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A WOMAN OF FORTUNE

BY CHRISTIAN REID. Author of "Armine," "Philip's Restitution," "The Child of Mary," "Heart of Steel," "The Land of the Sun," etc., etc., etc.

CHAPTER VII.

"SOME CHARGES PROVE RATHER DIFFICULT." "Well," said Craven, smiling, "what is she like?" The Vicomtesse lifted her hands and looked at him with a comical expression of surprise.

"She is like—what shall I say?" she replied. "Fancy the Venus de Milo with arms and a modern dress—that is what she is like more than anything else I can conceive."

"And your fears are all dissipated, your doubts all relieved?" "Completely. She is not only handsome, but she has the air of one who has always commanded social homage. That is something which cannot be affected, or learned in a day."

"I suppose not. It has been so long since I was an American beauty and belle that I was nearly forgotten what was incident to the position."

Craven paid the compliment which was expected of him here, and then asked if he might hope to have the pleasure of seeing Miss Lorimer.

"Oh, yes," the Vicomtesse answered. "She has promised to appear—ah, *vola!*" She looked toward the door communicating with another apartment as she spoke, and Craven turned in that direction.

"If you have not heard Jack Bernard speak of me often, Miss Lorimer, I shall think he is a faithless friend," said Craven, as he stepped forward.

"I have often heard Jack speak of you, Mr. Craven," she replied; "and I warn you that if you are able to justify all that he has said, you must be a very remarkable person indeed."

"Jack is a very enthusiastic friend," answered Miss Lorimer; "but I have had no doubt of your capability to justify his opinion."

"I think we all feel it so," she answered. "The ship was greatly shattered by the collision, and but for her watertight compartments would have been lost."

"It was terrible." She paused for a moment as if to recall it, while the beautiful drawing room seemed to fade away, and she saw before her again the long saloon of the ship, the pale, excited faces, the vision of death which had appeared so near, and Tyrone's dark, grave eyes.

"A shock to the strongest nerves, I should think," Craven went on. "Did it not make you apprehensive for the rest of the voyage?"

"I was not apprehensive at all, although we saw much more ice. Nothing is more true than that a coward dies a hundred deaths. Now, I cannot see the good of dying more than once."

"You are very sensible as well as very brave," said Craven, smiling; "but most people—most women especially—cannot control their fears."

for his last words to me were, 'Tell Craven to remember my charge.' " "He knows my weakness for this gay capital, and he wrote to me not long ago, giving me a charge which I shall take great pleasure in fulfilling."

"Some charges prove rather difficult," she said. "But some difficulties are animating," replied Craven.

"That is my favorite maxim," she said, with a laugh. "Well, I have discovered that you are self-satisfied and courageous. What phase of character do you mean to show me next?"

"I believe it is an accepted law, Mr. Craven, that one must have authority one's self in order to confer it on another. I do not therefore clearly see how Jack could confer on you powers which he does not himself possess."

"It is not a question of powers, but only of privilege. My rights, if you allow me any, extend only to counsel."

"You are too good," said Cecil, who saw that these words were spoken with perfect sincerity, and were indeed the overflowing of the Vicomtesse's great satisfaction.

"My dear," replied Madame de V6rac, so relieved that entire frankness was possible, "to tell you the truth, I was miserable. I knew you were handsome from your photograph, but manner is so much more than looks! How could I tell what you would be?"

"I felt sure you were frightened at your own rashness," said Cecil. "In your place I could not have been so courageous. But now let me say how much I am pleased with your friends. They are altogether delightful."

"M. de V6rac? I find him very charming, and do not wonder that you call him your nephew with an air of pride."

"He is more like a son than a nephew to me," said Madame de V6rac, in a tone of genuine feeling; "and I am devoted to him. But like other men, he can be very provoking sometimes."

A short pause followed. Cecil neither felt bound to ask nor curious to know how M. de V6rac was provoking; but presently the Vicomtesse continued:

"Now that you have seen Armand, you can imagine that there is nothing so near my heart as his success in life. He is very talented, and has lately entered politics. Belonging to the Royalist party, he has little to hope for at present, but works for the day of reaction, which he and others believe certain to come. Meanwhile his friends desire to see him strengthen himself by a suitable alliance—you know that in France, in certain rank like, all marriages are arranged for the mutual advantage of the parties concerned."

"Yes," Cecil replied, she was aware of it. "I have read a few French novels," she added, with a smile.

"It is a very wise custom," said Madame de V6rac. "Well, an opportunity for an alliance of this kind is presented to Armand, with only one disadvantage on his side. He has rank, social prestige, and talents, but he lacks fortune. His father was a notorious *vivier*, who impoverished the family estates; and Armand himself led a life of gay extravagance for several years. Consequently there is this drawback to his presenting himself as a suitor to the lady in question, who is a daughter of the Duc de Mir6court."

"Indeed!" said Cecil, with polite attention. "But is fortune always essential? I fancied that rank, social prestige, talent, would atone for the lack of wealth."

"I hope that you will see something of France outside of Paris," said the young count. There is much in the provinces that I think would interest you. Foreigners are too apt to believe that Paris is France. There could be no greater mistake."

"I am very sure that provincial France will interest me most of the two," said Cecil. "For there, surely, some remnants still exist of old royal France. That is what I care for, and wish most to see."

"Then I must persuade my aunt to bring you down to my old *chateau*. It is an interesting relic of the past; for, by a series of fortunate circumstances, it escaped destruction in the Revolution, and remains almost untouched as it was previous to 1789."

"Oh, I should like that very much!" said Cecil quickly. "In that case it must certainly be done," said De V6rac. "I think I can answer for my aunt, who likes the *chateau*—for a time—at the right season. You must prepare yourself for a great deal of antiquity. Since the Revolution the family finances have not admitted of much restoration."

"Which is often another name for demolition. I am glad they have not admitted of that."

The young man shrugged his shoulders, laughing slightly. "I cannot say that I am exactly glad of it," he observed. "But the result is at least interesting."

"I am sure that it will interest me," said Cecil frankly. "And indeed, as their conversation proceeded, she found M. de V6rac himself interesting. A man of the world, with the grace of its highest society, he had also a well-cultivated mind and a charm of manner quite irresistible. It was impossible not to like him; and Cecil had already conceived quite a cordial and friendly feeling for him, when the Vicomtesse interrupted their conversation by summoning her to be presented to a very great lady. The interruption was so gracefully made that it did not occur to Miss Lorimer until some time later that it had been done with a purpose."

It was not until after the guests had departed that Madame de V6rac's reason for ending the conversation between her nephew and Cecil began to dawn upon the mind of the latter.

"You are not tired, my dear, are you?" said the Vicomtesse caressingly, when they were finally left alone. "I want to tell you how much I am charmed with your success this evening. It is a great pleasure to me to introduce to my world one whom the most critical must admire."

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court's suitor exceptional advantages are demanded." "What then?" asked Cecil, beginning to be amused. "Will he resign hope since he has not the necessary fortune?"

"He is inclined to do so, but I am opposed to such an idea. The alliance would be so suitable in every way that I have set my heart upon it, and if he would listen to me—"

"You are very generous," said Cecil. Surprise was her first feeling, her next was an almost overpowering inclination to laugh; for it occurred to her that Madame de V6rac was offering her a timely warning against any hopes of such inheritance for herself.

"M. de V6rac must have been very much gratified to find his difficulty so smoothed away," she added after a moment.

"He will not consent to accept the assurance," said Madame de V6rac, in a tone of irritation. "I have urged, I have pleaded, but he is like steel; I cannot make him bend."

"Perhaps he is not anxious for the marriage," burred Cecil. "It seems to me that he might object to an arrangement of the kind. A woman must submit, I presume; but a man—"

"My dear," said the Vicomtesse, majestically, "you don't at all understand. Armand is thoroughly conservative in all his tastes and opinions—an aristocrat of aristocrats. He desires the alliance very much, and it would be so suitable in all respects that I hope he will yet hear reason with regard to it."

"For your sake, I hope so," said Miss Lorimer. "But I approve him for declining your offer. He must be an interesting person."

This remark was uttered so carelessly, with so much of the princess-like air and tone which was characteristic but quite unconscious on the part of Cecil, that her cousin was for an instant uncertain whether to be amused or offended. What was to be thought of a girl who condescendingly remarked that she "approved" of the Comte de V6rac?

Nothing more was said on the subject, but before Miss Lorimer retired to her pillow, she wrote a long letter to her sister, and this was one passage in it:

"Now that I have described Madame de V6rac, I hope that you and Jack will set your dear, solemn heads and hearts at rest about any matrimonial intrigues on her part with regard to myself. In the first place, she has no suspicion that I am matrimonially desirable; and in the second place, all her attention in that line is bestowed at present on her nephew (by marriage). She has already given me two items of information which have very much amused me, because her intention in giving them was obvious. One is that the inheritance of her fortune is absolutely assured to this young Comte de V6rac; the other, that he is an aristocrat of aristocrats, who desires an alliance with the daughter of the Duc de Mir6court. It seems, however, that a slight obstacle in the way of this alliance is the fact that he has squandered a large part of his fortune. So the Vicomtesse comes forward and desires to throw her into the scale, to facilitate his ambition and make the Duke's daughter possible. This is very kind of her—or would be if one could overlook the fact that the generosity really costs her nothing, and is attended by much *et cetera*. I feel shabby in writing this; but, charming as Madame de V6rac is, I see already the cloven foot of adoration for rank peeping out in more than one respect. Can any one live as she does and avoid the contagion, I wonder? With her, I fancy, it is held in check by good taste; but I am sure she would consider the Duc de Mir6court alliance cheaply purchased at the cost of pledging her fortune—after she can no longer enjoy it. You may imagine how much I was amused by her warning me not to hope for any share of this fortune, and not to set my ambitious thoughts upon the nephew, whom, I suppose, I must soon see quite often. Oh, what comedy there is in life! I think I am really going to enjoy my visit very much."

CHAPTER VIII.

"I FIND HER ADORABLE." Certainly if Miss Lorimer's prophecy was not fulfilled, it was not the fault of the Vicomtesse. Delighted to find her young relative so presentable, Madame de V6rac spared no effort in securing her success in the world in which she had made good her own place. It was a pleasure to show the exclusive circle which had received her that the stem from which she herself had bloomed was capable of producing other flowers as fine. "You have in you all the material of a *grande dame*, my dear," she said one day to Cecil. "You ought to make a great alliance; but, unfortunately, money—a good deal of money—is necessary for that."

