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OUR PRECIOUS BODIES



RICHARD A. WELFLE S. J.

THE QUEEN'S WORK

3742 West Pine Boulevard
ST. LOUIS, MO.



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Our Precious Bodies

By

RICHARD A. WELFLE, S. J.

“KEN, we must see Benares,” Ann declared, as she finished reading, in her tourist’s guide, the brief sketch of this ancient stronghold of paganism. “Look. It’s called here ‘The Rome of Hinduism,’ and it says that no one has really seen India if he hasn’t spent at least a day in ‘The Sacred City on the Ganges.’”

A momentous change had recently come into Ken’s life. For it was now scarcely more than a month since he and Ann had entered into a life partnership as Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hollis. The event had taken place in St. Patrick’s Cathedral, back in New York, and that same evening, when the Berengaria dropped down the Hudson and headed out to sea, Ken and Ann were on board, starting on their world tour. They were now doing India, traveling north from Bombay in a compartment to themselves on the Punjab Mail, and Ken still found himself in the stage of acquiescence.

“Why, by all means we’ll see Benares. The trip is yours, Ann. We’ll spend tomorrow in Agra, take a look-see at the Taj Mahal, and then the next stop will be Benares. Right?”

"Ken, you're a darling," Ann cooed.

"I know it," said Ken unblushingly. "And a year from now I hope you won't forget you admitted it."

Temples, Temples Everywhere

The Hindu pantheon, it seems, can always make room for one more divinity, but surely it approaches the absolute limit in Benares. As Ken and Ann followed their Hindu guide through the narrow and torturous dirty lanes, they encountered at every few yards another temple or shrine, surmounted by Vishnu's gilded trident or the symbol of some other equally prominent Hindu god, where worshiping pilgrims from every part of India sprinkled their holy Ganges water and offered garlands of golden marigolds or crimson hibiscus flowers to their idols.

"There are some fifteen hundred temples here in Benares," boasted their Hindu guide, and Ken and Ann were quite willing to accept his figure unchallenged. "And that doesn't include all these smaller wayside shrines built in the walls and set up under the sacred pipul trees.

"Let us now go down to the ghats along the Ganges," the guide proposed. And Ann clung close to Ken as they passed by ugly grotesque gods and goddesses, ash-smeared sadhus and half-naked fakirs, holy cows and goats and sacred bulls that wandered loose in the streets.

They halted near Manikarnika Ghat, which

was apparently the center of activity and which commanded an unobstructed view up and down the sacred river.

Hindus Burn Their Dead

"Gads, what a sight!" Ken exclaimed, as he and Ann took in the strange scene with wide-eyed amazement.

And indeed it was a scene to call forth exclamations. There were more shrines on the stone piers and terraces that ran down to the water's edge; temples partially submerged in the stream; filthy, reeking temples on the ghat steps. There were Brahmans with sleek bronze bodies, and sannyasis with only a cloth wrapped about their loins—holy men all, lost in contemplation or muttering their mantras. Large, palmleaf umbrellas, like overgrown toadstools, dotted the shore and sheltered devout bathers as they came up from the river to perform "puja" (worship) and mark their bodies with the signs of Shiva or Vishnu. The women's bathing ghat, with the brilliant reds and greens and yellows of their sarees (dresses), showed up like a multicolored flower garden. Several sacred bulls were strutting about, mingling with the crowds and snatching at the garlands of marigolds worn by the pious pilgrims, or munching the flowers strewn around the innumerable shrines. Pigeons went fluttering overhead among the gilded spires of the temples, and goats were clambering unmolested on their stone steps.

Ann had already begun to feel that she had had about enough of Benares. Something now met her gaze that left no further doubt about it. For, a short distance down along the river, she caught sight of the burning ghats, black with soot and columns of dense blue smoke rising from the funeral pyres. And close by, stretched out along the sacred stream, lay the corpses on their crudely constructed biers of bamboo.

“Come, Ken,” said Ann limply. “Let us go back to the hotel.”

