

TO MY ABSENT MARY.

Mary, Mary, are you straying
In our olden haunts alone?
In the meadows are you Maying,
Where the other flowers have blown?
In the green lanes are you roaming,
Where we chanted love's young hymn?
Do you think you see me coming
Through the evening shadows dim?

Do you think I'm happy, dearest,
In the wondrous sights I see?
An, when my new friends are nearest
Happiness is far from me?
Two things have I loved supremely—
Two things that I cannot see—
Mother Ireland, fallen but queasily,
Mother Ireland, love, and thee.

Seas and storms may roll between us—
Anger and neglect are not—
Time, too, rolls his tide between us,
Vainly to the unforgotten.
For your dwelling I have builded
Here a home, my heart's delight;
Hope the eaves and panes had gilded,
Freedom makes the landscape bright.

Courage, never fear the distance,
Summer winds and summer skies,
Without clouds or wild commotion,
Call you to me westerwise;
Love shall be our pilot, dearest,
Over the charmed summer sea;
Love, who a new home hath builded,
In the West, for you and me.

—Thomas D'Arcy McGee.

A SHORT SERMON.

Work Out Your Salvation.

St. Paul tells us to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling, for God worketh in us."

At first sight these words seem to imply a contradiction. If we are to work out our salvation, why should God work it out? And again, if He is the only Author and Finisher of our salvation, why should we do anything?

You know, dear reader, that the Catholic Church solves this apparent contradiction. God alone saves us by giving us the necessary grace, but He will not save us without ourselves. He does something and we do something. What is that something?

God's something is that necessary grace by which alone we can take one step towards Heaven, and continue on the way to Heaven for one instant after we have begun to go there. The narrow way which each one trends is simply a story of God's grace, God worketh in us and is always working. Now what is our "something?" It consists in (1) getting this grace and (2) keeping this grace when we have got it.

How are we to get this grace? We must pray for it. "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Now, dear reader, do you pray? I do not mean do you say your prayers, because we can "say" our prayers without either asking, seeking, or knocking. Praying means talking to God, and talking to God about something very particular, so particular that we must have it at all hazards. Everybody can do this. It does not require scholarship or learning. God does not insist upon fine words or care how you express yourself. St. Paul says we can "pray always," that is to say, the labourer can speak to God while he is at his work, the mill hand at his machine, the shopman at his counter. He can say, "Give me the grace that I want"—against drunkenness, impurity, sloth, love of the world or of fine clothes, bad temper, revenge, discontent—whatever it is that we know is the dangerous thing to us: and, as I said before, this can be done in a moment. No book, no crucifix, no chapel, no leisure is absolutely necessary, if we have not got them. We can dart out our request, we can make our knock heard, while we are breaking up the roads, or oiling our machine, or looking out for a pair of gloves which the customer is buying.

There is no time of the day when we cannot be praying if we like: and if we are to do something towards our salvation we must pray. And will not our Heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to those that ask Him? He has promised that He infallibly will do so.

Then how are we to keep this grace so that it will last till our salvation is secured? We must frequent the Sacraments. What do we mean by "frequent?" We must go often. "Christmas and

Easter" won't do. "When a mission is given" won't do. If we only fed our bodies twice a year, or once in five years "when the missionaries come," our bodies would die. So with our souls. We must live on the Living Bread, as our Lord has told us. Body, Blood, Soul and Godhead must come often into our bodies and souls to change them and preserve them. That particular virtue we want—meekness, temperance, purity, generous forgiveness of enemies—is imparted to us by receiving Christ's meekness, Christ's temperance, Christ's purity, Christ's forgiveness of His enemies, in Holy Communion. It is not a general reception of "our Lord," but a particular gift of that particular thing we want in order to work out our particular salvation. So with confession. Remember that when we make a good confession, we not only get all our sins washed away so that they never appear against us again, but we get that particular grace we want to prevent our falling into the same sin again, and the oftener we go the more we get. Pope Clement VIII. went to confession every evening, and some saints have gone oftener. Were they mad or great sinners, do you think? or are we mad who only go when the missionaries come round?

And more than this. We must pray and go to the Sacraments with "fear and trembling." Why "fear and trembling?" Because we are hanging over a precipice, and if we don't hold on we shall fall and be dashed to pieces. Listen to this story. There was once a poor boy who gained his living by getting the eggs of sea birds, who built their nests in the tall cliffs which surround some of our coasts. He was let down the edge of the cliff by a rope, and when he had filled his basket with the eggs and was going to be hauled up again, it was found that the rope had given away. What was he to do? He was fifty feet from the top of the cliff, and below him was another one hundred and fifty feet with jagged rocks beneath, over which the sea was breaking. The sides of the cliff were quite precipitous. He could not climb up. He could not by the projecting pieces of chalk which stuck to the face of the cliff. Fancy the boy's feelings! What fear and trembling! If he let go—a miserable death was before him, and how long could he hold on, unsupported as he was? How he prayed and entreated the men on the cliff to be quick and fetch another rope!

At last the fresh rope was brought, thrown in a noose carefully over him, and he was caught under the arms and hauled up in safety to the top. What joy and thanksgiving there was among the bystanders you may imagine, what a tumult of relieved emotions in the boy's mind!

Dear reader, each of us is that boy. — Friend Who has risked all to save us, Who will "never leave us nor forsake us," throws round us the cords of love if we will let Him. That rope is prayer and the Sacraments. We have broken our first rope by sin. We must seize the other. For, underneath our feet is something worse than jagged rocks.—The Catholic Truth Society.



Can Hardly Believe It. XII

JERSEYVILLE, ILL., May 30, 1898.

I take pleasure to let you know that my boy is still all right; he has not had any of the spasms since about March 20. The people can hardly believe it from the fact that he had as many as 18 a day or more. He was a very nervous child all his life, but did not show any signs of spasms until last December, after which they came in regular succession, and I had 8 doctors attending who could do nothing for him, nor even tell us what was the matter. I had despaired of his ever getting well, until I got Koenig's Nerve Tonic. After taking not quite a bottleful he got quite well and has not had the least sign of spasms since.

Respectfully yours,

MRS. E. LEYTON.

I testify to the facts as stated above to be strictly true.

JAS. HARTY, Priest.

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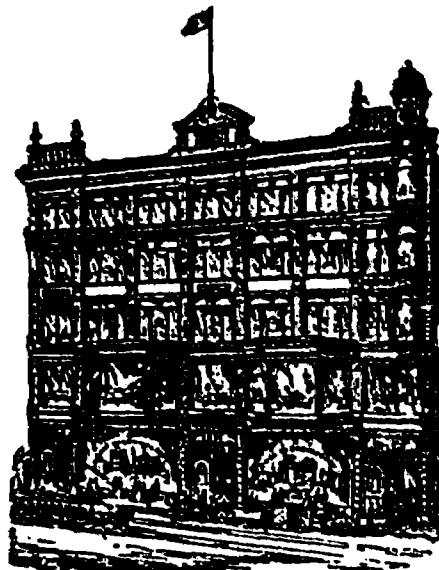
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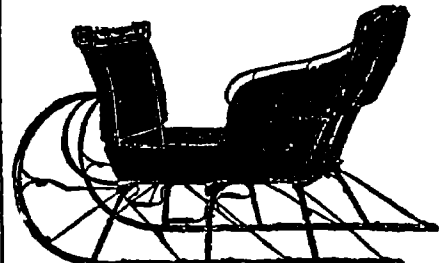
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