

RANDOM REFLECTIONS

RESPONSIBILITY OF ENORMOUS
OPULENCE.

If it is any consolation to some of our co-religionists, they may take a kind of worldly comfort in the fact that the richest woman in the United States is a convert to the Church, the widow Walker of Philadelphia, the heiress of the late William Weightman's many millions of dollars. Her son, an only child, died when he was 28 years old, but was the first of the family to be converted. The mother and father followed him into the true fold. I am informed that this lady, now about 60 years of age, is a devout Catholic, and as such, she must value her religion more, infinitely more, than her father's many millions of money and property. The vast fortune was built up chiefly by manufacturing quinine—discovered by the Jesuits—plus a high protective tariff, for a very long period. Though the old gentleman, who died at 91 years, did not leave a dollar to charity, he did bequeath his entire estate to his Catholic daughter. He himself lived and died a Protestant, but evidently respected as well as loved his daughter, his only child. What Mrs. Walker may do with her money eventually I do not know, and as far as the perpetuity of the Church is concerned, it does not matter at all. Her lot is not an enviable one as an enormously opulent lady. She, no doubt, is pursued and annoyed by a multitude of beggars, high and low. Her one inestimable treasure is her faith and her millions may not improve it. She is very apt to make a wise use of her fortune, and it is nobody's business what she does with it legitimately. The Church is not always bettered, humanly speaking, by riches, but the reverse. The Church in France had accumulated a vast sum, but the revolutionists and Napoleon robbed her of it all. That was a dastard, sacrilegious act on their part, but she shone, in her poverty, more resplendently than in her wealth. It is said that Cardinal Manning prayed that the Church in England should never become a rich establishment. Money, much money, is needed even by the Church, and many great works are frustrated by the need of it; but I take it that when God, through His providence, allows her to be poor, He will also aid her at times, as frequently happens, as has happened in the case of the Drexels and others, in this country. It may be that He has raised up Mrs. Walker for the help of our suffering missions or for some purpose of that kind, but that is all speculative, and, to quote the jargon of the day, "in the air."

THE BENEVOLENT PIZATTIS.

The Italians in New Orleans form a most exemplary colony. There are a few bad ones, as in all nationalities, and they had a terrible lesson, some years ago; but the overwhelming majority, I understand, are all that could be desired as Catholics and good citizens. Many of them have prospered, in all kinds of ways, and one of them, Captain Salvatore Pizatti, in conjunction with his pious wife, is distributing his large fortune during his life time. He has already given \$115,000 to Catholic schools and missions. His next projected charity will be a home for aged and needy Italians, in New Orleans. When these noble and generous Pizattis come to die they will probably be relatively poor, because they were true stewards of the Lord. Meanwhile they retain enough to support them decently. They are evidently determined that lawyers and pretended claimants shall not quarrel over and fatten on their estate.

INTERIOR PEACE AND EXTERIOR
CARE.

Talking with an old priest, belonging to one of the religious orders, recently, he said, in answer to some stated perplexities: "I have no cares and no anxieties." He came from an ancient and noble Irish family. He had, for many years, been, in turn, novice, scholastic, priest, teacher, missionary and pastor. He had been largely instrumental in the erection of some splendid churches and colleges. How grand a thing it is, in the evening of one's days, to be free from care and anxiety! That situation comes, in part, not only from a well-spent life, but from the security, in several ways, of living in community, where ordinarily there is no trouble about food, lodging and raiment, no trades-

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man's bills, individually, to settle, and no carking difficulties known only too poignantly to men of the world, with dependent families. Rodriguez, in his great work on "Christian Perfection," addressed chiefly to his religious associates, demonstrates that hard as the evangelical counsels may seem, they are, when properly appreciated, infinitely more conducive to true happiness than the freedom of worldlings. The secular or diocesan priest has larger privileges, but, I think, much more care and anxiety. I know of one priest who, once a valiant soldier, has a hard struggle in the temporalities of his career. He has dependent female relations to succor and support. His income is a small one. He denies himself and has long denied himself many conveniences. He has never, in all of his pastorate, had as much as \$100 he could call his own. It would be a veritable miracle if he had no cares and anxieties. He is one of the most hospitable and attractive of human beings; yet, in some strange way, in God's providence, no rich person has ever come to his succor or relief. I take for granted, in such cases, that our dear Lord permits this for future reward and for a milder purgatory. But, if it were not an obstruction to Divine intentions, I have wished sometimes that I had it in my power, as so many Catholics have, to lift some of the burden from such brave, self-sacrificing persons.

TWO SOLDIER FRIENDS.

A few days since I happened to write a short but sympathetic article on Father John B. Tabb and Sidney Lanier, who were fellow Confederate soldiers and prisoners. Lanier was master of the flute and poured his whole soul into the music. After the war he was desperately poor, and I alluded to that episode. I sent the article to Father Tabb and he replied as follows, after acknowledging the receipt:

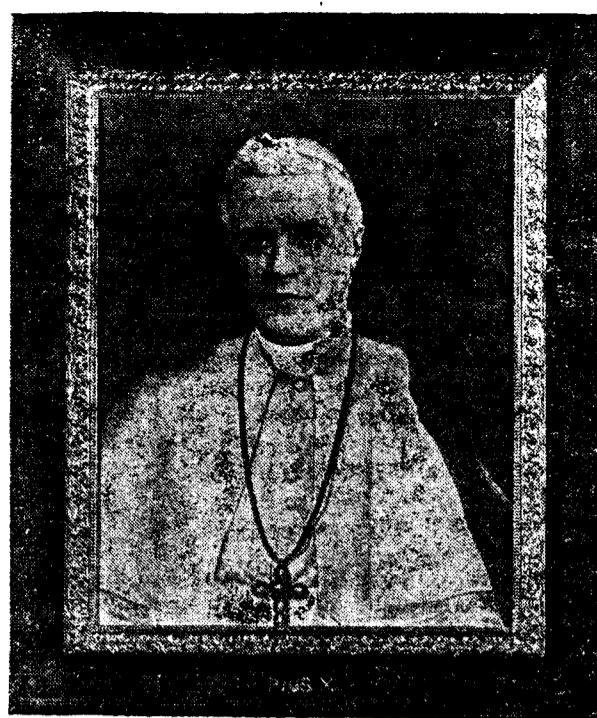
"You call us, Lanier and me, 'scholars and poets'; but in our prison days Lanier had written little, and I not a line. To scholarship, beyond the a, b in my name, I can make no pretension.

"Lanier was never poorer than was I when Mr. Alden, the editor of Harper's, accepted my 'Cloud.'

"As I wrote him, years afterward—One day, with foot upon the ground I stood among the crowd;
The next, with 'sole' renewed, I found

A footing on "The Cloud."
"Very sincerely yours,
"JOHN B. TABB."

Somehow I have never met Father Tabb, and I regret the failure. The loss is all mine. I dearly love to fore-



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gather with a priest who was once a Confederate soldier. Such a one stands doubly dear to me, not only as a brave defender of a cause he deemed right, but as a soldier of Christ, in a cause that is eternally founded, undying, inextinguishable as the throne of God.

James R. Randall in "Catholic Columbian."

JUDGING BY RESULTS.

Does this mean your school? A mother once said that her children since they began to go to Miss _____, were more careful to help her about the house. They were more careful, too, about their health and behaviour; they were particular about ventilating their rooms; the boys removed their hats and saw that their shoes were clean before entering the house. They were more interested in their lessons, and brought no complaints home about their teacher.—The Educational Review, St. John, N. B.

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