"Oh, my prophetic soul!" thought Cecil, with a smile. Aloud she said: "I should not care for an alliance that had to be made by money; so do not regret that the *grande dame* in me is not likely to come to light. After all, I am not sure that it exists."

"I am sure," said the Vicomtesse. "But you have the romantic ideas of your country—or at least what are supposed to be the ideas of your country. I find, however, that most Americans are quite ready to lay them aside when they come over here—provided they have money enough."

A quick answer—an answer

which would have betrayed her—trembled on Cecil's lips, but she restrained it, and only said: "I am afraid I must bear the odium of being romantic, for I should not like money to be a factor in my marriage—if I ever marry. But I think that doubtful."

Madame de V6rac shook her head. "It is doubtful, if you are too romantic," she said.

But she dropped the subject there; for, dearly as she would have liked to arrange a grand marriage for this beautiful, stately creature, she knew the ways of her adopted country too well to think of it for a moment as possible. Had she been aware of Cecil's fortune, nothing could have withheld her from match-making schemes; and, perceiving this, the young lady felicitated herself on the forethought which had caused her to maintain silence on this point.

"I should be as much tormented with suitors as Miss Percival in 'L'Abb6 Constantin,'" she said to herself. "The Vicomtesse would give me no peace. Who knows? I might even be considered worthy to become Comtesse de V6rac."

For one so accustomed to admiration as Miss Lorimer could not fail to perceive that the young Comte admired her extremely. She was, in fact, charming to him, with her beauty, her cleverness, her unconsciously princess-air. Like his aunt, he thought that she had in her the making of a *grande dame*. "What a pity," he thought, with an involuntary sigh, "that she has not one of the great American fortunes!" He did not add even to himself the unexpressed idea that was, nevertheless, in his mind, that in such a case he might resign with philosophy his pretensions to the hand of Mademoiselle de Mir6court, and follow the example of his uncle.

But now, as ever, thoughts of marriage were little in Cecil's mind. She liked the social atmosphere in which she found herself—that charming atmosphere of high-bred French society into which foreigners seldom penetrate—its culture, its grace, its exquisite refinement; she expanded in it like a flower, adapting herself readily to manners which pleased her, and receiving on all sides fresh impressions.

One thing which struck her forcibly was the tone of unaffected piety which seemed to pervade the best of this society. Religious questions were discussed with as much interest as the latest development in politics or discovery in science. And when Cecil, who had hitherto thought of religion as a thing belonging as little as possible to the intellectual world, heard it spoken of in its intellectual aspect, affecting the gravest social questions and influencing the politics of great nations, she felt as if she had awakened in another world. They interested her very much, these questions; she seemed to catch a glimpse in them of something greater, higher, nobler than she had ever known before; and she began to enlarge her knowledge of them with all the energy which characterized her.

It was not long before she discovered that she could not hope for much assistance in this direction from the Vicomtesse. Madame de V6rac had indeed entered the Catholic Church at the time of her second marriage, but religion was in no sense a vital force in her life. She attended Mass decorously, played her part in charitable affairs as befitted a great lady, and listened to the sermons of great preachers with apparent appreciation; but all this was, in a certain sense, a deference to the world—that portion of the world with which she desired to identify herself—and had little interest for her in itself. Yet as far as she went she was sincere. She admired the Catholic Church, and believed all that it proposed for belief, without troubling herself to inquire into the grounds of that belief. To Cecil's questions, therefore, she returned but vague and unsatisfactory replies; and, observing this, Miss Lorimer soon ceased to ask information from her. But her interest in the subject did not cease. She went to the functions in the great churches with eyes and ears open to learn if possible their full meaning; and the more she saw, the more deeply she was interested. Here was something which in greatness appealed to her love of greatness, while in majesty and poetry it fulfilled her highest ideal.

TO BE CONTINUED.

The Circumcision.

Why did our Lord fulfill the law of Circumcision? First to give it an honorable end, by terminating it in His own person. Second, to prove the reality of His human body, which was denied by some ancient heretics.

Third, to show that he was a son of Abraham, of whose seed the Messiah was promised to come. Fourth, to offer an early proof of His love for us by enduring this sharp pain for us.

Fifth, to teach us obedience to divine law. Sixth, to give us a lesson in humility. Seventh, to inculcate the need of spiritual circumcision—of suffering for sin, of detachment from the comforts of life, of separation from the worldly spirit.—Catholic Columbian.

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THE POWER

The Helper of

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THE POWER OF A GOOD ACTION.

The Helper of the Afflicted is Helped in Return.

"The quality of mercy is not strained, But is twice blessed; blessing him Who gives and him who receives."

Within my own knowledge there recently fell a practical illustration of the truth of the above proposition. It was a case of an aggrieved individual, who had suffered from a series of vexatious disappointments, and, although he was well grounded in the faith and precepts of the true religion, he was inclined to view life on its dark side, and what seemed at least to him an endless chain of reverses had left a sad impression on his mind, and in this state of melancholy brooding he was incapable of seeing or feeling the kindly influences which humanity is ever wont to bestow upon any of its really afflicted members. For him even the bright sunshine had lost its lustre and its pleasing glow; the flowers seemed bereft of their grateful fragrance. The songs of the birds had lost their cheerful cadence. In his perplexing and almost despairing mood he viewed the whole creation of animated nature with a perverted and dislocated vision, and he saw nothing in all its operations that was designed to soothe or palliate any part of the inherited or acquired afflictions that mortal man is heir to. In this desponding and hopeless frame of mind he bethought himself of a house of sickness and privation in which the afflicting angel had entered and left his mark, and having visited that abode of sorrow, he drew near to the bed where suffering humanity was laid, and seeing before his eyes a real case of painful distress, he strove to relieve it by a sympathetic exercise of whatever remedies were at his command. He began by pointing out to the exhausted sufferers what hope and consolation the great heavenly Watcher, from His throne above, pours into the truly resigned soul, and how short and insignificant are all the trials and discom- forts we are subjected to in this mortal life in comparison with the never ending joys that await the true, patient and faithful Catholic Christian in the next life. The comforting ex- hortation also sought to impress the lesson that all earthly tortures are not mag- nificent or abortive; and that the great Dispenser of rewards and punishments only sends us trials and afflictions according to our deserts and for our correction and amendment of life; and that if sometimes the blow falls with un- wonted severity it is because the per- verse will has stubbornly resisted the first divine voice that called us back from the path of sin and error. The inmates of the sick chamber were cheered and comforted by these re- ligious, and the beneficial results re- acted upon the benevolent exhorter, for on coming face to face with real illness and hardships he vividly saw that his own grievances were largely imagin- ary, and that to imitate them into a pretended cause of complaint were mere sophistry and base ingratitude. Herein he realized that "the quality of mercy is not strained," but that it is doubly blessed, for by the very effort he made to allay the pangs of others his own ills were assuaged and what he before regarded as afflictive evils he now recognized as blessings in dis- guise. With these thoughts solemnly impressed upon his mind he began to figure to himself the untold miseries that thoughtful people nurture in their own bosoms, magnify- ing petty annoyances into serious ills, and by their ungrateful murmurs helping to turn the fresh and fragrant valleys into fruitless desert wastes.

If the good results mutually derived from the one good action above re- lated were amplified and carried into the practical concerns of daily life, what an assistance the whole race of Adam could render to one another in days of darkness, interior conflict and bitterness of soul! Nor is it optional with Christian believers whether or not they shall render help to distressed fellow creatures, for the Divine Com- mand has gone forth that we should "bear each other's burdens" and thereby fulfil the law of Christ.

We all know how the great bulk of average men and women treat this great precept, and how the selfish element in mere humanity considers it an intrusion to be saddled with the bur- dens or concerns of others. This natural sentiment which hardens the heart of mankind to the woes of the un- fortunate had its origin in a remote period of history, for the rebellious son of Adam repudiated all responsibility of being his "brother's keeper." The vile taint of selfish wickedness that animated the breast of that primitive murderer has made itself manifest in the hearts of the human race down to this day. Of course, I am speaking of the heedless multitudes who pass through life without a thought as to the wants or claims of the helpless, so long as they can secure enough of the world's comforts to make their own lot happy. I always keep before my mind that in all ages and climes the human race has been redeemed by the heroic efforts of sanctified lives who consecrate them- selves to the service of the poor and to the propagation of the true faith. But these holy men and women who devote themselves to the cause of religion and charity have turned aside from the world's wickedness, and they stand on a virtuous plane far above the unthink- ing masses. Then again in the ranks of the righteous laity there are noble benefactors who give of their means to relieve poverty, and that, too, from motives of pure charity. These are the Christian types whose charitable concern for suffering humanity evoke tears and prayers of gratitude from the wretched, bringing down blessings upon their heads and drawing heaven

LEGENDS AND STORIES OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS.

The Desired Haven.

CHAPTER IV. THE ADVENTURES OF IRENEUS, MICHAELIS, AND NURANA.

Ireneus persuaded his companions to follow into the poorest part of the great city, where the streets were so narrow and dirty that Nurana wanted to turn back in disgust, and even little Michaelis turned sick and faint.

But Ireneus made them go on till they came to a house half in ruins, and so dirty that a respectable pig would have felt uncomfortable if lodged therein.

They went in, and in a room on the ground floor found three little beggar children—one lame, one blind, and the eldest covered with the loathsome sores of leprosy.

The latter Ireneus invited to come with him on his journey. Michaelis led the blind boy away, and Nurana, at the bidding of Ireneus, raised the lame one in his arms to bear him away to the seashore.

Many people flocked around them in the streets to ask where they were going. Some mocked at them; others tried gently to dissuade them from going. Some even laid hands on them, but Ireneus bravely pushed his companions; and not one of them flinched when the words and cries were changed into blows, and stones and dirt thrown on them.

The ascent of the hill was, as they had foreseen, very difficult. A heavy thunder storm came on, and while the lightning and the rain half blinded them, the wet earth clung to their feet and the loosened stones no longer formed safe supporters. Still they went on undaunted, though sometimes slipping back a few steps, sometimes falling on their knees.

"Ireneus," called Nurana more than once, "I cannot go on." Then Ireneus would give him his disengaged hand and help him as well as he could.

Little Michaelis never flinched. He had always been used to follow Ireneus, and to look up to him as his guide, and he felt glad even in difficulties and hardships to follow his friend.

