

praise. Such words rarely fell from his lips. "I don't see any use of complaining," said he. "You helped me a heap, doctor, and when I suffer I say: 'Lord, I'll suffer all you send me if you keep suffering away from my good doctor.'"

"Do you really say that, boy?" "Every day, doctor, and I'll hold the Lord I'm willing to bear any pain and ache that comes if He doesn't send any to you."

And then Dr. Storm looked back at his perfect and robust health these six years past and wondered if James Ignatius' prayers had anything to do with it. He was silent so long that the boy feared he was offended, and so expressed himself.

"Offended! Good heavens, boy, how could I be? I was thinking that you had perhaps been saying my prayers before the Lord all these years, for I never had a minute's pain and have never had time to pray for myself."

"On doctor, do you never pray?" "Not much, my son."

"And how do you expect God to take care of you?"

The question was incisive, and the doctor flushed before the clear gray eyes of the boy. His religion was his profession, and it was true that his knees were bent in prayer. He felt reproved, and wished the boy would speak of other things.

James Ignatius slipped his thin little hand into the firm, strong one of the doctor and said: "I'll ask God to let all your kind deeds to people be your prayers, and then I'll pray more and more that your life may be good and happy. But, doctor, you must speak to Him yourself sometimes. He will always hear you."

The doctor would rise hastily after such talk and say his time was up, but he always smiled his rare smile into the eyes of the boy, like a flash of light from behind a storm cloud when James Ignatius would lie still and think. Could it be possible that his idolized doctor never prayed to our Lord and to His sweet, spotless mother whom he loved so much? Impossible!

And then he would slip his hands under the covers and with closed eyes say his rosary for Dr. Storm, the nurse would tip-toe past and think he slept.

Dr. Storm's heart became like wax in the hands of little James Ignatius. He did not know how it came to pass, but he found himself telling him of his early life, of his struggles, of his bitter experiences, of the death of all he loved, and of his gradual crystallization and absorption of his soul by his profession. To all of which James Ignatius listened gravely, and never by a wrong word jarred on his mood. And in the few minutes' talk of every day by that little hand he found the simple old faith of his childhood and the beliefs of his youth. James Ignatius brought him back to God, and the great surgeon found his way once more to prayer in the guileless, yet stern, language of the dying lad.

Yes, the crippled boy was dying. All the resources of science proved vain and useless, and Dr. Storm confessed himself vanquished as he looked on the thin little face and saw the light of the blessed vision in the eyes of the little martyr.

It was Holy Week, and in the days that succeeded Palm Sunday, James Ignatius was worse. The nurse said that Dr. Storm was sadder than usual, more unsmiling, as such men when their hearts are stirred. His short visits to the little fellow's bed became more frequent, and on Holy Thursday morning he left word that a wineglass of milk and stimulant should be given to James Ignatius every three hours. The child had no inclination to talk to any one except to Dr. Storm, but a faint little smile always appeared when his back to a kind act for him. Another little lad who was in the same ward with him often sat by his bed, and thus relieved the nurse when duty called her elsewhere.

James Ignatius always shared his dainties with this little chum, Dickie, who was not blessed with much strength, and who greedily accepted all the good things that came his way. James Ignatius had given to him everything eatable that kind friends had sent him in Holy Week, and Dickie had quietly carried everything away to a certain hiding place where he secretly devoured them at leisure. Oranges, bon-bons, fruits of all kinds disappeared, and the nurse flattered herself that her charge would never perish of starvation. James Ignatius never uttered a word as he saw his gifts appropriated, and it goes without saying, neither did Dickie. Besides, the good priest who attended him and gave him the last sacraments had laid particular stress on the Holy Week through which they were passing, and on Holy Thursday, after he had given him the blessed Viaticum, spoke touchingly of the dear Lord's sufferings on Good Friday—His fasting and toments and His agony and death on the cross for sinners, for those who would not pray or try to benefit by His death. The words clung to the memory of James Ignatius. Suppose he would fast all Good Friday and unite with the suffering Saviour, and by the dying God to bless Dr. Storm for all his goodness to a poor little boy that was crippled and of no account to any one! His generous soul sprang to the thought. He did not realize his weakness; he did not know it would hasten his death. The spirit of an apostle burned in him and the single thought of the doctor's soul dominated his whole being. Hence, when the wineglass of stimulant was offered to him every three hours he would simply say: "Put 'em down, nurse. I'll wait a minute." And when her back was turned he beckoned to Dickie, who swallowed it with one gulp. Weaker and weaker he grew, but he was not fasting like the dear Lord to save a soul? Dr. Storm came in several times that Good Friday, his heart torn at the pinched look of the sweet little boy face. He could not understand the increasing weakness of James Ignatius in spite of the constant stimulation. He questioned the nurse, he saw the empty wineglass, and he never dreamed of questioning the vacant-faced Dickie, who sat at the foot of the bed in apparent patience and devotion. Good Friday was passing. James Ignatius had tasted nothing all day. Nature could hold out no longer, and at 1