Off for Darjeeling

The following morning, Ken and Ann, glad that they were leaving Benares behind, and fully convinced that it had nothing in common with Rome, even though it was given in the guide book as ‘The Rome of Hinduism,’ entrained for Darjeeling, a mountain resort, consisting chiefly of a picturesque cluster of red roofs and glistening white walls, clinging to a ridge some seven thousand feet up in the foothills of the Himalayas, and overlooking broad deep valleys, whose slopes are green with fields of tea.

They traveled all morning across the sun-baked plains of ancient Hindustan, and found it exceedingly tedious. But shortly after dinner the train stopped at a fairly large station, and as Ken and Ann surveyed from their compartment window the colorful Eastern crowd on the platform, they beheld a tall stalwart figure wearing a

white sun-helmet and a light, white cassock working his way through the throng up along the train, evidently looking for a vacant seat in the overcrowded carriages.

Enter Father Farrell

"I'll bet he's a missionary." Ann guessed correctly. "Let's invite him in with us."

"Right!" Ken agreed, and immediately called out: "Father, there's plenty of room in here."

The white-clad missionary acknowledged the invitation with a smile that lit up his deeply tanned features, and approaching the compartment, he glanced at the lettering on the side of the carriage.

"First class," he observed. "My ticket is only good for third."

"But we have the compartment chartered, Father," Ann promptly assured him. "And we'll be delighted to have you with us."

There must have been something familiar in Ann's voice that stirred the missionary, for his deep-blue eyes suddenly kindled.

"Tell me," he said eagerly, "are you young folks from God's country?"

"If you mean America, Father, you're right. How did you guess it?"

"Your speech betrays you." The priest laughed as he stepped into the car. "I happen to hail from Chicago myself. I'm Father Farrell."

And the train pulled out of the station

with the compartment ringing with rejoicings over this entirely unexpected meeting.

The Church's Attitude

"How long have you been out here in India, Father?" Ken inquired, when the first burst of enthusiasm had quieted down.

"Going on six years," Father Farrell replied simply. "I've got a flourishing little mission over here north of the Ganges and I find it great fun showing these poor pagans the way to heaven. I hated to leave them, even for these two weeks, to go up to the hills for my annual retreat. I'll bet you wouldn't mind staying out here in India yourselves. Now would you?"

"I certainly would," Ann protested vigorously. "Father, we've just come from Benares, and we couldn't get away fast enough."

Father Farrell suspected he knew why.

"Did you see the burning ghats?" he asked.

"We did, Father. And the sight of them gave me the willies. They're horrible!" Ann shuddered at the recollection of those smoking funeral pyres.

"I agree perfectly," Father Farrell admitted. "Six years here in India haven't diminished my dislike for that unchristian practice one bit."

"The Church forbids cremation, doesn't it, Father?" said Ann.

"Yes, it does. And rather emphatically too."

Ken wasn't so sure that he knew the reason for this.

"Why precisely?" he asked. "Is it simply because the thing is so repulsive in itself?"

"Well, that's one reason. Burning, if not positively inhuman, is certainly very irreverent at least. It is a violent destruction of the body, whereas the process of decomposition which takes place after burial is according to nature. And of course, for a Catholic this irreverence is increased immeasurably. Our bodies are holy. They are the temples of the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul assures us, for they have been sanctified by the reception of the sacraments, and in particular they have been nourished by the body and blood of Our Lord."

Another Reason

"But as a matter of fact," Ken urged, "cremation isn't restricted to pagan countries. There are plenty of crematories in Europe and back home in America."