At last the storm died away, and the sun shone forth. And when his fierce rays fell on their uncovered heads, they suffered even more than during the storm. But finally they reached the summit of the mountain, and it was not difficult to descend the grassy slope running down to the seashore.

"Come," said Ireneus, "we will go to the garden and choose flowers to decorate our boats." At the garden gate they met the King's messenger. In his hand he held three thorny crowns and three garlands of flowers. "Choose," he said. "The crown of thorns is what your King Himself wore when He passed through this country."

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They went in, and in a room on the ground floor found three little beggar children—one lame, one blind, and the eldest covered with the loathsome sores of leprosy.

The latter Ireneus invited to come with him on his journey. Michaelis led the blind boy away, and Nurana, at the bidding of Ireneus, raised the lame one in his arms to bear him away to the seashore.

Many people flocked around them in the streets to ask where they were going. Some mocked at them; others tried gently to dissuade them from going. Some even laid hands on them, but Ireneus bravely pushed his companions; and not one of them flinched when the words and cries were changed into blows, and stones and dirt thrown on them.

The ascent of the hill was, as they had foreseen, very difficult. A heavy thunder storm came on, and while the lightning and the rain half blinded them, the wet earth clung to their feet and the loosened stones no longer formed safe supporters. Still they went on undaunted, though sometimes slipping back a few steps, sometimes falling on their knees.

"Ireneus," called Nurana more than once, "I cannot go on." Then Ireneus would give him his disengaged hand and help him as well as he could.

Little Michaelis never flinched. He had always been used to follow Ireneus, and to look up to him as his guide, and he felt glad even in difficulties and hardships to follow his friend.

At last the storm died away, and the sun shone forth. And when his fierce rays fell on their uncovered heads, they suffered even more than during the storm. But finally they reached the summit of the mountain, and it was not difficult to descend the grassy slope running down to the seashore.

"Come," said Ireneus, "we will go to the garden and choose flowers to decorate our boats." At the garden gate they met the King's messenger. In his hand he held three thorny crowns and three garlands of flowers. "Choose," he said. "The crown of thorns is what your King Himself wore when He passed through this country."

his sails are not white; his boat is not pure gold.

"No cross," sneered the man. "Think you that the cross will save you? No, no, poor fools, be not so easily duped. Look on your chart, and you will see that you have not even yet traversed one half of the distance from your garden to the country of the King. Not one-half—not one-half of the dangers you will encounter have you passed."

Then Nurana, having no longer Ireneus at hand to encourage him, gave way and followed the enemy, begging only to be taken quickly from the storm and the dangers.

The little lame boy resolved not to follow the enemy. He cast himself in the sea, praying to the King to send His messengers to deliver him. And lo! two angels came and bore him away to that far off country and laid him at the feet of the King, who kissed him tenderly and gave him a glorious crown for his patience in suffering, and a celestial harp that he might sing the song of the redeemed forever.

And the enemy tempted Nurana to land on the Island of Riches, and there he picked up so much gold—for all the pebbles were pieces of money—that he locked himself up in a large cellar to count it. But when he wished to leave it, he could not unfasten the door. No one knew where he was, for he had made no friends, resolving to keep all his gold for himself; and he died of starvation in the midst of the gold that had brought him no happiness.

Meanwhile Ireneus and Michaelis remained steadfast in spite of many attacks of the enemy. Storms arose, but they pressed; the journey seemed at times long and irksome, but they trusted the promises of the King, and knew they would land safely home at last.

At last an adverse wind came and drove them apart again, and Ireneus, looking out for his little companion, saw a bright light in the distance. His heart beat fast, for he knew it was the promised land. A high wall of shining jasper, built on a foundation of all manner of precious stones, rose before him. Through a gate of pearl he saw the streets of the city of pure gold—as it were of transparent glass—glittering in the light of the glory of God, and of the Lamb, the light thereof.

But suddenly, all around him, he saw huge monsters with fiery eyes and long claws. A darkness filled the atmosphere; a sudden giddiness came over him; his boat was tossed hither and thither by the monsters swimming about in the water. For a moment he thought all was lost. He looked for the leper boy whom he had tended during the voyage, to whom he had given the best place in the boat, and on whom he had lavished the tenderest care. But he was gone, and Ireneus was alone in the darkness.

Then he heard the voice of many waters and the voice of mighty thunders, saying: "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." He heard the voice of a great multitude, the sound of harpers harping with harps.

Then he was deafened by loud mocking laughter close to his ears, and hoarse cries of "Down with him!" "Seize him!" "Let him not go!" But he knelt and prayed and trusted in the King, and cried aloud when the danger seemed the greatest and his heart quailed within him. All around was darkness. The little boat was whirled round and round; the waters opened, and far below he saw cruel, hungry flames leaping up, as if they would ensnare him in spite of himself. He heard fearful wailing and groaning. A foul, thick smoke, with a nauseous smell, came rushing up from the pit. Still he prayed, trusting in the King and saying: "Lord, save me; I perish."

Suddenly, with howls of baffled malice, the demons dispersed; their snarl became pure and clear. He was at the very gates of the city.

The party gate opened as his boat touched the shore. There, amid countless throngs of angels and saints, stood the King, who wore a crown of thorns, which shone like no light that mortal imagination has ever conceived. His welcoming, outstretched hands were pierced; He smiled so kindly; His voice was sweeter than the morning stars when they sang together for joy at the creation of the world as He drew Ireneus to His breast, and the love from His heart thrilled the boy's soul, while a chorus of praise and joy rang through the courts of heaven as He said: "Called and chosen and

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London, Saturday, Jan. 23, 1897

THE ARBITRATION TREATY.

A year ago it seemed that there was a likelihood that war would break out between the United States and Great Britain. The occasion which brought about this state of affairs was not any disagreement on matters which directly affect the interests of the United States, but only on such as relate to them very remotely.

The balance of power is a principle which governs the relations of the European great powers, and it is considered to be a sufficient reason why each of these should have its say in regard to every question which has any bearing upon European international politics, whether the trouble be in Europe, Asia or Africa. No one power will permit the preponderance of another in the settlement of any such question, and so there are diplomatic difficulties and numerous interviews between the representatives of the powers concerned, whenever there is a question relating to any of the three continents we have indicated, affecting the relations of European powers to each other.

The matter may be a war between China and Japan, the securing of a maritime outlet on some new coast, as in the case of Russia's recent acquisitions on the eastern coast of China, the extension of English or French dominion in Birmah, Siam, Cochinchina, India, or Egypt, or of German or Italian influence in the Transvaal Republic or Abyssinia; but in all such cases every European power imagines, whether rightly or wrongly, we need not discuss here, that its interests must be consulted before any final arrangement be made.

The idea has grown in the United States also, that the balance of power is to be preserved in the Western hemisphere; though there is this difference between the cases, that the United States has acquired its preponderance at a recent date, whereas the European powers go back to past ages, and several of them had acquired possessions in America long before the United States had existence as a distinct sovereignty.

In America, North and South, questions also arise from time to time in which European powers have an interest, but the United States, being the predominant power in the hemisphere, has assumed that its welfare requires that no European power shall assume any sovereignty not already existing therein, or extend existing sovereignty beyond its present limits.

The doctrine known as the Monroe doctrine was laid down by President Monroe, whose tenure of office was from 1817 to 1821, and, though never formally recognized by the European powers, it has been adhered to with much pertinacity by successive Presidents of the United States, and when the boundary dispute arose between Great Britain and Venezuela President Cleveland so strongly reasserted it in order to limit the contentions of England in 1896, that it seemed on the point of becoming a cause of war between the two powers. The dispute, however, has been apparently satisfactorily ended, and a treaty has now been signed between Great Britain and the United States, whereby the whole Venezuelan question will be settled by arbitration. Two arbitrators are to be selected by each of these powers to consider judicially the British demands. On the United States side it is expected that one of its arbitrators will be a nominee of the Venezuelan Government, and the other a United States judge. It is to be supposed that these arbitrators will incline toward favoring the American view of the case, whereas the two judges selected by the British Government may be supposed to be favorable to the British contention in the dispute.

This is naturally to be expected, even though all the judges selected by both powers were inclined to judge justly; for, however fair they may

wish to be, they would naturally incline toward the views of their own Governments, on doubtful issues at least. It became, therefore, a matter of great importance, who should be selected as the fifth arbitrator. Who was to settle questions where there would be a tie between the votes of the four arbitrators chosen by the Governments directly concerned in the dispute?

This matter has been settled by the appointment of King Oscar of Sweden to the position of fifth arbitrator, and the King has accepted the office. A fairer board of arbitration than this could scarcely be conceived, as it is not to be supposed that King Oscar would have predilections for either of the parties directly concerned in the dispute; but the chief matter for which we have reason for congratulation is that the peaceful settlement of this question, which a few months ago threatened to create what would undoubtedly have been a most disastrous war between the two great English speaking nations, is the first fruit of an agreement between the two powers, to leave future disputes also to the arbitrament of a similar judicial board. This provision is made for the future preservation of peace between the countries, perhaps for all time to come.

It is provided in the treaty that questions which concern the honor of either of the two countries shall not be thus subjected to arbitration. This proviso leaves room for either party to withdraw from the board of arbitration any question which it may deem proper, yet it is undoubtedly a great step toward the preservation of peace that the agreement has been made even with this provision.

A war between Great Britain and the United States would be disastrous to the interests of both countries, and we must congratulate the statesmen of both on the satisfactory conclusion which has been reached, and which forebodes a peaceful settlement of nearly all, if not all, future disputes.

No small honor is due to the Catholic Lord Chief Justice of England, Sir Charles Russell, for his foresight and wisdom in indicating the general principles on which a tribunal of arbitration might be agreed upon between the two nations. The treaty which has just been signed follows in almost every respect the lines on which Lord Russell declared in his address to the United States Bar, that such a treaty could be made with due regard to the honor of both countries.

THE REV. DR. LANGTRY'S LETTERS.

The Rev. Mr. Langtry is still engaged in writing letters which appear in the *Toronto Mail and Empire*, and the purpose of which is to show that Catholics "worship" images with the same adoration which is given to Almighty God, and he still maintains that this is the doctrine taught by St. Thomas of Aquinas.

