black bonnet, and as I passed blew two

thy own time comes thou pass without

angel that comes to summon thee thou

mayst recognize her whom thou hast

loved so long and well. INEZ OKEY.

MY STORY.

About eighteen years ago I lost my

father and mother within a few months

of each other; and in losing them, I

lost all. A year had not passed before my faith and morals had suffered ship-

wreck: morals first, faith afterward.

I gradually became a follower of Vol-

taire-impious, materialistic-then, as

occurs every day, an avowed infidel.

By a sort of satanic logic, I conformed

my acts to my new opinions. I, who

interment or a marriage. This conduct was the natural result of a course

had received my first Holy Communion,

probably from a hope to preserve some

link which would bind me to religion,

wrote to enquire whether I wished to

the church.

lock.

so many years.

low with age!

Christ.

myself in a corner, the old sacristan

approached me, and with a kindly

smile invited me to follow him. I did

so mechanically, wondering what he could want with me. What was my surprise to see him pause at the old

familiar pew, making a sign for me to

enter, as though I had never forfeited its occupancy! But I was not at the

end of my surprises. Having seen

Then I remembered that we form

erly had in our pew a box, of which

this was the key; and, looking around, I found it still lying in its

accustomed place, at the farthest end.

Impelled by a power I could not resist

—for it was something far deeper than curiosity — I turned the key in the

my heart beat loudly as I saw-lying,

no doubt, where she with her own

hands had last placed them - the

not also prayed fervently from those

pages, now damp and moldly, and yel-

relic of a dead friend from the coffin

where time had destroyed all else, I lifted them—"Daily Prayers," "The

Angelic Guide," "The Imitation of

Thanks to the sad and extraordinary

occasion which had brought me to the

from me; otherwise, my presence there

would have been the source of great

cariosity to my neighbors, -a curiosity.

which, under the new and conflicting

emotions now agitating my soul,

I could not pray-I had forgotten

how, -but remembrance and reflection

took possession of my soul. After some moments spent thus, I began to

turn the leaves of "The Imitation,

anxious in some way to hide my em

barrassment, in case curious eyes

of paper fluttered from the book to the

found it contained my mother's writ-

could scarcely have borne.

It opened without difficulty, and

Oh, how often had I

As one might lift the

A FAITHFUL HEART.

Its Record on a Leaf Torn From the Annals of the Poor.

Some of the most beautiful and valuable lessons life can teach us are lost because we fail to seek them where only they can be found—in the obscure lives whose virtues cluster around the sterner glories of the Church and, as it were, spring up under foot and rejoice the finder like the blue fragrance of early violets. Courage, fidelity and self-devotion, charity in heroic degree, though in homely guise, the ideal of a pure and spotless life kept intact through years of trial in a simple, unlearned woman's warm heart in spite of an enforced struggle with the world in its roughest aspect; I found these blooming on the market place, guarded by the sacred humility of the poor; if venture to lift them for a moment to the light it is in the certainty that my words will never penetrate that guard to ruffle the serenity of the gentle soul in which they have taken root.

She is, as I have hinted, but a homely heroine, with a homely name, Ann Murphy. You may see her any day in the market, her short, sturdy figure girded around with a clean checked apron and a big money pocket and her rosy, weather beaten face smiling under an old hood. She stands on some boards laid across the gutter behind her little vegetable stand, and fierce heat and biting frost alike find her steadily and uncom-plainingly at her post. The marketers passing in an endless stream through passing in an endless stream through passing in an endless stream through the chill of early winter mornings, on the chill of early winter mornings, on sunny forenoons of spring when so large a part of our Catholic cemeteries and began the second part of her mission of charity—a faithful rememmission of charity—a faithful rememmi the smoky lamps flare and sputter in the wind, and the stalls show wierd, Rembrandt effects, see the same cheery face, with its clear, honest eyes, and hear the same pleasant voice with its coaxing brogue year after year. children hang back on their mother's skirts in the jostling crowd to smile at her; the mild, black veiled Sisters on their quest for waerewith to supply the needs of their sick poor stop for the alms her generous hands never fail to drop in the basket from her slender store, and many a word of encouragement and blessing and heaven ly hope is whispered above the apples and potatoes and cabbages of the little stand unsuspected by the passers by, while even the rough men with whom she trades soften into something like gentleness and meet her simple shrewdness with fair dealing and honesty.