"Well I know it," Father Farrell replied. "And that fact is just one more reason why the Church condemns cremation. Perhaps it's the most cogent one too, for outside of pagan countries cremation is generally equivalent to a public profession of irreligion and materialism. When cremation was introduced into Europe back in the nineteenth century, the motive behind the movement was to do away with Christian burial as

being too apt to inculcate the truths of the immortality of the soul and the Catholic doctrine of the resurrection of the body. Catholic cemeteries with their crosses and crucifixes were so many eyesores to the enemies of the Church. These sacred symbols of our salvation were too prominent reminders of the Church's beautiful and consoling doctrine that we shall one day rise again with Christ. It is well to remember that it was the Freemasons and other societies inimical to the Church who introduced cremation into Europe, and you may be pretty sure that among those who advocate cremation today our faith in the resurrection of the body is repudiated. But to deny that, according to St. Paul, leads to a denial of our entire faith. Little wonder then that the Church, in order to safeguard one of her fundamental dogmas, has condemned the burning of the dead, except when absolutely necessary, as, say, during plagues."

"Really, Father," said Ken, "I'm glad this subject came up. I had almost forgotten that we Catholics actually do believe in the resurrection of the body."

"Why, Ken!" Ann gasped, midly scandalized, "you ought to hang your head for saying such a thing."

"Well, what I meant to say," Ken hastened to explain, "was that I never attached so much importance to our resurrection as Father says St. Paul did. Please go on, Father."

Tone and Color

Father Farrell removed a New Testament from his traveling bag.

"You're getting me started on a pet subject of mine," he remarked, still smiling at Ken's confusion. And he picked out the fifteenth chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, with a facility that argued familiarity with the passage. "But then St. Paul seems to have been rather fond of the subject too. I believe, if we grasped the significance of this article of our faith more fully, it would give tone and color to our lives and foster in us a deeper sense of Christian hope, together with a higher esteem for those precious bodies of ours.

"The poor pagan who looks forward to an endless series of rebirths and perhaps hopes for the final attainment of Nirvana, whatever that may mean for him, is badly off. And the atheist, the agnostic, the materialist, the rationalist and nonbelievers in general are worse off. Perpetual sleep, annihilation, absorption into 'the absolute,' that sort of thing isn't very apt to engender hope and confidence, is it? One need not be surprised at the despair in the world with such hollow creeds in vogue. Even the heaven of the Mohammedan, with the sensual pleasures it promises, isn't a very flattering enticement for a high-minded soul.

"The Catholic, however, has something very definite and eminently desirable to look forward to after death; he is buoyed up with

the joyous anticipation of an eternity of glory, not only for his soul, but for his body as well."

Ken and Ann were rapidly becoming convinced that Father Farrell really was on his pet subject.

Important

"To St. Paul our resurrection is a pivotal dogma of our entire faith. He argues like this: 'If there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.'

"So you see he unites our own resurrection by an indissoluble bond to Christ's resurrection. In other words, Christ's triumph over death is our triumph. The two are inseparably linked together, and therefore to deny that we shall rise again is at the same time to deny that Christ rose from the dead. But the dogma of Christ's resurrection is the very foundation of our entire faith. Once that is undermined, our faith topples to the ground. Hence the importance of our resurrection too."

Ken, who had been following closely, wasn't quite satisfied.

"Father," he said, "I see why we must by all means hold on to the resurrection of Christ; that was the seal to His divinity, as it were. Everything depends on it. But that isn't the point here. The question here is *our* resurrection, isn't it? And you say St. Paul proves it by inseparably uniting

our resurrection to Christ's. But why? Does St. Paul show this union?"

"That's no little point," Father Farrell assured him. "Indeed St. Paul makes a great deal of it.

Redemption

"But," Father Farrell continued, "in order to understand better why St. Paul unites our resurrection with Christ's, let us first see how our resurrection fits into the scheme of our redemption. For our victory over death is after all one of the chief factors in our redemption.

"We may ask how did death come about? What caused it?

