

## The Sign

Continued from last week.

"Have you no apology to offer for your tardiness?" he said.

"Why, no pater," answered Paul, smilingly. "I was just having a game of cards with the bunch at Foley's and did not notice the time."

Mr. Vincent shook his head, but looked vaguely relieved. Mrs. Vincent's eyes were full of pain.

"Will you never leave this idle life, Paul?" she questioned. "Surely it is time you settled down in life."

"Oh, you would not deprive me of a little pleasure, I am sure, mother dear," Paul replied. "Some day I will make up my mind as to where I want to settle, and work steadily for ever and ever."

Mrs. Vincent looked appealingly at her husband.

"Paul," said Mr. Vincent sternly, "your mother is right. It is high time that you choose a profession and take a man's place in the world. Perhaps—" he added, hopefully, "you will come into the business with me."

Paul shook his head decidedly. "Nix on that noise!" he answered rudely. "I never will do that. Your business is too slow for me."

"Oh, Paul," gasped his mother, "how can you speak to your father that way? His business is an honest one and well paying, and you know how anxious he is to have you with him."

"It's too slow," repeated Paul, impatiently. "I am going to start up a place like Foley's some day, and make piles of money."

"A gambling den?" asked Mrs. Vincent, scarcely believing her ears. "Surely you are joking Paul?"

"Not a bit of it," replied Paul. "I will open one just as soon as father will advance me the money. I intended speaking to him to-day about this very thing. You will let me have the money, won't you, father?"

"Never!" Mr. Vincent's answer thundered out. "No son of mine will ever run a gambling den with my money or consent!"

"No one calls it a gambling den in these days," burst out Paul, hotly. "It is just as honorable a profession nowadays as many so-called respectable ones, and surely pays better."

"But, my boy, think of your name—think of your soul," pleaded his mother. But Paul interrupted her with a sneering laugh.

"My soul!" he said harshly. "Why no one but Catholics and a few other fanatical religionists believe in a soul these days. And even granting that I have such a thing, it is mine to do what I please with it. I am answering to no one but myself for it. If I lose it, it is of little consequence. Life is at best a shallow, meaningless thing—a jumble of guess-work in all spiritual matters. So I intend to get as much pleasure out of it as I can regardless of such troublesome things as souls."

Mr. Vincent sprang to his feet, fairly shouting: "Paul! For God's sake, stop!"

"Why should I stop?" Paul questioned coolly. "And why do you use God's name to me? Do you pretend to believe in Him? Have not you yourself taught me that my own will is greater than any God's?"

"But, Paul, there is a God as surely as there is a heaven above us," sobbed his mother. "Believe in Him with all my heart."

Paul nodded. "Of course, you do," he said gravely. "All women do believe in Him in some way or other—especially those who are under priestly rule, like you and Mary. But the heavens above us are only empty atmosphere, and your God within them is only a myth."

Mr. Vincent broke in excitedly: "Paul, Paul, what has hardened you like this?"

Paul rose angrily to his feet, and pointed an accusing finger at his father. "You—my father—have done this thing. Who was it tried to break down every religious belief brought forward by my mother? You—with your superior knowledge! Who was it that taught me that all religion of any sort, and especially Catholicism, was fit only for women or weak-minded folks? Again you, with your new-fashioned reasoning. Who taught me that my own will was the only guide I required through life, and that I should stand free and independent of all conventional restrictions? You—and only you! Yet now, when my will clashes with yours—when my choice of paths does not agree with yours—now, when I am following out the desires of my own will and inclinations, according to your teachings, you profess to be shocked with my newer, bolder ideas; yet they all sprang from the grains of doubt which you planted in my breast. If I will to become a gambler, who shall stop me? Whether you are proud of me or ashamed of me, I am what you made me, and what my will chooses to be. So don't try to hold God before my eyes at this late date. When I see Him I shall believe in Him. Until then, my will rules." And turning abruptly away, Paul left the house.

The three who remained sat in stunned silence. Mr. Vincent looked dazedly from his wife's stricken face to Mary's, down which bitter tears were flowing.

"God forgive me!" he muttered. "What have I done?"

No word of reproach fell from his wife's lips. She saw that his suffering was almost greater than he could bear. Rising, she took his hand and led him gently back to the fire-lit library, where they sat together in dumb, aching silence. Mary left them and, going to her room, prayed as never before for help and guidance.

Long minutes dragged into hours and still the two sat, unable to speak. Then Mr. Vincent whispered hoarsely:

"Your God is avenged, Hannah."

