MORNING STAR AND CATHOLIC MESSENGER.

NEW ORLEANS, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1868.

The Rev. A. J. Ryan, "Moina," so universally known for his true poetic merit, has contributed the following beautiful lines to the Savannah *News and Herald*. It has the ring of genius:

LINES.

BY MOINA.—REV. A. J. RYAN.

Go where the sea-waves are kissing the shore,
And ask them why do they sigh;
The poets have asked them a thousand times o'er—
But they're kissing the shore as they've kissed it before;
And they're sighing to-day, and they'll sigh evermore—
Ask them what ails them—they will not reply.
"Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?"
The waves will not answer you—neither shall I.

Go, stand on the beach of the broad boundless deep,
When the night stars are gleaming on high;
And hear how the billows are moaning in sleep,
On the low-lying strand by the surge-beating steep—
They're moaning for ever wherever they sweep.
Ask them what ails them—they never reply;
They moan, and so sadly, but will not tell why.
"Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?"
The billows won't answer you—neither shall I.

Go, list to the breeze, at the waning of day,
When it passes and murmurs "good bye;"
The dear little breeze! how it wishes to stay
Where the flowers are in bloom, where the singing birds play;
How it sighs as it flies on its wearisome way!
Ask it what ails it—it will not reply;
Its voice is a sad one—it will not tell why.
"Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?"
The breeze will not answer you—neither shall I.

Go, watch the wild blasts as they spring from their lair,
When the shout of the storm rends the sky;
They rush o'er the earth and ride through the air,
And they blight with their breath all that's lovely and fair;
And they groan like the ghosts in "the land of despair."
Ask them what ails them—they never reply;
Their voices are mournful, they will not tell why.
"Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?"
The blasts will not answer you—neither shall I.

Go, stand on the rivulet's lilly-fringed side,
Or list where the rivers rush by;
The streamlets, which forest trees shadow and hide,
And the rivers that roll in their oceanward tide,
Are moaning forever, wherever they glide.
Ask them what ails them—they will not reply;
On, sad-voiced, they flow, but they never tell why.
"Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?"
Earth's streams will not answer you—neither shall I.

When the shadows of twilight are gray on the hill,
And dark where the low valleys lie,
Go, list to the voice of the wild whip-poor-will,
That sings when the songs of the sisters are still,
And wails through the darkness so sadly and shrill.
Ask it what ails it, it will not reply.
It wails sad as ever—it never tells why.
"Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?"
The bird will not answer you—neither shall I.

Go, list to the voices of earth, air and sea,
And the voices that sound in the sky;
Their songs may be joyful to some, but to me,
There's a sigh in each song, I hear a sigh in each key,
And thousands of voices sigh in grand melody.
Ask them what ails them—they will not reply;
They sigh—sigh forever—but never tell why.
"Why does your poetry sound like a sigh?"
The voices won't answer you—neither shall I.

AIMEE'S SACRIFICE.

A TALE.

CHAPTER IV.

Every now and again Aimee understood that *she*, though not directly named, formed the subject of conversation between the two partners. She was in some way connected with the return of "Robert," though who Robert was, or where he was coming from, she had not the slightest conception, and she felt too weary at heart to indulge much curiosity. Christmas came, and poor Aimee's heart was sore indeed. At such a period the happiest family has some sad memories—there are some vacant places at the board, some voices whose tone we listen for in vain; but with Aimee what a change since last year! She could not but think of the midnight Mass, the gathering of the villagers, the sky radiant with stars, her mother's kiss, the cure's blessing; how, later in the day, she had waited on the poor and gladdened many a heart, and how she had trimmed the church's arches with holly, and how she had dressed the *creche*. Now there were no such delights for her; still she drove back her tears. She thought of her mother's Christmas in Heaven, really singing the angelic song. And in the dingy London chapel a few holly-berries were glistening, and upon the altar was the same Lord, the same Friend and Comforter; and Aimee, as she walked home through the streets, when a fog was beginning to turn to rain, and when every object looked a dirty brown color, felt in her heart that she possessed the greatest blessing the festival could bring—*peace of heart*.

She dreaded the dinner because she feared Mr. Hulme would be present; but on entering the drawing-room she found, to her surprise, a gentleman whom she had never seen before. He was lying back in one of the easy-chairs, a newspaper in his hands, as if quite at home. On her entrance he sprang to his feet, and Aimee saw he was a young man about five-and-twenty, with a fair, open countenance beaming with good humor and cheerfulness.

