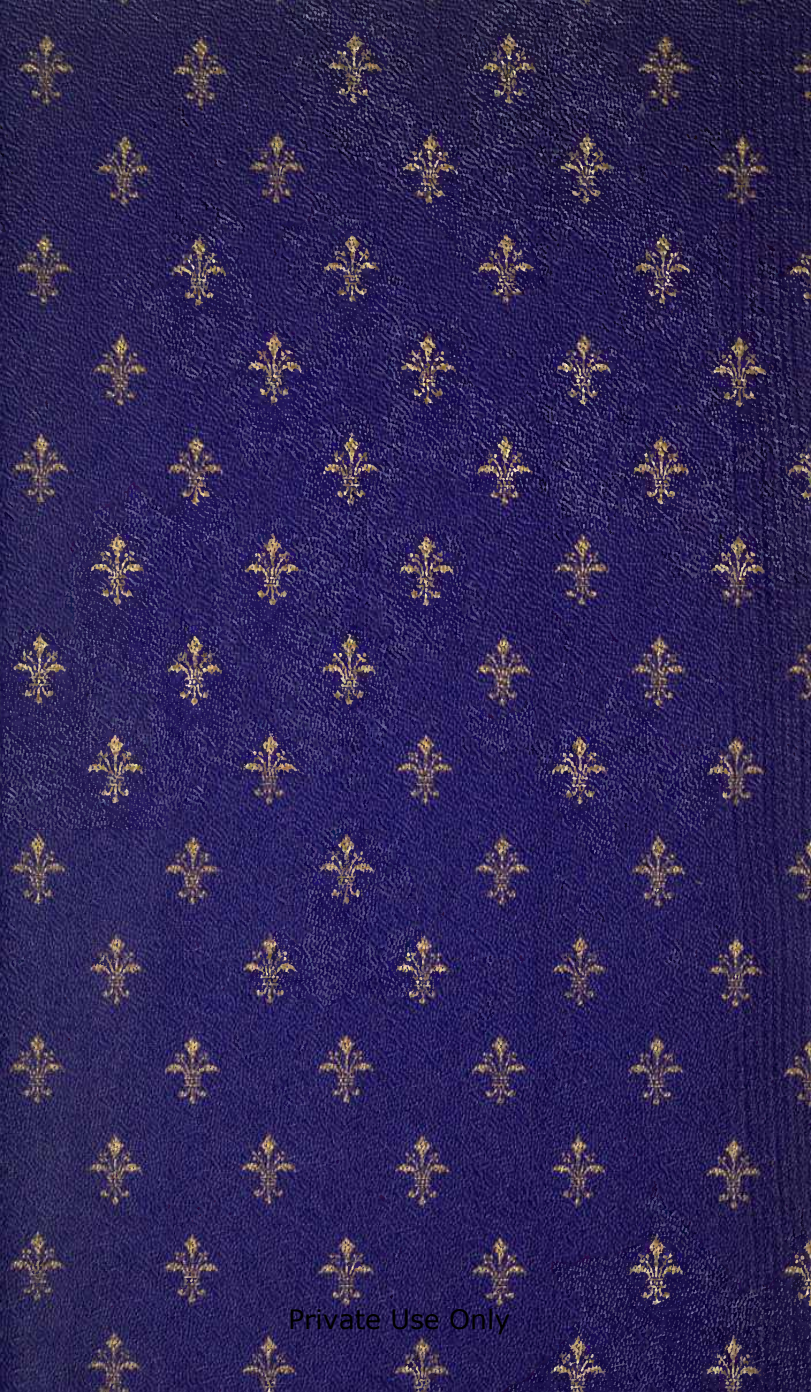


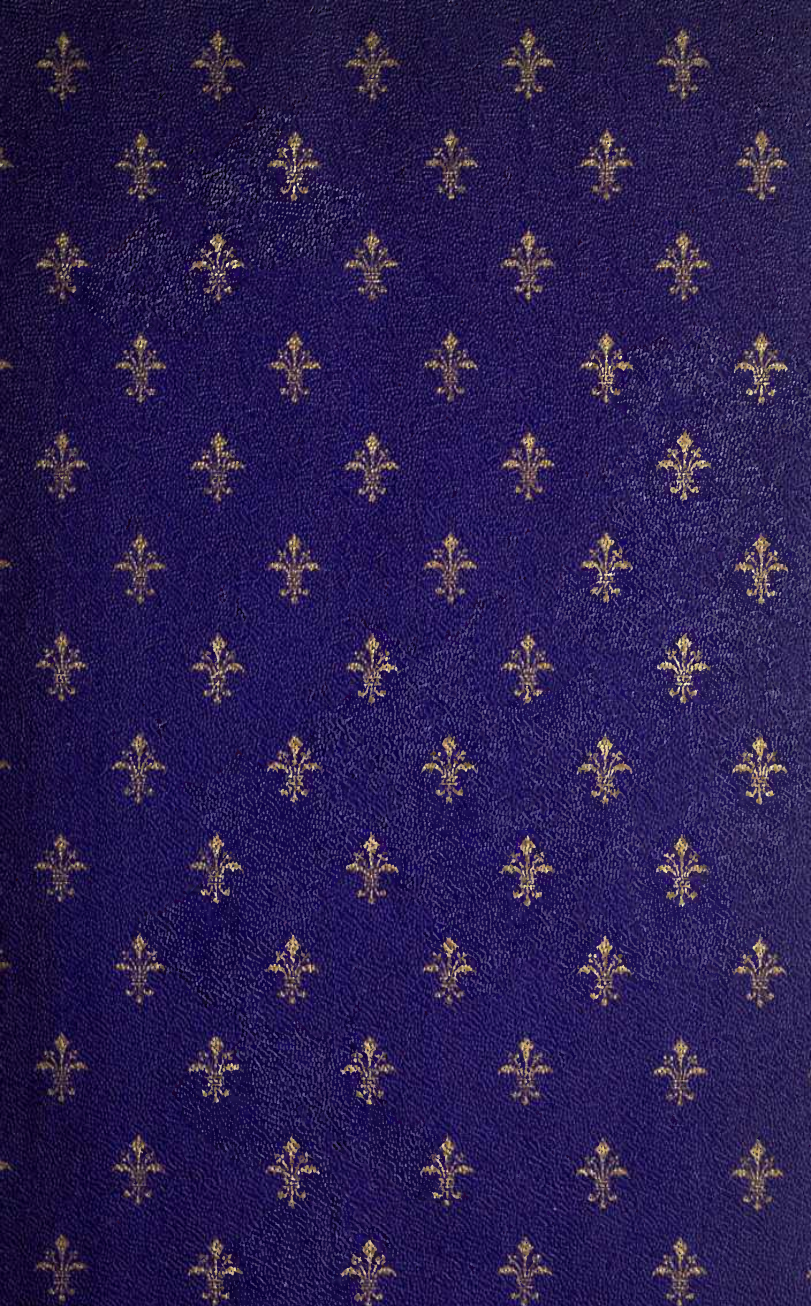
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OF

HEAVEN'S BRIGHT QUEEN

In Legend, Poetry and History

FROM THE EARLIEST AGES
TO THE PRESENT TIME

Compiled from Approved Catholic Publications

BY

WILLIAM J. WALSH

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

MONSIGNOR BERNARD O'REILLY, D.D.

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME THREE

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Sixty-three Fifth Avenue

LONDON

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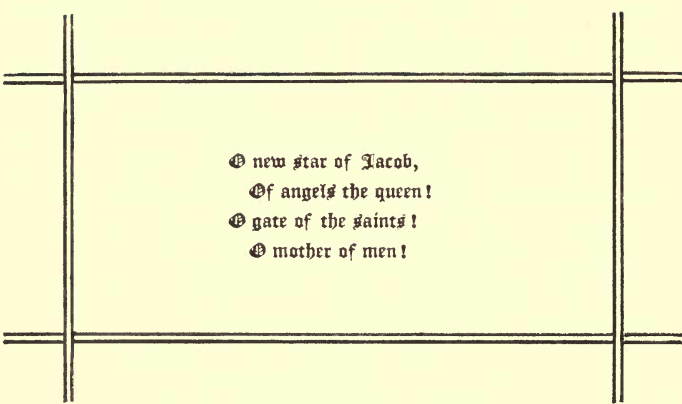
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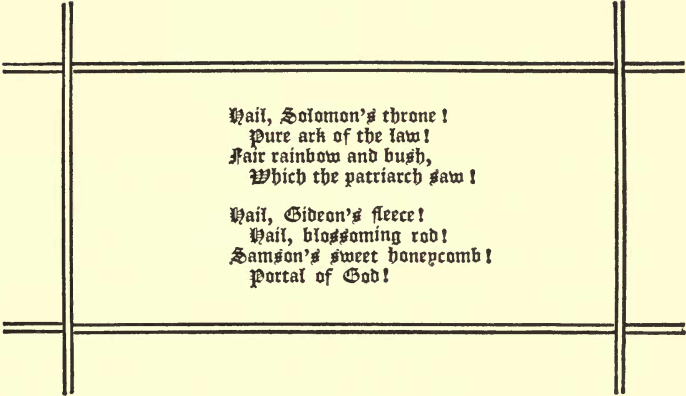


☉ new star of Jacob,
☉ Of angels the queen !
☉ gate of the saints !
☉ mother of men !

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Hail, Solomon's throne !
Pure ark of the law !
Fair rainbow and bush,
Which the patriarch saw !

Hail, Gideon's fleece !
Hail, blossoming rod !
Samson's sweet honeycomb !
Portal of God !



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SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF CAPOCROCE,
FRASCATI, ITALY

1527

Fount of love, for ever flowing,
With a burning ardor glowing,
Make me, Mother, feel like thee;
Let my heart, with graces gifted,
All on fire, to Christ be lifted,
And by Him accepted be.

D. F. MacCarthy.



NESTLING cozily on the northern slope of the Alban Mountains, about fifteen miles from Rome, lies the quaint little town of Frascati. A favorite summer resort of such residents of the Eternal City as are able to escape the sweltering heat of the Roman dog-days, it possesses other than climatic advantages for the tourist who, during the months of July and August, finds himself sojourning beneath Italian skies. Environing the town are the magnificent villas of princes and cardinals who for centuries have established here their country residences; while two miles farther up the mountain slope are the ruins of old Tusculum—the crumbling remains of the Amphitheatre, the Forum, the villa of Cicero—with countless other relics of the patricians, orators, and poets of Imperial Rome.

Guide-book in hand, the average tourist saunters about these classic scenes; admires the splendid panorama spread before him; notes the widespreading vineyards, whence issue the Albanian wines praised by Horace; visits the Villa Piccolomini, once the residence of the learned Cardinal Baronius; the more handsome Villa Aldobrandini; and the Villa Tusculana, owned successively by Lucien Bonaparte, Victor Emmanuel, and Prince Lancelotti; reads the memorial tablet to the left of the

high altar in the Cathedral S. Pietro,—the tablet that records the death at Frascati, in 1788, of the young Pretender, Charles Edward, grandson of James II.; takes a hasty glance at the interior of the older Cathedral of S. Rocco, dating from 1309; and, proud in the consciousness that he has virtuously followed the counsels of Baedeker, and consequently seen all that is worth seeing in Frascati, hies him off to Marino, Castel-Gandolfo, Albano, or some other neighboring town of equal beauty and celebrity.

Should the tourist, however, chance to be a client of Our Lady, and one who experiences genuine delight in discovering, thick-spread over all Italy, striking proofs that it is veritably and indeed “the Virgin Mary’s land,” he will probably seek his information from other sources than Baedeker and his kin, and will find in Frascati notable sights of which the statistically prosaic guide-books make no mention. He will, indeed, require no other informant than his personal observation to be made aware that the citizens of this little Albanian mountain town are peculiarly devoted to the Mother of God; while his query whether there exists any extraordinary reason therefor elicits the fact that Frascati has been privileged beyond most cities of old Latium in the enjoyment of the Blessed Virgin’s special patronage. The story of this protection, strikingly manifested on more than one occasion, is intimately connected with a painting in fresco religiously preserved above the high altar in the beautiful church of the Theatine Fathers, the first notable structure that attracts the attention of the visitor who enters Frascati by the highway from Rome.

Dedicated, it is needless to say, to the Mother of God, the church bears deeply engraven on its façade the singularly appropriate motto: *Tu nos ab hoste protege*,—“Do thou defend us from the enemy.” Within, vault and walls are decorated with pictorial representations of the different prodigies, of unquestionable authenticity, wrought during the past three or four centuries through the instrumentality of Frascati’s greatest treasure, the miraculous picture of Our Lady of Capocroce.

The early history of the picture is unknown, as is the name

of its painter. In 1527, the date when first it attained celebrity, the fresco figured on a wall surrounding a vineyard situated a short distance below the location of the present church. As long as the oldest citizens could remember, the painting had been on the wall; they had often paused before it to murmur a "Hail Mary" or utter an ejaculatory prayer; but their knowledge of its history went no further, nor indeed had there hitherto been any special reason for inquiring more minutely as to its origin.

One of the results of the struggle between the Emperor Charles V. and the French monarch, Francis I., in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, was the pillage of Rome by the licentious and infuriated troops of the Constable Bourbon. His army, which was composed chiefly of Lutheran soldiers from Germany, ravaged the Eternal City during two months with a destructive fury unequalled by that of either the Goths or the Vandals of an earlier period.

Glutted with the vengeance wreaked upon Rome, the German adventurers turned their arms upon the environing towns. Already a number of these had fallen victims to carnage and ruin, when on Sunday, May 1, 1527, the menacing hordes betook themselves to Frascati. Their approach was visible afar off to the inhabitants of the mountain town; and, although ultimate security from the conquering soldiery was scarcely anticipated, both civil and religious authorities at once took such measures as were deemed most opportune. The former disposed their inconsiderable forces so as to offer a desperate, if ineffectual resistance to the pillagers; the latter, accompanied by the women and children, repaired to the churches and besought the aid of Heaven. Terrified mothers clasped their little ones to their bosoms, and poured out their hearts in passionate entreaty to that Heavenly Mother who on occasion can be "terrible as an army in battle-array."

In the meantime the enemy had almost reached the entrance of the town. Already their fierce yells of anticipated triumph resounded along the mountain side, and Frascati's annihilation was apparently at hand. Suddenly the onward march of the

adventurers was checked. Just as their leading files reached the wall whereon was depicted the Virgin and Child, the lips of the painted Virgin opened and, issuing therefrom came a voice of irresistible power and majesty. Dominating the shouts of the advancing multitude as a thunderclap dominates the pattering of raindrops or the whistling of the tempest, was heard the command of Our Lady of Capocroce: "Back, soldiers! This land is mine!"

The effect was instantaneous. Not a soldier dreamt of disobeying the imperious mandate. Turning about, they rushed from Frascati toward Rome with an ardor far greater than had marked their recent advance. The terror to which the citizens had shortly before been a prey seemed to have fallen upon their dreaded enemy; and with frightened shrieks of "Back! back!" the troops fled in utter confusion and rout from the privileged town which Mary had called her own.

Not on this occasion alone did Our Lady of Capocroce prove the truth of her words, "This land is mine." Frequently during the intervening centuries has she manifested her special regard for Frascati. To her alone do the citizens attribute their singular preservation from the earthquakes which from time to time have carried consternation and death to the neighboring districts. To her peculiar tenderness for this home of her miraculous image do they owe, they will assure you, their immunity from that terrible scourge, the cholera, which, despite the purity of the mountain air, has often devastated towns in their immediate vicinage. Only twenty-seven years ago Albano, distant four or five miles from Frascati, lay prostrate under this disease. Victims fell daily in increasing numbers, not in Albano alone, but throughout its environs. Like a monstrous dragon the epidemic raged on all sides of the town save one. Frascati was absolutely untouched. The land is Mary's, and the dread ministers of divine vengeance cease their havoc at Our Lady of Capocroce's Shrine.

It will readily be believed that, after the prodigy of 1527, extraordinary veneration was accorded the miraculous image. A chapel was constructed at the entrance of the town, the picture

was placed therein, and this little sanctuary soon became the favorite resort of all who had petitions to offer to the August Mother of God. Of the incalculable number of spiritual and temporal favors won by the citizens of Frascati through the devotion manifested in that hallowed spot, no earthly record has been kept; but tradition testifies to the unfailling efficacy of prayers uttered before the miraculous picture, and a cult that has endured through three centuries and upward must needs have been fostered by signal graces thereby received.

The first chapel in which the picture was enshrined was a modest structure, which, as the years sped by, grew too small to accommodate the increasing numbers of Mary's clients; and, in 1611 a second striking miracle led to the building of the present ampler and more beautiful church. In that year a pious and wealthy Roman priest, Jerome de Rossi-Cavoletti, was one morning celebrating Mass at the altar of the miraculous picture. Just after the Consecration the Sacred Host left his hands and disappeared. He looked for It with scrupulous care, questioned the server; but all in vain: he could not find It. Trembling with apprehension, he examined his conscience; and as it did not accuse him of either guilt or irreverence, he turned his tear-filled eyes on Our Lady's picture, and besought his tender Mother to relieve his distress. As he gazed he heard an interior voice saying: "Jerome, you are rich in the goods of this world. Look at this humble chapel. Is it worthy of the Queen of Heaven?" He understood at once, and forthwith vowed to replace the little structure with a large and beautiful church in honor of Mary. Hardly had he formulated his vow when the Sacred Host, vainly sought for a few moments before, reappeared upon the altar. De Rossi accomplished his vow by causing the present spacious church to be built, and he added a large dwelling-house for the clergy who should be charged with the care of Our Lady's Shrine. The new church was consecrated in 1613.

Just a century later, in the year 1713, occurred another public prodigy attesting the Blessed Virgin's special predilection for her children of Frascati. A large number of people were

one day assembled in the church, kneeling before the miraculous picture, some imploring Mary to grant them additional graces, others returning grateful thanks for favors and boons already procured. Suddenly the religious silence reigning in the church was broken by a cry of warning issuing from the venerated picture. "Fly! fly!" was the order; and, in obedience thereto, the crowd rushed at once to the doors. Scarcely had the last of the number crossed the threshold when the whole roof fell in,—the vault, plaster, woodwork, rafters, all crashing down to the pavement. The timely warning had assuredly preserved all Our Lady's clients from serious injury, and many of them from instant death.

On October 28th of that year (1713), Frascati beheld a signal honor paid to its venerated image. The Chapter of St. Peter, of the Vatican, on that day visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Capocroce and, amid the enthusiastic rejoicing of the people, fixed above the miraculous picture a magnificent golden crown. In 1863 this same Chapter of St. Peter gave additional evidence of their devotion to the Virgin of Capocroce by placing above the picture two angels in gilded copper, holding over the head of Our Lady a still larger and more splendid crown.

The last public prodigy recorded of this miraculous picture occurred in 1796. Italy as well as the rest of Europe was to see, at the end of the eighteenth century, evil days—sacrilegious violation of laws human and divine, a very delirium of impiety, occasioning abundant tears and working damage irreparable. As if to assure her devoted children of her continued protection, and to fortify their souls against the trials to come, Our Lady of Capocroce once more gave astounding proof of the truly miraculous character of her venerated picture. In the presence of immense throngs of spectators, the eyes of the painted Virgin were seen alternately to close and open,—closing it may have been to shut out the spectacle of the world's iniquity, opening to beam in loving compassion on her faithful servants gathered around her Shrine.

All this, and more, one learns in a visit to the church of the Theatine Fathers at Frascati; for on every side he beholds *ex-*

votos attesting innumerable cures of the blind, the deaf, the afflicted of every description,—cures wrought throughout the centuries by the benignant and powerful Lady of Capocroce. Kneeling at the famous Shrine and gazing upon the marvel-working picture above us, we feel that this is the sight best worth seeing in all the Tusculan district; and we wonder whether Longfellow had in mind Our Lady's words, "Back, soldiers! This land is mine!" when he wrote:

This is indeed the Virgin Mary's land.

And then comes the consoling thought that, although we must soon bid adieu to Our Lady of Capocroce, never again, it may be, to view her miraculous picture, we may still enshrine in our heart an image of that Heavenly Mother as beneficent as this wonderful fresco before us. Not less confident in Our Lady's power and goodness than are these Frascati peasants, who kneel beside us, we shall treasure our heart-portrait of Mother and Son with lifelong fidelity and loving tenderness; hopeful that it, too, will warn us of peril and preserve us from danger,—hopeful above all that when, at the dread moment of death, Satan and his minions advance to their final assault, we may see them routed by our Mother's command: "Back, demons! This soul is mine!"

THE BLESSED MARY'S MONTH

This is indeed the Blessed Mary's land,
Virgin and Mother of our dear Redeemer,
All hearts are touched and softened at her name;
Alike the bandit, with the blood-stained hand,
The priest, the prince, the scholar and the peasant,
The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer,
Pay homage to her as one ever present,
And even as children, who have much offended
A too indulgent father, in great shame,
Penitent, and yet, not daring unattended
To go into his presence, at the gate
Speak with their sister, and confiding wait
Till she goes in before and intercedes:
So men, repenting of their evil deeds,

And yet, not venturing rashly to draw near
With their requests an angry father's ear,
Offer to her their prayers and their confession,
And she for them in heaven makes intercession.
And if our Faith had given us nothing more
Than this Example of all Womanhood,
So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure—
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.



APPARITION
TO
ST. JEROME EMILIANI
TREVISO, ITALY

1530

Dark the way and dreary,
Our feet have trod,
Sad are we and weary,
Mother of God!

So at thy mercy seat,
Bow we the knee;
Safe are they, Mary sweet,
Who trust in thee.

Cecelia McHenry.



T. JEROME EMILIANI was a member of one of the patrician families of Venice and, like many other Saints, in early life a soldier. He was appointed governor of a fortress among the mountains of Treviso and, whilst bravely defending his post, was made prisoner by the enemy. In the misery of his dungeon he invoked the great Mother of God, and promised, if she would set him free, to lead a new and better life. Our Blessed Lady appeared, broke his fetters, and led him forth through the midst of his enemies. At Treviso he hung up his chains at her altar, dedicated himself to her service and, on reaching his home at Venice, devoted himself to a life of active charity. His special love was for the deserted orphan children whom, in the times of the plague and famine, he found wandering in the streets. He took them home, clothed and fed them, and taught them the Christian truths. From Venice he passed to Padua and Verona, and in a few years had founded orphanages through Northern Italy. Some pious clerics and laymen, who had been his fellow-workers, fixed their abode in one of these establishments, and devoted themselves to the cause of education. The Saint drew

up for them a rule of life, and thus was founded the Congregation, which still exists, of the Clerks Regular of Somascha. St. Jerome died February 8, 1537, of an illness which he had caught in visiting the sick.

LOVE OF CHRIST'S LITTLE ONES

Let us learn from St. Jerome to exert ourselves in behalf of the many hundred children whose souls are perishing around us for want of someone to tell them the way to Heaven.

"We are bound to plead for children, since they cannot speak for themselves, and to labor that they be not deprived of the grace of Christ, which they cannot by their own efforts obtain."
—S. Augustine.

St. Jerome's orphans assembled each morning for Mass and twice daily for catechism. The work-hours, in which they were trained for some special trade were relieved by litanies, hymns, rosaries, and reading aloud. While washing their hands before meals they recited the Miserere for the Holy Souls. They confessed monthly, and on great feasts went in procession, clothed in white, singing litanies, to some principal church. The sight of their innocence and piety effected numerous conversions, and the Saint used to say that whenever he wanted any special grace from God he would make four of his orphans under eight years of age pray for it, and that he had never yet been refused what they had thus asked for.

"The ear that heard me blessed me, and the eye that saw me gave witness to me, because I had delivered the poor man that cried out, and the fatherless that had no helper."—Job xxix, 11-12.

VIGIL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

A sword of silver cuts the fields asunder—
A silver sword to-night, a lake in June—
And plains of snow reflect, the maples under,
The silver arrows of a wintry moon.

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The trees are white with moonlight, and ice-pearls;
The trees are white, like ghosts we see in dreams;
The air is still: there are no moaning wind-whirls;
And one sees silence in the quivering beams.

December night, December night, how warming
Is all thy coldness to the Christian soul:
Thy very peace at each true heart is storming
In potent waves of love that surging roll.

December night, December night, how glowing
Thy frozen rains upon our warm hearts lie:
Our God, upon this vigil is bestowing
A thousand graces from the silver sky.

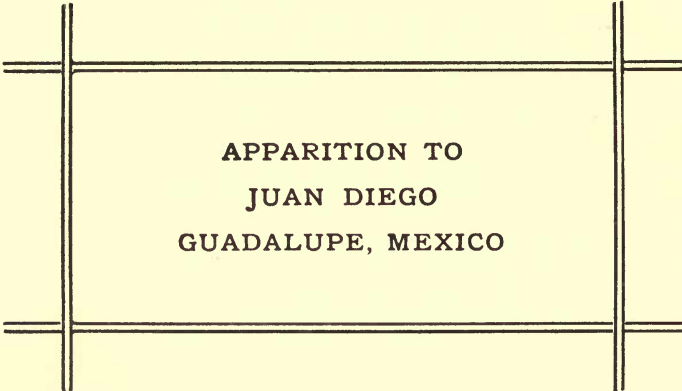
O moon, O symbol of Our Lady's whiteness;
O Snow, O symbol of Our Lady's heart;
O night, chaste night, bejewelled with argent brightness,
How sweet, how bright, how loving kind thou art.

O miracle: to-morrow and to-morrow,
In tender reverence shall no praise abate;
For from all seasons, shall we new jewels borrow
To deck the Mother born Immaculate.

Maurice F. Egan.

HER LADDER OF GRACE

A Carmelite nun appeared after her death to the sisters in her convent and said she had gained Heaven by saying the following prayers every day: Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Sacred Heart of Jesus, with His love, His sufferings and His merits; first, in reparation for all the sins I have committed during this day, and during all my life. Second, to purify the good I have done badly this day and during all my life. Third, to supply for the good which I ought to have done this day and during all my life, and which I have neglected.



APPARITION TO
JUAN DIEGO
GUADALUPE, MEXICO

APPARITION
TO
JUAN DIEGO
GUADALUPE, MEXICO

1531

The image of Our Lady, which in Heaven
Received its colors. Thus beheld it he,
The fortunate Indian, at Tepeyac,
That bare and desolate hill, a miracle,
That unto this day has been perpetuate.

Manuel Carpio.



THE name of Guadalupe has been of late brought prominently before the public. It belongs to a village about three miles north of the city of Mexico. Here it was that treaty of peace between the United States and Mexico was concluded on February 2, 1848. But its chief fame attaches to the apparition there of our Blessed Lady to the pious Indian neophyte, Juan Diego, on December 9, 1531.

The Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe is visited annually by thousands of pilgrims, who come to pay their devotions or to seek relief from bodily ills. It is the Lourdes of Mexico.

As I had obtained a signal favor from our Lady of Guadalupe, I was very desirous of visiting the Shrine to return my thanks before the miraculous picture. I shall first speak of this pilgrimage of mine and then of the solemn coronation that has lately taken place. I shall take the City of Mexico as the starting point of my description.

As the streets change their names at almost every corner, I had to be rather careful in picking my way and counting the turns that I made before reaching the Zócalo or great square. On the one side stands the Administration Building

of the Federal Government, an edifice begun by Cortez, enlarged and embellished by his successors, and recently thoroughly renovated.

On another side, the great cathedral, occupying the former site of the Aztec war-god's temple, towers majestically above the surrounding structures. Since its dedication in 1656, it has seen viceroys, emperors and presidents rise to fame and sink into obscurity, while it remains unchanged, a feeble image of the unchanging Church of God.

At the Zócalo, where nearly all the city and suburban tram-lines begin their course, I entered a car, and was soon moving slowly through a narrow, unclean and crowded street. On approaching each cross street, the driver blew a horn which hung from his neck. This was a necessary precaution for, as I afterward learned, a Mexican policeman does not concern himself about assisting foot-passengers across a thoroughfare. The pedestrian must look out for himself. If he is injured, his only redress is to lament his own imprudence.

When clear of the street and beyond what was once the city wall, the two diminutive mules which pulled our car broke into a lively lope, into which they were encouraged to persevere by the vigorous cracking of the driver's whip. On the left of our road, were representations of the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, some of them truly monumental, placed there by devout hands at a time when religious exercises were not confined by law to the interior of the churches. To the right stretch cultivated fields and meadows, and in the distance, the two great volcanoes, Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl reared their cloud-capped crests.

The road itself was full of novel sights which claimed a share of my attention. Indians—men, women and children—were trudging along to and from the city in a steady stream. Many bore heavy burdens of garden produce or pottery upon their backs, while others, the happy possessors of a donkey, walked behind it, to hasten its tardy steps. A ride of three miles brought me to the door of the sanctuary, over which I read:

"Sacrosancta Lateranensis Basilica."

The inscription, "Holy Lateran Basilica," proclaims the fact that this Mexican Shrine is aggregated to the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome, and enjoys the various spiritual privileges attached to this "Mother and Head of all churches." The church, which was undergoing enlargement and thorough renovation, was closed to the faithful; but the miraculous picture was exposed for veneration in an adjoining church, formerly the property of the Capuchin nuns. I say "formerly," for the good nuns have been ruthlessly driven away by the government from the convent which they had erected through a pious wish to live night and day under the protection of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The church doors were swung wide open, but heavy curtains hid the interior from view. Pushing these aside, I entered, and there, on the high altar, surrounded by candles, I saw the sacred picture which, for more than three hundred and fifty years, has been the object of the fervent devotion of the Mexican people. Threading my way among the kneeling throng, for the church, as is the general custom in Mexico, was not disfigured by pews, I approached the altar-rail and performed my little devotions.

Anxious as I was to examine the holy picture, I thought it better to wait until the congregation should leave, and therefore went out to visit the chapel erected on the site of the third Apparition.

In the vestibule of this chapel is the spring of aluminous water as in the days of Juan Diego. A little stream of people was coming and going, some merely to drink the waters and others to fill bottles to be carried to their homes.

A second visit to the Shrine having shown me that the worshippers were still too numerous to allow me to make a deliberate survey of the holy picture, I set out to visit the chapel on the hillock behind the basilica.

A winding path cut in the rock leads up past the *ex-voto* stone-sails to the summit, from which one has a grand view of the city and valley of Mexico. To the right is the Church of St. James Tlaltelolco, to which Juan Diego was going when

Our Lady appeared to him. The church has been sequestered and is now used as a *wine-cellar*.

Just within the entrance to the chapel there is a nameless tomb. Here lies a saintly Capuchin nun, through whose persevering efforts the devotion of the Holy Hour was introduced into Mexico. She begged that her mortal remains might find a resting-place here on the spot hallowed by Our Lady's presence.

Here, too, the chapel was not without its throng of worshippers. I saw, also, what I observed in all Mexican churches, that freedom from restraint and conventionality in devotion which, though edifying in itself, would seem odd and out of place in our churches. Some prostrated themselves before the altar; others knelt with their arms extended in the form of a cross; others kissed the floor; others, again, moved slowly on their knees from the entrance to the altar-steps.

In sharp contrast to this scene is the cemetery or "holy field," as the Mexicans call it, on the west side of the chapel.

The hill of Tepeyac was a naked rock, but earth was brought from below, and there in the "holy field," the members of the Spanish and Mexican nobility wished to be buried. But, alas! a sad change has been wrought here, too. The government has seized the consecrated burial places of the Church, and a Catholic cemetery is a thing of the past. One may now see, as I saw, side by side, the tomb of a faithful child of the Church, with an inscription begging for prayers, and that of a cruel persecutor, surrounded by the badges and banners of Freemasonry. Just within the gate of the little cemetery on the hill, an unpretending tombstone informs the reader that beneath it lies the body of the "most excellent lord, General Antonio Lopez de Santa-Anna," of Mexican war fame. Next to him lies the "most serene lady," his wife.

Having returned to the church, I ventured to ask one of the Fathers at what hour the church would be empty, as I wished to inspect the picture.

"The church is never empty," he replied very courteously; "but we do not permit the faithful to approach the picture,

"The fact is," he continued, "the present arrangement is only temporary, and the work is not very solid. If we were to permit one Mexican to ascend, we could not keep back the rest, but since you are an American, your desire may be gratified." He called the sacristan and directed him to enable me to get a close view of the holy picture.

His help was needed. Grasping him firmly by the hand, I crept up a very unsteady flight of stairs and along some creaking boards, until I was within reaching distance of the holy picture.

The exquisitely gentle and modest expression of Our Lady's countenance has been the despair of every painter who has attempted to reproduce it. With downcast eyes and hands joined in prayer she stands, surrounded by rays, with the moon beneath her feet. She is clad in a garment of crimson and gold, with a blue mantle bespangled with stars covering the head and falling down over the dress in graceful folds. The coarse fibres of *maguey*, or American aloe, of which the "canvas" is composed, stand out in bold relief, and add their mute testimony to the miraculous origin of the picture.

Impartial artists have pronounced it to be in no known style of painting. It is not in distemper, it is not in water colors; it is not in oils. The fabric, which in itself is most unfavorable for receiving colors, being not unlike a fishing net, has no priming or preparation of any kind. The tints have retained their original freshness in spite of the deleterious influence of the brackish emanations from the neighboring lakes. It has been remarked that the face is that of an Indian girl, and as the object of this Apparition was to win over the Indians to the Christian religion, the Virgin appeared to Juan Diego in the semblance of a maiden of his own race.

The frame is of massive gold. A wealthy priest, who contributed liberally towards its cost, obtained the first and original wooden frame and presented it, duly authenticated, to the Capuchin nuns in the city of Mexico. When the infamous Lerdo dispersed them, seized their convent and razed their church to the ground, this frame, with other relics and pious

objects, was conveyed to the residence of a sympathizing friend and is still preserved.

A peculiarly distressing feature of Lerdo's sacrilegious spoliation was that the church which he remorselessly destroyed was dedicated to St. Philip of Jesus, a native of the city of Mexico.

But let us return to the holy picture. Years and years ago it was examined by artists, minutely described and pronounced to be beyond the power or skill of human hands. One of the features mentioned was a crown of gold resting on Our Lady's brow. When the project of suspending a gold crown above the sacred picture was being agitated, the one represented in the painting disappeared, leaving no indication that there had ever been one there. Thus did Our Lady of Guadalupe signify her acceptance of the gift which her children wished to offer her.

Let me say a few words about the basilica. The Most Rev. Archbishop Labastida y Dávalos began the task of enlarging and renovating the collegiate church, but he was not destined to see the completion of his work. His successor in the Primate See of Mexico, the Most Rev. Prospero Alarcon de la Barca, eagerly took up the task which only death could force his venerable predecessor to relinquish; thanks to his zeal and the hearty co-operation of bishops, priests and people, the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe was thrown open, December 12, 1893, to the devotion of the people, more splendid than of old.

At the time of my visit, the great silver balustrade, of which the weight is reckoned by tons, was carefully stored away. Nothing of the priceless treasures of the Shrine could be seen as the building was given over to masons, carpenters and decorators.

By a pious agreement among the Mexican bishops, each diocese in turn defrays the expense of a solemn service on the twelfth day of each recurring month. On these days the number of worshippers is of course notably greater, but at no time are they absent.

Among the bishops who have signalized themselves by their devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe must be mentioned the venerable Ordinary of Querétaro, the Rt. Rev. Rafael Camacho, whose learning and piety shed additional lustre upon what its citizens love to call "the most Catholic city of Mexico."

I happened to be in the capital at the time of the arrival of a pilgrimage led by his Lordship. Over two hundred men had traversed the distance—one hundred and twenty miles—on foot, but the greater number, including fifty seminarians, had come by rail. So dense was the throng at the church when the Bishop pontificated, that only those who went early could get within its walls.

As it is "unlawful" to form anything like a religious procession, the faithful go by twos or threes to the sanctuary, pausing to pray before the mysteries of the Rosary erected along the way.

But let us pass from my own pilgrimage of some years ago to the great coronation of the miraculous picture.

The pious women of Mexico, out of devotion to the great patroness of the Republic, resolved, some nine years ago, to crown this painting. They made an appeal for jewels, gold and money. The answer far surpassed all expectation.

The next step was to get the permission of the Holy Father, for he alone can give the privilege. The Archbishops of Mexico, Michoacan and Guadalajara, presented the petition to His Holiness, who readily granted it. Then came the making of the crown. This was confided to a famous Parisian goldsmith and jeweller, who has fully sustained his reputation by producing a masterpiece. The bare cost of the making, excluding all the materials used, was \$30,000. Its value, on account of the jewels it contains, is priceless. It is in form an imperial diadem. It is 22½ inches high, and 50½ inches in circumference. The rim of the crown at the base consists of twenty-two enamelled shields, representing the twenty-two bishoprics of Mexico. Above this rim is a row of angels, represented as issuing from roses, all of massive gold. Between the angels and supported by them are six enamelled shields, on which are

emblazoned the arms of the six archbishoprics of Mexico. From the back of the angels, extending to the apex of the crown, and thus forming the imperial diadem, are alternate festoons of massive gold roses and of diamond stars. These cluster at the top under an enamelled geographical globe on which Mexico and the gulf of Mexico are represented. Above comes the Mexican eagle grasping the globe with one claw, while with the other it holds aloft a diamond cross. At the top of the cross is a ring by which the crown is held by the cherub over the painting. The shields are surrounded with diamonds, and between the shields are rows of sapphires and emeralds. In the breast of each angel flames a ruby. This crown is said to be the finest piece of workmanship of its kind in existence.

Of course the great event brought thousands of visitors to the little village. The proximity of the city of Mexico was favorable for their accommodation. The scene was a most characteristic one for a stranger. There one saw the peasants and Indians in their various picturesque dresses, prominent among them being a deputation from Cuautillan, the native place of Juan Diego, to whom Our Lady appeared. Mingling in the crowd with them were ladies in the traditional costume of Spain, and decked out with rare old Spanish lace; others dressed in the latest of Parisian fashions; side by side with them were women in the homeliest homespun. Nor was there less variety in the dress of the men. But all seemed to sink all distinctions out of sight in the great fact that they were all clients and children of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The village itself was almost buried in flags and flowers. Arches were erected at the principal places of interest; banners hung from every window and the houses were draped in bunting and even richer stuffs. All day long cannon were booming and bells were ringing; noisy expressions of the people's joy.

In spite of the immense throng of people there was no disorder and no accidents resulted from the crowding, although many who had reserved seats in the church were unable to reach them.