"Not my God," his wife replied, hesitatingly, "but our God—Mary's and—"

"Yes," he interrupted, "yours and Mary's—but Paul and I have no God. I have rejected Him all my life, and have robbed my son of his birthright in depriving him of all faith. We are lost—I see it now."

Then lifting up his voice, as a long-forgotten passage of the bible ran through his mind, he cried:

"Master, what must I do to be saved?"

Like an answering bell, his wife's voice rang out:

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved—thou and thy house!"

A wave of rapture swept over them. Mr. Vincent clasped his wife in his arms, while their prayers rose together to the listening God.

Suddenly the doorbell pealed loudly, stridently through the silent house. There was the sound of hurried steps, and of many shuffling feet. Mary came running in, her face white with alarm.

"Mother! Father! Paul!" the girl gasped.

Paul! Was this Paul? This crushed and helpless mass, stretched solemnly between the hands which bore him in? What had happened?

"He was passing the street," "and why do one of the men volunteered, "and you use God's name to me? Do you pretend to believe in Him? Have not you yourself taught me that my own will is greater than any God's?"

Mr. Vincent knelt down by the boy's side.

"Great God," he muttered, "is this your sign?"

Paul stirred feebly, and his eyes opened.

"Dad," he whispered, haltingly, "there is a God—I saw Him in a flash of fire—as I went down. He is glorious—wonderful!"

He tried to raise himself, but sank back weakly.

"Tell mother," he grasped, "tell mother—" he stopped.

His mother bent over him.

"Oh, Paul, my son—my baby! God have mercy on you!"

Paul raised one hand and waveringly crossed himself—then—"Lord, I believe," he whispered.

That was all—but three hearts felt the Great Presence among

## St. Patrick's Day March Seventeenth.



them. And the sign? Do you see that mother and father coming out from Mass with their son and daughter behind them? There is the sign of God's unfailing tenderness and mercy. The father and son are in business together, and the joy of Mary's face is reflected with added peace on her mother's brow.—Eugenie T. Finn in The Missionary.

### Foreign Mission News

Special correspondence by The Propagation of the Faith Society 348 Lexington Ave., New York City.

Weather Bulletin from a Jesuit missionary in Alaska:

"Just now the snow is only about five feet deep and the weather gauge records fifty below zero, which is rather comfortable for this part of the world."

An urgent propaganda is being carried on by all missionary bishops for the training of a native clergy to fill gaps in the ranks of European apostles. Many have made a good beginning. Mgr. J. C. Bouchut, P. F. M., of Cambodia, announces that his mission already possesses fifty-native priests, and he hopes, during 1917, to consecrate six more young men. The mission countries are almost as rich in vocation as our own. All that is needed is the opportunity to develop these vocations.

Father Crimont, S. J., of Alaska, has been having some much needed assistance this winter. A recent note from him says: "We have had in our midst for a few weeks two of our Californian Fathers, who gave missions at Juneau, Douglas and Sitka, last month. Their ministry brought

## News From Ireland Catholic News Notes

Carlton.

At St. Nicholas' church, Copperas Hill, Liverpool, by the Rev. James O'Connell, rector, Cyril Howlett-Nicholson, Glentener, Bray, County Wicklow, was married to Martha Mary McGrath, New Court Military hospital, Cheltenham, youngest daughter of Mr. and the late Mrs. McGrath, "Cloneen," Nurney, Uster.

The body of Joseph Sheehan, farmer, Kilshanny, missing since Ennis Fair, December 2, 1916, has been recovered from the River Fergus, four miles below the town.

Rev. J. Galvin, C. C., Miltoom, Malbay, has been appointed P. P. of Tubber.

Clontarf.

Monsignor Canon Barry, V. G., a native of Youghal, has been appointed Provost of Plymouth Cathedral by the Pope.

Derry.

James McColgan, 66, laborer, Mary street, Derry, died while sitting in a barber's shop in Bishop street.

The body of Ralph Haslett, 53, farmer, of Upper Feeny, Derry, was found in an ice-bound bog recently.

Down.

W. F. Crerand, Illistrim, Letterkenny, has been appointed tillage demonstrator for County Cavan.

Down.

Sister M. Charles Trainor, whose death has taken place in the Convent of the Passionist Sisters, Bryson street, was a native of Newry and entered the order in 1894.

Down.

William Bonham, Loughrea, has been appointed agent for the St. Patrick's Catholic Insurance Society of the West.

Killmacnee.

