

The Prayers of Mother.

My heart ached for the old lady. She sat erect, with her hands tightly clasped, big tears rolling down her cheeks and her bosom heaving with sobs.

"Oh, Father," she cried, "do you think God Almighty punished me by granting my prayer? Indeed, I did not mean it to come that way."

"No," I said, "God always does what is best. He knew your heart, and He saw the motive of your prayer. Tell me all about it."

We were seated in the little parlor of the rectory, and I had been called to see her. I soothed her and repeated my question.

And then this grieving soul told me the troubles that were crushing her. As she dried her tears, she began:

"You see, Father, my daughter was always a little wilful, and when she married a Protestant I warned her not to forget her faith, but in vain. Her husband was a good man, and if she had desired, he would not have placed a single obstacle in her way. She could have practiced her religion easily, if she wished it. But she got careless, and by degrees, after her two girls were born, lost her hold on the Church, and for a long time has refused to talk about religion. Only the eldest daughter is baptized, and in spite of my remonstrance, not the younger one. It has troubled that have come have terrified me!"

She paused a moment, and then resumed her story:

"For the past year, Father, my daughter has been steadily failing in health. She has grown thin, and nervous, and restless, and both her husband and myself have worried. Once I asked her if she would not like to say her Rosary with me, or read some pious book. She almost got hysterical and said I wanted her to die, and I must stop talking religion; she was only run down and would be all right after a little rest. It distressed me so that I went to my room and on my knees prayed to God to change her heart, by any means. He saw fit, and not to let her die in her sins. Shortly after it occurred to me that if she had a little change of air it might help her, and as my house is large and out of the city, I asked her husband to persuade her to lock up their own house and come to me, with him and the children for a month, and see if the rest would do her good. She was pleased with the idea, and they all came, about two weeks ago. I took all responsibility from her, the children rode to school in the trolley cars every morning with their father, and my daughter seemed to improve with the rest and care I gave her. But I could not get her to say a prayer, and when I told her she was breaking my heart she got hysterical. And now, Father, is the sad part of it. One evening her husband came home and went to her room. He seemed tired and complained of a headache; suddenly he threw back his head, and seemed to smother, and in a minute he was dead! Oh, that awful moment. We were both there, and too horrified to move. She fainted and I screamed, and when assistance came we laid him on the bed and sent for the doctor. He told us after a searching examination that it was heart trouble.

"Oh, Father I cannot tell you the agony of those days. The cries of the children, the despair of their mother, who at once was put to bed. And, Father, the thought of my prayer came back to me, and I have been thinking of it day and night, until I have almost lost my mind!" She burst into tears anew. I allowed her to weep a while, and then said:

"When did this happen?"

"Only last week he was buried," she replied, "and I feel as if it were a year since then. Father, do you think it is punishment?"

"How has your daughter been since?" I asked, purposely ignoring the question.

To be continued.

Reserve Fund of C.M. B.A. Goes to Older Members.

At the special session of the Supreme Council of the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association, which was held at Hotel Astor, New York, on Tuesday, March 6th, final action on the readjustment of the organization was taken. The entire reserve fund of the association, as it existed on March 6, was allotted to Class I. A separate reserve fund will be created for the members of the organization constituting Class II. The Supreme Council acted in accordance with the recent decision of Justice Dudley, who sanctioned the adoption of the classification plan enacted by the Supreme Council at its session in October, 1915, but did not permit a division of the reserve fund as it existed on January 1, 1916. The plan adopted in October, 1915, was to become effective on January 1, 1916, but before it could be enforced, several members secured an injunction restraining the Supreme Council from making the proposed classification in membership and from dividing the reserve fund.

Class I is composed of members who joined the organization before Jan. 1, 1904, when the last readjustment in rates was made. On Jan. 29, 1917, the reserve fund amounted to \$947,192.71, and after deducting the death claims which accrued until March 6, approximately \$800,000 will remain in the same. An increased number of assessments will therefore not become necessary until the present reserve is exhausted. There are approximately 38,000 members in Class I. and 22,000 in Class II.

While separate and distinct reserve funds will hereafter be maintained, the beneficiary fund will remain the common fund of both classes. The reserve fund for Class II. will be accumulated out of the tabulated reserve, which must be set aside for this class, as provided by the insurance laws of the State of New York.

