

John Dennison's Great Fear.

At the age of forty-five Mr. John J. Dennison, popularly spoken of as "J. J.," was still proclaiming that he feared neither God nor man. Strong and big and burly, he had fought his way with tooth and claw. On more than one occasion he had at the gaming table or race course, won or lost a fortune without so much as batting his eye. He had killed his man, broken, unlike the better class of gamblers, his most sacred promises, and walked into wealth over the prostrate bodies of widows and orphans. If there were any transgressions against the moral law which he had not committed, it was only because his knowledge of wickedness, wide as it was, had its limitations. Whether on horseback or in his machine, he had shown such a daredevil spirit as to make strong men shiver and fair women scream.

He had been baptized a Catholic and a legend ran to the effect that he at one time knew how to bless himself. It was a wild legend, but some optimists believed it. Also, he had shown his faith by an occasional and unlooked-for appearance at church bazaars, where, during his stay, money was very easy, indeed.

At forty-five years of age, then, he was still betting, still breaking laws, human and divine, with seeming impunity, still with unchanging face amassing fortunes and throwing them away, still proclaiming as well by word as by deed that he feared nothing—neither God nor man.

Then something happened. As he entered a downtown saloon one memorable night, some of his friends who were in the resort observed a startling change. His strong head was not held so high, his shoulders were not thrown back, and those firm lips of his were a-quiver.

"Give me a drink, quick!" he called out in a voice that seemed another's.

Two bartenders literally fell over each other and incidentally broke a few glasses to accommodate him, their eyes furtively on the watch in the fear that he would reach for his hip pocket.

He swallowed both drinks—for the two had served him—threw a silver dollar on the counter, and then looked round upon the silent and staring group.

"Nolan," he said, picking out a young man already prominent in the sporting set, "will you come home with me?"

"Sure, J. J.," answered Nolan. Together they went out into the night, and, as the swing-doors closed after them, the men at the bar looked at one another in dumb wonder.

"It comes to them all," said a famous horse owner, "breaking the awkward silence; they lose their nerve and that's the end of it—they're all in for good. I thought J. J. would last three or four years yet, but it has come to him, as it has come to every plunger I ever knew or heard about."

Then the group became reminiscent, ordered more drinks, and lit fresh cigars.

But it was really worse than his friends had imagined. J. J. Dennison had at last been frightened, so frightened that he kept to his house, where he trembled and shivered and proclaimed openly that he was afraid. And he told them why, too.

He had, on that memorable night, met some one face to face, and that some one as Dennison gazed upon him, was once entirely unknown and strangely familiar. Describe him he could not. Clothes? He had not noticed them. All he could remember was the face. Had the face been wholly familiar, Dennison, so he claimed, would not give the matter a second thought. But as it was, a great fear had come upon him.

Detectives tried to get the man he had met, and failed. Then a

famous neurologist came upon the scene, and after a long examination, made, in learned and technical words, precisely the same declaration that had fallen from the lips of the horse owner. Applications of electricity, massage and medicines were administered to J. J. Dennison, but to no effect. His manifestations of cowardice were at times pitiable.

Then, one day Detective Kelly, who knew his prayerbook as well as he knew the criminal world of the city, came to J. J. with a novel announcement.

"Ever heard of Father Drane, J. J.?" he inquired, after a few preliminary remarks about the weather.

"That old priest with the tremendous stoop?" asked Dennison, pacing the room restlessly and wringing his hands when he was not cracking his fingers.

"Yes, he's coming to see you to-day. Fact is, I've asked him," Dennison said nothing.

One hour later Father Drane arrived, and was ushered by the waiting detective into the room. For forty years he had given most of his time to the work of bringing sinners back to repentance.

People called him "the angel of the confessional," and often repeated the saying of some religious wag to the effect that the good Father kept the angels, in heaven so busy rejoicing that they were obliged to rejoice over time.

