

In a whisper, the man unfolded his plan, but the nurse shook her head, as though she expected no results from the experiment; but as the man persisted, she took the infant and, undressing the little cap and coat, carefully straightening out the little slip; then, crossing to the bed, she laid back the covers and placed the child amid the snowy pillows; but the man was not satisfied and, leaning over, he lifted a tiny velvety hand and laid it gently upon the cheek of the sorrowing mother. Dropping to his knees, he repeated over and over: "Sacred Heart of Jesus, help!"

It seemed an eternity to the watchers, but in reality it was but a few minutes before Mrs. Jennings stirred slightly, as if she felt the pressure of the soft baby fingers. Her hand passed over the little body up to the soft, satiny skin, and dived lovingly on the little head. Her eyes opened and fell upon the little form beside her, as the baby, awakened, beat the air with its little fists and gave a lusty cry of disapproval. In an instant the mother's arms went out and the child was clasped close to her.

"I've had such a dreadful dream, John," she smiled; "I thought the baby was dead, but he's wonderfully well and beautiful, isn't he dear?" And soon the mother and babe were sleeping peacefully, and the husband and nurse smiled in approval. Then the man remembered with a start and turned towards the two waiting figures at the door. Motioning them to follow him, he went into an adjoining room.

"I can never thank you sufficiently for your great goodness. I feel certain now that my wife will recover. I will go over to the hospital at once and try to procure an infant, and we will not tell her that it is not hers until she is stronger and has learned to love the one we will adopt."

"Would you not like to have the baby that is in your wife's arms now?"

"I would be willing to give every cent I possess to have it," the man said earnestly. "But, of course, you would not part with it."

"I think it will be best to tell you the whole story. The baby's mother was our youngest sister. She was buried yesterday." It was with difficulty the women kept back their tears, but she went on: "A year ago, disregarding our pleas and entreaties, our sister married a man whom she had met at the office where she was employed as stenographer, and left with him for Chicago. We really believed that the man loved her—she was such a dear sweet child, it seems impossible for any one to do otherwise—and our objection to him were based solely on the fact that he was not a Catholic. She wrote to us often but never gave us the slightest hint of her troubles. Soon after their marriage, it seems, he began to scoff and make fun of her religion and attempted to compel her to remain away from Mass. He laughed when she reminded him of the promises he had made to the priest when they were married and assured her that, should they ever have any children, they would never be baptized or raised in that 'idolatrous faith,' as he chose to call our dear religion.

"You can imagine that my sister suffered intolerably, praying constantly. For herself she had little fear, for the faith of our fathers was bred so firmly in her that no persecution could make it waver, but for the little babe that was coming she dreaded the worst. One morning he caught her as she was slipping out to Mass, and in great anger, because she dared to disobey him, he struck her, knocking her down. When she recovered sufficiently she left the house, taking nothing with her but a small grip, and took the first train for this city.

"You can imagine our consternation when she almost staggered into our home. Our indignation knew no bounds when we heard of the inhuman manner in which her husband had treated her, but we had little time to think of those things then. That night she became very ill and asked for the priest. The baby came next day and she regained consciousness long enough to plead with us that we never permit her husband to have the child if we could prevent it.

"You see, sir, we dare not keep the child for fear he may come back and claim it and blot from its little life all knowledge of its mother's religion. When we met you this morning, we were on our way to ask Father Malloy to assist us in placing the baby in a Catholic home. We are all members of the 'Sacred Heart League' and have always had a special devotion to the Sacred Heart. Just before her death, I heard my sister murmur 'Dear Sacred Heart, I place my baby in your care. Please watch over her.'"

"When I agreed to come with you, I thought perhaps the hand of God was leading us and, now that I have seen the picture of the Sacred Heart above the bed, I am sure of it. My sister is a bookkeeper with the firm of B— & L—, whom you no doubt know well and I have just completed my training as a nurse at M— Hospital, and we are able to give you every reference you may wish as to the respectability and good family of the child."