The ceremonies of the coronation began with the presentation of the crown to the Archbishop of Mexico by a delegation of women in behalf of the women of the Republic who had contributed the jewels and money. Then followed the Pontifical High Mass. At its conclusion the crown was carried around the church and its enclosures in procession. Thirty-seven archbishops and bishops, wearing copes of cloth of gold and mitres, took part in it. Among them were representatives of the hierarchy in Mexico, the United States, Canada, British Columbia, Cuba and Jamaica. Several hundred priests, secular and religious, assisted in the ceremony.

Then came the feature of the day, the solemn crowning. The Archbishops of Mexico and Michoacan, who had been specially delegated by Leo XIII. to represent him, ascended a platform which had been erected behind the high altar and in front of the painting. A priest then presented the crown to the two Archbishops. Each took hold of it, and together they raised it high above their heads and to its position above the head of the Virgin.

The enthusiasm of the vast audience could not be contained. There was an outburst of hand-clapping and of cries of "Viva Dios!" "Viva Maria Santisima!" "Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe!" "Viva Religion!"

Words cannot describe the effect on the worshippers of this spontaneous tribute of honor to God and His Blessed Mother. Such a manifestation in our days is a consolation and a cause of confidence. May Our Lady of Guadalupe watch over Mexico and her sister Republic!

The *American Ecclesiastical Review* contains an interesting and edifying paper in which the reverend editor shows that throughout Mexico Our Lady of Guadalupe is regarded as the Patroness of all North America. He remarks, however, that, "by a happy coincidence, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and that of the Apparition of Guadalupe are one, both in point of time and in their liturgical significance. The miracle by which Our Blessed Lady appeared to a Mexican child on the soil of the New World, as she had so often done to the af-

flicted and innocent children of the old Catholic lands in Europe, took place three times within the octave of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. . . . It is quite fitting, therefore, that Our Lady of Guadalupe should be called by excellence Our Lady of America. And so she is regarded by many who come under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Council of Baltimore, and for whom the Immaculate Conception is the prime titular feast."

THE VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE

"Near to the tremulous Tezcoco Lake
Rises a bare and solitary hill,
There never cypress tall or cedar grows,
Nor whispering oak; nor cooling fountain laves
The waste of herbless rocks and sterile sand—
A barren country 'tis, dry, dusty, sad,
Where the vile worm scarce drags its length along.

Here is the place the Holy Mary comes
Down from her home above the azure heavens
To show herself to Juan, who, comfortless,
Petitioned for relief from troubles sore.
Sometimes it chances that a fragrant plant
In the dense forest blooms unseen, unknown,
Though bright its virginal buds and rare its flowers
So doth the modest daughter of the Lord
Obscure the moon, the planets, and the stars,
When lends she to the poor Indian her grace
In bounty wonderful to all his kind,
. . . With grateful ear he heard;
Twice did he wondering kneel, and twice again
He kisses the white foot of the Holy Maid.
How often has the timid, trembling maid
Upon the verge of ruin sought thy help,
Shutting her eyes to pleasure and to gold
At the thought of thee, O Maiden, pure and meek;
Centuries and ages will have vanished by
Within their currents bearing kings and men;
Great monuments shall fall; the pyramids
Of lonely Egypt moulder in decay,
But Time shall never place its fatal hand
Upon the Image of the Holy Maid,
Nor on the pious love of Mexico."

Manuel Carpio.

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF THE WAY
ROME, ITALY

1540

The way is long—thro' weary wastes, it passes,
Thro' deserts without water, without shade;
Across green marshes, treacherous morasses,
It stretches, till the pilgrim grows afraid,
For unknown peril, all the known, surpasses,
And none can say where hangs the ambuscade.
Our Lady of the Way, whate'er betide,
Madonna della Strada, be our guide!

Eleanor C. Donnelly.



THE original of the Madonna of the Wayside is one of the most ancient of the publicly venerated portraits of the Virgin Mary in Rome. The origin of the painting is unknown, but it bears the marks of the earliest ages of the Church. Experts who have examined the original refer it to the earliest part of the fifth century at the latest. There are only four or five paintings of like antiquity in existence. Tradition dates it to the period immediately following the reign of Constantine.

The picture represents the Mother holding the Divine Child on the left arm. The Child has Its right arm raised to bless, and carries a closed book in Its left hand. The profiles have none of the sharp Byzantine characteristics, but are purely Roman, which has led some experts to date them to the time prior to that of the early iconoclastic persecutions, which occasioned the removal from the East to Rome of many venerable works of art.

The first building in which the painting was placed for public veneration is said to have been built by the Astalli family, moved by the veneration of the people for the wayside Shrine,

It was the favorite place for meditation of St. Ignatius and his fellow founders of the Society of Jesus. So much did he become attached to the picture that he asked the parish priest of the Shrine to give it to him for the first church given to his new order. At first the pastor refused, but finally gave not only the picture, but the church in which it stood, and became himself the first Italian member of the Jesuit Order.

With the consent of the Astalli family and Pope Paul III., the picture became the property of the Society, and was afterward transferred to the larger Church of St. Mark. Before it the rule of St. Ignatius was adopted and SS. Francis Xavier, Stanislaus Kosta, Aloysius Gonzaga, Philip Neri, Charles Borromeo, Francis de Sales, and others took their vows.

In 1568, aided by Cardinal Farnesi, Francis Borgia, Father-General of the Jesuits, built the Church of the Gesu as a Shrine for the Madonna. In 1575, the picture was transferred there, the entire section of the wall having been cut out for that purpose, and placed in a chapel prepared for it. It is in this chapel that the candidates for admission to the Jesuit Order in Rome take their vows. Mrs. Elizabeth Washburn Brainard, of Boston, painted a copy of this famous picture for the Immaculate Conception Church, Boston, Rev. T. S. Brosnahan, S.J., rector.

MADONNA DELLA STRADA

Robed in a mantle azure blue,
 Her starry eyes of a darker hue
 Lit by their love-light tender,
 Sits the young Mother, sweet and fair,
 A jeweled crown on her golden hair,
 Clasping the Babe with a worship rare,
 Greater than speech can render.

Fastening the mantle's silken fold,
 Upon her bosom a star of gold
 Beams with a lustrous splendor;
 A fitting emblem, Sweet, of thee,
 The shining Star of life's stormy sea
 When our frail barks 'neath the tempest flee,
 Gleaming more bright and tender.

Her clear, soft eyes gaze patiently,
As those of one who does not see
 The things that lie before her;
But as if the future unveiled lay,
And the years' long vista stretched away,
Till faint and far that dreadful day
 On Calvary loomed o'er her.

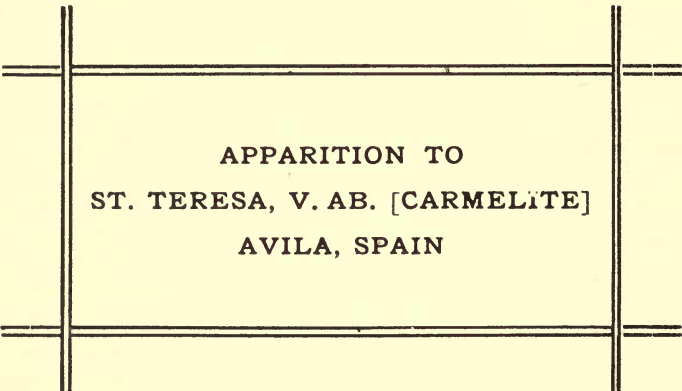
Tender and sad those gentle eyes,
Their clear, calm depths, like the morning skies,
 By that dread vision clouded;
Yet loving, meek, and patient still
Resigned to her Heavenly Father's will,
Although she knew the worst of ill,
 That the future no more shrouded.

The child is seated on her knee,
One little hand raised warningly,
 A volume in the other;
A ray of wisdom and of grace,
Sent from His Father's dwelling place,
Illumes the fair and childish face
 Turned fondly toward His Mother.

O sweet young Mother! Holy Child!
Madonna fair and undefiled,
 Mary forget me never,
When tempests rage o'er Life's wild sea,
And when I know not where to flee
Shine down, bright Star, on mine and me,
 Be thou my light for ever!

Lillian B. Taylor.





**APPARITION TO
ST. TERESA, V. AB. [CARMELITE]
AVILA, SPAIN**

APPARITION
TO
ST. TERESA, V. AB. [CARMELITE]
AVILA, SPAIN

1561

Age after age has called thee blest,
Yet none hath fathomed all thy bliss;
Mothers, who read the secret best.
Or angels yet its depth must miss.

Mrs. Elizabeth R. Charles.



PEAKING of the Carmelite Order, the talented authoress of a recent interesting English publication, entitled "Religious Orders," offers the following gracious tribute to the glorious Saint Teresa of Jesus, whose festival falls on the fifteenth of October:

"As time passes, the first fervor of the children of Carmel grew cold; the fine gold was dim; the love of unnecessary dispensations crept in, and then came all its attendant evils. But where save in the Church's pale, are miracles seen like unto her reforms?—reforms which bind together, and gather in, and strengthen the weak, and raise up the fallen; reforms which kindle up fire out of what looks like heaps of ashes: so in this instance, the mighty prayer had gone up from the Mother's heart to save the Order which bore her name and sign. And the 'still small voice' came into Spain, and spoke to the heart of one destined to be His instrument. Was it a holy Priest or zealous Bishop? No; it was a young and beautiful Spanish girl, with so delicate a constitution, that on her entrance into religion she would not choose the Order of Saint Augustine, as being too severe, but entered the then *mitigated* Order of Mount Carmel. It is not our intention to trace the history of Saint Teresa, for her biography is well known to all. All over the Catholic world has her name spread; her picture brings her

familiarly before our eyes, and her sweet name is a household word. We know her well, with the burning soul speaking in those large, dark Spanish eyes; we see the rude Carmelite habit, which yet cannot conceal the majesty of her form, worn though it be with penance and sickness—that sickness which she loved so well, saying that it was sent to her because she should not have had courage to seek so much suffering for herself. We see her hand holding the pen with which she traced those wonderful works that have raised her to be considered a teacher in the Church. We see her smile, full of raptured love, and we can almost hear her cry, in low, impassioned tones, as she speaks to her Beloved—‘Others may serve Thee better—that I do not deny; but that others should love Thee more, that I will never suffer.’”

To such a soul was committed the reform of Mount Carmel, and we cannot wonder that it was eventually accomplished. Long, indeed, and weary was the task! The enemy did his worst against the Teresa whom he so hated; but, weak woman as she was, she came off victorious. In vain did he raise storms against her outwardly; her courage and perseverance survived them. In vain did he strive to darken her spirit; her deep love could know no change. In vain did he shut the hearts of men, so that she, on one occasion, found herself in the town, where she had come to found a monastery of the reform, possessing only a few ducats in her pocket with which to commence the work. “Teresa and these ducats are nothing,” said she; “but God, Teresa, and these ducats, are more than enough.” What wonder then, that before her death, she saw seventeen convents of women, and fifteen of men, adopting her reform? Did any thought of pride or of human exultation mingle with her retrospect? “Let us carry your body back with us to Avila,” prayed her weeping religious. “Will they refuse me here a little earth?” answered she, who almost then could hear the echo of *that* praise, in which the praise of earth is lost.

It was at the time when the archfiend prompted Luther, the apostate monk of Wittemberg, to blaspheme against good works, and against the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience,

that God raised up Saint Teresa to restore to the Church that legion of devoted and ascetic souls in the Carmelite Order, whose prayers brought down benedictions upon the earth and restored it to its fealty at the moment that Satan sought so boldly to usurp God's place by the wild heresies of the sixteenth century.

Teresa was born of noble parents, at Avila, in Old Castile. From her tenderest youth God inclined her to the love of His service. When only seven years old she took great delight in reading the Lives of the Saints, in company with her little brother Rodriguez. These children were amazed at the thought of eternity, and even at so early an age felt impelled to despise all the things of earth, and value them at the price of eternity. Frequently they would repeat to each other, "*Forever—forever; eternity will last forever!*" And the martyrs were the special objects of their childish admiration; in imitation of these Christian heroes, the two children resolved to go into the country of the Moors, in hopes that they would be martyred for their faith. They privately left their father's house, and joyfully passed out into the open country, fully determined to offer their lives to God. But their absence was discovered, and the young would-be martyrs were soon overtaken by their uncle, who safely brought them back to their frightened mother. On being reprimanded, Rodriguez laid all the blame upon his little sister. Thwarted in this desire, Teresa and her brother resolved to become hermits at home, and they tried to build for themselves little hermitages of stones in the garden; but these they were never able to finish.

Teresa's mother early inspired her with a most tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin; and on her mother's death, Teresa, who was then twelve years old, threw herself in great grief upon her knees before an image of the Blessed Virgin, and besought her with many tears to be henceforth a mother to her.

Such was the beautiful childhood of our Saint. In her life, written by herself, she deeply deplores the faults into which she fell at the age of fifteen, by reading romances, and from the pernicious society of a vain, frivolous cousin. She says: "This

fault of reading romances failed not to cool my good desires, and was the cause of my falling into many defects. I could not be satisfied if I had not some new romance in my hand." Her devotions were laid aside; her rosary, once her constant companion, now hung unnoticed by her crucifix; and the lives of the glorious heroes of Christianity, that had formerly so inflamed her heart, were cast aside for the frivolous inventions of the novelist.

Her father, deeply grieved at the alteration, and finding it impossible to separate her from the vain society of the cousin who encouraged in her this perverted taste for the idle romances of the day, determined to place her in a convent where many young persons of rank were educated. The happy quiet of her new home soon became very delightful to Teresa; her former feelings returned, and she sincerely repented of the faults into which she had fallen. After a year and a half spent in this happy life, she was taken home on account of sickness; and to restore her health she spent some time at the country house of a very pious uncle. There she read many works which treated of the vanity of the world and the immense difference between temporal and eternal interests. After many struggles and conflicts with herself, she finally resolved to embrace a religious life; and during her novitiate she was blessed with rare spiritual favors, which abundantly rewarded her for the severe interior trials she underwent in determining her vocation. The first years of her conventual life were marked by a complication of severe physical sufferings; the patience with which she bore them amazed all who saw her, and in the midst of the most intense pains her heart seemed always fixed on God alone. At one time she was supposed to be dead, and a grave was dug for her in the convent cemetery. Again, she was almost a helpless cripple for three years—but she ever regarded her sufferings as so many steps by which she might ascend to perfection, and she welcomed them as special pledges of the love of her crucified Lord. It was never given to mortal to rise to more seraphic heights of contemplation than did Teresa amid her excruciating bodily pains. These high spiritual fa-

vors, which she so fully enjoyed, filled her mind, at times, with many fears that she might be suffering under illusion, for she knew that Satan often causes the fall of spiritual persons by leading them to indulge in pride and self-complacency. But the bodily pains she endured, and the persecutions she had at times to undergo in consequence of these favors, kept a spirit of deepest humility alive in her heart.

St. Teresa relates that one day in passing through the convent, she met a most beautiful boy. Astonished to find him there, but supposing that he had come to see some relative among the nuns, she asked him who he was. "Tell me first your name," replied the child, "and I will tell you mine," "My name," she answered, "is Teresa of Jesus." "And mine," He replied, "is Jesus of Teresa." This incident shows the close union which the King of Glory contracted with the soul of Teresa.

At one time her confessor commanded her to resist the visions she had, and to arm herself with the Cross in order to combat them, and one day as she held up the Cross our Lord took it in His sacred hands, and then returned it to her adorned with precious stones, telling her that for her only this Cross should remain always thus ornamented, as a witness to the truth of His Apparition. He did not dissuade her from obeying her confessor in resisting, as formerly, all heavenly favors. Let us add for the information of the reader, that our Lord had also bestowed upon St. Catharine of Siena a precious ring, which was visible to her alone. St. Cecilia and her spouse Valerian each received from the angel a crown of lilies and roses, visible to those alone who had been baptized, and had remained virgins.

The condition of prayer during which Teresa beheld our Lord, lasted for over two years. It became continual; sleep even failed to interrupt it, and the love which burned in her soul became so intense that she was perishing from the desire to behold her God. It was at this period of her life that she received that which theologians call the wound of love, a wound of which God wished that her heart should always bear the mark. Over and over again the Saint perceived near her, on

the left side, an angel under a bodily form : he was very beautiful ; by his ardent countenance he could be known as one of the cherubim, spirits made of naught but love and flame. "I beheld in his hands," she said, "a long poniard of gold, at whose extremity was a slight spark of flame. From time to time he plunged this into my heart and buried it in my entrails ; it seemed to me that he took them from me with this poniard, and left me filled and burning with the love of God. This wound, inflicted thus, caused me an indescribable martyrdom, and at the same time made me taste of perfect joy. There exists between God and the soul at that instant an intercourse of love so perfect that it is impossible to describe it. I consider my sufferings as a glory in comparison with which all the other glories of the world are as nothing."

One day when she was praying alone, she found herself transported into hell as into a dark trench, fearful, pestilential, and full of reptiles ; she then suffered the agonies of fire to a degree which surpassed all the pains she had ever undergone, even those of which the devil was the author, making them appear like shadows. Nevertheless, even this cruel torment was not to be compared to the agony of the soul, the sadness full of despair, the sinking of the heart which she experienced. She felt that any attempt at description would be useless, and always believed that God desired thus to show her the dreadful abyss from which He had delivered her, in withdrawing her from her former life of pleasure : for, from one thing led on to another, she would surely have ended by perishing. This vision made her feel intensely the sufferings of those souls who perish in such numbers, especially since the revolt of Luther, who had been followed by so many weak Christians and others whose faith was already shaken. To save one of these souls from such frightful punishment, she would joyfully have laid down her life a thousand times.

Once, when at Mass on the Feast of the Assumption, she was grieving over her sins, when the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph appeared to her, and, clothing her with robes of dazzling splendor and brightness, made known to her that she was entirely

purified from all her sins. The Mother of God then taking her hands assured her that she would always assist her, and as a pledge of her protection, and the truth of her promise, the Mother of Jesus placed around Teresa's neck a collar of rich gold whence hung a most resplendent cross. This gold and these precious stones differed from all those which one sees upon earth, as likewise did the fabric of her garment, whose shining whiteness was of such radiance that nothing could be compared to it, not even the snow, which, besides this purity, as the Saint declared, seemed as black as soot. Without being able to distinguish in detail the features of Our Lady, Teresa could only perceive that she was gracious with her holy beauty and the innocence of her youth.

Another time the Blessed Virgin appeared to her, and sheltering the Saint and her daughters under the vast folds of her mantle, made known to her to what heights of holiness her Divine Son desired to raise all those who became inmates of her Order.

Scarcely less beautiful was St. Teresa's vision on the Assumption into heaven, the joy and solemnity with which Mary was received, and the place she holds; the glory which her soul had to see that Mary's is so great; her desire to suffer greater affliction here and to serve Our Lady more.

Such is a brief, very brief sketch of the first portion of her religious life, and during these twenty-eight years, God was preparing this chosen soul for the great work of the reform of her Order. A perfect storm of indignation met her at the commencement of her efforts; but she was encouraged to persevere by Saint Louis Bertrand, Saint Peter Alcantara, and other holy persons. After many weary delays and bitter persecutions she succeeded in her great enterprise, and she lived to see seventeen convents of nuns, and fifteen houses of friars, established under her reformed Carmelite rule in all the principal cities of Spain.

The last house founded by the Saint was that of Burgos, in April, 1582. She was very ill, and with difficulty reached Valladolid about the end of July, where she was grossly insulted by a lawyer who would have her violate the provisions of her

brother's will. Because she was just, the lawyer called her a wicked nun, who was less good than many who lived in the world. The Saint accepted the reproach, merely saying, "our Lord reward you for your charity," as if she deserved to be thus treated.

The prioress of Valladolid turned against and sent her away from the monastery, and on September 16th, the Saint reached Mediña del Campo, where also the prioress treated her with the utmost disrespect. She then went to Alba de Tormes, and nearly died on the road for want of food. She came to Alba on the evening of the 20th; the next morning she went with the utmost difficulty down to the church for Communion, and then returned to her cell and her bed never again to leave them. Fra Antonio of Jesus, the first who promised to accept her reform, administered the last sacraments. Unable to speak, she turned towards her faithful companion, the Venerable Anne of St. Bartholomew, and drew her towards her, and then crept into her arms: Anne held her there for fourteen hours, and then, seeing our Lord with many Saints at the foot of the bed, she prayed for her death that she might enter into joy; the instant she had finished her prayer the Saint was dead. It was on the feast of St. Francis, October 4th, 1582.

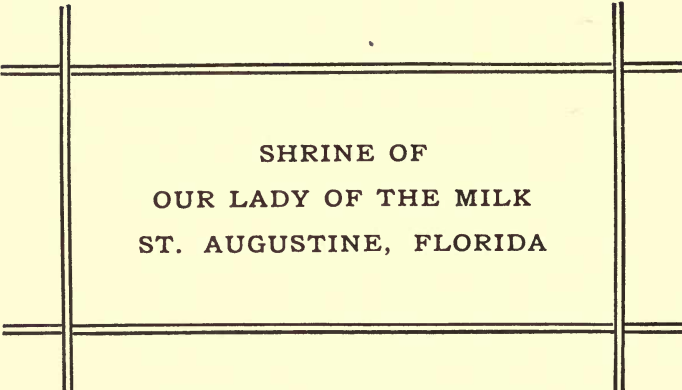
THE DEATH OF ST. JOSEPH

The following poem is selected from Father Matthew Russell's most devotional book—"St. Joseph of Jesus and Mary." The title of this book is in imitation of St. Teresa's title, chosen by herself, "Teresa of Jesus," which was so pleasing to our Lord, that, it is said He showed Himself to her as the Divine Child and asked her her name that He might reply: "And I call myself Jesus of Teresa." We choose this poem out of all the treasures in the book, because, in the closing words of Father's Russell's preface, "all that we want is a happy death. May our death bear a far-off likeness to thine, O St. Joseph of Jesus and Mary."

O JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH!

A simple print, from hand of high renown,
Upon my low bed's head looks kindly down;
—The Patriarch Joseph, Foster father mild
Of Nazareth's Virgin-Mother's heavenly Child;
His dying head pressed close against the knee
Of the Incarnate Son and Deity:
The Virgin-Mother kneeling gently near,
Dissolved in Prayer, on that mild cheek a tear;—
Thus has the Christian Master's pious mind,
Great Overbeck, the "Just Man's" death designed.
The picture, breathing all the holy peace
Of souls, which find in death, from death release,
Thus placed, a wish long cherished found expression—
When I shall come to my death-bed confession;
When faithful priest shall that last unction give
Which bids these lapsing, dying senses live
On God's own day of happy resurrection,
As long-tried vessels of most sweet election;
When on my parched, enfeebled tongue shall lie
Jesus Himself, in loving mystery;
Then my three friends, in fair, celestial state,
Unseen, around my bed benignly wait;
Thus shall I win while yielding up my breath
Life's last and crowning grace, a happy death.
O Jesus, Mary, Joseph! thus I sigh
Each night as 'neath that picture's wing I lie;
O Jesus, Mary, Joseph! me befriend
When this so troubled life begins to end;
O Jesus, Mary, Joseph! with you near
Death's dreaded spectres all will disappear;
And though no friend may come with pious care
To wipe the death-sweat, lift the last sweet prayer,
Contentedly, serenely, I can die
In your most dear and holy company.

Eliza Allen Starr.



SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF THE MILK
ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF THE MILK
ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

1565

I never think of thee apart from Him,
Nor Him apart from thee;
Lo! ever near thy Son, with Mother-love,
Thy tender face I see.

Charles H. Towne.



THOSE familiar with the detailed history of the Dominican, Franciscan, and Jesuit missions in the Floridas and Mexicos, know that the years 1540-41 were signalized by two events of unusual importance. One was the establishment and confirmation of the Society of Jesus before their beloved Shrine of the beautiful Madonna della Strada; and the erection of the first church, temporary though it was, at Tiguex, New Mexico, by the Franciscan, Father Padilla, afterward martyred, was the second event.

We may call the Shrine of Our Lady of the Milk—the meaning of our Spanish title—the oldest on the continent of America, save possibly that of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico. Visiting the actual spot of its first erection outside the city of St. Augustine, Florida, we search with avidity for those beloved landmarks of the faith, especially those connected with the first adoration of the Majesty of the Altar and Mary's sweet worship. They were ever united, ever subjects of joyous affection. Father Cancer, the Dominican, to be sure, made a brave and hazardous attempt to plant a Jesu-Maria mission near the present shore of Tampa Bay as early as 1549. But the new *Santa Maria*, on which he and his companions sailed, was beaten off by the Mobilian arrows.

It was only when the fiery-hearted Peter Menendez was commissioned by Philip II., of Spain, to reattempt the colonization of unfortunate Florida, that the famous first parish priest of St. Augustine, Mendoza Grajales, finally landed with the forces; and on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, 1565, said the first Mass at Nombre di Dios, and erected in the chapel the touching statue of Nuestra Señora de la Leche.

The allusion to "the milk" it is impossible to trace to its veritable source. No records seem to have been found by the burrowing genius of Gilmary Shea to resolve us this sweet riddle. Suffice it to advert to the gracious office of Mary toward her Divine Babe, and her evident taking to herself of this new land as her new inheritance, to cherish at her virginal breast as the chosen offspring of her Son in these latter blest times. This town and chapel existed on its original site at the head of the bay of St. Augustine proper, until, on account of the frequent desecrations of the spot and pillaging of the coast and town, outside the strong walls of the Fort (now called Marion), the Spanish authorities ordered the building demolished.

The second chapel of Nuestra Señora, still under the same tender invocation, was rebuilt inside the walls of the northernmost fortification, and no great distance from another Lady Chapel in an Indian village protected by the guns of the Fort, and to the south of the parallel wall running across the north end of the peninsula on which was built the city, and around whose circling shores forts frowned and villages smiled.

Hard by these ancient chapel sites, and indeed in almost a direct line out the St. Nicholas road, which passed directly north through the still extant square city gates, there exist today three successive cities of the dead. In the one incorporated in the present city lie the bodies of some of the Spanish heroes of religion, Father de Corpa's tomb being conspicuous. He was but one victim of the many hecatombs offered on Florida's blood-stained coasts. Another, the famous Father Rodriguez, seeing his end near, begged his Indian captors to allow him to

celebrate Mass. This they did, and tomahawked him at the foot of the altar.

To come down to our own times, Bishop Verot, the former zealous pastor of this poor flock, erected a chapel at the old bay point, and in the midst of the ancient graves, to perpetuate the memory of the regretted chapel. This was in 1870. But, unfortunately, a gale of wind blew down the structure; and its hoary ruins are sometimes yet taken for those of the original chapel of Grajales. Two walls stand; the site is desolate, as this and the two other former cemeteries have been abandoned. Now no one but those wise in history know when they kneel there that it is the site of the beloved Shrine of Our Lady of the Milk.

BELLS OF THE ANGELUS

Bells of the past, whose unforgotten music
Still fills the wide expanse,
Tingling the sober twilight of the present
With color of romance!

I hear you call and see the sun descending
On rocks and waves and sand,
And down the coast the mission voices blending
Girdle the heathen land.

Within the circle of your incantation
No blight or mildew falls;
Nor fierce unrest, nor lust, nor lost ambition
Passes those airy walls.

Borne on the swell of yon long waves receding,
I touch the farther past;
I see the dying glow of Spanish glory,
The sunset dream and last!

Before me rise the dome shaped mission towers,
The white presidio,
The swarth commander in his leathern jerkin,
The priest in stole of snow.

Once more I see Fortala's cross unlifting
 Above the setting sun,
 And past the headland northward, slowly drifting
 The freighted galleon.

Oh, solemn bells! whose consecrated Masses
 Recall the Faith of old—
 Oh, tinkling bells! that lulled with twilight music
 The spiritual fold.

Your voices break, they falter in the darkness—
 Break, falter, and are still;
 And, veiled and mystic like the Host descending,
 The sun sinks from the hill.

Francis Bret Harte.

Of what use would be Mary's great power if she did not employ it in our favor? Oh, let us rejoice, for if she is the most powerful of creatures with God, she is also the most eager to come to our assistance.—St. Augustine.

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN TO OBTAIN THE LOVE OF JESUS AND A HAPPY DEATH

O Mary, thou who desirest so much to see Jesus loved, if thou lovest me, this is the favor which I ask of thee, to obtain for me a great love of Jesus Christ. Thou obtainest from thy Son whatever thou pleasest; pray, then, for me, and console me. Obtain for me a great love towards thee, who of all creatures art the most loving and beloved of God. And through that grief which thou didst suffer on Calvary, when thou didst behold Jesus expire on the Cross, obtain for me a happy death, that by loving Jesus, and thee, my Mother, I may come to love thee forever in Heaven.

Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation.
 300 days' Indulgence.

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APPARITION

TO

ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA, S.J.
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

1566

Angelic youth, whose love for Heaven's Queen,
Has gained for thee a crown by angels twined,—
Oh! grant that we may reach that home serene
Which Mary's love has aided thee to find.

Fordham Monthly.



HERE is in Rome a small and graceful church right opposite to the old Palace of the Popes upon the Quirinal Hill. The palace is the Pope's no more; and soldiers and courtiers, not of the Pope, throng the narrow street that runs before it. Let us seek refuge from their uncongenial company in this modest sanctuary. On entering we are taken by surprise at its beauty. Circular in form, crowned by a dome, it has deeply recessed chapels, one of which attracts by the richness of its materials. We read on an inscription that underneath the altar repose the remains of St. Stanislaus Kostka. And if we pass into a room hard by we see his effigy in breathing marble. He is as at the moment of his death, holding a picture of Our Lady in one hand and a crucifix in the other. Young he is to die, but there is no shade of sorrow upon that sweet face. Who is this youth, what the story of his short life?

When the fierce flood of revolt against God's Church and God's truth was threatening the whole of Central Europe, Poland faithful and heroic was in grave peril of being drowned in the rising waters. But Masovia, one of her provinces, stood above them, like a rock unsullied, untouched by the deluge. And there, in 1550, when Edward VI. was King of England,

dark days for our dear land, Stanislaus was born. John Kostka, his father, was Senator of that most democratic, yet aristocratic kingdom, and Castellan or Governor of one of its towns. Where every freeman was a noble, nobility was no special privilege. But John was of one of the leading families, and several of his relatives and of the relatives of his wife held high places in the State.

As with so many of God's Saints, marvels foretold the greatness of this child before his birth. Stanislaus, the second son—he had a brother Paul, older by thirteen months—was born on the 28th of October. After the solemn baptism in the parish church, the child's godfather laid the baby on the ground before the altar of the Blessed Sacrament. It was a fitting consecration for one who was to be so highly favored by this sublime Mystery and so great a lover of his Lord in the Holy Eucharist.

Under a strict home training, Stanislaus grew up a sweet and winning child. The first act he could recall in after years was the dedication of himself entirely and forever to God. To this he was so faithful that no wonder his parents used to say: "He is an angel now, he will be a Saint hereafter." The Castellan kept open house, but if anyone at his table dared to say a coarse word when Stanislaus was present, the boy would raise his eyes to Heaven and then fall off into a swoon. And his father had to keep strict watch that the conversation should never turn on forbidden topics. As the brothers grew up, John Kostka looked around for some school where the faith of his sons would be secure, a privilege not easy to find in those evil days. The Society of Jesus, then but lately founded, had been invited by the Emperor Ferdinand I. to open a college in Vienna, his capital. He had lent to them a house belonging to the Crown to serve as a boarding-house for the young men of good family who flocked from all parts of Austria, Germany, and the neighboring countries to profit by the celebrated teaching and sure orthodoxy of the Jesuit masters. Even Protestants sent their sons thither.

Paul and Stanislaus arrived in Vienna in the July of 1564, accompanied, as fitted their rank, by a tutor, John Bilinski, by

a Bavarian valet, Pacifici, and two servants. It was a great delight to Stanislaus to live in such a Catholic atmosphere. The boys shared the refectory with the Fathers, and took part in the services in the church on Sundays and holy days. These were celebrated with all possible splendor as a reparation for the Protestant wrecking of sanctuary and of ritual. The altar was our young Saint's place of preference. He loved to hear three Masses every day, and to visit the church at his moments of leisure; and when there in public, he attracted all eyes by his deep though unconscious reverence, as he knelt in the choir stalls saying his beads or Our Lady's Office, often raised up from the ground in ecstasy. But he strove when it was possible to conceal his fervor from his companions by hiding himself behind the benches.

Scarce eight months had passed before the free-thinking Emperor Max, who had succeeded to the throne, reclaimed the boarding-house, at the prayer of his protestantizing nobles, from the Jesuits: and though he did not break up the college, the two young brothers had to seek a lodging in the city. Paul chose one in the house of a Lutheran gentleman, who lived in what was then the fashionable quarter, in the midst of all the gaiety and pleasure so attractive to a young nobleman of sixteen. A party of fellow students, two of their cousins, shared the house with them, and they seemed to join as much amusement as possible with the pursuit of their studies. Nor was the tutor much different from them in his tastes.

But the heart of Stanislaus was already set on leaving the world, and he divided all his time, as before, between study and prayer. He did not at first show any special talents in class, but by dogged and continuous work he got to the head of the sixth form, or as it is called in Jesuit terminology, the school of rhetoric. Besides his ordinary tasks, he learned to speak German. Many of his well-filled note books were preserved as relics in Poland, till the great Revolution. He never wore the brilliant national dress of his countrymen, and one of his great trials was being obliged to learn to dance. Whilst his brothers were playing cards after dinner, he slipped away to

visit the Blessed Sacrament in the Jesuit Church. He never would go out with them of an evening to theatres or amusements, but when they had returned and were asleep he rose at midnight to pray for a long time, and then finished with a severe discipline, the effects of which he found it difficult to conceal. Yet there was nothing stiff or morose about him, but, as is ever the case when self-control is all round and complete, Stanislaus was unchangingly bright and merry. His chubby and rosy face won the hearts of those whom he met.

But a life so different from that of his brother and of his brother's boon companions made him, as is often the case, "grievous" unto them "to behold," and Paul would vent his anger by words and even by blows. He beat Stanislaus with a stick, he kicked him, and he reproached him with living the life of a country clown instead of that of a gentleman. He constantly insisted that his father had sent him to Vienna on purpose to go into good society, and to mix with his equals. His companions in their old age owned that they, too, had joined in this ill treatment, and often jumped upon this holy boy and trampled him under foot, as though they had stumbled over him by accident, when in the dark he was lying prostrate on the floor of his room rapt in prayer. One night his companions complained that he was keeping them awake by sitting up late to read a spiritual book. Stanislaus, without a word, went to bed, but kept his candle lit at his side to finish his reading. Just as happened to St. Aloysius, he fell asleep; the candle burnt to the socket and set fire to the curtains. The flames and smoke aroused the others. Everything was in a blaze around his head, and they shouted to him to get up. He awoke, leapt out of bed, but not even a hair of his head was touched.

While unwilling to follow his brother to the parties and balls of the city, there was nothing he would not do for Paul, for he was exceedingly fond of him. He would even tidy his room and clean his boots, and render any service to him, however menial. But nothing that he did softened the harshness of his brother or of his companions. They called him "Jesuit," as a word of scorn, and the tutor, if he interfered when Paul actu-

ally ill treated his brother, laid all the blame of what our Saint suffered on his refusing to live as his station demanded.

The strain became more than Stanislaus could bear. The bad treatment, the perpetual persecution were not perhaps the sole cause. The long night vigils, the self-inflicted penances, the constant application of mind and, perhaps as much as any other thing, the unsatisfied yearning for religious life resulted in a dangerous illness during the December of 1566. Was it delirium or a vision of the evil one, when at the outset of his sickness, a great black dog seemed to leap up to his bed to attack him? Three times it came on and three times by the sign of the Cross our Saint drove it back and then it altogether disappeared. Stanislaus grew rapidly worse. He asked for the last Sacraments, but no priest could ever be allowed to pass the threshold of the Protestant landlord. This privation was more bitter to our Saint than death. He had a great devotion to St. Barbara, and he knew that to her was attributed the special power of obtaining the last Sacraments for the dying. During seven successive nights, Bilinski had watched by the bedside of his charge. Suddenly one evening, Stanislaus touched the tutor and bade him kneel down; "See!" he exclaimed, "St Barbara is coming into the room with two angels, who are bringing me Holy Communion."

Then the sick boy sprang up in bed and, on bended knees repeated three times the Domine, non sum dignus. He then opened his mouth, as though he were going to receive, and after that stayed for some time in an attitude of deep reverence. The tutor had become so worn out, that he was at length forced to leave a servant to watch the patient for one night. At day-break he returned to the sick room and Stanislaus beckoned him to his side, and assured him that he was quite well. Naturally, Bilinski thought he was wandering, but the doctors when they came confirmed the statement of the holy youth. What Bilinski did not know, but what Stanislaus told to two of his confessors, was that Our Lady had appeared to him and laid her Divine Child on the bed, and that He and the sick youth had embraced and caressed each other. Before the vision dis-

appeared the Blessed Virgin had ordered him to enter the Society of Jesus.

This was no new idea to him. For sixteen months the conviction of a real vocation had been in his mind. He had even bound himself by vow to enter religious life. The certainty that his father would refuse consent, the uncertainty whether the Society would receive him had made him keep his counsel to himself. God had called him, of that he could have no doubt. He knew that he "must be about his Father's business," and though he were to cause his earthly father and mother "to seek him sorrowing," he knew his Master's words, "that he who loves father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Longer silence and inaction now became impossible. Stanislaus went to lay his request before Father Maggio, the Provincial of the Austrian Province of the Society of Jesus. That Father was, however, just setting out his visitation of Poland, then a part of his province, and he refused to receive the youth against his father's wish. No other reason was needed than that the risk lest such a step might endanger the very existence of his order in a country already deeply tainted by Protestantism.

In vain our Saint turned to Cardinal Commendone, the Papal Legate at Vienna, who was at once a firm friend of the Society of Jesus and an old acquaintance of the Kostka family, he had known them when he was Nuncio at Warsaw. Not even the Cardinal was able to shake the determination of the Provincial. Stanislaus then turned with fresh confidence to God. He renewed the vow he had made, and bound himself to journey the whole world over until he could find some Jesuit house, some Provincial who would accept him.

