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Novena of Anastasia O'Shea

By rights, with such a name, Anastasia O'Shea should have been typical Irish. But in her appearance there was nothing to suggest her Hibernian ancestry. She was a slim, willowy creature, with small neat features, wild-rose coloring, and mouse-colored hair, which was always dressed in what she herself would have described as "the latest" style.

But in the only things that really mattered she was no unworthy daughter of "the Isle of Saints." Her passionate devotion to the faith of her fathers was Irish. Her childlike innocence and purity of heart were Irish and above all, in her unflinching faith in the love and goodness of God, when all in her poor life seemed to contradict it, she was Irish.

"Ah, shure, it's the will o' God," is what her Kerry grandmother would have said. Anastasia did not utter the words with a lip but her heart said them over and over, even though God seemed deaf to her prayers, for her novena to the Sacred Heart was ended, and still her Saviour made as though He heard her not.

Anastasia balanced herself adroitly on a short ladder, poised at a perilous angle in the deep, old oaken doorway of the great building where her widowed mother was caretaker. She rubbed vigorously at the brass name-plates set in the wall above her head. A cart loaded with heavy luggage for the American boat-sailing in the afternoon rumbled slowly down the street, and as she caught sight of it the tears trickled down Anastasia's cheeks.

When the brasses before her shone so that her sorrowful little face was grotesquely reflected in them, she descended from her perch and sat down in a shadowy corner of one of the wide steps. For a few minutes she could be alone, a rare luxury in the crowded, insistent life of her class.

It was early yet. Too early for the pulsating stream of life which in an hour's time would flow through the heart of the city. Too late for that other stream of toilers relentlessly hurried by the earning of their daily bread almost at the break of day.

As she sat there in the shadow of the doorway, Anastasia went feverishly over in her mind every incident of the last three weeks. For two years, almost, indeed, since his reception into the Church, she had "walked out" with Matthew Hambridge.

Anastasia was always glad to think that he had been a Catholic before she knew him, and that his conversion from Methodism was due to conviction, and no influence save God the Holy Ghost. For the past six months she had proudly worn a ring which Matthew had given her, a slender setting of gold which guarded jealously a minute ruby and a very few finitesimal diamond sparks.

possessed both qualifications in a marked degree. An additional attraction to the mind of the ardent Dissenter was the alluring thought that he might be the instrument used to pluck Matt as a brand from the burning, classified in his mind as "the errors of Popery."

To insure her brother's acceptance of the fruit farmer's offer, Caroline Hambridge took an excursion ticket to Liverpool, where Matthew's reception of her was neither encouraging nor gratifying. He professed himself quite content with his present humble prospects and even confessed under pressure, that he was thinking of marrying at an early date: Any question of apostasy from the faith he had learned to love and above all, in her unflinching faith in the love and goodness of God, when all in her poor life seemed to contradict it, she was Irish.

She then lost no time in calling on Anastasia and her mother, with a great show of friendliness, she confided to them the roseate nature of Matthew's future, taking care at the same time to make it quite plain that it was a future in which the girl to whom he had given his humble betrothal ring was destined to play no part.

Of course if Anastasia had possessed what her Lancashire mother called "a mite of proper spunk" she would have risen to the occasion and defied Caroline to do her worst. Instead of that, she sat by in silent suffering, while an overbearing nature, under the deceptive guise of family affection, brushed her beautiful dream-palaces aside as though they were cobwebs.

It was her mother who intimidated the caller that, for her part, she had no opinion of those who were not contented with the land of their birth. "Makin' your pile in furrin' parts," she said, "is a thing I never had no opinion of. There's a good bit of talk about it, so they tell me, but talkin' is easy whether you try it in England or America. 'Rollin' stories,' we used to call them that was on easy where God Almighty'd placed them, in my young days, an' it suits them still in my opinion. Thank God my boys an' girls are content where I put them. Furrin' parts! it's yep, thank you! for them that fancies to loose her moorings. The bell for 'Friends ashore' was clanging noisily, and people were hurrying down the gangway.