Mr. Jennings could hardly believe his good fortune. After telling the ladies of his prayers, he continued: "I shall be glad to adopt the child and make it my own legally. But I do not wish to take it out of your lives entirely. We shall require a nurse and, if you will stay, I will be

glad to have you remain and assist us."

"O! I'd just love to. I just dived to leave Louise's baby, and, if you will permit me to be its nurse for a while, it will be more than I dared hope for."

The older woman spoke: "The ways of God are indeed wonderful! Just think how He led us towards each other this morning, when we were so perplexed about the baby's future, and in doing so answered not only our prayers but our dead sister's and Mr. Jennings' also. Truly all of us have much to be thankful for and ought never cease to be grateful to the dear Heart of Jesus for what He has done this day."

CATHOLICISM AND HAPPINESS

Garrett Pierce in America

Balzac has a striking story of a scientist whose whole life was ardently devoted to the quest of the Absolute. Though he neglected the dearest ties of relationship for the sake of his pursuit, though he restlessly sought the great object as a miser seeks gold, he miscalculated through expecting to find the Absolute in created things. The scientist found the Absolute only in death.

The scientist's fate is a parable of life. All men are seeking happiness with passionate and feverish search. There is a veiled figure denied of all the nations of the earth. The God of their dreams is a hidden God. Partly for that reason, partly through their own negligence, many men make miscalculations in identifying this mysterious figure, the object of all human ambition. Some identify the desired object with wealth, and believe that this can satisfy an immortal spirit. Vain thought! Wealth does not meet the deep needs of the human heart, for the greatest millionaire ever seeks restlessly for more, and, until he is laid on the peaceful couch of death, his heart refuses to be quieted.

The great object of man's quest is identified by others with voluptuousness. Omar Khayyam ever had, and ever will have, his followers. But the world has had time enough to test Circean wine and the Dead Sea apples of indulgence, and it has experienced that the wine becomes bitter and the apples become ashes. The heart of a voluptuary, even of a Solomon with all means of selfish gratification at his disposal, finds no rest. The ancient Ecclesiastes breaks forth into the sigh of vanity, and the modern Ecclesiastes, the Faust of Goethe, reveals to us wine, wit, wealth, and voluptuousness as the unsubstantial baubles of a child's dream that dissolves into illusion. Even the pleasures of the intellect do not quiet the cravings of the human heart. A Newton after a lifetime of partially successful study, after having made a few giant steps across the boundary of the unknown, compares himself to a child gathering a few pebbles from a limitless ocean. The great Bossuet adds that the thoughts which have not the eternal for their object pertain to the domain of death.

Those who make frantic efforts to identify the goal of human desire with finite and created reality are like those in France who try to give solace to the griefed human heart in time of war, by beating drums and by singing the "Marseillaise." Human need is too deep to be satisfied with such pitiful fanfare.

Yet there must surely exist some worthy object to satisfy this deepest need of human nature. Unless the laws of nature are negatory, this object exists. It is the method of science to recognize that faculties have their objects in nature. Correlative supposes the existence of correlative. The eye, when it is first made, supposed the existence of the object to be seen. The fin of the whale suggested the existence of water. The wing of the bird supposed a sustaining medium. Is it to be thought that the deepest need of human nature alone has no satisfying object? Is it to be believed that nature is vain? Not so. The object of human happiness then exists. It is not, we have seen, mere finite reality which can satisfy our hearts. It remains that only the Infinite, only God, is the worthy object of the quest of the human soul. The cry of a great genius, Augustine, rings true: "We were made for Thee O Lord, and our hearts will never rest till they rest in Thee." How appropriate was the phrase applied by the Old Testament to the Messiah: "The One desired of all the nations of the earth!" For all nature, whether rational or not, whether animate or inanimate, is groping after God.

