

The Catholic Journal

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The Little Brown Madonnas

Claire Ralston moved hither and thither around her studio—the only thing restless among her quiet sculptures. To one point her steps were constantly retraced—to a shelf upon which stood a few studies still in clay, in brown clay.

Apparently they were all variations upon a single theme. Studies of Motherhood and Childhood, or Studies of Motherhood, one would have said at first glance. There were three separate statuettes, but all there were of a little mother holding a child—the positions varying somewhat in the three studies.

As Claire repeatedly paused before them, she viewed them with obvious fondness, yet examined them with critical vision. Evidently, however, with ultimate satisfaction, finally saying to herself:

"Well, that's about all I can do to them in clay. I do hope he will like them—they certainly represent drudgery enough."

The critic whose judgment Claire was awaiting was Signor Bartello, her old teacher. He had promised to step in this afternoon to see what she was doing.

Nothing that happened in Claire's life signified quite so much as such an occasional visit—and it was indeed a rare honor conferred upon her; for Bartello was among America's foremost sculptors, if one long ago adopted from his native old world of art.

Claire had been one of his favorite pupils and she had justified his partiality toward her. For now, although but a few years away from his instruction, she had achieved conspicuous success for one so young. Her work had a distinctive note. Both vigor and idealism informed it. It was a protest against the bizarre, eccentric work of some of the younger artists. Meanwhile Claire was unspooled by her growing reputation. She retained the true artist's humility and simplicity. And particularly, she retained her deference toward her old master. She hung upon his words. Whatever acclaim the rest of the world accorded her, his sanction was always needed as her final assurance.

Thus it was that upon the work to which she kept returning this afternoon she waited his verdict with special eagerness. For the studies were somewhat different from her usual endeavors. And they were done primarily to please and honor him. So it would be fairly tragical if he did not approve.

The idea for the studies had come to Claire last winter during a trip. Her father's affairs had called him to Porto Rico, and she had gone with him instead of to Italy for more study as she had planned. Her sense for plastic values always fairly delighted in seeing new kinds of humanity with their distinctive variety of lines—so she welcomed the opportunity to visit elsewhere than in the more familiar America and Europe of her past experience.

Her hopes and desire for "something different" were rewarded. Going along the island's old streets one day she passed an old church and been impressed by the figures of some women sitting on the steps, holding their babies. They were Porto Rican women, and whatever comeliness their type may or may not boast, these particular specimens through both their contours and hue made an immediate appeal to Claire's eyes. The babies too were irresistible; their brown eyes and deep ivory skin must have tempted a Murillo or a Sorolla. Claire immediately succumbed to the moment's inspiration. So passive were the women, yet so rich the glow of tenderness in their eyes, so wholly expressive the maternal grace of their lines that they were unconsciously ideal models for the young artist who now could scarcely wait to get her fingers on some clay—to shape it into their semblance.

"Why did I never before think of modeling a Madonna?" she asked herself, as the charm of

the simple women, the natural beauty of their lines, now so strongly appealing to her, strengthened her inspiration. "I know it will please the Signor. He will be amused—but he will be pleased."

For Signor Bartello was a Catholic, and a devout one. His own fame rested largely upon some of his sculptures on religious themes. These, many good critics insisted, most eminently among modern works recaptured the idealism, the spirituality of an earlier and more devout epoch. Meanwhile, though so definitely the product of his teaching, Claire's work had rather strikingly differed from his in subject. The fact was scarcely to be marveled at inasmuch as though her hand had excellently caught the magic of Signor Bartello's technique, the young woman's intellectual and spiritual range were still far removed from that of the older artist's, so uniquely spiritual by endowment and so disciplined by experience. Claire had often said to him half jestingly:

"Why can't you teach us your whole gamut? Pupils ought surely to go beyond their masters."

"It is so," the older artist would answer somewhat meekly. "But I suppose it takes time. A long life and work! What is it the critics say?—'It takes a great deal of life to make a little art.'"

"Oh, if we thought it was only a matter of living enough."

"No, no; not that exactly," the elder artist would say, regarding her from under the half-towered eyelids of the dreamer and thinker. Speaking of her to someone else, he had once said: "It may come, some day—the deepening of the heart, the awakening of the real soul. And then, a masterpiece!"

Someone had reported this last statement to Claire, and it had become stamped upon her memory, serving alternately as a goal and as a measure of the distance between his achievement and her own.

In the present instance she had no vain hope that the statuettes were masterpieces. But she had taken some pride in the fact that they did have a quality which she had never before put into any other piece of work. She had indeed a faint hope that they contained a note a little nearer that of her teacher's vein than she had ever before accomplished—without being in the least servile imitation. On the whole she was sufficiently satisfied to feel a little glow of happy anticipation when a knock at her door announced the Signor and brought nearer the verdict by which she set so much store.

Shaking her hand cordially and laying down his hat and stick with rapid characteristic movement, straightway Signor Bartello began his customary perambulations of inspection—pausing now before this or that example of clay, bronze, marble.

"You have been doing much," he observed, making more specialized comment as he went on his scrutinizing tour here and there.

