

kindly-faced and snow-crowned old man, but when he spoke it was always with a gentle dignity and a depth of sympathy and feeling that compelled attention.

"It is a great satisfaction, my dear Father," he began, "to find so many of you here to rejoice with our young friend and his devoted people, and to thus encourage the growth of a priestly life which he has so well begun in Alta. No one more than I glories in his success. No one more warmly than I, his Bishop, tenders congratulations. This is truly a day the Lord has made—this day in Alta. It is a day of joy and gladness for priest and people. Will you pardon an old man if he stems the tide of mirth for an instant? He could not hope to stem it long, for on such an occasion as this it would burst the barriers leaving what he would show you, one more submerged beneath rippling waters and silver-tipped waves of laughter. It seems even to think of the depths where lie the bodies of the dead and of the hulks of the wrecked. But the bottom always has its treasure as well as its tragedy. There is both a tragedy and a treasure in the story I will tell you to day.

"Do you remember Father Belmont, the first pastor of Alta? Let me tell you, then, a story that your generous priestly souls will treasure as it deserves."

The table was strangely silent. Not one of the guests had ever before known the depth of sympathy in the old Bishop till now. Every cord in the nature of each man vibrated to the touch of his words.

"It was ten years ago," went on the Bishop—"ah, how years fly fast to the old! A friend of college days, a Bishop in an Eastern State, wrote me a long letter concerning a young man who had just ordained. He was a lad of great talents, a brilliant and handsome young man, the son of a wealthy family, who, however, now cast him off, giving him to understand that he would receive nothing from them. The young man was filled with zeal, and he begged the Bishop to give him to some missionary diocese wherein he could work in obscurity for the greater glory of God. He was so useful and so brilliant a man that the Bishop desired to attach him to his own household and was loath to lose him; but the priest begged hard and was persistent, so the Bishop asked me to take him, for a few years and give him actual contact with the hardships of life in a pioneer State. Soon he thought he would be willing to return to work in his larger field. The Bishop, in other words, wanted to test him. I sadly needed a priest, so when he came with the oil still wet on his hands, I gave him a place—the worst I had—I gave him Alta. Some of you older men know what it was then. The story of Alta is full of sorrow. I told it to him, but he thanked me and went to his charge. I expected to see him within a week, but I did not see him for a year. Then I sent for him, and with his arms open to me he came, and which he had received. He said that it took very little when one was careful, and that he lived well enough, but his coat was threadbare and his shoes were badly patched. There was a brightness in his eyes, foot, and a flush on his cheek that I did not quite like. I asked him of his work, and he told me that he was hopeful; that he had a small flock, but in the conversation I actually stole the sad tale of his poverty from him. Yet he made no complaint, and went back cheerfully to Alta.

"The next month he came again, but this time he told me of the dire need of aid; not for himself, but for his church. The people, he said, were poor pioneers, and the comfortable and ugly old church they were losing their grip on their pride in religion. The young people were falling away. All around were well ordered and beautiful sectarian churches. He could see the effect not visible to less interested eyes, but very plain to his. He feared that another generation would be lost, and he asked me if there was any possibility of securing temporary aid, such as the securing of a building for their work. I had to tell him that nothing could be done. I told him of the poverty of my own diocese, and that while his was a poor place, that there were others approaching it. In my heart I knew there was something sadly lacking in our national work for the church, but I could do nothing myself. He wrote to his own State for aid, but the letters were unanswered. I could give him, and he devoted to his work, it was impossible to do anything. He was brave and never faltered, though the eyes in him shone brighter and in places his coat was worn through. A few days after I received a letter from his Bishop, asking how he did and saying that he would appoint him to an excellent parish if he would return home willingly. I sent the letter to Alta with a little note of my own, congratulating him on his changed condition. He returned the letter to me with a few lines saying: 'I cannot go. If I desert my people here it would be a sin. There are plenty at home for the rich places, but you have no one to send here. Please ask the Bishop to let me stay. I think it is my duty.' The day I received that letter I heard one of my priests at the Cathedral say: 'How sadly that young Belmont looks! For an Eastern man, he is positively sloppy in his dress. He ought to brace up and think of the dignity of his calling. Surely such a man is not calculated to impress himself upon our separated brethren.' And another chimed in: 'I wonder why he left his own diocese?'