Everyone, then, who has found God, has found a mood where all our quest ceases. The thousand ills that flesh is heir to cannot rob him of that peaceful mood. The least in the kingdom of God becomes akin to the most advanced mystic in the sharing of this gift of peace. The ceaseless mind and the restless heart find an oasis in the desert of life. But this rest in God, attained by life's weary pilgrim, does not mean a Buddhist quietism. For the love of God must be a working love, a love manifesting itself in beneficence to God's children, a love having for model Him of Whom it was written: "He went about doing good." While the heart rests in God, the hands do not rest, but ever find themselves workers of beneficence to the needy.

And this is one of the reasons why perfect happiness is not of this earth. For full happiness is the complete possession of

perfectly satisfying good. But in this life, while our ideals are boundless, and our performances are limited, we can never be entirely satisfied with our works; there will always be room for a Divine discontent in regard to evil conditions. But external circumstances need never rob us of substantial peace and happiness. In this sense happiness is subjective, though it always supposes union with the great object of our yearning, God. Our minds are largely independent of external objects. There was a glimmering of this truth even in paganism, for example, in the noble attitude of Epictetus towards a tyrant: "You may imprison my body, but you cannot imprison my mind. You can send me to prison, but can you send me weeping?" Horace also finely dreamed of the man, just and tenacious of purpose, who could stand unmoved amid the crash of worlds. But the dream of paganism became the Christian reality. It became fact in the child martyr, Agnes, who played with the manacles of torture, and in the deacon Laurence, who on the gridiron for a death-bed, mocked his persecutors.

If only the love of God is the attainment of happiness, it must follow that the only safe way to God is the only sure path to happiness. Catholicism is this way. Christianity brought the "glad tidings" to an unhappy world. The Catholic Church is still the accredited preacher of the glad tidings, for she alone is the Church founded by Christ. We know by whom her rivals were founded. We know who and what these founders were. Henry VIII, we know and Luther we know. The churches they founded are of yesterday; they are dividing into sects, and hastening to dissolution. The Catholic Church is nineteen centuries in existence; she can be traced back to the Apostles, and to the glad tidings of Christ. Though old she is not decrepit. Assisting at the cradle and the grave of empires of this world, she continues, because she is divine, her ancient apostolate with pristine vigor.

Catholicism has inherited from Christ the legacy of peace for men. "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you." That peace implies the mental satisfaction of one who has settled one's account with God. It may be possessed by one who carries the sword. It may be enjoyed by the beggar eating his slender crust. It may visit the convict in his lowly cell. But this deep peace is not possessed, nor given, by the world which knows no God. For it is a gift to those whose faculties are harmoniously fulfilling their Divine destiny.

If anyone doubts that Catholicism holds the keys of happiness and peace, let him consider its highest product, the saint. Let him reflect on the curious fact that somehow the epithet "unhappy" is never applied to a saint. We may speak of a contemplative saint, of an eloquent saint, but never of an unhappy saint. Such would be a contradiction in terms. Amid the severest rigors of mortification, amid the instruments of torture the saint retains the deep seated happiness. Even in this life he begins his beatitude. Or let the doubter concerning Catholicism consult his studies by a first-hand consideration of those who on a priori grounds are supposed to have chosen a convent of nuns and he will observe that their faces are cheerful and their lives happy. Let him stand beside the death-bed of practising Catholics, and ask himself whether the Catholic religion has brought them no solace, no happiness. Let him question those who have departed from the tribunal of Catholic penance, and whose hearts have been accompanied amid tears of joy. Let him question some poor Catholic charwoman who may tell him, as she told me, that her only happiness in life was found in her visits to a Catholic church.

