The Catholic Journal.

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The Procrastinator

Continued from last week.

"I know it, I know it," he replied impetuously, still holding her hand. "But were you ever absent from my thoughts even for a single day? No never. I simply put off writing, that is all. I meant to, Geneva. Your letters are all in a neat pile on my desk. I will admit that I've been punished looking at them, but there they have always been. And, now that I am here you are going to forget all that, aren't you Geneva?"

She could not withstand him for she loved him. During the ten days of his stay they were constantly together, but the mother remained cold until the end. On the eve of his departure he said:

"I shall not fail to write this time, Geneva—you will see."

"She smiled. "I almost believe you," she replied. "But my mother thinks it will be much better if I do not write to you except once in a great while. She says we are not children any longer, and shouldn't conduct ourselves as such."

"How strange your mother has grown!" said Wilfred. "But Geneva, I am going to send you a little ring, a forget-me-not, made of turquoise and pearls. I found it in a curio shop. I shall have it polished and made to fit you. Will you wear it?"

She looked at her white, slender hand on which no golden circlet had ever rested. A soft, contented smile stole over her face.

"Yes, indeed, Wilfred," she replied, "I shall be glad to wear it."

He took a piece of silk thread from his vest pocket and measured it round her finger.

"It is a beautiful little ring," he said. "I meant to bring it with me, but forgot it. When you wear it, Geneva; always remember that

"'I love you;' tis the simplest way
The thing I feel to tell—
But if I told you all the day
You'd never guess how well."

She smiled softly, gazing up into his adoring eyes, and a tear trembled on her long lashes. He stooped and lightly touched with his lips the white, blue veined lips. It was his first and last kiss of love.

When he returned to the office he found himself very much engrossed in business. Tasks set by others for him to do Wilfred never neglected. It was only his own personal obligations that he failed to perform. But he did not forget to send Geneva the ring. She thanked him through his mother as he had not written. From this he inferred that her mother had forbidden her to write to him. But he did not doubt her fidelity. After a while he was sent on a distant journey and when he returned found time to stop at his native village.

After his mother had greeted him he asked:

"How is Geneva?"

"She is married."

"Married! To whom?"

"To a gentleman who took the vacant Spotiswood place two years ago—just after you were here last."

He sank into a chair. "Mother," he said, "I could never have believed her to be false. She was betrothed to me."

"Betrothed! Wilfred—had it gone that far? She was scarcely more than a child two years ago."

"She is still a child. Her mother has done this."

"Yes I believe it. She was very ambitious for her Geneva, and who can blame her? Denison is a fine young fellow and loved her from the very first. He asked her more than once before she would consent. Wilfred—I think she loved you best. But you made no sign for so long a time. What could she do?"

"No sign should have been needed!" cried the young man. "She knew that I would always love her."

"Women are not like that. Wilfred. Nor are most men. Were you sure of her?"

"Entirely sure. I gave her a ring. Did she not return it to you for me mother?"

"No, she did not. You are a strange boy, Wilfred."

"Does she seem happy?"

"Quite happy—you know how sweet and gentle she is. And her mother has will enough for both. Her husband is very much in love with her."

"She is a false creature?" cried Wilfred, striding out of the house. The cottage next door was vacant; the mother had gone to live with her daughter. Scarcely knowing where he went he turned into the turnpike road.

It might have been ten minutes or ten hours, he could not tell which, when he heard some one speak his name. He looked up. She was there in front of him in a little phaeton. She wore a white gown and a white hat, trimmed with a delicate wreath of wild roses. The beautiful blue eyes sought his; her cheeks were slightly flushed.

"Wilfred!' she said timidly. "How do you do?" and put out her small, slender hand, the hand on which he had once believed she would be wearing his ring.

He looked at her with blazing eyes.

"How could you have so deceived me?" he cried, and turned his back upon her, stalking blindly through the powdery dust of the hot, white road.

It was not till years after, when reason and experience had come to his aid, that he forgave Geneva for what she had done. Little by little he grew to understand how the fault had been with him alone, after the besetting sin of his temperament had more than once worked him ill his enterprises and projects, without, however having cured him of it in the very least. He must procrastinate, and suffer for it until the day of his death.

He had seen her once, in a box at a famous opera, surrounded by her husband and children. she looked happy; he felt that she was happy, and the tall, resolute man beside her seemed fond and proud of her. Well he would have regretted to have found it otherwise; his was no mean nature.

And then, one by one, he had read of the death of her mother, husband and sons, and knew that she was all alone. His own mother had long been dead. He had felt a strong inclination to write to her, but feared that his motives might be misunderstood, and dallied with the kindly impulse until it was too late.