"Miss Morton, I presume. Allow me to introduce myself, as there is no one at hand to perform the ceremony. I am Robert Claydon, at your service, nephew to the redoubtful Mr. Hulme. I am not vain enough to suppose he has talked of me in my absence."

"I have heard him speak of some one called Robert," said Aimee, smiling.

"I have been in Holland these three months," he replied, "on business of the firm, and only returned last night."

The entrance of Mr. Morton and Mr. Hulme put a stop to the conversation; but Aimee soon found that dinner was a very different matter in presence of the new guest.

Mr. Hulme was in the highest good humor, Mr. Morton less icy than usual, while Robert's flow of spirits seemed inexhaustible. All the little incidents of an ordinary journey from Hamburg to London were told in such a manner as to make them amusing; and when Aimee went to bed that night, she felt as if a ray of sunshine had suddenly lightened her life. Sunshine, indeed, was the word that could best express the effect produced by Robert Claydon's presence. There was sunshine in his laughing blue eyes, in his merry smile, in his joyous voice. Having learned the secret of personal happiness, his one desire was to make others happy, and morose indeed were the natures he did not gladden; and Aimee soon found that he was not only bright and genial, but noble in character and heart.

Mr. Hulme had long intended to make Robert his heir, and since the arrival of Aimee, the partners had formed the scheme of marrying her to Robert, and thus keeping the property of the firm intact. Her wishes in the matter the old men little thought of, nor were Robert's much considered, except that they each knew too well Robert would not be dictated to in so important a matter as the choice of a wife.

It was however, not long after his return to England that the "firm" intimated the purport of their august will to Robert.

"The course of true love never did run smooth," was his smiling answer. "This little Aimee is, I believe, the very ideal I have imagined to myself for a wife, and by all laws of romance, you, our respected uncles, ought to forbid the match, or cut us off with a shilling, instead of actually urging us on; but now, remember," added he, "a fair field, or I am off the bargain. No using of commands to the poor little maiden. I will win her on my own merits and after my own fashion, or not at all." And so the weeks passed on, and Robert began seriously to doubt whether he had really made progress. Aimee was always pleased to see him; she had lost all shyness and embarrassment in his presence. There is no self-possession so perfect as that given by simplicity, and Aimee, who rarely thought about herself, was always at her ease. She trusted Robert implicity, and had learned to tell him about her home, her former pursuits, and even of her darling mother. She never tried to analyze her feelings; she only knew that her whole life was changed since that Christmas-day by the constant intercourse with this new friend; and Robert, whose whole heart was given to her, feared that she only regarded him with sisterly affection, and he feared to speak the words which might instead of crowning his hopes, banish him from her side.

One evening in the early spring, Aimee was sitting at the piano trying some new music Robert had given her. Robert was not far off, and Mr. Hulme and Mr. Morton were lingering, *according to their custom*, in the dining-room. A servant entered with letters.

"Are there any for me?" said Aimee, turning round eagerly. "The French letters often come by this post, and it is so long since I heard from St. Victor."

"Yes," said Robert, bringing the letter to her, "here it is, post-mark, foreign stamp, and all."

"But not his handwriting!" said Aimee in a surprised tone, and she tore the letter open. A sudden paleness overspread her face, and the letter fell from her hands, and she looked up into Robert's face with an expression of mute agony.

"My poor child!" said Robert, in a tone so gentle, so full of sympathy, that Aimee broke down.

"He is gone!" she sobbed out; "my last, my only friend."

"Nay, not so," cried Robert; "I would give my life for you, my Aimee—my love—my love! O darling! *can* you care for me; can you give me your heart for mine?"