Some of those who had reached the stage were waving gay farewells and calling up last words to those on board. Others could not trust themselves to look up. One girl in deep mourning, was crying in a heart-broken way.

Anastasia slipped under the protecting chain and made her way unheeded to the river's verge. Sheer above her rose the towering ramparts of the giant ship. Her gaze then a group of Scandinavian navies, with bright-colored kerchiefs on their lint-white locks. Then a party of children from an orphanage, gay in scarlet cloaks and hoods.

But nowhere could she find the one face for which she sought. A dry sob rose in Anastasia's throat. She looked and looked with smarting, miserable eyes until the mighty outlines of the vessel were lost in the mists of the river. The key was no longer under the mat where she had placed it, so her mother must have come in, and Anastasia would have to explain where she had been. She wished she could have had a little time alone. Her eyes were burning and her head ached, yes, and her heart ached too.

ended, when someone told her that Matt's ticket was taken, and the date of his departure fixed. And now the very morning had come when the cart loaded down to the dockside, and before night the ship, with Matt on board, would be far, far beyond her reach, and she would be left behind to face the intolerable pain which had come upon her, which her striking heart endeavored to embrace because her faith told her it must be the will of God.

With difficulty she pushed her way through the crowd, pressing against the wooden bars of the barrier, only to be motioned back with the rebuff, "Ticket holders only." At the sight of her dismay a man behind her laughed, and made some jesting remark. Anastasia shrank back abashed, and eager to miss nothing of the drama of the liner's departure, she forgot her and closed her eyes.

She hurried, half running, half stumbling on the wooden footholds of the long pontoon, which sloped upward from the stage to the covered roadway at the top. Here was a barrier reserved for the descent of the saloon passengers, but when she made timidly as though she would pass now, the same refusal met her: "Ticket-holders only."

"Oh, sir, for the love of God let me down," she implored. "I didn't know I wanted a ticket, an' it's too late to get one now. He'll be gone in a minute, an' it's my only chance of seein' him."

The police officer was young, and the man had not yet been lost in the official. It was late, and there was on one about to witness a blinking at discipline. He scrutinized keenly Anastasia's little tear-stained face, with a look of utter despair.

For two years he had his appointed hours of duty at those barriers, and in that time he had learned to recognize the meaning of the expression which he saw now on the face of the girl before him. He had seen it on many other faces. Without speaking he motioned to her to pass down, turning his back lest he should see her go.

The great liner was preparing to loose her moorings. The bell for "Friends ashore" was clanging noisily, and people were hurrying down the gangway. Some of those who had reached the stage were waving gay farewells and calling up last words to those on board. Others could not trust themselves to look up. One girl in deep mourning, was crying in a heart-broken way.

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right enough. I've come back for good." "Didn't you sail, Matt?" Anastasia faltered. "Not me," Mr. Hambridge answered cheerfully. "I wasn't takin' any when it came to the point. No priest an' no church in side of twenty miles, so a chap I know told me, I chucked the whole bloomin' show, an' I sold the ticket our Caroline bought (out of me own savin's mind you) for ten shillin's more than she give for it. Fruit farm in Florida! Not much!"

Mrs. O'Shea gave a sudden twitch to Anastasia's Gibson coat and then head on one side, inspected her tout ensemble. "Dunno as I wouldn't 'ave done better to 'ave bought you the brown after all," she said anxiously, "as like as not that green'll fade something cruel." "Oh! no, mother," Anastasia said hurriedly, "it won't. I've ad brown so often I'm fair sick of it an' this is much prettier."

This gave her mother the desired opening. "There you go," she said reprovingly, "all for the outward appearances, and after all I've learned you too. I only 'ope you 'ave'n't made a worse mistake than choosing the wrong costume. Men are proper deceitful, even the best of them, and the uppity is always the same. Show yourself soft to them and you may make yourself into a mat at once, an' not get so much as thank you. But 'old off and they're back like a scorpion to the cross as the sayin' is. Don't you forget that."