"Well, we know that death made its entrance into the world hard upon the heels of sin. It is one of the bitter fruits of Adam's transgression; the punishment of his sin. And just as every man born of Adam participates in his disobedience by that solidarity of the human race which makes us one with Adam, so too we must all taste death, which his sin brought into the world. But Christ, the second Adam, our Redeemer, has come to us. Through His crucifixion we have overcome original sin in baptism. So through His resurrection shall we triumph over death, which was inflicted as a punishment of original sin. In other words, our resurrection is a part of our redemption; it completes Christ's work of redemption in the case of each individual. St. Paul says: 'By a man came death, and by a Man the

resurrection of the dead. And as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive . . . And the enemy, death, shall be destroyed last."

One With Christ

"Now," Father Farrell went on, "from all this we get a hint why St. Paul unites our resurrection with Christ's. Because of the union of the human race with Adam all men partake in Adam's sin and must suffer its punishment of death, and now, in a similiar way, all who are baptized become spiritually reborn and one with Christ. There is a union between Adam and the rest of mankind; similarly there is a union between Christ and the faithful. And just as all must die because of Adam's sin, so will all who remain faithfully united to Christ most surely overcome death with Christ. For by baptism we have been incorporated as members into the mystical body of Christ. And since He, the Head of that mystical body, has risen from the dead, so we, the members, shall not taste death forever. 'Know you not,' says St. Paul, 'that all who are baptized in Christ Jesus are baptized in his death? For we are buried together with Him by baptism into death; that, as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.' And the reason is," Father Farrell commented, "because we be-

long to the same Mystical Body of which Christ is the Head, and the Head cannot rise without the members; it would be incomplete."

Father Farrell paused, for he noticed a question mark in Ken's look.

This Same Body

"So, then, Father," said Ken, "does that mean that this *same* body of mine, once death has claimed it for its own, is actually to take on life once more? Is that to be taken literally?"

"It is," Father Farrell replied. "Undoubtedly. We have Christ's own word for it. He has even given us the Holy Eucharist as a pledge. 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven,' He says; 'if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever . . . He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' Now Christ doesn't say that He will raise some *other* body up, but that body which partakes of His body and blood. It must be that same body; otherwise the very notion of the resurrection is destroyed. For the resurrection doesn't mean the acquiring of a new body, but the reunion of this same body with the soul which gave it life here on earth.

"Besides it wouldn't be just that these bodies which we now possess should labor and suffer and assist the soul in serving God, and then another body get the reward. Christ's risen body bore the radiant wounds

by which He had glorified His Father upon the cross. And it was the same body which participated in His glorious victory over death. Those glorified wounds of our Savior are an eternal source of joy to Him. And in the same way our sufferings borne with patience and resignation for love of Him will become for us so many sources of glory and happiness that will last forever. Yes, these same precious bodies of ours will rise again.

Reasonable

"In a way," Father Farrell continued, "reason seems to demand that our bodies should be united with our souls again after death, for the soul by itself is not a complete human being, but only the chief constituent in humanity. Man is a composite of body and soul. It is the very nature of a soul to dwell in a body and vitalize it, and this nature is not altered by death. So, even after its separation from the body, the soul still retains this inclination to be united with the body which it once inhabited and which was its coworker and companion during its earthly existence. Thus, although the soul cannot strictly demand its reunion with the body and could be active and happy without it, nevertheless the eternal privation of it would seem to be contrary to its nature. And if the body faithfully serves the soul in glorifying God here on earth, why shouldn't it share in the heavenly reward?"

"This is why a Catholic can smile at

suffering, and even at death itself. He can interpret misfortune and adversity in their true light. For him trials and afflictions are often positive graces to wean him from the petty vanities of this world, which is not his true home, and in any case he is sure that all 'the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the joy to come.' For him death is not the end of all; it is but the beginning of an eternity of glory for the body as well as for the soul."

Oriental

Our resurrection had never meant so much to Ken and Ann before. They were beginning to appreciate what a beautifully consoling and inspiring truth it really is.

But their attention was presently diverted. For the train was now pulling into a station, and still unaccustomed to the strange ways and the hubbub of a vociferating Eastern crowd, Ken and Ann gazed in bewilderment at the motley throng which surged on the platform before them.