And now he was an old man and a fairly prosperous one, living alone, save a couple of servants, in a house where no sound of woman's voice or woman's footsteps was ever heard. There had been but one woman in the world for Wilfred.

And last night there had come to him a message from a large hospital in the heart of the city—her card, and the words, "I would like to see you—come at once," Nothing in his whole life had so much moved him. Was she ill? Dying perhaps? Very likely? Could he endure to note the change that had taken place in her through all these years? He had always shrunk from the contemplation of illness—it was a horror to him. Could he bear to see destroyed the unfading picture of her he had always treasured—the tall, slender figure, the lovely girlish face, the delicate lips, the soft brown hair? No, he must carry it to his grave. Of the change in himself, to do him justice, he had never thought. No, what was finished, was finished, he would not see her again. But as he mused, memories began to well up from the very life-springs of his soul He forgot everything but that he loved her, that because of her his life had been made lonely, and today she had sent for him. He would obey her request.

Once he took up his hat and stick resolved to do it quickly that which he had at length resolved to do. He lifted the curtain. The snow was falling outside, the air was cold, a bright fire blazed in the grate behind him.

"It is too late tonight," he said. "The hospital may be closed to visitors before I get there." Something whispered. "The message was urgent; it said 'Come at once.'" But he put the monitor aside. "It mean't tomorrow—not tonight," he said. "I will go early in the morning."

In the afternoon of the next day he knocked at the door of the hospital. "The lady died this morning on the operating table," said the official whom he saw, "But her maid is here—she wished to see you if you called."

He sat like one stunned until the woman came. She had been weeping.

"Tell me—tell me!" he murmured.

"You are her one friend?" she inquired."

"Yes—her oldest friend."

"So she told me yesterday, though she had never spoken of you before. And this morning, very early—before it happened—she asked me if you came to give you this. If you did not I was to burn it. Would you like to see her? She looks very lovely—she was the most beautiful of women."

"No," said Wilfred, taking the packet from the woman's hand. "I remember her as a young and incomparable girl, fair and innocent as a child, untouched by care or sorrow or age or suffering; and so I wish to think of her always."

"I do not blame you," rejoined the woman, scarcely able to restrain her sobs. But she kept her beauty and sweetness to the last. She accepted the death of her husband, who adored her, and to whom she was the most loving of wives as well as that of children, in a spirit of resignation not often seen in this rebellious world. Her days were filled with good works and kindly deeds. There were those who called her cold, but I, who have known and lived with her more than thirty years, know that there was never a warmer, truer, more faithful heart than hers."

Wilfred could not speak; wringing the woman's hand he left the house. It was dark when he reached his home. The curtains were drawn, the lamp lit on the table the fire burning cheerfully. In the next room, behind the portiers, he could hear Michael, his servant, setting the table for his solitary meal.

He sat down in the comfortable chair he always found drawn close to the hearth-rug at this hour.

The packet was tied with a string. He opened it with trembling fingers. It contained a small pasteboard box, such as may be found in any jeweler's shop. Wilfred had seen it before. Lifting the lid he drew forth a card; underneath lay a ring, a circlet of pearls and turquoises very much worn, with several of the little stones missing. On one side of the card was written—"Geneva" on the other these lines:

"I love you;' tis the simplest way
The thing I feel to tell—
But if I told you all the day
You'd never guess how well."

"Dinner, sir!" announced the servant, but the old man did not hear him. For many and many a year he had forgotten the little couplet which had once fallen so tenderly from his lips, and must have been welcomed by her so tenderly—for; though she heard it but once, she had always remembered it.

Pity, reader, than condemn him. His fault had been its own punishment.—Mary E. Mannix, in the Rosary Magazine.

Weekly Church Calendar

Sunday 6—St. Fridolin
Monday 7—St. Thomas, confessor, doctor
Tuesday 8—St. John of God
Wednesday 9—St. Frances fast
Thursday 10—40 Martyrs
Friday 11—St. Sophron
Saturday 12—St. Gregory

Press despatches under date of Feb. 9th bring news of the appointment of Rev. J. W. Shaw, rector of the Cathedral, Mobile, Ala., to be auxiliary Bishop to Bishop Forest of San Antonio, Tex., and of the appointment of Rev. Denis O'Donaghue, auxiliary Bishop of Indianapolis, to be Bishop of Louisville, Ky., in succession to the late Bishop McCloskey.

All kinds of Job Printing done at reasonable prices.

Around the Globe

A press dispatch from St. Paul Minn., says that Rev. John J. Lawler, rector of the Cathedral there, has been appointed Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Ireland.