The great influence of Catholicism on happiness is brought into bold relief by a comparison with paganism, ancient or modern. The student of human history will observe that in paganism there is joy on the surface but sorrow and unhappiness beneath. In Christianity the sorrow is on the surface, but beneath there is an abiding peace. "Thou hast conquered, O King of the Gentiles, the world has grown gray with Thy breath." But it is really with the breath of paganism that the world has grown gray. One has only to ask oneself whether the paganism at the coming of Christ was not sorrowful at the core. In an outburst of natural virtue a Juvenile puts forth an undying will for the universal misery. Modern paganism, however pleasing a front it may show, is not less unhappy. Its smiling appearance only serves to disguise a broken heart; the worm that dieth is not prying on its vitals. Its apostle, Nietzsche, is one of the saddest figures in history. The fall of countries from Catholicism marks a change from a deep happiness to an underlying sorrow. The England that was "merrie" was Catholic England. The Continent that created the Cardinals was a Catholic Continent, but the Continent which is losing hold of the Christian ideals is deluged with the world with blood. Catholics were sufficiently pessimistic to recognize "this vale of tears," but they were optimistic enough to expect a heavenly Jerusalem, "a blissful vision of peace." They had the strong optimism resulting from the Christian belief that right and truth are on the winning side and will

ultimately prevail, and that the unrighteous and untruthful are pieces of God's machinery gone astray, whose unfortunate fate it is to be crushed. "Either a believer, or unhappy," is a summary of Pascal's apologetic thought.

True just here this momentous question forces itself upon us. "Why does God allow His creatures to suffer so many evils?" If you ask the so-called advanced thinkers of our day they will attempt an answer, but the solution is not in their hands. Before the mystery they are reduced to childish explanations. But ask the little Catholic child taught the lessons of the Gospel, to solve the riddle, and, enlightened by a wisdom that neither Plato nor Nietzsche knew, he will answer: "Man is a sin-stained culprit whom God is punishing. A crime committed against the Creator at the very origin of our history has defiled us, deprived us of perfect happiness, and subjected us to sorrow, disease and death." Yet man by an imperious law of his nature looks for that felicity here below. He can attain it in part by embodying in his life the truth of Catholic teaching.

Catholics who subscribe to Catholic papers are not the Catholics who complain about the inefficiency of the Catholic press. The non-subscriber is the fault-finder, and his fault-finding is often only an excuse for his failure to support an institution whose beneficence is widely recognized. "It seems to us," said our Holy Father, Pope Benedict, "that nothing is more desirable than that the number of those who can use their pen in a way rich in blessings should increase and that good papers should have a large circulation, so that every one may have every day good reading, which instructs and warns, and strengthens and promotes the Christian virtues." —Sacred Heart Review.

Of all the words in the English language that can be queerly conceived and made elastic, none equals the word piety. What strange conceptions of this virtue we see. Some devoted souls will sit down, and tell you with the greatest complacency, how often they went to the Sacraments in their lives. They never fear to know the number of times, for they never doubt but that all was well with all of them. They will tell you with holy horror of the sins of their neighbors, and would accentuate their own goodness by contrast with what they regard as the vicious lives about them. They never regret the sins of others for the violence offered the good God, but seem to rejoice in the fact that their poor neighbors serve as a dark background for their own peculiar brilliancy. Nor does the thought strike them that time was lost, hence sin committed, in acquiring the knowledge of the condemning qualities of their neighbors. These nice characters are always wearing their numbers on dress parade. They are ever conceitedly conscious that God could not do without them.

Now the saints, the exponents of sterling piety acted not in this way. They saw nothing of others because their eyes were ever on themselves. They regretted sin as sin, and not as a chance for contrast or comparison with themselves. They dreaded their unworthiness and wanted to forget, much less herald, their obligations to their conscience and the altar. They did not canonize themselves; they did not know they were good, and died in fear of the Searcher of souls. They knew the possibilities of their poor hearts, scarred with memories of the past, and so they were humble and silent.

Of all the plagues that embody folly and knavery, the man who thinks he is pious is the silliest and sorriest specimen. With him religion is a holiday pageant and not a serious warfare that first cuts off self and then at the world and the devil. Our duties to common sense and true virtue are dreary no boasts.