"Ah, that is nice! This I have never seen! Good!" He had halted before the statuettes—"Yes, pretty! Tender! Those arms, yes, they hold the babies! Those poses are good! Oh, you learn fast to model the head the way it should be—a head. It is a human head—not a plaster knob! Those those plaster knobs they make, with no feeling of skull! They have not head enough to know what heads should be! Mother and Child, I suppose," he asked, lifting his voice, but not his eyes—"very pretty!"

"That 'very pretty' sent a cold chill down Claire's spine. 'It is a Madonna, studies for a Madonna,'" she corrected faintly.

To be continued

Auburn, N. Y.

On November 1, Bishop Hickey will pay a second visit to Auburn to bless the graves in St. Joseph's Cemetery. Rain prevented the ceremony from taking place a few Sunday's ago.

News From Ireland

Clare.
Lieutenant R. E. Parker of Royal Horse Artillery, son of R. G. Parker, Ballyvalley, Killaloe, has been killed at the front. Lieutenant Parker was well known in Nenagh, County Tipperary.

Clare.
W. A. Copestake, who has been Postmaster at Bantry for the past five or six years has been transferred (on promotion) to Glonmel.

On the occasion of his departure for America, the members of the Mallow Coursing Club presented to Patrick Johns, late honorable secretary of the club, a gold medal (inscribed) and a cheque.

News has reached his parents at Mitchelstown that Private Michael Noonan, Munster Fusiliers, who went to the front, is missing since August 28th.

Rev. Father Lyne, C. C., Millstreet, has been transferred to Tralee. As president of the Total Abstinence Society, of the Football Club, and vice president of the local Coursing Club, he made himself deservedly popular.

Donegal.
William Webber, fisherman of Moville, died suddenly on September 23.

The greater portion of the Donegal Workhouse buildings, including the boardroom and some of the wards, have been completely destroyed by fire. The damage which is estimated at several thousand pounds, is covered by insurance.

Down.
The death is announced of Charles Russell Kelly, J. P., Killough.

The death took place on September 23, at Cloughmore terrace Warrenpoint, of Agnes, relict of the late W. R. Molloy, Kenilworth square, Rathgar.

Dublin.
Lieut. W. P. Hinton, the Irish Rugby International fullback, has joined the Royal Irish Regiment. Before his departure he was presented with a pair of field glasses by the Leinster C. C., E. E. Barbour-making the presentation.

At the Quarter Tense Ordinations by the Most Rev. Dr. Donnelly the following were elevated to deaconships: Revs. James Cassidy, A. Glavin, Thos. Hanrahan, B. Keating, A. Walsh, A. Metcalfe, R. McCaffrey, John J. Murphy and Francis O'Donnell.

Galway.
William Daly, Ballygaddy, Tyam, has been appointed a magistrate for County Galway.

The death of Peter Walsh, Bishop of Tuam, took place on September 21. Mr. Walsh carried on the business of bootmaker.

Kerry.
The Congested Districts Board have agreed to give a free grant of £3,150 in aid of the Dingle waterworks and sewerage scheme.

M. P. Moran, Listowel, who recently passed his examination as a solicitor, made a successful debut in Court, winning his first case.

Kilkenny.
On September 24, the death took place at his residence, Sandfordscourt, Kilkenny, of Patrick F. Butler, J. P.

Longford.
A very interesting local marriage ceremony was performed in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Tang, the contracting parties being Miss Kate Cunningham, Rathmore, and Patrick Ryan, Creevaghbeg.

Louth.
The Rev. Father McCarthy, O. P., Dundalk, has taken up duties at St. Saviour's Dominican church, Waterford.

Lancaster.
On September 17th, at Bloomfield, Castleconnell, the death took place of Frances Albine, widow of the late Major J. Nugent, Royal Artillery.

At the river bushes of his ordination, Mgr. Busch, of Lead, S. D., was presented with \$2,500.

"Where the Gates of Hell are Open."

[Excerpts from an editorial by the Very Rev. Dr. Kelley, in the November Number of Extension.]

In Texas, at the present time, are three exiled Mexican archbishops, five bishops, and more than a hundred priests and sisters. This count is only for those in our own country; there are six hundred more in Vera Cruz. Soon these latter will come to America.

Many are not Mexicans by birth; in fact, very few of those at Vera Cruz are. Many are Germans, some Spanish, some French, but no matter what they are, they are our brethren, whose property was seized, whose homes were broken up, who were driven away from their work without means of livelihood, after having suffered all sorts of hardships, being crowded into cattle cars, confined in dungeons, "insulted, reviled, spit upon" like their Master. And, as for the women among them—pure and innocent nuns—but there the story of the brutalities will have to stop, because it is too horrible to tell.

The cruelties perpetrated by the Constitutionals in Mexico against inoffensive priests and the unspeakable outrages against nuns have been smothered a little too long. A desire for peace will never justify murder, robbery and wanton outrage. There is such a thing as dishonorable peace; and there is such a thing, as a peace which may be more horrible than the worst horrors of war. It is evident that that is the sort of peace we are having.