All death claims will be paid out of the common beneficiary fund, which includes the reserve fund as it existed on March 6. When this fund becomes exhausted, the excess death claims will be met by the class in which the deaths occur, Class I. by additional assessments, and Class II. by drawing on its independent reserve fund. It is maintained by actuaries of the C. M. B. A. that the rates of assessment applicable to members who joined the organization since January, 1904, are adequate to assure the perpetuity of the organization.

How long the present reserve fund will last is purely problematical. An officer of the Supreme Council declared that it was his opinion that it would probably not become exhausted for eight or ten months. After it is exhausted there would probably be from ten to twelve additional assessments a year for the members of Class I. though if there is a healthy and normal growth in the membership, this number may be decreased.

Members belonging to Class I. may join Class II. by paying the lien against their policy, and hereafter paying the assessment according to the age attained on January 1904. Members may transfer at any time before January 1, 1919.

WIDOW OF MARTYRED EDITOR IS TO SPEAK

Announcement was made by the Rochester Committee of the Irish Relief Fund that arrangements had been completed for a public meeting in Convention Hall next Monday evening at which an address will be delivered by Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington, widow of Francis Skeffington, an Irish editor and pacifist who was killed in the uprising in Dublin last year. Mrs. Skeffington eluded the British authorities last December and came to this country. Since that time she has been touring the country, lecturing on conditions as she found them to exist behind the veil of censorship in Ireland.

BIGOTRY BEARING FRUIT IN THE SOUTH.

Splendid Stand Taken by the Atlanta Constitution; Foremost Newspaper of the South.

There have been those who have sought to minimize the importance of the anti-Catholic campaigns of Watson and bigots of his type and have questioned the propriety and utility of a Catholic campaign of defense. That they have been quite mistaken in this attitude is brought home quite strikingly in an occurrence of very recent date recorded in the columns of the Atlanta Constitution. We quote the statement, summarizing as it does the main facts of the occurrence.

"Macon, Ga., Feb. 28th. (Special.) Quite a furore has been created in Macon over the action of the local Confederate veterans in refusing to participate in the Memorial day exercises this year if the Daughters of the Confederacy permit Bishop Keiley of Savannah, to be the speaker of the day. The veterans have sent a letter, signed by 60 of their number, to Mrs. Walter J. Grace, in which they declare Bishop Keiley is a Catholic and not patriotic and that unless the invitation is recalled they will not take part in the exercises this year."

Mrs. Grace on March 2nd, issued a statement in which she said that Bishop Keiley delivered the Memorial day address in Atlanta last year and because he is a Confederate veteran, and did his part in the struggle back in the sixties, the Daughters decided to invite him to speak here on April 26th. The Daughters of the Confederacy is a non-sectarian organization, numbering amongst its members women of all different beliefs and for that reason the religious matter did not enter into question when the invitation was extended to Bishop Keiley.

There are, however, two compelling moments to be considered in this otherwise unfortunate affair; the one is the sane attitude adopted by the Daughters of the Confederacy, and the other is the noble stand taken by the foremost newspaper of the south in commenting upon it.

It is the Atlanta Constitution, from an editorial of which, written by Clark Howell, the editor, we quote the most trenchant parts.

"In refusing," he writes, "to withdraw their invitation to Bishop Keiley to deliver the Confederate Memorial day address at Macon, as requested by 60 members of the Confederate Veterans association in that city, solely because the bishop is a Roman Catholic, the ladies of the Macon Memorial Association are eminently in the right. And their stand evinces a degree of broad-mindedness that is commendable. (Here follows a statement of the affair).... The women however 'stood pat', and by an overwhelming vote refused to recall the invitation to Bishop Keiley. The women were right; and the men were wrong."

What better vindication of the position of the Macon D. A. R.'s could be afforded than by harking back to the records of half a century ago, when Bishop Keiley as a young stripling, radiant with patriotism, volunteered in defense of the confederate cause, donned a gray uniform and from beginning to the end of the war rendered brilliant service to his country?

He was a Roman Catholic then, just as he is now. That fact did not disparage him from patriotic service then, nor should it now. The women of Macon showed the instincts of true womanhood and patriotism in their spunky response to the recalcitrant veterans, which reflects infinite credit upon them."

