

# The Catholic Journal.

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## The Bishop's Substitute

A mule-cart rattled up the one street of which Howchow could boast, and as it approached Father Labarge's hut the driver called "Nur-kai," two or three times in a voice loud enough to have been heard half a mile away. In an instant the priest and John, his Chinese catechist, were at the door. The postman came but rarely and irregularly. His arrival was a great event and a letter or even a newspaper a treat not soon to be forgotten. On this day there was but one letter. It was addressed to Father Labarge, but John, catching a glimpse of large, peculiar writing, smiled broadly as he went back to his work of cleaning the three little rooms which formed the whole of their domain. He thought that almost immediately he would be called to hear the news, but minute after minute passed and Father Labarge said nothing, though as he pattered back and forth John could see he had finished reading. The hand that held the closely written sheets was hanging loosely at his side, and he was leaning wearily against the frame of the door, staring with troubled eyes at the dilapidated hut nearest their own. At last the boy could bear it no longer. He sidled over to Father Labarge and peered questioning into his face. The priest smiled.

"Well, what is it?" he asked, mischievously pretending not to understand that John was eager to hear the contents of the Bishop's letter.

"Is he coming soon?" John asked.

"Who?" Father Labarge inquired, still wilfully stupid.

"Oh, you know, Father; the Bishop of course. Is he coming soon to Howchow?"

John was an orphan whom the Bishop had taken from the Sister's asylum when he was a little fellow and had kept until at sixteen years of age, he had given him to Father Labarge to be his catechist.

"He won't come soon, John," the priest replied. "He is sorry that you must be disappointed, and so am I, but it can't be helped. He is unusually busy, and it will be a month or more before he can reach us at Howchow. He asks about you, and says that he still misses you."

John looked very sad when he heard that the Bishop's next visit was postponed; then grinned happily over what came next.

"A month isn't long. I can wait," he said.

Father Labarge said no more for a few moments, and when he did speak it was in so troubled a way that even John, too care-free and easy-going himself often to be conscious of the trials of others, even John perceived that he was worried.

"The Bishop is not coming soon, but some one else is," he announced. "He writes that he is sending a substitute—an old woman, John, who cannot speak a word of anything but French. She has lately come from Europe and wishes to devote the remainder of her life to the missions and the missionaries. We are among the few who have no woman to help us, neither a housekeeper nor any Sisters nearby; that is why he is giving her to us. She will reach us on the afternoon boat. This letter is dated a week ago. Had our lazy mail-carrier been a few hours later she would have found no one there to meet her."

As he listened John anxiously watched the priest's face, thin and haggard for all its boyishness, wondering why this was not good news.

"We are poor, very poor," Father Labarge continued, after a long pause. "We have hardly enough food for two, and whatever comes she must not suffer."

John was greatly relieved. So this was what was troubling Father Labarge!

"Oh, I can eat less, much less!" he said stoutly.

With real admiration the priest smiled into the stolid, contented face of the catechist. Already not shield himself from the dust he was living on what was starvation diet for a growing boy, because it was famine year in northern China, and, though generous to a fault, their people were too poor and too hungry to have more than a pittance to give away.

"And Father, perhaps she knows how to cook! Of course I don't mean that you don't, but—why, that's what women are for," he stammered taking true Chinese view of the matter; then hastened to add: "Maybe you will get stronger if you have better food. And your mother might help us pay, if you ask her. Do you remember you said once that perhaps she would? She knows that you are not as strong as you were at first. She'd be glad to think that there is some one to be good to you."

"Yes, she knows all about my health. The Bishop made me write and tell her what the doctor said last winter. I am afraid I shall have to ask her for money. I can't allow you and this old woman to suffer. But, John, my mother is not rich, and she has many charities, each dearer to her than anything else in the world. I know well that all she sends us will come out of her living, not out of the part of the income she gives away."

Father Labarge sat twirling the Bishop's letter for a while before he continued hopefully, to himself, rather than to John:

"Perhaps the doctor is right, and I could grow strong if I had better food. Somehow, I can't cook. John can't. Practice only makes us more incompetent. And each time he sees me the Bishop threatens to send me home if I do not get well. It was the doctor who first put this mischief into his head. I might be kept there for months, or even years, away from these dear people and this field, white for the harvest and so poor in laborers! It would break my heart to go—though I often dream of being home again just for one hour, just to look once more into my dear mother's face."

That there was a possibility of Father Labarge being sent back to France John had not known. He was deeply distressed.

"Oh, Father, you won't leave Howchow!" he exclaimed.

"Never, John, of my own will, or without an aching heart!" Then, abruptly changing the subject, he said in a matter-of-fact way: "We shall give the old lady my room and move my books and papers out of her ways. Henceforth I'll spread my bed beside yours on the kang in the back room. We must be very good to her, John. She will be homesick and lonely, you know, so far from France."