We have already shown by quotations from the authoritative decrees of the Council of Trent that the respect shown by Catholics for the images of Christ and His Saints is a merely relative honor, not offered to the image itself as a material object, but to the original, and as Christ is the object of that honor when it is an image of Christ which is before us, of course the honor paid to Christ is the supreme adoration of latria—but the adoration is referred and offered to Christ, the material image being used merely as a medium to represent Christ vividly to our minds.

We have seen also that, according to Bossuet, there are theologians who do not coincide with the expressions used by St. Thomas, who is, after all, not the Church itself. Nevertheless, his explanation is not to be hastily rejected, as he stands in the front rank among the exponents of Catholic belief and practice.

But the Rev. Mr. Langtry is not in a position to insist so strongly that every theologian's views are to be taken as the sure exponent of the doctrine of the Church. It is only a few days since the Anglican Archdeacon Wilson declared that the existence of a Personal God is not a revealed truth. The non-existence of a Personal God means that there is really no God at all, and yet the Council of the English Church Union has just refused to take any step towards obtaining a condemnation of these views, on the ground that it is not sure that the Archdeacon is an infidel.

A clergyman who belongs to a Church in which positive Atheism is thus tolerated is not in a position to accuse Catholics of tolerating danger-

ous opinions; and there is, besides, this difference between the two cases, that whereas there is good reason for the view taken by St. Thomas, the views of Archdeacon Wilson cannot be explained in any other sense than that God is merely an imaginary being, and there are hundreds of Anglican ministers who hold views as subversive of all Christianity as are those of Archdeacon Wilson.

NEW HOPE FOR IRELAND.

The Tory press of England and Ireland have been very persistent in telling us that the cause of Irish Home Rule is dead, the last and decisive blow having been given it by the elections of 1895 which brought back to power Lord Salisbury and that implacable enemy to Ireland, Mr. Arthur Balfour.

The wish was father to the thought; but it is not so easy to destroy national aspirations at one blow, and notwithstanding the adverse present indications of the will of the people of England, and the deplorable dissensions existing among the Irish factions, the Irish Nationalists are as resolute as ever in demanding that justice shall be rendered to Ireland, a justice which cannot be had until self government be obtained.

The revelations made by the Financial Commission which has been investigating the monetary relations between England and Ireland have done more towards bringing the Home Rule movement to renewed life and vigor than years of argument have succeeded in doing, and we have seen that in a single moment the apparently hopeless cause has assumed a vigor which is both a surprise and a terror to the Government.

To the dissensions in the ranks of the Irish Nationalists, whereby they have been split into three contending factions, the apparently hopeless condition of the Irish cause was chiefly to be attributed, but now that it has been clearly shown that owing to the government of the country by an alien majority at Westminster, Ireland has been overtaxed to the enormous extent of £2,500,000 per annum, the first time in the history of the century there is a prospect that there will be now a really united Irish party; and this time that party will be composed, not of the Catholic tenantry alone, as has been almost the case down to the present time, but of all creeds and classes.

It has frequently been pointed out that Protestants are just as deeply interested as Catholics in the question of Irish autonomy; but the evidences of this fact were not able to convince them that they should be Home-Rulers, and comparatively few of them were ranged on the Nationalist side, though there were some honorable exceptions. The Orange element, especially, among Protestants pretended fear that the Catholic majority would tyrannize over the minority, and the landlord class, Catholic and Protestant alike, convinced that the Home Rule cause is inseparably connected with that of Tenant Right, and that under it the tenants would acquire many new privileges at the expense of the landlords, were also decidedly anti Home-Rulers.

But the enormous over-taxation to which Ireland has been subjected has suddenly opened the eyes of the anti-Home Rule party, and now we have the spectacle of landlords and tenants, Protestants and Catholics, the Orange and the Green, for the first time seriously uniting to fight under one banner, and the Protestant landlords who have taken up the cause of justice for Ireland, are more threatening in their attitude than have been the Nationalists at any time, unless we take the extreme physical force party, which has never had control of the Nationalist policy. With one voice the country now demands "justice for Ireland;" and at a meeting on Thursday last the Earl of Mayo was very outspoken in opposition to the Government. He threw back into Mr. Arthur Balfour's teeth the statement that Irishmen cannot pull together on any one question, and declared that on the present question they will be a unit. He said they are now ready to suggest economical reforms, and he reminded Mr. Balfour that over taxation had been the cause of many revolutions, and that it was just such a question which sealed the doom of Charles I.

This is just like what was said by Lord Castledown at the meeting which sounded the key-note to the present movement. The union of all Irishmen, which now seems imminent, will not suffice to overthrow the Government immediately, but it means the transferring of sixteen votes at once to the

Opposition, and the reducing of the Government majority by 32, which is a matter for serious consideration, as no doubt the justice of Ireland's claim will also have great weight with other present supporters of the Government in England and Scotland, and unless the Government yield in this instance the whole representation of Ireland in the House of Commons will be inevitably permanently united into one Home-Rule party.

This matter is not merely hypothetical. Col. Sanderson, who has been hitherto one of the staunchest supporters of Lord Salisbury, and who is regarded as the leader of the Irish Unionists, is their leader still in the new movement, and so far has it gone that the Unionists have had a meeting with the three Nationalist parties, led by Messrs. Dillon, Healy, and Redmond, and the Hon. Edward Blake has been selected to move an amendment to the address to the effect that justice be accorded to Ireland by the immediate reduction of her taxation. This course has been decided on, because the Government proposes to delay the matter until a new commission to be appointed shall make a report.

Mr. Blake has been chosen for the purpose, because he represents the cool-headed, argumentative and logical type, instead of the hot headed and fiery enthusiast. Thus Mr. Blake will represent the new united Irish party, and it is possible that this may forecast his appointment as leader of a new Nationalist party, which will represent the whole country, whether Protestant or Catholic. We have no wish to see Mr. John Dillon superseded in the leadership, but we are sure that Mr. Dillon himself would be glad to retire from his present post, if by his retirement a united Irish party could be established.

SUPERSTITIONS.

The superstitions of "Romanism" are a constant theme with our Protestant religious contemporaries, and there is scarcely an issue of the *Toronto Presbyterian* organs, especially, which does not deal sanctimoniously with the subject, it being assumed that the Catholic Church encourages superstitious practices. Hence it is held to be a very laudable enterprise to rescue the French-Canadians, the Mexicans, the Spaniards, and the populations of other Catholic countries from the horrors of "Romish superstition."

This is the only plausible excuse for the missions which Presbyterians and a couple of other Protestant denominations keep up in the Province of Quebec and elsewhere, where the population is chiefly Catholic. These missions are universal failures; but the missionaries engaged in the work are able, by misrepresentation of the facts, to induce their dupes to subscribe liberally towards their maintenance, and so the work goes on, though they have been unable to point to any real results therefrom.

The Catholic Church does not, and never did, encourage superstition in any form. Every Catholic child is instructed, in the little catechism which he learns at school, that all superstitious practices are strictly forbidden by the first commandment; but we do not include under the name of superstition prayers offered to God for mercy, or to the saints in heaven asking for their intercession with God for us, nor is it superstitious to show due reverence to the images of Christ crucified, or the images and relics of the saints, because these objects are used merely to remind us of Christ and the saints whom the images represent, or to whom the relics call our attention.

Protestant polemicists rave wildly against these Catholic practices, but they themselves employ images, statues, pictures, and relics of persons who may not be saints at all, as of monarchs or statesmen, and even of noted characters in the history of sectarianism, with precisely the same purpose in view with which these objects are used by Catholics.

Why is the image of Queen Victoria stamped on the current coin of the realm, unless it be that the Queen is to be honored through her image? Why are statues erected to the memory of distinguished statesmen, unless with the similar purpose of honoring the dead, or of inciting us to imitate their example, which is not always worthy of imitation in every respect?

But with all the zeal of Protestant missionaries to repress superstition among Catholics, which does not exist, they close their eyes entirely to superstitions of a most gross character which are rampant among their own co-religionists.

Of all the superstitious frauds which have appeared on earth, under the name of religion, there has probably been none so transparently ridiculous and absurd as that which goes to-day under the name of Spiritualism, with the aliases of clairvoyance, animal magnetism, biology, etc.

Mahometanism has, to say the least, a code of morals to recommend it. It does not profess to regard infidels, that is, unbelievers in the divine mission of the mule driver of Mecca, as possessing any rights to life or property, and so we have witnessed during the past years the efforts of Siltan Abdul Hamid to rid himself of the inconvenient presence of Christians in his Empire, by wholesale massacre.

But the spiritualistic superstitions have taken great hold upon the minds of hundreds and thousands of people in spite of the boasted enlightenment of the age, and it is the more to be deplored as it puts on the mask of a species of religion as a means of propagandism. Yet its promoters are in almost, if not in absolutely every instance, simply prestidigitators who find among the people plenty of dupes to pay them well for their fraud. We are happy to be able to say, however, that it is very rarely that Catholics are caught in the meshes of this superstition, or any who have had a Catholic education. Would it not be advisable if some of the missionaries who are devoting themselves to the work of demolishing imaginary superstitions among Catholics, would put some of their energy toward destroying this superstition among those of their own faith?

A curious development of the Spiritualistic superstition has come to light within the last few days in Detroit. Under pretence of a gathering for religious purposes, a meeting is held in a certain house near the centre of the city, every Sunday, where ghosts appear and kiss or embrace the audience, with such endearing expressions addressed to the individuals as "Uncle Robert," or "Brother Alfred, do you not know me? I am your niece (or sister) Eva (or Ida etc.)" It often happens that the person addressed has neither niece nor sister of the name given, but the seances are nevertheless attended regularly by large audiences, who willingly pay a dollar a head for the religion they get out of them. It is needless to say that these people would be very backward about paying so much toward the worship of the true God, devoutly as they worship these material ghosts.

We recommend the missionaries now engaged in French-evangelization to devote some of their attention to evangelization among the wealthy Protestant citizens of the City of the Straits, and of some of our Canadian cities too, who are devoted to a superstition far worse than any to be found among French-Canadians.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is a strange fact that the mania for suicide is becoming more common; not indeed in Canada, where religion of some sort has its hold on the minds of the people, but in the United States, which have for over a complete generation been almost without any religious education. In the city of Detroit alone, with a population but little larger than Toronto, there were during the year 1896 forty six suicides, of which six were Americans, six Canadians, two English, two Irish, two Poles and one Bohemian. It is sad to think that in the closing years of this boasted century of enlightenment there should be such a record, but we have no doubt that to the absence of religious education in the schools this condition of affairs is chiefly attributable. Those Canadians who wish to abolish religious education in the Dominion are laboring for a similar state of affairs here.