What a mixture of races and what odd styles of dress! There were Europeans and Anglo-Indians, wearing sun-helmets and khaki shorts, and pretentious Bengali babus with betel-stained lips and sporting canes in imitation of the English sahib. There were dark-skinned and sullen-eyed Hindus and beady-eyed sons of Islam, whose apparel ranged from the coolie's scanty lap-lap about the loins and turbans of every color of the rainbow to the Mohammedan's red fez and

full-length skirt or baggy pantaloons. Two tall, fine-looking fellows, clad in white pajama-like trousers, tight-fitting velvet vests and yellow turbans, Father Farrell identified for Ken and Ann as Punjabis from over near the Afgan border.

"Baksheesh, Sahib!"

And the Babel of tongues that rent the air! Ken and Ann were able to make out only the broken English of the babus, but there were also Hindustani and Urdu and Bengali, with a number of other dialects thrown in for good measure. There were the strident cries of the coolies quarreling over the baggage and the monotonous, mournful wails of the beggars, many of them maimed and blind and others infected with disease, who pestered the passengers with their plaintive pleadings: "Baksheesh, sahib! Bakssheesh, dijiye!" which being interpreted means something like "Please, mister, give me a tip!"

As the train steamed out of the station, Ken caught sight of a strange-looking figure out on the edge of the crowd.

"What's that fellow doing over there?" he quickly asked of Father Farrell.

The man in question was innocent of all clothing save for the merest strip about the loins and he was squatting cross-legged, motionless as a statue, with one arm raised in the air. And the arm appeared to be slightly withered.

"Oh, he's a yogi," Father Farrell explained.

"He's doing penance. And by the looks of that arm he's been doing it for a good long time too."

"Ye gods!" was all Ken could manage to utter.

Subjection

Ann, however, seemed to have been rather favorably impressed by the yogi's strange performance.

"That isn't so silly, Ken," she said. "We do penance too. Perhaps not in such an outlandish way; but even at that some of the saints did things almost as queer. Didn't they, Father?"

Father Farrell was smiling.

"Did you ever hear of the famous ascetic Simeon Stylites?" he asked.

"No, I don't think so."

"Well, he was pretty original in his method of mortification. He fasted rigorously and lived on top of a pillar for I don't know how many years."

"See!" Ann triumphed. "Ken, you're simply too worldly-minded to appreciate such things."

"All right," said Ken dryly. "When we get back home and settle down to light house-keeping, we'll rent the mooring mast on top of the Empire State, and then we'll see how long your appreciation lasts."

Poor Ann's feeble attempt at a retort was

drowned in an outburst of laughter. But Father Farrell came to her rescue.

"In the first place," he said, "it isn't likely that yogi back there is performing his penance with the same motive that prompted the saints. Our bodies are not to be treated as though they were something evil in themselves. They are intended to be helpmates to our souls in working out our salvation. However, some mortification is good for us, even necessary, in order that our bodies may not fall a prey to concupiscence and thus be robbed of their future glory. For this reason we are taught to bring our bodies into subjection, for that unruly law of our members which St. Paul speaks of and which would have us do what reason and our better selves forbid, is another consequence of original sin which we must overcome. The Catholic who is faithful to all his obligations and who accepts trials and afflictions with patience and resignation will generally find abundant mortification to bring his body with its rebellious inclinations into subjection. And at the same time he is preparing the glory which will be the body's reward for faithfully serving the soul on its pilgrimage to heaven."

Immortality

There was a brief period of silence.

"Father," Ken began, "a little while ago, you said that these same bodies of ours will rise again, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"And once they rise, they are to remain in glory forever."

"Correct."

"But how is that possible? These bodies of ours are material. How can they become immortal?"

"Ah, ha! Listen to that!" cried Father Farrell. "There's something to that."

"My, I'm proud of you, Ken!" Ann contributed teasingly. "I don't think I'll leave you after all."

