

Jessie's Offering, AND ITS RESULTS.

Jessie had not been very recollected during the first weeks of preparation for First Communion, and Sister Margaret had once gone so far as to say that perhaps she would better wait another year. This had the effect of making the child more thoughtful, although by nature she was very lively, and not much given to piety. Sister Margaret, seeing this, had kept her after the others, in order to encourage her good disposition by pious conversation and stories of the saints. Jessie fully appreciated all that was being done in her behalf and surprised her teacher by numerous questions and thoughtful remarks, which gave her a better insight into the character of the child than all the previous years of acquaintance and guidance had accomplished.

One day she said to her, "Jessie, my child, what is your favorite devotion?"

The child smiled shyly as she answered, "I like to pray to the souls in Purgatory."

"To them or for them?"

"To them," said Jessie. "Of course I always pray for them—I think 'Out of the Depths' is the loveliest prayer. But when I want anything very badly I just say, 'Please get me so and so, dear holy souls,' and they nearly always do."

Sister Margaret smiled. "Now I never thought you were such a pious little thing," she said. "Indeed, I fancied—"

"Oh, but I am not pious at all," interrupted Jessie, hurriedly. "If I had been, you would not have had almost to put me away from my First Communion. But I do love the holy souls, and Sister"—she hesitated, blushed and again smiled in her peculiar shy little way.

"Do not be timid about saying any of your thoughts to old Sister Margaret," said the gentle religious, observing her confusion.

"I was only going to say, Sister," she continued, "that I wondered if it would be nice to offer up my First Communion for the release of a suffering soul?"

"Nice?" echoed the Sister. "Nothing could be more lovely. Is there some relative, perhaps, for whom you should wish to make the offering?"

"No, Sister. Papa and mamma are always praying and having Masses said for the grandpapa and grandmamma who are dead. And I don't know of any other friends."

"Well, then, what would be your wish?"

"I thought it might be a good thing to offer it for some neglected soul."

"Indeed it would," said Sister Margaret, much edified.

"Then I will do that," said Jessie, simply, and the matter was spoken of no more.

On the morning of First Communion day the children marched in procession from the convent to the church, with that look upon their young faces which no human being ever wears except on that memorable occasion. Jessie and her companion were the last to run the gauntlet of admiring criticism from the crowds that lined the sidewalks and surged up to the steps. A lady richly attired was passing in a carriage, driven by a liveried coachman. The horses began to kick, and Jessie swerved aside with her companion, for the first time raising her eyes, which had been bent upon the ground. They met those of the lady, large, dark and sorrowful, with a haughty expression that repelled the child even in that brief moment. But something in that innocent gaze caught the attention of the occupant of the carriage. She hesitated, leaned forward, and ordering her coachman to stop, alighted from her vehicle and slowly entered the church into which the crowd had already disappeared. Once inside she edged her way forward, and soon found herself, in the pew just behind Jessie, who was seated in the last row of first Communicants.

The Mass proceeded, and the lady sat during the greater part of it, half kneeling at the Elevation. Her face was pale and outwardly calm, but the occasional twitching of her lips betrayed the existence of strong hidden emotion. After a few words from the officiating priest before the Communion, the children advanced to the rail. As Jessie once more re-entered the pew, her hands clasped together, her young face radiant and glorified by the sublime act she had just performed, the lady bent forward in a vain effort to catch her eye. But the child had no thought

for anything but the holy tenderness that filled her soul, knew only that she had received her Lord within her heart, in which He was still reposing. Dropping her head in her hands she remained wrapped in an ecstasy of prayer and thanksgiving. The lady also knelt, tears falling from her eyes. After a time she touched Jessie on the shoulder. The child turned around.

"My child," said the lady. "Will you pray for me?"

"Yes, ma'am, I will," replied the little girl.

"And for a soul in purgatory who is very dear to me?"

The child again answered in the affirmative, and returned to her devotions.

Early that afternoon Sister Margaret came to the priest's parlor to confer with him about something relative to the Confirmation of the children, which was to take place at 4 o'clock. He was talking to a lady, to whom he excused himself while he left the room to fetch what Sister Margaret wanted. As the Sister stood looking into the yard where the children were already assembled, the lady came forward and addressed her:

"There was a little girl this morning, Sister," she said, "if I see her I will point her out. I should like to know her name. She was so very sweet and innocent, with such a wrapt look in her eyes that she impressed me very much. Indeed, it may seem a very strange thing, but it really drew me into the church, where I had no thought of going, for I had not been in a Catholic Church for many years."

Sister Margaret glanced at her quickly, and then withdrew her gaze. It was a face that bore traces of suffering, a proud face, with lines of care and unhappiness upon the forehead, and there were traces of recent weeping.

"Do you know where she sat in the church?" asked the Sister.

"In the last row, I was just behind her. A little thing, with great, dark, pleading eyes. A future nun I should say, if appearances are not deceitful."