She gave one look only from her innocent eyes, still full of tears, but that one glance sufficed; it removed all doubt from Robert's mind. He felt that he was indeed beloved with a woman's first and ardent attachment, and gathering her into his arms, he bade her weep out her sorrow on his breast, henceforth to be her refuge. Henceforth their joys and their sorrows were to be in common. After a time they read the letter together. It was from the doctor of St. Victor, and they told how the old cure had died suddenly while kneeling before the altar in silent prayer—a frequent custom of his throughout the day. He had fallen sideways, his head resting on the alter-step, a smile of childlike sweetness on his lips, his rosary twined about his hands, his breviary by his side—a soldier with his armor on, he had been called by his Master to join the church triumphant. For such a loss there could be no bitterness, and Aimee's sorrow was calm and gentle. And round her life there hung a halo such as never brightened it before. She had been happy with her mother, and in her village, with the springtide joy of childhood and early youth; but now the rich, full summer of her life was come. True it was, no voice, save poor Mrs. Connell's, wished her joy. She had no mother or even friend to tell out the many new thoughts that her position brought to her mind; but, to make up for this, she found she had won a heart such as rarely falls to the lot of mortal.

To the lonely girl Robert was literally all—mother, and brother, and lover in one. Her happiness, not his own gratification, was the pervading thought of his life. She was not only loved, but watched over tenderly and cared for with exceeding thoughtfulness. There was, of course, nothing to wait for; and as soon as the settlements were drawn up, Easter would have come, and then the marriage would take place. Knowing Aimee's love for the country, Robert took a cottage in one of the pretty villages that surround London, and there, as he planned, they could garden together in the summer evenings and sometimes take a row upon the Thames.

Meanwhile, Robert took Aimee away as much as possible from the gloomy atmosphere of Russell Square. They went together to the Parks and to Kensington Gardens, where the trees were fast beginning to put on their first, fresh green; and they went together to the different Catholic churches, for the beautiful services which abound in such variety during Lent; and during their walk to and fro Aimee learned more and more of the nobility of the mind that was hereafter to guide and govern her own. They were no ordinary lovers, these two; their affection was too pure, too deep, too *real* to need much outward demonstration, or many expressions of its warmth. They knew each possessed each other's heart, and that was enough. Their conversation often ran on grave subjects; and often, leaving the things of earth, they mounted to the thoughts of a higher and better life—and Aimee found, to her astonishment, that the young merchant, active in business, the laughing, merry Robert in society, was in reality leading in secret a life of strict Christian holiness, and that the secret of perpetual sunshine of his nature proceeded from his having found out where alone the heart of man can find it. Deep as was his love for her, Aimee knew it was second only to his love for his Creator; and at the call of duty he would not hesitate to sacrifice the dearest hopes of his life. Here, she felt, she could not follow him; her love for him nearly approached idolatry. The thought was painful, and she banished it from her mind, and gave herself up to the full enjoyment of her first perfect dream of bliss.

It was a late Easter, and the feast came in a glorious burst of spring. Only a brief ten days now intervened between Aimee's marriage day. Already the simple bridal attire was ready; "for," as Mrs. Connell observed, "there was nothing like being in time;" and the orange-flowers and the veil were already in the good housekeeper's charge, and she looked forward with no little pleasure to the novel sight of a wedding from her master's gloomy abode. Robert wished Aimee to see the house he had taken for their future home, and early in Easter week Mrs. Connell accompanied them thither, to give her sage advice as to the finishing touches of furniture and house-linen. It realy was a little gem of a house, surrounded with fairy-like gardens, with tall trees shading it on one side, and the silver Thames shining in the foreground; and as Aimee stood, silent with delight, before the French window of her drawing-room, Robert showed her a little steeple peeping through the trees, and told her the pretty new Catholic church was not five minutes' walk from their abode. "And this tiny room, dearest," said he, opening a miniature window adjoining the drawing-room, "I thought we would make into a little oratory, and hang up those pictures and crucifix which belonged to your dead mother."

Aimee's head fell on his shoulder. "Robert, I feel as if I were much *too bright* for earth. The cure always seemed to be trying to prepare me for a life of suffering, for a sad future, for a heavy cross. Long before mamma's death, he used to speak so much in the confessional of the love of suffering of *enduring* life—and I always believed he had some strange insight into the future. But where is the suffering in my lot now, Robert. I ask myself sometimes, *where is the cross?*"

"It will come, my dear one," answered he with his bright smile; "never fear, God gives us sunshine sometimes, and we must be ready for the clouds when they come, but we need not be looking out for them. We may have some great trials together—who knows? But now come and look at the way I am going to lay out my garden." Aimee followed him without answering, but in her heart there swelled the thought that, *with him*, no trial could be really great.