"Father," said Dennison, at once taken by the kind and winning manner of the good priest, "you know it; everybody knows it—I'm afraid, I'm scared."

They were sitting close together. The priest had taken Dennison's hand in his, and for nearly half an hour, while Detective Kelly looked on at a respectful distance, their hands remained locked together. And all this time Dennison went on telling his pitiful story—pausing, stuttering, babbling even incoherently.

"I think," said Father Drane at last, "that I understand your case and I'm going to cure you. Kelly, will you wait outside for a few minutes?"

And as the detective retired he saw something suspiciously like a stole coming out of the old priest's pocket.

"Well, Father," cried Kelly, as Father Drane left the room, "have you got him over the fright?"

"My son," said the priest, "the man who is afraid of nothing is a fool. Dennison isn't a fool any longer. And I think you can call off the neurologists."

"Is he still scared?"

"We all ought to be scared now and then. And it's best we get our measure of scare on the installment plan. God help him who gets his first scare before the judgment seat of Christ."

Dennison was about in a week—a wiser and a better man. He still spent money lavishly on widows and orphans and charities. He still risked his life—to save others. But there were a great many things of which he was afraid.

Various were the explanations of the change. Father Drane, when asked, put the question by in various ways. But Detective Kelly was certain that he and he alone—always excepting Father Drane—had found out the cause of the trouble, and saw how it could be removed.

"Sure, it was Father Drane with a bit of purple ribbon around his shoulders that cured him of his fright. And why was he frightened, do you ask me? Because on that night when he came all of a-shiver into the saloon, by the great mercy of God he had seen himself!"—The Rev. F. J. Finn, S. J., in Exchange.

St. Norbert's Church; Priory, New School, necessitous Fund; send for "Illustrated Collection Cards"; "Grand Presentation Photo," given on receipt of cards; address, Father Mathew Smith, C. R. P. St. Norbert's Priory, Crowle, Lines England.

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Atheism in College

Rev. Wm. H. Harrington of Ithaca, replies to a critic.

To the Editor of Ithaca Journal, Sir—

Far be it from me to engage in a public controversy as to the merits or demerits of the Christian religion, or to take up your valuable columns with such a controversy. Such disputation would imply, in the first place, a want of stability in the faith itself—a weakening of my own allegiance, which God forbid!

But I cannot refrain from pointing one certain new-found evidence for the benefit of your readers, who no doubt read Dr. C. W. Heizer's previous eulogy of what he called a "new religion," and my reply to the same. His enthusiasm was stirred by the thesis of a young man on the Hill, who, now, subscribing himself as "Wallace H. Hook, College of Agriculture," takes me to task because he twits, I have gained my living from advocating a particular faith. "All men must gain a living, in order to live, that is sure; whether some men are gaining it by sacrifice and service or by indulging their desires—yielding to the carnal inclinations, must rest with the Judge of all men to decide.

We may safely pass this point, I think; trusting only, in passing that our worthy Doctor Heizer will be edified in scanning this amazing conception of the Christian ministry—as a money-getting pursuit!—as part of the "new religion" which is being so sedulously, and so incisionally withal, inculcated in the very young.

We have only to note a very few lines from the young man's decidedly informal response of a column and a half; (notwithstanding that he disclaims at the beginning any intention to be either formal or lengthy). It might behoove an older person to inquire whether young Mr. Hook has not imbibed some of the sauciness and precocity so typical of the youth of the day; but we shall leave the proof to his own lines:

"Every individual has a moral and political right to embrace any creed whether that individual be infant or patriarch, college student or illiterate.

"No defense for the oration is offered. If it gives intellectual indignation I timidly suggest that you keep your ravings from the public.

"If it (the celebrated oration) tends to upset your ideas of religion, perhaps those ideas of yours are at fault and need changing."

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings of a verity! But how warped, paraphrased in the interpretation!