"I heard no more for two years, except for the annual report and now and then a request for a dispensation. I did hear that he was teaching the few children of the parish himself, and every little while I saw an article in some of the papers, unsigned, and suspiciously like his style, and I suspected that he was earning a little money with his pen.

"One winter night, returning alone from a visitation to Vinta, the last train was stalled by a blizzard at the

Alta station. I went out on the platform to secure a breath of fresh air, but I had scarcely closed the door when a boy rushed up to me and asked if I were a Catholic priest. When I nodded he said: 'We have been trying to get a priest all day, but the wires are down in the storm. Father Belmont is sick, and the doctor says he will die. He told me to look through every train that came in. He was sure I would find some one.' Reaching at once for my grip and coat, I rushed to the home of the pastor. The home was the lean-to vestry of the old log church, in one corner Father Belmont lived. The other was devoted to the vestments and linens. Everything was spotlessly clean. On a poor bed the priest was tossing, moaning and delirious. Only the boy had attended him in his sickness until the noon of that day, when two good old women heard of his condition and came. One of them was at his bedside when I entered. When she saw my collar she lifted her hands in that peculiarly Iberian gesture that means so much and said, 'Sure, God sent you here now this night! He has been waiting since noon to die.'

"The sick priest opened his eyes, that now had the brightness of death in them, and appeared to look through me. He seemed to be very far away. But slowly the eyes told me that he was coming back—back from the shadows—till at last he spoke:

"You, Bishop? Thank God! He made his simple confession. I anointed him and brought him Viaticum from the tabernacle in the church. Then the eyes went wild again, and I saw when they opened and looked at me that he had already turned around and was again walking through the shadows of the great valley that ends the long road.

Through the night we three, the old woman, the boy and myself, watched him and listened to his wanderings. Then I learned, old priest and Bishop as I was, I learned my lesson. The lips that never spoke a complaint were moved, but not by his will to go over the story of two terrible years. It was a sad story. It began in his great zeal. He wanted to do so much, but the black discouragement of everything slowly killed his hopes. He saw the faith going from his people. He saw that they were ceasing to care. The town was then, as it is to day, McDermott's town, but McDermott had fallen away when his riches came and some terrible event, a quarrel with a former priest who had attended Alta from a distant point, had left McDermott bitter. He practically drove the pastor from his door. He closed his sanctuary to the priest's people, and one by one they left. Only eighteen like warm families stayed. He counted them over in his dreams, and sobbed as he told of their going away. Then the bigotry that McDermott's faith had kept concealed broke out under the encouragement of McDermott's infidelity. The boys of the town flung insults at the priest as he passed. The people gave little, and that grudgingly. I could almost feel his pain as he told in his delirium how, day after day, he dragged his frail body to church and then, as if the words came naturally to bear him up he would say, 'It is for God's sake, I am nothing. It will all come in His own good time.' Then I knew the spirit that kept him to his work. He went over his visit to me. How he had hoped, and then how his hopes were dashed to the ground. Oh, dear Lord, had I known what it all meant to that sensitive, saintly man, I would have sold my ring and cross to give him what he needed. But my words seemed to have broken him, and he came home to die. The night of his return he spent before the altar in his log church and, saints of heaven! how he prayed! When I heard his poor dry lips whisper over the prayer once more, I bowed my head on the coverlet and cried as only a child can cry—and I was only a child at that minute in spite of my white hair and wrinkles. He had offered a supreme sacrifice—his life. I gleaned from his prayer—that his parents had done him the one favor of keeping up his insurance, and that he had made it over to his church. So he wanted to die at his post, and piteously begged God to take him. For his death he knew what meant that Alta would have a church. He seemed penetrated with the idea that alive he was useless, but his death meant the resurrection of Alta. When I heard that same expression used so often to-day, the whole story of that night in the little vestry I lived over again. All this time he had been picking the coverlet and his hands seemed, during the pauses, gathering up the minute particles from the corporal. At last his hand found mine. He clung to it, and just an instant his eyes looked at me with reason in them. He smiled and murmured, 'It is all right now, Bishop.' I heard a sob back of me where the boy stood, and the old woman was praying. He was trying to speak again, and I caught the words, 'God's sake—I am nothing but a man.' Then he was still just as the morning sun broke through the windows.