The Atlanta Constitution is to be complimented on this brave view of steamers plying between New Orleans and Central America, but our correspondent affirms that they will soon resemble those of Mexico. Born to the inheritance of the Faith, the people have drifted into a very lax moral condition. Liberty of thought is the cry, and what higher education is obtained is from the Protestant Universities in the United States.

gentleman, the editors of all the Georgia newspapers with but few exceptions, so politically enmeshed and dominated, that they are afraid to open their mouths in defense of the Church and the patriotism shown by the long list of patriots who gave their life in the service of our country.

This unfortunate affair is but another of the many examples which prove, that we can be none too vigilant and active in counteracting by a sane propaganda of enlightenment and defense the sinister forces that seek to stigmatize Catholic citizens and make pariahs of those professing the Catholic faith.

C. B. of C. V.

Foreign Mission News

Special correspondence by The Propagation of the Faith Society, 338 Lexington Ave., New York City.

WHO WILL MAKE GOOD A XMAS TREAT.

Fr. J. Cotta of the Poona district, India, is in the habit of giving his young charges a little feast at Christmastide and a gift of clothing—food and clothing being always needed in India. This year the misery was especially great on account of the plague. The small huts were unable to hold all the sick ones of the family and some would be lying outside in the sun, while others were dying in the gloomy interior.

Relying on future help Fr. Cotta indulged in his usual yearly treat, but Christmas has long passed and he has not yet been cheered by the sight of any offerings. If he does not help his people, moreover, they will drift to Protestant missions, always waiting to receive and reward such acquisitions.

"It is too often forgotten by many that in assisting the work of the missions is to be found the most important application of the great precept of charity, for its scope is not adequately gauged, when frequently it is limited to those who are near and dear to us, and to the needs that most strike our attention."—Pope Pius X.

Bishop Berlioz, P.F.M., of Hakodate, writes that he has been having a visit from Fr. Breton, of Los Angeles. The latter went to Japan to secure teachers for the very successful mission conducted for the Japanese in California, and having found some good material will now be able to enlarge his schools.

Imagine being archbishop of a district containing twenty-four million souls. Mgr. Charles Joseph Gentili, O. M., Cap., who died in January last, governed the great archdiocese of Agra in northern India, the population of which was this vast number of human beings. The venerable prelate was seventy-seven years of age and had been twenty years a bishop and archbishop. The missionaries under him comprised thirty-eight European Capuchins and twelve native priests.

CENTRAL AMERICA IN NEED OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

Rev. Richard R. Rooney, S.J., asks us to make an urgent appeal for St. John's College in Belize, British Honduras. We do not hear much about conditions in Central America, but our correspondent affirms that they will soon resemble those of Mexico. Born to the inheritance of the Faith, the people have drifted into a very lax moral condition. Liberty of thought is the cry, and what higher education is obtained is from the Protestant Universities in the United States.

The Jesuits have now a small college, but they wish to build a larger one on the sea-coast, in full view of steamers plying between New Orleans and Central America. Such a location will be its best advertisement and serve to attract the Latin Americans to the advantages offered by their own country. Offerings for this cause will be transmitted by the National Office of the Propagation of the Faith.

Catholic News Notes News From Ireland

Domestic.

The Cathedral property of the diocese of Crookston, established six years ago, and valued at \$250,000, is free of debt.

Reliable statistics gives result of thirty months' of European war: Killed, 5,000,000; wounded, 13,000,000; national debts, \$49,000,000,000 increase and total cost of the war in Europe \$75,000,000,000.

Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, speaks the Japanese language fluently.

The Passionist Order has purchased a fifty-acre tract of land at Des Moines, Iowa, and will, in the near future, erect thereon a monastery and seminary to cost about \$100,000.

The Immaculate Conception Parish of Youngstown, Ohio, raised more than \$25,000 last year.

There are now more than two million olive trees in California, thanks to the initiative of the Franciscan Order.

During its seventy years of apostolic labors in the heathen world, the Holy Childhood Association of the Church, has opened heaven to as many as twenty millions of infant souls rescued in a dying state and baptized.

In two years only two deaths, both from accidents, have occurred in St. John's Orphan Home, numbering 1,200 orphans, Brooklyn.

Ten religious orders have houses of study affiliated with the Catholic University.