But Father Labarge did not go at once into the house to make the necessary changes. He was more weak and weary than any one guessed. Every least effort cost him heroic effort. And John, lazy by nature, was only too glad to crouch down on the ground and gaze idly and dreamily at the cloudless sky. Presently he broke the silence which had fallen over them, saying in a hesitating, wistful way, unlike his habitual, unemotional stolidity:

"Father, this old woman who is coming—I wonder if she is anybody's mother."

Father Labarge's tender heart was touched, and he laid a caressing hand on John's shoulder. The boy could not remember his own mother, and this was not the first time he had said something which showed that deep in his heart was a hunger for the love he had never known.

"Yes, John; I forgot to tell you all the Bishop said. She has two sons. Both are settled in life and she is carrying out a project which has long been her dream. So you must be a son to her and fill the place of those she has left behind."

Before noon Father Labarge set out towards Tai-nan, four miles away. Though very miserable, he was too courteous to allow John to meet the old French woman. To protect himself from the heat of the mid-day sun he carried a large umbrella of

strange, unearthly shape, the worse for much use; but he could not shield himself from the dust which lay several inches deep in the road and almost blinded him whenever a car joggled past. As he dragged himself along his heart was oppressed with the fear which grew on him day by day; that he would be sent to Europe to recuperate. During his four years of work in China he had seen several men break under the strain of hard work and poor food; a few had gone home and never yet been allowed to return; others, and these he envied, had toiled without respite until the Master Himself had come to take them home to rest forever. He was troubled, too, about the woman thrown upon his hands by the Bishop. She would doubtless be a care in many ways, a help in none, unless she could cook. She might be ill-natured, as good people of a certain type are, in China as elsewhere. She might become discontented; she might be a gossip; she might be meddlesome; there were a dozen menacing possibilities.

On and on Father Labarge trudged, the day seemed to lengthen endlessly before him. When, at length, he neared Tai-nan vehicles of every description passed him frequently, and soon his clothes were brown with dust, his eyes smarted, and his lips became parched.

On and on he trudged, faint and weary, the sense of depression deepening every minute. A feeling of homesickness stole into his heart, as it was liable to do when he was particularly ill or tired. As a boy, because he was delicate, he had been his mother's care day and night; and ill, he always longed to creep into her arms, a little child once more.

He was thinking of her as he picked his way through the dirty street of Tai-nan, recalling little incidents of his boyhood that sometimes brought tears to his eyes, more often a merry smile to his lips. When he reached the boat landing he saw that among those waiting there were Mrs. Smith, wife of the British consul at Tai-nan, and her son, a half-grown boy, who, he had heard, was going to England to complete his education. He spoke to them, a word only, and hurried to the end of the dock, ostensibly that he might be able to lean against one of the stout bamboo poles that flanked it. Homesick as he himself was that day, he could not bear the sight of Mrs. Smith's white, set face, or her son's quivering one.

He had walked slowly from Howchow and had not long to wait. In ten minutes the boat came in sight around the bend in the river, and at that instant, chancing to glance again towards the Smiths, he saw the boy cling suddenly to his mother as if he could never part from her. He quickly looked away, but a lump had risen in his throat and tears were streaming over his cheeks.

Already the boat was trying to make a landing, and impatiently he brushed his hand across his eyes so that he could see. A number of people stood by the railing of the upper deck and he scanned them one by one; first, some American tourists, noisy, curious, unmistakably rich; two mandarins, smiling, dignified, inscrutable; a fat Englishman who lolled over the railing as he chatted with a man much younger than himself; and next to them he saw a short, stout, rose-faced old woman. She was tremulously waving her handkerchief and tears were pouring unheeded over her cheeks.

For one instant Father Labarge stared at her before he dashed across the still insecure gang-plank; another instant, and he was running across the deck. The old woman's arms were outstretched towards him, and in a moment he was folded close in them like a little weary child.

"Oh, Mother! Mother!" he sobbed.—Florence Gilmore in the Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

Cardinal Pompili has succeeded the late Cardinal Ferrata as Archbishop of St. John's Lateran's.

In Italy there are 274 Bishops and 84,000,000 Catholics.

## News From Ireland

**Antrim**  
A woman named Mary Louie, was fatally burned in a recent outbreak of fire which occurred in the dwelling house of Ellen Doherty, 364 Ligoniel road, Belfast.

**Crawford McCullagh, J. P., T. C., Lord Mayor of Belfast,** was unanimously selected for a second year of office by the General purpose committee of the corporation.

**The death** has occurred of Miss Susan McCorry, Garvagh, Blacklion, at the early age of 19 years.

**At his residence, The Corn Market, Ennis,** the death took place of Matthew Kennedy, youngest son of the late Matthew Kennedy, aged 50 years.

**Miss Margaret Culligan,** an elderly woman, was accidentally knocked down by a dray cart, and succumbed to her injuries in the Kilmash Union hospital.

**James O'Connor,** son of the late Alderman, was by 603 votes to 588 cast for ex-Alderman Cornelius Millard, elected Alderman of the Northwest ward, Cork.

