

Miss Lucy sniffed. "It's too perfectly silly, why, can't you mind your own business? If your mother were here she'd not let you do it."

"No, she wouldn't," Agnes thought in her heart, "she'd be doing it herself," but she merely nodded, she had no time to lose.

That she was needed in the Moore household was evidenced at some distance; the baby's wailing, mingled with Rita's shrill scolding, vainly attempting to still the general riot of boys, greeted her from afar. Mr. Moore was "hitching up"; the horse looked almost as discouraged as his master, who ran forward as Agnes appeared.

"Anything the matter?" he queried anxiously. "What's happened?" "I wanted to be sure you all got off in time; I knew Rita would never be ready with the baby and all to tend to," Agnes thought it the part of wisdom to make Rita and the baby responsible for her appearance rather than draw attention to her other "grave reasons."

"Why, Agnes, Mr. Moore was almost startled into animation, 'that certainly is neighborly! They're all backin' and pullin' in there.' A war whoop from young Tom confirmed the statement, and Agnes hastened to the house, where she was a great favorite.

"You, Tom," she called in affable but most authoritative tones, "drop that cat and finish dressing before I count ten. Bobby, take the button-hook out of your nose instantly and fasten your shoes—where, such fancy shoes our Bob's got! Etta, give me the baby and make haste, don't bother with dishes or dusting, I'll attend to that, you get ready, Billy," this with a flattering change of voice, "if you're ready please come and help me with these kids."

As Agnes entered, Billy was telling his mother he didn't mean to make the mission; that Jack Ferris whose old man had more money anybody round here, said religion was only for women and kids, and Catholics were Catholics 'cause they're too ignorant to be anything else. Mrs. Moore was crying, but Agnes?—Agnes was different; even Jack Ferris said Agnes was the prettiest and smartest girl in town or out of it. Great Scott! he didn't want Agnes to know he was tormenting his mother. It was mean when she was sick, if you stopped to think of it.

"Please bring me a necktie for Tom, Billy," Agnes requested. Billy was making frantic efforts to get his own tie in place.

"Two seconds, Agnes," he responded with a sudden accession of amiability that made his mother open her eyes.

It was amazing how quickly and quietly everybody came to order with Agnes at the helm. Not another protest of any sort was registered; they were soon under way, and Agnes could give her attention to Mrs. Moore.

"Oh, Agnes, Agnes," sobbed the poor woman, "you're an answer to prayer. I didn't sleep all night just begging and beseeching that something might happen to get them all to the mission, and my head aches so I can't see. Evidently Mr. Moore hasn't seemed to care lately, whether he goes to Mass or not. I've been sick so long he hasn't any spirit left."

"He'll feel different after the mission. Father Forrest'll make him care—he makes everybody care. Now, I'm going to katie Mr. Baby and get him to sleep, then I can make you comfy and straighten things up for Etta."

"It's a shame to let you do it," Mrs. Moore whimpered.

Agnes laughed and the baby laughed with her. "Awful shame," was her comment; the baby thought she was making a joke and gurgled appreciation.

She carried out her program to the letter, and made Mrs. Moore's room more tidy and attractive than it had been in days; then, as the poor lady revelled in the renewed daintiness of her bed and belongings; Agnes read her the Mass prayers, and bled rather and harrer found now beauty in the familiar words thus spoken aloud.

It did not seem possible that the morning was really over when the family returned, bringing a message from Cousin Lucy; as the weather was threatening, she had decided to spend the day in town, so Agnes stayed to help Etta with dinner and hear about the opening of the mission.

"My, but he's a grand man," was Etta's verdict. "I never thought I'd stand for sermons but I just loved to hear him talk; it made me feel funny, kinda."

She did not admit it till the hope was gone that there had been one that involved Lucy's offering to take the place for the evening. She was determined Mr. Moore should go, and Billy and Etta; as for the younger boys, it left at home they were liable to fire the house or drown the baby, and possibly they needed the mission more than any of the others; "A brace of young heathen," Agnes' father dubbed them with reason. If the baby would only go to sleep properly! But the Moore baby could be counted on to do the wrong thing, and Mrs. Moore was too nervous and easily upset to be left alone, even if the baby's conduct had been most exemplary.