Most Rev. Dr. Brownrigg has made the following appointments: Rev. T. Brennan, C. C., Ballyhale, to be P. P. Ballyhale; Rev. E. Dooey, C. C., Ballycallan, C. C., Ballyhale; Rev. M. McGrath, C. C., Ballycallan.

Killmacnee.

Much sympathy is felt with Rev. Brother Germanus O'Connor, Presentation schools, Birr, on the death of his father.

Limerick.

Rev. W. J. Higgins, P. P., Effin, whose death is announced, was a former curate at St. John's Limerick, and prior to his translation to Effin was administrator of that parish.

Longford.

The golden jubilee of Most Rev. Dr. Hoare, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, will be celebrated in Longford on June 11th.

The death took place at his residence, Lincolns, Granard, of Michael Masterson, aged 93.

Monaghan.

The Monaghan County Council have appointed the Very Rev. Dean O'Connor, P. P., and T. Nolan, Carrickmacross, on the Old Age Pensions committee.

Queens.

James McCaffrey, whose death has taken place in Newtownmore, County Leitrim, was for many years teacher of Rath N. S., Ballybrittas.

Wexford.

Most Rev. Dr. Cleary, Bishop of Auckland, is at present on a visit to Wexford.

Tipperary.

Thomas Hayes, 50, farmer, Ballynacloogh, Nenagh, sustained fatal injuries by a fall from a tree.

IN MEMORIAM.

Sister M. Francis Borgia, formerly Miss Letitia A. Fennessy, of Rochester, died Wednesday at Villa Marie Academy, Erie, Pa. She leaves four sisters, Mrs. Thos. Folan, of St. Louis; Mrs. J. J. Connor, of Erie, and Mrs. M. J. Nier and Mrs. E. M. Craig, of Rochester; three brothers, R. J. and W. D. Fennessy, of Rochester and J. J. Fennessy, of New York.

Domestic.

One hundred and ten years ago the Trappists established themselves in Kentucky.

This year is the centenary of the death Archbishop Neale of Baltimore. He died June 16th.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians has a membership of 150,000 and a Ladies' Auxiliary of 70,000.

The Holy Name Societies of Providence, R. I., voted \$1,000 for the creation of a scholarship at LaSalle Academy.

The Rev. Dr. Guilday, of the Catholic University, Washington, has been appointed one of the eight members of the Public Archives Commission for 1917.

The beautiful Gothic marble Cathedral of St. Patrick in New York was begun in 1858. It is 308 feet long, 108 feet high and 96 feet wide.

The Marist Brothers exiled from Mexico, will establish themselves permanently at San Antonio, Texas. Their establishment will be as novitiate and school. Their building is completed and dedicated by Bishop Shaw.

The Home for Destitute Catholic Children, Boston, has supervision over more than 2,000 children. Last year 1,401 destitute boys and girls were placed in the Home.

The late John M. Roensch, of Erie, Pa., left about \$40,000 to Catholic charitable institutions.

Cardinal O'Connell says the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is the type of charitable work of which the world most always stand in need.

A movement is in progress to erect on Lookout Mountain a monument to Mr. Cody, "Buffalo Bill." It is suggested that parish schools help in this.

By next August the Bulgarians of Baltimore expect to have their new House of Study, at the Catholic University, opened.

### Hibernian Dinner.

The Monroe County Board of the Ancient Order of Hibernians has completed arrangements for its banquet to be held at the Whitcomb House on St. Patrick's night, March 17th, to celebrate the anniversary of the patron Saint of Ireland and of the A. O. H.

An elaborate Irish menu will be provided by the hotel management and will be discussed to the accompaniment of Irish songs and music under the direction of John Predmore. John Rogan will be toastmaster and the principal speaker will be Attorney Philip H. Donnelly, who will deliver an address on "The Vital Question for the Irish in America." Daniel F. Fitzgerald will also speak and Frank Mulcahy will deliver an address on "The Day We Celebrate."

Edgar Sweeney, Charles Hawken, Fred Stager and Miss Matilda Reidman will sing some of the famous old songs of Erin and County President M. T. Ryan has made arrangements for several amusing interludes.

It is to be the first St. Patrick's Day banquet given in this city by the A. O. H., and, encouraged by the promptitude with which the tickets have been taken up, the County Board proposes to make it a regular event.

### Learn Parliamentary Law

In the R. B. I. evening class. This class was organized last Monday evening with a nice attendance of men and women. It is not too late to enter. You can enroll next Monday evening, March 19th. Class session begins promptly at 8 o'clock. R. B. I. building, 172 Clinton avenue south.—Adv.