**Edmond A. Rice,** son of Colonel Rice, solicitor, Fermoy, has been admitted a solicitor.

**A farmer named Patrick Brien** of Barnagowlane, near Skibberreen, was found dead under his cart at the entrance to his house on the 24th ult.

**A marriage** was celebrated at Our Lady's church, Castleknock, by the Rev. Joseph Devine, C.C., assisted by the Rev. W. B. MacFadden, Adm., St. Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, between Michael, son of the late John MacDevette, Knt. O. N., J. R., Derry, and Mary, daughter of the late Patrick Gallagher, solicitor, Castleknock.

**Frank Gallagher** has been appointed district superintendent of the Irish United Assurance society, Newry.

**Lieutenant J. A. O. Broke,** 2d Gordon Highlanders, killed at the front was a son of Captain H. V. Broke, D. L. Fairley, Aberdeen, and a grandson of the second holder of the Broke baronetcy, which has long been associated with Colebrook, County Fermanagh.

**Killarney Urban Council,** on the motion of C. J. Collins, seconded by Dr. Courtenay, passed a vote of condolence with James D. O'Shea on the death of his mother.

**The local government board** have sanctioned the loan of £1520 to the Kilkenny County Council for the purpose of purchasing steam rolling machinery.

**A marriage ceremony** was solemnized at St. Mary's, Carrick-on-Shannon, the contracting parties being James McGreevy and Miss May Keenan, Carrick-on-Shannon. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Father Newman, C. C.

**T. Freeman,** postmaster, Kilmallock, has been transferred on promotion to Birr.

**The Limerick City Regiment** of I. N. Volunteers, has organized a cavalry corps.

**The Louth County Council** has passed a resolution of regret at the retirement from the management of the Hibernian bank at Dundalk and Crossmaglen of J. J. Flynn, J. P.

**B. Grogan** has resigned his position as secretary of the Meath county infirmary.

**The marriage** was celebrated in St. Joseph's, Boyle, of Miss Anne Wynne and Peter O'Hara, Boyle.

## Catholic News

**Notes.**

**Archbishop Ireland** says: "An intelligent laity is the prime need of the Church today in America."

**Rev. William J. Anthony** has been appointed secretary to Archbishop Mooney of Cincinnati.

**A Hungarian church** has been blessed at Gary, Ind., by Bishop Aidering.

**At Etna, Pa.,** a handsome church in the Romanesque Italian style, was dedicated recently. It will seat 700 persons.

**Salina, Kansas,** has a new Catholic hospital. It, too, is a handsome edifice of four floors 160x112 feet.

**The recently built Lithuanian St. Louis Church** at Malsville, Pa., at a cost of \$20,000, was destroyed by fire.

**The new mortuary chapel** in Holy Cross Cemetery, San Francisco, is an architectural gem.

**The old Carroll mansion** in Baltimore is now used by the city for educational purposes.

**At Tucson, Arizona,** the Market Brothers have opened a college.

**In St. Martin's Church, Baltimore,** fifty converts were recently confirmed.

**A little pearl of a church, St. Mary's, at West Woods, Ill.,** has been dedicated. It is 20 by 40 feet.

**The Mill Hill missionary Father Bogan** has 16,000 native Christians under his charge in the Philippines.

**Work was recently started** on the erection of the new House of Calvary, which is being built in the Bronx, New York, at a cost of \$120,000.

**The Xaverian Brothers** have opened a juniorate for candidates for their congregation, at Old Point College, Va.

**For his contemplated "Home for Aged Women,"** Cardinal O'Connell received, as his first gift, \$100 from a business man.

**In the diocese of Superior,** an \$80,000 orphanage is to be erected.

**In the opinion of Bishop Dunne** of Peoria, mixed marriages is one of the gravest evils now menacing the United States.

**The number of Schent Fathers** of Belgium in the Island of Luzon, Philippine Islands, is fifty.

**The tercentenary of St. Teresa** was solemnly celebrated in Rome in the monastery of the Carmelites.

**The war has seriously interfered** with the work of the revision of the Vulgate, this work necessitating international communication.

**At the Le Bourget cemetery** near Paris, 30,000 people assisted at Mass for the soldiers buried there.

**In England, France, Belgium** and Germany, ecclesiastical services and functions are mostly mortuary.

**Remember the opening date** of the R. B. I. midwinter term, Monday, January 4, both day and evening schools. Classes started in all commercial subjects. Officers open every day for consultation and registration from 8:30 A. M. to 5 P. M. Rochester Business Institute, Y. M. C. A. Bldg.—Adv.

## Death of Bishop

The death of Archbishop Rick W. Blom of St. Paul, Minn., was announced today in a telegram to the Vatican.

Archbishop Blom, who was second archbishop of the diocese and was born at Alton, Ill., in 1852, was 73 years of age.

He was a member of the National Council of Bishops and had served as president of the American Bishops' Conference.

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