Christendom beseeches the rulers of the countries now at war to put a stop to the clang of arms, whilst Christians are everywhere celebrat-ing the Feast of the World's Redemp-The dispatch to the London Chronicle adds: "It is stated that his Holiness has directed that particulars of his appeal be com-

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