-waiting for ordination, waiting for a parish, waiting for pew rent, waiting for roofers, waiting for plumbers, waiting for servers, waiting for brides, waiting for corpses. Wrapped snugly in his overcoat he sat in the chilled car finishing his broviery.

Thos. Cook, bridge contractor, who could do practically anything except be patient under forced inactivity, had faithfully promised his wife that he would not disturb that he could be priced by the could be supported by the support

priest, slipping a finger between the pages to mark where he left off. "Why don't we pray for our-selves?" repeated Cook nonplussed by the abrupt directness of the question. "The fact that we don't is clear, but why we don't is not so easy to say.

"Are you joking, Mr. Cook, or is it true that you do not practice your religion?" Father Casey's passion for bringing in hardened sinners had kindled a hunter's instinct at the tracks of a bear. He laid down his breviary without adjusting the bookmark, and probably recited vespers twice that day on account of his thoughtlessness.

on account of his thoughtlessness.

"Well, now, Father Casey, that depends on what you mean by practicing religion. Back in Indiana where I was raised, there was an old fellow batching in the house across the road, and every night of the year, after he had finished supper and done up the chores, he took off his shoes, rolled up his sleeves, and sawed on the fiddle for two blessed hours. 'Practiein', he called it. There was another old lad on the 'back forty.' He had a fiddle stowed away in a dust-covered case. It was harder to connect him up with that fountain of harmony than to hitch a balky mule to a road-grader, except during one of his periodical drunks. Then, if his wife managed to get into the kitchen and barricade the door and he could not find anybody else to fight with, he'd go into the took to make the contained."

The self-respecting poor envy no one—they are too genuinely acknowledged and deplored that most of our Catholics of wealth do ranged and deplored that most of our Catholics of wealth do ranged and deplored that most of our Catholics of wealth do ranged and deplored that most of our Catholics of wealth do ranged the first most of our Catholics seem to be blood-brothers in generosity and charicy, 'declared His Eminence Cardinal O'Connell in a post-communion talk to several hundred members of the St. Vincent destroyed by some accident before its completion?"

"No, it is not likely. A steel bridge is too big an investment to expose to any danger."

"Therefore the destruction of the bridge is not likely—but is possible, but I protect myself against the possible destruction of the bridge by some accident before its completion?"

"Of course it is possible, but I protect myself against the possible destruction of the bridge by some accident before its completion?"

"Of course it is possible, but I protect myself against the possible destruction of the bridge by some accident before its completion?"

"Of course it is possible, but I protect myself against the possible destruction of the bridge by so Well, now, Father Casey, that front room and take it out on that wheezy old fiddle 'practicin'.' I

guess practicing religion is considerably like practicing on the violin. It is—er—susceptible to divers interpretations."

"Oh," said the priest, "I under-stood that you had been brought up

a Catholic!"
"Brought up a Catholic! Well,
if you'd known my dad, I guess
you'd say I was! Any time that I
tried to slip into bed without studying my catechism, believe me, there was some show and my dad was the star performer!"

"Then you know very well what is meant by practicing your religion. The anecdotes about the fiddle are funny, but not to the point. Do you go to the sacraments?"

"I generally fall in with the rear guard, the last Sunday night of Easter time. That little wife of mine would wreck our happy home if I did not make my Easter duty—though I guess it does alin my mind home just at that time of the chance?" why don't y year."

"Bo you go to Mass on Sundays?"
"Well, yes,—sometimes."
"Do you say your prayers?"
"Look here, Father Casey, this cross examination is getting down too much into details to be comfortable. I know the next question will be about the ten commandments—and there are certain of these same commandments that do not just fit in with the bridge building business. Let's talk about

"I might meet with an accident that accident that an accident that accident that accident that would bankrupt me. No dependable concern could operate on that basis. It is bad business."