But it is in the single room she calls home, a front room on the ground floor of an old frame tenement, sitting quietly in the evening when her day's work is done and the firelight plays through the open door of the stove across the clean hearth, and is reflected across the clean hearth, and is renected from the bright tin safe and small looking-glass on the brass crucifix that stands by the clock and the statue of the Blessed Virgin on a bracket above the high, white bed, or in less in the shadows of the dark old.

strong and tender soul. On the thread of her talk, which is enriched by bits of legend and story, with recollections of the happy, carefree childhood in Ireland; of the little parish school and the white-capped "Gray Nuns;" of rising at daybreak on Easter mornings "to see the sun dance" across the dark green fields; of the powers of the "Nine Holy Women," all told in the soft, winning brogue that touches the heart more nearly than any other music in the world, her history pieces itself out little by little. She tells of her coming to America, a lonely orphaned ing to America, a lonely orphaned thing to Experiences that subdued the limit of amusement in the heavy of amusement in the heavy their humor the comical experiences that attended her initiation into the local property of the process in the soft, winning worn, handsome face, deadly pale end of my surprises. Having seen to the pew—which I entered in a differ a night of dissipation and the ocoty but disordered garments, to the costly but disordered garments, to that attended her initiation into the mysteries of American housewifery, and of the longing that grew and strengthened in years of service for others for a home she might call her own, and of the happy day when her savings enabled her to furnish the little room. "And then Mary (the Lord have mercy on her !) and I went

to housekeeping together." Mary was a friend of many years standing. Like Ann, she was without family ties, and weary of forming a mere nominal part of the household of others, but an older woman and already failing somewhat in health when the arrangement was completed, though certainly neither of them suspected that instead of the mutual helpfulness and home making and innocent enjoy ment they had planned, one was taking up the heavy cross of physical suf fering and dependence to lay it aside only at her death, and the other assuming a burden of charity that she would carry with loving courage for nine

long years. Only God and the guardian angels of the two women know the history of those years, uneventful outwardly, one day serving as a type of the next, save that Mary's infirmities increased, and Ann's cares deepened as time wore on. When it became plain, as it did very soon, that Mary's working days were over, it was also evident that the choring and "work by the day" on which they had depended would not feed and shelter two with but one worker; yet it was cruelly hard for Ann, simple, untaught soul that she was, to undertake anything that com-pelled her to cope with the business world, even in the smallest way, and it was not without many anxious discussions between the two, with hopes and fears and prayers, that the last of day. invested in establishing a very humble vegetable stand on the daily market. From the first the venture prospered, that is it brought such slender pittance that is it brought slender pittance that is it brought slender that is it brought slender pittance that is it brought slender pi of returns as enabled the two women ling, and the wires on which they

to live. Mary's ailments did not prevent her from attending to the lighter duties of the tiny honsehold, although Ann, according to her own words, "niver let her chop a sthick of kindlin" or lift so much as a bucket of wather, and their daily life soon settled into a peaceful routine. Neither sickness and pain nor the prospect of a hard day, before keep them. day's labor kept them from the Mass that was said every morning in the great church near by, and the two patient faces, one white and ethereal ized by suffering and the other ruddy and hardened by exposure, were raised in mutu I accord and supplication day

after day, from out the shadows where they knelt to the lighted altar whence flowed the strength and comfort they sometimes needed sorely.