On returning to town, Robert took leave of Aimee at the station and put her and Mrs. Connell into a car, and promised to return to Russell Square for dinner. As the car rolled through the streets, now bright and cheerful in the sunlight, Aimee thought of her first journey through them six months before, and how her life, then so sad, had so strangely brightened; and it was with a radiant face that she entered the gloomy portal of her uncle's house.

The footman stopped Mrs. Connell as she followed her young mistress. "My master has come home," he said, "and asked for you, and precious cross he was because you wasn't in; he seems ill like, for he sent for a cup of tea."

"Master at home! a cup of tea!" ejaculated Mrs. Connell in dismay, and she hastened to the study to find Mr. Morton shivering over the fire, and so testy and irritable it was difficult to know what to do for him. He was evidently ill, but would not hear of sending for a doctor. "Nonsense, he was never ill; he should dine as usual," he exclaimed sharply; but when dinner-time came, he was unable to partake of it, and his illness was so evidently gaining on him that he *yielded to Robert's persuasion*, and Dr. Bruce was summoned. The doctor ordered his patient to bed, looked serious, and promised to come again in the morning. By that time Mr. Morton was delirious, and it was with no surprise that the household learnt the illness was a low typhus fever. A nurse was sent for to assist Mrs. Connell. Aimee was forbidden to approach the bedroom and the wedding was postponed.

CHAPTER V.

Robert's first wish had been to send Aimee away, but she shrank from the idea, and as Dr. Bruce considered the risk of infection had already been run, he did not press the point. He was careful to take her out as much as possible into the open air, and to prevent the silence and gloom of the house from depressing her. Mr. Morton's life was in the utmost danger, and therefore, do what they would, they could not be so cheerful as before. Hitherto the lovers had, by a tacit consent, avoided the mention of Aimee's uncle; for the six months that had elapsed since she had entered his doors had made no difference apparently in Mr. Morton's feelings toward her. He was as icy as ever, and when her engagement was announced, he never wished her joy or seemed glad of it for her sake. Cold and hard he naturally was, but Aimee could not but feel that he had an actual dislike to her; for he would smile now and then at Mr. Hulme's jokes, and his manner to Robert often verged on cordiality. With her only he was invariably silent, stern, and freezing; and poor Aimee's heart, so full of affection, so ready to be grateful for the little he did for her, felt deeply pained. But now Robert and she spoke anxiously of that soul that was hanging in the balance between life and death. He had lived without God, in open defiance of his laws, in avowed disbelief of the very existence of his Maker, and now was he, without an hour's consciousness, without any space for repentance, to be hurried into the presence of his Judge? They shrank in horror from the thought; and many were their prayers, many were the Masses offered up that God in his mercy would not cut off this man in his sins. Their prayers were granted, he did not die, and after three weeks of intense anxiety, the crisis passed, and he began to mend. Mental improvement was not to perceived with returning health. No expression of gratitude for having escaped death crossed his lips—apparently the shadow of death had not terrified him—he rose up from his sick-bed as hard, as cynical, as icy as before. And Aimee's fond hope that at last he would thaw to her was disappointed. As soon as Mr. Morton could leave his room, Dr. Bruce prescribed change of air, and it was arranged that Robert and Aimee should accompany him. Mrs. Connell was so thoroughly used up with nursing that she was to be sent to take a holiday among her friends in Ireland.

It was hard work to persuade Mr. Morton to go at all, still harder to find a place to suit him; he moved from spot to spot, till at last, to his companions' surprise, he seemed to take a fancy for a wild spot on the North Devon coast, and there they settled down for some weeks. It was a most out-of-the-way spot, and the only place in which they could reside was a homely village inn. It pleased him, however, and day by day he rapidly regained his strength. Robert and Aimee were well contented; the beauty and quiet of the place were delightful, and not a mile from it was a Catholic church, which happened to be served by a priest who had known Robert in his boyhood. Great was Aimee's pleasure in listening to their laughing reminiscences of by-gone years, and greater still was her happiness when she chanced to be left alone with Father Dunne, and he spoke of Robert, of his innocent childhood, his holy life, the bright example he set in his position, and assured her that few women had won such a prize as she had for life. Then Aimee's heart swelled with joy and pride. On one lovely day in June, Aimee was specially happy; for her uncle's improvement was so marked, Robert had been asking her to fix an early day in July for their wedding. Mr. Hulme and Mrs. Connell could join them, and they could be married at this little church, which had become dear to them, and Father Dunne could pronounce the nuptial benediction. Aimee greatly preferred this to being married in London, and her heart was very light. That morning she had knelt by Robert's side at communion. She could not help observing the rapt, almost celestial expression of his face afterward. It was the Feast of the Sacred Heart, and Father Dunne had benediction early in the afternoon.