A LETTER from Dr. Tristram, Bishop of Stepeny, appears in a recent issue of the *London Times*, which shows the anomalous position of the Anglican clergy in regard to the questions of marriage and divorce. He declares that a large portion of the clergy, especially of the High Church section, desire that the marriage tie should be indissoluble, but he admits that owing to the Church being a State Church their views cannot be carried out in practice. A clergyman cannot refuse to marry a divorced person, nor can a Bishop refuse to issue a license for such a marriage, as by so doing the clergyman or Bishop would be subject to the penalties prescribed by law for refusal to fulfil his duties. The Bishop thinks that there ought to be a

provision whereby only a civil marriage should take place under such circumstances, but as the Church is entirely subject to the laws of the State it cannot refuse the religious marriage in the Church to those who desire it, if by the civil law they are free to marry.

The Anglican Bishop of Manchester is disgusted with the farcical demand made before the consecration or installation of a Bishop of the Establishment, that any person having any objections to offer should now come forward and present them, whereas when at Archbishop Temple's installation, the objector, Rev. Mr. Brownjean, was told that his objections could not be listened to. The Bishop of Manchester says the demand should be abolished from the rite, as it is well known it is meaningless.

The attendance at Catholic schools in the United States at the beginning of the year 1895 was reported to be 933,944. In the beginning of 1896 the number had increased to 1,059,366, showing the astonishing increase of 115,422 pupils. Facts like these are a sufficient answer to those who have said during the Manitoba school discussion that Catholics in other countries are quite satisfied to send their children to godless or Protestant Public schools. Catholics everywhere wish for the religious education of their children.

There is now a better prospect than ever that the condition of the Poles in Russian territory will soon be ameliorated. The reigning Czar has been supposed to be more humanely inclined than have his predecessors for many generations, but for some reason or other his attention has not been seriously called to the sufferings to which the Catholic people of Poland have been subjected on account of their religion. But the efforts of Pope Leo XIII. have been directed for several years towards drawing the Czar's attention to the matter, and it is stated that they have at last been successful, and that orders from St. Petersburg have been issued to officials to desist from the oppressive measures which have hitherto been employed in governing Poland.

It is something we could never comprehend, that Catholic France persists in electing unbelievers and enemies to religion to the Senate and Chamber of Deputies of that country. Religion has certainly not lost its hold upon the people of the rural districts, though the cities are very largely given over to the control of sceptics. But there exists an incomprehensible apathy among the people to elect sound Catholics to the chambers, and the result is the same year after year. At the elections just held for one hundred seats in the Senate it is said that only twelve who may be relied on as sound Catholics have been chosen. There are thirteen Radicals and thirty one Socialists elected, and sixty-nine who are known as Moderate Republicans. We presume, however, that some of these are likewise sound on religious questions.

The Catholic Truth Society in Ontario is making splendid headway. In Toronto there are now four branches, connected with St. Mary's, St. Michael's, St. Basil's and St. Helen's parishes respectively, besides branches in Trenton, Ottawa, St. Thomas and Winnipeg. A public meeting is to be held at an early date in St. Mary's church, at which reports will be presented from the different branches in Ontario. In connection with this meeting a lecture will also be given by His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto (who is the patron of the society). He is taking an active interest in the work. The future of the society seems to be assured, and the encouragement which it is receiving from those in authority is very gratifying. We hope to see by this time next year branches established more generally and the laity more actively interested in the great work of disseminating broadcast amongst our separated brethren the knowledge of the teachings of the Church of Christ.

Lenten Preacher at Notre Dame.

The Cardinal Archbishop of Paris has appointed Pere Ollivier, the famous Dominican preacher, to the post of Lenten preacher at Notre Dame, vacant by the death of Mgr. d'Hulst, thereby continuing the tradition which connects the great order of "Preaching Friars" with the cathedral pulpit. Pere Ollivier, who is already well-known in Paris, has the reputation of a quarter of a century as a preacher of unusual power and originality, and a perfect master of the elocutionary art, who never fails to rivet the attention of Parisian audiences.

CATHOLIC PRESS.

Sometimes we hear people, calling themselves Catholic, say all religions are good. To make such an assertion is to belie our faith. Catholicism alone is true, alone is good. There is no abstract Christianity; there is no abstract revealed religion. The truth which God has revealed is absolutely and simply Catholicism.—Pittsburg Catholic.

The power of the Catholic Church lies in its possession of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. To it He is indeed Immanuel—God with us. He gives it light and grace, peace and hope, unity and strength. On the altar He rests as on a throne, happy to be with the children of men and disposed to grant their prayers. He is the true Head of the Church. No wonder that it is guided with more than human wisdom and that its solidarity in essentials is the awful admiration of its enemies!—Catholic Review.

"Priests, who are responsible for the souls of our flock, and who can best save them by taking care of the children, have a solemn duty to encourage Catholic writers and Catholic publishers. If they are not always up to the highest standard, let us be satisfied with a good standard. Let us make it possible for them to be better. This is not done by general denunciations. We are to build, not to tear down; and we should be thankful for the help given us by all who profess and sincerely desire to further Catholic truth. If we would know what is good and what is better, let us read.—American Ecclesiastical Review.

"A nation which has lost the capacity of begotting great men is a nation in decadence."

So writes Mr. W. T. Stead in his *Review of Reviews*. And in the article in which this sentence occurs he declares Pope Leo XIII. to be the grandest of all the world's "grand old men." Others to whom the title has been applied, like Bismarck and Gladstone, have failed to maintain the claim until the end. But it must not be inferred from this that the Kingdom of Italy is not in decadence. The Holy Father is not a product of that kingdom, but of the Italian race, which will survive and be great long after the present monarchy has become a thing of the past. Nor as a great man does he belong merely to Italy, but to the world, in which he holds the first place among illustrious men, a rank, too, which he is likely to retain until called by his reward.—Catholic Standard and Times.

The secretary of the Indian Protestant Mission, who bears the unctuous name of Foley, declares with much fervent regretfulness that the outlook of Protestantism in China, India and Ceylon was never so dark as at present. Hereafter followeth the pathetic lamentation of Brother Foley: "The Romanists are advancing by leaps and bounds in Toquain, 100,000 converts, 150 priests, and 170 schools under Jesuits alone (not to mention missions under other religious societies) in Western, Eastern and Northern Cochinchina. The Roman advance is still greater at the present time in China and Corea, where there are more than a million and a half converts, with 1,000 priests and 8,000 schools. In India and Ceylon the strides of Romanism are startling and unprecedented." We thank you, Mr. Foley for those statistics, which are not in the least startling, only gratifying—highly so.—Ave Maria.

The New Year of 1897 dawns upon the world with little of the peace which the world knew nearly two thousand years ago. On the contrary, there is a strange spirit of unrest agitating its heart and how it will all end is more than mortal man may know. Europe is bristling with bayonets, and ready at the behest of a few individuals to make the old world tremble with the roar of cannon. Meanwhile young Liberty rallies and lifts her ever laureled head in Cuba, Ireland, the Philippine Islands, and elsewhere over the flowering earth. The East is especially perturbed. The cruel Islamism, which for so many centuries has been the terror and the shame of Christian decency and rule, is at last tottering on its throne; and there is hope that once again the bells of St. Sophia will ring out Christian greetings along the shores of the Bosphorus as in the days of the glorious Chrysostom.—Union and Times.

The committee of the Protestant Reformation Society would be glad to hear of a Cambridge graduate in honor, "thoroughly evangelical and 'Protestant,' willing, for a fair remuneration, to devote part at least of his time to the work of the society in that town and university. He will be expected to deliver addresses to ladies, to give lectures to Sunday-school teachers, and to distribute Protestant literature at railway stations and other places. So we learn from the *Rock*, which adds that the need for "vigorous work" at Oxford is very great, as the new Jesuit hall, under Father Clarke's management, was opened in October, and a similar institute is to be started at Cambridge. We quite agree that there is serious difficulty in combatting the Catholic Church at the English universities; and it may well be doubted whether the fight can be effectively carried on by addresses to ladies and the circulation of Protestant tracts. With the exception, perhaps, of Rome, there are no spots in the world where the historical character of the monuments is more impressive than at Oxford and

Cambridge, and the most interesting among them are perpetual arguments in favor of the claims of Rome.—Liverpool Catholic Times.

THE CATHOLIC CLUB.

The Catholic Club of London formally opened their handsome quarters on Richmond street on January 15, with a grand concert, when two of the largest rooms were filled to overflowing. The audience numbered 700 people, about 350 being in each room, both of which were tastefully decorated for the occasion. President Thomas J. Murphy presided in the room upstairs, and Mr. Henry Beaton did honors as chairman in the room below.

The President, in his address, referred to the special benefits that would naturally accrue to every person who cast in his lot with the club, and pointed out that as a literary organization it would not be surprised in the city.

The programme was an elaborate one, including a variety of solos, recitations and instrumental selections. The first part was as follows: Instrumental selection, Miss Maud Regan; vocal solo, Mr. Frank Firth; recitation, Miss Stella Carrothers; duet, violin and piano, Miss Hattie V. Taylor (of Hamilton) and Miss Emma L. Walsh; vocal solo, J. M. Daly; recitation, Mr. W. E. Mullins. Part two consisted of an instrumental selection by Miss Cora Packham; essay, Miss Maud Regan; vocal solo, Miss Mary Lenihan; reading, Mr. Thomas Anderson; duet, Mr. T. M. O'Hagan and Mr. Frank Firth; recitation, Master Frederick Bricklin, of St. Peter's school; vocal solo, Mr. James O'Connor.

Each participant received well-merited applause, and when their numbers were rendered in the one room, they were escorted to the other. The accompanists were Miss Cora Packham, Mary Connors (organist of St. Mary's church), and Christina McKittrick.

The energetic committee, to whom the great success of the entertainment is due, included: President T. J. Murphy, C. G. Wright, J. McDonald, John Dromgole, Wm. E. Mullins, Geo. Aust, John M. Daly, Wm. Corcoran, James Ward, Martin O'Sullivan, John Dougal, Ed. McDonald and Secretary Clements Green.

We have much pleasure in reproducing the following essay composed and read by Miss Maud Regan, a young lady who will yet, we doubt not, attain a foremost place in Canadian literature:

TWILIGHT COMRADES.

