

as a hopeful sign by Marjorie, and wherever she went among her poor friends she asked for prayers for a special intention, till, though neither he nor they were aware of it, there was scarcely a Catholic house in all the parish where prayer was not being offered to God for the conversion of the Protestant vicar.

Yet the glow of early autumn had lit up every beauty of the country-side before Marjorie learned that those prayers were to be answered. A sister of Mr. Blackburne's had come to stay with him, and on her account he had accepted more invitations than was his wont, for everyone had remarked how little the vicar had been seen in society of late. The Laytons, too, had friends with them, and all went for a picnic to the chief beauty spot of the neighborhood, where as someone remarked laughingly to Mr. Blackburne, he could have his eye on all his parish at once.

There it lay at his feet, glorious with the red and gold of autumn. Cornfields surrounding prosperous farms in the foreground, with the little town further off, and even the unpicturesqueness of its straggling streets and the unsightliness of its modern villas softened to beauty by the trees and shrubs in their rare colored lines. Far away, wood and water and distant hill completed the picture. Seeing Mr. Blackburne standing alone, in contemplation of the scene below him, Marjorie moved across to where he stood.

'I heard someone congratulating you on your parish,' she said lightly. 'She was right, I think, and I do the same.'

He turned to her with sudden resolution, and in his eyes she read sorrow, regret, and yet the dawning of a great happiness.

'And you,' he said, 'have taken it all from me.'

She did not understand for a moment.

Then her heart began to beat and, though she did not speak, he gave the explanation that she sought.

'I have finished your books,' he said, 'and—I am a Catholic.'

He had resigned his living and left his beautiful red and gold parish before the leaves began to fall, before anyone but Marjorie knew of his intention.

Then in the Catholic houses the prayers of intercession were changed into thanksgiving, and Marjorie waited from day to day for the answer to the letter she had given him to the only Catholic priest she knew besides the gentle, kindly old man at home.

With this letter as his only help, Vernon Blackburne set out on the journey of his new life, a life that was to lead him not only into the communion of Rome but to the Eternal City itself. For Marjorie's words to her mother had not fallen short of the truth. The Catholic faith alone did not satisfy him, nothing less than the priesthood could do that. Under the shadow of St. Peter's the erstwhile clergyman, unlearned and learned again, until the crowning day dawned and he became, in very truth, a priest forever.

Marjorie was present at Father Blackburne's first Mass, but there was one before her to kiss the newly consecrated hands. His sister had followed him into the Church, and before many months had passed by he had the joy of assisting at her clothing at a convent where Marjorie would fain have joined her. But to her soul never came the call of God, *Veni sponsa Christi*.

In the busy life in the world that was Marjorie's portion the lessons she had learned through the conversion of her friendly foe were never forgotten. Their paths in life led different ways but the goal was the same. If one may judge by lives and works, the call, when a few years ago it came to each of them, must have been followed by the Master's 'Well done!'—Alice Dease in *The Magnificat*.

If you are waking call me early,

Call me early, mother dear!

If you do of my recovery

You really need have no fear.

For it's doing me good already—

'Tis really a life renewer!

I've always said it's the best of all —

Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.

THE CROAGH PATRICK PILGRIMAGE

IRISH FAITH AND MISSIONARY ZEAL

The Croagh Patrick pilgrimage took place on Sunday, July 27, and it was estimated that no fewer than 50,000 people ascended the mountain. Many Masses were celebrated, and an eloquent sermon was delivered by Rev. Dr. McCaffrey, Maynooth. The Rev. Father Augustine, O.S.F.C., preached an impressive sermon in Irish. His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, visited the foot of the mountain during the day, and made touching references to the pilgrimage during a discourse in the Westport church in the morning. The Most Rev. Dr. Higgins was among the pilgrims on the summit. Pilgrims from all parts of Great Britain and every village in Ireland, and even far overseas, flocked to Westport on Saturday and Sunday. The town was simply besieged for the accommodation of the enormous number of visitors, which far exceeded that of any previous year.

As usual, many hundreds of devout visitors scaled the steep slopes of the mountain during the previous night, keeping vigil on the ground where, 1500 years ago, the National Apostle watched and prayed. From dawn on Sunday pilgrims on foot and in every kind of vehicle wended their way to Murrisk, the picturesque hamlet some six miles from Westport, where the arduous climb was begun.

The sermon in English was by Rev. Dr. McCaffrey, who said:—

Well nigh 1500 years have passed since this mountain on which we are assembled to-day was sanctified by the prayers and penance of our National Apostle. Whether we turn to the sea or to the land, westward towards the myriad islands that are set like gems in the Atlantic, or eastward towards the mountains and plains of Mayo, the view that confronts us to-day is much the same as that which met the eyes of St. Patrick during the memorable Lent that he passed on this lofty summit. In the lapse of centuries since then, the world has witnessed many remarkable changes. Kingdoms and dynasties have disappeared, to make way for new nations and new forms of government. In politics, in social life, in men's ideals, and in their outlook upon the world, striking developments have been witnessed. Among all these fluctuations of fortune, in one respect alone we can proudly boast that Ireland remains unchanged and unchangeable as is the mountain on which we stand to-day or the Atlantic which dashes itself against the western shores, and that is in its devotion and attachment to the faith that St. Patrick preached and in its loyal adherence to the See of Peter, to which he bound the Irish Church as with chains of steel. The pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick is not a thing of yesterday. It is not a mere passing whim taken up to-day and to be put aside to-morrow.

From the Fifth Century to the Present Time thousands of pilgrims following in the footsteps of St. Patrick have toiled up the bare and rugged slopes of this mountain-side to imitate the example of our Apostle, to pray to God on the very spot where he had kept his long and lonely vigil, and by mingling their prayers with his to ensure for themselves and their families the blessing and protection of God. So numerous were the pilgrims in the olden days that the route by which they came can still be traced from Aughagower to Croagh Patrick. The pilgrimage was indulged by Popes, and was under the protection of the chieftains of Connaught; and it was deemed a serious crime to interfere with those journeying to the shrines of Croagh Patrick. Even in the darkest days of Ireland's history, when the good monks who inhabited yonder roofless walls were driven from their peaceful abode of penance and prayer, and when to profess oneself a Catholic meant to run the risk of plunder, imprisonment, and death, bands of pilgrims still dared to ascend this sacred mount to lay their sorrows before God and St. Patrick in the hope that he who in life was the Apostle and protector of the Irish race might plead for mercy for his adopted country. Nor was

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