Down on our knees then! Look at God and self, and feel how little is one and how infinite is the Enthroned Majesty of the other. We will learn sense and sanctity in meditation that will give true values and not absurd conceits. We will find that God and His Church do not need us but that we need both—the one to sanctify and the other to fortify.—Catholic Columbian.

The one place on earth wherein Christ lives. The one place on earth where all men and women are equal. The one place on earth admittance to which is never denied anyone, sinner or saint. The one place on earth wherein man, no matter how sinful, can find the way to God. The one place on earth where the fallen and abandoned are heard with pity and consideration. The one place on earth wherein the humblest in life can reach the greatest height—namely, communion with God Almighty here below and repose in His bosom hereafter. No wonder men are transformed by the Catholic faith!—Intermountain Catholic.

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

COULD A CHURCH'S CREDENTIALS BE MORE VALID THAN THESE CREDITED HER BY A PROTESTANT? (Prof. A. M. Fairbairn, in his "Catholicism, Roman and Anglican")

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COULD A CHURCH'S CREDENTIALS BE MORE VALID THAN THESE CREDITED HER BY A PROTESTANT? (Prof. A. M. Fairbairn, in his "Catholicism, Roman and Anglican")

"I freely admit the pre-eminence of Catholicism as an historical institution; here she is without a rival, or a peer. If to be at once the most permanent and extensive, the most plastic and inflexible ecclesiastical organization were the same thing as the most perfect embodiment, and vehicle of religion, then the claim of Catholicism were simply indisputable. The man in search of an authoritative church may not hesitate; once let him assume that a visible and audible authority is of the essence of religion, and he has no choice; he must become or get himself reckoned a Catholic.

"The Roman Church assails his understanding with invincible charms. Her sons proudly say to him: 'She alone is Catholic, continuous, venerable, august, the very Church Christ founded and His Apostles instituted and organized. She possesses all the attributes and notes of Catholicity—an unbroken apostolic succession, an infallible chair, unity, sanctity, truth, an inviolable priesthood, a holy sacrifice and efficacious sacraments.'

"The Protestant churches are but of yesterday, without authority, whose confused voices, but protest their own insufficiency, whose impotence almost atones for their own sin of schism by the way it sets off the might, the majesty and the unity of Rome. In contrast, the Catholic Church stands where her Master placed her on the rock, endowed with the prerogatives and powers He gave her, and 'against her the gates of hell shall not prevail.'

"Supernatural grace is hers; it watched over her cradle, has followed her in all her way through all her centuries, and has not forsaken her yet. She is not, like Protestantism, a concession to the negative spirit, an unholy compromise with naturalism. Everything about her is positive and transcendent; she is the bearer of divine truth, the representative of divine order, the supernatural living in the very heart, and before the very face of the natural. The saints, too, are hers, and the man she receives joins their communion, enjoys their godly fellowship, feels their influence, participates in their merit and the blessings they distribute. Their earthly life made the past of the Church illustrious, their heavenly activity binds the visible and the invisible into unity, and lifts time into eternity. To honor the saints is to honor sanctity; the Church which teaches man to live holy, helps him to love holiness. And the fathers are hers; their labors, sufferings, martyrdoms, were for her sake; she treasures their words and their works; her sons alone are able to say: 'Athanasius and Chrysostom, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus, Cyprian and Augustine, Anselm and Bernard are ours; their wealth is our inheritance; at their feet we learn filial reverence and divine wisdom.'

"But rich as she is in persons, she is richer in truth; her worship is a great deed. Hidden sanctities and meanings surround man; the sacramental principle invests the simplest things, acts and rites with an awful yet blissful significance; turns all worship into a divine parable, which speaks the deep things of God, now into a medium of His gracious and consolatory approach to man, and man's awed and contrite, hopeful and prevailing approach to Him. Symbols are deeper than words; speak when words become silent; gain where words lose in meaning; and so in hours of holiest worship the Church teaches by symbols truth language may not utter.—Our Sunday Visitor.

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