Twilight deepens, and the shadows which but a few moments since lurked in remote corners of the room, now stretch far out across the floor, till at the hearth stone they are held at bay by the fire, redly glowing in the wide old-fashioned grate, and flicker and dance, advance and retreat, like a shadowy elfin army.

I have been idly watching the shifting pictures in the burning coals, tracing in the fiery depths a fleeting resemblance to a mediæval city, or on the heights a towered Norman keep faintly suggestive of Front de Bœuf's doomed castle, and like it vanishing in a sea of fire. Hungry little blue flames leap and dance about the cavern, where my castle lies buried, and as I gaze at the pictures in its fiery heart I think of Lizzie Hexam's "hollow down by the flare," and wish that I, like her, might read my fortune in the glowing coals. I turn instead to the pages of Our Mutual Friend to follow the fate of Lizzie's Castles in Spain, only to find that my invading shadow has laid a wavering ghostly hand across the pages and separated me by a veil of darkness from my genial Dickens, a twilight companion of whom I never weary. Yet not separated, I have but to close my eyes and I am surrounded by the immortal children of his pen, living, breathing comrades who echo my every mood, figures grotesque or pathetic, merry or sad, over whom time and death have no dominion.

No form is missing saying that of the much-quoted Mrs. Harris, complaining voucher for all the apocryphal tales which it pleased the imaginative Sairey Gamp to set afloat upon a credulous world. In a remote corner the Gamp and Prig stuffered wax confidentially over a tea-pot full of a beverage eminently cheering in its nature, but Mrs. Harris persistently refusing to materialize I am reluctantly forced to the conclusion that she is simply a personification of that mysterious power known to scandal mongers as the very best authority, and exclaim with the sceptical Betsy Prig, "There never was no such a person."

And the domestic inconveniences to which they give rise, remembering that while she matures her plans for the formation of a coffee plantation in Booriboola Gha, the Jellybys are deprived of that beverage at breakfast, and while she schemes the physical and moral regeneration of some Booriboolan wail, the hapless Peepay is making a rapid descent of the cellar-stair, keeping count of the steps by the bruises on his person. I think of poor Mr. Jellyby dazedly surveying a state of affairs he is powerless to remedy, of forlorn Jo at her very door, and I would be very severe with her, only that under the influence of the hour I fall to moralizing, and remember that we are all Mrs. Jellybys on a small scale. Figuratively speaking, I hasten to add, for we meditate too often upon the oft quoted "Charity begins at home," to join sewing circles and such like organizations before we are quite certain that no peep of ours wanders abroad in garments more holy than righteousness. But we would be great reformers and inaugurate our reforms with others; it is the old parable of the bean and the mote, our spiritual eyes are so very far-sighted that they are apt to overlook the abuses lying at our doors which cry aloud for remedy before we turn our attention to the regeneration of some moral Booriboola Gha. Having served to point a moral upon which I have mused not, I trust unprofitably, Mrs. Jellyby very obligingly betakes herself to other scenes, leaving me at liberty to contemplate the architectural features of No. 9, Brig Place, fortress of the fell Mrs. Bunsby, erstwhile MacStinger. Even as I gaze down the street straggling the two Wollers arm in arm, and in earnest converse, the face of the elder positively aglow with the fervor of the sentiments to which he is giving utterance and which unhappily for me are drowned in the cries arising from the paving stone where Alexander MacStinger is in process of cooling after a warm and brisk encounter with the maternal slipper. However as they pass the open door-way of No. 9, where Mrs. Bunsby mounts guard over this improvised refrigerator, there comes to me between walls the sege exhortation, fruit of sad experience reduced to a compass suitable to daily needs, "Sammy, beware of widders," whereupon a shadowy form looming up in the dark hall way gives vent to an enigmatical, "If so, why not?" Therefore leading me to suppose that the bosom of the oracular Bunsby. Happily the picture fades ere I witness any painful scene consequent upon this outburst, but it seems that I am fated to hear the affirmative answer to the question "Is marriage a failure," for I am confronted by the disconsolate beadle, Bumble, fallen from his high estate and shorn of his parochial honors uttering aloud in bitterness of spirit this honeymoon reverie: "And tomorrow two months it was done. It seems an age."

Even while he speaks his place is filled by two enthusiastic witnesses for the defence, David Copperfield and his winsome child wife hand in hand and chatting blithely. A momentary shade is visible on Pasa's laughing face caused by some passing allusion to the affairs of prosaic daily life or to one of the many subjects broadly classified under the common head of "Dreadfuls." I am no less sensible than is David himself of the charms of this delightfully irresponsible little person, and not being of her household can afford to smile at her frankly avowed inability to cope with domestic problems in general, and the servant question in particular—problems which have puzzled many a wiser head and have in these latter days found one solution in co-operative house-keeping.

David's fairy god mother, Betsy Trotwood, vouchsafes no greeting as I pass the open gate of her cottage by the sea, and as I gaze upon her irate countenance I conclude that it would be a most unpropitious moment for obtruding myself upon her notice. Fast and furious rages the struggle upon the debatable land between that most wonderful of women; I borrow the words of Mr. Dick, and her inveterate foes the donkey drivers, and amid the din of conflict her battle cry, "Janet! Donkeys!" rings ominously on the air. Another moment and I am an unsum guest at Peggotty's hospitable hearth, feasting my eyes upon the beauty of little Emily, seated by her uncle's knee, the fire light shining by her upturned face and playing at hide and seek among the waves of her golden hair. I gaze upon Peggotty's rosy, good natured face, bent low over the inevitable mending, and marvel not at Barks' "willin'ness" to embrace the matrimonial state; upon Ham, that hero in homespun, endeavoring to smoothe the "contrary" path of the disconsolate Gummidge at her lonest and lonest, for the time has not yet come when she shall be forced to forego the melancholy pleasure of musing upon her own grievances, to soothe true hearted Dan's incomparably great grief.

The wind wails softly about the walls of the little house-boat as though freighted with the moans of the many who had gone down to the sea in ships to return no more, and far away on the beach the waves are breaking with a sullen roar. A hand is laid upon the latch, the door flies open, the room is filled with the salt sea air, and framed in the open door-way stands a little graceful figure with laughing face and wild tossed curls to which all look up in eager welcome; unhappy Steerforth, who is soon to wreak in the hos-

pitable home a desolation compared to which that of death itself were merciful. As I look upon him I fancy that there is an angry note in the mourning wind, the happy home picture fades away and I am out on the sands amid a crowd of the fisher folk, gazing vaguely upon the tempest driven clouds scudding across the angry sky, at the green waters piling themselves into great dark walls that rear their foamy crests a moment aloft, then break upon the beach with deafening roar—at a few spars and beams rising and falling on the waves that tell where the wreck once lay; gazing most of all at a knot of men gathered about two lifeless forms cast upon the shore by the last receding wave, which they have laid a little distance apart, not thinking it fitting that Steerforth should rest by the side of the man whom he had so deeply wronged and who had given his life in a fruitless effort to save him.

Once again I am treading the streets of Dickens' London, following in the path of a pathetic little figure whose step has lost its lightness in the hopeless daily journey to the courts of Lincoln's Inn, and whose mind has gone astray in the long-continued effort to follow the mazy windings of Chancery's proceedings. She is walking more slowly than is her wont, and there are traces of tears on the withered cheeks where long years of hope deferred have written their story in unmistakable characters. Even the remembrance of the "Judgment" which is to right all abuses and leave her at liberty to con- fer estates, fails to woo her from sadder thoughts, for the day has witnessed a parting which no judgment till the last can make good, and were the fortune of which she has in her poor mad dreams so often disposed, hers in very deed, there is one friend whose nerveless fingers could not close over the least coin in the golden stream she would pour into his hands. It is Gridley, the angry man from Shropshire, for the possession of whom Inspector Bucket on behalf of the outraged majesty of the Lords of Chancery has waged grim war with the "fell sergeant" whose arrest none may dispute. Certainly Gridley yielded himself a willing prisoner. Fortune, happiness, friends, were all vague memories; his very name had been forgotten in his Chancery title, "the man from Shropshire" bestowed upon him by their Highnesses of the Bench and Bar, when, according to grim promise hedged to the bitter end, and the only tie between him and the living world was the tie of many suffering years which bound him to the little mad woman. A dim realization of the sadness of his fate penetrates to the clouded brain of poor, lonely Miss Flite, mercifully dulled to the pathos of her own lot and to night lamentations for her friend are strangely mingled with the sentence, "I expect a judgment on the day of judgment," which is ever part of her wanderings. Then she toils wearily up the steep stairway to the attic where the oddy-christened birds, Youth, Joy, Peace, Despair and Plunder, wear their little lives away awaiting the judgment which is to set them free, poor little Chancery prisoner, upon him by their Highnesses of the Bench and Bar, when, according to grim promise hedged to the bitter end, and the only tie between him and the living world was the tie of many suffering years which bound him to the little mad woman. A dim realization of the sadness of his fate penetrates to the clouded brain of poor, lonely Miss Flite, mercifully dulled to the pathos of her own lot and to night lamentations for her friend are strangely mingled with the sentence, "I expect a judgment on the day of judgment," which is ever part of her wanderings. 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PILLARS OF SALT.

Writing under the above title in the Catholic World Henry Austin Adams, M. A., who is himself a convert, speaks of the converts, particularly those who are tempted to turn back:

It is the day of the convert. How to make one, how to develop him when made, then how to make more converts—these, it would seem, will presently be the questions most discussed by the Catholic press. There possibly was never a time before when one heard so much about non-Catholics as such. Nor, indeed, is this to be wondered at in view of the growing company of pilgrims pouring across the Campagna of bleak negation by every highway, into the Eternal City.

"All roads lead to Rome" eventually. The world is likely to find this out quite soon, thanks to the new signposts which Leo XIII. is setting up. Every encyclical of his is one, and set up, too, at the perplexing cross roads of our modern thought.

It may be that his reign will be celebrated in the days to come because of just this motley concourse of those whom his compelling love has won to God—strangers at Rome, and proselytes innumerable, and the dispersed.

At all events it is a time of conversions and of converting energy. Hence the peculiar prominence given the subject. To every phase of it attention has been called not only by newspapers published by Catholic authority, but (in a different temper) by the non-Catholic religious press. The latter frequently has that to say which, ludicrous as it must seem to us, nevertheless throws light on, let us not say the facts, but what is quite as useful, namely, their own interpretation of phenomena which from our safe, near side seems clear enough.