"Bad business!" cried the priest, that's the word! When there is question of filthy lucre, of the money you may enjoy for a few years, until pneumonia or apoplexy or a train wreck gets you, you take not just fit in with the bridge building business. Let's talk about the commandments that do not just fit in with the bridge building business. Let's talk about the comfort. Even the pagans recognized the danger of this as a cause of weakness to the race. It is not by avoiding realities that the fact has become a flagrant public disgrace. The rich Protest-ands and the poor Catholics are the fact of suffering is admittedly so universal that every known philosophy, every known religion is based upon its acknowledgment. The desire to escape suffering is and mittedly so universal that every known philosophy, every known religion is based upon its acknowledgment. The desire to escape suffering is and mitted the fact has become a flagrant public disgrace. The rich Protest-ands and the poor Catholics are the danger of this as a cause of wakness to the race. It is not by avoiding realities that the fact has become a flagrant public disgrace. The rich Protest-ands and the poor Catholics are the danger of this as a cause of wakness to the race. It is not by avoiding realities that the fact has become a flagrant public disgrace. The rich Protest-and the fact has become a flagrant protection of suffering is admittedly and the fact has become a flagrant protection and the fact

which you are just completing over the Mississippi, you would have time to take the next train east in order to be on the ground to defend your rights?"

"Yet how is it, Mr. Cook, that you follow the very line of conduct you would condemn so mercilessly in him? You admit that you are a steward—for you have the faith—

which you can enjoy only for a few years at the most."

"But a man must live!"
"That's quite true. It is quite true also that a man must die. You manifest a poor conception of relative values when you direct all your attention to one of these important events and none what-ever to the other."

After a pause he continued.
"When building a bridge, I suppose you take every precaution to protect it from injury from the very beginning to the moment it is turned over to the owners?

Cook eyed his questioner for a moment, then with a laugh he exclaimed:

premium to an insurance company.
If my bridge is destroyed by some unforeseen accident, the insurance company reimburses me.'

"It must cost quite a considerable sum to insure a big bridge."
"You are right, it does."
"If you were to count up all that

you have paid on insurance since you have been in the bridge building business, you would find it quite a fortune?

"Yes, a nice little fortune."
"Did you ever have a bridge so badly damaged that you could collect the entire insurance "Never! The worst I had were

some minor accidents. "Then why throw that money away merely to guard against a possibility? Why don't you keep that money yourself, instead of giving it to the insurance company? There is no likelihood—just a mere possibility that the control of the co though I guess it does slip my mind once in a while if I happened to be on a job far enough away from on a job far enough away from the control of the contr

"I might meet with an accident that would bankrupt me. No dependable concern could operate on

I was mean and unjust to you,—if you would only come home to us—"
She did not see a large blue car stop in front of the house; nor hear the gate click. She knew nothing of his approach until Douglas stood before her, and, in a deep tender voice,—uttered the word one—"Alice."
She looked up dazedly, and the man fell on his knees beside her.
"I have been a brute to you, Dear. Can you forgive me?"
With her arms around him she whispered, "It was my fault."
A month after Douglas returned, little Theresa's spirit had flown to the land "where there is no tired feeling or pain."
In their recovered happiness Alice

something more gross and material. For example, do you think the dining more gross and material. For example, do you think the dining car steward—will scare together enough odds and ends to make another meal for this hungry crew?"

"Who started this conversation on spiritual affairs?" asked the priest.

"Well, I'll own up that I did.
"Well, I'll own up that I did.
"No oaths required—yon're not building a bridge," retorted Father Casey. Then he added sadly, "You have no idea, Mr. Cook, how it pains a priest to see one, with your early training, give up the faith!" "Very well, Mr. Cook, you were a good sport, and discussed the sub-

Sr. Can you forgive—whith the steps of the sub-integration of the su

Thos. Cook, bridge contraction, who could do practically anything except be patient under forced inactivity, had faithfully promised his wife that he would not disturb Father Casey until the priest had finished his office, but having approached every other individual on the train and having found them all too disgusted to carry on a conversation, he could restrain himself no longer.

"That's right, Father Casey," he bellowed, "Pray for us poor devils! We don't pray for ourselves."

"Why don't you?" asked the lime to take the next train east in order to be on the ground to defend your rights?"

"I'd have to find time, naturally.

"I'd you have nothing else to do. Instead of caring for your soul you deliberately harm it by sin, and all this in the face of the fact that you this in the face of the fact that you the fact that must one day in the near future give a strict account of your stewardship to One who has the power of rewarding you with hell. What kind of a steward are you? Answer me that."

"A blame poor one, I'll say!" replied the contractor.—C. D. Mc-Enniry, C. SS. R., in The Liguorian.

## RICH CATHOLICS LACK GENEROSITY

"You mean?"
"It is precisely in the most premium to an insurance company.
If my bridge is destroyed by some of my bridge. capital cities that poverty is most squalid, destitution, material and moral, most poignant.