It used to be thought the proper thing for the young men to listen to the old men. Even among the aboriginal savages no young man was allowed to speak pending the permission of his elders. We now take a back seat and listen to the oncoming generation—have our philosophy mapped out for us our outworn "seventeenth century faith" impudently set aside. For does not young Mr. Hook of the venerable mind set down:

"I wish that the heads of the oldline religions would get together (a part of; the context we omit, as blasphemous, sacrilegious and therefore unfit for repetition) and develop a religion which an individual could take to college with him and have it stand the everyday wear of common sense knowledge.

Here we have it, in black and ugly, its hideous visage rising like a spectre; which must indeed daunt the Christian parents of America. Here is the mask thrown aside—all semblance of respect for sacred things cast off—all pretense of the humility and contrition of prudent youth dumped overboard. Here, indeed, is Doctor Heizer more than vindicated, although standing worse confounded; for the young man has indeed got a "new religion." But shame of shames, pity of pities, the "new religion" the young man has got is even worse than

appeared in the original! He now turns from "biology, chemistry and physics," the scientific formula, in downright scoffing; from the soft purr of classroom platitudes to the harsh scorch of blasphemy. We may leave the wreck here so vividly portrayed for the contemplation of the Doctor Heizer of the "new religion." As we said in our last, let them look to it—these who are poisoning the young minds. Better for them a thousandfold that millstones were hanged about their necks.

And with one further quotation from this sad compilation of young Mr. Hook's—the having grace is that he is so very young—we shall have done.

"I have never taken a course on the Hill embracing either religion, ethics or morals (we can well believe it).

The Hill professors point out the findings of science and leave the students to draw their own conclusions."

The "common-sense knowledge" which an individual may not "take to college with him," necessarily, but which at any rate he takes away with him, it appears. Unconsciously, no doubt, the young man here touches the vital point of the whole matter.

The only question which we raised in our preceding letter, and the only question of more than passing importance which we now raise, is this: Do Christian parents who send their sons to college desire that professors "point out the findings of science and leave the students to draw their own conclusions?"—Is any infant prodigy, even, large enough properly to draw his own "conclusions?" If so, the teachings of the age are in vain; the counsel of sages is wasted; experience is valueless; callow youth is competent to formulate a code itself.

Is it? We are not addressing ourselves to young Mr. Hook, but to the Doctor Heizer. If youth competent to regulate itself? We have set up a civil law that the penalty of homicide is death. No man may take the life of another on pain of sacrificing his own earthly existence. Our civil laws apply to all who have reached the age of reason. Youth often pays the penalties these laws impose; yet the laws are not made by youths.

If it is not good for youths to make the civil laws, how is it the laws of religious and moral conduct? We cannot make fish of one and flesh of another. Infants are not born with the knowledge that it is wrong to steal; we expect our good mothers to inculcate the lesson and our fathers, too. Is it not preposterous to suppose that infants may be denied religious instruction and have the true concept of religion?

Doctor Heizer maintains that a student in the College of Agriculture evinces in his writings of class-room platitudes that he has found a "new religion." We now have the full and complete measure of that religion; Mr. Hook, the student in question, has rounded out in his latest studied prospectus he gave us in his first.

These contributions of Wallace H. Hook's are the most noteworthy we have had in a long while as establishing the contention of many preachers, editors of newspapers and various other writers and close observers, that our young men are being taught atheism in the colleges—some of the colleges; and also that some of them are imbibing the teachings—subtle though they be; left to "draw their own conclusions" though the poor young fellows may be. The seed that is sown will bear fruit—alas, that it should be so!

If my small note of warning—my appeal to the Christian fathers and mothers of the land—this Christian land—can count for anything, I give it volume a thousand fold and with a million trumpets shout it from the house-tops.

Rev. William H. Harrington.

House or rooms to rent, at reasonable terms, inquire of Mrs. Dennstedt in rear of 750 Jay St.

News From Ireland

Correspondence

The Carlow Urban Council has undertaken to erect a public library in the town.

