

Centuries ago the Maker of hearts, as He walked the golden sea-shore and preached amidst the busy haunts of men, threw out this invitation, 'Whosoever will be perfect let him leave all and come and follow Me.' It was a very general invitation, but in practice we know that, as He Himself explained, all take not the word. All do not receive the grace. And grace in this connection means inclination, desire, joy, and happiness, a clear light to estimate the value of hard poverty, complete obedience and austere celibacy for His sake. It speaks of greater love and greater security. Thus we can say that 'a religious vocation is a great grace, a concentration of the best graces, of the brightest mental illuminations and heart-yearning aspirations. The word "come" is heard that thrills and fascinates. It is faith and hope and love superabounding. It may be pain and even anguish to old attachments not yet dead and even rivals in their attractions. Still it is a grace that wins the heart and is not merely conscience making one a victim to a sense of duty. Thus a religious vocation is an individual experience as all graces are, and is easily distinguishable from sentimental emotions, natural generosity, or neurotic impulses; it is a direct communication from the spirit Who breathes where He wills.' The emotions of the candidate for the priesthood, a religious Brotherhood or Sisterhood are one thing; the life, duties, and services of these states are another. The latter is the test. The touchstone of sane thoughts and noble emotions is the object in which they centre. A religious is noble in spirit because of life's noble object: life for fellow-men and for God. Vocation indeed means a call, but it is the call of God coming from the orphan, the sick, the old, the poor, the child's budding soul—frequently from the benighted savage in a remote land or more often in the diocese at home. It is a call, too, from the Master to imitate Him in personal holiness of life and self-sacrifice, in view of the hundred-fold reward—and even to win the special crown of the religious teacher or martyr.

We may surely regard it as the most favorable of omens for the future of the Church in this young country that vocations to the priesthood and to religious communities are so plentiful. The latest statistics inform us that sixty-seven religious Brothers and one thousand one hundred and twenty-six Sisters spend their sweet lives in God's service. What a noble army! Honors do not come their way at present—they do not look for any—but at the end of the march the roll-call will be read out and the King's right hand will pin on their breasts the cross of unfading glory.

### The 'Anglo-Saxon' States

To many readers of the daily papers one of the standing puzzles of the war has been the attitude of the United States of America. The headlines and editorial columns of our newspapers have insisted so much in days past of the Anglo-Saxon origin of Americans and of America's debt to England, that careless readers and perhaps editors themselves by dint of repetition have come to think of the United States as an England beyond the seas. Dr. Austin O'Malley, a very distinguished writer of Philadelphia, has recently been throwing some light on the subject in the December number of *Studies*. 'A few English of the New England States and the old southern States did influence our foundations, but the French Revolution influenced them far more; and the German, Irish, Dutch, and other early settlers were the material influenced. The War of the Revolution was not won by the Anglo-Saxons. They were the Tories that opposed the Revolution. Major General Robinson, English Commissioner for the exchange of prisoners after the American Revolution, testified in 1779, that Washington's army consisted of one-half Irish, one-fourth natives, and the rest were Scotch, Germans, and English. In 1850 twelve per cent. of the immigrants here were English; in 1910 only six per cent. were English. In 1910 there were 13,516,000 foreign-born people in the United

States, and of these only 878,000 were English.' This cannot be a very weighty influence in a population of 101 millions. 'Even in 1850,' continues Dr. O'Malley, 'there were four times as many Irish here as English, and many more Germans than Irish. We are so slightly Anglo-Saxon that there is scarcely one man of English race among our multi-millionaires, that peculiar American product.' And if, as there is excellent reason for believing, it is the moneyed man with his money-bags that counts in the making and ending of war, we would be foolish to look for much practical sympathy from that quarter in the States.

### Curiosities of Literature

By way of relief from the wearisome work of refuting oft-repeated slanders against the Church, Mr. James Britten, of the English Catholic Truth Society, is fond of wandering along the less frequented paths of literary effort, and some months ago presented the readers of the *Month* with a bouquet of the flowers he had plucked on his way. Apparently there are many thousands of little-known poets who feel driven by some inner necessity to put their feelings into verse: they sing because they must. And having sung their little songs these Impossible Poets insist—for the benefit of their fellow-men, of course,—on publishing them. Here then are some of the flowers.

Police Constable George H. Mitchell found that his *Ballads in Blue* met with a generous reception from the public and accordingly lost no time in getting out a second edition which (as he avers) 'has the advantage of being larger than the former and better bound.' The preface informs us that 'not a few persons have been interested by the fact that long spells of prosaic police duty in some of the most squalid districts of the great Metropolis have been unable to subdue the instincts of an aspiring Constable.' His own opinion is that this was the very place for developing latent power, and stirring the mind, as it had the advantage of placing one in close touch with human suffering.

It is not surprising to find Mr. Mitchell praising the work of the 'men in blue':

'At midnight's darkest hours, when all the world is hushed in sleep,  
The fierce garotter prowls around his harvest rich to reap;  
But Robert, with his smarter mind, his eye so bold and bright,  
Just closes with the savage brute, and puts his hope to flight.'

Mr. John Bradford was slow in publishing. He long cherished 'a desire to see the scattered bantlings of (his) brain gathered together and housed under the covers of a book, so that (he) might be able, by referring to them, to live over again, in a certain sense, the hours of gaiety and gloom in which they were written.' The opening lines of the sonnet 'To Clare's Eyebrows' illustrate his style:

'Thou art a lucky thing, dark bar of hair!  
For it must be a most delightful lot  
To have a home in such a lovely spot  
As is the base of Clare's bright forehead fair.'

'The poetical genius,' Mr. Alfred Macey tells us, 'awoke within me on a gusty December afternoon in 1897, and from that day until now it has unceasingly dogged my steps—in the muddy dock, the train, the shipyard, the wayside, etc.' It seems to have gone to sleep again on the occasion of the following visit to Hexham:

'I am staying now in Hexham  
Just three days a married man,  
I am rambling now in Hexham  
Over scenes where once I ran.  
Oft I've thought of thee, dear Hexham,  
Oft I've longed to see thy scenes,  
Now I'm with thee, bonny Hexham,  
And a wife on thy greens.'