"It must have been Jessie," was the reply.

"Ah, there she is," said the lady, as a child ran across the walk toward the school room.

"Yes, that is Jessie," replied Sister Margaret, and moved by an impulse for which she could not account, she added:

"She is a dear good child. Would you believe it, madame, she offered her first holy Communion this morning for some neglected soul in purgatory."

"Mon Dieu," exclaimed the lady, clasping her hands, "it is like a miracle. Oh! Sister, I must see you again when you have leisure. I must tell you the story of my life. I have just been asking the priest when I might come to Confession. When can I see you?"

"To-morrow we will have a holiday on account of the First Communicants," was the reply. "Will you come to the convent at three?"

The next afternoon, Sister Margaret found herself listening to the following story:

"I was born in New Orleans," said Mrs. Malot, "of mixed French and Irish descent. My father, once a Catholic, had become an infidel; my mother was a pious Catholic Christian. But from the first I was careless in religious matters, and when I married, after the death of my mother, I gave up my faith entirely. My husband was a Protestant, and did not know that I had ever been a Catholic. In earlier days it was a mark of odium in some portions of this country to attend the Catholic Church, and when we removed to the West we settled in a new town composed almost entirely of Methodists. Nothing could be farther from my inclinations than the Methodist religion, but I joined the church for the sake of society, and it was only after I had really identified myself with that form of worship that I began to realize my perfidy, and have regrets for my own, which I endeavored to stifle.

"Some missionaries came to the town; my husband went to hear them through curiosity, with the result that he obtained works on Catholicity, and was received into the Church. He not only lost prestige, but clients and money by it, and while I did not reproach him for what he had done, I made no sign. Our only child died, after having been baptized by the priest, and I felt it to be a judgment of God. My

husband solicited me to join the Catholic Church, where I would find true comfort and consolation; but I had now gone so far that I was ashamed to tell him I was already a Catholic, fearing his displeasure and lasting contempt, for he was an upright man. He wished to remove to some town where there was a Catholic Church; the priest coming to C— but once a month, his congregation consisting of laborers on the railroad, miners and servant girls. I protested against this, and we remained in C—.

"My husband entered into politics, neglected his business, lost the nomination for judge, and took to drinking. His health was not robust, and in a couple of years dissipation reduced him to a dying condition. He did not ask for a priest and I did not inquire whether he wished to see one, fearing to alarm him. The end came suddenly. His last words were: 'Oh! Mary, pray for me and have prayers said for me when I shall be in purgatory.' His mind was wandering, but it betrayed his most cherished wish. At the moment I meant to do as he requested, but later neglected it. My heart seemed to have become hardened. God permitted it, no doubt, to punish me. I lost all desire to reconcile myself with Him. Some Western mines in which my husband had been interested proved valuable, and I was a rich woman. I came East, joined the Episcopal Church as being the most fashionable, and I was on my way to early service when I encountered the first Communicants on their way to Mass. Something in the eyes of that little girl seemed to summon me. After I went in, and found her kneeling in front of me I tried to pray. It was only after she had returned to the pew from the Communion table that I felt a flood of shame and repentance sweeping through my soul. I wanted her dear prayers for myself and for him, for whom I had wept and mourned through all these years, but whom I had left to suffer in the fires of purgatory."

"For I firmly believe that his was the soul whom God had chosen her to deliver, or at least assist by her pure, sweet offering. It is more than a coincidence, it is a special Providence, a miracle. I needed one to bring me back to the fold."

"Yesterday I was tempted to despair; I felt that I could never face my God, never meet my poor husband whose last prayer I had permitted to go unheeded. But last night I went to Confession, and today I begin to experience what it is to be Catholic, even though a most unworthy penitent."

Society was agast when the rich and fashionable Mrs. Malot returned to the Catholic Church, of which she took pains to inform her friends she had once been a member. Jessie wondered at the affection she ever afterward showed towards her, and why she seemed so pleased to meet her on the way to and from Mass, their roads lying in the same direction. But she did not know the secret of it; wiser heads than hers believing it better not to endanger the simplicity of her pure young heart, by telling her how it seemed that her beautiful offering had been pleasing to God and accepted by Him.

Nor does she know it yet, though one of the holiest and happiest among the Helpers of the Holy Souls.—The Indian Advocate.

of knowledge that prompted it, there was strong religious conviction. Yes, Catholic priest that I am, I will stand here and say that I would far sooner see every Protestant church crowded to the doors than this indifference that now confronts us. And why do we find this emptying of such churches? Is it not because they lack the great fundamental principle which should underlie all true worship of God—namely, a sacrifice? They go to hear their minister speak, and sometimes they hear a discourse on politics while often some reference is made to current affairs. But they soon tire of the eloquence of the man; they soon tire of the music, and then they stay away. There is nothing to hold them, and hence the forty or fifty million people in our country to-day who belong to no church.