Bishop Gallagher, of Grand Rapids, studied four years in Mungret Seminary, Ireland, and five years at the University of Innsbruck, Tyrol.

At Troy, Alabama, the Bishop of Mobile dedicated the \$30,000 memorial church to the late Martin Connor and his wife.

Baltimore is to have a new and imposingly massive St. Bernard Church, with rectory and convent building.

Ten thousand dollars, together with \$11,141.98 interest was paid last year on the debt of the Cathedral of Denver.

The Ursulines of Louisville, are building a new central house and chapel.

The Boston Catholic Night School has a registration of 2,500.

It is said that the Bishop of Natchez, Mgr. Gunn, during his pastorate in Atlanta, Ga., made upwards of 2,000 converts.

Foreign.

In Holland a Romeward movement is apparent.

The late Emperor of Austria, in his will and of his private fortune left about \$12,000,000 for the benefit of wounded soldiers, invalids and relatives killed in the war; to three daughters and a granddaughter about \$2,000,000 each.

The Vatican Museum of Sculpture contains 1,800 statues.

Ireland has lost a scholar in the recent death of Very Rev. Dr. O'Hickey, of Maynooth College.

Most probably steps will be taken in Ireland to have the saintly Passionist Father Hougan of Dublin beatified. There he lived and labored from 1857 to 1898.

News From Ireland

Sir William Ellison McCartney, formerly M. P. for South Antrim, has been appointed Governor of West Australia, and is succeeded in Tasmania by F. A. Newdigate, M. P.

Potash has been discovered in a quarry at Forkhill, Armagh.

At a public meeting held in Portadown, it was decided to open a fund for supplying the poor of the town with coal at 1s per ewt.

Armagh County Council passed a vote of sympathy with the relatives of the late T. O'Hare, J. F., Besbrook.

While sweeping snow from the front of her house, Miss M. Toole, Bagenalstown, collapsed and died in a few minutes.

The estimate for rates in Carlow is £3,000 in excess of last year's expenditure.

Thomas W. West of Mullyduff house, Newtownbutler, farmer and stock-breeder, has been appointed by the Department of Agriculture as inspector in connection with the increased tillage order.

Cavan U. C., by a majority increased by £15 a year the salary of the town clerk, T. McGinnane.

Brian O'Higgins, Dublin, has been unanimously appointed resident secretary and registrar of the O'Curry college, Carrigroholt.

The parishioners of Netherel, Cork, expressed regret at the transfer of Rev. Father O'Leary, P. P., and Rev. Father O'Mahony, C. C., to whom they wished success in their new parishes.

Most Rev. Dr. Kelly offered Skibbereen Urban Council a park of four acres for allotments.

George Logue, 31, laborer, Lismore, Limerick, succumbed to injuries caused by the kick of a horse.

Rev. Joseph O'Neill, C. C., Donaghmore, has been appointed P. P. in succession to the late Canon McCartan.

Miss M. O'Neill, daughter of J. O'Neill, late clerk North Union, has been received in the Convent of Poor Clares, Silverton, Edinburgh, by Father Doyle of the Glasgow Franciscans, who is a Dublin man.

Rev. John Byrne, B. A., of Carysfort avenue, Blackrock, was ordained to the priesthood by Most Rev. Dr. Miller, O. M. I., at Belmont house, Stillorgan.

A boy named James Finnerty of Atherry, aged seven, has been presented with a silver watch and £5 from the Carnegie Hero Fund for having saved a little girl from drowning.

Patrick Moloney, a laborer, was found frozen to death on the Liffey to be taken to the Liffey.

At the Catholic church, Roscrea, with nuptial Mass, by the Rev. W. Grace, C. C., Clontarf, cousin of the bridegroom, Michael Grace, merchant, Ballyragget, was married to Margaret, (Maggie), daughter of Michael Lantry, Whiteswall.

Miss Bridgid Shaughnessy, daughter of P. Shaughnessy, Linsingh, Birr, has been professed at the Convent of La Sainte Union de Sacre Coeur, Highgate, London. Her name in religion is Sister Joseph Magdalene.

On his marriage, the friends of John Ryan, county court registrar, Castlebar, presented him with an illuminated address, silver tea and coffee service and a gold watch. Rev. J. W. Meenan, C. C., presided.

When propping up a cock of hay it toppled over on J. Murphy, Kilmaine, suffocating him.