For days came when even Ann's brave spirit flagged, days when the rain poured and dashed and she came home "dhripwin' like an umbrella, and worst of all with very few bits of silver to jingle in the big money pocket. The last year of the nine was the hardest. Mary grew entirely helpless and between the time she lost in attend

ing her and the medicines she must buy, Ann fell little by little under the yoke of debt that she had feared and striven against all her thrifty, selfrespecting life. It was the supreme sacrifice that she made for Mary's sake, and as if God had wished to try the faith of her trusting soul to the uttermost, Mary's death came just when the very last resources were exhausted and even Ann's iron strength was about to give way under the double load .

of life which scandalized the whole parish. The old cure, from whom I She laid Mary away in one of those

deign to reply to his communication. Eighteen years passed away, — eighteen years which I would gladly brance of Mary's soul. efface from my existence at the price of the time which I have yet to spend It was a part of this remembrance that came under my own observation on earth. One incident will inform and touched me very nearly. When by hard work and privation the debts you what manner of man I was. were in a fair way to be paid she bought one of the white wooden crosses hearing the joyous church bells pealing out in their own sweet language, and at seeing the highway filled with that mark the graves of the poor, and had Mary's name and age and the R. men and women on their way to Mass I. P. painted on it, and one morning in their gay holiday attire, I seized a when misty grey dawn struggled down when intsty grey dawn struggled down into the narrow streets and the gas lights flared a sickly yellow against its cold pallor; while the sleepy chatter of the sparrows wakening in the stunted trees or the distant rattle of some noisy milk wagon making its rounds were the only sounds that broke the silence of the sleeping city, she started to carry it to the commission house where a friendly old farmer had promised to let her ride in his wagon as far as the cemetery. It was a wierd figure that crept along beween the tall buildings, bending under the weight of the great wooden cross, at least six feet in length, which she carried on her shoulder. The uncertain light cast grotesque shadows on the blank walls, in which she seemed now a misshapen giantess and the cross a toy or was dwarfed by bracket above the high, white bed, or is lost in the shadows of the dark old wardrobe, that one learns to love this strong and tender soul.

and the cross a toy or was dwarded by some change of position while the sacred symbol towered ready to crush her dwindling form. Occasionally a workman on his way to an early task would eye her with a startled glance as she emerged from the shadows, but only one man ventured to address her, as she stepped for an instant under a street lamp to better adjust her strange burden. Him she answered with composure, her steady look taking in and comprehending with a pity that had no touch of fear, every detail from the

> while drinking her solitary cup of tea; crooning over the conversation in a soft, introspective monotone: "That poor by was a Catholic I'm thinkin' anyway. Says he, 'you're carryin' your cross early, my good woman" (Shure only a Cath'lic would say that), and I says to 'm, 'Yis, sorr, and 'tis betther to be carryin' it on the back than on the sowl, 'an' wint on, Twould an' his eyes afther me. grieve his mother's sowl in glory to

prayer-books my mother had used for see 'm lukin' like that.' The little figure plodded sturdily on among the lightening shadows and reached her destination as the chill, reluctant daylight of the November morning dawned fully on the market place, and with the cross stowed safely among the baskets and barrels of the wagon, was soon jolting by the farmer's side toward the western hills that showed gray green down the long vistas of street. Slowly the old horse limbed the long slope that lifted them above the great city, now rousing to its daily labor, weaving afresh the veil of smoke and steam blown away by the night winds, and calling up its toiling children with hoarse shricks of whistle and clangor of bell. They wound away from it all over the brow of the hill, through quiet, sleeping suburbs, out past the sere, brown fields to the graveyard gate, where she resumed her burden and went to seek the sexton and watch the placing of the cross at the head of Mary's

grave. It was here I saw Ann late one Sunday evening in November. The wet, yellow clay had oozad up through the gravel in the paths beneath the tramp ling feet that had passed during the Her worn, black dress was stained with it. She knelt on the sodinvested in establishing a very humble den grass, her work hardened fingers I ever forget them!

were strung now eaten with rust from | commit one mortal sin. Pardon my their exposure, on one arm of the cross and they rattled to and fro in a subhealth of my child. Save him and they rattled to and fro in a subfrom the misfortune of offending Thee. But if he should ever be so unhappy as dued accompaniment to her prayers. The sun was setting behind a bank of to leave the path of virtue, lead him back, gently and mercifully, as Thou grey clouds and a streak of lurid red marked the horizon; a keen, cold, didst lead the prodigal son to his wind was rising and whirled the sodden leaves along the avenues of the father." now almost deserted cemetery. It buffeted the bent, kneeling figure ; it