I appeal to you Catholics for the love of your country, to be faithful to your religious duties, for the day will come when men of religious conviction, men with a faith in God, will be needed, if our political institutions are to be preserved. Look at ravages made in other countries by anarchism and socialism, and the inroads these forces are making here. 'No God and no master,' is what they have on their banner. The time is coming when we shall find in this country that those who know no God will know no master, and will rise against our democratic institutions. Is it not inevitable that those who will not acknowledge the law of God will also refuse to acknowledge the law of man? See what has happened in other countries where churches have emptied, Asia Minor, where the Christian religion was born, we find under the hoof of the atrocious and infamous Mohammedan.

Then to come to that country which perhaps you are thinking about. I refer to France. No country on the globe has a more magnificent history, but behold her to-day. She is closing the institutions which were once her pride, and is driving in the streets to mingle with thieves, pickpockets and abandoned women, hundreds of pious men and women who have dedicated their lives to God. The boast is made that within a few years there won't be a Mass said in all France. Now the only reason I can ascribe for this—and I know France and I love her—is religious indifference. Her men and women have not gone to church as they should have, and now, when the crisis is reached, it is seen that they have lost their old patriotism and chivalry."

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PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.
District of Montreal.
No. 1703.
Dame Myrtle Hungerford, of the City and District of Montreal, wife of George H. Hogle, of the same place, livery stable keeper, Plaintiff.

vs.
The said George H. Hogle, Defendant.
Public notice is hereby given that an action for separation as to property has been this day instituted between the above parties.
SMITH, MARKEY & MONTGOMERY.
Montreal, 13th May, 1903.

Father Campbell on Religious Indifference.
Rev. Thomas A. Campbell, S. J., in the course of a sermon, preached at Stamford, Conn., recently gave expression to his convictions regarding the indifference to religion in the American Republic. He said in part:

"I urge you to be present at this sacrifice of the Mass, and to partake of the Blessed Sacrament, not only because I love my Church, but because I love my country. Let us look for a moment at the conditions prevailing in this glorious country of ours. Statistics show us, and I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the figures, that between forty and fifty million people attend no church. In looking about us we find our churches emptying, their congregations are withering. It was not so long ago that you and I were subjected to ridicule and to scorn owing to our belief. We were not considered as worthy of the consideration that was given to others. Now all this is changed. A Catholic stands on the same base with everybody else, and we hear no more of bigotry. But, for my part, I would say I would rather a thousand times have the old days with all their bitter bigotry and bitter prejudice than the indifference that we find to-day, because back of all that bigotry, back of all the narrowness and lack

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A.O.H. LADIES' AUXILIARY, Division No. 5, Organized Oct. 10th, 1901. Meetings are held in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander, on the first Sunday of each month at 2.30 p.m., on the third Thursday at 8 p.m. President, Miss Annie Donovan; vice-president, Mrs. Sarah Allen; recording-secretary, Miss Rose Ward; financial-secretary, Miss Emma Doyle, 68 Anderson street; treasurer, Mrs. Charlotte Bermingham; chaplain, Rev. Father McGrath.

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There are some who have the idea of prayers being sent to heaven for the protection of the country, and they who scoff at the most miserable when the hour of danger comes. In this connection well quote another passage from the same article, as cited above, do so to furnish these lying, trembling creatures with an idea of how a Protestant considers the matter. The "It is an exceptional case, referring to the fires). We await the rain and pray this is exactly what the Catholic population of being doing. It was enjoyed Divine Lord, on one mission, to "watch and pray to wait for God's providence to watch for the Providence but also to "pray," then needed might be accorded has said plainly "Ask a receive." But He insists asking. If we do our part, contract, if we do the part the asking—the easier part He will do the rest. But He not hesitate in the asking necessary act upon our acknowledgment of our upon Him, and He has exceedingly easy for us. It was the efficacy of prayer undantly proven.



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NOTES
DAILY DISASTERS
we publish an account of every disaster, the details being sent to us from all parts of the world. We will quote the "Boston Post," in describing the forest fire in the New England States that organ says:—"This however, is entirely of our own. And it means more than any distant turbulence can mean. It is destruction which man not fully repair." In the natural cry that comes from each one as soon as calamity comes to him. With a kind of indifference or hear of the disaster lands. But when these multiply to an abnormal when they grow so frequent almost become accustomed when we find them of most hourly occurrence feel that the danger is closer and is gradually with its chain—and we moment that ours will fated region. In no part of the world to-day is there a free from such calamity up the ordinary daily told of the terrific cyclones and the hundred that were lost; in another we read of the scores of by cyclones in Texas as on the same page the elements are recorded have along the valley south and Mississippi; an account of the people conflagrations that have weeks in our own section; Turtle mountain and the remains of the tower Pellee is in active southern seas are swept canes that engulf whole hundreds of lives; rally are of hourly occurrence is moving down human rate of a thousand per day; and the forms of are made up with small murders, suicides and the spectacle that the world to-day.

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