But Anastasia was starting by a cheap excursion to the Nottingham Union Fair, which Matt had often wished to see, and where they had decided to visit on their brief honeymoon. Perhaps this influenced her view of things.

What she saw was a future stretching before her in a dim haze of happiness. What she felt was a humble thankfulness that nothing could come to her except through the security of the Will of God and the ineffable Love of the Sacred Heart. —The English Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

"When you eat a spoonful of honey you have very little notion as to the amount of work and travel necessary to produce it. To make one pound of clover honey, bees must drive 62,000 clover blossoms of their own, and to do this requires 2,750,000 visits to the blossoms by the bees. In other words, one bee, to collect enough nectar to make one pound of honey, must go from hive to flower and back 2,750,000 times. Then, when you think how far these bees sometimes fly in search of these clover fields, often more than one or two miles from the hive, you will begin to get a small idea of the number of miles one of the industrious little creatures must travel in order that you may have the pound of honey that gives them so much trouble.

"It may also help you to understand why the bee is unsuitable enough to sting if you get in its way. When one has to work so hard to accomplish so little, it is quite irritating to be interfered with."

Curious Indian Tribes. The government of Eastern Bengal and Assam is publishing a series of manuals on the relatively unknown peoples of eastern India and its borders. Among these are the Mithras, who live south of the Brahmaputra River, and the Mithras, who inhabit Manipur. The costume of the Mithras women is picturesque. These people are also interesting for having suggested to British officers the curious custom among them is the selection of a man who gives his name to the year, and during twelve months bears all the sins of his people. His personal good or ill fortune is supposed to influence the luck of the whole country.

News From Ireland

Antrim. Most Rev. Dr. Tohill, Bishop of Down and Connor, blessed and laid the foundation stone of the new church of St. Teresa, Hanahastown road, Belfast, on Oct. 31.

Armagh. Miss Anne McLaughlin, daughter of the late James McLaughlin, Ogle street, Armagh, was recently received in the Convent of Mercy, Ballyshannon, County Donegal and assumed in religion the name of Sister Malachi. A solemn requiem office and high mass was celebrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, on Oct. 21, his Eminence Cardinal Logue presiding for the repose of the souls of the deceased bishops and priests of the archdiocese of Armagh.

Cavan. Most Rev. Dr. Boylan, Bishop of Kilmore, has been very ill in Dublin for some weeks past but according to the latest papers to hand, he is recovering. Lady Mann Barrett, sister of the Earl of Cavan, has entered one of the strictest Catholic nunneries in Belgium. There is only one reservation in the convent rule that she shall never see her friends or relations again. That is the "Onlooker" that when at the point of death she should then express the wish she may send for her nearest relative to make the final adieu. In one of the forms in the ceremony the novice lies before the High Altar in the coffin which will serve for her last resting place. Lady Maud Edith Gundreda Barrett is the widow of the late Mr. Henry J. Barrett, whom she married in 1862. He died in 1901. The Earl of Cavan's family are not Catholics. Several members, including the Earl himself were in Belgium, however, to be present at the final ceremonies of taking the veil.

Derry. A discussion arose at Derry Corporation on Oct. 21, over a proposal of the Most Rev. Dr. McHugh, Lord Bishop of Derry, to purchase a piece of ground known as "The Bishop's Garden Plot" for £1,750 and eventually it was decided to accept his Lordship's offer.

A fire broke in the main hall of the ground floor of the Nazareth Home, Bishop street, on the night of Oct. 19 and did some slight damage. The aged people and children occupying the apartments overhead had been ordered out, but only a few had got out when the fire was subdued.

Down. In the paper read by Rev. Ambrose Coleman, O.P., at the Irish Section of the Eucharist Congress in Cologne, on "Mass in Penal Times in Ireland," the fact was mentioned that Dr. McGettigan, who died Bishop of Raphoe in 1861 used to relate that in his childhood he was often placed on the summit of a high rock to signal the approach of the priesthunters, while in adjoining hollow the parishioners were assembled round the temporary altar on which the Holy Sacrifice was offered up. The "high rock" overlooks the town of Letterkenny, and in view of it, Dr. O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe, laid on September 23, 1904 the foundation stone of St. Eunan's Seminary.

