

# The Case Of Dr. McGlynn

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In the collection of a rich lady recently deceased, placed on exhibition last year in this city prior to its sale by auction, there was a little picture by a French artist that brought under the hammer thirty thousand dollars. And for those who can afford to buy great paintings this was none too much for the little picture of perhaps a couple of square feet. It was not merely marvelously drawn and colored, but was one of those paintings at which one can look long and look again, because of the meaning they express.

This painting, which now adorns a railroad millionaire's mansion instead of hanging, as it ought to hang, on the walls of some public art gallery, is entitled "The Missionary's Story." In the magnificent salon of a Roman palace a simple monk of one of the missionary orders is telling a story of hardship and martyrdom in some far off heathen land to two young cardinals seated easily on a couch. In the middle ground another dignitary of the church is helping himself to refreshment from a well-filled table, while a handsome dog, on his hind legs, wistfully begs, and in a corner of the apartment the heads of some of the great orders are gossiping and laughing. The earnestness of the monk on the one side, the abstraction and languor of the two cardinals as they listen to what to them is "a tale of little meaning, though its words be strong," and the utter indifference of the other dignitaries, produce an impression which it is hard to convey fully in words. It is the contrast between the earnestness and devotion of the men who have carried the banner of the Cross throughout all lands and the worldliness of the polished hier-

archical aristocracy, who out of their devotion and their sacrifice enjoy the sweets of power and the luxuries of wealth.

Take the history of France and read of princely cardinals, of luxurious bishops and abbots and of supple, cringing abbots, fawning and intriguing in the court of Versailles, and you will understand how the Revolution, stung to madness, decreed the abolition of Christianity and set up the altar of reason. Turn to the pages that tell of the poor priest driving the dead cart in the plague; of Vincent de Paul serving the galley slave; of sisters of charity toiling among the poor like ministering angels, and you will know how Christianity has endured and yet endures.

So it has always been. Christ was cradled in a manger, and came forth from the home of a working carpenter to preach to the tramp and the outcast. Peter was a fisherman, Paul a tent-maker. It was among the despised and down-trodden and the generous-hearted who felt for the oppressed that the gospel of hope for the poor and of menace to the rich made its way. Christ's declaration was that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it; yet to the high priests of Jerusalem, as to the pontiffs of pagan Rome, the gospel of the common fatherhood of God was rank communism, to be trodden out with anathema, with steel and with fire, because it threatened the privileges of the rich and powerful. Hunted, persecuted, through the toils of its missionaries and the agonies of its martyrs, Christianity made its way, until it had become a power which the greatest of politicians could not despise, and in what is called the "conversion of Constantine," Roman imperialism, with all it represented, was married in form with Christian truth.

From that time, and in every land where it has

become a dominant religion, the very powers that at first fought so bitterly against Christianity have sought to use it. This has been true of all forms of Christianity. The Catholic Church has been used to bolster the power of tyrants, and to keep the masses quiet under social injustice; the Greek Church to support the absolutism of the Czar. Luther hurled his direct anathemas against German peasants driven into agrarian revolt by the unbearable oppressions of their lords; the English Church has been the staunch supporter of regal tyranny and landlord robbery; and Presbyterian ministers have preached to Scottish lands-men that in resisting eviction from their homes they would be resisting the will of God; while in our own day and place the popular preachers of the great liberal denominations, however careless they may be of the charge of heterodoxy, are careful to temper the gospel to their wealthy sheep.

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There is another thing worth noting. Ireland was never conquered by the Romans, as were England and the Scottish lowlands. The idea that land could be made private property so as to shut out any class of the people from all legal rights to the use of the earth, opposed as it is to ancient Irish law and customs, was only forced upon Ireland in comparatively modern times, by the force of English arms and the treachery of Irish chiefs, bought, as were the Scottish chieftains, to betray their countrymen by the promise of a change of the tribal tenure of land into an individual tenure which would make it absolutely their own. It is only where the English tongue has supplanted the Irish tongue that Irishmen have forgotten their ancient traditions and become accustomed to regard private property in land as a matter of course.

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"God bless you, my son!" said the venerable Bishop Duggan of Clonfert to me when I was in

Ireland five years ago. "In what you say of the equal rights of all men in the soil of their native land there is to me nothing new or startling, nor will there be anything new in it to any man who was held to the breast of an Irish-speaking mother. Your doctrines are the old beliefs of our race. When a little boy, sitting in the evening in the group about a turf fire in the west of Ireland, I heard the same doctrines from the lips of men who never spoke a word of English. Our people have bowed to might; but they never have acknowledged the right of making land private property. In the old tongue they have treasured the old truth, and now in the providence of God the time has come for that truth to be asserted. I am an old man now, and may not see the victory; but I tell you that no matter what may be arrayed against it, there is no earthly power that can stop this movement."

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And this is characteristic of the Gaelic people, as I afterward found it, not only in the west of Ireland. To the thoroughly Anglicized Irishman the doctrine that "God made the land for the people"—the doctrine that property in land cannot have the sanction that attaches to property in things produced by labor—may seem a new-fangled notion; but to the descendants of the men who were driven into the hills and bogs of the west, with the cry of "To Connaught or to hell!" and who with the old language have preserved the old traditions, it comes like a half-forgotten, but still familiar and self-evident truth. The rallying cry of "The land for the people!" with which Michael Davitt raised the banner of the Land League, wakes a quick response in the bosom of the Celt.

This is the stock from which, like Michael Davitt and Patrick Ford, Dr. McGlynn comes.

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