"This miserable body of mine," Father Farrell went on, "subject to every infirmity, how can it partake of a life of immortality? That's the difficulty, isn't it? Now, if you don't mind, let me answer it by reading something at you."

He removed a badly worn notebook from his traveling bag.

The How of It

"I always glance through this during the days of my annual retreat. It's a sort of spiritual scrapbook of mine," Father Farrell explained. "Now here are some jottings which I copied from a volume of St. John Chrysostom years ago, when I was still a student in the seminary. Chrysostom is here addressing the doubters and nonbelievers of his day. He says:

"'Shall He who for thy sake maketh the corn to grow not be able to reawaken thee for His own sake? . . . Can it be that man,

who alone on earth knows and honors God, is destined to perish forever? Yet thou doubttest whether thy body can be restored after death, since it will decay. Tell me, O man, what wast thou before thy mother conceived thee? Nothing, absolutely nothing; and cannot God, who created thee out of nothing, even more easily restore thee out of something? It is easier to restore that which once existed than to bring into being that which never existed at all. God, who created thee in thy mother's womb, can surely renew thy being from the womb of earth. Art thou afraid lest thy dry bones could not again be clothed with flesh? Cease to measure God's omnipotence by the standard of thy weakness.'

"Now that of course answers the difficulty in a way," Father Farrell commented. "Nothing is impossible with God. However, the precise manner in which our resurrection will be effected must ever remain a mystery for us. We find it almost impossible even to imagine a natural organic body which is eternally incorruptible. But St. Paul has some beautiful and illuminating things to say about this. Here's what he tells us:

Christ the Second Adam

"The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible; and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality. And when this mortal hath

put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?"

"A fine passage that, isn't it? And now, just before this, he states more explicitly the changes that the body will undergo:

"'It is sown in corruption; it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it shall rise in glory. It is sown a natural body; it shall rise a spiritual body.'

"We shall receive from Christ, the second Adam, a celestial body. True, it will be the same body which we inherited from the first Adam, but it will be glorified.

A Little Less Than the Angels

"Then we'll become angels," Ann reflected. "Won't we?"

Father Farrell enjoyed this.

"As a matter of fact," he said, "St. Luke tells us: 'They that shall be accounted worthy of . . . the resurrection . . . are equal to the angels.' But I think this must be properly understood. For the angels are pure spirits; they never had to bother with bodies, whereas it is the very nature of our souls to be united to a body. So, strictly, we shall not become angels; essentially our personality will not be changed. Nevertheless we shall become only a little less than the angels. For our glorified bodies will no longer be subject to humiliating necessities and infirmities and limitations of nature. They will rise in honor, worthy of the

highest esteem; in power, masters over time and space, immune from every suffering, and enjoying perfect freedom of action; they will become spiritualized bodies, shining like the noonday sun and clothed in an immortal splendor, resembling the glorified body of the risen Christ.

Surfeited With Sin

"A moment ago," Father Farrell continued, "we were discussing the necessity of subjecting one's body and of mastering our passions. Now that of course constitutes a stumbling-block of the first magnitude for one without faith in our resurrection. Why shouldn't such a one gratify his natural impulses to the full? Sheer decency might restrain him, but if he's logical, since the grave is the ultimate goal, he'll indulge his body and get all the thrill out of life that he can. St. Paul himself says: 'If I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me if the dead rise not again? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die.'

"But such a wantonness of indulgence is sure to have disastrous consequences. You know, there is such a thing as contempt of death. It was rather common among the pagans of old. And I have no doubt there are modern pagans to whom life is nothing more than a plaything and who likewise gradually come to develop a cynical contempt of death.

"It's really the culmination of a wasted life and the penalty for an immoral indulgence of the flesh. The voice of conscience

has long since been stifled, they become surfeited with sin, life has no further attraction, a cloud of melancholy settles down upon them with no ray of hope to dispel it; so one last sneer at death, and then the end . . .

