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Little 'Citizens of the Cathedral'

By C. V. Service. Of hardship are heroes made. While soft living and comforts make for indifference and denial and persecution develop strength of character and fortitude.

This contention holds true particularly of religion. No better of this could be offered than the history of Mexico. For well over a century this ill-starred country has been governed by men who have regarded the Catholic Church as an enemy and have done their best to exterminate her and the influence she might exert on the minds and hearts of the people.

Following the example of the mother country, Spain, the Mexican Republic instituted the "reforms," which meant the suppression and looting of churches and monasteries in the nineteenth century, and in more recent years—when practically all property had been confiscated—the suspension of even religious services and the persecution of the faithful.

CLEARLY SHOWN

What religion means to the plain people and the children of Mexico has never been more clearly or simply illustrated than in the tale of a Methodist missionary, published recently in "World Outlook," a Methodist mission paper. Not long ago, the missionary relates, he came to stay in a little town in the mountains of Mexico.

The Methodist saw a group of children headed toward the plaza. "Most of them were little girls dressed in white, some with their First Communion veils." Back of the children came the mothers and grandmothers, all hurrying.

Naturally, curiosity got the better of the observer so he followed them. "I climbed after them up the precipitous stone street until I came to the plaza. Here, as in most Mexican towns, the cathedral sprawled at the side of the plaza like some large, dirty but motherly market woman."

The children crossed the threshold of the cathedral, familiarly but with a certain dignity, knowing what they were about, "and their mothers and their grandmothers knew they knew and let them step ahead." Once inside, the Protestant missionary states, they moved easily and surely through the children's mass, responding, genuflecting, and at the proper time lifting their garlands to be carried forward to decorate the altar.

DUTY DONE

After Mass had ended, he continues, the children came back to their mothers and all went out into the late afternoon sunshine. "The children gave you the feeling that they had got through with some responsible task and now could relax."

The observer's reaction is especially significant. "I do not hold much with children's Masses," he asserts, "but I fell to thinking on the way back to my room that I had just watched a very successful demonstration of the part children can play in the church. Now I doubt very much if the Roman Catholic Church of Mexico gives much of its time and thought to child psychology. But it is an eminently practical church. It recognizes the practical importance of children as citizens of the cathedral if the Catholic Church is to exist at all in the hostile atmosphere about it."

Among the Heroes



Major James Patrick Sinnott Devereaux, United States Marine Corps, commander of the brave garrison which, in the face of superior numbers, defended Wake Island in the war in the Pacific.

Major Devereaux is a member of Blessed Sacrament parish, Chevy Chase, D. C.

condescension toward them. And the children, swift to sense attitudes, take over their religious duties with a sense of grave importance. I feel, of course, that my church has more to offer its children than the churches of other faiths.

In conclusion, the missionary affirms: "It takes wisdom to live long. And it takes wisdom to let children take their place in the church."

The author might have added that it is not merely the children who have been "citizens of the cathedral" in such countries as Mexico. Religious tenacity has always been a characteristic of the poor who have held on to their faith through all manners of adversity, including especially persecution, and every church has always and everywhere been considered by them their Father's House, in which they have a right to be and feel at home.

Voices Fervent Hope World May Gain Peace

VATICAN CITY.—(NC) — Voicing once more the fervent hope that peace may be restored to the world, His Holiness Pope Pius XII addressed the Noble Guards.

The Holy Father expressed the wish that "in this sea of tempestuous storms and human disasters the fury of the winds may cease and the tranquility of the waves restored, that on the ship of bounty goodness and fidelity may clasp hands and justice and peace embrace."

His Holiness then pointed out that nobility must be founded on virtue. Too often, he said, virtue's light is dimmed by that of nobility. The Pope recalled that many Roman families owe their nobility to the Pontifical Throne and that therefore their duty of preserving themselves faithful to their ancestral traditions is the greater.

Getting On In The World

Do you ever notice in the Want Ads the requests of young men for adventurous work, for exciting occupations?

Did you ever meet a woman having a man's haircut who said, drawing her breath through her teeth, that she wanted to live dangerously?

If you didn't, it's just as well. People who look for danger for danger's sake are generally fools.

All men who try to save their souls sometimes live too dangerously to save them without the Church.

Psychologists sometimes express admiration for the fact that there are few suicides among Catholics. They have a safety valve. They get rid of their worries, the really serious worries that trouble the soul.

The neo-pagan president of a large American university once remarked that he would like to have something akin to the Catholic confessional in contemporary education.

Why something like it, when the real thing is here at hand?

No one is a judge of his own case. Physicians do not cure themselves; they call in other doctors. Likewise, a confessor can judge better than you can.

Aside from the fact that he is the Judge representing the Almighty, he will in that role settle your doubts, relieve your fears, instruct where there is ignorance, work out a program of daily living, build positive character, and suggest practices which bring you closer to the true happiness you are seeking.

Advertisement for E. Forman Co. featuring a January Sale Highlight with Matching Slip and Gown. Includes an illustration of a woman in a gown and a matching slip, along with descriptive text and prices.

Advertisement for Liberty Coal Co. featuring a Special Offer for limited time only. Coal is priced at \$10.95 per ton. Includes contact information for Glenwood 5960.

Advertisement for Rochester Business Institute (RBI). Promotes registration for Army and Office Administration courses. Sessions start Monday, January 12, 7 to 9 P.M.