"That minute, reverend fathers, began the resurrection of Alta. The old woman told me how it happened. He was twenty-five miles away attending one of his missions when the blizzard was at its height. McDermott fell sick, and a telegram was sent for the priest—the last message before the wires came down. Father Belmont started to drive through the storm back to Alta. He reached McDermott's bedside and gave him the last sacraments. He did not break down himself until he returned to the vestry but for twenty-four hours he tossed in fever before they found him.

McDermott was better. He sent for me when he heard I was in town. The first question he asked was, 'Is he dead?' I told McDermott the story just as I am telling you. 'God forgive me,' said the sick man, 'that priest died for me. When he came here I ordered him out of my office, yet when they told him I was sick he drove through the storm for my sake. He

believed in the worth of a soul, and he himself was the noblest soul that Alta ever had.'

"I said nothing. Somebody better than a mere Bishop was talking to McDermott, and I, his minister, was silent in His presence. 'Bishop,' said McDermott, after long thought, 'I never really believed until now. I am sorry that it took a man's life to bring back the faith of my fathers. Send us a priest to Alta—one who can do things—one after the stamp of the saint in the vestry. I'll be his friend, and together we will carry on the work he began. I'll see him through if God spares me.'

"Dear Fathers, it is needless to say what I did.

"Father Broidy, on this happy day I have not re-echoed the praises that have been showered upon you as much as perhaps I might have done, because I reserved for you a praise that is higher than them all. I believed when I sent you here that you were of his stamp. You have done your duty, and you have done it well. I am not ungrateful, and I shall not forget. But your best praise to-day is that I firmly believe that you and your circumstances would have willingly given your life also for the resurrection of Alta."—From "Extension," published quarterly by the Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States.

GLIMPSSES OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

LONDON PHYSICIAN'S TESTIMONY TO MANIFESTATIONS OF DIVINE POWER IN OUR DAY.

That the power of God is as evident in the world to-day as in the time when miraculous proofs of it were more common and that supernatural promptings are as often heard by those who will listen to them was the argument developed in a recent address on the supernatural by a well-known English physician, Dr. Gideon W. B. Marsh, of London. The address is quoted by The London Monitor and New Era. Dr. Marsh said in part:

"We live in a busy world that is ever making claims upon our time. Every moment of the day is filled with cares of one sort or another, and from early morning until bedtime we are rushing at express speed through the crowded hours. Hardly have we time on waking from a troubled sleep to turn our thoughts to heaven before the world is beckoning with impatient gesture. At night, weary and worn, our tired brain finds it difficult to spin out its drain of strength in a momentary glance toward its Creator. Such is the life, or rather the existence, passed by man in this twentieth century in the great city of London. Little wonder is it then that we are apt to forget the world that lies beyond the grave. The eyes are blinded to it by the glare of earth, and the ears are clogged with the tumultuous struggle for the 'survival of the fittest.'

"I am going to ask you this afternoon," said Dr. Marsh, "to bear with me while I tell you of some of those wonderful glimpses of the supernatural which have occurred within quite recent times.

"THE WHISPER OF THE PRIEST. A priest, a friend of mine, was one day hastening home to dinner after a hard day's work. He was very late and was concerned at keeping his brother priests waiting. As he hurried along the thought flashed across him, 'You must go and see Mr. X.' Now this parishioner had been very ill and an inmate of a large infirmary to which he had been taken. He was, however, then at home and apparently in much improved health. Thinking to himself, 'I'll call and see him to-morrow,' the good priest kept up his rapid pace, but the more quickly he walked the more persistent became the thought, 'You must go and see him,' until at last thinking that perhaps he might be acting against some inspiration, he retraced his steps and went to the man's house. At the door he met with the wife, who in great alarm and apparently in much improved health, said to him, 'My husband is insensible, and I cannot rouse him.' The reverend gentleman hastened to the bedside and found his parishioner unconscious, but when he bent over him and called him by his name the sick man opened his eyes and sat up. In answer to inquiries he said that he felt very unwell. The good priest, heaving a sigh of relief, and seeing no danger of death, promised to call and see him again in a few hours. As he left the house he bade the wife send at once if her husband were taken worse, and then he hurried to the presbytery. Hardly had he been there half an hour when a messenger came to say that the man was dead.