At Providence, R. I., last Sunday Archbishop Falconio, the Apostolic delegate, dedicated the new Church of the Holy Spirit, a handsome edifice erected for the Italian Catholics of that city.

This year's session of the Catholic Summer School of America will open on June 26 and close on September 9.

Eighty-five thousand dollars of the John A. Creighton estate will go to establishing and maintaining a home for poor working girls under a recent decision rendered by Judges Redick, Troup and Estelle, of the District Court Omaha, Neb. This includes the $50,000 specifically bequeathed for the project and $35,000 from the residue of the estate after this and other specific bequests are provided for.

Archbishop Messmer, of Milwaukee, whose health has not been satisfactory, was recently prostrated by a severe cold.

What Catholics have accomplished in Holland, where they now constitute about one-third of the population shows what Catholic union can achieve even against the prevailing public sentiment. During the past sixty years they have risen from a humilating position not worth noticing politically to an importance which is second to none in public affairs. They have also shown prodigious generosity in contributing both means and missioners to the Church's work.

The cause of the beatification of Mother Philippine Duchesne, religious of the Sacred Heart, has been placed before the Sacred Confregation of Rites. Mother Duchesne led the first band of religious of the Sacred Heart in this country, and founded the first house of the order at Florissant, Mo., about one hundred years ago.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites is now entered upon the new process in the canonization of Blessed Joan of Arc. The postulator of the cause is now in a position to present to the Sacred Congregation two new miracles wrought lately, and which are attributed to the intercession of the Blessed Maid of Orleans. One is said to have taken place at Lourdes. If the procedure for examination shall follow a regular course, it is thought that the process of canonization will finish in about two years, and that very probably Pius X., who beatified Joan of Arc, will also proclaim her "saint."

Rev. James O'Reilly, rector of St. Anthony's Church, Minneapolis, whose appointment to the See of Fargo, N. D., as successor of the late Bishop Shanley is announced was born in Ireland about fifty-three years ago. He was educated at All Hallows Seminary, Ireland, and soon after his ordination to the priesthood came to this country and to the Northwest. For more than a quarter of a century he has labored at St. Anthony's Minneapolis, during which time he built the parish school and made $25,000 worth of improvements to the church property.

The new Youth's Directory of San Francisco, Cal., a handsome structure erected at a cost of $70,000, was opened the other day by Archbishop Riordan. The institution is a monument to the zeal of its president Rev. D. O'Crowley. The public dedication will take place on the playground in the rear of the Directory as soon as good weather sets in.

Mgr. J. C. K. Laflamme lies seriously ill at Quebec.

News From Ireland

Antrim.

Rev. D. O'Keeffe, M. A., Professor of Scholastic Philosophy at the Queens University, speaking at the second night of the Belfast Fair, said he was proud to be identified with the Gaelic League in Belfast, and that city was to have a chance of having a professor of the Irish language in the University. The success of the movement depended on slow and gradual development, and his opinion was that if it took a sudden and immediate hold on the people it would not have such a chance of succeeding. The programme was then proceeded with, and included, singing, harp, violin and pipe playing, recitations and chess competitions.

Armagh.

A splendid newly-erected post-office, just completed for postal and telegraphic business, has been opened to the establishment handsomely fitted up and suitably and adequately equipped in all respects, supplies a long-felt want in the town.

Michael Short has been re-elected Chairman of Armagh Urban Council.

Cavan.

At the annual meeting of the Cavan Urban Council, L. C. P. Smith, outgoing chairman, was re-elected vice-chairman.

Carlow.

At Carlow Quarter Sessions on January 25, Judge Brereton Barry, K. C., was presented with white gloves in consequence of there being no criminal indictment for disposal. The presentation, in the absence of the high sheriff, was made by Robert W. F. Throp, sub-sheriff. His honor acknowledged the compliment, saying that such a presentation had become of frequent occurrence in County Carlow.

Cork.

A verdict of accidental death, without blame to any person, was returned at an inquest at Hollyhill Station (Schull and Skibbereen Light Railway) on the body of Thomas Newman, who was killed on the line on January 27. Deceased, who lived in one of the gateway cottages, fell beneath the wagons at Hollyhill Station while the train was in motion, and succumbed immediately to his injuries.

Clare.

The sloop Catherine of Kilrush with a cargo of basic slag from Foynes to Kildysart, was sunk in a gale recently while entering Kildysart harbor. The crew were saved.

Donegal.

During the month of January the catches of herrings at Buncrana amounted in value to about £20,000, and the existing pier accommodation has been found entirely inadequate for the demands upon it.