You can understand my feelings. My pride could not restrain the tears which flowed from my heart. To say loosened the grey hair under the old, that I was fully converted at that moment would be, however, to say too tears from the gentle blue eyes down much. One cannot break so quickly on the withered cheeks. Tender and with eighteen years of implety. faithful heart! God grant that when was at least touched and awakened to a sense of what I had done. probation to that peace thou dost im-plore for another and that in the bright

That very day I hastened to thank the good cure for having so delicately and kindly preserved the pew for my unworthy sake. It was with the greatest difficulty that I could persuade him to accept the pew-rent for those eighteen wasted years.
"You see," he said to me, "good blood

must always tell, does always tell, in the end. One cannot discard a family of saints with impunity. I knew well that one day or another you would return to occupy the old family pew. Taking both my hands in his, he added: "I beseech you, now that you have made a beginning, come back again." What can I say more? The follow ing Sunday I went to Mass. the grace of God was not denied me. belonged to a family of saints, never entered a church, not even for an interment or a marriage. This con--M. in Ave Maria.

BLESSED JEROME.

Blessed Jerome was born at Metauras, Italy, of the distinguished Ranutii family. His youth presaged a life of eminent sanctity. His pious parents reared him with great care, retain the family pew. I did not even and zealously guarded his innocence from evil influences. They instilled in his impressionable mind the lofty sentiments of Christianity. No child ish traits marked his tender years. He seemed to emerge from lisping boy His demeanor hood into manhood. was always grave and his words few. He shunned the company of other It was New Year's; and, furious at youths and lived retired, dividing his time between study and prayer, in both of which he became daily more proficient. He mortified himself in a manner beyond his strength, and was often commanded to abate his austerities. The world had no woodcutter's axe and began to fell a beautiful oak tree which grew by the road side, in one of my fields. Thus attraction for him, and he longed to abandon it. He prayed earndid I wish to protest against what I foolishly called popular superstition.

Several months after this fine exestly and frequently to know the will of God. After besieging heaven for a long time, God deigned to man-ifest His will through the august ploit, on a hot summer's day, a terrible storm arose, and a family comqueen, who bade him enter the Servite Order. He entered the novitiate posed of father, mother, and three children were killed by lightning. at the age of fifteen and laid deep the All the parish attended the funeral of foundations of humility and self-denial. those five persons called so suddenly to At the expiration of the time of probameet their God, and I followed the tion he was sent to Bologna to pros-ecute his studies. He edified all by Impiety is sometimes out of season his willing obedience and exactness in So I thought, with sincere sorrow, as I joined the throng of sympathizing the observance of the rules, and easily became the foremost in his classes friends who wended their way to His natural gifts were of the same liberal order as his spiritual ones. It was almost eighteen years since He received the well-merited titles of had set my foot in the house of God; it was natural, therefore, that I should Licentiate and Doctor of Divinity at the completion of his course of studies. feel embarrassed in the crowd that day in the church. As I was about to hide

was assigned to a professorship. His brilliant and profound discourses were listened to with admiration and profit.

"Pray always," our Saviour said. On being raised to the priesthood he listened to with admiration and profit and won the applause of the learned. He aimed not only to develop the mental possibilities of his pupils, but also taught them the beauty and attractive ness of virtue and truth, and infused in them a desire to cherish religious perfection. His life and learning were well fitted for such a task, and his popularly known by the appellation of "Angel of Good Counsel." The fame Angel of Good Counsel.

of his deeds spread far and wide. From remote countries people came to him for counsel in perplexing matters and to be healed of their spiritual as well as physical maladies. He was appointed the coun selor of the dukedom of Urbini, and Duke Frederick was guided by his counsels in all difficult matters of State. By his prudence and discernment he reunited warring and bitter factions and caused such laws to be framed as resulted in incalculable good to the community at large. The poor looked priest?" ipon him as a father; the oppressed as a protector; the ministers of law as an racle. The position of public adviser, however, was most distasteful to him and jolted much against his feel ings, for he loved to be in solitude and far removed from the importunities church, public attention was diverted

and distractions of the world. He besought his superior to remove him from the public eye lest he should become a victim of the seductivers, and ompass the ruin of his soul. After many entreaties, he obtained what his soul yearned for. He retired among the hermits of the order. Contrary to is wishes, he was appointed director over them. After many years spent among them in the most severe auster ities and unceasing prayer and con templation, he died in the odor of sanc tity at a ripe old age, full of merits and fortified by the sacraments of the Church in the year 1455, on the 12th of should look my way. A detached slip ground. I stooped to pick it up, and December.