o'clock it was apparent the little fellow was in his agony. The priest came to his bedside and found Dr. Storm seated there with his fingers on his pulse. He watched the life ebbing from the one creature who had found a way to his hungry heart. The big gray eyes of the dying boy, fixed on his friend's face, still held the love that had animated his little heart when he offered his fasting and pain for the doctor, but his lips could not frame a word.

As the clock struck 3, the dreaded change came. The doctor did not move but between the spasms he saw the lips of James Ignatius move, and stooping low, he caught the words, disjointed and trembling: "Dear—doctor—I—faster—for your soul—like Jesus—did on Good—Friday." With an expression of ineffable sweetness the tortured body gave up its white soul, and paradise opened to poor crippled James Ignatius!

The doctor rose with a face as white as marble. He pressed the eyelids shut, laid the thin little hands on James Ignatius' breast and turned away. With an intuition that was almost like a revelation he saw the whole tragedy. James Ignatius had started to death for his salvation! He turned to Dickie, who was weeping aloud. One glance showed the culprit.

"Did you take his medicine?" "It was only milk and stuff," waited Dickie. "And he gave it to me every time."

"Well, you killed him, that's all!" said Doctor Storm in a voice of thunder, and he strode out of the ward.

He looked himself in his room, and on his knees, the strong man wept as few men have, and registered a vow that the sacrifice of James Ignatius should have its recompense. The beauty and grandeur of the little cripple's soul, the wonder of his love, the greatness of his Good Friday offering again and again overwhelmed him. He prayed with all his being, and he prayed he felt the gentle spirit of the boy hovering near, bringing him strength and purpose. Doctor Storm arose a new man, a fervent Catholic Christian forever.

James Ignatius was buried with solemn High Mass. The mourners were but two—poor, simple Dickie and Doctor Storm.

THE DANGERS OF BAD READING

In a recent sermon in St. Ignatius Church, Galway, the Rev. Father Masterson, S. J., after having indicated the chief help to his own subject matter, frequentation of the Sacraments, devotion to the Blessed Virgin—spoke at some length of that important, though negative help, which consists in the avoidance of reading evil literature.

This is a matter in which even some Catholics are sensitive, and chafe under the restrictive legislation passed by the Church. They will tell you they cannot understand how the Church can have anything to say in the matter. They had thought that the function of the Church was to define and disseminate revealed truth; and that she seems to be going beyond the limits of her competence when she implicates herself in our literary pursuits, and would set boundaries to our literary outlook; really, in matters literary, we ought to be perfectly free to follow the objects of our free choice. People who talk in this way show that they do not understand the meaning of the word "means"; as they most unquestionably contract unduly the ambit of the Church's teaching authority. As I shall show you by and by, the Church has the right to pronounce on both science and literature. Every well-informed Catholic will concede this right; and every reflecting Catholic will see that the nature of the subject which the Church will be more often called on to exercise that right within the domain of science. The subject matter of science is objective truth, truth as it exists in itself, as it exists independently of us, and of what we may think of it. The man of science confines himself to his own subject matter; he deduces his conclusions logically from his first principles; on the one hand, he need not be afraid of ecclesiastical interference; on the other hand, the Church will have nothing to fear from his scientific speculations. Heresy and vice are not propagated through the medium of the multiplication table, nor of Euclid's geometry; nor would the most hardened libertine find it easy to express them in the terms of an algebraical notation. In literature, it is very different. The subject matter of literature is not objective truth; not truth as it exists in itself; but, at best, truth as it is perceived by the writer; as it is passed through the alchemy of his mind; as modified or colored by his prejudices, social, political or religious. In other words, the subject matter of literature is, not things, but thoughts. So close is the connection between the writer's thoughts and the literature which he produces that thinking out in words. I insist on it, then, was the man of letters gives us are his thoughts; his thoughts on life and on the various aspects of life; on home life and on marriage, education, politics, religion, and every subject under the sun. To say, therefore, that we ought to be free to read what literature we please is to say that we ought to be free to adopt as our own all the filthy fancies, so insistently dinned into our ears, and offered for our acceptance by the literary writers of our time. "Not so," objects our discriminating reader. "To read a man's works is one thing; to adopt his views, quite another. Quite another in theory, but the two things in theory so distinct are, in the run of cases, synonymous in practice. A pupil given up freely, under certain given conditions, will cause other pendulums, that were at rest, to swing in unison with itself. A sounding board will cause other resonant bodies to take up its own vibrations. The man of genius molds language to his purposes. He is ever happy in his choice, and exquisite in the arrangement of his words; and, as the swinging pendulum will cause other pendulums to swing, so will the writer of genius compel us to fall into step with the rhythmic swinging march of his sentences. As the sound-