The Saint addressed himself in confession to a Portuguese Jesuit, Father Antonio, a man of high standing, a former Master of novices, and at that time confessor to the Empress Dowager Mary. This Father whose position gave him a certain liberty of action, made no hasty reply. But after commending the decision to God, he advised the Saint to seek admission from Blessed Peter Canisius, so justly named the Apostle of Ger-

many, who was then Provincial of Upper Germany, and was believed to be at Augsburg. If the Provincial refused, he counselled him to go on as far as Rome and beg the sainted General, St. Francis Borgia himself, to receive him into the Society.

Our Saint prepared for flight by accustoming his brother to his prolonged absences from home. He procured a peasant's dress of coarse stuff and a straw hat to match, besides a girdle and a pilgrim's staff. When next his brother, with his usual cruelty, attacked him, Stanislaus, instead of bearing it in silence, threatened that if he went on in that way, he would be forced to go away, and that Paul would have to answer for the consequences. This unusual conduct sufficed to throw his brother into a fury, and he bade Stanislaus leave at once.

That night our Saint passed in prayer, and early next morning, Sunday, the 17th of August, 1567, he went to hear Mass and to receive Holy Communion in the Jesuit Church. He obtained from Father Antonio the letter of recommendation which he had promised. As soon as ever he was safely outside the walls of Vienna he renewed his valiant vow. He then changed his clothes, giving those he had taken off, as St. Ignatius had done, to a beggar whom he met. Before leaving he had told the servant that he would not be back for dinner. No one but Father Antonio and a young Hungarian friend, who shared in his aspirations, knew of his decision.

When night came on and Stanislaus did not return, Paul, Bilinski, and their landlord, Kimberger, felt sure that he had gone to join the Jesuits. Accordingly, early next morning, they went to the college, only to find that he had certainly not been received into the Austrian Province, but had probably gone off to Rome. They returned home in a fury, they cross-questioned the valet, Pacifici, and as soon as day dawned hurried after the fugitive. Bilinski and Kimberger drove off in pursuit in one direction in a carriage, while Paul rode away in another. The two former seem to have come in sight of him, but at that moment their horses—they had gone forty-five miles—stopped dead, nor could the driver make them move an inch further.

Paul overtook his brother, but did not recognize him under his disguise, although he spoke to him and asked about Stanislaus. The peasant replied that the youth had gone along that road in the early morning. Paul flung some money to the unknown boy, put spurs to his horse and galloped off. He paid the guards of the gates of the various places through which his brother would have to pass, that they should arrest him when he appeared.

Stanislaus thanked Our Lady for having protected him, and, when all danger seemed over, pushed forward. Fortunately, he met a Jesuit who was on his way to Dillingen, and who, to shelter him, took him past the two next towns in a carriage. But the pilgrim insisted on making the rest of his way on foot. At length he reached Augsburg, apparently in the early morning. Blessed Canisius however was not there, but several miles away, at Dillingen. Stanislaus would brook no delay, and started off at once in company with another Jesuit.

Our Saint was still fasting in hopes of receiving Holy Communion and, not many miles further on, he stayed at a wayside church. The hand of the spoiler, alas! had been before him, the church had been *reformed*, neither tabernacle nor Blessed Sacrament was there. Stanislaus burst into tears. But suddenly a throng of glorious angels appeared, lighting up the desecrated sanctuary. One of them bore the Ciborium, and the rest knelt down around our Saint, while once more he received His Lord and Love from heavenly hands.

At Dillingen he found Blessed Peter Canisius in the large Jesuit College, which had been opened in that town. Stanislaus threw himself at his feet and presented him the letter written by Father Antonio. He met with a warm welcome from the holy Provincial, and had Canisius seen his way to it he would have gladly accepted the youth as a member of his own Province. For he must have admired his courage, and, during the short interview, the holy and experienced old man must have read the secret virtue of the soul of Stanislaus. As he was despatching two Jesuits to complete their studies at Rome, B. Peter thought it wisest and safest, according to young Kostka's

own wish, to send him along with them. This was surely a Divine overruling, that with the other youthful Saints, Aloysius and John Berchmans, he might glorify the Holy City in life and in death!

Meanwhile, to test his constancy, Canisius made the high born Pole act as a servant to the young students in the college. The Saint joyfully embraced the toil and the lowliness of this post. He added to it severe austerities and an almost constant fast. The boys were greatly struck by his gentle humility and readiness to be of service, and his example was to many a call to follow him along the narrow way.

We know but little of the long autumnal journey over Alps and Apennines to the Eternal City. The central house of the Society in Rome—for there were several—was then next to what is now the splendid church of the Gesu, wherein the body of St. Ignatius de Loyola is enshrined. The General of the Society of Jesus at that time was the aged St. Francis Borgia, who had left his ducal coronet to wear a heavier crown, to rule over an order which was even then spread throughout the world. He received the travelers on October 25, 1567, in the little room where his founder had written the Constitutions of the Jesuits. We may be sure he welcomed Stanislaus with special affection, for B. Peter Canisius, in the letter of introduction he had sent, said of him, "I expect great things from him."

One of the great works of St. Francis Borgia during his Generalate was the organizing of separate houses of probation for the novices. It would seem as if the model novice was to inaugurate the first of them, the new house of St. Andrea on the Quirinal, just founded by a lady of royal Spanish blood, Jane de Aragon, the mother of Mark Antony Colonna, the hero of Lepanto. It had been opened only a year before Stanislaus came to Rome.

At first, however, this house was not large enough to receive all the Jesuit novices at the same time who were then within the Holy City, so that some stayed on at the central house, while others remained at the Roman College, such as it then existed; or rather the novices were changed about, making part

of their two years of trial in each of these different religious houses. Thus all three were hallowed by the presence of our Saint. The life of the Jesuit novice is truly a hidden life, and few, if any, incidents broke the calm of the short ten months which Stanislaus spent in Rome. Among those of various lands who were his companions there were many who had played no unimportant part on the world's stage, and many were in after years to win still purer fame in God's service. But one and all recognized in the gentle Polish youth their master and leader in the path of virtue. The future General of the Society, perhaps the best known, after St. Ignatius, Claud Acquaviva, who had been a prelate in the Vatican, was told off to give the spiritual exercises to the Saint on his arrival, but he owned that his pupil had an abler teacher, for he was taught by the Holy Ghost.

Obedience, the flower of a Jesuit's virtue, was with Stanislaus so perfect that not even a thought ever rose in his mind against any command, nor did any present the slightest difficulty to him. Neither did he ever fail through the fickle member—the tongue—so thoughtful was he before he spoke, so gentle and so wise were his words. They were full, too, of charm and set all hearts on fire with love of God, coming as they did from a heart aflame with ardent charity. He had a special gift of lifting the conversation in a joyous and easy way up to highest thoughts. Our Lady and the privilege of a religious vocation seemed his favorite topics. His face would flush and tears of joy would come to his eyes when he thought of this grace. He had written out those of the rules which concerned him and carried the copy always about him. One page of this is still treasured as a precious relic.

His countenance, which had grown pale by sickness, breathed forth a sort of fragrance of holiness that drove out evil thoughts from tempted minds and fostered holy desires in those who saw him. His very portrait seemed to have this effect. He crucified his flesh by every means that his superiors would allow, and he ever thirsted for more penance. One of our English Confessors, Father James Bosgrove, who escaped the

traitor's death at Tyburn only by being reprieved while on the road, met St. Stanislaus one day in the streets of Rome. The cruel imprisonment he afterwards endured in the London prisons, the tortures he went through therein never blotted out the impression which that angel face had made upon him. The prayer of our Saint grew more ardent as his end drew nearer. To him, as to St. Aloysius, distraction was unknown. His day was, in fact, almost an unbroken prayer. His modest, down-cast eyes used ever and again to be cast upwards towards Heaven with a deep sigh—as of earnest longing. He went about the house as if lost to all but God, and his lips moved in colloquy with Him. His eyes were constantly brimming over with tears, and in time of prayer these flowed down in streams. Often he seemed rapt in ecstasy.

As on the face of Moses, so the reflection of God's presence was seen at times in this angelic youth, and his face shone as a flame. But still more frequently the divine fire which burnt within his heart produced such effects that he was unable to conceal them, for the heat within was so intense that it brought on spasms and fainting fits. Again and again clothes dipped in the chill water of the garden fountain had to be applied to his chest, or, during the winter time he walked out in the novice's garden, when the bitter north wind was blowing, that it might temper the flame that consumed him and was wasting away the structure of his earthly tenement. His superiors gave him in charge of one of the novices, a doctor by profession, with orders to watch over him and use any restoratives that science could apply. His love of Mary was, after that of Jesus, the reigning power of his soul. He could not find phrases sufficient to express her worth, and the Rosary and Little Office were recited by him every day with a visible delight.

In the early part of the summer of 1568, B. Peter Canisius had come to Rome, summoned by St. Pius V., to give his advice as to the means of advancing the faith in Germany. The Novice-master invited this saintly and experienced man to come and give a spiritual exhortation to his little flock, and many of the Fathers from the other houses in the holy city asked and

obtained permission to be present. It was the 1st of August, the harvest time, when the Romans make merry as though to brave the deadly fever which then stalks over Rome. He took for his text a local proverb—Ferrare Agosto—Welcome to August; and he taught from it the wise lesson to enter upon each month as if it were our last, and to get ready by fresh diligence to meet our God.

It was the custom for the novices after an exhortation, to gather in little groups and talk over what they had heard. Stanislaus said that while the warning was useful for all, to him it came as a summons from God that he should die that month. He was in his ordinary health and no one seems to have attached much weight to what he said. That same day, as is the custom in many religious houses, each novice drew from a heap of tickets the name of a patron Saint of the new month. The martyr St. Laurence fell to Stanislaus. He asked his superiors to allow him a long list of penances in the Saint's honor. But they refused permission for the larger portion. Four days after, Stanislaus went on a visit to his favorite sanctuary of Our Lady, the Madonna of St. Luke at St. Mary Major's: it was the beautiful festival of the Dedication of the Basilica, when a miraculous fall of snow had marked out the site of the church and gained for that day the title of Our Lady of the Snow. He had for a companion a venerable old professor of Sacred Scripture. Talking on the way about the coming of the feast of Our Lady's Assumption, which is kept so solemnly every year at St. Mary Major's, the young Saint plainly said he hoped to witness it in Heaven. The Father thought he only meant that he would see its glories in spirit.

On the 9th of August, the eve of St. Laurence, he performed a public penance in the refectory, and went next morning to Holy Communion. He carried on his breast a letter, addressed to Our Lady, begging for the privilege of being admitted to enjoy the coming feasts of the Assumption in Heaven, and imploring St. Lawrence to present this his request to Mary and to further it by his prayer. He spent that morning working in the kitchen. The fire and, no doubt, the heat reminded him at



MADONNA DI FOLIGNO

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once of hell and of the martyrdom of his patron on the gridiron. Before the day was done Stanislaus felt so ill that he was forced to inform the Brother who had charge of him, and as he was being carried up stairs to his bed, he again said that he should die in a few days. His Master of Novices and Claud Acquaviva came to visit him, and to both he told the request he had made to his Heavenly Mother, and that he hoped by that time his prayer was heard. On Friday, two days later, a slight tertian fever declared itself, and he was borne in the arms of a German novice, whom he had known in Dillingen, up to another and more airy room. When he reached it, he knelt down beside the bed and prayed for a short time, and then, before getting into it, he blessed it and said, "I shall never get up again," adding, to calm the sorrow of those round about him, "At least, if it please God!"

Sunday came, the eve of the Assumption, and, though no serious symptoms had shown themselves, the Saint assured a Brother who was waiting on him that he would die that night. "It would need a greater miracle for you to die of so slight an illness, than to be cured of it;" was the reply, "unless, indeed, Our Lady wishes you to spend the Assumption with her in Heaven." But before the day was half past a sudden fainting fit, accompanied by the loss of strength, showed that his words were too true. "O man of little heart!" said the Novice-master laughingly, as the patient regained consciousness; "do you lose courage for so slight a matter?" "I am a man of little heart," replied the Saint; "but the matter is not so light for I shall die of it." The symptoms grew more serious, and at nightfall he made his confession, and the Holy Viaticum was brought to him. The sight of his Lord revived him. His whole frame trembled with emotion, while the light came back to his eyes. As the novices knelt around him, weeping bitterly at his approaching death, he humbly begged pardon for the faults he had committed and thanked his superiors for their great goodness to him. He especially begged that the Father General should receive his expression of gratitude for having received him into the Order. Then with deep devotion he made his last

Communion, and received Extreme Unction. He reverently repeated all the responses of the holy rites.

One thing alone troubled him, a doubt as to whether he had ever been confirmed. The state of things in Poland, in Austria and Germany, and the short time Stanislaus had been in Rome would have accounted for the omission, had there been any. It was urged that it was now too late, and one of the Fathers comforted him by recalling the singular graces which he had received, and he thus regained his peace of mind.

After receiving Extreme Unction, he repeated his confession to gain the Indulgence granted at the hour of death. Then the dying youth talked for a brief space, his face all beaming, to those around him. A blessed rosary was put into his hands and the Father, who had had charge of him when at the Professed house, and had come to visit him, asked him,—for he kept on kissing the medal,—what he was doing with his beads. “They are my most blessed Mother’s,” he replied with a bright smile. “Courage,” the Father said, “for you will soon see your Mother and be able to kiss her hand!” The very thought transported him with such joy that he lifted up his hands and eyes, as though he already beheld her. He kept repeating the holy names, and then every now and again, “My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready!”

Stanislaus for a third time made his confession. He had asked time after time to be laid on the ground that he might die as a penitent. At last the request was so far granted that a pallet was stretched on the floor and he was placed upon it. The night was wearing on. He inquired about his fellow novices and when he found they had gone to bed he renewed his messages and greeting, and begged again their forgiveness for all the scandal he had given! There were kneeling around him his two Novice-masters and a few other members of the community. As he felt his hour draw nigh, he said to his confessor, “The time is short.” “Yes,” the Father replied, “it remains——” “That we be ready,” added the Saint.

Then he followed fervently some other prayers said by the Fathers, grasping his crucifix all the while. They feared to tire

him; but when they ceased, he at once began to pour out his soul in Latin, thanking God for all His favors, especially for having died for him and for having called him to religious life. Then he kissed devoutly the wounds of his Crucified Lord and bowed his head over the Crown of Thorns. He called for a little note book in which he had marked down his monthly patrons, and begged those around to pray to those Saints for him. He was asked if he were prepared to die, and his joyous reply was, "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready!"

The morning of Our Lady's Assumption was come, the dawn was near. Suddenly he ceased his prayers, and his face beamed with a wonderful joy. He gazed around the room and seemed as though he wished those present to join in an act of reverence to some high and holy personage who was present. He kept saying that he saw distinctly Mary and a band of angels—and then the face with the radiant smile upon it settled down into the peace of death. Stanislaus lay there with a blessed candle in one hand, his crucifix and rosary in the other. The bystanders looked at each other as if to ask whether or not he were dead. One of them raised to Stanislaus' eyes a picture of Our Lady which lay beside him. This had always met with a response. Now there was none. It was evident that his soul had gone to God. It was shortly after three when he entered upon his reward.

We almost seem to know St. Stanislaus, with his pleasing but pale face, though with a bright flush on his cheeks and his eyes bright when not dimmed by a mist of tears. He was of middle height, full grown and strong. As in the beautiful statue at Rome, so did his brethren find him, when rising at an early hour they saw him lying as though in a calm sleep, but gone from them to God.

After Stanislaus' flight from Vienna, Paul Kostka had returned to his father in Poland, and both of them were very indignant at what had happened. The old Castellan wrote a violent letter to Stanislaus, which reached him while still alive, threatening to come himself and bring the fugitive back in

chains. The Saint sent back a firm but gentle reply, and Paul was despatched to Rome to carry out his father's threat, but did not arrive until a month after his brother's death, only to find the whole city ringing with the fame of the sanctity of Stanislaus. He returned home a changed man. The funeral had been attended by crowds, and the fame of our Saint's holiness spread quickly to Poland. Two years later, 1569, the body was found incorrupt. A versified life of the Saint was published at Krakow in 1570, and in 1602 Clement VIII. gave an authorization for the work to be published in Rome and in the Brief he five times called Stanislaus by the name of Blessed.

The news of this honor was received with rapture in Poland, and the family of Kostka especially shared in the universal joy. Our Saint's father and mother and two brothers were then living, though the father and Albert, one of his sons, died shortly after. Even before the death of his holy mother, Paul gave himself up to a life of great prayer, austerity and charity. He even begged to be received into the Society of Jesus, though then a broken-down old man. The permission was granted, but he passed away before he could carry out his designs. He had never ceased to lament to the very end with bitter tears his cruelty to his holy brother. Strangely enough he died on the 13th of November, 1605, the day of the month afterwards chosen for the Saint's feast. The tutor, Bilinski, became a priest, and conceived great devotion for his holy pupil. He died with the portrait of the holy youth before him and St. Stanislaus came to comfort him in his agony.

In a crisis when Poland, the bulwark of Christendom, seemed to be going down before the hordes of the Great Turk, the king of that valiant country sent to Rome to beg for the skull of St. Stanislaus. The Poles had chosen the Saint for one of their national patrons. The victory of Chocim, in 1621, was attributed to the arrival of the precious relic. Nor was this the only time when his countrymen owed to his intercession their safety in moments of like peril. The great John Sobieski held with a small force a post for twenty days against a Turkish

force fifteen times more numerous than his own, and this success he attributed to the intercession of St. Stanislaus.

It was on the 13th of November that St. Stanislaus' remains were translated to the exquisite little church where they now repose. In 1726 the holy Dominican, Pope Benedict XIII., raised St. Stanislaus with his brother Saint, Aloysius Gonzaga, to the highest honors of the altar, that of a canonized Saint.

During the evil days of French invasion a good Canon, at great peril to himself, received the precious relics from St. Andrea's and carried them for safety to Austria. When Pius VII. came to his own again, the relics were restored. But the powers that be have not respected a sanctuary hallowed by so many Saints and by the tomb of one of the Kings of Savoy, who had laid down his crown to become a lay-brother of the Society of Jesus in that holy house. The novitiate was pulled down in spite of the petitions of the ladies of Poland, and the graceful statue and memories of the Saint were transferred to a new building alongside the church. The skull, or at least a portion of it, escaped the perils of the revolutionary wars, and this is now the precious treasure of the exiled Fathers of the German Province of the Society of Jesus.

May the memory of our brave young Saint be a shield to the youth of every land in moments of danger! May he intercede for his heroic Fatherland! And may young and old alike follow him in his devotion to Our Lord and in his deep affection for Our Lady!

ST. STANISLAUS

A little babe brought to the Fount of Grace
And cleansed by Mother Church in Christ's Sweet Blood—
And angels smile down on that sleeping face,
And write his name in Heaven among the good.

A tiny child that loves to run away
To some dark corner, and with eyes upturned,
Small hand a-clasp, in ecstasy to pray,
His childish heart with love of Jesus burned.

An angel-youth, not like the giddy crowd
That fill the streets, and when he passes by
They stop their sports and dare not speak aloud,
As if he were an angel from on high.

A perfect novice, seraph-like and sweet,
As some fair rose that sheds its fragrance round,
As sighing for the time when he shall meet
His Queen, his Mother, in her glory crowned.

A saint in Heaven, dear to Christ's own heart,
At home at last, the crown and palm branch won.
Safe with his Mother, nevermore to part,
His travels are o'er, and rest, sweet rest, begun.

Pray for us Stanislaus, by that great grace
Bestowed on thee when our dear Lady came,
With Saints and with attendant angels bright,
Bringing to thee the King, whose holy Face
Enkindled in thy bosom such sweet flame
That but to die for Him were keen delight.

Marcella A. Fitzgerald.



APPARITION
TO
ST. ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ, S.J.
VALENCIA, SPAIN

1567

Mortals, sing! And, angels hail Him,
God Incarnate, Mary's Son!
To whose Heart of Love appealing
Man hath princely pardon won.
Sing His clemency unfailing!
Sing His mighty reign begun!

Caroline D. Swan.



ABOUT the beginning of the sixteenth century there lived at Segovia, in Spain, a wealthy merchant, whom the Lord had blessed with a large family of seven sons and four daughters. Of these children, the second oldest was the one destined to make the name Rodriguez illustrious throughout the Christian world. He was born on the 25th of July, 1531; and the day of his birth being the feast of the Apostle St. James, it seemed as though God wished that his whole life should be under the special protection of the great patron of Spain. Carefully directed by a truly Christian mother, his heart from his earliest childhood days was penetrated with intense love for the Blessed Virgin—a love that continued to increase as he advanced in years, so that at times he was with difficulty able to restrain the ardor of his feelings. He could not behold one of Her statues without addressing it with a childlike simplicity and tenderness, and fervently begging his Mother to intercede for him with Her Divine Son.

When he was about nineteen years old it happened that two religious of the Society of Jesus arrived at Segovia, and were hospitably entertained at the house of his father. In a short time

the religious desired to leave the city, and Alphonsus and his brother were deputed to accompany them to the merchant's country residence, and attend to their wants. While there they were instructed by the religious in the truths of our Faith, and were trained to practises of devotion. The following year they were sent to Alcala to complete their studies in the college of the Jesuits, but after a few months they were suddenly recalled home by the death of their father.

While his older brother devoted himself to the study of law, our Saint took upon himself the conduct of his father's business. Some time afterwards he was espoused to Mary Suarez, by whom he had two children. In his family life he faithfully fulfilled all the duties of a devout Christian, and merited for himself the eulogy which the Holy Spirit pronounced upon St. Joseph—"He was a just man." But it was in the designs of Almighty God that Alphonsus should be attached entirely to His service. Now, Providence makes use of various means in order to draw souls to higher paths. In the case of Rodriguez, the means employed were not unusual, but very efficacious—it was by trials. At one blow the hand of death cut off from him all that he held most dear upon earth—his beloved spouse and his eldest child.

He was then thirty-two years old, and after this severe trial, disgusted with the world, he abandoned his business to the care of his brothers, and it became his only occupation to think of death and the salvation of his soul. He made a general confession of his faults, and conceived such a lively sorrow for them that for three years he wept unceasingly. To interior mortification he joined that of the body, which he frequently subjected to the most severe discipline. He clothed himself in hair-cloth, and fasted rigorously on Friday and Saturday of each week. He recited the Rosary every day, and frequently approached the Holy Sacraments with sentiments of deep contrition and fervent devotion. Soon our Blessed Lord deigned to show how agreeable to Him was this constant sorrow for sin. One night, while Alphonsus was weeping bitterly over the memory of faults committed, the Lord appeared to him in the

midst of a number of Saints, resplendent with glory. Among them was the seraphic St. Francis, who approached and asked why he wept so much. "O dear Saint!" answered Alphonsus, "if one venial sin should be wept for during a whole life-time, why should I not weep, guilty as I am?" This humble reply pleased our Lord, who gave him a look full of love, and the vision disappeared.

From that time Alphonsus felt the greatest attraction towards a life of contemplation. The life and Passion of Jesus became the subjects of his meditations. He represented to himself the Saviour of the world full of sweetness conversing with men during His life, then crowned with thorns, covered with wounds, insulted by those He had come to save, humiliated before Pilate, meeting His Blessed Mother while sinking beneath the heavy weight of the Cross, and finally suffering a most ignominious death for the redemption of the world. If our cold hearts are moved at the sight of Jesus suffering, what must be the sorrow of those whom this Divine Saviour draws to Himself in an especial manner!

Each day that he was to receive Holy Communion, he was at an early hour kneeling before the altar, in order to prepare himself to receive in a worthy manner the God of all holiness. One day—the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin—after receiving the Holy Eucharist, he fell into an ecstasy, and saw himself before the throne of Mary, with whom appeared St. Francis and his Angel Guardian. He beheld Our Lady offering his soul to God, who accepted it. When he came to himself, he was so filled with delight that he could hardly return home. He had no further thought for this world: his soul was all absorbed in the joys of that heavenly country, which he seemed to have just left, and to which he eagerly longed to return. Thenceforth, by a virtue which we may be unable to understand, but which is very familiar to the Saints, his heart was perfectly detached from everything of this earth. His son, a beautiful child, three years of age, was the object of his tenderest love, but he resolved to offer him in sacrifice to God. He prayed fervently that his child might be removed from all

danger of sin, and his prayers were heard. The boy died soon after, and then Alphonsus determined to retire wholly from the world, and enter some religious order.

As he had no knowledge of Latin, and the condition of his health, greatly enfeebled by his austerities, rendered him incapable of much study, he was admitted into the Society of Jesus simply as a lay Brother. Thus at the age of thirty-nine years, on the 31st of January, 1571, he began his novitiate at the College of St. Paul of Valencia. Six months afterwards he was sent to another establishment on the Isle of Majorca, where he made the simple vows on April 5, 1573, and his solemn profession twelve years later. There he passed the period of his religious life, for more than thirty years seeking to sanctify his daily actions, and become more and more pleasing in the sight of the Lord. Each morning, at the first sound of the bell, he would throw himself upon his knees, and recite the Te Deum in thanksgiving to the Most Holy Trinity for having preserved him during the night, pronouncing with the greatest fervor these words: *Dignare, Domine, die isto, sine peccato nos custodire.* After his other exercises of piety, he entered upon the duties of his office as porter, receiving everyone that came with as much attention as if he were our Lord Himself. If he had to suffer any injuries, he bore them with great patience and humility. When his duties permitted, he would recite the Rosary and give himself to prayer to the Blessed Virgin, for whom, like all the saints, he had a particular devotion. Then he would pray to our Lord that he might die rather than commit a single mortal sin. For every hour of the day he had a special invocation to the Queen of Heaven, and when evening came he recommended to Her the souls in Purgatory, for whom he would offer his own penances and mortification. Often, too, the thought of those suffering souls would cause him to forget to take any nourishment.

But the demon could not endure such piety. He commenced his attacks upon the servant of God by violent temptations against the most beautiful of the virtues, appearing to him under a thousand hideous forms. Alphonsus constantly resisted

him. Then, to revenge himself, the enraged demon flung him headlong from the top of a staircase; but he was saved through the sacred names of Jesus and Mary, which he pronounced as he was falling. The evil spirit next made use of a temptation which of all others is capable of afflicting a Saint—he sought to persuade Alphonsus that one day he would stray from the path of virtue, and be lost forever. In the midst of his trial the servant of God had recourse to Mary; his constant prayer was the recitation of the Rosary; but seeing that this temptation to despair was daily becoming more violent, he cried out: “O Mary, come to my aid, or I am lost!” Then the Mother of God appeared to him, surrounded with heavenly splendor, and calmed the soul of Her servant, saying to him: “Alphonsus, My son, where I am thou hast naught to fear.” On several other occasions he received like proofs of the interposition of his Heavenly Mother; and it was but natural that he, on his part, should have a filial devotion towards Her, trusting in Her protection in all his difficulties, and obligating himself to always have recourse to such a powerful protectress, who would never abandon him.

A Spanish religious, who afterwards wrote a life of the Saint, was about to leave Majorca, and came to visit him. Finding him wrapt in contemplation, he knelt and kissed his feet. The Saint came to himself, and blushed that any one should so humble himself before him. “Brother Alphonsus,” said the other, “I am going to leave you. In memory of the years that I have spent with you, give me, I beg of you, some spiritual token.” “Whenever you wish to obtain anything from God,” replied Alphonsus, “have recourse to Mary, and you may rest assured you will obtain what you ask.” He himself constantly experienced the wonderful results of such unbounded confidence in the Mother of God.

It is hard for our proud reason to understand that blind obedience which characterized the Saints, and by which they made themselves so pleasing in the sight of Him who knows the most secret thoughts of the heart of man. The love which Alphonsus bore to our Blessed Lord and His most Holy Mother

made him realize that in fulfilling the orders of his superior he was doing the will of God, and this thought made the yoke of obedience sweet and easy. Sometimes when he had been ordered to wait at a particular place, he would remain there whole days, until some one happened to think of him. And if he were ridiculed on account of his simplicity, he profited by it as an occasion of suffering, and meriting a greater reward in heaven.

One day the rector of the College, in order to try him, told him to go to the docks and sail away without saying whither he was to go, or on what vessel he should take passage. Alphonsus immediately started off, but before he had gone far he was met by another religious, who told him to return, as his superior called for him. He immediately obeyed, and the superior asked him: "Where were you going? There is no vessel now in port, and how did you expect to leave?" He answered, with great simplicity, that he was going to practise obedience. "Go to India," said the superior on another occasion. The Saint immediately went down stairs, and asked the porter to let him out. "Where are you going?" asked the porter. "I am going to India; the superior has just ordered me." "I cannot let you out unless you show me the permission," said the porter. The Saint went back, and the rector asked him: "How were you going to India?" "I was going to the port," said Alphonsus. "If I found a ship there, I would get on board. If there were no ship, then I would walk as far as I could on the water, happy at least that I had been as obedient as was in my power."

A third time the superior wished to test the obedience of this holy soul. He called him one day, and told him that he was too old and useless to be kept any longer, and that he should leave the house and go where he pleased. At these words the holy old man bowed his head, and, without the least murmur, turned his steps to the door of the house wherein he had labored for more than thirty years, and whence he was now driven, without thought of his services nor regard for his old age. He asked the Brother porter to let him out. "No," re-

plied the latter, with emotion,—“no, dear Brother, I cannot open for you. Return to your cell, and there remain as before.” This example of obedience produced, as the superior expected, a deep impression upon the other religious; for no one in the community found aught but pleasure in the practice of obedience.

About this time there was at the College a religious named Father Aguirra, who, after some years spent at Majorca, received orders to go to Catalonia. On hearing this, Alphonsus betook himself to prayer, recommending to God the voyage of his friend. Then the Blessed Virgin appeared to him, and told him that the vessel would be taken by the Turks, and that the religious, if he embarked, would be brought captive to Algiers. “If Thou wilt, Thou canst save him,” cried Alphonsus. “I will never cease imploring Thee to bring him back to us safe and sound.” And his prayer was granted; for the superior, for some reason or other, before the vessel set sail, sent orders to the religious to return.

Some time afterwards, as several religious were about to embark for Valencia, our Saint consulted the Lord on the issue of the voyage, and received for answer that it would be a golden voyage. The vessel, however, was seized by infidel pirates, and the religious were taken captive to Algiers. Still the voyage was indeed golden; for the religious made many conversions among the infidels; and one of them, Jerome Lopez, whose virtue hitherto had been rather weak, suffered most cruel tortures rather than deny his faith, and became the apostle of his time.

Alphonsus Rodriguez uttered many prophecies and wrought many miracles that have not as yet been recorded in his life. The day at length came, after forty-five years passed in the practice of the highest virtues, when he was to receive the crown of immortality. He died while pronouncing the sacred names of Jesus and Mary, on the 31st of October, 1617, at the age of eighty-six years. An immense concourse of people from all parts of the island attended the funeral, for the virtues of the Saint were known far and wide. And ever since Alphonsus

has not ceased to be the object of great veneration throughout the Church. Many miracles have been wrought and still take place at his tomb. The cause of his beatification was introduced in the year 1627, under the pontificate of Urban VIII.; but it was reserved to Leo XII. to inscribe him among the number of the Blessed, which was done by a decree of September 29, 1724. Another Leo—our Holy Father now happily reigning—has completed the work by placing him on the calendar of the Saints of the Church, January 15, 1888.

THE QUEEN OF SEASONS

All is divine which the Highest has made,
Through the days He wrought till the day when He stayed:
Above and below, within and around,
From the centre of space to its uttermost bound.

In beauty surpassing the universe smiled
On the morn of its birth, like an innocent child,
Or like the rich bloom of some delicate flower;
And the Father rejoiced in the work of His power.

Yet worlds brighter still, and a brighter than those,
And a brighter again, He had made, had He choose;
And you never could name that conceivable best,
To exhaust the resources the Maker possessed.

But I know of one work of His Infinite Hand,
Which special and singular ever must stand;
So perfect, so pure, and of gifts such a store,
That even Omnipotence ne'er shall do more.

The freshness of May and the sweetness of June,
And the fire of July in its passionate noon,
Munificent August, September serene,
Are together no match for my glorious Queen.

O Mary, all months and all days are thine own,
In thee lasts their joyousness, when they are gone;
And we give to thee May, not because it is best,
But because it comes first, and is pledge of the rest.

Cardinal Newman.

APPARITION
TO
B. EDMUND CAMPION, S.J.M.
BRUNN, BOHEMIA

1571

Mary, dear Mother of our God,
Sweet flowers we bring to thee,
Upspringing from the willing sod,
Types of thy purity.
Protect us from the world's foul breath,
Great Queen Immaculate.
In joy and sorrow, life and death,
Be thou our advocate.

A. de Lande.



HE busy whirl of cabs and omnibuses, of carts and carriages, that eddies round the Marble Arch, the ever-changing crowds that surge by, make us forget that there we are on holy soil. Three hundred years ago, Tyburn reared its three-legged gibbet close by, and the blood of martyrs ran freely beneath it for the cause of God and of His Church. Now that the Church has, by public act, recognized these her valiant sons, it is well to make known their heroism, that God may be glorified in them, and that men may pay honor to whom honor is so rightly due. Among the many who died there, and to whom the Holy See has decreed the title of Blessed, was a priest of the then new-born Society of Jesus, the first of his brethren to shed his blood on an English scaffold. His life is full of interest, as it is full of lessons—not only for his brethren, but for all the household of the faith, and even for those who are outside.

Edmund Campion was born within the sound of Bow bells, in the year 1540. He was the son of an honest Catholic bookseller. It was a year of grave events. The dissolution of the greater monasteries, in England, by Henry VIII., was another

step towards the destruction of her ancient faith, while the solemn approval by Pope Paul III. of the Society of Jesus, was a promise of help near when danger was greatest. The boy would have been apprenticed to a trade, if his bright wits had not won for him the interest of one of the great city companies, who sent him to the well-known Blue Coat School. There was plenty of rivalry in those days between the scholars of the different grammar schools; and, in the inter-scholastic contests, young Edmund came so well to the fore, that, when Queen Mary entered London in state, on her obtaining the English crown, he was chosen, though but a lad of thirteen, to make a set speech to her as she went by. The Lord Mayor of London, on that occasion, was good Sir Thomas White; and no wonder, when he re-opened, as a lay college, the Cistercian House of St. Bernard, at Oxford, that a place was found in the new St. John's for this promising youth. No wonder, too, that Edmund soon became a special favorite of the founder, and made his mark in the University. But that rapid success was a serious danger to his soul.

Queen Mary's short reign was over, and her base-born sister, Queen Elizabeth, quickly showed how hypocritical had been her profession of Catholicity, and how resolved she was to follow in the footsteps of her father. The readiest speaker in Oxford, Campion was called upon by the Queen's too fervent favorite, Dudley, to deliver a funeral oration over the body of his murdered wife, poor Amy Robsart, whose fate is familiar to the readers of *Kenilworth*. Edmund's friend and protector, Sir Thomas White, was dead. He had died a staunch Catholic; and though Edmund made over him a panegyric, eloquent as it was sincere, yet he had found a still more powerful friend in Dudley, whom Elizabeth, in her shameless passion, had raised rapidly to honors and afterwards made Earl of Leicester, and whom the University, to flatter the royal lover, elected as Chancellor. Campion never doubted the truth of the Catholic faith, but like many before and after his time he could not bring himself to sacrifice his splendid prospects by open confession of an outlawed creed. He was the star of all the gay

pageants and learned discussions by which Oxford entertained the Queen on her visit to the University. Cecil, her Prime Minister, was forward with promises of patronage and support.

Campion unhappily allowed himself to be persuaded into receiving the deaconship in the new state religion, as a necessary step to preferment. But his mind found no rest. God clamored for his soul. He sought for excuses for his outward conformity. But the more he sought, the more clear proofs did he discover that the old faith alone was true, and that the new was false. In vain had he looked to Scripture or to the ancient church. They both declared against him. He talked out his difficulties with too many for his doubts to be long a secret, and the Grocers' Company, from whom he held his fellowship, insisted that he must make a clear profession of Anglicanism at the well-known pulpit of St. Paul's Cross in London. Others there were of his friends who had sacrificed all for God, and one of these, Gregory Martin, quondam tutor to the ill-fated and heroic Earl of Arundel—a brilliant scholar of St. John's—wrote from beyond the seas urging him to come out of the peril and snare.

It was a snare—for Campion was made Proctor and Public Orator of the University, and so raised as high in office as one could be, before taking his degree of Doctor. Young men imitated his style of writing and of speech, his very dress and mannerisms, and gloried in being called Campionists. One of these was Richard Stanihurst, whose father was a good Catholic and yet Recorder of Dublin and Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. In Ireland and in the house of Mr. Stanihurst, Campion at last determined to take refuge. There he hoped to be safe to follow the Catholic faith, under such powerful protection. At the same time he was anxious to have a hand in setting up again the ancient Catholic University of Dublin, which like so many other seats of learning, had been utterly ruined by the change of religion. The Lord Deputy of Ireland, Sir Henry Sydney, as well as the Lord Chancellor, if anything favored the old religion. So being then about twenty-one, Edmund settled down quietly in the Recorder's house in Dublin,

where, surrounded by books and immersed in study, he led so strict and so holy a life that the good Irish folk called him the angel.

But the storm-clouds were every day gathering thicker and thicker. The persecutions of Elizabeth and her cruelty to her captive guest, Mary Stuart, found their answer in the ill-starred rebellion of the North. Philip II., always dilatory, was planning an invasion of Ireland, in the name of St. Pius V.; and in a paroxysm of rage and terror, fresh measures were adopted by the Queen against the Catholics. Sydney was on the eve of leaving Ireland, and could thus offer no further protection to Campion. One good turn, however, he did for Edmund. He gave him secret warning of his peril, and Campion fled at once through the darkness of night to Sir Christopher Barnewall, at his home in Turvey, where he was hidden away in a garret. It was his first taste of suffering for the faith. However, he continued to devote himself to literary work, and wrote in his narrow cell an interesting sketch of Ireland as it then was. An old serving woman coming into his hiding-place, during the very day on which he got there, to tidy up, thought the poor stowaway was an apparition, and ran off to tell Lady Barnewall that a ghost was in the garret, writing a book. She got well laughed at for her pains. But the search for Campion was so hot that he felt his stay endangered his kind hosts; so he took ship for England, disguised as the servant to Lord Kildare's steward, and under the name of Patrick, out of devotion to the great Apostle of Ireland.

