

All that was but a memory, but a memory that still had power to sting. Not such a very old memory, either, for it was but three years since he had passed through the fiery furnace of that never-to-be-forgotten Christmas night.

Point de Gare lay under the shadow of the tall hills that shut in the river. The full moon shone down fitfully on the hard white snow and the shifting shadows of the black pines.

Remembrance of the Christmas eve three years ago flashed across his mind—the Christmas night that had seen him go forth from his father's house to wander as he might through the world.

Being the first arrival, he had had first choice of places in the church shed, and his slim sorrel mare was already snugly covered and was securely in the far corner, well out of the wind that was rising steadily.

Hector raised his head to listen. "Half a mile away yet," he ejaculated, and started to walk briskly to and fro, clapping his hands together, for the frost was keen and he had driven a long way with the thermometer below zero and a keen wind whistling down the valley.

Only the knowledge of the surrounding country that he had acquired in his mining work enabled him to find the track, for the snow had fallen fast and steadily and drifted in places, where the wind made miniature whirlpools.

There was a little stir as they passed up the aisles to the pews where the women folk were already seated. The organ pealed softly; then, as the cure, attended by his boys, entered the sanctuary, it broke into the strains of the "Adeste Fideles."

Hector bowed his head. He had stationed himself opposite to the crib, whence he could see all that passed at the altar, and it might be, cast an occasional glance at the girl post-mistress of Calumet, who knelt a little in front of him.

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Something of all this passed through his mind as he knelt before the altar, praying for the parents whom he had wounded by his acceptance of the truth, and pleading that to them also might be given the light of faith.

He was the last to leave the church, for he was not just then in the mood to meet people, and he had stayed for a few moments at the crib. When he stepped outside he found that it was snowing heavily.

"A sick call," he thought, and then, approaching: "Permit me to drive you, father. There are too many on that sleigh anyhow, and it's going to snow hard."

The priest looked up and smiled at him. The lumber men nodded and scrambled into their places. In another moment Hector had got his sleigh round to the steps, where the priest was waiting for him.

To the end of his life he would remember that drive through the snow, for the priest had whispered to him that he bore the Blessed Sacrament, and the young man was thrilled with joy that was like to fear, and surprise and wonder that he should have been given this privilege, that increased with each moment and inspired him with deep reverence and a new boldness to ask great things from the Lord, who deigned to make use of him thus.

"Which way?" he said, shouting to the priest, for the wind had risen and he could scarcely hear his own voice.

"The lumber camp at Point de Gare," replied the Cure.

Hector wondered which of the men was sick. He knew them all, and had not missed any of them at the church. It took all his energies to keep the road. Already the white track was nearly wiped out, though surely the big sleigh must have passed only a short time ago.

Only the knowledge of the surrounding country that he had acquired in his mining work enabled him to find the track, for the snow had fallen fast and steadily and drifted in places, where the wind made miniature whirlpools.

The lights of the shanty roused him to a sense of outer things as he drew up before the door and assisted the priest to alight. One of the men came forward at once. Hector wondered that he should have remained away from the Christmas Mass.

Then he remembered that this was a sick call, and turned in time to see the Cure disappear into the darkness of the rough shanty.

"We'll have to stay here for a bit," said the watchman.

"Who's sick?" asked Hector casually.

"A stranger. Said he was going to Calumet. Must have missed the road and gone over the hill by mistake. He tried to walk over from Grenville yesterday; got a touch of frost bite and a spell of fever. He's better now, and I think he'll pull through. But it was best to send for the priest, for he's an old man."

"Not I—Jean Le May. He's an Englishman just come out to look for his son, he said. I guess he fell on the road. Anyhow, his foot's froze, and he couldn't walk."

"An Englishman—and come to find his son—how odd—and a Catholic, too," said Hector dreamily.

"The man laughed. 'You've got it all down, Mr. Sharp.' 'And there—there—is nothing more?' 'Only that he's getting better. He'll be all right in a day or two.' The priest came to the door. 'Mr. Sharp, will you come here for a moment?' he said.