"Whence came that importunate whisper to the priest that made him visit the sick man? Not from earth, certainly, but from the land of spirits. Porchance it was the Guardian Angel whose words he heard.

"THE STORY OF THE BLEEDING CIRCULAR. I am now about to relate to you a strange occurrence, for the truth of which I pledge you my word. In a certain town in the North of England lived a lady who was joined in matrimony to a Protestant gentleman of some position. After their marriage he forbade his wife the practice of her religion, and so deadly was his hatred of the faith that he swore to shoot any priest who dared to enter his house. He was so desperate that the clergy abstained from visiting, and time passed on. There was a mission going on in the parish, and the good Fathers who gave it had heard from the parish priest the awful story I have related to you. It was Saturday night, and one of them had just finished his heavy day's work and had left the confessional by his room. Suddenly the thought flashed across his mind, 'I must go and see Mrs. So-and-so—meaning the lady to whom I have referred. The more he tried to rid himself of the apparently silly thought the more did it force itself upon his mind until at last he felt that the message was from another world, and taking the holy oils for extreme unction, he prepared to set out on a journey which he knew and felt might be his last. Using

human prudence, he obtained the championship, though at a distance of a few young men, whom he bade to be ready at a signal should he be in danger.

"They knew his peril full well, for the parish rang with the threat—no idle one, as everybody was quite aware. Approaching the door with fear, yet trusting in the God he served, the good Father rang the bell and was answered by a servant, who replied that her mistress was ill in bed—very ill. The priest begged to be shown to her room at once, as he had come to visit her. He was asked into the house, and when he entered the hall, upon his left was a room, the door of which stood open, thus exposing to view two men who were talking loudly and were absorbed in looking at a lamp upon the table. So engrossed were they that the priest's presence seemed to go unnoticed, and he hesitated to go uninvited to the bedside of the sick woman. When he was announced and had entered, the poor creature burst into a cry of gratitude to God, for whose priest she had longed and prayed. He remained with her, heard her confession, and, finding that she was dying, he anointed her and then rose to leave, promising, with God's help, next day to bring her the Holy Viaticum.

"As he passed through the hall on his way to the door he was met by one of the two men whom he had seen by the master of the house—who begged him urgently to come into the room, for he had something to show him. Feeling that it was only a plan to ensnare and kill him, the good priest hesitated, and a lack of time had all but passed, and he was compelled to enter the room. There he found the other person engaged in looking into the lamp. The master of the house now rejoined his friend and kept importuning the priest to join them, for he declared there was a strange vision in the lamp. More frightened than ever the priest now excused himself and hurrying from the room thanked God when he found himself once more in safety in the street. On the morrow, early, he started for the dangerous house, bearing upon his breast the Food of Angels, and attended as before at a distance by his escort of young men. Once more he was admitted and reached in safety the dying woman's bedside. He gave her the Holy Viaticum and the last blessing, and within a very short time she breathed her last. On his way downstairs he saw the master awaiting him, and, feeling sure now the end had come, he made a fervent act of contrition and resignation to the will of God.

"Taking the priest by the arm, the man led him once more into the room and closed the door. Then begging his attention he poured into his ear this wondrous story:

"Last night when you rang the bell and entered I should have carried out my threat and have shot you dead but for a strange occurrence. You saw my companion and myself looking with rapt attention upon the lamp, and when you came downstairs I endeavored to bring you also to see what we saw there. When your ring was answered by the servant a figure of the Saviour stretched upon the Cross, and from His hands and feet blood trickled down and fell in drops within the globe. The sight paralyzed and then astounded me and I called my comrade who also saw it. Thus was I distracted from my purpose and lost to serious thought and misgivings, and now I repent of my evil purpose and of the wickedness I have done against God and His church, and I ask instruction at your hands that I, too, may become a Catholic. Pardon the priest's astonishment! I need no further. He was instructed."