As they walked to church together, their conversation turned on religious subjects, and Robert spoke in a more unreserved way than he had ever done before. He spoke of Heaven, the rest it would be after earth's toils, of the sweetness of sacrifice, of the joy of God's service. Aimee was silent. He looked down into her face.

"Well," he said, smiling, "is it not true?"

"O Robert!" she cried, "your love is heaven to me now. Is not, oh! is not mine so to you?"

"No, my Aimee," he answered, gravely yet sweetly; "my heart's darling, God first, then you."

"I cannot!" she answered, in a stifled voice.

"You will soon, darling, never fear. I prayed this morning that our love might be sanctified, might draw us closer to God—and I feel it will be so. Pray with me for it at benediction."

So they went and knelt before the altar, and their Lord blessed them as they bent before him. Passing out of church, Father Dunne joined them, and remarked on the beauty of the evening.

"We shall go with my uncle on the cliff," said Aimee, "and watch the coast."

"And perhaps I shall meet you there," answered the priest, "for I have a sick call from which I can return in that direction." So saying, he turned into another road.

Mr. Morton was ready when they returned to the inn, and the three passed up on the cliff and wandered on far beyond their usual distance. They came to a part where the cliff was one sheer sheet of rock descending to the beach, save one large crag which jutted out, and on one side obscured the view. Aimee had a great horror of looking down any steep place, and shrank back from the cliff, while Mr. Morton, who despised her weakness, always choose to walk at the very edge.

"See here, little one," said Robert, "here is a safe place for you." An iron stanchion had been thrust into the ground, and a thick rope was carelessly coiled round it. "It must be used for throwing signals to the boats below," said Robert, "but you can lean against it, Aimee."

"I think I shall step on that crag, Robert," said Mr. Morton, "if you will lend me an arm. I want to catch the whole view at once."

"O uncle!" said Aimee, in a tone of terror.

"Do you think it is very prudent, *sir?*" remarked Robert. "It is none too wide to stand on."

"Oh! very well," said Mr. Morton testily, "if you are afraid, I shall go by myself." Robert's merry laugh was the only answer, and, giving his arm to Mr. Morton, they both descended.

Aimee hid her face, sick with terror. She heard their voices for a minute, then, O horror! *what* was that? A crash, a rush, a sudden shout of pain! She rushed to the edge to see the craig detach itself from the rock, and the two figures falling. She saw both clutching for some support—she saw both catch hold of different bits of rock jutting out—she knew, for her senses were sharpened by fear, that they could not long sustain their weight. She thought of the rope, rushed for it, uncoiled it, and ran back. All was the work of one moment. An unnatural activity seemed to possess her. She was like one in a dream. She saw the rope would not reach both; she must choose between them; and Another could see her! But on the still evening air, with her ears quickened unnaturally she heard—oaths from one; from the other, "Lord, into thy hand I command my spirit."

Aimee threw the rope to Mr. Morton, and saw him catch it. The next instant she heard another crash—a dull *thud*, as of something falling—and nature could bear no more. Aimee fell on the ground, insensible, just as Father Dunne, and some laborers, alarmed by the shout in the distance, came running to the spot.

When Aimee woke to consciousness, she was in her own bed at the inn. Her first thought was, that she had been dreaming; but she started back, the landlady was walking by her, and now came forward, trying to put on an appearance of composure.

"My uncle?" said Aimee.

"Lies in bed, miss, and going on well," answered the good woman hurriedly.

Aimee gave one searching look into Mrs. Barton's face, and sank back on her pillow. In another moment the door opened, Mrs. Barton disappeared, and Father Dunne stood by her side. The silent look at him was all she gave.