"The young man stepped to his side. 'Yes, father,' he replied. 'Tie my horse, Sam,' he added, turning back to the man for a second. When he looked at the priest again he saw that he was much moved, and wondered a little, but he waited until he spoke again.

"I have had a great surprise," he said, as though seeking to gain time. "The stranger—the traveler—will soon be all right." He came looking for his son, it appears, and nearly lost his life in the woods.

SINS OF OMISSION

As children we learned that "actual sin is any wilful thought, word, deed or omission contrary to the law of God." It will do no harm—is certain, indeed, to be productive of much good—for us to brush up once in a while on a few of these lessons in the Baltimore Catechism, not forgetting to apply them after the review.

Somewhat we forget that the important duties we neglect will one day call for a reckoning. It comes home to us with surprise that we are really and truly our brother's keeper; that all around us are services to be rendered, heartaches to be cured, burdens to be shared.

"I expect her at any moment, for Sam heard the mail come up from Montreal half an hour ago."—Mary Agatha Gray in "The Orphans' Friend."

A CONVERT MINISTER'S STORY

A convert Anglican minister tells the following story about the use of "Roman," in regard to the Catholic Church. Some Boulogne fishermen whose boat had been damaged in a storm at sea, had put into our harbor to make the necessary repairs. They came up to our church and attended the services. But they looked about the church in evident perplexity: the absence of holy water and of an image of Our Lady, among other things, surprised them.

"Est-ce l'église catholique?" "Oui," I answered.

"Et apostolique?" "Oui," I again answered, devoutly hoping that was the end of the matter. But no: another "test" yet remained to be applied.

"Et romaine?" he persisted. "Non," I answered.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, turning to one of his comrades, with a slight shrug of the shoulders and the faintest suggestion of a smile. "Est l'église schismatique."

These simple souls, at all events, were not to be deceived. They had summed up our position as accurately as one of the theologians of the Church.—The Monitor.

THE CATHOLIC PAPER

ITS VALUE IN SCHOOLS

"An effective means for implanting genuine Catholic principles is the reading of Catholic papers and Catholic books. The school is the place to awaken a taste for such reading."

Such was one of the important resolutions passed by the Catholic educational association at its convention at St. Paul, Minn. Of its wisdom there can be no question. As soon as children can read with fair facility, there is usually a desire to know the news of the day. What can be more important than that they should learn this news from sources of the best morality?

The results of education extend to eternity. The end for which man was made was to know and serve God on earth, and ultimately to see and enjoy Him forever in heaven.

"The man who has imbibed a false philosophy in youth has hard work to get rid of it. So it is easy to see the importance of the theories of life that are to be taught in the school-room, and to realize the need of giving the young their acquaintance with the passing events of the world through the medium of a Catholic newspaper."

For the Catholic newspaper if it fulfil its mission, will view events not merely from a material standpoint but in relation to their religious significance. And thus the young who read the Catholic newspapers will from the first imbibe sound principles and will learn to look upon all events from a religious viewpoint.

In helping to give right notions to the young, a great work can be done by a Catholic newspaper. It is a work that will outlast this life. In one respect particularly, a valuable work can be done by Catholic writers writing in a tone that shows a respect for authority. The lack of respect for authority is no mark of greatness. On the contrary, disrespect to authority is usually to be found among those whose real value is small.

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RELICS OF PENAL DAYS

Ingatstone Hall, the ancient seat of the Petre family in England, is to be sold. It has many historic associations.

The old residence, which has been described as resembling Hampton Court Palace, contains many features which are typical of the Tudor architecture of the sixteenth century.

The plan of what still remains of the Hall is after the fashion of the lower part of the letter H, and this portion forms the oldest part of the house. Miss Braddon laid the scene of her famous novel, "Lady Audley's Secret," at Ingatstone Hall.

MISSIONARIES NEEDED

The Trumpet Call, the official organ of the Apostolic Union of secular priests for India and other English-speaking countries, gives India, with Burma and Ceylon, a total population of three hundred and fifteen millions.

