

The Catholic Journal

Twenty-sixth Year, No. 10

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Open Doors

An Original Story, by a Convert

Written for the Catholic Journal

The wind whistled around the corner of Elm street, raising a fine white cloud of snow and sifting it generously over the pedestrians it happened to encounter. It blew sharply into the face of a girl, who, with bent head and cuddled shoulders, was endeavoring to make a headway against it. She was a slender little thing, clad in black. Her face was pale and thin, her lips were blue and chapped. A terrific gust tugged at her small black hat and almost tore it from her head. She snatched it with a bare hand, which she had been keeping in her coat pocket in a vain endeavor for warmth.

Thus she turned the corner, where a fresh gust nearly took her off her feet. She fought her way to the entrance of a store, where, for the present at least, she was out of the gale. It was the Christmas season, and in spite of the wind and snow, the store was filled with shoppers. Streams of warmly clad people crowded past her. School girls, very little younger than she, went by in groups, laughing and chattering.

But Christmas brought only an aching void to Marion Dey, a deeper realization of her loneliness. Last Christmas, she too had been warmly clad and gay. Her eyes filled with tears at the remembrance. It seemed so long ago; it was like living in a different world. Then she had been happy, well fed, and loved; today she was alone. She had not eaten since noon of the day before, and all she had in her purse was an old three cent piece. She had been on the streets since daybreak looking for work, but, in spite of the Christmas rush, there seemed to be plenty of workers, and she had been turned away repeatedly. She was completely discouraged.

The sight of the hurrying shoppers recalled to her mind incidents of the year before. She thought of the gloves she had bought for her mother and the cravat for her father; she thought of the little things she had made for her friends. Just then a group of girls went by carrying baskets and bundles.

"Taking them to church to give to some poor family," thought Marion to herself. She too had done that last year, and had helped to distribute them afterward.

Then she had an idea. Perhaps, if she went to the pastor of the big church she had been attending during her three months in the city, he would be able to help her find work. She had never spoken to him, and he did not know her, but she felt sure he would help her. She had never really felt the need of help before, in spite of her double bereavement, for she had had work and was not in want before. Now that the little store, where she had been clerking, had failed, she was stranded. But surely the pastor of so large a city church would know of something she could do.

Stimulated with this hope, Marion plunged into the snow again. It was not far to the church with its stately parsonage and lovely snow-swept lawn bordered with white-capped hedges. Marion pulled down her thin little jacket, tucked up a stray lock of hair, and straightened her hat. Her heart beat a wild tattoo as she climbed the stone steps to the imposing front door; to be truthful, she was a little afraid of the austere, tall, white-haired man, whom she had seen every Sunday on the big black walnut pulpit with its huge carved, and velvet cushioned chairs. Even in the church, she had felt awed and had clung to her seat in a back pew and slipped out quickly when the service was over. Now she was to confront him face to face, and ask a favor of him. She longed to run away but she had already touched the electric bell and knew it was too late. A prim maid opened the door and Marion stammered her request to speak to Doctor Robertson.

"I'm sorry," the maid smiled. "He is not at home this afternoon. Will you leave any message for him?"

"Oh no—no thank you," Marion said quickly.

"He may be in late this afternoon." The maid turned quickly to a little girl who had come into the hall.

"Run back, Miss Elsie dear, you'll take cold here I'm afraid."

The child danced away to her cozy, warm playroom and the maid turned to Marion again.

"He has been attending a convention out of town, but he will surely be back by this evening or at the latest to-morrow morning. You had better call him on the phone and make an appointment. He is very busy just now."

The maid smiled again and closed the door.

Marion was out in the storm again. The wind whistled frightfully across the broad expanse of the lawn; it caught her breath and nearly stifled her; it snatched at her skirts and blew her hair into her face. It took all of Marion's strength to keep from being swept into a big snow-bank at the turn of the walk. Gasping, Marion reached the door of the church. Here she paused in the shelter of an arch to get her breath again. The snow whirled in dizzy eddies in front of her. The cold seemed to have penetrated to her very heart, it pumped so slowly and so hard.

"Oh," she thought, "if only the church were open, I could find a corner to huddle into and keep alive until Doctor Robertson comes home. I never, never can live if I try to stay out in this horrible wind," she cried. "Is there none who can help me?" But the cold stone pillar was the only thing that heard her cry. In a frenzy, she turned to the gate of beautifully twisted and hammered iron bars which guarded the massive doors of the church. She tore at them and shook them until her chapped hands cracked and bled, but it was useless, they were firmly bolted and padlocked. There was no hope.

She glanced down at her hands. On her knuckles, a drop of blood was frozen. Hatred swelled up in her heart. She turned to the parsonage. Through the lace curtains at the long windows, she could see a bright wood fire burning briskly in the fireplace. A child stood at one of the windows watching the snowflakes. It was the same little girl who had come into the hall while Marion was there.