Dr. Marsh related other equally wondrous incidents and concluded: "Such are a few examples of the glimpses given in recent days of the supernatural. As I said at the beginning, God's arm is not shortened, nor are His loving mercies diminished. If we will but look around us, we shall see them everywhere. If we will, we shall hear the whisperings of the spirit world. Angels and saints are thronging around us, and they bring us many a message that our dull ears hear not because the sounds of earth are so loud. For He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

CHOICE OF TWO EVILS.

A Spanish Catholic magazine having advised its readers to vote for the less objectionable of the two political candidates when neither was entirely acceptable, was taken to task for this by another Spanish Catholic magazine. The discussion grew so warm that the Pope was invited to end it, and he did so by deciding in favor of the first mentioned periodical. If we lay the Holy Father's words in this case before our readers, it is because so many of the citizens of our own country are apathetic about exercising the franchise or if they do exercise it, put the interests of party above the public good:

"Let all bear this in mind that in the presence of danger to religion, or to the public welfare, it is unlawful for any one to remain inactive. For, nowadays, those who try to destroy religion or society, aim chiefly at laying hold, if possible, of the public administration, and at the procuring their election to administrative bodies. Accordingly, it is incumbent upon Catholics to ward off such a peril and so putting aside all interests of party—so work vigorously for the safety of the religion and of their country; above all persistently working for the following object, namely, that those persons shall be returned to administrative as well as to political assemblies who, viewing the conditions of each election and the circumstances of time and place according as the articles in the said review maintain, seem likely to keep an eye upon the interests of religion and of fatherland in the performance of their duties."—Antigonish Casket.

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A LOURDES CURE

DESCRIBED BY A MAN WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE IN MIRACLES.

The following letter, published in the Sun (New York) is curiously enough one of the fruits of Professor Goldwin Smith's attempts to demonstrate the fallacy of belief in miracles:

To the Editor of the Sun.—Sir: I have no greater belief in miracles than has Professor Goldwin Smith, nor am I any more of a Catholic than he is; but I know of an instance of a "Lourdes cure" in New York city which is so remarkable, however it may have been effected, objectively or subjectively. Several years ago a young woman of about twenty years fell on the ice and injured her spine and hip. She was laid up for some time, then the right leg began to lose its strength. Within a year she was unable to walk except with a strong steel brace to keep the foot in position. Being possessed of ample means she had the best physicians, specialists and others, that could be procured. She also resorted to remedies not exactly in the professor. But none availed, and she gradually grew worse. The only consolation—not a cure—she had come from one physician, who told her that nothing could be done except to cut a tendon in the ankle and stiffen the joint, which would make her a cripple for life, though she might walk without the heavy brace. This treatment she declined.

Although a Catholic, she had not thought of any of the miraculous cures offered by her church at various points. About three years ago she went to Europe, and while there visited Lourdes, France, and with a very strong faith. She remained there about twenty-four hours or possibly eighteen, but long enough to try the waters three or four times, and received a small card with a printed prayer upon it, with instructions to repeat the prayer at intervals. That was about the extent of her "treatment," and at 9 o'clock in the evening she left for Paris. The following night in Paris she knelt by her bedside—still unable to walk unassisted—to say her prayers, and when she arose from her knees she walked across the room without the brace and has not used it since. From that time she walked unaided, and as soon as the leg had resumed its normal condition, for it had shrunk considerably, she walked as well as she ever did, and has continued to do so.

If this young woman were of the temperament of some, I could easily understand the influence of psychology upon her case, but she is eminently sensible and practical, and if Professor Smith could talk with her I believe he would wonder a little himself just what it was that effected her cure. I have no faith whatever in miracles, but this instance is puzzling, to say the least.

W. J. L.

New York, May 20.

Mother's Ear

A WORD IN MOTHER'S EAR: WHEN NURSING AN INFANT, AND IN THE MONTHS THAT COME BEFORE THAT TIME.

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