Agnes went back through the rain to see the family make a second start, and spent the evening listening to Mrs. Moore's account of her many trials, her illness, and her worries. "It just breaks my heart to see the way my boys are going," she cried. "And I'm so helpless, I never did know how to teach them, and poor little Rita is so smart and she sees we're lax about our religion and she thinks she can be, too. If they would only go steady to the mission they'd learn something, but how can they with me this way?"

"They'd go," said Agnes. "I'll see to that, and you and I will have a mission to pray for them. Father McGuire said this morning no prayer could be a success without prayer, so we can help that way."

"So we can," Mrs. Moore was delighted with the suggestion. "Why, I'm so glad you said that; of course I pray for my own, but I didn't think of helping the whole mission; it's kind of having a part in it isn't it? Oh, Agnes, I never knew what a neighbor meant till I moved by your ma, and you're just like her, dear."

"This was praise, indeed, and Agnes cherished it the next morning when she literally waded across lots to the Moore's. Bobby, who had taken the reepeat Lucy's place, stumbling sleepily by her side. She knew there was no chance for her to go to Miss Lucy's; it would be impossible to get back to drive her into town in time with the roads in their present condition. If only she had kept the team at home! And she had been so pleased to have her brother offer to take care of them off her hands while her father was away. Well, if she was like her mother she must not be grouchy, she told herself.

It was hard to keep cheery, for circumstances piled up against her; the weather was certainly bewitched, and thunder storm followed thunder storm until the horses were all but stalled by the mud; then that unfortunate baby developed a cough that threatened to end its feeble existence and afforded its mother another headache, so even when the sun shone long enough to do any good Agnes did not dare leave the baby, who was quiet with her and with no one else.

Cousin Lucy telephoned and wrote notes imploring and commanding Agnes to come to the mission before it was too late; the Moores had had their share, it was her turn now and there was no excuse for her; Cousin Lucy ignored the baby's needs, and everbody thought it so queer, when she'd not even old friends."

The Moores did not think it queer; they accepted Agnes' generalship and her sacrifice as a matter of course. After the first two days they forgot to say they were sorry she could not go with them. They talked about the mission incessantly, and while Agnes was quite as eager as Mrs. Moore to hear all details, she found it difficult to repress the irritation that possessed her to think that she was missing it all.

The only daughter of well to do and devoted parents, she had known very little of trial or disappointment. If anything had ruffled her path, her mother had been close to help her over the rough places and smooth it out again. This was a real disappointment and a trial as well, and taking charge of the Moores' uproaring brood was a decidedly trying experience for the youngest member of a singularly well ordered household. She wanted to bear it patiently, to offer it without spot or stain, but her prayer for the success of the mission. In all outward appearances she was all that she meant to be, but when she faced her conscience at night she called her own "meanness."

"I'm ashamed of you, Agnes Carl," she commended with her inner self, "as long as you were going to do it, you might at least do it right and not be grudging them every little thing."

The continued struggle with her unaccustomed duties and her own quick temper told on her, and by Friday night she was decidedly "on edge," she went so far as to vigorously box young Tom's ears, much to that young man's surprise, for some trivial offense; it relieved her feelings and had a most happy effect on Tom, who was absolutely lamblike thereafter; but Agnes knew that however much he needed punishment, Tom was merely her scapegoat this time. It was Etta who had fired the train that led to the explosion.

Etta had her difficulties, too, and voiced them. "I'm sick and tired of this old mission business; it's nothin' but go, go, go, till you're wore to a ravelin'!"

And for this Agnes had sacrificed what meant so much to her! So Tom Saturday the family went to confession after Mass, save Billy, who waited until evening to escort Agnes.

Never before had Agnes been loath to go on such an errand, but this time it seemed to her she had had no chance to prepare, she was confused and disoriented. What if she had made a mistake and it had all been of no use? If she could only have asked her mother's advice or Father Forrest's.

A group of young people were waiting outside the Church as Agnes and Billy appeared. A general chorus went up: "Why, Agnes! Here's Agnes! Why Agnes Carl, where have you been all week?" "Were you sick?" "To think you of all people, should miss the mission!"