The officers searched the ship for him, and he stood by, as with big oaths they cursed the villain Campion who had again escaped them, he all the while praying heartily to his new namesake to shelter and defend him. Edmund found England far too perilous for him. Still he dared to be present in court during the trial and condemnation of the aged martyr, Blessed Dr. Storey, who had been kidnapped in the port of Antwerp, and against the law of nations brought over to England, where he was tried, and suffered the death of a traitor. The trial was conducted with such disregard of all law and justice, that Cam-

pion felt that as a layman he could do little for the progress of the faith, and hastened to rejoin a number of his old Oxford friends, who had sought in a university in a Catholic land for opportunity of pursuing their divinity studies and preparing themselves for the priesthood so as to keep alive the Catholic religion at all cost in their dear fatherland. Two Oriel men—Dr. Allen, the future Cardinal, and Dr. Oliver Lewis, afterwards Bishop of Cassano—and a host of others, had founded an English college at Douay, in Flanders, the nursing-mother to be of so many martyrs, confessors and apostles. There, by affiliation to the university of that town,—whose Chancellor, Dr. Smith, was himself an Oxford man,—higher education could be obtained for the English exiles; and thither young men and old flocked from our shores to fill up the glorious regiment of saviours of their country.

The very day of Dr. Storey's cruel death, Campion was crossing the Channel, when his vessel was overhauled by an English frigate, and the passengers were asked for their passports. Edmund naturally had none, so he was carried off by the captain of the "Hare," who put into his own pocket the money which Campion's friends had collected for his journey, and threatened to take him to London. But on the way from Dover to town it became pretty clear that he preferred Campion's purse to Campion's prosecution, so dropping gradually behind his captor, who evidently was not at all anxious about his charge, Campion soon parted company with him, and once more put the sea between him and his well-loved country. Cecil complained to young Stanihurst that England had lost in Campion one of its diamonds. And that was in the very days of Shakespeare!

A year of peace, but not of idleness, went by in the quiet of Douay. Campion finished his theological studies and took the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, while giving lectures at the same time in the English College. The new Chancellor of the University, a Fleming, who heard him speak on St. Michael's day, was forced to admit that his country could not show a genius like to him. But more than this, Edmund ascended the

first steps on the altar, receiving the four minor orders and the sub-diaconate. He was then thirty-one. But his heart was not even yet at rest. What he called "the abomination of the sign of the beast," the Anglican deacon's orders, which he had received at Oxford, called for the expiation of penance. At his first coming to Douay he had made a complete offering of himself, of his life and blood to His Lord and Master for the land he loved. A voice within him urged him, as it had so many before and after, to go in a penitent spirit to the Holy City, and there, by the favor of the two great Apostles, to seek admission into the Society of Jesus. He made no reserve in his obedience, leaving his future in the hands of God; but still he resolved, in case he were received, to beg his superiors to grant him the wish of his heart, and to allow him to spend himself and be spent for the restoration of the faith in England. And before he started on his journey, he began his apostleship by urgent letters of farewell to some of his old friends, Catholic and Protestant, so full of power, that many were induced to follow his example of leaving home and all to follow Christ. Among those to whom he wrote was his old friend, the aged Anglican Bishop of Gloucester, whom he had known and loved—Cheney, whose views were far apart from those of the other so-called bishops of Elizabeth's new-fangled hierarchy, and from the fanatical clergy subject to him. He was like a High Churchman of our time, believing neither in the Calvinism nor the Lutheranism of his days, and yet professing, illogically, to stand by Councils and Fathers, though, as his young friend clearly saw, both condemned his position in an heretical and schismatical body. This letter which still exists, as Fr. Persons says, "doth so rattle up the old man of 60 years old (but yet with great modesty, and show of reverence and hearty good will) as it may easily appear how abundantly God has imparted His Holy Spirit unto him, for his letter is truly apostolic."

Many were the friends who came out with Campion to the gates of Douay, to bid him good-bye, as he went on the road, trodden by many a Saxon king and English Saint, to the Apostles' Shrine. And, like them, his only retinue was poverty.

Begging alms by the way, he met, coming back from a tour in Italy, "an old acquaintance that had known him, in times past, in Oxford in great pomp and prosperity of the world." The English gentleman rode by without recognizing the poor pilgrim, but something in his looks struck him and he turned back, recognized Edmund, and leaping from his horse shook warmly his old friend's hand, pitying him deeply because sure that he had fallen among thieves. But he was very disgusted when he found that it was only a case of practical following of Gospel counsel. However, he held out his purse and told him to take what he wanted. But Campion would have nothing, and, so Persons tells us (he himself was then at the University), "made such a speech unto him of the contempt of this world and eminent dignity of serving Christ in poverty, as greatly moved the man, and as also his acquaintance that remained yet in Oxford, when the report came to our ears."

It was late in 1572 when Campion reached Rome. Worn out with his embassy to Spain in the suite of the Pope's nephew, St. Francis Borgia, quondam Duke of Gandia, and at that time General of the Society of Jesus, died on his return to Rome, shortly after Edmund's arrival. So there was needs a long delay before he could present himself for reception to the General, as the electors had to gather in from the foreign provinces of the Society to choose a successor. Nor was it till April 23, of the following year, that Father Everard Merceœur (Latinized into Mercurianus) of Liège was elected.

Campion was the first postulant received by the new General. The official examiners were so completely satisfied with his answers that he was received as a novice without any further probation. No doubt their previous knowledge all went to confirm their decision. In fact he had come to be so well known by the various Provincials and Fathers, deputies for the election,—there was then no English Province,—that there was a contest over him, as to which should secure his service. Campion rejoiced to think that his lot was now entirely in God's hands, and his only prayer, and an earnest one, was, that He would, through his superiors, dispose of him when and as He

willed. The Austrian province won the day, and Prague in Bohemia was chosen as the place of his novitiate. Thitherwards he traveled in the summer, on the close of the Congregation, in company with Fr. Maggi his Provincial and several German and Spanish Fathers, as far as Vienna. Thence he started for the novitiate with Father James Avellanedo, the confessor to the Empress, a man who had held weighty posts in Europe and India, and who told Fr. Persons in after years "how exceedingly he was edified with the modesty, humility, sweet behavior and angelic conversation of Campion which made him ever after to have a great affection for our nation."

Bohemia, the home of the Hussites, had then well nigh lost its faith: and as John Huss owed his socialistic and anti-Catholic ideas to Wycliffe, Campion felt that as an Englishman he might by God's holy providence gain some souls in that land back to the faith, "in recompense of so many thousands lost and cast away by the wickedness of Wycliffe." The novice by his fervent life gave great edification to all, for his only thought was to serve God and to live in peace and charity with all around. In two short months the novitiate was moved, on October 10, 1573, to Brünn in Moravia, where things were worse even than in Prague, and where the Bishop hoped that a house of prayer and penance might effect a change for the better. There Fr. Edmund spent a year's novitiate. One of the novice's duties was to catechize in the neighboring hamlets. The results were great; but Campion was ever noted as the most successful, and he won many converts to the truth.

In spite of the humiliations and hard life of a Jesuit novitiate, or, rather, because Campion had thoroughly caught the spirit of a true companion and imitator of his Divine Lord, love made all that labor light. The blessed martyr, writing to his former fellow novices, shows how he valued the trials of his probation. "Beautiful kitchen, where the Brothers fight for the saucepans in holy humility and charity unfeigned! How often do I picture to myself one returning with his load from the farm, another from the market; one sweating stalwartly and merrily under a sack of rubbish, and another under some other toil!

Believe me, my dear brothers, that your dust, your brooms, your poles, your loads are beheld with joy by the angels, and get for you from God more than if they saw in your hands sceptres, jewels, and gold in your purses." Father Campion's novice-master was made Rector of a College of Prague, and on September 7, 1571, he went to his new post taking with him his favorite pupil. Amidst the prayerful retirement of Brunn the future martyr had been favored with a vision of Our Lady under the stately and venerable type of St. Luke's painting at St. Mary's Major's, of which a copy was in the novice's chapel. She offered to him a purple robe as a promise of his victory.

In the College of Prague, Edmund's talents were at once brought into play. He was made professor of rhetoric to the young gentlemen and nobles of Bohemia, while other humble duties were assigned to him in-doors. He had to be the first out of bed at a very early hour of the morning, to call the community, and had to be the last up at night to see that all lights were out, and that all had retired to rest, while his recreation was often spent in helping the cook in the kitchen. The following year, 1575, when he had taken his first vows, he set up the Sodality of Our Lady among the students, and the year after he was moved into the convictus or boarding school, and was appointed prefect of discipline, in addition to other duties. Never was he known to make any other difficulty to his superior, when he laid any new labor upon him, but only: "Does your reverence think I am fit to discharge that office?" If the superior said "Yes," he accepted it without more ado. And his companions thought it a miracle that one man could bear so many loads.

Amidst all his varied occupations, Blessed Campion's fall at Oxford and his reception of Anglican orders was ever a source of trouble to him. And it was in vain "to tell him, that which he knew right well himself, that it was no order or character at all, seeing that he that gave it to him was no true bishop, and had no more authority than a layman, and that indeed these bishops themselves did not consider that any character was given, as in Catholic ordinations, by imposition of hands." Still,

the very memory of this mark of his open apostacy made him sad and unhappy. Nor was he ever freed from his inward grief, till the absolute order of his General came from Rome, not to trouble himself about this scruple, and, in 1578, he was ordained deacon and priest by the Archbishop of Prague. He said his first Mass on Our Lady's birthday.

Meantime news from Rome renewed all his old desires to labor directly for his native land. The blood of martyrs had begun to flow in England. Blessed Thomas Woodhouse, an old Marian priest, had given his life for the faith at Tyburn. Blessed Cuthbert Mayne, the first of the illustrious band that came from the English seminaries across the water, was martyred at Launceston, on November 9, 1577. He was of St. John's College, like Campion, and was one of those whom our blessed martyr had persuaded by letter to throw up his position, and to come out of England to Douay. Campion learned, too, that several of his old Oxford friends had entered the Society of Jesus in Rome, of whom the best known are Robert Persons of Balliol, his biographer and future companion, Henry Garnet of New College, and William Weston of All Souls, all three of whom were in turn to be Superiors of the Society of Jesus in England.

Every day the Queen and her advisers grew more angry as the arrival of fresh priests became known, and several captures of Catholic priests called for more care and watchfulness. London had become too hot to hold them. As soon therefore as Father Persons returned, a meeting was held in a small house in Southwark to settle some grave questions before they separated. Several priests and laymen were present. The chief question to be discussed at the meeting was how to rebut the accusation which had gone abroad that the Jesuits had come into England for political and revolutionary ends. It was thought enough to be prepared to deny the allegation solemnly and on oath; but just when the Fathers were bidding each other good-bye at Hoxton, before leaving London, Mr. Pound, a gentleman of rank, came deputed by the many Catholic prisoners in the Marshalsea prison, to urge in their name that some more

definite measures be taken, to contradict the rumor. He begged that a declaration written by each Father, signed and sealed, should be left in the hands of some trusty friends, to be produced and published if, after their death, these falsehoods should be urged against them. Father Campion, taking a pen in his hand, wrote upon the end of a table in less than half an hour the declaration which was to play hereafter so important a part. Written off without any previous study, while his friends were waiting his departure, it was so pithy, both for matter and language, as to please greatly the unprejudiced reader and sting his opponents. In it he challenged a discussion on religion before the Council to show how it affected the State, before the University to prove its truth, and before the men of the law to show how the English statute book itself justified his creed. He offered even to preach before the Queen. At the same time he declared that his holy calling and the orders of superiors warned him from any matters of State. Father Campion gave a copy to Mr. Pound; the other, which he kept for himself is now carefully treasured at Stonyhurst College. Pound showed his to other friends, who begged to be allowed to transcribe it, and quickly it became spread about, and fell into the hands of friends and foes alike, and more than one copy was laid before the Queen's Council.

At once fresh and sweeping measures of persecution were adopted, and the Catholic gentry were packed into the state prisons; and, when these were full, castles, whose ruinous state made them unfit dwellings for men, were crowded with the best and noblest of the land. Meanwhile, well provided with horses, money and changes of disguise by the devotion of the Catholic Association, Fathers Campion and Persons bid each other good-bye, and set out each on his separate mission, full of peril, as it was full of profit. Each was accompanied by a trusty squire, who shared his danger and served as guide. Blessed Edmund passed through Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire, calling at gentlemen's and noblemen's houses, both Catholic and Protestant. "We entered, for the most part," Persons narrates, "as acquaintance or kinsfolk of

some person that lived within the house, and when that failed us, as passers-by, or friends of some gentlemen that accompanied us; and after ordinary salutations, we had our apartments, by the Catholics' aid, in some retired part of the house, where putting on our priests' dress, which we always carried with us, we had secret conference with the Catholics that were there, or such of them as might conveniently come, whom we always caused to prepare themselves for confession late that night. Next morning very early we had Mass, and the Blessed Sacrament ready for such as wished to communicate, and after that an exhortation which had been prepared on horseback, and then we made ourselves ready to depart again." When they were able to prolong their stay, they would repeat these exercises. Such was the plan the Fathers followed.

Once more they came back to the south. Campion was so hotly sought after that he dared not enter London, but he met Fr. Persons and other priests at Uxbridge. There it was determined that Fr. Edmund should use his brilliant pen to write a Latin appeal to the Universities, where his memory was still fresh and in honor. With the enthousiasm which formed such a large part of his character, he chose for his subject, "Heresy at its wits' end," and, though the idea seemed a strange one at a time when heresy was the master of the whole material power of the realm, the Father insisted that its very activity and cruelty showed that it had no better argument to produce. The two Fathers renewed their vows, heard each other's confessions, and then again bade good-bye.

Fr. Campion, as had been resolved, made his way towards Lancashire, the road beset by ever-increasing perils, while Persons betook himself to London to plan some way of setting up a press to print the work as soon as it should be ready, and other controversial books. Guided as before by some dauntless gentlemen, Father Campion went northward by Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire to Yorkshire, where in the shelter of Mr. Harrington's house at Mount St. John, amidst the picturesque hills above Thirsk, he stayed some twelve days to work at his promised book, known by the name of the "Ten

Reasons." One of Mr. Harrington's sons was so struck with his father's guest, that he left friends and home to study at Douay, and returned to be martyred at Tyburn. When Father Campion reached Lancashire he preached assiduously, people of high station passing the night in barns to secure a place to hear his morning sermons. All felt the attraction, not so much of his wonderful eloquence and cultured accent, but of his earnestness and of a hidden power which they knew came from above. While staying at Blainscough Hall, the home of Mr. Worthington, whose wife was a niece of Cardinal Allen, the pursuivants got on his track, and would have seized him, if a maid-servant, in a pretended fit of anger, had not pushed him into a miry pond. The mud served as an effective disguise.

A safe place had been found for the printing press at Lady Stonor's at Stonor, near Henley-on-the-Thames; and Father Persons, who was anxious that Father Campion should superintend the "Ten Reasons" as it passed through the press, recalled him to the south, with orders not to stay at any private house, but only at the inns, in order to avert suspicion. While the book was being printed, Fr. Campion evangelized the neighborhood, and passed the anniversary of his arrival in England, St. John's day, 1581, at Twyford, in Buckinghamshire. On the 27th of that month of June, when the dons and students entered St. Mary's, Oxford, for Commemoration—the Church served, in those days, the purpose of the Theatre—they found on the benches copies of the new work, while others were distributed up and down the colleges by a priest of the name of William Hartley, who in 1588 gave his life for the faith. "Nothing else is wanting," wrote Fr. Campion to his new Father General and old friend, Fr. Aquaviva, on July 9, "to the cause of Christ than that, to our books written with ink, others should succeed, which are being daily published, written in blood."

The "Ten Reasons," and its audacious publication, only added heat to the raging persecution. Once more Father Campion bade good-bye to his companion and superior, after they had mutually renewed their vows and been to confession, and,

early in the morning, they mounted and so parted, Father Edmund with Brother Ralph Emerson, for Lancashire and thence for Norfolk, Father Persons returning to London. He had given orders as before, that Campion should not visit gentlemen's houses on his way. But a letter reached Father Edmund on the road from Mr. Yates, of Lyford Grange, in Berkshire, then a prisoner in London, to beg him call on his wife and a few Brigittine nuns who happened to be at his house. The Father rode after his superior to obtain leave to go. Father Persons' reply was, "I know your easy temper. You are too soft to refuse anything that is asked of you. If once you get there, you will never get away." He allowed him to go, but limited him as to time, and putting him under obedience to Brother Ralph, they parted. So after dinner the next day Father Campion left Lyford. But a large party of Catholics came that very afternoon to visit the nuns. Grieved to have missed the Father, they persuaded Blessed Thomas Ford, one of two priests staying at the Grange, to ride after him and bring him back. Mr. Ford came up to Father Campion in an inn not far off Oxford, and found him surrounded by a number of students and masters of the University, who were trying in vain to get him to preach to them. The arrival of Blessed Ford was soon known, and one and all urged his request, as they hoped thus to share in the privilege of hearing Campion. But he would not yield, yet at last being hard pressed, melting into tears, he said he was under obedience to Brother Ralph. So they all turned on the Brother; who, in turn, overborne, agreed that Father Campion should return to Lyford, while he went off to Lancashire to get the Father's papers, and that they should afterwards meet in Norfolk. This weakness, on Brother Emerson's part, was to him a subject of lifelong regret.

What was known to a large number of University men could not long remain a secret, and there was a traitor about, anxious to gain pardon for crime, by the capture of Father Campion. On Sunday morning, the 16th of July, the nuns, the students, and Catholics, altogether 60 in number, with two priests, and Eliot, the spy, were present at the Father's Mass, and at his

touching sermon on the Gospel of the day—Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. Never had he preached as then. Campion intended to leave as soon as dinner was over. But the meal had hardly begun before a man on the look-out announced that the house was entirely surrounded by armed men. Before getting admission, Eliot had learned that his prey was there, and had sent orders to a magistrate to come with a hundred men to do the Queen's bidding. Father Campion wished to give himself up at once to save the rest, but the two priests hurried him off to one of the many hiding-places, in the hollow of the wall, over the gateway. There, on a narrow bed, the three just managed to stow themselves away, preparing, by mutual confession and earnest prayers, for their fate. The stout Berkshire yeomen did not like the dirty work of invading the home of a neighbor, and, at Eliot's bidding, of upsetting the whole house. They sought the whole afternoon in vain and when at last they withdrew, vented their annoyance on Eliot. The wretch pretended that his warrant gave him authority to break down the walls, and insisted on returning. The priests were already being congratulated on their escape, and had to beat a second retreat. Mrs. Yates, the lady of the house, remonstrated with the magistrate at her night's rest being interrupted, and the gentleman politely promised she should not be disturbed; so she had her bed made up in the room next to where Blessed Campion lay hid. She ordered the searchers, when they were tired, to have a good supper served them, and they were soon all fast asleep. Then Mrs. Yates insisted on hearing a fresh sermon from Father Campion, and he was eloquent as ever. All prudence seems for the moment to have been forgotten, and the sentinels posted at the door were up and gave the alarm. But in a moment all was still again. The hunted priests had regained their hole. Next morning, however, the search was renewed. Eliot noticed a wall which was as yet unbroken, and one of Mrs. Yates' servants, who was by his side to mislead him, betrayed his alarm by the ashy paleness of his face. In another moment a hammer crashed through, and the three priests were disclosed.

Very unwillingly Mrs. Forster, the sheriff of the county, received orders to send Fr. Campion, with the two priests and some of his audience, on to London. Eliot, full of his success, rode in triumph at their head. Oxford men came out to see him as he passed through Abingdon; and at Henley, Fr. Persons sent his man to note how the Father bore himself, for his friends would not let him go himself. At Colebrook, orders arrived that Campion should make his entry into town on Saturday when the streets would be crowded with market folks, and the prisoners, who had been hitherto treated as gentlemen, now had their elbows pinioned behind their backs, their hands tied in front, and their feet fastened beneath their horses' bellies; while to the Father's hat was attached,—the fashion with perjurers in those rough days,—a paper on which was written in large letters, "Campion, the seditious Jesuit." So on July 22, all round the crowded streets and squares of the metropolis, the cavalcade of scorn was led till the jaws of the fatal Tower received its victims. Father Campion bade his guards a kindly good-bye, cheerfully forgiving any wrong they had done him, and assuring them he sorrowed more for their state than for his own. He had already forgiven Eliot as freely and as forcibly: "and absolution, too, will I give thee, if thou wilt but repent and confess; but large penance thou must have."

The governor of the Tower, Sir Owen Hopton, thrust his victim into the wretched hole so well named, "Little Ease." But, four days after, July 25, Blessed Campion was taken to the water side, to the house of the Earl of Leicester, and there for the first time since the festivities at Woodstock, found himself face to face with the royal favorite, and his royal mistress, who was accompanied by the Earl of Bedford and the Privy Counsellors. They told him they found no fault with him save that he was a Papist; "And that," he answered with deep respect and enthusiasm, "is my greatest glory." Queen Elizabeth offered him life, liberty, riches, honors, anything he might ask, but at the price of his soul. We can imagine his answer. When taken to the Tower, Hopton at once caught his cue. He treated the Father with all consideration, while he sug-

gested to him that the highest honors at court; even the broad lands and mitre of Canterbury were within his reach if he would but give way; and Sir Owen spread the news abroad that Campion had accepted the bribe. When, however, the offer to become a Protestant was made openly to him, he treated it with such scorn that it was at once resolved to have recourse to torture.

It was probably on the day on which St. Ignatius had died, July 31, that Father Campion first tasted the horrors of the rack-chamber. He knelt on the threshold, and made the sign of the Cross, and, as they stripped him and bound him to the rollers, called on Jesus and Mary for help. No voice could come up from that subterranean hell: but it was noised about London that Campion was yielding, that he had betrayed his friends, and that he would soon openly become a Protestant. That some of his companions, under the awful torture of strained muscles and dislocated limbs, had told some secrets, seems too clear; but Burleigh was obliged to own, in a confidential letter to Lord Shrewsbury, that from Campion they could exhort nothing of moment. But the slander did its work for the time. Mr. Pound wrote to the Father to implore him to say what truth there was in the awkward rumors afloat. Campion was allowed to receive the letter and to send a reply, but both were intercepted, and it was said that in the answer, though he had, in weakness, confessed to some of the houses at which he had stayed, he had discovered nothing of secret, nor would he, "come rack, come rope." The great aim of Elizabeth's advisers was to connect Campion, rightly or wrongly, with the schemes afloat of foreign invasion or home treason, from which, both by natural inclination and by the express orders of his superiors, he had kept carefully aloof. As he never was allowed to confront those whom he was said to have accused, it became evident, that even if the words of his letter to Pound were truly given, he meant nothing more than that he had never divulged anything that his torturers did not know before.

The European fame of Campion, the extraordinary renown

his "Ten Reasons" had won him, from friend and foe, made Burleigh and Cecil feel they could not treat him like an ordinary priest or recusant unless they could first damage his credit as a scholar. Nine Deans and seven Archdeacons were told off to answer the book which they affected to despise. But now that the author was in their clutches, after the prison dietary, the rack, the sorrow of heart, there did seem a chance that he might fail to maintain the challenge he had made to support his faith against all comers. So the servile Bishop of London was ordered to prepare a series of public discussions. In the venerable Chapel of the Tower, without a book to aid them, without even a chair-back to rest against, BB. Campion and Sherwin, with other Catholic prisoners, were brought face to face with the Deans of St. Paul's and Windsor, and other disputants, who were seated at a table, supplied with any number of works of reference. A Catholic who was there tells us that Father Edmund looked ill and weary, his memory nearly gone, his force of mind almost extinguished. Yet he won admiration from all by his ready answers, by his patience under the coarse abuse and ill-timed jests of his well-fed and well-prepared adversaries. They jeered at his ignorance of Greek, a false reproach which in his humility he accepted in silence; they denied his quotations from Luther, because they could not find them in their emended edition; they threatened him with torture and with death. In spite of the odds against him, there was no doubt which way the victory inclined. What with Campion's saintly meekness and his unanswerable arguments, the Venerable Philip Earl of Arundel owed his after conversion to what he then saw and heard, when from a Protestant and a courtier of the voluptuous Queen he became a confessor and a martyr of the faith. Each fresh discussion, and there were four in all, proved more fatal to the Protestant cause; and when at length his enemies determined they should cease, spite of the boasting of the sleek dignitaries of the new creed, it became clear to all that Campion had been neither traitor to his friends, nor would be to his God. His success was sung in doggrel rhymes in the streets—

Let reason rule and racking cease,
Or else for ever hold your peace;
You can't withstand God's power and grace,
No, not with t'Tower and racking place.

As it had been decreed by the Queen's Counsel that Father Campion must die, false witnesses were now suborned, as a last resource, to prove his share in the schemes by which outraged Europe hoped to tear Elizabeth from the throne. But when neither rack nor perjury could entrap him, an imaginary plot had to be trumped up. The rack, which he had declared was more bitter than death, was again applied to exhort a confession from Father Campion, and with such savagery that he thought they meant to kill him then and there. Still, as Lord Hunsdon said, they might sooner pluck his heart out of his breast, than wring one word from him against his conscience. When the jailor asked him next day how he felt his hands and feet, his answer was, "Not ill, because not at all."

At last the indictments were drawn up. It mattered little what they were, for the Crown lawyers had their orders to carry a conviction at any cost and in any way. So on Tuesday, November 14, the grand old Hall of Westminster, the scene of many of the greatest trials in English history, saw Blessed Campion, with Blessed Cottam and Fr. Bosgrave of the Society of Jesus, BB. Sherwin, Kirby, and Johnson, with Rishton, a priest, and Orton, a layman, brought up before the Grand Jury. When the indictment had been read, Father Campion, who was the spokesman all through the trial, protested before God and his holy angels his innocence of any treason, and Sherwin added, "The plain reason of our standing here is religion and not treason." When called upon to plead, one of the prisoners had to lift up B. Campion's tortured arm, made helpless by the rack, which he did, reverently kissing it, as the martyr stoutly answered, "Not guilty." Next day Blessed Briant of the Society of Jesus, BB. Richardson, Shert, Ford, Filby, with two other priests, Hart and Colleton, were brought up to plead to the same indictment.

The trial commenced on Monday the 20th, if trial that could

be called, which Hallam stigmatizes as “unfairly conducted, and supported by as slender evidence as any perhaps that can be found in our books.” The Chief Justice, Wray, who presided, was a Catholic at heart, and the shameless travesty of justice in which he took an unwilling part, is said to have shortened his days. Skilfully, but hopelessly, for three hours the arguments of counsel and the perjuries of degraded witnesses were met and answered by Fr. Campion, and the verdict was given—to order after an hour’s debate. When asked what he had to say why he should not die, with his face beaming and with noble dignity, the eloquent martyr replied, “It was not our death that we ever feared. But we knew that we were not lords of our own lives, and therefore, for want of answer would not be guilty of our own deaths. The only thing that we have to say now is, that if our religion do make us traitors, we are worthy to be condemned; but otherwise are, and have been, as true subjects as ever the Queen had. In condemning us you condemn all your own ancestors—all the ancient priests, bishops, kings—all that was once the glory of England—the island of Saints and the most devoted child of the See of Peter. For what have we taught, however you may qualify it with the odious name of treason, that they did not uniformly teach? To be condemned with these old lights—not of England only, but of the world—by their degenerate descendants, is both gladness and glory to us. God lives, posterity will live: their judgment is not liable to corruption, as that of those who are now going to sentence us to death.” No wonder Blessed Cottam said he was quite willing to die, after hearing Campion speak so gloriously.

Then the hideous sentence was pronounced, and Campion made the oaken rafters ring with a jubilant “Te Deum laudamus, Te Dominum confitemur,” while B. Sherwin responded, “This is the day which the Lord has made, let us exult and rejoice in it,” and such a chorus of praise and joy rose from the dock as astounded and touched the vast throng. The prisoners who had been arraigned on the second day were brought up for like judgment on the Tuesday.

Cruel treatment and heavy irons awaited the Blessed Campion on his return to the prison. But nothing could alter his gentle patience. A week after his sentence, his sister brought him the offer of a rich benefice if he would but change his religion. He proffered Eliot, his betrayer, now a yeoman of Her Majesty's guard, who came to visit him and express his sorrow at his fate, a recommendation to a Catholic Duke in Germany, in whose territory he could live in safety should his life be menaced by Catholics as he feared. This charity converted Campion's jailor. The martyr prepared for death by a five days' fast, and spent the two last nights, Wednesday and Thursday, 29th and 30th of November, in prayer. Out of the condemned, three victims were selected for the first sacrifice, Campion the Jesuit, Briant of the Rheims College, and Sherwin of that of Rome.

It was in a dreary downpour that, on December 1, the three were brought out to be tied on two hurdles, each of which was fastened to the tails of two horses. BB. Sherwin and Briant were bound to one, Campion to the other. As they were dragged through the mud and over the stones of the unpaved streets, a mob of ministers and fanatics followed them, calling on them to be converted. Still the Catholics had from time to time a chance to speak to them, and a gentleman like another Veronica, wiped the mire from B. Campion's face. As they passed beneath the New Gate, where now the prison stands, Campion tried to raise himself—"Moriturus te saluto"—to pay homage to the statue of Our Lady that had escaped the iconoclasts' hammer in the niche above. The crowds grew denser, as at the end of the long road the gallows came in sight. The martyrs' faces were bright as the sun shone out. "They are laughing," the people cried, "they do not care about death." A new gibbet had been put for the Blessed Dr. Storey's death. The blood of a martyr had hallowed the cross. Close to the triple tree was a group of noblemen on official duty, but many a Catholic gentleman and even a priest pressed up to witness the sacrifice. Father Campion was the first who was made to get into the cart which stood beneath the gallows, and then

he put, as he was bid, his head into the noose. And, when the buzz of the thousands ceased, he began gravely, "Spectaculum facti sumus Deo et Angelis, et hominibus: 'We are made a spectacle or a sight unto the Lord God, unto His angels, and unto you men,' verified this day in me." The sheriffs bade him confess his treason against the Queen, but he only reiterated his innocence, saying, "If you esteem my religion treason, then I am guilty; as for other treason, I never committed any." So, too, he explained, that the only secret he had kept back under torture, was merely the fulfilment of his priestly functions. So for some time he stood in earnest prayer, oftentimes interrupted by captious questions. A minister would have had him to pray with him. "You and I," he replied, "are not one in religion; wherefore, I beg you to content yourself. I bar none of prayer, but I only desire those of the household of the faith to pray with me, and in mine agony to say one 'I believe.'" Then they bade him to sue for the Queen's forgiveness, and to pray for her. "Wherein have I offended her? In this I am innocent. This is my last speech; in this give me credit. I have prayed, and do pray for her." "For which Queen?" broke in Lord Charles Howard. "For Elizabeth, your queen and my queen, unto whom I wish a long, quiet reign with all prosperity." And so the cart was drawn away, and a long groan went up from the crowd. The body swung in the air till life was extinct. As it was cut down and quartered on the block, a drop of blood and water splashed out on young Henry Walpole, and in an instant he felt himself called to be a Catholic, and, in due time, to be a Jesuit and a martyr.

Sherwin, proto-martyr of the English College, was the next to die. And, last of the three, Father Briant, freshly dedicated to God in the Society of Jesus, whose beautiful young face, lit up with desire of martyrdom, won the hearts of all who stood by.

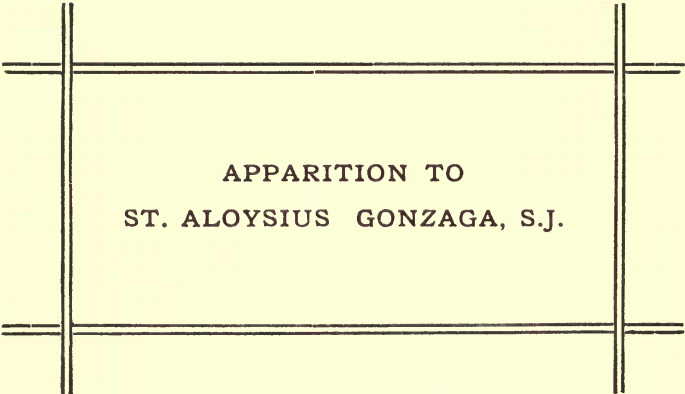
It was not until the 28th and 30th of May following, that the other Blessed Martyrs, who had been condemned with Campion, met their deaths at Tyburn. As they had all stood together at the bar of human injustice, at Westminster, so they

all met together again in Heaven, to receive from Divine Justice the unfading crown amongst the white-robed army of martyrs.

“FOR BEHOLD FROM HENCEFORTH ALL GENERATIONS SHALL CALL ME BLESSED!”

Loveliest of women, and most glorified!
In thy still beauty sitting calm and lone,
A brightness round thee grew—and by thy side,
Kindling the air, a form ethereal shone,
Solemn, yet breathing gladness.—From Her throne
A queen had risen with more imperial eye,
A stately prophetess of victory
From her proud lyre had struck a tempest's tone,
For such high tidings as to Thee were brought,
Chosen of Heaven! that hour; but Thou, O Thou!
E'en as a flower with gracious rains o'er-fraught,
Thy virgin head beneath its crown didst bow,
And take to thy meek breast th' All-Holy Word,
And own thyself the Handmaid of the Lord.
Yet as a sun-burst, flushing mountain snow,
Fell the celestial touch of fire ere long
On the pale stillness of thy thoughtful brow
And thy calm spirit lighten'd into song.
Unconsciously, perchance, yet free and strong
Flow'd the majestic joy of tuneful words,
Which living harps the choirs of Heaven among
Might well have linked with their divinest chords
Full many a strain, borne far on glory's blast
Shall leave where once its haughty music passed,
No more to memory than a reed's faint sigh;
While thine, O child-like virgin! through all time
Shall send its fervent breath o'er every clime
Being of God, and therefore not to die.

Mrs. Hemans.



APPARITION TO
ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, S.J.

APPARITION
TO
ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, S.J.

1583

"Angelic youth, so chastely fair,
Inflamed with love divine!
Around thy Jesus' Sacred Heart
Our best affections twine.
And pray the Queen of Angels bright
To guard our purity,
That when these exile-days are past
We may His vision see."

Ave Maria.



T. ALOYSIUS, the eldest son of Ferdinand Gonzaga, Marquis of Castiglione, was born on the 9th of March, 1568. The first words he pronounced were the holy names of Jesus and Mary. When he was nine years of age he made a vow of perpetual virginity and, by a special grace, was ever exempted from temptations against purity. He received his first communion at the hands of St. Charles Borromeo. At an early age he resolved to leave the world and, in a vision, was directed by Our Blessed Lady to join the Society of Jesus. The Saint's mother rejoiced on learning his determination to become a religious, but his father for three years refused his consent. At length St. Aloysius obtained permission to enter the novitiate on the 25th of November, 1585. He took his vows after two years, and went through the ordinary course of philosophy and theology. He was wont to say he doubted whether without penance, grace would continue to make head against nature, which, when not afflicted and chastised, tends gradually to relapse into its old state, losing the habit of suffering acquired by the labor of years. "I

am a crooked piece of iron," he said, "and am come into religion to be made straight by the hammer of mortification and penance." During his last year of theology a malignant fever broke out in Rome; the Saint offered himself for the service of the sick, and he was accepted for the dangerous duty. Several of the brothers caught the fever, and Aloysius was of the number. He was brought to the point of death, but recovered, only to fall, however, into slow fever, which carried him off after three months. He died, repeating the Holy Name, a little after midnight, between the 20th and 21st of June, on the octave-day of Corpus Christi, being twenty-three years of age.

Cardinal Bellarmine, the Saint's confessor, testified that he had never mortally offended God. Yet he chastised his body rigorously, rose at night to pray, and shed many tears for his sins. Pray that not having followed his innocence, you may yet imitate his penance.

There is something moving in the letter he wrote to his mother upon this occasion, and it would be doing the reader an injury not to lay it before him in the very words he wrote it.

"MY LADY AND HONORED MOTHER IN J. C.

"The peace of our Lord be with you

"I pray the Holy Ghost to pour down upon you grace and perpetual benediction. I was still an inhabitant of this vale of death when your last letter arrived; but I must now begin to look upon myself as an inhabitant of Heaven, and prepare to enter into that land of the living, to praise God for all eternity. I did not imagine I should have held out so long but the fever, when come to its greatest height, abating on a sudden, as I informed you in my last letter, carried me on to the feast of the Ascension. Since that time the humor has fallen upon my breast, and the fever has become so violent, that it cannot be long before I go to receive the embraces of the Eternal Father, in whose bosom I hope to find secure and everlasting rest. Thus you see the report which was spread abroad concerning

me, was not very wide of the truth, as I wrote to the marquis. If it be the part of true charity to weep with those that weep, and to rejoice with those that rejoice as St. Paul tells us, you should be exceedingly glad, my honored mother, when you hear with what joy I find myself upon the point of entering into a state in which I shall be no longer under the apprehension of losing God. For my own part, I confess that whenever I consider the goodness of God, which I represent to myself as an immense ocean, without either shore or bottom, I am lost in the thought, incapable of comprehending how God should grant me rest without end for labor of so short a continuance—how he should be willing to give me a reward which I have so little deserved, and promise such plentiful fruit for the few tears I have shed in His service. Take care, I beseech you, lest you prove deficient in a grateful acknowledgment to this sovereign goodness; which certainly you would be guilty of by lamenting as dead, one who will be living in God, and will be of much greater service to you there above, than he could possibly be here below. Our separation will soon be over. We shall then see one another again in Heaven, where, united with our Redeemer, we shall find an infinite beatitude in praising Him, and singing forth His mercies for all eternity. When we view things not with the eyes of flesh and blood, but with those of faith and religion, neither you nor I shall find any great difficulty in conforming ourselves to His will, and giving Him what belongs to Him. We shall make this sacrifice the more willingly, as the thing we offer is more dear to us, persuaded that God disposes of nothing but wisely and for our greater good. For He only withdraws what He has given us to put it in place of security, and to confer upon those we love that happiness which we desire for ourselves. I write you these lines, madam, that you and all the family may look upon my departure as a great favor from the hand of God, and that, by your blessing, you may help me in the passage I am going to make out of this life to that happy shore, which I long to gain as the term of all my desires. I am the more eager to communicate these sentiments to you, because I see no better way to

express that fondness and respect which a son owes his mother. I conclude by begging your blessing once again, for

“Your dutiful son,

“ALOYSIUS GONZAGA.”