"It's not right!" Marion cried, "it's not fair! I am starving and freezing, and in there, in the ministers house, there is warmth and food, plenty of it. They have maids and lace curtains and fires and lots to eat and I can die! It's all the same to them. O there is no God! It's a fraud, a wicked, wicked fraud! The story of Christ is a fable—O no! no! no! not that! O not that! There is a Christ somewhere, but something is wrong; this minister of His is rich and proud; Jesus was poor and humble. No one would be turned from Jesus' door with only a smile and an invitation to come later, when 'later' meant hours of pain and cold and hunger." Suddenly she remembered Doctor Robertson's text of the last Sunday. "Let us go up to the house of God," Marion turned angrily.

"You are not the house of God," she said through her blue lips, addressing the huge structure before her. "You are the house of riches, you are the house of the fortunate." And she plunged again into the storm.

She walked on and on, fighting the wind, clinching her teeth to keep up her courage and strength. Gradually the early winter twilight fell. She had no desire to go back to the parsonage to see if Doctor Robertson had returned. She felt that she hated that man, she thought him a hypocrite; all her respect for him had vanished. Still she crept on. Before her, two little children were trudging hand in hand. Mechanically she followed them. One of them slipped on the icy sidewalk and fell; happily she was not hurt, but Marion helped the tiny girl to her feet and brushed the snow from her coat. The child smiled up at

her. "I'm going to see the crib," she lisped confidently.

"What do you mean, dear?" Marion asked.

"At Church," the child replied. "The manger with Our Lord, when He was a baby, in it," her little companion explained.

"And there's shepherds and sheep and wisemen," said the child.

"And the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph," added the older child.

"I'm afraid I don't know much about it. But—is your Church open today? It is not Sunday. Won't the doors be locked?"

"Why of course it's open, it's always open."

"Always? During all the year?"

To be continued

Gaelic Association

Hold Masquerade

Peace and harmony prevail among the warring nations of Europe and Asia; at least that is the impression conveyed at the annual masquerade of the Gaelic Literary and Musical Association at the Conservatory of Music on Saturday evening. Austrian husbands tripped the light fantastic with French vivandiers, and a Chinese Mandarin danced an Irish four hand reel with a German Fraulien. Almost every nation in Europe, Asia and America was represented in costume, conveying the impression that it was Andrew Carnegie's peace congress out for a good time.

Prizes were awarded for the most unique costume to James W. Dunne who was attired as "Chinwang of China," and Miss Tessie Cole who represented an Irish Colleen. Mr. Dunne being president of the association, requested the judges to make a second award and the prize was adjudged to M. K. Fenelon, who represented an Oriental potentate the "Ackroond of Swat."

Among other elaborate character costumes were "Iskander Berg," King of Albania, by Francis O'Byrne; a Connaught maiden by Miss Marie Crehan; a Persian Chief by N. J. Devereaux; a Suffragette by Mrs. N. J. Devereaux; "Columbia, the gem of the Ocean," by Mrs. M. K. Fenelon; "Helen McGregor" by Miss Carroll; Colonial dames by Miss Lillian Mills and Miss Elsie Cole; "Joe Grimaldi" by D. C. Ryan, director of the Dramatic and Dancing classes; an Italian Contadina by Miss M. Dolan and an American Farmer by Mr. P. Mackey. Frank Murray and Jas. Cole appeared as a pair of English lords, and appeared to be on friendly terms with a Jewish peddler and a Hungarian magnate.

The management was effectively supervised by Miss Mollie Woods and Miss Rose McSweeney and suitable music provided by Mr. A. Strogen and Mr. Courtney. The Association has agreed that the entertainment was the most successful yet held, and give promise of further attraction for the remainder of the season.

In the Minnesota University there are this year 468 Catholic students.

In the Antwerp Cathedral is a stained glass window given by Henry VII. of England.

The splendid Gothic Church of St. Jacob, in Liege, Belgium, is uninjured; its stained glass windows, among the finest in the world, have been preserved. The same is the case with all the other churches, and notable buildings and collections.

What was formerly a Methodist Church, near the corner of Leal and Colorado streets, West End, San Antonio, Tex., is now a Catholic school for colored children.

The Archbishop of Cincinnati is going to establish in his archdiocesan city a Catholic school for deaf mutes.

The Social Question

Rev. Joseph J. Baiert, S. J., Bernard's Seminary speaks on the subject.

Before the Windthorst Study Circle at its weekly meeting last Friday evening in Holy Redeemer Hall, Hudson Avenue, Rev. Joseph J. Baiert, professor of philosophy at St. Bernard's Seminary, delivered the first of a series of lectures on the social question to be given before the Circle. His subject was "The Social Question, Its Nature, Causes, and some of the Theories for Its Solution."