Stacia Halligan averted explanations by drawing Agnes aside. "Agnes, dear," she began, "I hope you know I'd been out to help you if mother hadn't hurt her hand so bad she couldn't do a thing without me. You wouldn't have been alone that way if she hadn't. I think you're awful good, Agnes."

"I'm not, Stacia; you are," Agnes spoke quickly. "It was dear of you to think of me, and I hope your mother's better."

"It's getting on all right, and everybody says Mr. Moore looks twenty years younger." Stacia's English might be confused, but Agnes understood. "I'm going to tell 'em it's all you."

"Indeed, you mustn't, Stacia; it isn't." "H'm," quoth Miss Stacia enigmatically, "your cousin's boiling mad." Agnes held her head high as she went into church.

On the way home she learned something. "Agnes," began Billy, as they jogged along in the dark, "I'd like to thank you for all you've done, but I can't; I don't know how. You can't think what just seeing you give up what you like best and doing what you've done for us has meant to me, but I want you to know that tonight I went to confession right for the first time in my life; and I'm always going that way now and I'm going often. I've found out something that the Church means from the mission, and I've found out more from you. And Agnes, I took Jack Ferris to the night lectures and he's been talking to Father Forrest, and he's decided to go to a Catholic college next fall. And that's some of your doing, too."

"And to think I was cross and mean about it," Agnes cried, as she fell asleep.

Mrs. Moore celebrated the family's return from Mass by getting up to breakfast. As Agnes helped her settle herself at the head of the table Mrs. Moore drew her down and kissed her.

"Agnes," she said solemnly, "you've made me well. Mr. Moore hasn't approached the Sacraments in years, and I feel now everything is going to be right with us once more."

Etta added her testimony later. "I've been awfully snappy to you, Agnes, just because I thought you had everything and I hadn't nothing, and I thought you was stuck up, but I know what you are now, an'—an' I wish I was just like you."

"Etta," Agnes told her, "we're going to be good friends—the best of friends. You bring over your new dress and I'll help you make it."

Etta the hard-hearted, began to cry. "I never had a friend before," she sobbed in Agnes' arms.

Agnes had no regret as she sat with Mrs. Moore that night. "The next mission we'll be going, too," she said gaily to Mrs. Moore.

And Mrs. Moore insisted upon escorting her and Bobby to her own door. He nearly wrung her hair off as he said good night. "I'll never forget this, never," his voice was husky with the feeling in it.

Agnes was deep in Monday's wash when she heard some one coming around the house. Had Cousin Lucy returned? She had just time to shake off the suds and wipe her hands when Father Forrest appeared.

A CALL TO CATHOLIC WOMEN

TO ARM THEMSELVES FOR BIG CONFLICT WITH EVIL FORCES

How many good resolutions have we Catholic women made for the year 1916? First and above all, have we made up our minds to be good, practical Catholics, hearing daily Mass when possible, receiving Holy Communion at least every first Friday, and by our attitude in the home and in social life setting an example of Christian womanhood?

Are we starting the New Year at peace with our neighbors and forgiving our enemies? Have we made up our mind to give up that old grudge which, like a canker spot, has embittered us during the past year and caused unhappiness not only to ourselves, but to others. Perhaps it is someone whom we once called friend who has been the cause of our misery and turned our affection into dislike. Have we given earnest thought to what led up to the breach, and our share in the matter. Were we not also to blame? Now is the time to cast all pettiness aside, to be generous, to acknowledge our weakness and to learn to forgive and forget. If we do this we shall have the peace of God that passeth all understanding—and no happiness equals such peace.

What a power we Catholic women have for good—or evil! The example of a practical Catholic woman cannot be overestimated. It will travel further than she dreams and work miracles.

We are all more or less imitative; not all of us have the initiative faculty. That is the reason so many of us blindly follow the dictates of fashion, whether the style suits us or not—we must be a la mode. Sometimes we make ourselves ridiculous, but what do we care, so long as we are in the fashion. When one of our prominent Catholic women set the style in putting down indecent dressing; will not attend plays in which risqué situations are depicted; will not as hostesses offer wine to young people visiting their homes; will see that their children attend Catholic schools and colleges—then a new era for Catholicity will start, which will make the Catholic women the initiators of a campaign against the powers of materialism which is insidiously making headway even among our Catholic people.