Of late, for instance, it has become the fashion among these journals to say of converts,

"Leave them alone, And they'll come home," etc.

The Episcopalian Bo Peep, whose sheep are forever being lost in the adjoining Papal pastures, does presently much comfort herself with the above refrain. So much so, indeed, is she sustained by that hope that the editor of her foremost paper, in commenting upon the return of a "pervert" to the other day jauntily declared that "most all of them return, anyhow, after a year or two."

We know, as does also the reverend editor, that hope and prejudice between them beget a delicious indifference to facts and that nothing is easier than hasty generalizing, unless, perhaps, hateful generalizing. At Charleston the first earthquake seemed an awful exception; the second shock had a familiar look; the third fixed the earthquake habit, and for months the negroes looked for the cataclysm as regularly as for sunrise.

Given our cat and another cat on the roof, and the imagination of the boy at once prompts the statement of the old nursery tale, "There must be a million cats on our roof." Editors will be boys.

No, not "most" converts fall away. One can count those that do, but not those that do not. Moreover, such a spiritual revulsion is quite the most inexplicable movement that one sees.

It stands out above and apart from the conceivable; it is exceptional, singular, disquieting. Hence two, three, half a dozen cases, and our editor flies off into his "most of them."

Not most! Infinitely few. But inexpressibly saddening these few, are they not? And full, moreover, of significance to us and our day of convert-making.

To the average Catholic mind it seems strange beyond all else that devout men and women, earnestly striving to face God and the light, can live and die outside the Church. How utterly beyond comprehension must it seem, therefore, that anyone who has once passed the stormy trials inseparable from a conversion to the Truth, can deliberately retrace his steps and choose again the city of confusion for his soul's abode! And yet this "looking back" to the abandoned city does occur at times, and the effably sad spectacle is seen of some one hurrying across the plain to enter once again the very Sodom or Gomorrah from which he had but yesterday escaped with fear and anguish!

When these relapses shock us by their nearness to us we feel, as possibly by no other time, our Blessed Lord's swift, terrible injunction: "Remember Lot's wife!" But to no Catholic can these pathetic derelictions speak as to such Catholics as have themselves come from the desolation that is doubt. The present writer knows no subject quite so full of pain, no problem so perplexing and saddening withal. A few thoughts bearing on it may not be now amiss. First of all, then, the reasons commonly assigned for these reversions are superficial and anything but charitable. We hear that "So-and-So," having "turned Catholic" a year ago, has just thought better of his ill-digested step and has returned to his former Church. And in explanation we are told that he found that all is not gold that glitters; that he found things behind the scenes not as fair as in front of the footlights; that now that the glamor and tinsel are seen close by, their cheapness is discovered; and that "the human element," under saintly robes and back of spectacular mysteries, has now been felt too palpably.

The revert who declares these reasons have actuated him only echoes the statements of an unthinking world

—or, if he does so earnestly, degrades himself unspcakably.

Either in leaving his first position or deserting his new he confesses that he has acted in the most humiliating lack of the only motives which can for a moment be held sufficient for so unspcakably important a step.

Look at it. It is inconceivable that any one would think at all of putting every sacred tie in life to the perilous strain involved in a change of faith except for some compelling, fundamental, vital reason. A conversion to the Catholic religion means, usually, the giving shame, heartache, anxiety to parents, friends, fellow Christians. It involves the repudiation of all that is held sacred by those who love one most. It scandalizes disturbs, disgusts those whose respect has been one's chief measure of satisfaction. It seems to be a betrayal of honor in its very soul, when the convert is called and thought to be a priest of God. And—since man is still an animal—it nearly always costs him suffering. In nearly every instance it means a loss of comfort, influence, respect and money. Therefore it would most certainly not once be thought of but for the voice within which will not down. Some lofty, powerful reason must be sought for a self-injury so grievous.

The Holy Spirit moves in many ways. Perhaps no two recount the same impelling motives; but surely, coming from whatever point, the panting pilgrims when they fall within the bosom of the dear old Church all know and say that they have come from doubt, confusion and uncertainty, in quest of the "City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Yes! they have come for two things—Certitude and the Presence! For these only was the sacrifice made, these alone were before father or mother or wife or lands or houses.

Nor is it conceivable, furthermore, that a man could take the awful responsibility, and inflict and incur so much pain, unless the negative untenableness and untruthfulness of his present position had first prompted the search for the positive good of some other. Only after the heart had starved, and the soul had fainted, and the mind grown bewildered by the discord and godliness of a Church, is it to be thought possible that a man can think of escape. Even then he searches diligently for reasons for remaining; he calls aloud for some one to comfort and reassure him. Oh! the pitiful clinging to the house where one's faith lies dead. Oh! the hungering quest of those who, though abiding in the tents of their fathers, "show plainly that they seek a country."

They remain—God knows!—till they cannot; some even till they die. To those who escape we take note of, comes an hour when they must go!

Now, is it creditable that one so harassed and constrained by lack of truth where he is, and having—at infinite cost and pain—sought it in despised Nazareth of Catholicity, can for any of the commonly alleged causes return to the city of the plain? Never!

And yet some do return. Why? God only knows! But that a soul so returning back can possibly be anything less pitiful than was Lot's wife I cannot think. Pillars of Salt, at best, whose bitterness is this—they found no refuge.

Of these are also doubters, troubled souls, who for some cause have not received that "Margarita preciosa"—Faith! These reverts stand out from the dreary plain quite the most needy of our prayers and pity.

Think of it! Theirs was no soul to make its ease amid the Babel of confusion and the death of truth. They heard and heeded when the Voice bade them flee! They broke their very heart-strings for the sake of truth, and fled from home and friends and good repute. And we rejoiced to see them reach our sweet walled city. And then, to our unutterable amazement, we saw them leave. Whether? Apparently to go whence they had come: but fancy to what bitterness the soul has sunk when, having thought God had a place and home where man could know Him, it has come to think there is not such a place nor home—and so, heart-sick, chagrined, plod back to that which is a hell of torments. The man may reach it—his joy and peace do not; they are congealed, a very monument of dried up tears, there on the trackless plain. God pity them!

All this talk about "the human element in the Church" scandalizing the raw convert, and the disappointment on finding human nature under Catholic conditions is nonsense. As if there were any lack of human element in the Protestant denominations! I was constantly amused when I was first thrown with Catholics after becoming one myself, by their efforts to explain and apologize for this human element, finding myself thought to be very tender, not to say squemish, sort of a Miss Nancy who would be shocked by the downright common-sense and lack of cat found—thank God!—among Catholics.

So far from this precious human element scandalizing the recent convert I believe that nothing is more refreshing than this very naturalness of Catholicity, after the long suffocation, artificiality, and emotionalism of Protestantism. Poverty, plainness, simplicity, bluntness, downrightness are glories, and they seem so to the fresh convert from the plush and unction of official Protestantism.

Nor can we find any sufficient reason for a relapse in the experience of the convert as a practical Catholic. No. There is one reason—his faith is dead. It was given to him; he has lost it. What can he learn for the history of the Church, of the doctrines,

of the life, after becoming a Catholic, that he could not before? Nothing. In fact, it is beyond belief that anyone could possibly endure the throes of a conversion, unless and until all that is included in the Catholic faith burned itself into the conscience as God's inexorable truth. What happens is the death of faith. And so the wretched soul creeps back to the familiar faces and accustomed scenes of the Old Babel from which while faith remained he fled at any and all costs!

It is not logical to say "he found Rome wanting, therefore he returned;" for he did not seek Rome till all else failed. Does the Episcopalian din turn into God's own order during the temporary absence of some convert? Certainly not. Why, then, return? Ask of Lot's wife.

CREOLE DEVOTION.

Deep Religious Feeling of the Creoles of New Orleans.

The deep devotional spirit of the French Creoles of the South forms the subject of the following paragraphs by Ruth McNery Stuart of the Ladies Home Journal:

Your venerable hostess will tell you that she goes out seldom excepting to church—to the old St. Louis Cathedral, probably, and maybe, occasionally, for nine consecutive days, for a novena, out to the little chapel of Saint Roche—to secure a needed benefaction for a poor kinsman or friend, or to pray for sight to blind eyes or renewed life for paralyzed hands or feet. She rarely makes these weary pilgrimages in her own behalf.

In this quaint old cathedral all the proud old Creole families that New Orleans has ever known, have, in one generation or another, come to kneel and pray, and to the old who worship there to-day, the high altar, with all its wealth of suggestive symbols, is reminiscent of a thousand tender associations, that in the retrospect are as way stations along the pathway of life. Here, to look upon the scene of the miracles of Lourdes, and mayhap receive the perfect gift of faith, many have brought their little ailing ones, and when the good Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Lady, has granted their petitions here they have hung their tablets of thanks, or perhaps their tablets of prayers, or perhaps they have enriched the altar with a gift—a handsome lamp or cross of carved ivory or fine metal. Here, amid the votive tablets with their grateful inscriptions, "Merci" or "Ex voto," have sometimes hung the identical discarded crutches that the healed sufferers have no longer needed; models in wax or marble of eyes or ears made whole; examples of distorted, maimed and twisted hands or feet. Here rich and poor may generally be seen kneeling together, black and white, reputable and notorious—all equal in the presence of the Divine manifestation. If the Lady of the Grotto does not heed the petition perhaps Saint Antoine, the patron saint of little children, will add his intercession to hers. When prayers are answered through his intercession the beneficiary will drop into a little black box a gratuity in acknowledgment of the benefit—a fund which is distributed among the poor.

