

An Epic Story: Soggarth Aroon

When seated in the New York Academy of Music at the Anti-Poverty Society meetings, which crowded the large hall to capacity, we were accustomed to close our eyes and listen to the bell-like voice of the Rev. Dr. Edward McGlynn, first vice-rector of the North American College in Rome, rising and falling. For gestures added little to Dr. McGlynn's oratory despite his imposing presence (he was six feet two) and despite, too, the magnetic quality of his delivery.

He was a great figure in the early nineties. He made thousands of friends for the cause of man's equal right to the use of the earth, which as an unfrocked priest he embodied in the terms of his religion. We can see now how he made friends for Catholicism through his unswerving loyalty to the canons of his Church.



And when the ban of excommunication was removed and he was reinstated with not a single word of retraction he could rest serene in the confidence that the Church of Saint Peter had revealed itself in a new light to those who through sectarian

or religious bias had distrusted or misunderstood her.

We see it more clearly now. Some one had blundered. But with the reinstatement of the rector the mistake was gloriously rectified. Dr. McGlynn had made new friends for the Church where before were enmity and malice. He had signally established the fact that his Church stood for no partial truth, that all truth was free within her borders, despite how men might differ.

And so his words delivered at the bier of his beloved leader, Henry George, have an added weight: "Here was a man sent of God"—a defiant proclamation to those who sought to misrepresent him.

The story of this great life is told by Stephen Bell in "Rebel, Priest and Prophet," just published by the Devin Adair Company, New York, and it is marvelously interesting.

Born in the East Side of New York, the good priest was familiar at an early age with the struggles of the poor, though his family were fairly well circumstanced, his father, being a prosperous building contractor. He was of Irish extraction, hence his fighting spirit. There is no doubt that he felt keenly the injustice meted out to him by his ec-

clesiastical superiors. He loved his Church, he differed from none of its canons, and he fulfilled in all his clerical functions the ideal that the church had set for those who take the vows of the priesthood. And he was loved by his parishioners as few priests were ever loved.

We would dispute but one point in this most fascinating biography, the statement of Mr. Bell that Dr. McGlynn was "a sombre character." Aside from his clerical functions he was anything but that. I remember being present at a gathering of young people at the home of the Rev. C. P. McCarthy, who is quoted by Mr. Bell in the biography in another connection. The priest was the life of the party and, seated at the piano, played a number of Irish tunes. It was difficult to keep one's feet when he rendered a jig measure to which the



young folks instinctively responded. Sombre he was not, but intensely human. No wonder we all loved him.

—Joseph Dana Miller.

("Rebel, Priest and Prophet," in the \$3 Devin Adair edition, may be obtained by our readers for \$2.75 from Land and Freedom, 150 Nassau Street, New York; mention that you are a reader of The Freeman.—The Editors.)