There is no doubt that materialism is working destruction to the sects, and it is only by the grace of God that Catholics can hope to escape its contaminating influence. The grace of God! How many of us seek it in the right spirit? Now is the time, at the beginning of the year, to throw ourselves on His mercy and ask help to help to fight the good fight against the powers of evil.

What a contrast is the weak-hearted, lukewarm Catholic woman to her earnest sister, the good practical Catholic. The former is outwardly a Catholic, attends Mass on Sundays, but does not like to be mentioned as being in the Catholic set. She prefers the society of people higher up perhaps in the social swim—people who are often openly and confessedly antagonistic to Catholicity. If she were a good practical Catholic and circumstances threw her among these people, her power for good would be great, but generally speaking, good Catholic women seldom seek such company, and it is here the lukewarm Catholic comes in and works havoc.

This class of woman sends her children to godless schools, or colleges, because it is fashionable. She will reap the whirlwind. In the years to come, when, despite riches and material prosperity, age and infirmity come, her children, instead of being a solace and a joy, will be a nightmare. According to their training they will despise the Faith and will naturally despise the lukewarm Catholic mother who was ashamed of it. She sent them to the institutions where God's name was tabooed, where there was no room for our Divine Lord, just as there was no room for Him in Bethlehem more than nineteen hundred years ago.

That is another resolution to be made for 1916: to send our children to Catholic schools and colleges. We Catholics cannot afford to join in excluding God from our children during the most precious years of their lives—the years of school life—the time when the mind is like clay in the hand of the potter—to fashion perfectly or imperfectly. If these precious hours are lost or badly used through the fault of the parents or guardians, you to each! The Catholic school or college is the place for the Catholic child. It is supported by the Catholic people, and its results in education alone, not speaking of religion, have proved its superiority. In it the Catholic child is taught the value of time as a God-given gift, therefore not to be wasted. Love and respect for parents and superiors is inculcated in the children. If the child does not profit by these instructions, it is no fault of the teacher.

To put the idea in a nutshell: If there is a chance for a Catholic child turning out a credit to the State and all concerned, it is in the Catholic school. The importance of parents sending their children to Catholic schools cannot be impressed too deeply. Parents who neglect to do so, do not understand what they are depriving their children of, or what evil it will do to themselves. When a sorrow and tribulation overtake them, the child brought up in a

Catholic school will be a solace and a comfort to them if he or she has imbibed the teachings of such schools.

Another resolution; to watch what our young people are reading. Never were there more subtle attacks on Catholicism, particularly in the fascinating form known as novelettes. Some of these by the best writers are deadly in their diabolical attacks against the morals, purity and religion of our people. In an evening newspaper which carries such fifth I read recently what might be termed the worst. So let parents be careful lest such stories fall into the hands of their children. The story mentioned came from the pen of a writer who has produced many good things, but that does not excuse him; rather does it make his offense more grievous.

Never was there a greater need for Catholic women to keep a sharp look out to guard the purity of their children. There is a great war raging in Europe, but a greater one is fought every day at home with us, and the victims are—the souls of the children. So Catholic women, girl or young, arm and fight the good fight against the powers of evil during 1916!—Sheila Mahon in the Tablet.

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A NOTED CONVERT
THE STORY OF FRAU DAVIN'S CHANGE OF FAITH
"How I Became a Catholic," is the story, in pamphlet form, of the conversion from Lutheranism of Olga Maria Davin, an accomplished artist, linguist, writer and composer.

Frau Davin was born in St. Petersburg, of German Lutheran parents. The religious ceremonies, which the Russian Orthodox church has taken over from the Catholic Church, made a profound impression on her. A comparative study of the tenets of faith of the various denominations revealed to her the weakness of the Protestant sects and the strength of Catholicism.

In the course of time, her leaning to the Catholic Church prompted her to visit a Catholic Church occasionally. Concerning such visits to the Catholic Church in Ems, she says: "There was no one in the church; therefore, I examined it to my heart's content, after which I knelt once more and prayed long and earnestly. Then I went out again into the street. I thought, 'Thou dear, hospitable Church that openest thy door so willingly to the weary stranger! Here in Ems thou shalt be my friend. I will visit thee daily; in thy holy peaceful atmosphere I will see rest and meditation.' And so I went day after day—sometimes twice—to that lovely house of God to pray; I had all my time at my own disposal. Occasionally there would be another worshipper, but often I knelt and prayed alone.