While there are, perhaps, no people less ostentatious than the Creoles in matters of religion, there are certainly none in America whose religious observance and ceremonials form so interesting and definite a factor in distinguishing them. Whether it be May or November, Christmas or Easter, or only one of the lesser religious seasons of the Church calendar, the Creole is always in evidence in relation to her Church. In writing the above sentence I have unwittingly employed the feminine pronoun, and, while I would disclaim any charge against the fidelity of the Creole *pater* in regard to his religion, I am, nevertheless, inclined to let the pronoun stand—and, for this reason: The beauty and picturesqueness of the religious ceremonials, as they impress the spectator from the outside, are so closely and almost exclusively associated with the gentler sex that when one thinks of the New Orleans Creole as a religious unit he is apt inadvertently to write her down a woman. And this is not only because he first realized her as a procession of dainty, veiled First Communion girls, passing in one street and out another, through the old French town, immaculate as little brides; nor is it, yet, because he recalls her gentle face as Sister of Charity, and knows its sweetness even though he has never seen her lift her placid eyes from the starched rim of the beautiful bonnet of her religious order—the beautiful bonnet of one of the few enduring fashions that know no change. Nor yet, still, is it because it is the woman who is most in evidence in the crowded old cemeteries on All Souls' Day—the annual festival of the dead—where the Catholic is the only expressed religion, and French the language of the day. Women are there by daybreak and all day bearing testimonials of flower and plant and beaded symbol to the tombs of their departed dead—women in tears and heavy crape; women in rose bonnets and smiles; women in Paisley shawls, and women in gait shoes; old, withered, French-talking, brown and yellow *praline* women; shabby women, bending to rearrange the white shell borders that outline the cheaper graves; rich women who can well afford the luxury of priest and red gown and acolyte with swinging censor, who intone their beautiful Latin lines at the wrought iron gates of some of the stately tombs; Sisters of Charity at the outer gates chaperoning the pink-bonneted

orphan girls who stand beside them and clink their silver plates for sweet charity's sake.

FOR FAULT-FINDERS.

Speaking of fault-finding, a recent writer on that subject said that the habit of fault-finding is so common that most of us seem to take delight in giving the reason why our fellow-sufferers in this vale of woe have not done better than they have. If by any chance we are led to take an introspective view, and analyze our own attainments and undertake to determine our own latitude, we find that it is owing chiefly to our misfortunes, rather than our faults, that we have not become bright and shining lights beckoning those below us to greater effort, in the hope that they might scale the precipices above them and at last stand untrifled by our side. This is no doubt the case with a great many people, and the position we find ourselves in as compared with that occupied by our neighbors—and we use the word neighbors in the larger sense of the word—is probably the effect of an obliquity of vision, which, strange to say, we notice in others so much sooner than we do in ourselves. While we are not prepared to dispute the truth of the ancient writer who declared, "There is not one perfect; no, not one," we believe that most people occupy the very place they are best fitted for. If every man were capable of making himself famous, fame would lose its value and become too common to be worth striving for. It all men had equal ability to accumulate riches, then each one would have a like amount, and in the division the share that would fall to each would be so small that it would not be worth while to make special effort to become possessed of it. After all, the rather trite saying, "You can't keep a good man down" is true to a very great extent. The man with ambition and energy will succeed along the lines upon which he expends his energy, whether he become "a doctor, a lawyer, a beggar man, or a thief." It is altogether likely that the man who is a doctor would have failed as a lawyer, and a lawyer would have made a sorry preacher, while both would have failed as farmers. It is a wise provision of Providence that there are "many men of many minds," and that men are so constituted that what is easy of accomplishment for some is utterly impossible in others. A man may be both witty and wise and not succeed, and still not be in any way at fault because of his lack of success. Very few men have greatness thrust upon them, and it is quite safe to assume that any man who is really great was born with possibilities in the direction of his achievements. There is no harm in speculating over "mute inglorious Miltons or Cromwells guiltless of their country's blood," but there is no possible foundation upon which to base a logical argument that any Milton ever lived who did not sing, or any Cromwell who did not lead their partisans into civil war.

If we feel inclined to find fault we should stop an instant and ask ourselves this question: "Why am I not more of a success than I am?" We will find that our inability to answer that constitutes, or should constitute, a very good reason why we should refrain from fault-finding with others.—Sacred Heart Review.

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FIVE-MINUTE'S SERMON.

Third Sunday After Epiphany. PRIDE.

The advice given by St. Paul to the Christians who lived in Rome eighteen hundred years ago, "Be not wise in your own conceits," well deserves the attention of those who are living in our own days.

Look at our young men. Consider the want of respect and even decent regard so many show to those older than themselves. "Old age is a crown of dignity," Holy Scripture tells us.

Consider, too, the manner in which parents are so often treated by their children. I do not refer to those sons and daughters specially who are utterly bad and depraved, those who, by their vicious lives and their cruel treatment, are bringing the gray hairs of their parents in sorrow to the grave.

But why does the Apostle condemn this false wisdom, and why does he teach us, on the contrary, to aim at the attainment of humility and lowliness of mind? It would take too long fully to answer this question; but to give a sufficient answer is quite easy.

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

CHARLIE DAY'S VOCATION.

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.

"I was in hopes, Charles," she said, "that you had given up that foolish idea."

"There was a pause during which Charlie's wistful eyes did not turn from his mother's face. She could not withstand them."

"What!" said the priest; "to stay?" "Yes, Father," replied Charles, with a glad smile.

"Nothing further concerning Charlie Day need be said, except that he did become a priest and at an unusually early age. From the moment of his ordination he did not cease to do good to suffering humanity, which was the wish of his life."

Paul became worse. He was very weak and breathed with difficulty and then came the end. Paul died. Mrs. Day gazed upon her fair curly headed little Paul, whose face now wore in death such a happy, smiling expression, with a dull aching heart.

When the doctor had gone Mrs. Day gave a despairing cry and sank upon her knees, and remained thus for some time. A thousand things came into her head. Uppermost was the thought that, although she had not been willing to give up one of her sons to work for the glory of God, He had chosen to take one to Himself, and perhaps was going to take another; and she was powerless.

Charlie opened his eyes and his face lighted up as he saw his mother. He reached out his hand from under the coverlet and said in a half whisper, "I was wondering why you did not come back."

"O mamma!" he said and covered in surprise. "Tell me how did the doctor say I am? I feel better."

Mrs. Day's prayers were answered.

CHARIE GROW STEADILY BETTER.

Charlie grew steadily better, and before very long was quite well again. Mrs. Day had gone through a severe trial which she never forgot.

As for Charlie, he was made happy by the change in his mother, and believed implicitly that his recovery was due to her prayers.

One day he presented himself to Father Casarius and said, "I have come."

Being true to convictions. Be sincere in your religious belief and practice. If you have any doubts in matters of faith go to your pastor and ask him for some work that will clear them up.

Picture to yourself, on the other hand, how beautiful and consistent is the life of a young man, guided by religious principles. His conscience has no sting of remorse for him; the future no horrors.

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USE SURPRISE SOAP. Best for Wash Day. For quick and easy work. For cleanest, sweetest and whitest clothes. Surprise is best. Best for Every Day. For every use about the house Surprise works best and cheapest.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

It is wonderfully significant of the change in the temper of Protestants towards things savoring distinctly of the Catholic Church, that a play with the above title should hold the boards for hundreds of nights in London, Eng., drawing immense audiences, and be received with marked favor by people of all forms of belief in the Museum, Boston.

Wilson Barrett has grasped the dramatic possibilities of the acts of the Martyrs of the Early Church, and has made a play of the most pathetic and absorbing human interest.

He chooses the reign of Nero as the time of most effective contrast between the poverty, purity and devotion of the Christians and the luxury and appalling corruption of the Roman court and aristocracy.

There seems a general willingness to concede these early martyrs to St. Peter.

Of course, there was no intent of such effect in the writing of the play—a fact which but adds to the strength of the impression.

There were sentiments on the part of the Christians' accusers, too, which must have sounded rather familiar alike in London and in Boston, as when Christianity was denounced as "a foreign superstition," and its professors as conspirators against the Government!

The most piteous scenes in the drama—bringing tears to the eyes even of the men—are those in which the Christian boy Stephanus figures. After boldly proclaiming his faith, even under the lash, the child is put to the rack, and crazed with pain and terror, partially loses his trust.

After Stephanus, the most interesting character is Marcus, the Roman Prefect, won to the Cross through his love for the Christian girl, Mercia, and going with her to death.

Nero is faithful to historical tradition, and of the women characters, the beautiful, frivolous and vicious Dacia best epitomizes the Pagan spirit of her time.

THE "DAY" OF CREATION.

The Right Reverend Monsignor Molloy, D. D., is known as one of the most learned of the Irish clergy; a man whose attainments and work as a scientist give him a national reputation, and whose rank as a theologian is more than respectable.

The Monsignor, in a paper recently read at a meeting of the Maynooth College Union, dealt with "The Historical Character of the First Chapter of Genesis," and in particular with the interpretation of the word "days" regarding the period of creation.

One of the most generally urged objections to the veracity of Scripture by common people whose critical powers are still in bud and not yet developed into the unbragging amplitude of Higher Criticism is that the First Chapter of Genesis declares that creation took place in "six days" and that as but six thousand years have elapsed since the completion of creation, the earth, according to Scripture, can only be six thousand years old.

But these gentlemen go too quickly. They assume that "day" as used in Genesis means twenty-four hours, and in this they assume too much.

Doctor Molloy, in his paper referred to, returned to a subject treated of by him many years ago, when he contended that the interpretation of the word "day" could not be given as a day of twenty-four hours.

Concluding, Doctor Molloy shows how exactly the ascertained facts of science fit in with the Sacred Writings. The first great geological ages—the Primary or Palaeozoic Age—shows to the geologist the remains of trees and forests.

After Stephanus, the most interesting character is Marcus, the Roman Prefect, won to the Cross through his love for the Christian girl, Mercia, and going with her to death.

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A NUN'S RETALIATION.

Risked Her Life at the Bedside of a Friend of Margaret Shepherd.

Here is a pretty story from Elkhart, Indiana. It is vouched for by a priest, and is certainly true. As told here it consists of bare facts, but they are eloquent:

Margaret Shepherd, whom our readers will remember as the notorious lecturer and vilifier of Catholic Sisterhoods, recently visited Elkhart. She became especially intimate with one lady of the town, who attended her lectures and advanced her interests in every manner possible.

The lady believed all of Mrs. Shepherd's statements. Mrs. Shepherd had scarcely taken her departure when this friend was attacked by diphtheria. Before the notice had been placed upon the door by the Board of Health the husband of the stricken woman had telegraphed to the hospital in South Bend for a Sister of the Holy Cross to nurse his sick wife.

There being no Sister there to spare, he was referred to Miss Hawaka, Ind. There a Sister was secured who started on the evening train and entered immediately upon her dangerous duties.

The feelings of the patient as she was being nursed back to life and health by a gentle nun, the besmirching of whose character she had recently countenanced, are not described.

Rich red blood is the foundation of good health. That is why Hood's Sarsaparilla, the One True Blood Purifier, gives HEALTH.

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