Dublin.

Lord Iveagh is about to erect a memorial in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, to the Knights of St. Patrick, since the commencement of the Order, and has requested Captain Wilkinson, Ulster King of Arms, to make the design.

Fermanagh.

A remarkable escape from being buried in the debris of a house is related from Saloon, a short distance from Ballinamallard. A farmer named John Moffatt and his wife retired on the night of January 26 as usual, but they were awakened by strange sounds in the house. On getting up they found that the gable of the house had given way from the foundations, and in a few minutes the wall of the room in which they were sleeping had collapsed. Mr. and Mrs. Moffatt had a very narrow escape, being unable to save any articles in the room save the bed.

Galway.

George Stephens an employe at the electric lighting company['s] works in Galway, was killed under very tragic circumstances on January 26. It appears that his clothes became entangled with the machinery ... [illegible] ... assistance could be rendered. His body was dreadfully mutilated. The machinery was immediately stopped and all that was possible was done to alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate man, [illegible] death occurred in a few [illegible]

Kildare.

A very enjoyable [illegible] the members of the Athy [illegible] Emmets Football Club [illegible] at the Hibernian Hotel, Athy, January 28, under the chairmanship of J. A. Lawler, [illegible] The chief object of the [illegible] was for the purpose of [illegible] a presentation of a gold [illegible] to the vice-captain of the [illegible] (Mr. Brennan) and the [illegible] (Mr. Herdon), with a [illegible] watch and chain.

King's.

John Dooley has been re-elected chairman of Birr Urban Council in the tenth successive [illegible]

Kerry.

D. J. Flavin has been [illegible] chairman of Listowel Urban Council.

Limerick.

In the Convent of [illegible] at Doon, Limerick, [illegible] on January 21, Mother [illegible] seph, after a long life of [illegible] ness and activity in the [illegible] of God. Her genial, [illegible] sonality was well known [illegible] who visited the beautiful [illegible] Convent. This Convent [illegible] hive of educational and [illegible] al activity and the nun [illegible] of the chief assistants [illegible] Reverend Mother.

Leitrim.

It may not be generally [illegible] that F. E. Meehan, M. P. [illegible] Leitrim, is in favor of [illegible] being extended to [illegible] Happy [illegible] Ladies [illegible]

Louth.

James McCourt, J. P. [illegible] re-elected chairman of [illegible] Urban Council.

A meeting of over [illegible] bers of the Dundalk [illegible] L., was held on January [illegible] W. J. Quin, Adm., who [illegible] stated that [illegible] at their [illegible] last election. He was [illegible] from what he knew of [illegible] tional spirit of the town [illegible] which returned Mr. [illegible]

Mayo.

Father Hegarty, P. P. [illegible] address at a meeting of [illegible] missioners at [illegible] scribed the remarkable [illegible] of a lace school in his [illegible] which is at present [illegible] £5,000 a year, or more than [illegible] the total rent of the parish [illegible]

A fund has been [illegible] Ballina to indemnify [illegible] Egan, the independent [illegible] candidate, [illegible] the recent election. [illegible] was the proposer of [illegible] tion at a meeting of [illegible] and others in the [illegible] at which John [illegible] M. S. Browne was [illegible] retary and P. [illegible]

Meath.

Bartle Collins, [illegible] Dunshaughlin workhouse [illegible] that institution on [illegible] having attained the [illegible] years and 10 days. [illegible] tive of Garristown, [illegible] about eighteen or twenty [illegible] ago he was actively [illegible] agricultural pursuits in [illegible] Meath and Dublin.

Monaghan.

The residents of the [illegible] which Killark National [illegible] Carrickmacross, is situated [illegible] ly paid a marked compliment [illegible] the principal teacher [illegible] Devlin, in return for the [illegible] tion of their children. [illegible] sentation, which took the [illegible] a harmonium, was [illegible] ported by Major General [illegible] ley, C. B. who takes a [illegible] terest in education.

Tipperary.

Rev. J. Maher, a popular [illegible] rate of St. Mary's Clonmel [illegible] has been promoted Administrator of Newcastle parish.

Waterford.

Married.—At the Cathedral Waterford, on the 27th of [illegible] uary, after nuptial mass, [illegible] Dean McMahon Gillingham, [illegible] cousin of the bridegroom [illegible] Thomas, son of the late [illegible] Lynch, New Inn, Cahir, to [illegible] nie (Mary) second daughter [illegible] the late William Whittle, [illegible] Knock Waterford.

Died.—January [illegible] P. Power, [illegible]