"On the third or fourth visit, as I was kneeling and reflecting, I felt a hand upon my shoulder. I turned and found myself gazing into a pair of earnest, dark eyes, belonging to a distinguished looking and handsome woman, who, in a low, husky voice inquired: 'Do you speak English?' I replied that I did. 'Do you know whether the priest of this church speaks English?' I thought the lady was in search of the English Protestant church, and I answered: 'This is a Roman Catholic Church. You probably are looking for the English church.' 'Oh, no!' said the lady. 'I am a Catholic. Are you not one also?' 'No,' I replied, 'I am a Lutheran.' And you are praying in this church though not a Catholic?" Then I answered: 'Catholic and Protestant alike believe in the Trinity God and Redemption. I prefer those points in which the churches agree to those in which they differ.' 'Come with me,' whispered the stranger, 'We must not speak here, but I have something to say to you.'

"We went outside, and the stranger and foreigner enlightened me for the first time on the grandeur of the Catholic Church. She spoke practically as follows: 'There is but one true Church on earth, which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, founded, and the Apostles preached. She alone possesses the treasure of the true faith as revealed by Almighty God. She alone has a Visible Head as a guarantee of her unity with God. She alone is the burning lamp, the City on the Mountain. Come to see me at my hotel. I am staying at an English boarding house with my husband. We are Californians, stopping here for a while in Ems. I will give you a book to read. Come, I beg you, tomorrow at 2.'

This meeting with the American lady prompted Frau Davin's first definite step on the road to Rome. Though her husband and friends tried to dissuade her from entering the Catholic Church, Frau Davin could not be deterred from following the voice of conscience and reason. On the feast of St. Boniface she was received into the Church.

Not content with having herself received the light of faith, Frau Davin has been instrumental in bringing about as many as seventy known conversions. Thus she has been planted into the heart of Frau Davin

by an American lady has yielded abundant fruit. Very properly the translator of Frau Davin's pamphlet alludes to this happy fruition in the foreword:

"It is no wonder that the American lady, herself a convert from the Baptist sect, who was the first to reveal the truth, the beauty of Catholic doctrine to Frau Davin, should rejoice over her conversion or that she herself should be instrumental in leading so many others into the True Fold. It is not given to every Catholic to exert such a great influence as hers; however, it is well to remember that good example and fervent prayer are never without effect upon the witnesses and subjects of them, though such effect may not always appear."—Catholic Bulletin.

PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH
From the time that the early Christians were fed to the lions for the amusement of the plebeians of Rome, the Catholic Church has had to suffer persecution at the hands of pagans and barbarians, and although we may boast of our great civilization of the present time when we speak and act against the mother Church of Christianity, we but revert to paganism and barbarity, is the opinion of W. H. Van Doran, a non-Catholic, which he voices in the Ladora Ledger.

The keen observer will find that before you can give proper credit to the Catholic Church for what it has done to bring man from heathenism to civilization, we must go back to the history of the time when Christ gave the command to His apostle to teach the world, and if you will but take the time and trouble to study and read, you will then appreciate what the Catholic Church has had to endure in the past twenty centuries.

It is not my purpose to recount the horrors of the martyrdom of the early Christians, the tale is too terrible to tell. But suffice it to say that in that time the privileged few of the pagan leaders revealed in wealth, luxury and vice, and when the gospel of Christ was preached and taught it bid fair to separate them from their carnal and sensual pleasures, and as a consequence, they bitterly fought the new faith, and inflicted horrible torture on those who preached and followed the teachings of the Humble Shepherd of Bethlehem.

Comparing the history of the early Christian faith, it can be likened to the present age, when man is prone to rebel a religious belief that has a semblance of authority, and one that will compel him to observe and practice the doctrines and forms of that particular worship. Hence, the need (?) of so many varied and controversial beliefs and teachings—nearly the average American likes to have a religion like a suit of clothes, when he gets tired of the pattern, he can throw it away and have another made to his liking. This is probably one of the great reasons why our 70,000,000 of American people take up with and believe (for the time being) with every new fetish that is propagated in and under the guise of religion.