God revealed to St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzis, a Saint whose conversation seemed rather in Heaven than on earth, that the glory of Saint Aloysius was very eminent. On the 4th of April, in the year 1600, she was rapt into an ecstasy, saw Heaven opened and the glory of St. Aloysius; in astonishment at so extraordinary a sight, she began to say slowly, making an occasional pause between her words:

“O what glory is that of Aloysius, the son of Ignatius! I could never have conceived it unless my Jesus had revealed it. Fain would I fly all the world over to declare that Aloysius, the son of Ignatius, is a great Saint. O that to all nations I could proclaim his happiness, that God may be glorified! He is exalted to this pitch of glory, because he led an interior life. O who can tell the inestimable value of an interior life? Between the interior and exterior there is no comparison. Aloysius, while here below, kept his eye constantly fixed upon the Word divine. He was a hidden martyr; for to one who loves Thee, O my God, it is a martyrdom to see that he does not love Thee as he desires to love Thee, and that Thy creatures, far from loving Thee as they ought, daily offend Thee. Aloysius was likewise a martyr by the austerity of his life. O how he loved on earth, and now enjoys God in the satiety of love. While on earth he continually sent up darts of love to the divine Word, and now those darts return to settle in his own heart and fill it with gladness.”

Here the Saint seeing that Aloysius prayed fervently for those who had formerly assisted him in the way of virtue, added: “And I will likewise to the best of my power help souls, that when any of them go to Heaven, they may pray for me, as Aloysius now prays for those who have been of service to him.”

HYMN TO ST. ALOYSIUS

Ah! see that flow'r of wondrous whiteness,
Just rising from Three Centuries' mould,
Its crown is of the rarest brightness,
Its heart is of the purest gold.
Hail to thee St. Aloysius,
Flow'r of love, and gem of truth,
Prais'd on earth and crown'd in Heaven,
Sweet Mary's flow'r, Angelic youth.

Ah! sinless youth, the fairest lustre
All from thy hallow'd name is caught;
Around thy Shrine what virtues cluster
In rare mosaics richly wrought!


And all who read thy life's grand story—
All these may see thy noble heart
And how thou'st bartered earthly glory,
All to secure the better part.

Fair type of youth, ah, thou wert tender;
True type of manhood, thou wert brave;
Ah, be our patron and defender,
So sweet to comfort, strong to save.

Ah, may we strive as thou hast striven
Against a world of sin and pride;
And may our lives be wholly given
Like thine to Jesus crucified.

Sister N. D., Phila.





APPARITION TO
PETER DE BASTO
LAY BROTHER, S.J.
SALSETTO, INDIA

APPARITION

TO

PETER DE BASTO, LAY BROTHER S.J.
SALSETTO, INDIA

1585

Now praise, oh, praise the sinless Mother,
Praise to that Household's gentle Master be;
And, with the Child whom we call Brother,
Weep, weep for joy of that dear Family.

Rev. F. W. Faber.



IN the life of the servant of God, Peter de Basto, we find an example which shows how the holy angels, even whilst they are watching over us upon earth, interest themselves in behalf of the souls in purgatory. And since we have mentioned the name of Brother de Basto we will make known this admirable religious to our readers; his history is as interesting as it is edifying.

Peter de Basto, brother coadjutor of the Society of Jesus, and whom his biographer calls the Alphonsus Rodriguez of Malabar, died in the odor of sanctity at Cochin, March 1, 1645. He was born in Portugal, of the illustrious family of Machado, united by blood to all the nobility of the whole province between the Douro and the Minho. The Dukes of Pastrano and Hixar were among the number of his relatives, and the world held out to him a career of the most brilliant prospects. But God had reserved him for Himself, and had endowed him with the most marvelous spiritual gifts. Whilst still a little child, when taken to the church, he prayed before the Blessed Sacrament with the fervor of an angel. He believed that all the people saw as he did, with the eyes of the body, the legions of celestial spirits in adoration near the altar and the tabernacle, and from that time forward the Saviour, hidden under the Eucharistic veil, became

by excellence the centre of all his affections, and the innumerable prodigies which characterized his long and holy life.

It was there that, later, as in a divine sun, he discovered without veils the future and its unforeseen details. It was there also that God showed him the mysterious symbols of a ladder of gold which united Heaven and earth, supported by the tabernacle, and of the lily of purity shooting forth its roots and drawing its nourishment from the flower of the wheat of the elect and the wine which alone can bring forth virgins.

Towards his seventeenth year, thanks to that purity of heart and that strength of which the Sacrament of the Eucharist was for him the inexhaustible source, Peter made at Lisbon a vow of perpetual chastity at the feet of Our Lady of Perpetual Succor. He did not yet, however, think of quitting the world and, some days later embarked for the Indies, and for two years followed the military profession.

But at the end of that time, on the point of perishing by shipwreck, being tossed about at the mercy of the waves for five days, supported and saved by the Queen of Heaven and her Divine Son, who appeared to him, he promised to consecrate himself entirely to their service in the religious state for the remainder of his life. As soon as he returned to Goa, being then but nineteen years of age, he went and offered himself in the quality of lay brother to the superiors of the Society of Jesus. Fearing that his name might procure for him some mark of distinction or esteem, he adopted henceforward that of the humble village where he had received baptism, and was called simply Peter de Basto.

It was a short time afterwards, during one of the trials of his novitiate, that this wonderful incident occurred which is recorded in the Annals of the Society, and which is so consoling for all the children of St. Ignatius. Brother Peter's novice-master sent him on a pilgrimage with two young companions in the Island of Salsetto, ordering them not to accept hospitality from any of the missionaries, but to beg from village to village for their daily bread and their night's lodging. One day, fatigued with their long journey, they met a humble family, consisting



VIRGIN AT FOOT OF THE CROSS

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of an old man, a woman, and a little child, who received them with the greatest charity, and pressed them to partake of a frugal repast. But at the moment of their departure, after having returned them a thousand thanks, when Peter de Basto begged his hosts to tell him their names, wishing, no doubt, to recommend them to God: "We are," replied the mother, "the three founders of the Society of Jesus," and all three disappeared at the same instant.

The whole religious life of this holy man until his death, that is to say, almost fifty-six years, was but a tissue of wonders and extraordinary graces; but we must add that he merited them, and purchased them, so to say, at the price of virtue, labors, and the most heroic sacrifices. Charged by turns with care of the laundry, the kitchen, or the door, in the colleges of Goa, of Tuticurin, of Coulaou, and of Cochin, Peter never sought to withdraw himself from the hardest labors, nor to reserve a little leisure time at the expense of his different offices that he might enjoy the delights of prayer. Serious infirmities, the sole cause of which was excessive labor, were, he said smilingly, his most pleasant distractions. Moreover, abandoned, so to speak, to the fury of the demon, the servant of God enjoyed scarcely any repose. These spirits of darkness appeared to him under the most hideous forms. They often beat him severely, especially at that hour each night when, as was his custom, he interrupted his sleep to go and pray before the Blessed Sacrament.

One day whilst traveling, his companions fled at the sound of a troop of formidable-looking men, horses, and elephants, who appeared to approach them with furious gestures. He alone remained calm; and when his companions expressed their astonishment that he had not manifested the least sign of fear, he replied, "If God does not permit the demons to exercise their rage against us, what have we to fear? and, if He gives them the permission, why, then, should I endeavor to escape their blows?" He had only to invoke the Queen of Heaven, when she appeared immediately and put the infernal troop to flight.

Often it seemed as though all was confusion, even to the very depths of his soul, and he found calm, peace, and victory only

near his ordinary refuge, Jesus present in the Holy Eucharist. Loaded one day with outrages, which caused him some little disturbance, he prostrated himself at the foot of the altar and asked of Our Divine Saviour the gift of patience. Then Our Lord appeared to him covered with wounds, a purple mantle about His shoulders, a rope around His neck, a reed in His hands, and a crown of thorns upon His head; then addressing Peter, He said, "See what the true Son of God has suffered to teach men how to suffer."

But we have not touched the point we wished to illustrate by this holy life—I mean to say, the devotion of Peter de Basto towards the souls in purgatory, a devotion encouraged and seconded by his good angel guardian. Notwithstanding his many labors, he daily recited the Rosary for the dead. One day having forgotten it, he retired without having recited it, but scarcely had he fallen asleep when he was awakened by his angel. "My son," said this heavenly spirit, "the souls in purgatory await the benefit of your daily alms." Peter arose instantly to fulfil that duty of piety.

CHRISTMAS DAY

O! blessed day, which gives the eternal lie
 To self and sense and all the brute within;
 O! come to us amid this war of life;
 To hall and hovel, come; to all who toil
 In senate, shop, or study; and to those
 Who, sundered by the wastes of half a world,
 Ill-warned and sorely tempted, every face,
 Nature's brute powers, and men unmanned to brutes—
 Come to them, blest and blessing, Christmas Day;
 Tell them once more the tale of Bethlehem—
 The kneeling shepherds and the Babe Divine;
 And keep them men indeed, fair Christmas Day.

Charles Kingsley.

APPARITION
TO
THOMAS MICHAELEK
LEZAJSK, POLAND

1578

"Holy Mary, we implore Thee
By thy purity divine:
Help us, bending here before Thee,
Help us truly to be Thine.
Teach, oh! teach us, holy Mother,
How to conquer every sin,
How to love and help each other,
How the prize of life to win."

St. Casimir.

POLAND is still the Kingdom of the Blessed Virgin whom the Poles invoke, ever since 1655, in their Litany, under the title, Regina cœli et Poloniæ. Her image hangs from the necks of the young Polish girls; mothers formerly used to hang it on those of their brave sons when they set off for battle. The great ladies have in their apartments an oratory decorated with the picture of the Blessed Virgin; and that proud Polish nobility, which once eclipsed in splendor all the nobility of Europe, at the Christmas holidays would set up in the most conspicuous place of their sumptuous banqueting halls a sheaf of straw, in memory of the utter destitution of Jesus and Mary in the stable of Bethlehem.

In the last years of the sixteenth century there was a remarkable Apparition of the Blessed Virgin near Lezajsk, in Poland. It happened after this manner:

One day Thomas Michaellek, a simple but pious man, had gone, as was his custom, to make up fagots in a wood near the town, when suddenly he beheld, on a spot where he was wont to pray, a marvelously bright splendor and within it the Blessed

Mother with our Lord Jesus and St. Joseph. At the same time he heard a voice that seemed to come from the lips of the Blessed Virgin, and it said to him: "Thomas, I have chosen this place; on it my Son shall be honored, and everyone who shall invoke me here shall experience my intercession. Go to the rulers of the city and tell them that it is my will and command, and also that of my Son, that they build here a church dedicated to me."

Now Thomas was a very humble man and deemed himself unworthy of a heavenly vision. So, fearing some diabolical illusion, he kept the revelation secret. Only some time after this, when Our Lady had reminded him twice, he asked the rulers of the city to allow him to set up a cross on the spot where the Blessed Mother had stood.

Soon the people of the neighborhood began to gather together at the holy place, and the Queen of Heaven, faithful to her promise, heard the prayers of the pious people.

Afterwards it happened that another dweller in this place, Sebastian Talarczyk, who was tending his cattle near the spot, saw the Blessed Virgin clad in white and surrounded by a great light. He went immediately to the city and informed the ecclesiastical authorities of what he had seen. The parish priest went to the spot, clothed with his priestly garments and with a great procession, and they built there a small wooden church under the invocation of St. Ann.

Not long afterwards, in the year 1606, the bishop of the diocese, M. Potrokonski, seeing that the small wooden church could not contain the worshippers of the Blessed Virgin, who went thither, set himself, with the help of the pious king, Sigismund III., to build a magnificent church there with a monastery attached to it; and he brought thither the Fathers of St. Bernard.

The image of the Blessed Virgin was painted by an artist brought from the city, and as he was very devout to the Immaculate Conception, the work, with the assistance of the Blessed Virgin, was a wonderful achievement. From that time, the people, who were very devout to the Immaculate Virgin,

went in crowds to Lazajsk, principally on the day of her feast; and Our Holy Mother rewarded them liberally with her favors, in proof whereof are numerous votive offerings suspended around her image. After a canonical investigation the bishop of the diocese, Henry Firliz, on the 20th of November, confirmed the truth of the miracles wrought there.

When, later on, the renown of the miracles and graces obtained on that spot was ever more and more noised abroad, Pope Benedict XIV., a great servant of Mary, gave leave to crown the miraculous image, thus satisfying the requests of the clergy, the nobility and the pious people.

All the outlay for increasing the splendor of this solemnity was furnished by Joseph Potocki, the Hetman of the Crown, who also at his own expense purchased two golden crowns for the image. The crowns were blessed by Pope Benedict XIV.; but the pious Hetman did not live to see the coronation. His son, Stanislaus, the Senator, accomplished the work which his father had begun, sparing neither money nor trouble to make this solemnity most splendid and memorable.

On the 8th of September, 1752, the bishop, W. Sierakowski, in the midst of a large body of clergy and surrounded by the Polish nobility and an innumerable throng of the faithful, performed the solemn ceremony and crowned the image of the Blessed Virgin.

DAILY, DAILY

Daily, daily sing to Mary;
Sing, my soul, her praises due!
All her feasts, her actions worship
With the heart's devotion true.
Lost in wond'ring contemplation
Be her majesty confest;
Call her Mother, call her Virgin,
Happy Mother, Virgin blest.

She is mighty to deliver—
Call her, trust her lovingly;
When the tempest rages round thee,
She will calm the troubled sea,

Gifts of Heaven she has given,
 Noble Lady, to our race—
 She, the Queen who decks her subjects
 With the light of God's own grace.

Sing, my tongue, the Virgin's trophies
 Who for us her Maker bore—
 For the curse of old inflicted
 Peace and blessing to restore.
 Sing, in songs of praise unending,
 Sing, the world's majestic Queen;
 Weary not, nor faint in telling
 All the gifts she gives to men.

All my senses, heart, affections,
 Strive to sound her glory forth
 Spread abroad the sweet memorials
 Of the Virgin's priceless worth.
 Where the voice of music thrilling,
 Where the tongue of eloquence,
 That can utter hymns beseeching
 All her matchless excellence?

All our joys do flow from Mary,
 All then join her praise to sing;
 Trembling sing the Virgin Mother,
 Mother of our Lord and King.
 While we sing her awful glory,
 Far above our fancy's reach,
 Let our hearts be quick to offer
 Love the heart alone can teach.

St. Casimir's Hymn.

St. Casimir, King of Poland, born 1458, died 1483. Feast, March IV.

O Virgin most admirable and worthy of all honor! O Woman beyond all others to be venerated, who didst repair the fault of our first parents, and didst bring life to their descendants!—
 St. Bernard.

APPARITION

TO

REV. MICHAEL DE LA FONTAINE, S. J.
PERU, S. AMERICA

1600

Mary—our comfort, and our hope—
O may that word be given
To be the last we sigh on earth,—
The first we breathe in Heaven.

Adelaide A. Procter.



FATHER MICHAEL DE LA FONTAINE, S. J., was one of the first missionaries who labored for the salvation of the people of Peru, South America. His greatest care when instructing the new converts was to inspire them with a sovereign horror of sin, and to lead them to great devotion towards the Mother of God, by speaking of the virtues of that admirable Virgin, and teaching them to recite the beads in her honor.

Mary, on her part, did not refuse the favors asked of her. One day, when exhausted with fatigue, he lay prostrate in the dust, not having strength to rise, he was visited by her whom the church styles the "Comforter of the Afflicted." She reanimated his courage, by saying to him, "Have confidence, my son; your fatigues will take the place of purgatory for you; bear your sufferings patiently and, on leaving this life your soul will be received into the abode of the blessed."

This vision was for Father de la Fontaine during life, but especially at the hour of his death, a source of abundant consolation. In gratitude for this favor, he each week practised some particular penance. At the moment when he expired, a religious of eminent virtue saw his soul take its flight to Heaven in company of the Blessed Virgin, the Prince of the Apostles, St. John

the Evangelist, and of St. Ignatius, the founder of the Society of Jesus.

He died on February 11, 1606, at Valencia, in Spain.

CHRIST'S BEAUTIFUL MOTHER

O Christ! of Thy beautiful Mother
Must I hide her name down in my heart?
But ah! even there you will see it—
With Thy Mother's name, how can I part?

On Thy name all divine have I rested
In the days when my heart-trials came;
Sweet Christ, like to Thee I am human,
And I need Mary's pure human name.

Did I hear a voice? or was I dreaming?
I heard—or I sure seemed to hear—
"Who blames you for loving my mother
Is wronging My heart—do not fear.

"I am human e'en here in My heavens;
What I was I am still all the same;
And I still love my beautiful Mother—
And thou, child of Mine, do the same."

I was happy—because I am human—
And Christ in the silences heard,
"Our Father," "Hail Mary," "Our Father,"
Repeated faithfully word after word.

Rev. Abram J. Ryan.



SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF VICTORIES
QUEBEC, CANADA

1608

Blessed Queen! upon our souls
Thy warm smile reposes,—
Let it thaw their wintry cold,
Draw from out their icy mold
Bright celestial roses.

E. C. Donnelly.



THE real founding of Quebec was in 1608, when a post was established at the foot of the steep by that "Father of Canada," Champlain. Among the cities of the New World, there is certainly none grander in situation, more romantic in association, more picturesque in detail, than the Sentinel City that keeps the gates of the St. Lawrence. With its quaint, steep-roofed houses, precipitous streets, breadths of gray cliff-front, and far up on the summit of the height the grim eyrie of the ancient citadel and the frowning guns of the grand battery, Quebec seems certainly well called the Gibraltar of America. There is the monument to Wolfe and Montcalm, on the very field where they fought so good a fight, and both fell, covered with glory.

There, too, is the obelisk to Montcalm, stating that destiny, though it deprived him of victory, compensated him by a glorious death. No Englishman can taunt his French brothers with the result of the battle on the Heights of Abraham, for their defeat was fully as glorious as victory. The French are proud of being beaten by such a Bayard as Wolfe; the English are proud of having beaten such a Duqueslin as Montcalm.

Quebec is not only an eminently French city; it is also an eminently Catholic city. Not only were Recollects and Jesuits among its earliest and most dauntless citizens, but, back nearly three centuries, it could boast of a bishop of its own, the noble scion of the house of Montmorency, Jean Francois Laval, first Bishop of Canada. His See was in Quebec, although the town could offer him no better accommodation than a room in the house of Madame de la Petrie. It was in October, 1874, that the present French cathedral of Quebec, the church of Notre Dame, was elevated into a basilica in honor of the second centenary of the erection of the See of Quebec. A plain edifice exteriorly, with a cut-stone front, added in 1844, and rather unpleasantly contrasting with the remainder of the structure, it is, nevertheless, quite large, capable of accommodating four thousand people, and its interior is very rich and impressive. Massive arches of stone divide the nave from the aisles, above which is a gallery at each side running the whole length of the church. At the east end are the grand altar and choir, superbly decorated. The vestments used at this altar are probably more gorgeous in adornment than anywhere else in America, many of them being gifts from French Kings. There are also four small chapels in the aisles, after the manner of European churches, dedicated to different Saints. In a transverse gallery at the west end is a fine organ, rivalling that in the English cathedral. There are also sacred paintings of great value, among them a St. Paul by Carlos Marratto, a Crucifixion by Van Dyke, and several examples by Carracci and Halle. Many of the paintings in the cathedral were secured in France during the Revolution in 1793. They were bought from their infidel captors and sent with all speed to the secure shores of New France.

Within the choir of the cathedral, a little to the right of the altar, is a marble tablet with an inscription to the memory of Bishop Plessis, whose sanctity and zeal made him the pride of all Canada; while near at hand is the tomb, not only of that first Bishop of Canada, Mgr. Laval, but also of the heroic explorer, founder and first Governor of Quebec, Champlain.

Thus, the first Governor and the first Bishop lie side by side in death. Within these walls, too, is buried the fiery and chivalric Frontenac, Governor of Canada from 1688 to 1698.

Canada as a Catholic province was a perpetual eyesore to the New England Zealots of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. To overthrow Catholicity there, was the great object of their thoughts. Not to forego the opportunity of leveling church and convent, of showing their love for Christ and her whom He loved, by treating with every indignity any representation of them, they exposed their frontiers to the horrors of Indian war, rejecting all Canadian proffers of neutrality. They were many; the Canadians were few. In 1690 a mighty expedition was sent out from Boston and, before the first intelligence of such a project reached the French Governor, the New England fleet was in the St. Lawrence. Frontenac hastened back to Quebec from Montreal, and did what man could do. He was brave and he was capable. When he looked around on his petty force, he thought of one ally not to be overlooked. It was Mary's land, and the Blessed Virgin was invoked at every altar, in every household. A painting of the Holy Family was hung out on the steeple of the cathedral, and all hearts beat high with hope. In a few days Phips, the English commander, defeated and baffled, fled down the river, leaving his own flag in the hands of the French, to be hung up in the cathedral as a trophy. "Then," says a nun of the Hotel Dieu, "a magnificent procession was made to all the churches of Quebec; the image of the Blessed Virgin was borne in triumph as Our Liberatrix, who had vanquished our enemies; all resounded with praises of the Queen of Angels, and of her Divine Son, who had given us such signal marks of His protection. The feast of Our Lady of Victory (October 7) was established in the church of the Lower Town as an eternal memorial of the defeat of the English. To Our Lady was attributed all the glory of this victory, without speaking of the prudence of the Governor, the valor of the officers, the bravery of the soldiers and settlers; and no one objected, so convinced were all that Mary alone had repulsed our enemies."

If you seek this plain, unpretending, though substantial church, by the market-place in the Lower Town of Quebec, you will find it called, not by the name we have given, but by that of Our Lady of Victories, and you may ask the reason. You will find that again, in 1711, Canada was menaced, a powerful fleet again sailed towards the mouth of the St. Lawrence, a formidable army marched on Montreal. In that city the ladies discarded all fineries for a year, and vowed a chapel to Our Lady of Victory; at Quebec all gathered around the May altars, to implore once more her potent protection. Though hopeful, every face was serious, impressed with the importance of the hour, and of the utter inefficiency of human means. The novena to Our Lady of Pity had but just ended in the cathedral of Quebec, when the clients of Mary, passing out on the square, met persons just arrived from France. A French ship had entered the river! where then were the English? The fleet, wrecked with fearful loss on the rocky shore, had strewn the riverside with dead bodies and fragments of all kinds; a few ships only got away to spread dismay through New England. On land panic had seized their army, which broke up in disorder. Then rose in Montreal, beside the convent of the sisters of the Congregation of Our Lady, the chapel of Our Lady of Victory, and that at Quebec assumed its present name.

The Jesuits who after commencing their missions in Nova Scotia and Maine, came to found in Canada missions which have excited the admiration and wonder of all, and have found in our day Protestant eulogists in Bancroft, Kip, and Parkman, consecrated their first chapel in Canada to Our Lady of Angels.

In 1639 they summoned to their aid new auxiliaries, not brave and fearless men, soldiers of the Cross trained in seminaries of theology, but weak, though devoted and dauntless women.

One of these, Mother Mary of the Incarnation, Foundress of the Ursuline Convent in Quebec, had been already interiorly called to this field of labor. "One holy Christmas-tide, in her home at Tours, France, when her heart and soul had been particularly given up to union with God by meditation on the mys-

tery of His Incarnation, she fell asleep and dreamed. She thought that she, with one companion, hand in hand, were toiling along a broken and difficult road; more difficult than ordinary, because they did not see, but only felt, the obstacles. But they had good courage, and went on until they reached a place known as the Tannery, beyond which lay their home.

"Here they were met by a venerable old man, in whose pure, sacred lineaments beamed kindness and protection. It was he who had watched and guided Holy Mary and her Child from the roofs of Bethlehem to the palm shades of Egypt. And St. Joseph, she thought, conducted them into a vast enclosure, whereof the sky was the only roof. The pavement and the walls were of white, spotless alabaster, and arabesqued with gold. Here all was silence, deep religious, recollected. And without disturbing the holy stillness by a word, their guide pointed out to them the way they should go. And they saw a little hospice of quaint, ancient architecture, but very beautiful, and of snow-white marble; and in an embrasure of this, upon a delicately-sculptured seat, sat Our Blessed Lady, with the Infant Jesus in her arms; but their backs were toward the travelers.

"Mary of the Incarnation sprang forward and embraced the throne of her Queen, while her companion knelt at a little distance, where she could easily see the Virgin and her Child. The hospice faced the Orient. It was built upon an eminence, and at the foot of this was a vast space, murky with clouds; and through the thick chill mists, there rose into pure air the spire and gables of a church, but the body of it was hidden by the heavy fog. A rugged, perilous road led down the rocks into this space, winding along fearful precipices and through cavernous rents in the mountain. Our Lady's gaze was fixed upon this gloomy space, and the heart of the nun kneeling behind her burned with desire to see the face of the Mother of pure delights.

"And then the virgin turned, and welcomed the suppliant with a smile of ineffable sweetness, and bending down she gently kissed her forehead. Then she seemed to whisper some-

thing about the Ursuline to the Divine Child in her arms. And when she had done this three times the vision faded, and in a tremor of delight the nun awoke."

Mary of the Incarnation came to Quebec. A devoted French lady, Madame de la Peltree, gave means to found the Ursuline convent, and gave herself to it.

For two centuries and a half that holy institution has taught the Canadian girls of all ranks and races to love Jesus and Mary.

Their annals are full of instances of tender devotion to the Mother of God and of her favors to the devout clients who sought her intercession.

OUR LADY OF VICTORY

Lady of victory, Regent of hearts,
 Thy name in the combat new courage imparts,
 With banner of white
 And watchword of peace,
 Thou comest in light
 And war hath surcease,
 Thou comest an army all set in array,
 The minions of Satan against thee in fray;
 And lo! they are vanquished, and flee in affright,
 Before thee, who standest in purity's might.
 Thy weapon is love,
 O Regent of hearts!
 The angels above
 Wing thy sin-hostile darts;
 Before thee the banners of Satan are furled,
 Our Lady of Victory, Queen of God's world!

The Eternal Father, wishing to show all possible mercy, besides giving us Jesus Christ, our principal advocate with Him, was pleased also to give us Mary, as our advocate with Jesus.—
 St. Bernard.

APPARITION
TO
BLESSED LIDWINE, V.
SCHIEDAM, HOLLAND

1609

"O guide us in safety,
And come, we entreat,
To help our last agony,
O Mary most sweet!"

J. C. F.



LIDWINE was born at Schiedam, in Holland, on Palm Sunday, 1580, while the Passion was being chanted in church. They christened her Lidwine, which means "suffering much," and thus a single word foretold the story of her life. The child at twelve dedicated body and soul to God, and then, lest men should think of marrying her, prayed God to spoil the charms of her exceeding beauty. Her prayer was more than granted. At fifteen she fell while skating on the ice. The hurt she received kept her in the bed, from which she never rose, except in ecstasy, for thirty years. Soon every limb was in torture. Her head and left arm only could be moved. Her face became hideous with sores. Her body, eaten with worms, would literally have fallen to pieces if not tied together. For years she ate no food. Crowds came to stare at her. Drunken soldiers mocked and even brutally struck her. A bad woman spat in her face. Her very friends, through neglect, left her once with a heap of red-hot coals in contact with her helpless feet. Meanwhile her poor hovel was an apostolate of charity and a paradise of joy. Her few meek words softened hard hearts, healed quarrels and wrought miracles of grace, until in 1433 her wondrous sacrifice

was complete, and her beloved Spouse took her to her everlasting home.

If men deserted Lidwine, angels became her courtiers. They shed light around her cell and scattered sweet perfumes upon her bed of straw. They bore her bodily in their arms long journeys to the Holy Land, to Calvary, and to Mount Thabor. From these mysterious visits she brought back visible tokens—a wand, plucked from a tree of Paradise, wherewith to move the curtain about her head, a veil given to her by the hand of Our Blessed Lady. And our Lord Himself fed her miraculously with the Sacred Host, and finally restored to her body after death the freshness and beauty of youth.

Pain comes to us from the hand of God for our good. B. Lidwine's life reminds us how great are the rewards in store for those who know its value and accept it as a mercy.

"Know," says St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, "that the experience of pain is something so noble and precious that the Divine Word, who enjoyed the abundant riches of Paradise, yet, because He was not clothed with this ornament of sorrow, came down from heaven to seek it upon earth."

"As gold in the furnace He hath proved them, and as a victim of holocaust He hath received them."—Wisdom iii:6.

MARY IMMACULATE

Pure as the crystal bright,

Pure as the Seraph's light,

Mary was ever,

Stained by a shade of sin,

Even where lives begin,

Never! no, never!

The Spouse of th' Anointed Son—

God's own Church, true and one—

Said in her might:

Semper purissima,

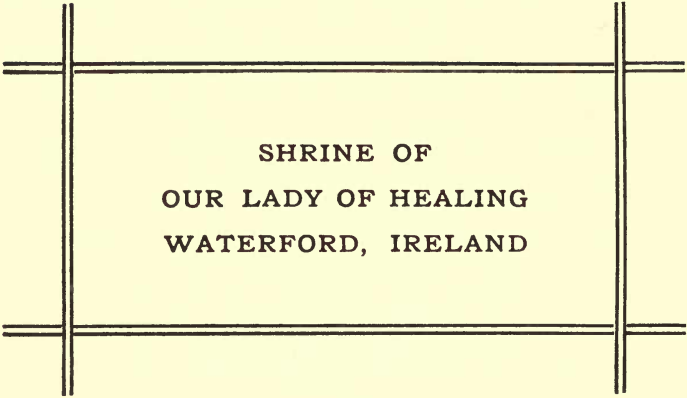
Semper castissima,

Heaven's delight!

She has our Ransom borne;
She, by our passions torn,
 Stood by the Cross.
Now, 'midst the flaming Thrones,
Stands she, with sweetest tones,
 Praying for us.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.





SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF HEALING
WATERFORD, IRELAND

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF HEALING
WATERFORD, IRELAND

1614

Fount of love and sacred sorrow,
Mother, may my spirit borrow,
Sadness from thy holy woe;
May it love—on fire within me—
Christ, my God, till great love win me
Grace to please Him here below.

Aubrey de Vere.



T. PATRICK, from his ingress into the island in 432, impressed upon his hearers the beauty of holy virginity, and held up Mary as the type and model of female excellence, so that among his earliest converts were virgins who consecrated themselves to the service of God, and taking the Blessed Virgin as their model sought to re-enact in their lives the virtues which were so characteristic of her, and which must be ever dear to her heart.

The hereditary devotion of the land is clearly evinced by St. Malachi, the intimate and friend of the great St. Bernard, the glory of his age, the ornament of the Church universal, and the author of the life of that noble-hearted son of Ireland. He was interred far from his native shores in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin at Clairvaux, where, as St. Bernard tells us, "it had been his delight to spend long hours in prayer." According to Messingham, one of the last public acts of St. Lawrence O'Toole, who did so much to repel the invasion of the English, was to erect a new church in Dublin "to the honor of God and the Blessed Virgin Mother."

Then came the Canons Regular from the Continent in the wake of the English, and they entered heartily into the Irish love and service of Mary.

Nicholas Fagan, an Irishman by birth, took the habit of religion in the famous Cistercian abbey of Farrara, in Castile Spain, in the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign. After some years he was sent back to Ireland, where, though exposed to many dangers and more than once beaten, ill-used, and wounded by his enemies, he nevertheless managed to preserve his life, which he spent in apostolic labors. He was very desirous of promoting the devotion to the Blessed Virgin as a powerful means of restoring and strengthening the Catholic faith, and for this purpose he placed an image of Our Blessed Lady, which he had brought with him from Seville in an oratory attached to the hospital of St. John in the city of Waterford, where numbers of Catholics devoutly resorted, in whose behalf, says Don Gaspar Jongelino (in his work entitled "The Propora di S. Bernardo"), Our Lord, through the intercession of His Blessed Mother, worked many and astounding miracles at the Shrine.

There was a certain man who lived in the county of Kilkenny, whose arm had been withered from his birth, so that he could not so much as move it. One night the Mother of God appeared to him, and commanded him to go to Waterford and visit her image, preserved in St. John's Hospital, promising him if he did so the restoration of his arm. On awaking he resolved to obey what he believed to be a Divine revelation and, going the same day to Waterford, he acquainted Father Fagan with the reason of his visit. The good father bade him wait till the next day, when he would celebrate Mass and recommend his cure to God. In the morning a considerable number of Catholics assembled in the oratory where Father Fagan said Mass, and at the moment of the Elevation, the man felt his hand suddenly and perfectly cured, so that he at once used it by fervently striking his breast. Not wishing, however, to cause any disturbance at that moment by declaring what had happened, he held his peace till the end of the Mass, when he raised his arm now as healthy and whole as the other, and proclaimed his cure to all present.

Another miracle of a somewhat different character, yet fur-

ther increased the veneration of the Catholics for this holy image, which they visited in such throngs that the little oratory was never without some pious votary. A certain Catholic of the neighborhood who retained the Faith, but unhappily lived a very disorderly life, had stolen some necklaces of great value, but not so secretly as to escape suspicion. He was accused of the crime, but swore to his innocence, and the fact was not proved against him. In company with several persons who had been present when he took the false oath, he went to hear Mass in St. John's oratory before the holy image. In the midst of the holy Mass the necklaces fell at his feet, without any one perceiving from whence they came. The thief, finding himself detected, fell on his knees and confessed his crime, receiving a severe reproof from the venerable servant of God.*

Nicholas Fagan was afterwards elected Bishop of Waterford, but died in 1616, before receiving consecration. His tomb is still to be seen in the church of Waterford, bearing an inscription in Latin verse, and his memory is commemorated in the Cistercian Menology on March 8th.

ST. LAURENCE OF DUBLIN

The name of St. Laurence is associated with two sanctuaries of Our Blessed Lady, one in Dublin and another in Wales, the history of which is related in the exceedingly beautiful and interesting life of the Saint preserved by Surius, but without any particulars which would enable us to decide their precise locality. St. Laurence many times visited England and, on one of these occasions, returning from the court of Henry II., into his own country, he came to a certain sea-port in Wales,

*Wadding, in his "Annals," mentions a miraculous Image preserved at the Franciscan convent at Tralee, built about the year 1440 by Lord McCarthy, concerning which a very similar story is told of the discovery of a theft. This Image continued to be venerated until the reign of Elizabeth, when it was concealed in a withered tree, which thereupon is said to have produced leaves, boughs, and blossoms, whereby the holy Image was more perfectly hidden from the view of the heretics.

the name of which is not given, and was there detained by unfavorable winds. There was in the neighborhood a church which had been recently built in honor of the Blessed Virgin, by a rich man of the country, but in consequence of the absence of the Bishop of the diocese, it had not yet been consecrated. A certain hermit had constructed for himself a cell attached to this church, in which he lived, that he might serve God more freely. To him the Blessed Virgin appeared in the night, richly adorned and with a majestic countenance, and inquired of him why her church had not yet been consecrated. And the hermit replying, that it was because of the absence of the Bishop, she made answer, "I will not have it consecrated by him, but by Laurence of Dublin, for whose coming I have been waiting, that he, and none but he, might dedicate my church. And this shall be a sign to him, for he shall not obtain a favorable wind until he has done my pleasure." The hermit awoke, amazed with the vision and, as soon as it was day he sent for the lord of the adjoining castle who had founded the church, and declared to him what had taken place. He at once went to the Archbishop, and invited him to his castle, and, receiving him honorably, made him a feast and implored him to deign to consecrate the church. But the holy man replied that he could not do this in the diocese of another, and remained unmoved by all the prayers of his host. Then the latter related to him the vision of the hermit, and all the words of the Blessed Virgin, till Laurence, convinced that it was indeed the will of God, and that the thing was not unlawful, but rather enjoined, the next day consecrated the church. And as soon as the Mass and other holy rites were ended, and he had tasted bread, he entered into his ship and, with a favorable wind set sail for his own land. And from that time innumerable miracles were performed, and Divine graces and favors poured out in this church.

On another occasion, as he was about going to England and had already got on board the vessel, some of the citizens of Dublin joined him, believing themselves sure of escaping the perils of the sea, if they sailed in his company. However, they had not proceeded far before a great tempest arose, whereupon

they all gathered round their holy pastor, imploring him by his prayers to deliver them from the death that appeared to threaten them. But he encouraged them, assuring them that if they followed his counsel, not one of them should perish. "You know," he said, "that we are even now building a church in Dublin, in honor of the Mother of God. Promise, therefore, to give to this work bountifully of the fruit of those things which He has given to you, and I will promise you, on the part of God, a tranquil sea and a safe voyage." They at once made the required promise, offering their alms to the Archbishop with a good and ready will; for the ship was loaded with their merchandise. Then the heavens cleared, the sea grew calm, and they reached land in safety, praising God and His holy servant.

In many a cottage home upon the lonely mountain side, or among the dreary bogs to which the fury of religious persecution had driven them, the children of the martyred sons of Erin gathered every evening, when the shades of night were closing in, to offer to their Mother Mary the daily tribute of the Rosary. Throughout the land, from end to end, from anguished hearts the cry for help went up to Mary's golden throne, and the form of prayer our ancestors most loved and clung to was the Family Rosary. The younger members carried it across the seas and planted it in foreign lands. The aged folk who lingered on at home, knelt down each night beneath the lowly cabin roof to say the Beads for the welfare of the sons and daughters they should never see again until they met upon the steps of Mary's throne.

And to-day the people of Ireland are as true to Mary as they ever were. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin is an heirloom of the Irish race.—*Irish Messenger of Sacred Heart.*

THE VEIL OF THE VIRGIN MARY

A LEGEND OF THE WICKLOW MOUNTAINS

[The peasantry give to a strange mist which is sometimes seen hovering on the mountain tops, a beautiful appellation in Gaelic, signifying "The Veil of the Virgin Mary."]

In a Wicklow valley, rich Imale
The peasants tell you a wonderful tale;
At the close of even, there falls, 'tis said,
A fleecy cloud on the mountain's head,
Of a fairy lustre, pure and pale,
And they call it the Virgin Mary's Veil.

One day long past at the twilight time,
A youth the mountain side did climb;
Thoughtful his brow and passing fair,
His modest eyes and wavy hair,
The people said that he was a saint,
That his soul of sin knew never a taint.

And this was the reason, no doubt that he
So favored of Heaven above should be;
For the soul that is pure hath beauty rare
And shines like the sun beyond compare,
While the angels weep in their mansions aisled
To gaze on a human heart defiled.

The sun had sunk 'neath the mountain's head;
The clouds were shimmering pink and red;
A calm majesty was reigning there,
And the youth soft breathed a fervent prayer,
For lo! before him untinged and pale,
Was the mist of the Virgin Mary's Veil.