ing. By the ink, well nigh faded, and the worn appearance of the edges, I Chicago World's Fair to find that of all saw that it had often been in those dear the blood purifiers, Ayer's Sarsaparilla was the only one on exhibition. hands. These were the words, -shall reason is that Ayer's Sarsaparilla is a standard remedy, and not a patent "O my God! do not punish me if I

SOUL CULTURE.

This Life is But a Period of Probation.

Catholic Mirror. Do you know that this life is a pro bation intended for soul culture? The soul is sent here for the one purpose of perfecting itself for the higher life. Have you perfected your soul? you have loaded it down with shocking sins, the very ones, too, for which the world was destroyed—sinful luxury sins of the flesh. Religion teaches, and our Saviour

set the example, that this life should be one of self-denial and sacrifice. You have made a God of your body, your appetite rules and demands luxyour appetite rules and demands lux-ury; in your pride you clothe your-self in costly apparel; in the mean-time, your soul is clothed in the leprosy of sin. You make no sacrifice except for your vanity. Our Saviour said, "Take up your cross," but your life is one of amusement. You must be made to laugh and to smile. The literature you have been reading, if bound in volumes, would make a large monument over your grave-all the veriest trash. You are a reasonable being, but you do not use your reason. Reason was given you to subject the pas sions and the appetites, but reason is ignored and the appetites have full

This the way you employ your pro bation. You neglect the very thing for which you came into the world. The lower order of creation follows the instincts that God has given, while you subvert the high intelligence that God has given you. The brutes fulfil the divine plan in their creation, but you are living in open revolt against God's intention. Reason was given you to govern the lower instincts while you are striving to acquire an extraordinary love for God-love greater than that for father, or mother, or sister or brother. You wait for a death ted conversion, a repentance moved by fear, not love. Love has to be planted like a seed and grow to perfection. It is not accomplished in a day or a week. It is impossible to obtain per-

fection at once.

TAKE UP YOUR CROSS. The Master said: "Take up your cross." But here is a class of luxuriant, indolent, well-to do people. They only seek pleasure. They never vex their minds about anything serious. They are surrounded by such effeminate literature as the times afford, viz., the Detroit Free Press, Texas Siftings, the Judge and Puck, and all the pic torial papers, some decent and others indecent. They know the time is wasted in reading this trash, but they This is a Pagan must be amused. This is a Pagan standard of life, such as prevailed in Ninevah and Babylon. What satisfaction at the death bed to gaze out upon six hundred volumes of this trash that you have read merely to kill time, now so valuable and so unpurchaseable.

You must walk with God. "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to Make friends with God; He controls the elements around you; He is to be your Judge; He will rule you forever. Having Him, you are rich, indeed; without Him you are worse than a beggar with the leprosy, al

There may be one person in one thousand that prays always. If they say a few prayers in the day they think they are pious. They are ignorant of the mystery of prayer; they have no conception of spiritual science; they have no soul life. Let them pray as our Saviour said—"always."

Our Lord in the Old and New Law gave such excellent counsel that he was have no conception of a surpassing incessant prayer.-Phillip O'Neill in Catholic Mirror.

The Abbe's Retort.

A good story is told of Monsignor Mioland, the predecessor of Cardinal Desprez in the Archbishopric of Tou-He was passing one day through the pig market, when a man shouted at him: "There are only priests and pigs in this place. abbe, as he then was, stopped and said to the man, "My friend, are you a priest?" "Not I," returned the other. "Then," said the abbe, "you naturally are the other thing."

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sleep well nights and she said no one could tell how badly she felt. She was also troubled with had tried different kinds of medicine, but none did her any good. At last Hood's Sarsaparilla was

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