But on the other hand, just as soon as one begins to study out the real from the false, just as soon as he is compelled to turn to the Catholic Church for authority of what he must prove to his own satisfaction.

Your deliver after facts will find that the Catholic Church was the first Christian organization to consecrate the lives of its men and women to the mission of reclaiming humanity from savagery and was the first to unfurl the banner of civilization and wage a war that has been fought for nearly two thousand years, in an effort to bring mankind to understand and accept the teachings of Jesus Christ.

For this she has sacrificed millions of lives, and the Church stands to day, the one institution that has withstood the storms and hatred of centuries, and it the Catholic Church is not of divine origin, I would be pleased to have you tell me what particular religious faith it is that was intended by Christ, Himself, when He bade His followers to go forth and teach the world?—The Guardian.

"JUSTICE SHALLOWS" DESCENDANTS CATHOLICS
The following statement will give gratification to Shakespeareans of the fold, and perhaps a little amusement to all who like the ironies of history. It comes from "The Chronicles of St. Monica's at Louvain," edited by the learned English Benedictine, Dom Hamilton, vol. 1, pp. 184-5:

"Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote was not only a fierce and bitter Protestant, but had set a savage and merciless part in the judicial murder, if not martyrdom, of Edward Arden, one of the noblest victims of the Earl of Leicester's vindictive hatred of Catholics. During the proceedings in the Arden affair, the Crown Commissioners held their sittings at Charlecote. * * * To Sir Edward Ashton, of Tixall, in Staffordshire, Shakespeare's enemy gave his only daughter, Anne Lucy, who thus became the ancestress of the Astons and Cliffords of Tixall. * * * Walter Aston (son of this Sir Edward and of Anne Lucy) in 1619 went as Ambassador to Spain for the affair of the expected royal marriage. Born and bred a Protestant, he embraced at Madrid the Catholic religion, from which his descendants have never swerved. And thus from the old

Protestant knight, Sir Thomas Lucy, a long line of loyal Catholics is descended, of whom Sir George Clifford, Bart., is the actual representative.—Ave Maria.

GETTING JOHNNY OFF TO SCHOOL

On these cold, frosty mornings when kitchen problems are more vexatious than at any other time of year, it is not an easy matter to get the children off to school on time without neglecting the thing that is most vital to their health and their progress in studies.

The problem is an easy one for the mother who knows the nutritive value of shredded wheat and the many wholesome, appetizing ways in which it can be served. Being ready-cooked it is so easy to prepare a warm, nourishing meal with shredded wheat in a few minutes. The biscuits are made more appetizing by placing them in the oven for a few moments to restore their crispness, then pour hot milk over them adding a little cream.

These shredded wheat biscuits have in them all the rich, body-building material in the whole wheat grain. When served in this way they give more real, body-building nutrition than meat or eggs, cost but a few cents and are easily digested. In any group of children you can always pick out the 'shredded wheat boys and girls' by their unusual physical sturdiness and mental alertness.

MUST RECEIVE THE ENGRAFTED WORD
It is not sufficient to hear about religion, or even to listen to its adherents as they explain its dogmas and precepts. In order to become a Christian, there must be a reaching out after truth, a certain taking of the Kingdom by violence, ere the listener can be considered an earnest lover of truth. Cardinal Newman says:

"A man may hear a thousand lectures and read a thousand volumes, and be at the end of the process very much where he was, as regards knowledge. Something more than merely admitting it in a negative way into his mind is necessary, if it is to remain there. It must not be passively received, but actually and actively entered into, embraced, mastered. The mind must go half way to meet what comes to it from without."

Much is said in various Catholic circles about combating the present wave of bigotry. The discussion, however, that we hear is not the kind of discussion that accomplishes desired results. It is not Catholics but non-Catholics who need the light and truth on the subject. And the sensible and practical way to put them in possession of both is to send out among them all over the country capable and thoroughly equipped lecturers. That's how anti-Catholic bigotry was spread. And that's how it can best and soonest be checked.—The Missionary.

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