Correspondence

Matthew Kelly, Berrinstown, has been appointed porter of Kildispart Union.

At a meeting of the Executive Board of Guardians, Dr. Daniel C. Hayes being the only applicant, was unanimously elected as medical officer of the Killybegs dispensary district in room of the late Dr. Keenan.

Correspondence

The Estates Commissioners have sanctioned a grant not exceeding £120 for buildings, £20 for fences and live stock to Peter McLagarty, an evicted tenant on the J. B. Little estate.

Correspondence

The death at the Presentation Convent, Mill street, of Mother Mary Ignatius Slattery has evoked deep regret among the Sisterhood as well indeed, among all who knew her. She was in the 66th year of her age and the 35th of her religious profession when death came.

Correspondence

Catherine Brocks, aged 17 years of 83 Chapel street, Newry, has been missing for over three months. Previous to leaving home she worked in Moneck Mill, and left her employment on Feb. 2, 1912. Description: Light hair, 5 feet 6 inches, stout built, straight nose, good looking. She wore a pair of laced boots, dark blue skirt and a grey shawl.

Correspondence

At Templeogue Bridge a motor car in which were Dr. E. C. Pelissier, his wife and another lady, collided with one of the Dublin and Bealington trams. The front of Dr. Pelissier's car was struck, and he was thrown to the road. The ladies escaped without injury. The ambulance was telephoned for and on it Dr. Pelissier and the ladies were brought to the Mater hospital. Dr. Mearns, the house surgeon, found that the accident to Dr. Pelissier had been a fatal one, and the ladies, who suffered from shock, were attended. Dr. Pelissier resided at 9 Rutland Square.

Correspondence

Miss Monahan, daughter of Michael Monahan, Inchmahon, made her final vows in the Convent of Mercy, Galway, on May 7, taking in religion the name of Sister M. Ethna.

Correspondence

Edward Wrean, Castleland, has been appointed deputy surveyor to the Kerry County Council.

Correspondence

Athy Rural Council has applied for a loan of \$30,000 for the purpose of erecting a number of houses for the working classes.

Kilkenny

Solemn requiem office and high mass were celebrated on May 7, at the convent chapel, Loreto Convent, Kilkenny, for the repose of the soul of the late Sister M. Michael Barry, who died on May 5, 1912, in the 17th year of her religious profession.

Correspondence

The Sisters of Mercy have recently celebrated the golden jubilee of the founding of the Mercy Convent in Clara.

Letter

The death took place recently of William Monahan, Clontarf, Carrick-on-Shannon, at the age of 22 years.

Edinburgh

An impressive ceremony took place recently at the Convent of the Sacred Heart of Mercy, Ferrybank, Waterford, when Miss Kathleen O'Dea, Scart, Killybegs, Limerick, was professed.

Mayo

At the Convent of the Sisters of Charity, Foxford, on May 7, Sister M. Berchmans died, at the age of 65 years. The deceased lady led a most exemplary life and was beloved by all.

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Catholic News Notes

The People

The Rev. Fr. Joseph M. Ryan, O. S. A., has been appointed pastor of the Holy Trinity Church, New York City.

St. Charles

His Eminence, Cardinal Hayes, has appointed the Rev. Fr. James G. O'Connell, O. S. A., to the position of vicar general for Catholic diocesan affairs.

The Massing

The Massing and opening of the new Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, New York City, will be celebrated in the month of October.

Very Rev. Bishop

The Very Rev. Bishop of New York, Cardinal Hayes, has appointed the Rev. Fr. John J. Kelly, O. S. A., to the position of vicar general for Catholic diocesan affairs.

The New York

The new St. Vincent's Hospital, 110 West 22d street, New York City, will be opened by a cross which was planted above the entrance by the Rev. Fr. John J. Kelly, O. S. A.

Miss Mary

Miss Mary, daughter of Mr. M. J. Kelly, O. S. A., has been appointed to the position of vicar general for Catholic diocesan affairs.

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