"Yes, my child," he said, "your sacrifice has been accepted, and Robert is with those who follow the Lamb withersoever he goeth." And then, sitting down beside her, the priest drew out the truth, which, by a sudden instinct, he had all but guessed. No one but he ever knew it; it was generally believed that Robert had failed to catch the rope when thrown to him—he had fallen on the beach, and was dashed to pieces. Aimee could not look upon his form or kiss for the last time the pale, cold face. He had passed in one brief instant from her sight for aye. In the heat of noonday her sun had gone down.

From this fresh shock to his constitution Mr. Morton could not rally; he was fearfully shaken and bruised, but he lingered many weeks, and Aimee waited on him with a daughter's care.—And at last the stern heart was softened, and Mr. Morton implored mercy from the God he had so long offended. He died a sincere penitent; and the grief for Robert's death caused a salutary change in Mr. Hulme also. Aimee had now become a great heiress, but money cannot heal a broken heart. She would fain have remained in the little village where the tragedy of her life had been worked out, and devote herself to the poor; but Father Dunne would not allow it, and to him she now looked for guidance and help. He made her go to Italy and Rome in company with some quiet friends of his own, for two years; and time, and the sight of the woes of others, gradually softened Aimee's grief. And by degrees a great peace stole over her spirit; a love deeper than hers for Robert took possession of her heart; and the hour came when she acknowledged that in sacrifice lay much sweetness. She did not live many years; she distributed her large fortune among various good works. A fair church replaces the humble building in which Robert and she for the last time prayed together, and a convent stands near the spot where he breathed out his last sigh to God. And when her work was done, death came to Aimee; and, with a smile on her lips, and joy in her eyes, she went to meet again those fondly loved, so strangely lost on earth.

EDITORS IN FRANCE.

The flippant manner in which reference is made to the French press—its want of dignity, shallowness, etc., will find its antidote in the following remarks of an intelligent writer. The prevalent opinion would seem to be that the Anglo-Saxon race alone are equal to the task of journalism—the highest efforts of a Frenchman never reaching beyond a witty feuilleton. It were to be wished that some of their traits were more generally followed among us. The writer alluded to says:

Much as French *morals* are stigmatized, it cannot be denied that the columns of the French papers are *always* entirely free from personal slander, from all indecent details, from virulent abuse, often even the great law paper itself, the *Journal des Tribunaux*, in giving an account of a great trial, will give only the initials of the parties—deeming it unnecessary and cruel toward many innocent persons that the real name should pass the threshold of the courts. All journalism in France requires men of education. The French language is a most complicated one, being difficult even for a Frenchman to write correctly, so that not all with a fancied vocation can jump from setting type to writing an article. Then, though the circulation of newspapers in France cannot compare with that of newspapers in the United States, they are read by a larger portion of educated and informed people—therefore, the editor must be well informed, educated and well read; therefore, must he possess superior knowledge to the public who read him, therefore, must he know the theory of art, as well, if not better than the artists he is called upon to criticise.

That the editors and sub-editors are thus qualified for their position, is shown in the respect and deference paid to them by all classes.

THE STEAM MAN.—The New York *Tribune* says of the steam man made by Mr. Deddrick, of Newark, New Jersey, of which a description was given some time ago: "Many experiments have been made with the 'man' during the past fortnight, and although some accidents, such as are incident to new machinery, occurred, he finally works perfect. The old spiral springs have been replaced by stronger ones, so that the steam man is no longer weak in the knees, and upon steam being generated, he stumped off live a live Trojan."

DESTITUTION IN ENGLAND.

Notwithstanding the boasted advancement in material wealth which the English people are fond to vaunt on every occasion, the fact is unquestionable that there is more misery, destitution, and that sort of ignorance which besets a people, existing under the English government, than can be found in any other in Europe. What we mean by besotted ignorance, is such as was brought before the public in the testimony taken before a committee of the House of Commons, when the disgraceful fact was made palpable, that a certain percentage of those working in the collieries never heard the name of Jesus Christ. The source from whence the following is derived, places it beyond doubt as authentic—that source being the London *Examiner*:

The most populous quarter of the metropolis is craving for food, and *Civis Britannicus* has to fall back on public and private charity for the means of keeping body and soul together. It is deplorable to find such a state of things co-existent with and contiguous to an accumulation of wealth such as was never aggregated before within the same space. A world of coined gold in the banks and a world of skilled labor in the hovels, and no employment for either the one or the other—Midas and Misery in perilous proximity. Let us not be unjust, however, to Midas. The gold which he cannot use to a profit for himself he gives with an unstinting hand to save his poor neighbors from starvation. The mischief is, that the demands of poverty rise with the supply of charity. Craving want pursues willing wealth as the shadow follows the substance. The willingness of wealth teaches want to crave; and in this lies the great danger of the situation.