Deep thrilled his heart with a reverent fear,
As the mystic cloud came drifting near,
He felt the awe of a Presence high,
A heavenly incense floated by,
And he heard, as the mist enveloped him,
A sound as of chanting seraphim.

Then broke on his eyes such dazzling light
He fain would cover his aching sight,
But an angel voice bade him have no fear,
He looked and beheld a vision near—
A woman whose beauty outshone by far
The light of the lustrous morning star.

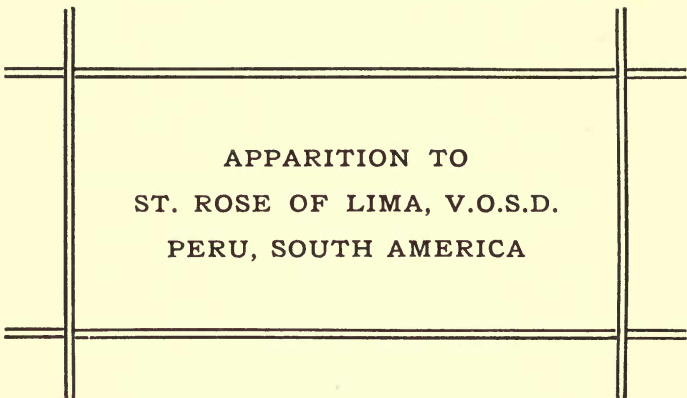
Short moments of rapturous amaze
Did the ravished youth on that vision gaze—
All crowned with the blazing orbs of night,
And clothed in robes of living light—
Then spoke the Lady in tone so sweet
It calmed his hot heart's feverous beat:

“The Virgin Mother of God am I,
And come from my throne on high
To claim the love of your youth as mine,
God dowers me with souls that are pure like thine,
Your spouse shall no earthly maiden be,
You are mine for the long Eternity.”

The youth arose, the vision was gone,
His face with a sacred lustre shone,
With a pilgrim's staff in the morning grey
He journeyed to blessed Melleray,
And there with the pious monks did bide—
Ere a year the death of a saint he died.

And thus I've told you the wonderful tale
I heard in the beautiful Wicklow vale.
The lesson of the moral all may see;
God's loveliest gift is purity.
When we stand in the awful Judgment Light,
May our hearts be robed with The Veil of White.

Mary is rightly called “Our Lady of Peace,” peace for sinners—for the wretched soul weary and worn in the conflict with the world and the flesh, the demon of all demons. Our Mother of Peace! She “seems to waft a breath of Heaven into our overheated and noisy atmosphere, and speaks to us of a far-off land where the suffering and the weary shall be at rest.”



APPARITION TO
ST. ROSE OF LIMA, V.O.S.D.
PERU, SOUTH AMERICA

APPARITION
TO
ST. ROSE OF LIMA, V.O.S.D.
PERU, SOUTH AMERICA

1615

First flow'ret of the desert wild!
Whose leaves the sweets of grace exhale,
We greet thee, Lima's sainted child—
Rose of America, all hail, all hail.



HIS "first flower of sanctity in the New World," was born at Lima, the capital of Peru, in South America, on the 20th of April, A.D. 1586, and received in Baptism the name of Isabel, but was always called Rose, in consequence of a beautiful rose having appeared in the air over her cradle, gently touching her face and then vanishing.

She was favored at this early age with a wonderful gift of prayer. She kept herself continually in the presence of God; everything she saw helped to raise her mind and heart to Him; and even in her sleep she might be heard repeating: "May Jesus be with me! Blessed be Jesus." She was a child of extraordinary beauty, and continually heard herself extolled for the clearness of her complexion and the symmetry of her features. These foolish praises deeply wounded her sensitive humility. She began to fear that there was something of flattery in her name of Rose, which she knew had not been given to her in baptism. In her distress she had recourse to Our Blessed Lady, and prayed earnestly before an image of the Divine Mother and Child in the Rosary Chapel of the Dominican Church at Lima. Our Lady smiled graciously upon her, and she heard these words: "Thy name is very pleasing to the Son whom I bear in my arms; but hence-

forth thou shalt add mine to it, and shalt be called Rose of St. Mary. Thy soul must be a fragrant flower, consecrated to Jesus of Nazareth.”

The mother of St. Rose died when she was a child, and her father married a woman who was not good to her. She was very small and delicate, they say, and her step-mother used to make her do work that was too hard for her; also the step-mother's children used to tease and torment her in many ways, because they were larger and stronger than she. Once her step-mother had sent her to the spring for water with a great earthen pitcher, larger than she could easily carry; and one of the children knocked it out of her hands and broke it, for mischief, in the hope that the step-mother would beat her; but she put the pieces together, and made the Sign of the Cross, and the pitcher was made whole again.

Another time her step-mother, who had never taken the trouble to teach her to sew, gave her some linen, and told her to make a shirt, threatening her with I know not what if she failed. And she, being shut up in a room alone, dropped on her knees and prayed for help; at which a beautiful lady came in, who spoke very kindly to her, and, taking the linen from her hand, cut and sewed it as no linen was ever cut and sewed before. And when the little girl showed it, and told the story, everyone knew that the kind lady could have been no other than the Madonna.

HER HEAVENLY FAVORS; TEMPTATIONS; VIRTUES

When she read, the mere sight of the Holy Name of Jesus would throw her into an ecstasy. Then her Divine Spouse would appear to her in the form of an infant of surpassing beauty, lying on the book and affectionately caressing her. As she sat at her work, the same Divine Child would come and sit upon her cushion, stretching out His little arms to her, and telling her that, as she desired to belong entirely to Him, so He wished to be all hers, to take her heart and to give her His in

exchange. These favors were of daily occurrence, and were sometimes witnessed by others. If by midday she had not yet received a visit from her Heavenly Guest, she would implore Him with sighs and tears to come to her, and would send her Guardian Angel to invite Him. Once she had remained till after midnight in her cell; and, when she wished to return to the house, she was too exhausted to take a single step. As she wished to communicate in the morning, she could not bear the thought of breaking her fast, though she felt herself almost dying from want of food. She therefore humbly had recourse to her Divine Spouse, Who appeared to her and said: "Apply thy lips to the wound of My side, My beloved daughter. It was laid open for the salvation of mankind; and in it the faithful always find the salutary balm of which they stand in need." Rose obeyed, and was immediately consoled and strengthened.

St. Rose also enjoyed a sweet familiarity with Our Blessed Lady, from whom she received almost daily visits. Whilst still a child, she had constituted herself a sort of little sacristan of the Rosary Chapel in the Dominican Church. She delighted in keeping it exquisitely clean and beautifully decorated. She bore a special devotion to the image of Our Lady and the Holy Child in this chapel. To its feet she brought all her troubles and all her petitions, and she at once knew whether or not to expect a favorable answer. Sometimes the countenances of the Blessed Virgin and of the Divine Infant assumed a serious and even a threatening aspect. "But," said the Saint, "on these occasions I do not let myself be discouraged. I go on praying until I have succeeded in disarming the wrath of the Divine Babe through the intercession of His mother, and in obtaining from Him a gracious smile." At one time, the Saint suffered from sleeplessness, and received orders from her Confessor to take a sleeping draught, and allow herself longer rest. It was not till towards morning that the draught began to take effect; and then, in spite of the penitential character of her bed, the Saint slept so profoundly, as often to exceed the prescribed number of hours. Her spirit of obedience took alarm, and she besought the Mother of God to come to her assistance. From

that day, Our Lady deigned to take on herself the office of calling her faithful servant. At the appointed hour she would present herself, radiant with beauty, saying: "Rise, my daughter; the hour of prayer is come." Then St. Rose would leave her bed; and, prostrate on the ground, would exclaim with St. Elizabeth: "Whence is it to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to visit me?" One morning, however, the Saint was more weary than usual; and, though she answered the heavenly call and at once sat up, she involuntarily closed her eyes and fell asleep again. Our Lady returned, touched her with her immaculate hands (a thing she had never done before), and said in a graver tone than usual: "Sleep not, my daughter; thou didst earnestly beg of me to call thee at the hour of prayer. Lo! I come a second time. The hour is past." Rose re-opened her eyes and saw the Mother of God departing; but she had not the happiness of beholding, as usual, her beautiful countenance; whence she concluded, with deep contrition, that Our Lady wished to punish her for her idleness.

Like all faithful servants of God, St. Rose was not free from the assaults of the devil. He continually laid snares for her, in the hope, if he could not lead her into sin, of at least disturbing her at her prayers and wearing out her patience. But it was all in vain. Though he was permitted to strike and ill-treat her, Rose only laughed at his attacks, and drove him from her by calling her Divine Spouse to her aid. Then the evil one began to ill-use her books of devotion, especially her copy of Granada's Meditations, of which she was very fond. He tore the precious volume and threw it upon a heap of filth; but it was presently returned to the Saint, perfectly uninjured. St. Rose would even defy Satan to the combat, bidding him torment her body as much as God permitted. "As for my soul," she added, "thou canst not harm it; it is under the protection of my Divine Spouse." On one occasion, having been tempted to impurity, she pitilessly scourged herself with an iron chain, exclaiming in tears: "O Lord, why hast Thou abandoned me? If Thou hadst been near, never should I have been exposed to so abominable an assault." As she pronounced these words,

our Lord appeared before her, casting upon her a look of love and saying to her: "Wouldst thou have conquered, Rose, if I had not been in thy heart?"

HER INTERIOR SUFFERINGS. SHE ENTERS THE
THIRD ORDER OF ST. DOMINIC. HER
MYSTIC ESPOUSALS

From the age of fifteen until her death, it pleased God to purify the soul of His servant by causing her to endure the most terrible spiritual desolation for an hour or more every day. It seemed to her that God had abandoned her; and she cried out with her Divine Spouse: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" In this state of mysterious suffering, her memory was completely obscured; it seemed to her each time that this moral torture was to last forever; and she compared her anguish to the sufferings of purgatory and hell. Her understanding was without light; her will still tried to love, but was hard and cold as ice; her memory sought in vain for any consoling recollection. But in her sorrow she wholly submitted herself to the Divine Will. When pressed by her confessors to say what happened to her at the end of her daily agony, she told them that God suddenly flooded her soul with spiritual consolations, assuring her that He would never abandon her; and that visions of the Sacred Humanity of our Lord and, after her death, all came to pass as she had said.

From childhood Rose had earnestly desired to wear that Dominican habit with which her beloved Mistress, St. Catharine of Siena, had been clothed. She ardently wished to see a Convent of Dominican nuns founded in Lima; but the Spanish Government would not give the necessary authorization, on the plea that there were enough convents in the city already. Spite of this obstacle, which seemed insuperable, St. Rose predicted that her wishes would be realized. She even recognized at first sight the person who was to be the future Prioress, drew an exact plan of the buildings, and foretold that

her own mother would take the habit in the new community; and, after her death, all came to pass as she had said.

One day Rose fell into an ecstasy, and it was revealed to her that she was, according to her desire, to take the habit of the Third Order of St. Dominic. On the Feast of St. Laurence, therefore, A. D. 1606, being then in her twenty-first year, in her beloved Chapel of the Rosary, she received from the hands of her confessor the white habit and black mantle of the Order, continuing to reside as before in the house of her parents. Being now a member of the Order of Penance of St. Dominic, St. Rose redoubled her austerities, using a double iron chain in place of the discipline of knotted cords she had hitherto employed, and wearing next her skin a garment of horse-hair, garnished with sharp points and prickly thistles, so that she could not move a step without pain. Her health was always delicate, and, during her whole life she was subject to a complication of diseases, which baffled human science, and left no part of her body without its torment; but in the midst of her pains she would exclaim: "O Lord, increase my sufferings, but increase also the flame of Thy love in my heart."

About the time of her admission into the Dominican Order, she was granted a most beautiful and instructive vision, which fortified her desire of suffering. Being in prayer, she was all of a sudden ravished in spirit, and beheld a brilliant light, in the midst of which was a resplendent arch of various colors; above the arch was a second of equal beauty, which bore in its center the blood-stained Cross of our Lord; rays of light marked the place of the nails; the title, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," was also discernible. Our Lord, resplendent with majesty and glory, appeared in the space between the two arches and, from His Sacred Humanity, there darted forth flames which seemed to penetrate into the inmost depths of the Saint's soul. Beside Him lay a pair of scales and some weights. The Angels took them and weighed out sufferings and tribulations, of which Jesus distributed a share to each of the elect, giving the Saint a large measure. Then she saw an enormous heap of heavenly favors, which our Lord Himself placed in the

scales, weighed them with the tribulations, and then divided them amongst the elect, Rose receiving a share equal to the measure of her sufferings. After this, she heard our Lord say: "Affliction is always the companion of grace. Grace can only be obtained by suffering; Divine consolations are distributed in the same proportion as sufferings; let everyone understand this. Let none deceive themselves. The way of the Cross is the only path which leads to Heaven. Earthly sorrows are the roots of heavenly joys." Then the Saint felt an earnest desire to proclaim to the whole world the blessings attached to suffering. "Know," said she, "that sufferings are never disproportioned to the strength of those to whom our Lord sends them; for He does not strike at random; His wisdom weighs out the crosses which He imposes."

The mystic espousals with our Lord, accorded to St. Catharine of Siena, were vouchsafed also to this her faithful client. St. Rose was prepared for this wonderful favor by a heavenly voice, which said to her: "Give Me thy heart," and by a mysterious dream in which our Lord appeared to her under the garb of a sculptor about to start on a journey, and asked her to become His Spouse. On receiving her consent, He showed her some blocks of marble which she was to polish and chisel during His absence. Shortly afterwards He again appeared to her, as though returned from His journey; the Saint excused herself for not having yet completed her task, saying it was a labor to which she was wholly unaccustomed, having hitherto only occupied herself with needlework and other female employments. "Think not," said our Lord, "that thou art the only one of thy sex on whom I have laid a similar task; look here." So saying, He opened a door, and Rose beheld a large workshop, full of blocks of marble. A multitude of young maidens, armed with chisels, mallets, and other tools, were carving and polishing the blocks, and watering them with their tears. Rose remarked, that, in spite of the dusty nature of their work, they were clothed in rich garments of spotless cleanliness, as though bidden to a marriage feast. Then it was revealed to her that this chiseling of stones was figurative of the pains, tears, and

efforts needed for the acquisition of virtue. Whilst she was watching the maidens at their work, she suddenly beheld herself clothed in a magnificent garment of gold brocade, adorned with the richest jewels. She then awoke, full of supernatural joy and consolation. A few days afterwards, on Palm Sunday, the Saint was assisting with the other Sisters of the Third Order at the Office of the day in the Church of St. Dominic, and the Sacristan forgot to give her a palm. In her humility, Rose attributed this omission to her sins, yet she failed not to follow the procession devoutly with the rest; and at the end of the ceremony, she resumed her place in the Rosary Chapel; and, looking up affectionately at the statue of Our Lady, accused herself of having perhaps too eagerly desired the blessed palm. The Mother of God smiled upon her even more lovingly than usual; and Rose forgot her trouble and exclaimed: "Henceforth, most amiable Lady, I will never receive any palm from mortal hands, for thou, O palm-tree of Cades, wilt give me one which will never fade." Then Mary turned her eyes on the Divine Infant, as though asking a favor; and the Holy Child distinctly pronounced these words: "Rose of My Heart, be thou My Spouse." The Saint, prostrated on the ground and in the transport of her gratitude, exclaimed: "I am Thy servant, O Lord. O King of glory, I am the last of Thy slaves. I am Thine, and desire to belong to Thee alone. I will be eternally faithful to Thee, and I desire to lay down my life for Thee." Then Our Lady said to her: "O my Rose, thou seest and understandest the favor which my Son has granted thee." The Saint resolved to have a ring made, which she might always wear as a memorial of the immense favor which had been conferred upon her. She entrusted her brother Ferdinand with the commission, begging him to have a motto engraved on the ring. The young man, who knew nothing of what had passed, reflected for a moment, and then wrote down the very words which our Lord had used: "Rose of My Heart, be thou My Spouse." The Saint joyfully acquiesced, recognizing in this wonderful coincidence a fresh proof of the love of her Divine Spouse. The ring was brought to her on Maundy Thursday

morning, and she begged the Sacristan of the Dominican Church to place it where the Blessed Sacrament was to repose. Her request was complied with; and on Easter Sunday the Saint suddenly beheld the ring on her finger, without knowing how it came there.

CLOSING YEARS OF ST. ROSE'S LIFE. HER LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH

At the time of her espousals, our Lord told St. Rose that He would now take upon Himself the charge of her family; and thenceforth she consecrated to the service of the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, the time which she had hitherto devoted to working for the household. St. Rose beheld her Divine Spouse in the person of His suffering members, and labored for them with heroic and self-sacrificing charity; and God often bestowed upon her miraculous powers for their relief. In her zeal for souls she was a true daughter of St. Dominic. She would gaze on the lofty mountains of her native land, and weep to think of the eternal loss of the poor pagans who dwelt in their recesses. Often was she heard to exclaim, that, to save souls, she would gladly suffer herself to be cut in pieces; and that she would fain be placed at the gate of hell to prevent sinners from entering there. She bore a holy envy to missionaries whose sex and vocation enabled them to carry the light of faith to the Indians and die a martyr's death. Once, indeed, she hoped that the crown of martyrdom was within her own grasp. On August 24th, A. D. 1615, the Dutch fleet appeared off the coast of Peru. Now the Dutch were at that time impious and sacrilegious heretics, the implacable enemies of the faith. The inhabitants of Lima were panic-struck; but Rose, surrounded by a few devoted souls, hastened to the Dominican Church, and took her stand on the altar steps, well knowing she could do nothing to protect the Blessed Sacrament, yet resolved to shed her blood in its defence. "I shall entreat the heretics to slake their rage on me," she exclaimed; "and I hope that, instead of killing me at one blow, they will slowly cut me

to pieces, and that the Holy of Holies will be spared." When, however, the danger seemed most imminent, the Dutch Admiral was struck with apoplexy, the fleet sailed away, and no further attempt was made. Rose alone did not altogether share in the general rejoicing; she was disappointed at not having been permitted to shed her blood for our Lord.

The last three years of our Saint's life, with the consent of her parents, though from what cause does not appear, were spent under the roof of Don Gonzalo de la Massa, who held an important post under the Viceroy, and whose wife had always been devoutly attached to Rose. She had for some time previously been allowed the privilege of daily Communion, and had reduced her bodily sustenance to one, or at most, two, mouthfuls of bread by day; often she passed whole weeks without taking any nourishment whatever. When she came to live with the de la Massa family, it became her practice to go daily to the Dominican Church, at daybreak, and assist at all the Masses celebrated there till noon, when she would return to the house and retire to a little garret, where she led as solitary a life as formerly in her cell in the garden. During the last Lent of the Saint's life, a little bird used to come daily to celebrate the praises of God in her company.

It was in the house of these kind friends that she was attacked by her last illness, which lasted three weeks, and was one of agonizing suffering, borne with the most angelic patience. She received the Last Sacraments with the utmost devotion, reciting the Creed over and over again, and expressing her joy in living and dying a Child of Holy Church. She begged that her white Scapular might be placed before her, that she might have continually before her eyes the standard to which she had sworn fealty. Seeing her mother weeping beside her, she said: "Lord, I resign her into Thy hands, do Thou strengthen and support her." Her father was ill at the time, but she caused him to be carried to her bedside, that she might receive his last blessing. Then she asked for the blessed candle, raised her eyes to Heaven, and pronounced the words: "Jesus, Jesus, be with me." Thus did her pure soul go forth

to meet the Bridegroom, on the 24th of August, A. D. 1617, at the age of thirty-one. Her dying prayer had been heard; her mother found herself so overflowing with supernatural joy, that she was obliged to retire to conceal her transports.

The virginal body of St. Rose was buried with great honor in the Dominican Church. At the funeral, the image of Our Lady of the Rosary was seen to shoot forth beams of dazzling light, whilst the eyes of the Queen of Heaven seemed to rest lovingly on the mortal remains of her devoted client. An extraordinary religious movement took place at the death of St. Rose; the confessionals were besieged, hardened sinners were converted, scandals ceased, and works of charity and mortification were begun. This wonderful change was not confined to the city of Lima, but spread with marvelous rapidity throughout the whole of New Spain. By the rigor of her penances and the practice of heroic virtue, Rose had satisfied the Divine Justice, effaced the scandals of the past, and drawn down the blessing of God on her native land. She was beatified by Clement IX., A. D. 1668, and canonized by Clement X., A. D. 1671, the 30th of August being appointed for her festival. She was declared Patroness of America and of the Philippine Islands. The narrow limits of these pages preclude the insertion of any of the miracles and heavenly favors granted through the intercession of this "First Victim of Divine Love in the New World."

SANTA ROSA AND HER BIRD*

In the deep blue nights of Lima,
 'Neath the brilliant Southern stars,
 At her casement, Santa Rosa
 Knelt beside the lattice-bars;
 With her fond eyes fixed on Heaven,
 And her soft lips quivering,—
 Lo! unto her vigils given,
 Came a wondrous bird to sing.

*"In the midst of incessant penances, and evincing their effect by the extreme maceration of her lovely person, St. Rose of Lima would spend her nights gazing fixedly upon the heavens, like an exile who contemplates from afar a lost home.

Bird resplendent, radiant vision!
 Gorgeous dream of Paradise!
 Flamed its wings with light Elysian,
 Glowed, like gems, its glittering eyes;
 Every plume, with glad emotion,
 Trembling on its slender throat,—
 What a wealth of pure devotion
 Thrilled through every tender note!

“Tune thy lay, my beauteous minstrel!
 Let thy swiftest notes be heard;
 Praising God in strains celestial,
 We will sing to Him, my bird.”
 Thus the Saint, in tones ecstatic,
 “Jesus bids us both rejoice!”
 Clear the bird beside the lattice
 Echoed soft her dulcet voice.

O'er the sward, the moonlit plaza,
 Through the garden warm and wet,
 Sweeter than the native *quena*,†
 Swelled that marvellous duet;
 'Neath the bird's shrill, piercing treble,
 Rosa's rich contralto rolls,—
 Matchless music heard in heaven,
 Song of glad, seraphic souls!

All too soon the golden morning
 Dawned in skies of sapphire-blue;
 Rosy rays the East adorning,
 Crowned with glory old Peru.
 Vigils past, while to her labor
 Santa Rosa turned once more,—
 Lo! her feathered, midnight neighbor
 Soaring, sped thro' heaven's bright door!

Eleanor C. Donnelly.

During the last year of her life an enchanting bird came to her window every evening, and sang its canticle of joy, to which she responded thus:

“Attune thy song, my beauteous bird,
 And let thy sweetest notes be heard
 In praise of Him. Responsive to thy voice,
 I sing. He bids us both rejoice.”

This stanza is an almost literal rendering, from the Spanish tradition, of the daily antiphon they warbled.”—“South Sea Sketches,” by Madeleine Vinton Dahlgren.

* The Peruvian flute of reeds.

APPARITION
TO
VEN URSULA BENINCASA, V.
NAPLES, ITALY

1616

Mother of Him who bore without relief
His heavy load of grief:
Mother most sorrowful, guide us we pray,
Along the thorny way
Where Christ walked, where His worn feet have bled,
Where we should love to tread.

Lady C. Petre.



URSULA BENINCASA was born at Naples. She was consecrated at her birth to Mary Immaculate, whose glory she was to spread among men. Being left early an orphan, she lived with her brother and sister in extreme hardships, yet she was always willing and cheerful. She would leave her sick bed to carry her brother his dinner; and the three children thus led, with no other guidance, lives of religious exactness and prayer. As she toiled at her loom, she had the picture of Mary before her, and was constantly rapt in ecstasy by visions of the Mother of God. On the death of her brother she retired to a cell at Mt. St. Elmo, above Naples, where by her extraordinary influence she caused a church to be built in honor of Mary Immaculate. Moved by the Spirit of God, she visited Gregory XIII., at Rome, and declared that, unless penance were done, God would scourge the world for its sins. St. Philip Neri was charged to try her spirit; and after seven months of searching trials he formally approved her sanctity. Ursula, full of gratitude to St. Philip, returned to Naples, and there instituted a Congregation of the Theatine nuns of the Immaculate Conception and the devotion of the Blue Scapular. She died A. D. 1618.

In the year 1616, on the 2d day of February, Our Blessed Lady appeared with the Divine Child in her arms, clothed in a white robe and light blue mantle, and surrounded by maidens in like dress. "Weep no more, Ursula," she said, "but listen to what my Jesus and yours will say to you." The Holy Child then told her of the Order she was to found, of its rule, and what blessings were to be gained by wearing the blue habit. Ursula thereupon asked whether devout persons, living in the world, might not have like benefits, and knew her prayer was granted when she saw angels scattering Scapulars about the earth.

Pope Clement X. approved this Scapular by a Brief dated the 30th of January, 1671.

The Scapular should be of blue woolen stuff; and it is customary to attach to it two engravings, one representing Mary conceived without sin, and the other the Blessed Virgin with the Child Jesus in her arms.

To gain the indulgences it is sufficient to be duly enrolled, and to wear the Scapular; but additional indulgences can be obtained by reciting six Paters, Aves, and Glorias in honor of the Holy Trinity, and of Mary conceived without sin.

The devotion of the Blue Scapular, or Scapular of the Immaculate Conception, is one that should be dear to the heart of all American Catholics. "Mary conceived without sin" is the Patroness of the United States, and a happy inspiration it was that consecrated them to her benign protection. This the land of Mary Immaculate, and the Scapular that honors her sublime privilege should be the national badge of every Catholic who loves his country. Let us think for a few moments of all that this consecration signifies, and also to what it obliges us as Catholics and as patriots.

Our country—the promise of its future, its intelligence, its riches, its liberties, the integrity of its political and social life, the purity of its morals, the sanctity of its homes, the sobriety and virtue of its men, the honor of its women, the innocence of its children—all have been confided to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mother of our Redeemer. Does not this thought

make our hearts beat high with new hope that a future of religion and morality is secure to us from the fact of her patronage alone?

But let us see whether this consecration to Mary Immaculate does not lay some obligation upon her children. Do we have recourse to her as we should? Do we invoke her in the special manner that befits her as our country's Patroness? Do we, indeed, pray for our country at all? Do we realize its grave dangers as well as we comprehend its marvelous promise? Do we feel the necessity for earnest prayer, that the former may be averted and the latter fulfilled? We need not fear that Mary will fail to do her part, but are we doing ours? It is the will of God that much, very much, should be dependent upon our prayers; and are we not tying Mary's hands by our neglect of prayer for our country?

The dangers that threaten our country are insidious and powerful. True religion and Catholic morality are held and observed by only a small proportion of its inhabitants—one-sixth at the largest showing. Moreover, the air is full of evil influences tending to undermine them—moral evils which assail us all, and errors in doctrine to which five-sixths of the people are a prey, and which are not without peril even to the faithful. We have but to name a few of these evils to appreciate their danger: intemperance, divorce, political corruption and business dishonesty, social evils, pauperism and crime, godless education, infidel literature, agnosticism and heresies, worldliness and greed of riches, enmities and strife between capital and labor, speculation, gambling and extravagance. There are, besides, dangers arising from conditions unfavorable to the growth of traditions of piety and purity—conditions brought about by constantly shifting populations, indiscriminate immigration, and the necessity of letting our young people drift out into the world alone and unprotected to seek their fortunes. Many of these evils we share in common with all peoples, but many arise from our peculiar circumstances and temptations. They are American evils, or at least are felt here with exceptional force.

These and other evils are sources of national danger. But Mary Immaculate is our Patroness; God has willed it, and here-in lies our hope. The ship that brought Columbus, the "Christ-bearer," to the shores of America was named the *Santa Maria*. And as a vessel consecrated to Holy Mary first brought the Cross of Christ and the light of the true Faith to the New World, so it is consecration to the same Immaculate Mother that will bring us to the most perfect fulfilment of a glorious destiny—an ideal civilization founded upon Christian morality and true religion.

How will the devotion of the Blue Scapular forward our country's interests? We have seen that its dangers arise from two sources: a perverted moral standard, and erroneous opinions and skepticism in matters of faith. Now, let us examine the origin and aims of the devotion of the Blue Scapular, and see whether it does not furnish us with a remedy against these dangers.

The Blue Scapular is neither a new nor an unknown devotion. It is long established and richly indulgenced. It was not long after the rise of Protestantism. Corruption of morals and errors of doctrine were laying waste the fairest possessions of the Church, when our Divine Lord appeared to this chosen soul, Ursula, instructing her to wear the blue habit in honor of the Holy Trinity and Mary Immaculate, for the preservation of faith and purity; to pray ardently for the reformation of morals and extinction of heresies; and to found a religious order for these ends. She begged of our Lord that devout people in the world might share in the benefits which He promised to those wearing the blue habit, and was answered by a vision of angels scattering Scapulars about the earth.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the young girl went to Rome and presented herself before Pope Gregory XIII., saying that the world was being scourged for its sins, and urging men to penance and to devotion to Mary Immaculate. The Pontiff ordered St. Philip Neri to test her spirit, to see if there was any imposture. For seven months St. Philip exercised her in every sort of humiliation and trial; then he declared her mis-

sion to be from God, and she was permitted to found a congregation of Theatine nuns of the Immaculate Conception, whose special task should be to pray for the objects named by our Lord.

The propagation of the Blue Scapular was confided to the great Theatine missionary, St. Andrew Avellino, famous for his two heroic vows: always to resist his own will, and always to do what was most perfect. The new devotion spread rapidly throughout the world, and it is from that bright period that Protestantism rather lost than gained ground in Europe; and that the beneficial results of the Catholic reform instituted by the Council of Trent began to be felt, and to produce in the Church one of the richest harvests of sanctity and glory she has ever known. Nearly two centuries later the devotion was revived as an antidote to the irreligion and lax morality of his times by one of the greatest Saints of the Church, St. Alphonsus Liguori, founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer and a Doctor of the Church.

In the present century it has been especially recommended and propagated at two centres of Catholic faith and devotion, which have witnessed the greatest prodigies of divine favor accorded to modern times—*Lourdes*, and the miraculous altar of *Notre Dame des Victoires*. Thus throughout its history we find the Blue Scapular connected with great moral reforms, revivals of faith and movements of grace; and we see that the aim of its institution as given by our Lord Himself was to avert the greatest evils that menace our country to-day, and to forward those objects that are most for its welfare; in other words, to bring about the reformation of morals and the spread of the true Faith—the conversion of sinners and the extinction of errors.

We see now how well adapted this devotion is to our country's needs; but can we practice it without adding an unbearable burden to what we are already carrying? All that is required is simply the devout wearing of the Scapular in honor of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception, and we need only add to this a special intention of honoring her more particularly as

the Immaculate Patroness of our country. No vocal prayers whatever are attached to the devotion. Still, in order to gain the precious indulgences with which it is enriched, it is necessary, as the little Italian Manual of the Blue Scapular says, "to have the habit of praying from time to time, according to the spirit of the devotion, for the reformation of morals, the conversion of sinners, and the extinction of heresies."

What objects of prayer could be more appropriate to our country's needs, and what could be easier than to fulfil this obligation by including these intentions in our daily morning and evening prayers, for instance, or in some pious ejaculation familiar to us, that could be made without effort at any time or in any place, such as, "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!" or the indulgence aspiration, "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!" Those who have leisure for vocal prayers are recommended to say frequently the little chaplet of the Immaculate Conception, or Crown of Twelve Stars, composed by St. Andrew Avellino himself expressly for those who wear the Blue Scapular. These tiny chaplets of twelve beads can be easily procured, but they are in nowise necessary to the devotion. Each may follow his own taste in satisfying the obligation.

Those of us who have little leisure for vocal prayer may pray for our country in an admirable way by joining the intentions of the Blue Scapular to the devotions we are already practising. Of course we all wear the Brown Scapular of Mt. Carmel,—*the* Scapular, properly speaking. The spirit of Carmel is one of intercessory prayer. Let us remember that every night from nine o'clock to eleven—those hours of temptation and danger to thousands of heedless souls—the nuns of Carmel are interceding in a special manner with the merciful God for the conversion of the sinful and the protection of the innocent. We can think of this when we kneel down to say our night prayers, especially on Saturday; for Saturday is the American holiday, the day when probably more sins are committed, more souls lost to religion and morality, than on all the other days of the week put together. Yet Saturday is also the day conse-

crated to the Blessed Virgin, and the day when many sinful souls are led back to God by the Sacrament of Penance. Remembering these things, let us unite with the Carmelites, in all whose prayers and good works we have a share, and send up a sigh for souls in peril in every portion of the land.

It may be that we belong to the Rosary Society. Well, the Rosary was especially revealed to St. Dominic as a powerful instrument of Heaven for destroying heresies and spreading true religion and morality—our very objects. Or perhaps we belong to the Sacred Heart Confraternity and the Apostleship of Prayer. What is their motto but "Thy kingdom come!" And is not the reign of Christian truth and morals what we desire for our beloved country? Have not all the societies to which we may belong been established not only for our individual good, but also for the good of the community in which we live and so, ultimately, for the good of our country? The better each one of us is individually, the better, our country will be for having such citizens; while the harder each one works and prays for the objects of his or her sodality or association, the nearer is the day when true religion and Christian morality shall be supreme in the land. There is hardly one of us who has not a distinct apostolic vocation in some one direction. Our religion is not for ourselves alone. We must bring the spirit of the Blue Scapular right down into everyday affairs.

We must, however, go further than this. True doctrine is the foundation of faith and morals. If we wish to work for the reform of morals and the destruction of error, our dearest study should be the teachings of the Church; not only for our own guidance in thought and conduct, but for our neighbor's sake as well. There is no one of us so humble but may be called upon to speak the words of Catholic truth. A number of instances come to our mind of wealthy and highly educated Protestant employers turning in anxious good faith to the obscure workman or the lowly servant-girl, with an honest inquiry for the Catholic teaching concerning some points of faith. We need not fear, though we may be un-

learned in argument or unskilled in controversy. Argument and controversy often embitter and repel; while, as thousands of converts will testify, the simple presentation of Catholic doctrine will often win an immediate ascent. Truth is mighty and will prevail. The trouble is there are many million souls in this country so enwrapped, through no fault of their own, in clouds of ignorance, error and prejudice, that the light of truth never finds its way to them through the appointed channels. They will never dream of applying to Catholic priest or teacher or controversialist or theologian. They will turn, however, to the Catholic layman who is their acquaintance in society, or their fellow-workman in the office or the factory, or their companion in school or club, or perhaps their employee in shop or kitchen, and seek the truth of him.

Then the humble apostle of the Blue Scapular, safe in the guidance of the Little Catechism of his childhood, and full of faith in the prevailing power of truth, with one quick glance toward her who is the Seat of Wisdom, and "who alone has destroyed all heresies throughout the world," as the Church has declared, will, in all simplicity and charity, sow the first small seeds of truth in the soul that Mary has led to him. He will not expect to reap the harvest in the same day that he has sown: he knows it may be many weary years before the seed bears fruit; but he also knows that there can be no harvest without the seed; so he thanks God for the opportunity that was given him, and passes on in all patience and hope. The history of almost all conversions dates from some word spoken or some example given, perhaps many years before, but recalled by the soul in its hours of trouble and perplexity.

We have found in this study that the consecration of our country to Mary Immaculate obliges us to three things: first, to honor our Holy Patroness in some special way; secondly, to implore her intercession for our country's needs; and thirdly, to exercise a humble apostolate of good example and helpful words as far as in us lies. We have also found that the Blue Scapular especially honors Mary in her Immaculate Conception; that its objects are especially suited to our country's needs;

and that its spirit is especially adapted to the sort of apostolate we are called to exercise. Moreover, it is a simple devotion, that makes no great demands on us, and fits in naturally and easily with our other devotions, with the duties of our state of life. It is full of motives for zeal and perseverance in the service of God and our neighbor, and for our own sanctification and the development of all our gifts and opportunities, adding a new interest to our usual devout practices, and penetrating our whole lives with that love of our country and of our fellow-men which is so consonant to the spirit of religion. We enjoy in it all the advantages and traditions of an old and long-venerated devotion, which rekindle its first fervor and give it a new and effective impulse by adapting it to the young life of a vigorous growing country, exposed to fearful dangers in all the heyday of its restless youth,—a country whose chief hope lies in this: that God Himself has thrown around it the blue mantle of the Immaculate Virgin, saying to its passionate heart, "Let this be thy safeguard. Behold thy Mother!"

Let us, then, all, Catholic Americans, unite in the face of our country's hopes and perils, and with childlike faith and confidence draw the Blue Scapular about us, crying from our hearts, "Behold thy sons!"

"O Mary, through thy pure and Immaculate Conception, obtain for me purity of body and sanctity of soul."—[Indulged prayer.]

THE "ANGELUS"

"Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ!"

St. Mark sets the peal for an hundred chimes dear;

"Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ!"

Thus the low prayer of my swarth gondolier.

The purple curtains of the west

Have almost hid the sunset's fire,

Which, flaming Venice-ward, a crest,

Lights softly dome and cross and spire.

Deep lie the shadows in lagoons
 Far as Chioggia's sails and reeds;
 The air with landward perfume swoons;
 My oarsman bows and counts his beads.
 Our craft rides silent on the stream;
 And, floating thus, I idly dream.

And dream? Ah, fair Queen of the sea,
 Not all thy witchings can enthrall
 And fold the wings of memory!
 A thousand leagues one tone can call,
 A thousand leagues one picture bring
 In fadeless form and scene to me;
 And through thy Angelus thrilling ring
 Out o'er the Adriatic sea,
 I hear through all its rhythmic rung
 Those dear old songs my mother sung!

O angelus-hour to heart and soul,
 O angelus-hour of peace and calm,
 When o'er the farm the evening stole,
 Enfolding all in summer balm!
 Without, the scents of fields—the musk
 Of hedge, of corn, of winrowed hay—
 The subtle attars of the dusk;
 And glow-worms like some milky way;
 Within, as from an angel's tongue,
 Those dear old songs my mother sung:

“From every stormy wind that blows;”
 “Softly now the light of day;”
 “Thou hidden source of calm repose;”
 “I love to steal awhile away;”
 “My days are gliding swiftly by;”
 “Depths of mercy can there be;”
 “Jesus look with pitying eye;”
 “Rock of ages cleft for me;”
 “Savior, on me Thy grace bestow;”
 “Praise God from whom all blessings flow!”

“Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae!”

Sweet were the echoes that fell on my ear;
‘Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae!’

I worshiped betimes with my swarth gondolier.