"It's really a terrible punishment when God permits one to lose that salutary fear of death which is born of the belief in a day of retribution to come, and which is perhaps the last thing to go of all that could bring a reckless sinner around to God.

All Will Rise

Ken was wondering what will happen to the reprobate.

"What about the fellow who commits suicide, Father," he asked, "or the wicked in general? Will their bodies also rise again?"

"Indeed they will," Father Farrell replied. "All will rise. But, as St. Paul says, all will not be changed. Or in the words of St. John: 'They that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.' In other words, there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust, but only the bodies of the just will be glorified. This is to be their recompense for faithful submission and service to the soul. Those who unfortunately have not kept their bodies in subjection, but have polluted their 'temples of the Holy Ghost' by sin, well, they will get their just deserts, too—but not in heaven."

Up In the Foothills

The little train that does the climb in the mountains had already passed through the strip of jungle that separates the hills from the plains, and was now winding in and out of rugged ravines, skirting precipitous cliffs, and crossing crystal streams that went racing down their boulder-strewn beds to form the twisted silver ribbons gleaming amidst the dark foliage of the hot, moist valleys far below. The lower spurs and ridges, clad in a wealth of semitropic vegetation, displayed an exuberance of magnificent greenery such as Ken and Ann had never seen before. The trees were lavishly festooned with tufts of beardlike mosses, clusters of aerial orchids, lichens and clinging vines, while the ground below was concealed beneath a profusion of plants and shrubs, trailing creepers, banks of giant ferns, and flowering rhododendrons.

But higher up all this luxuriant growth had been ruthlessly cleared away. For here were the tea gardens. The steep slopes, worked up into innumerable little terraces, now took on the appearance of never-ending stairs, rising from the valley floors to thousands of feet above, each terrace lined with stubby green bushes of tea. And here and there, on some picturesque ridge, the red roof and glistening white walls of a planter's bungalow appeared among a clump of tapering pines, lending color to the landscape.

Father Farrell glanced at his watch.

"I'm to spend these two weeks," he re-

marked, "with Father Gilford, who has his mission among the coolie villages up here in the tea estates. So we'll soon be going our separate ways again."

But We Shall Meet Again

Both Ken and Ann were wishing they could enjoy his company longer.

"Father," said Ann, putting her thoughts into words, "our meeting has been delightful. I only regret that it must be so brief."

Father Farrell smiled. "But we shall meet again," he said, and Ann guessed what he meant.

"Well," she replied, "your words on our resurrection encourage that hope."

Father Farrell seemed to grow thoughtful.

"A Catholic has every reason to be the happiest of mortals," he said, "even when his dearest friend takes leave of him." (Ken and Ann knew that he was now referring to that parting which comes when we lay a loved one to rest.) We know that the separation will not be everlasting; we shall meet again in that glorious realm of unclouded joy and endless bliss where partings shall be no more.

"And what an ecstasy of unimaginable delight they are going to experience who, having been near and dear to one another here on earth, shall have risen and meet in their glorified bodies! What a time of rejoicing that is going to be! Friends and acquaintances, brother and sister, husband

and wife, mother and son—all now radiant as the noonday sun!

That First Easter Morn

“When I think of that moment,” Father Farrell went on, “I like to picture to myself this joyous scene which must have taken place on the first Easter morn: It is still very early; the sun is just tiptoeing out of the East, and its soft, golden rays are filtering through the latticed window of a little cottage, where I behold a calm white figure kneeling in prayer. It is our Blessed Lady, the mother of Christ, our mother. She is rapt in quiet contemplation, and as I gaze, her sweet features appear to be wreathed in a heavenly smile.

“But I ask, How can the Mother of Sorrows be smiling? How can Mary be happy? Has not all been lost? Did she not stand at the foot of the cross and witness with unutterable anguish the tragic failure of her divine Son? His crimson blood has been spilled on Calvary in a most ignominious death, and with her own hands Mary has laid His broken body, gaping with wounds, in the newly hewn tomb of Nicodemus. What joy, then, can there be for her now? How is it that I now behold her smiling?