Fermanagh. William Monaghan, stationmaster at Florence court died in Dublin recently at the age of thirty-seven years. Most Rev. McKenna, Bishop of Clogher, laid the foundation stone of a new church at Monagh, on Oct. 17, and it was announced that amongst the contributions toward the new building was the generous gift of £100 from his Lordship.

Monaghan. The death of Mrs. Mary McGough, Shantonagh, occurred on Oct. 15, after a short illness. The grass lands around the Demene at Lough Bawn, County Limerick, property is at present being broken up for tillage.

By the new owners of the old the former tenants.

Tyrone. A popular young man, O'Connell, Dr. Henry Joseph Windor, who quite recently graduated from the Glasgow University, was home recently on holiday. Dr. Windor, who had a very successful scholastic career, occupies a responsible position as house surgeon in a County Durham hospital.

Clara. Denis Collins, Querrin, for twenty-three years a representative of the ratepayers on Kilmuck Board of the Guardians and rural Council, recently resigned his seat.

Cork. Mr. G.G. Kent, who was postmaster of Cork from 1900 to 1904, and since then postmaster at Southampton, has just retired from the service.

Kerry. Miss Nora Newman, daughter of the late Jeremiah Newman, Dromcollagher, County Limerick, was received into the Tralles Ballonagh Convent of Mercy, on Oct. 19. The ceremonies were performed by the Very Rev. C. O'Sullivan, P.P., V.G., of Kerry.

Limerick. Miss Nora Newman (in religion Sister Mary Albans), daughter of the late Mrs. Newman, Dromcollagher, County Limerick, was received into the Convent of Mercy, Ballonagh, County Kerry, on Oct. 19. The ceremony was performed by the Very Rev. C. O'Sullivan, P.P., V.G., of Kerry, assisted by Rev. W. Bennet, C.C., in the presence of a representative congregation of friends, clerical and lay.

Tipperary. Edward Quinn, Clonmel, has been appointed master of the Tipperary Union at a salary of sixty pounds per annum, with lodgings and apartments.

Waterford. Married.—On October 21st, at the Cathedral, Waterford, by Rev. T.F. Furlong, Adm., Harry second son of Mr. L. McCarty, The Quay, Waterford, and Miss Kelly, daughter of Mr. J. Kelly, Farnell street, Waterford.

Waterford. Died.—October 17th, at Dromcollagher, Mrs. Elizabeth Bullock, relict of the late John Bullock, aged 81 years. Oct. 19, at the residence of his brother, Bagnalstown John Dros.

Waterford. Dr. A. E. McMahon has been selected medical officer of Clonmel and Palmerstown dispensary districts by South Dublin Board of Guardians.

Waterford. The Kilkenny Castle, Co. Wick, Athy Railway, act received the Royal Assent on Wednesday, the work of raising capital for the undertaking has commenced.

Waterford. The solemn consecration of the altar, presented to the Chapel of the Community of the Convent of Mercy, Callan, by Thomas O'Laughlin, K.S.G., of Larat, Australia, who is also the donor of the church of St. John in Kilkenny, was performed by the Most Rev. Dr. Browne, Lord Bishop of Ossory, on Oct. 19.

Waterford. Sister Albus Cahill, for many years night nurse in Edenderry Union, has resigned her position much to the regret of the Guardians and poor alike.

Waterford. Most Rev. Dr. Foley, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, paid a triennial visit to Maryboro, Oct. 22, and administered the sacrament of confirmation to the children of Maryborough and joining parishes.

Waterford. Rev. B.E. Fitzhenry, of the House of Missions, Enniscearty, has been appointed to the Curacy of Marshalstown in succession to Rev. N. Mornagh, P.P. Ballynoughty.