Edgar L. Wakeman.



ST. JOHN LEADING THE VIRGIN TO HIS HOME

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APPARITION

TO

B. JOHN MASSIAS, LAY BROTHER O.P.
LIMA, S. AMERICA

1619

Unfolding in life's dew and sun
Thou wert, oh fair Judean Flower,
Serenely sweet, enfraught with more
Than charms of girlhood's gentle dower.
For thou wert maiden, mother, too,
And strength co-mingled with thy grace,
The mystery of thy Motherhood
Lent wondrous beauty to thy face.

Mary F. Nixon.



BLESSED JOHN MASSIAS was a Spaniard of noble descent, and was born at Rivera, in Castile, A.D. 1585. His parents were very poor in this world's goods, but rich in virtue, and brought the child up very piously. When four years old, little John's mind seemed already to have attained the maturity of manhood, he cared nothing for childish sports and pastimes, but consecrated himself wholly to our Blessed Lady, resolved to recite her Rosary thrice every day, a practice in which he persevered even until death, to the great profit of his soul. He loved to gather children of his own age around him and to instruct them in holy things. He lost his parents whilst still very young and had to earn his bread as a shepherd. Whilst tending his flock he devoted himself to prayer and holy meditation, and received many wonderful supernatural favors. God entrusted him in a special manner to the keeping of St. John the Evangelist, who used often to appear to him under the form of a beautiful child. Our Blessed Lady also frequently visited

him, and these two celestial friends would sometimes carry him away with them to a glorious country, which, they told him, was the home in which they dwelt, and which he was one day to inhabit with them. When, after these mysterious journeys, he returned to the hills where he had left his flock, he found it safely tended, having been guarded all the time by a beautiful lady, doubtless no other than the Blessed Virgin herself. St. John also often rendered him this charitable service during his ecstasies, collected his sheep for him, and helped him to bring them back to the fold at night. In obedience to the Holy Evangelist, he crossed over to South America, not, like so many of his countrymen, for the sake of gain, but because he had been told that somewhere in that distant land was the place where God willed that he should serve Him.

On reaching the New World, John entered the service of a wealthy man, and was employed for two years and a half in tending cattle in the vast solitudes of those unexplored regions. At length his vocation was made manifest, and he became a lay brother in the Dominican Monastery of St. Mary Magdalen, at Lima, a house of strict observance, where he made his profession on January 22, 1623. He treated his body with such extreme severity that his superiors were compelled to moderate his penitential practices. He allowed himself only one hour for sleep, and this he took kneeling in his cell before a picture of Our Blessed Lady, with his head leaning on the bed, or at the foot of the high altar or Rosary altar, or on the bare ground in the cloister. His food was very scanty; and he used to collect all that was left from the meals of the Community and distribute it on his knees to the poor with the most tender charity and devotion. His office of porter afforded him many opportunities of serving these suffering members of his Divine Master. He often begged for them in the city. He daily fed two hundred poor persons, and the wooden spoon is still preserved with which he distributed the food at the gate of the monastery, and with which, when his provisions were exhausted, he used to make the sign of the Cross over the empty bowl, whereupon it would immediately be once more

filled. He took special care of the bashful poor, and his miracles in the exercise of his charity were very numerous.

The sanctity of blessed John caused him to be held in very great esteem, so that persons of the highest rank used to come to see him, and commend themselves to his prayers. This was a severe trial to his humility and, on such occasions, he generally managed to hide from his illustrious visitors. He sincerely regarded himself as the worst of sinners. When his terrific austerities had caused a malady which necessitated his undergoing an extremely painful surgical operation, he bore the long and agonizing incisions without a groan, and when asked how he could remain so motionless beneath the knife, he humbly replied: "I thought I was before the judgment seat of God, and that these torments were inflicted for my sins; and they seemed little in comparison with what I deserved."

Blessed John's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was very great. He used to serve all the early Masses, kneeling in adoration as he heard the sound of the Elevation bell. It was his great delight to decorate the altar for the great festivals, and especially to adorn the line of procession along which the Most Holy was to be borne on Corpus Christi. In spite of his continual occupations, he daily recited three entire Rosaries on his knees. For fourteen years he was cruelly tormented by devils as soon as he began to pray, but he persevered faithfully and fervently in this holy exercise, in spite of all their efforts to drive him from it. He had a special love for the crucifix which hung in the porter's room.

His deathbed was a holy and happy scene. The Divine Master whom he had served so lovingly, Our Lady of the Rosary, the beloved Disciple, and many other Saints appeared to him and consoled him; and, with the words: "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," he tranquilly expired on the 17th of September, A. D. 1645. His miracles, both in life and after death, were very numerous and remarkable. He was beatified by Gregory XVI.

MOTHER OF GOD

At morn, at noon, at twilight dim—
 Maria! thou has heard my hymn!
 In joy and woe in good and ill—
 Mother of God, be with me still?

When the hours flew brightly by
 And not a cloud obscured the sky,
 My soul lest it should truant be,
 Thy grace did guide to thine and thee.

Now, when storm of Fate o'ercast
 Darkly my Present and my Past,
 Let my future radiant shine,
 With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

Edgar Allen Poe.

MANY PEARLS OF PRICE

Like so many pearls of price, the beauty of which rivets us again and again, are the tributes which the Popes have bestowed upon the Rosary. For the edification and encouragement of all clients of the Rosary we append a list of these utterances:

Adrian VI.—The scourge of the demon.

Gregory XIV.—The destruction of sin.

Nicholas X.—The tree of life which raises up the dead, heals the sick and preserves those who are in health.

Paul V.—The treasury of graces.

Urban VIII.—The growth of Christians.

Julius III.—The glory of the Roman Church.

Urban IV.—Every day immense good accrues to the Christian people through the Rosary.

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF THE LILIES
ELEND, GERMANY

1620

O lily pure, whose petals fair
Breathe soft the message that you bear;
Unrival'd flower, you stand alone.
Mid sheltering leaves you bloom unknown,
Till incense sweet around us thrown,
Soft whispers of your presence there.

Lucille Sullivan.



N a stormy, dismal night in midwinter a belated teamster, with a heavy load of wine, was driving along the almost impassable road which runs by the little mountain church of Elend, at the foot of the Brocken. The disc of the moon appeared only seldom through the dark clouds, which chased one another across the sky. A sharp north wind shook the bare branches of the trees that grew thick on both sides of the way, and blew the snow into the ravines, heaping it into huge snowdrifts. The wind grew every moment more sharp and cutting, the snow deeper, and the difficulty greater for the tired horses to draw their heavy load.

Now and then the teamster stopped and gazed into the darkness in search of some shelter. He called for help, but heard only the echoes of his own voice ring deep in the snowy wood. All remained desolate, dumb, and awful. No friendly light, that so rejoices the nightly wanderer, was to be seen anywhere; no bark of dog. The silence of death reigned. Only now and then the dark wings of some nocturnal bird of prey fluttered over his head, and a ghostly rustling was heard among the dry branches of the leafless trees. The stars seemed like cold, silent eyes looking down on the weary man and tired horses,

The thick clouds scudded quietly past; and the snow, too, was silent as a spirit.

The lonely traveler grew more terrified; and, urging on his horses, the wagon suddenly sunk in a deep place, and no efforts of the exhausted animals could move it from the spot. Loud cried the unfortunate teamster for help. No one heard him. In anguish he wrung his hands, and besought the Blessed Virgin, Hope of the Despairing, to aid him in his distress.

Suddenly he heard a rustling in the thicket; and a female form, like the silver moon when she appears above the peaks of the mountains, glided out of the darkness into view,—slender as the fir-tree of the Harz, rosy as the early dawn, fresh as meadow dew, beautiful as eternal youth. A lustre like a sunset in spring, or an Alpine glow on the perpetual snow, floated around the heavenly form, and breathed on the rigid snow masses a soft glimmer like a fairy light.

In consternation the teamster gazed at the radiant figure, that, with a celestial smile, approached the sunken wagon, and, with a single touch drew wagon and horses out of the deep place.

Thrilled by the mysterious vision, and cheered by the unexpected aid, the teamster fell on his knees and endeavored to thank his helper and deliverer, expressing deep regret that he had neither gold nor silver to make an offering to her mountain chapel.

At these words the beautiful Apparition touched a shrub that stretched forth its dried, thorny branches—when instantly leaves and buds burst forth, and soon the whole shrub was loaded with most beautiful lilies, that breathed forth a wondrous and unwonted perfume!

The Queen of Heaven—for it was she herself—broke off one of the lilies and formed a chalice. And as the teamster was thinking whether he might venture to fill it with wine from his casks, the vision vanished.

Meanwhile the horses had gone on with the wagon, which they now drew with perfect ease; but stood still before the Chapel of Elend. The teamster entered the oratory to thank

the Almighty for his deliverance, when lo! he recognized in the painting of Our Lady over the altar his gracious deliverer, and placed the lily-chalice as an offering before her Shrine.

With amazing rapidity the fame of the miracle spread over Germany, and the Chapel of the Lilies became one of the most frequented Shrines. The wondrous lily-chalice was sent to Rome; but first an exact copy of it was made in clay and preserved in Elend for many, many years. It was often shown to the pilgrims, who flocked to the mountain church in such great numbers that it was enlarged, and seven doors cut in its walls. It is sometimes called the Church of the Seven Portals, but more commonly by the prettier name of the Chapel of the Lilies.

LILIES OF THE VALLEY

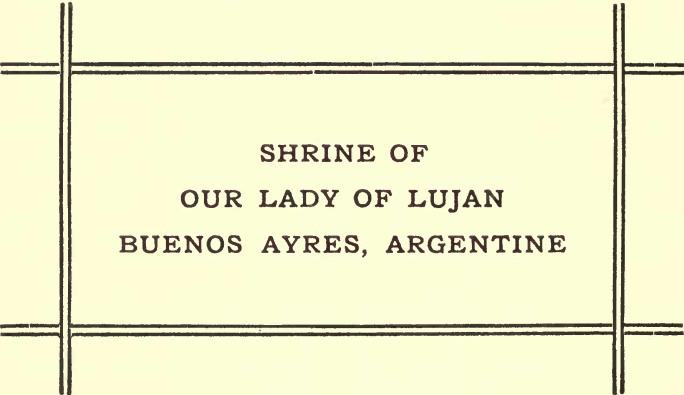
"How pure they are! What sweetness breathes
Between the greenness of their sheathes,
Hiding in some secluded place
The beauty of each tiny face!
I do not think that anywhere
There is another flower so fair.

"I found these nestling in the grass,
Where busy footsteps seldom pass—
By that old house, where long ago
They say a poet lived, you know.
Perhaps he planted them one day,
And left them to their own wild way."

"Where shall we place them, love?" I said.
Quickly she raised her golden head:
"I think they will be far more sweet
If left to bloom at Mary's feet,
They are so like her. Mamma dear,
Where could I leave my pets but here?"

Sweet child, thou art thyself a flower,
Too pure and fair for gaudy bower;
Thy form a thing of tender grace,
The soul of beauty in thy face,—
The fairest blossom in the dale,
My gentle lily of the vale!

Sylvia Hunting.



SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF LUJAN
BUENOS AYRES, ARGENTINE

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF LUJAN
BUENOS AYRES, ARGENTINE

1639

"The years may enter not her shrine:
Forever fair and young she stands,
And with her gracious girlish hands
Folds tenderly the Child Divine."

Helen Burroughs.



IN 1630 a certain Portuguese, whose name has not come down to us, had a farm near Sumampa, a village some forty leagues from Cordoba, in the Province of Tucuman. Being a devout Catholic, he wished to erect a chapel on his estate, and dedicate it to the Immaculate Conception, then called in Spanish La Purissima Concepcion. Accordingly, he wrote to a friend in Brazil for a small imágen (image) of Our Lady under that title, asking him to send it by sea to Buenos Ayres. His friend sent two images: one of the Purissima, the other, somewhat larger, of the Madre de Dios—the Spanish designation for a Virgin-and-Child. The ship arrived safely at Buenos Ayres, and the sacred images had to be conveyed all the rest of the way by bullock-cart—a clumsy vehicle on two huge wheels, still used for long “camp” journeys with wool, timber, etc. These carts at that time traveled in caravans of twenty-five or thirty together—a measure rendered necessary by the hostile Indians.

Our Lady's two imágenes, each boxed up separately, were placed in the same cart. The caravan traveled slowly, of course, and on the third day reached a spot near the River Lujan, where there was a ranch called Rosendo de Oramas. Encamping here for the night, the men prepared to resume

their journey next morning, when a wonderful thing occurred. The cart which held the sacred images would not move! The oxen were cruelly goaded, and as many as six yoke attached to the vehicle; yet, although there was no obstacle from road or rut, all efforts at motion proved futile. At last, it is said, the miracle recorded in Numbers xxii, 28, was renewed; only this time it was an ox that spoke, reproaching his drivers for their blindness. This protest opened their eyes at once to the supernatural character of what had befallen the cart; so they took down the box containing the larger image, and then plied the goad. But no: the wheels would not stir. On the other box being taken out of the cart, all difficulty was over. It was, therefore, clear to them that Our Blessed Lady wished the smaller image, at any rate, to remain at the spot she had chosen. And there it did remain, while the other, it appears, continued its long drive to Sumampa.

A hut of straw was Mary's first sanctuary, near the River Lujan; and her first guardian there was a black man, sole occupant of the ranch. No wonder that a settlement soon formed around this favored spot,—a village, which in course of time grew into a town. A pious lady, Doña Ana Mattos, one day undertook to remove the sacred image from the ranch to her own house; but it had disappeared next day, and was found at home in its hut of straw! This was recognized as conclusive evidence that Our Lady had selected a particular spot, and meant to stay there. So it came to pass that, in the year 1677, Father Pedro Montalvo built a chapel on this spot, with the money of the good Doña Ana.

In 1730 the centenary of the miraculous detention above recorded, Bishop Juan Arreguy erected a church in place of the humble chapel; and this church, in turn, was rebuilt and enlarged in 1754 by Bishop Agramont and Don Juan Lezica. This is the sanctuary which stands to-day, with quite a venerable look, and which is now to give place to a basilica.

Such is the origin of the Shrine and sanctuary of Our Lady of Lujan, as tradition gives it. It is easy to call the miraculous story a legend unworthy of credit. But why is it unworthy of

belief? Is there anything absurd about it? It does not read like an invention. For my part, I cannot see any solid reason for rejecting it. However, be this as it may, the fact is beyond question that Our Lady has had a Shrine at Lujan from the latter half of the seventeenth century. And equally is it matter of fact that recourse to this Shrine has been made not only by countless individuals in all sorts of necessities, but by dignitaries of the Argentine Church and officials of the Argentine nation.

In 1763 Our Lady of Lujan was declared patroness of Buenos Ayres—that is, of the entire province. And what was this but a solemn public acknowledgment of many and great favors received from her? And particularly in the war of independence, which was fought in the early part of the present century, the Argentines invoked Our Lady of Lujan to aid them against the Spaniards, and attributed their victories to her intercession. Thus, in 1813 General Belgrano offered at this Shrine the flags taken from the Spaniards, while in 1815 Colonel French placed his troops under Our Lady's protection.

It is far more interesting, to your readers who are not Argentines, to know that the great servant of Mary who was afterwards, as Pope, to define her Immaculate Conception, paid his homage at this sanctuary of Lujan in the year 1824.

The image itself is a queer little thing, more like a doll than a Madonna. It is about fourteen inches in height, though its dress makes it appear taller. The dress consists of a white robe, like an alb, which widens out, bell-shaped, at the feet; and over this a blue mantle, like a cope, covering the head and reaching to the feet. Both garments are of silk, and richly embroidered.

It is singular that the Argentine colors are those of Our Lady—white and blue; the latter, too, generally of the exquisite tint known as “the Blessed Virgin's blue.” For this reason, I confess, I think the Argentine flag the prettiest in the world. Would that the nation were worthy of it!

The Shrine at Lujan is literally covered with votive offerings—silver hearts, arms, legs, etc.,—made in acknowledgment

of favors received. But far more valuable donations have, of course, been lavished at Our Lady's feet there. Indeed, the crown just placed upon the head of the miraculous image was formed from the store of gold and jewels faithfully treasured by the Lazarist Fathers who have charge of the sanctuary of Lujan.

This crown—blessed by Pope Leo XIII. on the 30th of September, 1886—is a masterpiece of Parisian workmanship. It is valued at one hundred thousand francs, one of its diamonds being worth seven thousand. The arms of Pius IX., Leo XIII., Archbishop Aueiros (of Buenos Ayres), and of the Argentine Republic, are beautifully enameled on it. The Pope at first delegated Father Salvaire to crown the sacred image in his name; but the humble priest had come to ask that honor for Archbishop Aneiros, and the Holy Father granted the request.

Our Archbishop, moreover, made a vow of pilgrimage to Lujan when the cholera attacked this city last December; and we may well attribute to Our Lady's intercession the surprisingly little harm done by the plague among streets and vicinities the most favorable for its ravages. While Rosario suffered heavily, and other places and provinces—particularly Mendoza and Tucuman,—Buenos Ayres, both city and province, was singularly spared, as all acknowledge. It was, therefore, peculiarly gratifying to his Grace Archbishop Aneiros to be the Pope's delegate for placing the crown upon the head of Our Lady of Lujan.

Father Salvaire had another favor to ask from the Holy Father: viz., the concession of a new feast, with proper Mass and office, in honor of Our Lady of Lujan. He asked that it might be assigned to the fourth Sunday after Easter, and as a feast of the first class. The Congregation of Rites granted the petition in all but one point—making the feast of the second class; but an Octave was also conceded, though at first not requested. And it is probable that in a few years' time the festival will be raised to the first class.

The first Vespers of the new feast were solemnly sung in the church at Lujan, Saturday evening: the Archbishop offi-

ciating, with three bishops present—one the Bishop of Montevideo,—and a large number of clergy, secular and regular. As to the people, the church was crowded to overflowing. Two Fathers and a Brother, beside myself, represented the Passionists. And we three Fathers deemed ourselves highly favored next morning by being the first to celebrate Our Lady's new Mass, each securing an altar at four o'clock (the earliest permissible hour). There were some eighty priests to say Mass, and, fortunately, ten altars.

At nine o'clock began the grand función (function); the procession forming at the church, and wending its way,

“with solemn march and slow,
Like mighty Nile or Ganges in his flow,”

to a large open space outside the town, where an altar had been erected upon a high platform, and under a sail-like canopy.

The procession was certainly very picturesque and, in far better taste than I had expected to see. At the head rode two companies of Knights of Our Lady: one company in blue, the other in yellow (the Pope's color). Bringing up the rear, marched two battalions of infantry, sent expressly by the Minister of War. His Grace the Archbishop had the place of honor, of course, and in front of him was the Bishop who was to sing the Mass. Then there were the other two Bishops, and the Canons with their violet capes; and then the miraculous image, carried in a sort of sedan-chair of blue plush, and resting on the shoulders of eight priests in alb and chasuble. The Dominican and Franciscan habits; the long line, on either side, of surpliced clergy; the confraternities, with their banners of white or blue silk; the white-dressed Children of Mary, and the blue-sashed seminarians,—all contributed to fill up the picture. There were also three bands of music, one of which acted as orchestra for the Mass.

The only drawback to the Mass was the wind, which not only prevented the lighting of any candles, except those enclosed and carried in the procession, but also kept shaking the canvas roof in a very distracting way, ripping it a good deal,

and threatening to carry it away altogether. In other respects the day was perfect, a genuine specimen of the Southern November (May). After the Gospel, his Grace Archbishop Aneiros preached eloquently, as he always does; though he could hardly be heard, I suppose, by anybody off the platform. The throng of people was dense, indeed; there must have been twenty thousand at the very least—probably thirty, while one estimate was over forty thousand.

At the end of the Mass came the coronation ceremony. This was reserved for the Archbishop, as Apostolic Delegate. Intoning the Regina Cœli at the foot of the altar, and singing the collect which completes the antiphon, his Grace then blessed the incense, and, proceeding up some steps at the back of the altar, to where Our Lady of Lujan stood with her sacerdotal guard, censed the sacred image; then, taking the golden crown, placed it on the veiled head, saying as he did so: "*Sicuti per manus nostras coronaris in terris, ita et a Christo gloria et honore coronari mereamur in cœlis.*"* At the same moment all the banners and flags gave the royal salute, and the soldiers fired two volleys.

The Te Deum, of course, closed the ceremony, and the procession formed for the return march. The crowned image was brought back to its sanctuary along streets hung with banners, and the church itself was most tastefully decorated with hangings of blue and yellow—blue predominating.

The day finished with solemn Vespers, and a panegyric from a famous preacher; followed by another procession, which, instead of merely going round the plaza, or square, in front of the church, as I had been told it would, led us a slow tramp of over a mile along the two principal streets. And here I think Our Lady of Lujan wrought numerous miracles, for which few gave her credit; for the sun had set before we started, and the air grew chill and damp to a degree that ought, by the laws of nature, to have given a most severe cold (to say the least) to many who took part in the interminable walks,—

*As by our hands Thou art crowned on earth, so may we deserve to be crowned by Christ with glory and honor in heaven!

to myself, for one, who find the cold of this climate possessed of a penetrating power never experienced anywhere else. But I, for one, escaped unharmed.

After the religious ceremonies were over, there was a display of fireworks, of course. But these I did not witness, being better employed in warming myself up at the hospitable dinner table provided by the Lazarist Fathers.

Each day of the succeeding week was devoted to Our Lady's honor, and placed under the care of some clerical or religious body. Friday was the day chosen for the Redemptorists and ourselves: *they* furnishing the preacher (in Spanish); *we*, the celebrant, ministers, and master of ceremonies for the Mass. That day was consequently selected by many of our English-speaking Catholics for their visit to Lujan, while not a few who had attended at the opening came again. A goodly number approached the Sacraments. There were four thousand Communions, by the way, on the first day; and a large portion of the communicants were men belonging to the "Catholic Association" formed in Buenos Ayres last year, and having a branch at Lujan.

The corner-stone of the new basilica was laid by Archbishop Aneiros on the closing day of the Octave, May 15. The Jesuit Fathers were in charge that day, but the canons of the cathedral chapter were present also, with a very large assembly of the laity.

And now, in ending this long letter, I am sure your readers will all join with me in the hope that our glorious Lady of Lujan will bring about a great revival of faith and practice among this nominally Catholic people. When she first came among them, they were fervent. There still are to be seen many native families, as well as individuals, well worthy of the name of Catholic. But, alas! within the past thirty years (as I am told) the circle of the elect has narrowed alarmingly. The Church is hampered and insulted by a Masonic Government, whose propaganda is to destroy Christianity by infidel education and every other means in its power. The worst feature of the case is the fact that the people are alienated from

their clergy to a very serious extent. Their minds have been poisoned, it would seem, by the bad Italian element which has been flowing into the country—I mean the revolutionary, Garibaldian, secret-society element; for a considerable portion of the Italians who come here are much better Catholics than the natives. Yes, the Argentine clergy, though a respectable body of men, are regarded by their people as holding a purely official position—as salaried servants of the State. Consequently so many of their flock will not come near them except when obliged to do so, as for baptisms, marriages, or funerals; while even in case of fatal illness the priest is seldom sent for till life is despaired of; and then, of course, it is often too late to benefit the parting soul. The entrance of a priest into their houses means death in the eyes of these people.

No wonder, then, that the Argentine clergy dread the separation of Church and State. But there is no need to dwell further on this painful picture to convince your readers that Our Lady of Lujan has a vast work of reform to accomplish, if the wills of her rebellious children can be brought to yield to God's grace. Let us hope that with this coronation of her miraculous image a new era has dawned. Her sanctuary at Lujan is not, indeed, the most celebrated in South America; but her image there is the first that has been crowned anywhere in the New World (I believe).

I ask your pious readers to join with me in praying frequently for the intention of Our Lady of Lujan as to the triumph of the Argentine Church.

Your servant in Christ,

EDMUND OF THE HEART OF MARY,

Passionist

THE "ANGELUS BIRD"

In the woods of Guiena there hovers a bird
 Whose plumage is gorgeous and notes are sublime;
 Thrice daily its carol is distinctly heard,
 Like the sweet, solemn toll of the Angelus chime,

At morning it wakens the echoes around
With the ring of its magical, sacred notes;
At noon can be heard its thrice-uttered sound,
And at eve, tho' the forest, its soft measure floats.

'Tis the "Angelus Bird" of Paraguay's coast,
That chants the grand key of the holiest prayer;
Its altars, the forest—the day-god, its host—
The heaven, its vault—what temple so fair!

'Twould seem that when darkness o'ershadow'd the land
And the light of the Christian was yet to be seen,
That the God of Creation created this grand
Living bell, to intone the pure hymn o'er the scene!

From the moment 'twas said that the Mother should be
"Hailed Blessed," all over the earth, by the Word;
E'en the savage afar, by that Southern Sea,
Could hear her true praise in the "Angelus Bird."

While temples were torn by iconoclast hands,
And the Faith of Redemption shone only in blood,
When the praise of the Virgin, in civilized lands,
Was hushed—it was heard in Paraguay's wood.

The bells might be silent all over the world,
The toll of the Angelus never be heard;
Yet Nature the banner of Christ holds unfurl'd,
And His Mother is blessed by the "Angelus Bird."

Grant, Mother of God, that a lesson we take,
From this creature so strange, so truly sublime;
Let us honor the bird that such music can make,
May silence ne'er muffle its Angelus chime.

Dr. J. K. Foran, LL.B.

THE ANGELUS BIRD

When traveling in the forests of Guinea and Paraguay it is not uncommon to meet with a bird whose music greatly resembles that of an Angelus bell when heard from a distance. The Spaniards call this singular bird a bellringer, though it

may be still more appropriately designated as the Angelus bird, for, like the Angelus bell, it is heard three times a day, morning, noon, and night. Its song, which defies all description, consists of sounds like the strokes of a bell, succeeding one another every two or three minutes, so clearly and in such a resonant manner, that the listener, if a stranger, imagines himself to be near a chapel or convent. But it turns out that the forest is the chapel, and the bell a bird.

The beauty of the Angelus bird is equal to his talent; he is as large as a jay, and as white as snow, besides being graceful in form and swift in motion. But the most curious ornament of the Angelus bird is the tuft of black, arched feathers on its beautiful head; it is of conical shape and about four inches in length.



SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY COMFORTER OF THE
AFFLICTED
KEVELAER, GERMANY

1642

Thou like unto a blossom,
So pure, so comely art;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
Steals down into my heart.

Meseems, my hands should folden
Lie rev'rent on thy hair,
Praying that God may keep thee
So pure, and sweet and fair.

Heinrick Heins.



DESPIITE the miracles that long have been, and still are, of constant occurrence at that favored spot, the Shrine of Our Lady of Kevelaer, in the Lower Rhine provinces, is perhaps less known than many others to the religious world. It cannot boast such great antiquity as the sanctuary of Einsiedeln, nor has the soil on which it stands been watered with the blood of a martyr; it has not the prestige, the world-wide fame, of Loreto, Bon Secours, or Genazzano; it does not, like Lourdes, attract crowds of visitors from every quarter of the globe; and yet for more than two and a half centuries it has been a wellspring of health and benediction to the inhabitants of Belgium, Holland, and West Germany. Humble in its origin, unnoted in its development, the Shrine of Kevelaer is situated apart from the world's highway. The village which has grown up around it breathes an atmosphere of seclusion,—a spirit of simplicity, modesty, and industry, akin to that which characterized the lowly Mother of

God, who is pleased to dispense some of her choicest blessings on this spot.

In the early part of the sixteenth century the original village of Kevelaer, not far distant from the Rhine and about two hours' journey to the north of Dusseldorf, was completely destroyed by fire. It was not rebuilt; for until almost the close of the century the country was devastated by bands of rough and lawless soldiery, in consequence of the long struggle against the Spanish power in the Netherlands. After that came the miseries of the Thirty Years' War. Nor was this all; for a pestilence swept away a large proportion of the population, and whole tracts of land became a scene of desolation.

Toward the close of these troublous times, in the end of the year 1641, a trader named Buschmann, who carried on a small business in the adjacent town of Gueldres, was crossing the deserted moors where the village of Kevelaer formerly stood. His road led him past a wayside cross, protected by a rude erection of wood from sun and storm. The winter day was fast drawing to a close, and he was still some distance from home; yet the pious burgher drew bridle when he reached the sign of our redemption; and, dismounting, knelt for a few moments to recite a Pater and an Ave, and commend himself, as well as all solitary travellers in that dreary region, to the care of Our Blessed Lady. His orisons ended, he was about to proceed on his way, when he heard a voice distinctly say: "You will build a sanctuary in my honor in this place." Startled and surprised, he looked all around; but no living creature was in sight; no sound broke the stillness of that lonely spot. Concluding that he had been mistaken, Buschmann pursued his journey, and thought no more of the matter. The next time, however, that business led him by the same road, the selfsame thing occurred; and again on a third occasion, shortly after, the voice was heard to repeat the words.

He could no longer believe himself to be laboring under a delusion, nor was it possible that anyone was playing him a trick; yet he felt puzzled as to the meaning of the admonition, since he was a poor man, quite unable to furnish the funds re-

quired for the erection of a chapel. However, he resolved to do what lay in his power. He told the story to his wife, and bade her put aside two or three copper coins each day out of the meagre profits of their little business. By this means the sum of 100 florins would gradually be amassed, which should be devoted to the building of a simple Shrine.

Thus the winter passed away without anything noteworthy taking place, until, about a month after Easter, Buschmann's wife, awaking one night, beheld the humble chamber she occupied illumined by a brilliant light, in the midst of which was a small sanctuary containing an image of the Blessed Mother of God. The image was not unfamiliar to her: it was the same as one a print of which had been offered her for sale a short time previously. She remembered that two soldiers from Luxemburg had recently entered her shop, and asked her to purchase one of two pictures which they had been charged to take to their lieutenant, then a prisoner in the fortress of Gueldres, but which, as they had no money in their possession, they were anxious to dispose of for a trifling sum.

These pictures represented the image of Our Lady at Luxemburg, venerated under the title of *Consolatrix Afflictorum*, which had gained celebrity some years before, when the ravages of a fearful pestilence had been arrested in the city through the all-prevailing intercession of the Mother of God. At the time of which we are speaking, religious pictures, though but rough, uncolored woodcuts, were very rare, and highly valued by the unlettered peasantry. Doubtless the good wife would dearly have liked to possess one of the prints offered to her; but, small as was the amount asked for it, thrift got the better of her desire to purchase it; and the two pictures were therefore taken to the officer for whom they were originally destined.

When Frau Buschmann related to her husband the vision she had seen, he would not believe a word of it. He was, however, convinced of its reality when, later on in the day, the neighbors and the watchman informed him that in the dead of night, when all lamps were extinguished, they had remarked

that the windows of his chamber were lighted up in a most extraordinarily brilliant manner. Thereupon he immediately took steps toward commencing the erection of a Shrine on the model of the one his wife saw in the vision, upon the spot where he had three times heard the mysterious voice. At the same time he sent his wife to make inquiries of the Hessian soldiers as to the whereabouts of their lieutenant, who had meanwhile been set at liberty. On learning where he was, she went to him and implored him to give her one of the much-prized prints. At first she could not induce him to part with either, but at length her entreaties prevailed: he let her choose between the two, and sent her home rejoicing. Her husband commissioned a painter to prepare a board to which the picture should be attached, in view of exposing it for public veneration.

Meanwhile the wonderful incidents that had occurred got wind. The Carmelite nuns at Gueldres heard of them; and at their request, the picture was entrusted to them for twenty-four hours, during which time they kept solemn watch before it. When Buschmann took it back to his own house, the concourse of townspeople who desired to see it—many of whom brought gifts of money or wax tapers—was so great that the good man, finding the privacy and tranquillity of his house destroyed, asked the Capuchin Fathers, who had a monastery at Gueldres, to give it a temporary place in their chapel. This they did; but so many were the visitors who crowded into the chapel—some urged by curiosity, others by an honest desire to pay homage to, or petition help from, the Consoler of the Afflicted,—that the Fathers requested it might be removed as soon as possible to the Shrine that was being prepared for it. Thither it was proposed to carry the picture in solemn procession on the 1st of June, 1642; but the parish priest of Kvelaer, fearing that so large a gathering of people might, in those unquiet times, be regarded with suspicion by the civil authorities, preferred to carry it to the Shrine himself, under cover of darkness, during the night preceding the 1st of June, on which day it was placed in the little chapel.

The place at once became an object of attraction for pilgrims

from the towns and hamlets of the surrounding district. In fact, the pilgrimages and processions were so numerous that the priest, aware of the bitter animosity of the Protestant portion of the population, in consequence of the religious wars, became uneasy, and begged that the picture might be removed elsewhere. Once more it was taken to the Capuchin chapel, but only for three weeks, at the close of which the priest was persuaded to consent that it should occupy a permanent position in the little Shrine. He soon found himself unable to minister to the spiritual needs of all the pilgrims, in addition to those of the population of Kevelaer. Three Oratorian Fathers were deputed by the Bishop to assist him; and a dwelling-house, which still bears the name of *Kloster*, was erected for their accommodation.

Before many weeks had elapsed the report of the extraordinary cures which were experienced at the Shrine of Our Lady of Kevelaer reached the ears of the ecclesiastical authorities. A little girl four years of age, who had been born blind, suddenly obtained her sight whilst her mother was carrying her for the ninth time to the sanctuary. A boy seven years old, living in Gueldres, dumb from his birth, was found by his parents, on their return from a pilgrimage to Kevelaer, to speak distinctly. On being taken before the municipal authorities, he recited the Angelic Salutation without hesitation. Several children from different parts of Holland, who were cripples, recovered complete use of their limbs in presence of the miraculous picture. Nor was it to children alone that the loving kindness of Our Queen was made manifest: adults of all ages, suffering from one or other of the manifold diseases to which the human frame is subject—cancer, carious bone, long-standing wounds,—found immediate and permanent cure. The lame left their crutches at the Shrine; the blind were restored to sight; the deaf and dumb returned home singing the praises of God and of His ever-blessed Mother.

In 1647, by order of the vicar-general of the diocese, a synod was held, at which thorough investigation was made into the reputed miracles. The depositions on oath were taken of vari-

ous inhabitants of Gueldres who had recovered their health at the Shrine, as well as of Buschmann and his wife; the result of the proceedings being that the cures obtained by the intercession of Our Lady of Kevelaer, on a visit to her sanctuary, were declared to be miraculous. After this the devotion spread rapidly.

As soon as Kevelaer became a place of pilgrimage, the building was begun of a church of considerable size, adjoining the chapel erected by Buschmann. The offerings of the pilgrims were devoted to this object; for, although they belonged principally to the poorer classes, few came empty-handed; and many gave largely, in gratitude for favors received. About ten years later the primitive Shrine containing the picture was superseded by the present chapel—the *Gnadenkapelle*,—consecrated in 1663 by the Bishop of Roermond. It is hexagonal in form, and surmounted by a dome and cupola. The image of the Holy Mother of God, which constitutes its most prominent feature, is an exact copy of the image of Our Lady *Consolatrix Afflictorum* at Luxemburg.*

The chief treasure, however, contained within the precincts of the little sanctuary—the magnet that attracts thither so many sufferers both in soul and body,—is the original woodcut: a quaint, rough little print on paper, of no artistic worth, some five inches high and three in width. Framed under glass, in a silver-gilt frame, it is built into the masonry of the wall in the rear of the altar, behind an iron grating; on the arch above is inscribed in large letters the consoling title under which Our Lady is invoked. The space behind the altar affords room for about sixty persons at most. A door on the Epistle side admits the pilgrims in single file; they pass before the picture, stopping to venerate it devoutly upon their knees, and return into the body of the chapel on the Gospel side.

A number of silver lamps, and other offerings of greater or less value, hang around this treasured, wonder-working picture. On festivals of Our Lady, and other days when the con-

*Since the destruction of the chapel containing this image during the French Revolution, it has occupied a place above the high altar in the cathedral.

course is greatest, the pilgrims pass before it in unbroken succession from dawn of day until a late hour of night. And some, in fact, do not succeed in approaching it at all; but are obliged to content themselves with kneeling on the steps at the side of the altar, whence, through a screen, they can obtain a full though more distant view of the sacred object they have travelled far to venerate.

At the time of the French Revolution, when the army under General Miranda occupied the left bank of the Rhine, all pilgrimages and processions to Kevelaer were suppressed. Soldiers were quartered in the house of the Oratorian Fathers, four of whom were taken to France as hostages for the payment of a fine of 15,000 francs. The miraculous image was concealed in a cavity in the tower of the parish church, the sacred vessels and other valuables being sent to Münster for safety. The chapel was reopened in 1802; but the Oratorians were not permitted to retain their house, which passed into the hands of the municipal authorities. Later the sanctuary was roofed with copper plates, and the exterior restored and decorated. The whole of the interior also has been adorned with frescoes,—some symbolical, others representing scenes and personages taken from biblical history.

In 1858 the foundation stone was laid of a magnificent church in Gothic style; the stone itself came from Rome, being a gift from Pope Pius IX., at whose command it was taken from the Catacomb of St. Callixtus. Six years later the nave and tower were solemnly consecrated by the Bishop of Osnabrück, afterward Cardinal Melchers. The building, which can accommodate 9,000 worshippers, was not completed until 1883. It is beautifully decorated with frescoes representing subjects from the New Testament, and the "four last things."

Although the first pilgrims to the Shrine of Kevelaer were chiefly the poor and needy, personages of distinguished rank and high position followed in their steps,—coming, like the Magi of old in the wake of the lowly Shepherds, to venerate the Child and His Mother, and lay their offerings at her feet. The first who offered a silver lamp of great beauty was Count

von Wils, the governor of Limburg, in thanksgiving for a miraculous cure obtained in consequence of a vow made to the Mother of God. Since that time the annals of Kevelaer record the visits of many princes and prelates, principally from the dioceses of Germany and Holland. The celebrated Bishop von Ketteler was frequently to be seen there, hearing confessions or delivering exhortations from the pulpit; also his Eminence Cardinal Melchers, who passed several days there previous to his enthronization as Bishop of Osnabrück. At the time that the May Laws were in force the Bishop of Münster, during the period of his nine years' banishment, could not refrain from repairing to Kevelaer—always his favorite resort,—in order to commend himself and his distressed diocese to the Comforter of the Afflicted. Despite his beard and the colored suit he wore, he was recognized by one of the railway officials, who had formerly been employed at Kevelaer; and the persecuted prelate had no small difficulty in imposing silence on the man. As soon as he was again permitted to exercise his episcopal functions, one of his first acts was to bless a peal of bells for the new church, one of which bore the name of his patron, St. Bernard.