We have purchased it, up to the present, by closing our eyes to the most shameful of shameful deeds, beside which all robberies, all burnings, all scourings, all murders pale into insignificance. No one would believe that men could be so blinded by hatred, so abused by strife as to become veritable beasts, as have the Constitutionals—officers and soldiers. If the blood of Madero demanded vengeance, as they say it did, for God's sake answer this: did it need rivers of better blood than ever flowed in his apostate veins, oceans of tears, and sin enough to glut the very gates of hell?

To get rid of one ruler, who was tried and convicted at a court before which he never appeared, we have paid an awful price, but it has been paid, as usual, by the innocent—paid by bishops driven into exile, by priests treated with cruelty which only human devils could invent, by girl-children violently snatched from mothers. Think of these mothers, poor, cowering women, covering their eyes that they might not see. Good God! they would willingly have had their own hearts torn out to save their innocent children the crowning infamy.

In Chicago there are fifteen Passionist Fathers who saw the murder of a confrere, and then his corpse placed for forty-eight hours in their midst. This was one of the mildest of the stories we have heard. The witnesses are in Chicago today. There are twenty-six ladies of the Sacred Heart in one of the convents in Chicago, who, knowing what had happened to other nuns, fled from their convent and escaped to America in time. When these nuns were asked if they fled because they feared death, they answered: "We fled because we feared what was worse than death." Pity the others who did not flee in time.

Mexico is a hell-hole today. From Carranza and Villa down to the last Indian who fights in the Constitutionalist ranks, there is nothing but bestiality and lust for blood. Mexico has been transformed from a land of hope to a land of grim and black despair. If Mexico has sinned it has paid

a horrible penalty; but can we afford to pay our share of the cost of making politics a religion? The purchase of votes for long periods of office by the Magazines, have allowed such considerations to influence me. I do not want to introduce even a semblance of politics into a non-dependent publication, or to embarrass any man in doing what he thought was his best, while in a position of responsibility. I do not wish to do so now. I even do not blame the President, who has to depend on others for his information. It isn't the time to be blaming; but the time for action. Perhaps we would have done no better with men who should have shot facts instead of sitting down—president and all his advisers—and about as effective.

Have the Mexican people a claim upon us? We have brought this state of things about ourselves. Who insisted upon the non-recognition of a government lawfully in charge according to the Constitution of Mexico? Ourselves! Who upheld the hands of Carranza and Villa? Ourselves! Who foisted this iniquity upon the decent people of Mexico? Ourselves! It is useless to blame any one in particular. Whoever did the work was a representative of the American people, of which we are a part. A bigoted representative of the United States government is said to have expressed, on the streets of Vera Cruz, sentiments which could not well be interpreted as anything but encouragement for the killing and murder of priests and nuns. He was talking for us. The opinions of the "charges" of "fairies" were evidently considered as worth nothing. He happened to be a Catholic. Now, when the murder has been done and the outrages have been committed, and the axes left falling and starving, another man is sent to undo the harm—but if you can't "unscramble eggs," how can you bid blackened and bloodied corpses come to life, or give back to the lily of virtuous white men?

Knight of Columbus.
The Fourth Degree Assembly Knights of Columbus has elected these officers for the following term: Dr. Walter H. O'Neil, F. N. Thos. F. Sharkey, F. C.; Wm. J. Rosenbach, F. A.; Wm. T. Nolan, F. P.; Henry K. Wheaton, F. C.; Cyril J. Stett, F. I. S.; Frank H. Bstel, F. O. S.

The cornerstone of another church, St. Jerome's, has been laid in Chicago by the Archbishop. It is to be 61x151 feet, and seat 800 people. Its front will have two towers.

The new St. Bernard Church at Dayton, Ky., is one of the most imposing edifices in the state. Its cost may approximate \$100,000.

Rev. Dr. W. A. Fletcher, of the Baltimore Cathedral, appointed Domestic Prelate last spring, was invested with the habiliments of his rank by Cardinal Gibbons.

Three laymen of the Archdiocese of Boston, Harry P. Navan, of Roxbury, Thomas B. Fitzpatrick, of Brookline, and Hon. Joseph H. O'Neil, of Fall River, have been honored with the Knighthood of St. Gregory.

Father Mele, at Sacramento, Cal., has a New Testament printed in Lyons, 1840.

Archbishop Spalding is now in his 75th year; Cardinal Farley, in his 73rd; Bishop Chastard, in his 80th; Bishop Richter, in his 77th; Bishop Foley, in his 81st.

Charles S. Osborne, a negro porter in Boston, has just painted an excellent portrait in oil of Cardinal O'Connell.

Dubuque College, Iowa, possesses Pietro Pisani's masterpiece, Veronica, of the 16th century. It is painted on wood.

The late Mrs. Mary O'Connor, of Wicklow, Ireland, was the mother of six nuns.

Church Dedications

St. Mary's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Joseph's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Michael's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Anthony's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. James's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Peter's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. John's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Paul's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. George's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Andrew's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Nicholas's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Demetrius's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Eusebius's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Great's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Confessor's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Archbishop's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Emperor's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Martyr's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Priest's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Bishop's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.

St. Basil the Monk's, New York, N. Y., was dedicated on the 23rd inst.