Father Baiert analyzed the factors that go to make up the social question. "The social question is not, as so many would have us believe, concerned only with Socialism; and Socialism is only one of the factors in the social question. The social question is when rightly understood, the sum total of the disorders that affect human society."

He then pointed out the various disorders that have produced the social question. Divorce, with all its attendant evils, evils affecting the family, the community and the state. And then closely connected with divorce is that other disorder of society so common in our day, the disorder of race suicide. No solution of the social question will be effective that does not concern itself with removing these maladies. Then the disorders that exist between capital and labor are to be considered. These disorders can, he said, be removed only by getting back to the sound principles that will make both employer and employees realize that their interests are common and hostility will only result in ruin to both.

Turning to the causes of the social disorders, Father Baiert said that they were many; that there was no one cause. In his judgment the main cause of the social disorders is the rapid growth of industry. He then pointed out how industry has grown in the past hundred years or more; how different are the relations of employers and employees from the time when the artisan produced a complete article to the time when he is engaged in the making of only a portion of an article. He showed how this changed condition made the artisan more skilled in that making of that particular article which he worked upon day after day. This changed condition made the workman to a great extent dependent upon the employer, but the general gain was a marked one.

He then in a general way referred to the various theories that have been offered to solve the social problem. In a future lecture he will go into these theories thoroughly and will compare them with the theory that is proposed by the Catholic Church, the theory of Christian social reform.

Christian social reform is what is needed, he said, and not social revolution. He contended as Pope Leo had contended that the fundamental principle in all social reform must be that private property must remain intact; that what a man has procured by the sweat of his brow is his and no individual and no state can appropriate it without giving compensation to the owner.

The Windthorst Study Circle is having one of the most successful seasons since the Circle was organized a few years ago. Admission to the meetings is free, the only desire of those engaged in the work being to spread right principles concerning the social question and kindred subjects.

Last year the lecturers before the Circle went into every phase of the social question, and touched quite extensively on Catholic philosophy. This year plans have been made for many out of town speakers, besides a number of well known local speakers. Last year also the Circle installed a library of works treating principally of economics and the social question, and this year it hopes to increase the number of books so that there will be hardly an

important work in economics or social philosophy in the library. But they may not all during the hours when the library is open.

Although the Circle has been in existence three or four years, the work that it is doing has been generally known, and what the Circle is doing according to those who have attended its meetings, to determine its spirit of the Circle seems to take hold of those who attend the meetings. They feel that in view of present day conditions at least one aggressive society is needed to take up the fight on behalf of Catholics. The policy of the Circle is not a passive policy, but an active policy. To meet and face the issues that are being debated about Catholics in the eyes of the chief aims of the Circle for the coming year.

Catholic News

Notes

A new hospital costing \$20,000 has been dedicated at Farmington, N. H. It is in charge of the Sisters of St. Ann, who went to Japan in 1895.

Rt. Rev. Edward D. Kelly, of Ann Arbor, has laid the cornerstone for the handsome new church of St. Florian, which is being erected in Hamtramck, Wis., and of which the Rev. Joseph P. Plognia is pastor.

The new school for St. James parish, South Kensington, was recently dedicated. The school cost \$40,000 and is finely equipped.

The Northwest Provinces of Seattle, Wash., has been made the joint official organ of the dioceses of Seattle and Spokane.

The new post office at Notre Dame University was opened a fortnight ago. It is 50x100 feet and cost about \$5,000. The post office was established 63 years ago.

Campion College, Prairie du Chien, is to have a new dormitory to cost \$120,000. It will be ready for occupancy at the opening of the next school year.

His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons has granted permission for the erection of a new parish in Hillside, Md., and has appointed Rev. John M. Barry, rector of St. Agnes Church, Catonsville, as the organizer.

The parish of the Visitation, Des Moines, Ia., has secured a splendid lot on Ninth street upon which to erect a new church.

The Carmelite Fathers, East Twentieth street, Manhattan, will celebrate the silver jubilee of the foundation of their parish on December 18th.

Handsomeness new rectories have been recently completed for the parishes of the Sacred Heart, Suffield and St. Brendan's of New Haven, Conn.

The war is responsible for the delay in the completion of the new Church of St. George on Gold street, Brooklyn. It is probable that it will not be completed before Christmas.

The imposing new building of the Sisters of Notre Dame Cleveland, O., 250x135, with ground front of 920 feet, is almost completed.

St. Patrick's Holy Name Society of Brooklyn, will have a clubhouse for members in Lafayette avenue. The formal opening was on November 1st.

Send us your printing.

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