“Mary remembers these words: ‘They shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and on the third day He shall rise again.’ Her own divine Son had foretold it. Forgetful now of the fierce hours of anguish, Mary is in-

effably happy in the joyous expectation of beholding her own dear Son in glory.

“As she dwells on this blessed joy, a dazzling splendor floods the little room, and Mary’s heart quickens as the silence is broken by one sweet word: ‘Mother!’ And our Blessed Lady turns to gaze upon the glorified figure of the risen Christ.

“What must have been Mary’s transports of joy at that moment! She gazed upon the radiant countenance of her Son. A dazzling splendor envelopes Him. The wound where the soldier’s lance had pierced His sacred side is now streaming with light. The wounds in His sacred hands and feet are shedding beams of glory. And, though I have never seen a picture of our Lord smiling, yet surely He must have smiled as Mary took Him to her mother’s heart and tenderly embraced Him . . .

“I believe it’s a joy something like that,” Father Farrell added, “which awaits us when we, too, shall have risen and behold our loved ones in glory.”

A Remembrance

The train now rounded the shoulder of a pine-clad ridge and an unsightly little village came into view. It consisted of a group of rickety hovels strung out along the road and extending down the precipitous slope, like a colony of swallows’ nests clinging to a canyon wall.

The train slowed up and Father Farrell prepared to take his leave.

"My mountain villa is somewhere down there in that valley," he said, gazing out of the window, smiling. "Now I hope you'll have a fine view of the snows from Darjeeling. And when you get back home, please give Lady Liberty a profound salaam for me."

"Father," said Ann, "it isn't likely we shall ever meet again here on earth, is it? But—well, I want to thank you for——"

"For my sermon." Father Farrell laughed. He then slipped from his breviary a small bookmark which he had discovered earlier in his spiritual scrapbook. "I had a very encouraging audience," he said. "So now you must accept this as a reward for good conduct and as a slight remembrance of our chance meeting away out here in India."

Printed on the card was this simple quatrain:

Jesus lives. No longer now

Can thy terrors, Death, appall us.

Jesus lives. By this we know

Thou, O grave, canst not enthrall us.

Glorious

The following morning Ken and Ann were up at four o'clock, and together with another party of tourists they climbed the Ghum ridge, a thousand feet or more above Darjeeling, to view the sunrise on the snows.

It was still dusk when they gained the summit, but soon the topmost peak of Kanchenjunga began to blush with a delicate pink. All eyes turned to the East, and, save for a few suppressed sighs of wonderment

and admiration, a solemn hush fell upon the enchanted watchers of the dawn. For there on the far horizon, out of a ruffled sea of fleecy clouds, a glowing ball of angry red was slowly rising, setting the eastern sky aflame.

Ann turned to gaze at the great snowy wall. The lower pinnacles, still steeped in cold gray shade, were chastely clad in frosted silver, but all the lofty summits had now become tipped with tints of roses; and even as she watched, the light crept slowly down the snows, deepening into crimson and scarlet. Then the sun scaled the sky, leveling its first bright beams across the sea of clouds, and splashing the glacier-fluted peaks with burnished gold and fire, which quickly paled into softer tints of orange and saffron and amber, until at last each separate icy spire stood revealed in all its magnificent splendor.

“Glorious, isn’t it?” said Ken.

Ann, with her head tilted at a saucy angle, looked at him and smiled.

“It is glorious, Ken,” she said. “And you know—really, I shouldn’t tell you this—but just as Old Sol was coming up out of the clouds, I stole a glance at you, and my! but you looked handsome there in the soft ruddy glow of the rising sun.”

Ken grinned and accepted the compliment with a slight shrug of his shoulders.

“But that was nothing,” he said. “Just wait till you see me all radiant in the dazzling splendor of our glorious resurrection.”

THE QUEEN'S WORK
3742 WEST PINE BOULEVARD
ST. LOUIS 8, MO.