"THEIR SOULS ARE PAUPERS"

"Yet one may live all his life in any or all of these centers of the wealth of the world and never see wealth of the world and never see a sign of such conditions. The world of amusement never knows its very neighbors—never even crosses the line, very clearly defined, on the other side of which is utter misery. It is the way of They suddenly wake up to the first terms of the side of is utter misery. It is the way of many people of refinement to close out the sight of whatever is disagreeable to look at.

'This is not really refinement—it cowardice born of selfishness. Cultivation which saps streagth is decadence. It is precisely the privilege of the truly cultivated and wealthy to reach out to those

forever is the whole purpose of

religion.
"The cross of Christ is the consecrated sign and symbol of Christianity—it points to happiness through suffering. At first sight that looks like a paradox. But in reality it is not a contradiction but a plain truth proven by experience. Physical pain and moral peace are not incompatible. That condition is a fairly common one among people of the faith. And it is even truer that physical well being and peace of mind do not always walk hand in

help you to save that soul?

"Without a doubt."

"Then why don't you live according to your belief? Why don't you say your prayers and go to Mass and keep the commandments?"

"To tell the truth, Father, I haven't the time. I—"

"When we get to Seattle—that is, if we ever get there through these snow drifts—I suppose, on account of reaching there two or three days late, you will be extremely busy."

"Busier than ever before."

"And yet, suppose that at the moment you arrive there you get a wire stating that the inspectors are is the marooned by a blizzard in the Rockies."

"Fact!" agreed Cook.

"What would the company do to him if, instead of being the good stewarthe is, he were to neglect his duty? Suppose he spent his time playing poker with the miners and came up to the dining car only a couple of times a day to give it the 'once over.' What would the company do to him?"

"Busier than ever before."

"And yet, suppose that at the moment you arrive there you get a wire stating that the inspectors are wire stating that the inspectors are which you are just completing over which you are just completing over which you are just completing over the wouldn't know what happened."

"Yet how is it, Mr. Cook, that would by a blizzard in the Rockies."

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"That would be an outrage against the passenger as well as against the company. They would fire him so quick he wouldn't know what happened."

"Yet how is it, Mr. Cook, that would he certainly was not classfronted the king and put him to shame, without uttering a single word. He certainly was not class-conscious. He mingled with the went on from generation to genera-tion, often to the fourth and fifth

SURE MARK OF A VULGAR MIND" "Agreeable and pleasant are pretty adjectives—but they do not constitute all real life. To be con-stantly chasing after them is not refinement—it is decadence. It is a sure mark of a vulgar mind to love luxury and despise poverty. Because the very essence of vulgarity

is selfishness.
"The rich who imagine that decent poverty is a thing to be pitied as a great misfortune are as

"Now it is not enough to know how to meet poverty and suffering in ourselves. We live in commun-ities, we have community duties. We must therefore help others—in reality that is the best way of securing our own happiness. There is no surer remedy for our own discontent and suffering than bring-

ing aid and comfort to others. "That sounds like a platitude to myriads of men and women.
They suddenly woke up to the fact
that the chief cause of their misery
was thinking of their own troubles.

WHERE CATHOLICS MAY DEARN FROM PROTESTANTS

"To tell the truth, it is universally acknowledged and deplored that most of our Catholics of wealth do practically nothing for anything or less fortunate. When the rich forget that, their souls are paupers —far more in need of help than the bodies of the poor.

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ly told me, and I think in the main it is fairly true, that he had found that the wealth that was generous lasted longest, that wealth that was niggarldy soon disappeared. And he went on to explain that the family fortune of those who, while prudent, were also very charitable, went on from generation to grape to grape 8.

without diminution: often in fact "Whereas the money of the miser soon disappears. Frequently the third generation is in poverty. If true, this study is interesting. In any event it teaches a lesson. Hoarding for grandchildren has been proven a futile folly.'

BLESSINGS IN THE CROSS

"It is a remarkable thing," says an eloquent preacher, "that every blessing of God's Church is always given with the sign of the Cross. There can be no blessing with-out it."

No doubt this is meant to signify that as all good and grace has come to us through the Cross of Christ, so Holy Church invokes its virtue in every blessing she bestows.

But the Cross of Christ is also the symbol of our own crosses—our daily triple and difficulties.

daily trials and difficulties. Here, too we must remember there can



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