Of this vast number Catholics are only about two and a half millions, while Protestants of all denominations amount to about one and a half millions, the remainder, about three hundred and eleven millions, are all non-Catholics, composed of Hindus, Mussulmans, Buddhists, Animists, Sikhs, Jains, Zoroastrians, Jews, etc.

As the number of the European missionaries in India is being thinned and as it cannot be made good by the arrival of new missionaries from Europe in the near future, there is only one way left open for Catholic India to effect the conversion of India, and that is to have her own sons turned into missionaries.

Missionaries we mean not only in the strictest sense of the word as restricted to the clergy of India, but missionaries also in its broadest sense as applicable to all the laity as well, so that one and all—the clergy and laity—be apostles.

It was Leo XIII. who said, "Thy sons, O India, are thy salvation-workers." Pius IX. told his subjects the same thing, when license in the name of liberty was prevalent in Italy. "You are my men, when all these evils will have an end, I shall tell you. It will be when, after praying and sighing in the church, will begin to act out of it."—America.

CANNOT COMPROMISE

Many mistake the Catholic attitude toward his non-Catholic associates. It has never been one of hostility, but one of charity. We do not and cannot compromise the truths and principles of our religion. We attack error but engage in no personalities. If Protestants could be brought to realize this, they would be more charitable in judging the Church. A recent incident recorded in the Christian Register is to the point:

There is a great difference between the liberalism of the mind and the liberalism of the spirit. The writer spent a few days recently in a hospital conducted by a Roman Catholic sisterhood. These nursing Sisters were loyal to their Church, and not given to theological inquiry but they had a most tender regard for the

religious convictions of others. They were just friendly souls who found deep comfort in their own religion and wanted other people to find the same in theirs. If there was anything in their feeling out of harmony with the somewhat exclusive claims of their churches, they were surely unconscious of it. Of the liberalism of the mind they knew nothing, but the liberalism of the spirit was theirs in great measure.

Catholics realize that faith is a gift, and that not to all peoples has God sent His dispensations. All, however, can practice charity in thought, word and deed, and the world would be the better for it.—The Pilot.

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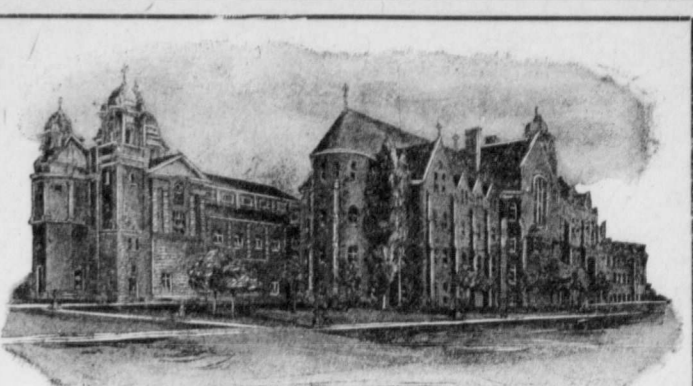
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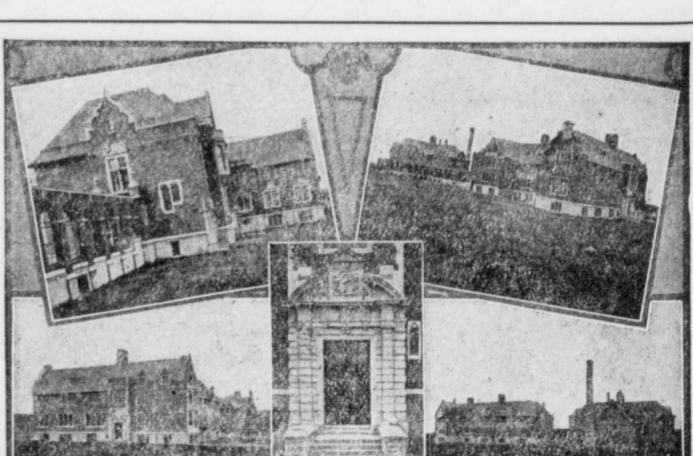
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