We are told that there are some eighty or ninety relief committees in the East End of London, all more or less engaged in supplying the necessities of an unemployed population. There are, besides, the exertions of the clergy and of benevolent laymen. But all this voluntary machinery, with the aid of the ordinary legal relief of the workhouse, is inadequate to cope with the ever-rising tide of pauperism.

The London *Daily News* says: Every winter the dry and rocky bed of human misery in this rich man's country becomes a torrent and almost an inundation of distress. Instantly and invariably society sets itself to work in an irregular and bewildered fashion to arrest by dykes and drains this devastating deluge of unknown and unnumbered fellow-creatures who have drifted from penury to starvation. Our English public prides itself on its philanthropy, and rejoices in the subscription lists spread before its eyes every morning like an oblation. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are distributed by checks, to the great relief and satisfaction of the charitable donors, to all sorts of committees, and lists of secretaries and collectors. Nothing was ever comparable to the organization and abundance of British charity. But where does all the money go to? Still the cry of want rises up, and the torrent overflows, and men and women and children starve, and are forgotton and still the checks are poured in. Then comes the everlasting confession of incompetence to deal with such an unexampled amount of suffering.

Every year the amount of suffering is "unexampled." Is there no possibility in this classic land of men of business, of colossal industry and enterprise, of obscure but enormous opulence, of arriving at some tolerably direct and effective system of charitable assistance and relief? There is no other country in the world that has a poor law which makes starvation impossible, and under which starvation is an every day occurrence. There is no other country in the world that professes, as England does, to find bread for every man who is willing to work, yet leaves hundreds of men and women willing to work, to perish for want of clothing and a loaf. There is no other country in the world that has so many millionaires—good men, for the most part, and church or chapel-goers. And among them all there has been one Peabody; and he is not an English but an American philanthropist.

ANSWER TO PRAYER.

A correspondent of the *Catholic Standard* communicates the following to that paper:

A little anecdote I heard the other day will not be out place here. A gentleman who dislikes the Catholic religion, but who is forced to admit that the Catholic educational institutions surpass all others, concluded to withdraw his daughter from an "indifferent" private school, to put her at a well-known Catholic academy. Of course, she was there only to avail herself of the superior instructions of the good ladies, but her religious convictions were not to be interfered with—a compact which was certainly observed. Well, the end of the scholastic year arrived, and the young Protestant passed a most brilliant examination and obtained one of the first premiums. On her return home, as her parents were rejoicing at her success: "Ah!" exclaimed the young girl, "I would not have had the prize if it had not been for the Virgin Mary!"

"Why, daughter," queried the astonished father, "what do you mean?"

"Oh! I was so much afraid I would not pass a good examination that I prayed for the Virgin to help me."

"What! did they make you join in their superstitious practices?"

"No, father, nobody told me. I thought of it myself, and I prayed alone in my room; and I know the Virgin Mary helped me, for, every time I prayed, my task seemed easier."

Happy young girl! I do not know if your parents have gotten over the shock, but I am sure they will bless the day on which they entered you in that academy. You are right to think Mary helped you. Your childish faith was rewarded in order to make it grow stronger. One day you will ask her to help you to find the True Light, and she will guide you then, as she does now.

THE POPE'S GOVERNMENT.—As many persons, even Catholics, think that the Pope's government is entirely, if not very nearly so, composed of ecclesiastics, we shall give the real facts of the case thus, from official documents: The chief council of the Pope is composed of eight persons, but one of whom is an ecclesiastic. In the ministry of justice is one ecclesiastic, with eighteen laymen; civil tribunal, three ecclesiastics, and one hundred and sixteen lay judges; criminal tribunals, six hundred and twenty laymen, and not one ecclesiastic; finance, three ecclesiastics, two thousand and seventeen laymen; commerce and public works, two ecclesiastics, and one hundred and sixteen laymen.

In England will be found bishops in Parliament and parsons on the judicial bench; and in Ireland may be seen the richest church in the world fastened on the necks of the poorest people, who reject its teachings and its doctrines.