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Did he not more than half surrender that power to the enemy of his soul, when without any justifying cause, he grasped to his heart as his teachers in morality writers who wallow in the filth of sensualism? To determine the rights of the Church in this matter, we must keep steadily in view the end for which the Church was instituted. The Church has for its end the salvation of the souls of men. The Pope, as the successor of blessed Peter, is charged with the duty of feeding the flock of Christ. Personally, he may be more learned or less so; highly born, or of humble extraction; but whatever his personal gifts may be, he is equally burdened with the commission given by Christ to blessed Peter: "Feed My lambs; feed My sheep." Every society, and every lawfully appointed superior, have a right to the means necessary or useful to the end for which they exist. 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For that it would not suffice that he should be able to say that this or that abstract proposition or statement is of immoral tendency. If a man knew that I was going to get my chin in my foot, and if he were to content himself with proving to me that strychnine was a deadly poison, what would it profit me? I should say to him, "Thank you for nothing," or "Tell me something I don't know." To be of any service to me, he should tell me that I was in imminent danger of having that deadly poison given to me; with circumstances of time and place stated. Very often it would profit the simple faithful just as little for Pope or Church to assure them of such and such abstract statements were heretical or immoral. To be of effective service they must warn them of the books or publications in which heresy or immortality is contained. And when they so warn us, as the Pope often does warn us, we are bound not merely to an obsequious or respectful silence, but bound to republish with heart and mind whatever, in matters of faith and morals, the successor of blessed Peter reprobrates and condemns. Let us be quite sure of it, that the right of the Pope and of the Church to pronounce an infallible decision extends to the condemning of evil publications. But antecedent to, and independent of, this right of the Pope, we have a charter given us by nature to protect us from the poisonous influence of evil literature. The natural law, of which God is the author and conscience the herald, the law not written on pillars of stone, but on the tablets of the human heart, sternly forbids the production. —Denver Register.

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For that it would not suffice that he should be able to say that this or that abstract proposition or statement is of immoral tendency. If a man knew that I was going to get my chin in my foot, and if he were to content himself with proving to me that strychnine was a deadly poison, what would it profit me? I should say to him, "Thank you for nothing," or "Tell me something I don't know." To be of any service to me, he should tell me that I was in imminent danger of having that deadly poison given to me; with circumstances of time and place stated. Very often it would profit the simple faithful just as little for Pope or Church to assure them of such and such abstract statements were heretical or immoral. To be of effective service they must warn them of the books or publications in which heresy or immortality is contained. And when they so warn us, as the Pope often does warn us, we are bound not merely to an obsequious or respectful silence, but bound to republish with heart and mind whatever, in matters of faith and morals, the successor of blessed Peter reprobrates and condemns. Let us be quite sure of it, that the right of the Pope and of the Church to pronounce an infallible decision extends to the condemning of evil publications. But antecedent to, and independent of, this right of the Pope, we have a charter given us by nature to protect us from the poisonous influence of evil literature. The natural law, of which God is the author and conscience the herald, the law not written on pillars of stone, but on the tablets of the human heart, sternly forbids the production. —Denver Register.

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Did he not more than half surrender that power to the enemy of his soul, when without any justifying cause, he grasped to his heart as his teachers in morality writers who wallow in the filth of sensualism? To determine the rights of the Church in this matter, we must keep steadily in view the end for which the Church was instituted. The Church has for its end the salvation of the souls of men. The Pope, as the successor of blessed Peter, is charged with the duty of feeding the flock of Christ. Personally, he may be more learned or less so; highly born, or of humble extraction; but whatever his personal gifts may be, he is equally burdened with the commission given by Christ to blessed Peter: "Feed My lambs; feed My sheep." Every society, and every lawfully appointed superior, have a right to the means necessary or useful to the end for which they exist. 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