Literary and scientific men have also been seen kneeling in supplication at the feet of Our Lady of Kevelaer. Johann Janssen, the illustrious author of the "History of the German People," while quite a youth, dedicated himself, in presence of the miraculous statue, to the service of the Church and of historical science.

Among the benefactors of the sanctuary is recorded the name of one whom we should little expect to find in such company—King Frederic William I., father of Frederic the Great. The following account is given of a visit he paid to Kevelaer:

"In the year 1714, on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, an official arrived early at the monastery of Kevelaer to announce the coming of his Majesty. The Father Superior, who was absent at the time, was summoned hastily, and returned in time to receive the royal visitor in the afternoon. In com-

pany with the Superior, the King visited both the chapels; he bowed low before the tabernacle and before the miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin. Then he asked to see the votive candles; and selecting the largest among them, laid it upon his shoulder, saying: 'This taper shall be lighted and burned in honor of the Blessed Mother of God.' The Superior begged that a Brother might be allowed to carry the taper to the chapel; to this his Majesty consented, but he persisted in paying for it.

"Before taking his departure, the King laid his hand kindly on the arm of the Father Superior and said: 'Father, I assure you of my good-will toward you. Ask of me whatever favor you like.' The Superior answered that he had no better wish than that his Majesty should take the devotion to the Mother of God under his august protection, encourage Catholic practices, and confirm the privileges granted to the people of Kevelaer. The King answered: 'I certainly will protect, favor, and maintain them. But, Father, you must ask something for yourself. I will grant it you, never fear.' The Superior hesitated. 'I do not wish to take advantage of your Majesty's condescension,' he replied; 'but, since you bid me make a request, may it please your Majesty to promise that the charge of the parish of Kevelaer shall always be given to the priests of our Congregation.' To this the King assented willingly. He ordered that the book containing the rules and regulations of the monastery should be taken to Cleves the next day, that a clause might be inserted to that effect. And as he got into his carriage to depart, he turned once more and said, in a clear voice that all present could hear (some six hundred persons had assembled round the door): 'It is my wish that the taper be lighted and burned in honor of the Blessed Virgin.'"

In 1728 the same King of Prussia sent the price of a taper of wax, fifty pounds in weight, to be lighted in the chapel; and a silver shield, to be hung on the candlestick, bearing the royal arms and the Prussian Eagle. This shield is still to be seen in the chapel. Such was the conduct of a monarch whom history declares to have been ultra-Protestant in his belief, and

most desirous to further the reformed opinions in his family and among his subjects.

Two years before his death King Frederic William I. visited Kevelaer a second time, accompanied by two royal princes and several high dignitaries of State. In the most amiable manner he said to the priest who received him: "Although I am a Protestant, I have not the slightest hostility toward you." The truth of this assertion he proved by purchasing a quantity of rosaries and prayer-books, for distribution among his soldiers in Potsdam.

Kevelaer had another royal visitor in the person of King Frederic William IV. when he was Crown Prince of Prussia. He was conducted over the chapels, and made inquiries concerning the history attaching to the spot, the number of pilgrims, etc. On being informed that the number had diminished of late years, owing to the strict regulations as to passports, he promised that these should be removed, as the people who came thither could not be dangerous to the State. He also made a donation of fifty dollars to the Shrine; this sum was unostentatiously slipped by his own hand into the box placed for the offerings of pilgrims.

Three jubilees have been celebrated in Kevelaer, each one far surpassing its predecessor in pomp and solemnity. On the first occasion, in 1742, it is said that from thirty to forty thousand persons were present; on the second, in 1842, the number was computed at two hundred thousand,—the festival lasting from the 1st of June until September. On the 1st of June, 1892, the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the erection of the Shrine was celebrated. Pontifical High Mass was sung by the Archbishop of Cologne, in presence of several bishops and high dignitaries both of Church and State. Bishop Korum, of Treves, preached the sermon on this occasion, which was no ordinary one; for the statue of the Mother of God was to be decorated with a magnificent crown of gold.

Before the Holy Sacrifice began, four bishops—attended by some two hundred clergy, secular and regular, besides representatives of all the Catholic nobility of the diocese, the Knights

of Malta, and other orders and confraternities—went in procession to fetch the venerated image. It was lifted from the niche in which it stands, and carried beneath a baldachin upon the shoulders of four priests to the new Church of St. Mary. After the celebration of Mass the crown was solemnly placed on its head by the Bishop of Münster. The spacious edifice was crowded to overflowing; in fact, thousands stood without, unable to find standing room inside. The ceremony closed with the *Te Deum*; after which the procession formed again, and the *Gnadenbild*, or miraculous image, wearing the brilliant crown of gold, was carried through the place before being deposited in the chapel. The bishops, in mitre and full pontificals, walked before, the Archbishop of Cologne immediately behind the image; they were followed by an immense train of people—ecclesiastics and laymen, high and low, learned and unlearned, rich and poor; all animated with one and the self-same desire—to pay honor to the Mother of Mercy, the Comforter of the Afflicted.

The image recently crowned—a counterpart, as the reader will remember, of the one at Luxemburg—is a quaint figure of carved wood, attired in a robe and stiff mantle of cloth of gold. A necklace of gems adorns the neck; the countenance is dignified and benign; the right hand holds a sceptre, the left arm supports the Divine Child.

Thus the humble little Shrine erected by a poor peddler on a deserted moor, its sole attraction a common paper print, has, by the will of God, who chooses the weak things of the world to confound the strong, become one of the great sanctuaries of Christendom. And if little is heard of the wonders wrought there, this is in keeping with the character of Mary, whose humility made her anxious to conceal from the eyes of the world the high privileges bestowed upon her.

Nearly four hundred thousand persons, it is said, visit Kevelaer annually. Many of these come regularly each year; some are known to have made the pilgrimage no less than fifty times. In 1890 a woman, whose life had been spent in domestic service, journeyed thither on foot for the seventy-fifth time. Carried to

the Shrine by her mother as an infant, never since that day had she missed fulfilling the vow her mother then made for her—that the visit should be repeated each year.

Nature has given the Rhinelanders an eye for effect and taste for music. Hence none know better than they how to organize and conduct a procession; and in summer-time numerous are the processions—often composed of simple villagers, headed by priest and acolyte—which wend their way in unbroken order along the dusty roads, bordered with lofty poplars, to the Shrine at Kevelaer. On festivals several of these processions, from the towns and hamlets of the vicinity, may be seen there at once, winding round the square, passing through the *Gnadenkapelle*, or devoutly making the Way of the Cross. The various costumes of the peasantry of different districts, the snow-white caps and glittering gold ornaments of the women, the scarfs and badges worn by the men, who carry colored lanterns and embroidered banners, cannot fail to please the eye; while the voices, sounding from far and near, in earnest prayer or melodious song, speak to the soul and touch the heart of everyone present. And when the pilgrims reach the Shrine from one and all, in various tongues and different dialects, the same cry ascends to Heaven: “Mother of Mercy, pray for us!”

The processions to Kevelaer form the subject of a beautiful ballad by the poet Heine. It was suggested by the story of one of his comrades at school, who had been cured of a long-standing wound in the foot on being taken by his mother to Kevelaer, where she offered a waxen foot on his behalf. When a student at the university, Heine chanced to meet once more his former schoolfellow. The latter reminded him of the miraculous cure he experienced as a child; adding, with a sigh, that if he went to the Shrine again, it would be to offer a waxen heart this time to the Mother of God. The poet was given to understand that the young man had been disappointed in love. Some years afterward he was one day watching from the window of a house in Bonn a long procession on its way to Kevelaer; among the pilgrims he recognized his friend, looking ill

and worn, leaning on the arm of his aged mother. Shortly after he heard that he was dead.

A few stanzas from this truly Catholic ballad will not form an unfitting conclusion to the account that has been given of a spot chosen by the Mother of Mercy herself as the site of a sanctuary, and where she delights to show herself mighty to deliver her suffering children in the hour of their need:

The mother turned from the casement low
To the bed where her sick son lay;
"Wilhelm, my child, say, wilt thou not rise
And view the procession to-day?"

"Nay, mother, I cannot hear or see:
I am too ill to rise," he said.
"My heart is sore; I care for naught more,—
Now Gretchen, my dear love, is dead."

"Come Wilhelm,—come! Take taper and book:
To Kevelaer's Shrine we will go,
And pray the gracious Mother of God
To heal thy sick heart of its woe."

In the morning breeze the gay banners wave,
The pilgrims are chanting a lay,
While through the streets of Köln, on the Rhine,
The procession wends its slow way.

Mother and son are there in the crowd,
They follow and sing with the rest;
The song that they raise is one of praise—
"Let the name of Mary be blest!"

The poet proceeds to speak of the cures wrought at Kevelaer, and the custom of offering as *ex-votos* wax representations of the member needing cure. The mother purchases a waxen heart, which her son presents at the Shrine, confiding his grief to the merciful Heart of Mary. That same night the anxious mother has a vision, in which she sees Our Blessed Lady enter their humble chamber and approach the couch of the invalid.

Gently she stooped o'er the sick youth's bed,
With countenance sweet and benign;
On his wounded heart she laid her hand,
Then vanished without sound or sign.

The mother thought it was only a dream;
 And when from her sleep she awoke,
 The dogs barked loud in the street below,
 And the dawn through the casement broke.

Her son lay stretched on his narrow couch,
 The rosy light played round his head;
 But the mother saw by his pallid cheek
 That the child of her love was dead.

Devoutly folding her hands in prayer,
 By what feelings she knew not possest,
 She said again the pious refrain:
 "Let the name of Mary be blest!"

Heinrich Heine.

SHORT PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN IN HER DESOLATION

Hail, Mary, full of sorrows, the Crucified is with thee; tearful art thou amongst women, and tearful is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of the Crucified, give tears to us, crucifiers of thy Son, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

An Indulgence of one hundred days.

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

"I believe that on this festival Heaven itself must present new charms, as it will display the glory of Mary crowned Queen of Heaven, placed very near the Lord, above all the choirs of angels. And if it be true, as I believe, that the celebration of that day is renewed in Heaven, I hope I shall see this next one there." So spoke the seraphic Stanislaus Kostka a few days before the great festival of Mary, and his wish was granted. Similar was the desire of St. John Berchmans, whose wish was also granted by this most amiable Queen.

SHRINE
OF
THE SANTO BAMBINO
ROME, ITALY

1647

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I
Would bring Him a lamb;
If I were a wise man I
Would do my part,
Yet what can I give Him?
Give Him my heart.

Christina Rosetti.



HE sacristan, if asked, will unlock the Shrine of the Santo Bambino, an image of the Holy Child, carved by a Franciscan at Jerusalem in the seventeenth century out of wood taken from the Garden of Olives. The ship that brought it from Palestine was wrecked at Livorno, but the image was miraculously preserved and brought to Ara Cœli about 1647. It is greatly venerated in Rome, and frequently carried to the sick for their consolation; even miraculous cures are said to have been wrought by it. The figure is robed in silk and diamonds, and formerly had a carriage of its own, given by Prince Torlonia to convey it to the sick. The blessing given with the Santo Bambino from the head of the marble steps at Christmas time is a great event. On Christmas day also, after vespers of the Feast of the Epiphany, the miraculous image is carried in solemn procession. An immense crowd gathers on the long flight of steps leading up to the church door and spreads out in the piazza below. The priest bearing the statue halts at the open space outside the church, which commands a distant view of St.

Peter's, and blesses the city with the sacred image; heads are bared and knees bent in reverence to receive the benediction.

A famous crib is made every Christmas at this church; and throughout the octave of the feast children of tender years recite poems of little sermons on a platform in front of it. The infant preachers, whose ages range from four to ten years, go through their task one after another without the slightest embarrassment, emphasizing their words with graceful gestures. They tell us how they had heard the angels in the early morning, had accompanied the shepherds to the crib, and looked upon the Divine Infant; how they had told the Bambino not to cry, that they would console Him by being good, etc.

There is a tradition that as the great procession of penance directed by St. Gregory the Great (then Pope-elect) in 590 passed through the Forum with the Picture of Our Lady from St. Mary Major, angels were heard singing over the church of Ara Cœli.*

THE SANTO BAMBINO

Looking at Fra Gervasio,
Wrinkled and withered and old and grey,
A dry Franciscan from crown to toe,
You would never imagine, by any chance,
That, in the convent garden one day,
He spun this thread of golden romance.

Romance to me, but to him indeed,
'Twas a matter that did not hold a doubt:
A miracle, nothing more nor less.
Did I think it strange that, in our need,
Leaning from Heaven to our distress,
The Virgin brought such things about—
Gave mute things speech, made dead things move?
Mother of Mercy, Lady of Love!
Besides, I might, if I wished, behold
The Bambino's self in His cloth of gold
And silver tissue, lying in state
In the Sacristy. Would the signor wait?

*St. Louis of Toulouse, grand-nephew of St. Louis, King of France, made his religious profession at Ara Cœli in 1296, and was consecrated Bishop soon after.

Whoever will go to Rome may see,
In the chapel of the Sacristy
Of Ara Cœli, the Sainted Child—
Garnished from throat to foot with rings
And brooches and precious offerings,
And its little nose kissed quite away
By dying lips. At Epiphany
If the holy winter day prove mild,
It is shown to the wondering, gaping crowd
On the Church's steps—held high aloft—
While every sinful head is bowed,
And the music plays, and the censers' soft,
White breath ascends like silent prayer.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

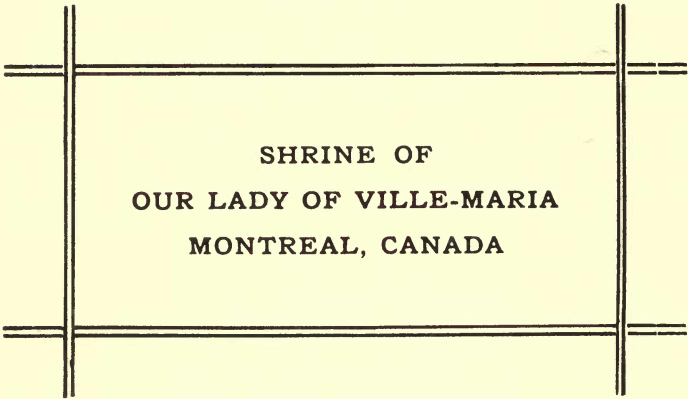
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PRAYER TO OUR LADY

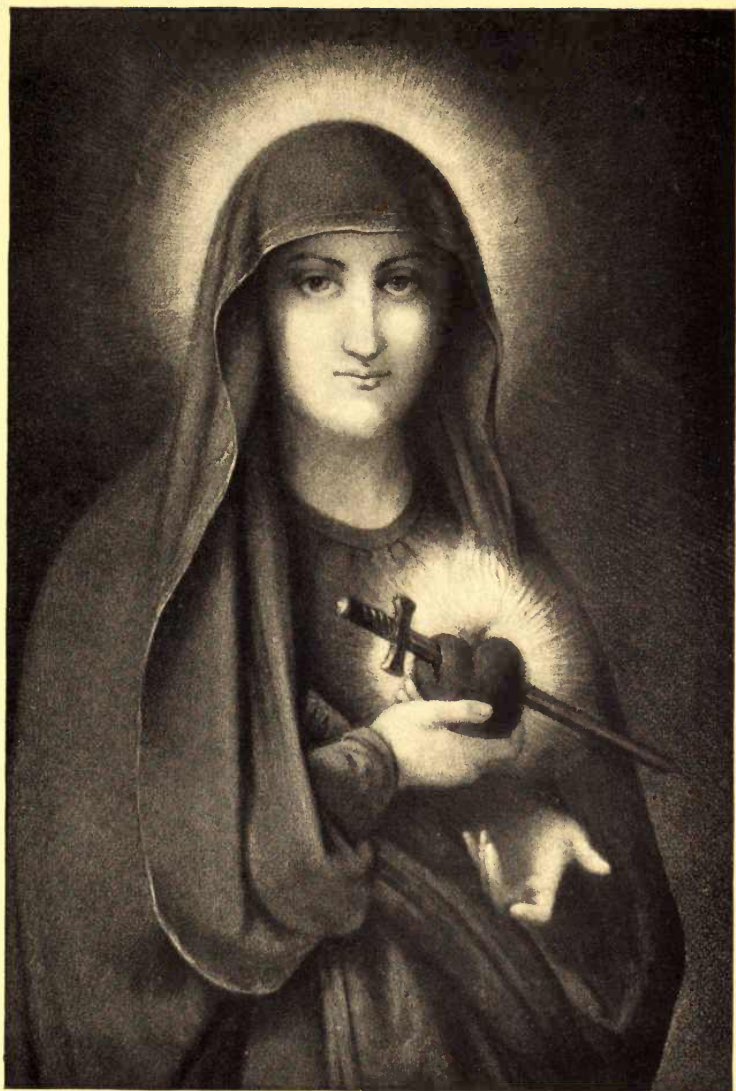
The following Prayer accompanied the Apostolic Letter of Pope Leo XIII. to the English people, given at St. Peter's, April 14, 1895:

O Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England, thy Dowry, and upon us all who greatly hope and trust in thee. By thee it was that Jesus, our Saviour and our hope, was given unto the world; and He has given thee to us that we might hope still more. Plead for us, thy children, whom thou didst receive and accept at the foot of the Cross. O sorrowful Mother, intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the One True Fold they may be united to the Supreme Shepherd, the Vicar of thy Son. Pray for us all, dear Mother, that by faith fruitful in good works, we may all deserve to see and praise God, together with thee, in our heavenly home. Amen.

300 days' indulgence; plenary once a month.



**SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF VILLE-MARIA
MONTREAL, CANADA**



THE SACRED HEART OF MARY

Private Use Only

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF VILLE-MARIA
MONTREAL, CANADA

1659

Mary! dearest name of all,
The holiest and best,
The first low word that Jesus lisped,
Laid on His Mother's breast.

Adelaide A. Procter.



IN the year 1659, a new settlement arose at Montreal. The new city was termed Ville-Maria, city of Mary.

The Rev. Mr. Olier, the founder of the Seminary of St. Sulpice and of Montreal, was one of the great servants of Mary. His father was one of the most sincerely pious clients of Mary in France. He himself gloried that he was born of a mother named Mary, and in a street called Our Lady of Silver. Even in boyhood whatever recalled the Blessed Virgin filled him with gratitude and joy. He never undertook anything, or put on new clothes without going to offer them to Mary, and ask her guidance. When ordained a priest he said his first Mass in the Church of Our Blessed Lady. He held all he possessed as her vassal, used them only in her name, and wore a silver chain around his neck to show that he was a bondman of Our Lady.

Such was the man who projected the settlement of Montreal, and called it Mary's city. The society formed by him in the same spirit consecrated the island to Mary.

To found the new colony they selected Paul de Chomeday, Seigneur de Maisonneuve, a soldier, who for twenty years had served his king with honor, and the Blessed Virgin with devotion, having made for her sake a vow of perpetual chastity,

never omitting, for any reason, the recitation of his beads and the little office. Under him, then, they started at length from Rochelle, crossed safely, wintered near Quebec, and on the 17th of Mary's own month of May, arrived at Montreal. They built a chapel of bark, erected an altar, and offered up the Sacrifice of the Mass. On that day they reserved the Blessed Sacrament, and from that day it has always been reserved in Ville-Maria. "Henceforth," says Bancroft, the American historian, "the hearth of the sacred fires of the Wyandots was consecrated to the Blessed Virgin."

Montreal, too, had its religious institutions consecrated to Mary.

For the instruction of the young, rose up the heroic Margaret Bourgeoys, who founded the Sisters of the Congregation of Our Lady.

A worthy assistant of Maisonneuve, while he was building up a material city for Mary, she was establishing the spiritual empire of that Blessed Mother in the hearts of the faithful. For four years occupied in these labors, she went from house to house, for as yet no building could be spared her for a school, not even the stable she at last secured. But if the first governor of the town could give her no building, he could and did give her land; and on this, thinking first as always of St. Mary, she determined to build, not a school, but a chapel, in her honor. Then she redoubled her energies, running about to everyone in the town; and so, one brought wood, and another stone; a few money, a greater number their stout arms, willing hearts, and mechanical skill; and thus the chapel arose, just where now stands the Church of Our Lady of Good Help (*du Bon-Secours*), so famous for its miracles. Her school began in a stable, yet with no convent but this she found devoted ladies in France to join her for love of Our Lady.

Another treasure she also acquired. Mr. Le Pretre, *Sieur de Fleury*, one of the Montreal Company, had a little statue of Our Lady, by which it had pleased God to work miracles. This he determined to send to Ville-Maria, where, he hoped, a chapel would be built for it, and where it would be more

honored than elsewhere, as that town and colony were more particularly consecrated to the pure Mother of God than any other portion of the world. Being brought to Mr. de Fancamp, another member of the Company in Paris, he was healed of a dangerous illness, and then he vowed to labor steadfastly for the chapel, headed the subscription list with a large sum from his own purse, and placed that sum and the sacred image at once in the hands of Sister Margaret. It was the consolation of the sisters on their voyage, and the object of their unremitting zeal on their arrival.

Margaret's whole life was devotion to the Blessed Virgin; every thought was affected by her, every act was done as if by her direction. To Mary she gave herself in France; for her she left her native land forever to dwell in a wild and just-discovered country in a town bearing the name of Mary, where the books, and houses, and people wore the livery of Mary, and where Mary herself was solemnly chosen first and perpetual superior.

For at the first formal assembly of the congregation for the election of a superior, the sisters had cried with one voice, that "they would have the Blessed Virgin for their superior, their origin, founder, protectress, and good mother, for time and for eternity." And then Margaret and the rest of them prostrated themselves before the image of Our Dear Lady.

Our Lady has for two centuries and more blessed their labors. How many thousands of young virgins have been trained by them to honor God in the cloister, and in domestic life, Canada can well attest.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOW

If, pilgrim, chance thy steps should lead
Where emblem of our holy Creed,
Canadian crosses, glow—
There you may hear what here you read
And seek, in witness of the deed,
Our Lady of the Snow!

In the old time, when France held sway,
From the Balize to Hudson's Bay,
O'er all the forest free,
And noble Breton cavalier
Had made his home for many a year
Beside the Rivers—Three.

To tempest and to trouble proof,
Rose in the wild his glittering roof;
To every traveler dear;
The Breton song, the Breton dance,
The very atmosphere of France;
Diffused a generous cheer.

Strange sight, that on those fields of snow
The genial vine of Gaul should grow,
Despite the frigid sky!
Strange power of man's all-conquering will
That here the hardy Frank can still
A Frenchman live and die!

The Seigneur's hair was ashen gray,
But his good heart held holiday;
As when in youthful pride
He bared his shining blade before,
De Tracey's regiment on the shore;
Which France has glorified.

Gay in the field, glad in the hall,
The first at danger's frontier call,
The humblest devotee
Of God and of St. Catherine dear,
Was the stout Breton cavalier
Beside the Rivers—Three.

When bleak December's chilly blast
Fettered the flowing waters fast,
And swept the frozen plain—
When, with a frightened cry, half heard,
Far southward fled the Arctic bird,
Proclaiming Winter's reign—

His custom was, come foul, come fair,
For Christmas duties to repair
Unto the Ville Maria,

The City of the Mount, which North
Of the great river looketh forth
Across its sylvan sea.

Fast fell the snow, and soft as sleep,
The hillocks looked like frozen sheep,
Like giants grey the hills—
The sailing pine seemed canvas spread,
With its white burden overhead,
And marble hard the rills.

A thick, dull light, where ray was none
Of moon, or star, or cheerful sun
Obscurely showed the way—
While merrily upon the blast
The jingling horse-bells pattering fast,
Timed the glad roundelay.

Swift eve came on, and faster fell
The winnowed storm on ridge and dell
Effacing shape and sign—
Until the scene grew blank at last,
As when some seaman from the mast
Looks o'er the shoreless brine.

Now marvel aught to find ere long
In such a scene the death of song
Upon the bravest lips—
The empty only could be loud
When nature fronts us in her shroud,
Beneath the sky's eclipse.

Nor marvel more to find the steed
Though famed for travel and for speed,
Drag on a painful pace—
With drooping crest, and faltering foot,
And painful whine, the weary brute
Seemed conscious of disgrace.

Until he paused in mortal fear,
Then plaintive sank upon the mere,
Stiff as a steed of stone.
In vain the master winds his horn—
None, save the howling wolves forlorn
Attend the dying roan.

Sad was the heart and sore the plight
 Of the benumbed, bewildered Knight,
 Now scrambling through the storm,
 At every step he sank apace,
 The death-dew freezing on his face—
 And vain each loud alarm.

Down on his knees himself he cast,
 Deeming that hour to be his last,
 Yet mindful of his faith—
 He prayed St. Catherine and St. John,*
 And our dear Lady called upon
 For grace of happy death.

When lo! a light beneath the trees,
 Which clank their brilliants in the breeze,
 And lo! a phantom fair!
 As God's in heaven! by that blest light
 Our Lady's self rose to his sight,
 In robes that spirits wear!

Oh! lovelier, lovelier far than pen,
 Or tongue, or art, or fancy's ken
 Can picture was her face—
 Gone was the sorrow of the sword,
 And the dread Passion of our Lord
 Had left no living trace.

As when the moon across the moor
 Points the last peasant to his door,
 And glistens on his pane—
 Or when along her trail of light
 Belated boatmen steer at night,
 A harbor to regain—

So the warm radiance from her hands
 Unbinds for him death's icy bands,
 And nerves his sinking heart—
 Her presence makes a perfect path;
 Ah! he who such a helper hath,
 May anywhere depart.

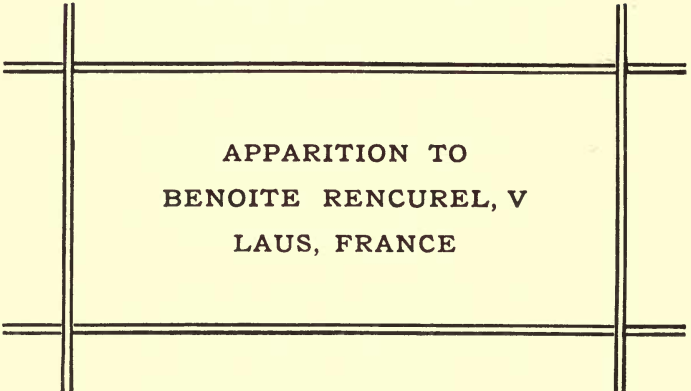
*The patron Saints of the French Canadians are St. Catherine and St. John.

All trembling, as she onward smiled
Followed that Knight our Mother mild,
 Vowing a grateful vow;
Until, far down the mountain gorge,
She led him to an antique forge;
 Where her own Shrine stands now.

If, pilgrim, chance thy steps should lead
Where, emblem of our holy creed,
 Canadian crosses glow—
There you may hear what here you read
And seek, in witness of the deed,
 Our Lady of the Snow.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee.





APPARITION TO
BENOITE RENCUREL, V
LAUS, FRANCE

APPARITION
TO
BENOITE RENCUREL, V.
LAUS, FRANCE

1664

"So, Mary, they who justly feel the weight
Of Heaven's offended majesty, implore
Thy reconciling aid, with suppliant knee:
O sinful man, O sinless Advocate,
To thee they turn, nor Him the less adore;
'Tis still His light they love, less dreadful seen in Thee."

Gerald Griffin.



ALPINE sanctuaries of the Madonna are indeed numerous. One of them might well be called Our Lady of the Blessed Valley. All fresh and fragrant with its mountain beauty and simplicity, it is like a humble violet amongst Mary's Shrines. Time, it would seem, has only strengthened the people's faith in her intercession. "I have asked my Son and He has granted me this favored spot for the conversion of sinners," said Mary to the chosen object of her celestial apparitions; and for the fifty-four years during which the visions continued, the Laus valley, all impregnated by the presence of the Queen of Heaven, seemed to the inhabitants of the Hautes-Alpes like a corner of Paradise.

No busy crowds from far and wide come to disturb the tranquillity of this happy spot: Laus has ever retained its simplicity by ever remaining unknown to the general public; so, no doubt, it will continue to the end of time. Heaven had made of it a place of exquisite beauty,—lying in one of the most lovely valleys of the district, the snow-crowned mountains around being covered with vast forests, and adorned with choicest flowers, together with quantities of fragrant hyssop. And thither Our Lady came, crowning all the natural charms of the spot by her celestial presence; leaving after her what in all the country

round has ever since been known as *les parfums du Laus*,—fragrant odors pervading all the valley, and for which no natural explanation can be found.

In this peaceful solitude dwelt the Rencurel family; and there, in the village of St. Etienne d'Avançon, lying in the Laus valley, Benoite Rencurel was born on the 29th of September, 1647. The girl's name, Benoite, was in itself a predestination, being the old form of *bénite*, or blessed. Poor indeed was the cottage in which this future servant of Mary first saw the light,—the sole ornament of the room in which she was born being a rustic image of her Heavenly Mother. Once, when she was only five years old, a mysterious and beautiful Lady drew her aside as she was at play with other children, and sprinkled her with water; whilst later on the same Lady appeared to her and her younger sister when they had missed their way on the mountain, and set the frightened children in the right path.

Benoite lost her father at the early age of seven; and on his death-bed the good man impressed on his little daughter's mind the necessity of frequent prayer, of obedience to her mother, and goodness toward everyone. "Never forget the Pater Ave, and Credo, petite" said the dying man. And Benoite replied: "With those prayers I can say my Rosary, and that is all that is necessary." To the chaplet the child ever remained faithful.

After her father's death dark days fell on her mother, and the poor woman was obliged to sell the plot of ground around her cottage; whilst Benoite sought work with a neighboring farmer, earning her living by tending and guarding his flocks, and finding consolation, for this daily separation from her mother, by visits to a wayside chapel dedicated to Notre Dame de Bon Rencontre. Tranquilly the years glided away in this peaceful occupation,—years of preparation for the young shepherdess destined to become the glory of her Alpine valley; destined perhaps in God's good time to be raised to the dignity reserved by the Church for her favored servants. She had almost attained the age of seventeen when the intentions of Heaven toward her became manifest.

One day, in the early spring of 1664, Benoite was wending her way toward a grotto hollowed out in a large rock, called the Roche-aux-Fours, from its vicinity to limekilns, when a light coming from the grotto attracted her attention. She stopped, and, looking again, beheld a beautiful Lady smiling at her from the grotto. Benoite, greatly delighted at the Apparition, drew near, no fear of the unknown Lady falling on her innocent heart, and simply inquired if she wished to buy lime. The Lady gave no answer, continuing only to smile at the young shepherdess. Until the 29th of August of that year these apparitions continued almost daily, all the country around knowing how favored Benoite was, and all feeling certain the *belle Dame* could be no other than the Immaculate Virgin, although she had never spoken.

M. Grimand, the judge of the district, took upon himself the task of questioning Benoite, and enjoined on her to speak to her mysterious visitor. The following day the Apparition had scarce appeared before her when the young girl cried out: "*O belle Dame*, we are so troubled to learn who you are! Deign to tell me. May you not, perhaps, be the holy Mother of God? If it be your good pleasure that we should build a chapel in your honor and for your service, tell me and it shall be done." And then the Blessed Virgin answered: "Yes, I am Mary, the Mother of Jesus. My Son wishes to be specially honored in this valley, but not on this spot." With these words Mary vanished, leaving Benoite consoled and happy.

Sorrow, however, soon followed joy. The next month no vision came to delight Benoite. But again, on September 29, as she followed the Avenge river, she suddenly beheld a dazzling light on the other side, on the top of the Pindraux rocks. The young shepherdess crossed a rustic bridge; but scarcely had she done so when the light disappeared, though a delicious perfume pervaded the spot. Guided by it, Benoite soon found herself at the little thatch-covered chapel of Notre Dame de Bon Rencontre and, entering, saw the Blessed Virgin standing over the altar, while a bright flood of light inundated the sanctuary. Benoite, seeing the dust lying on the altar, wished

to remove it with her apron; but Mary stopped her, saying: "Soon nothing will be wanting here—neither vestments nor altar linen, nor anything necessary for divine worship. On this spot I wish a church built,—a privileged sanctuary, wherein many sinners will repent. Here I will often appear to you. Means will not be wanting, despite the poverty of the country people around. Besides, I wish only the money of the poor."

Each day Our Lady came to converse with her chosen servant; and in these celestial confidences she made known all her wishes, giving the exact dimensions of the future Shrine—its length, breadth, and height. So it can truly be said that if ever earthly sanctuary was designed in heaven, and its plans drawn up by a celestial architect, Notre Dame du Laus enjoys that distinction. "And now," Mary said, as she gave the last directions, "tell the people my wishes, and may my sanctuary quickly rise in this valley!"*

But Laus, all valley as it is, stands high up on the mountain side; and, being entirely surrounded by wild and rocky hills, up which no horse can climb, the task of conveying thither the materials for the church seemed well-nigh impossible. Mary, however, had said it was to be; and, with hearty good will, the pious peasants of the neighborhood carried the stones up the mountain,—the pilgrims, who came in large numbers from the towns and villages of the department, rendering cheerful aid.

No sooner was the church begun than a miracle took place—the cure of a young man, Antoine de Caseneuve, the son of a doctor of Gap, who had been ill from his birth. The second miracle was the cure of M. Grimand's daughter; and during the first two summers as many as sixty cures were effected at the humble Alpine sanctuary,—all of which were carefully affirmed as miraculous by official documents. Still-born infants when placed on the altar came to life, and received baptism.

*A little wayside chapel now stands on the spot, erected in memory of this episode of the apparitions, under the title of Notre Dame de l'Erable.

Four years were spent in building the church; during that time Sœur Benoite—as the young girl was now called—aided the workmen, prepared their meals, prayed with them, and encouraged them.

How all the difficulties of the task were surmounted and the work happily concluded cannot be better described than in the words of an old document in the archives at Laus: "This edifice had its origin almost in nothing. The hands of the poor brought the material, and their alms dug the foundations. Providence raised its walls, and confidence in God completed it." An eminent pilgrim of our day has declared that the greatest miracle ever wrought at Laus was the erection of the lovely sanctuary, as it now exists, in such a place.*

One cannot say that the Laus sanctuary belongs to any particular style of architecture; each stone is an *ex-voto* to our Heavenly Mother, carried to her blessed feet by willing hands prompted by loving hearts; but the *ensemble* of the building is so religious that it possesses a beauty which is rarely found anywhere; a curious feature being that the rustic chapel of Notre Dame de Bon Rencontre, in which Mary first made known her wishes to Benoite, is enclosed within the church. Over the high altar we read the invocation, *Refugium Peccatorum, ora pro nobis!* The walls are decorated with large paintings representing some of the marvelous episodes in Benoite's life.

The Heavenly Apparitions continued for fifty-four years, Benoite conversing with her celestial Mother as familiarly as with her earthly one. The most authentic historians of her life declare that on the Feast of the Assumption, 1698, she was ravished to heaven, where Mary showed her all the blessed, and

*Until 1856 gold had almost *never* been found in the money-box at Laus. The superior of the missionaries, wishing to purchase a new Benediction cope, opened the alms-box to see what sum it contained; and, to his astonishment, found a roll of gold pieces amounting to 500 francs—the exact sum required for the cope. It has never been known who placed the money there; besides, the slit in the box being very narrow, rendered it impossible for the roll to have been passed through. Hence at Laus the belief has ever remained that it was deposited there by angel hands. On other urgent occasions also mysterious money help has unexpectedly come, as to the Venerable Curé of Ars.

unveiled for a moment the throne awaiting her favored servant. After this ecstasy Benoite remained fifteen days without eating, and only revealed the great favor she had received by the express command of her confessor. On the 15th of March, the following year, she suddenly found herself enveloped, as it were, in the most delicious perfumes; and Mary told her that the odors would ever hover, especially on certain days, throughout the Alpine valley and in the church.

Like St. Hilary, St. Philip Neri, and St. Bridget, Benoite received the gift of discovering all kinds of sin by the sense of smell. The hidden secrets of many lives stood out clear as daylight before her. She was thus able to warn sinners, who, terrified at the enormity of their crimes, dared not approach the tribunal of penance. She brought back countless souls to the practice of virtue.

Angels were Sœur Benoite's constant companions, often warning her of coming dangers. Such crowds of people came to seek her advice that she finally built a room near the church, that her mother might not be disturbed by their incessant visits. The room was simply furnished with a bed, table, and chairs; and thus it may be seen even to this day. The bed is enclosed in a glass case to preserve it from the pious depredation of pilgrims. Here also is her portrait, painted by an Italian artist as a thank-offering for his miraculous cure at the Shrine. She is represented kneeling before Our Lady, clothed in the habit of a Franciscan Tertiary.

If faith filled the hearts of many in regard to Benoite, incredulity, on the other hand, sought to bring discredit on her, by accusing her of pride and hypocrisy; and, strange as it may seem, her most bitter enemies were priests. Some of these went so far as to have her cast into prison; but, after fourteen days spent in fervent prayer and without tasting food, Benoite was released, her persecutors then declaring their doubts unfounded,—the prison cell having been filled with the most heavenly perfumes during all that time. M. Foresta, Vicar-General of Marseilles, incredulous like others, expressed a desire to speak to Benoite, who, by the advice of her confessor,

went to see him. Scarce had she entered his presence than she warned him against pursuing some project he had formed, and of which Heaven disapproved. M. Foresta, thunderstruck by the warning, declared Benoite must surely be animated by the spirit of God, as he had never spoken of the project to any one; and he blessed Mary who deigned to warn him by her chosen servant.

Not only did Heaven permit Benoite to be persecuted by men: the devil likewise was allowed to torment her in every way. Nothing which the infernal spirits could invent was left untried. Morally, they left Benoite no peace, and physically there was no danger into which she was not cast.

Often Our Lady appeared to Sœur Benoite, accompanied by the Infant Jesus; and many times she beheld the Divine Child in the Sacred Host. At Embrun, whither she had been obliged to go by order of M. Javelly, the Vicar-General, who was anxious to assure himself of her perfect sincerity, she was consoled, as she prayed in the old Embrun basilica, by an Apparition of the Child Jesus on the high altar.

From her childhood Benoite had been accustomed to pray before a large wooden cross—such as is frequently met with on the roadside in country parts of France,—called the Croix d'Avançon, standing on the road leading from Avançon to the blessed valley of Laus. As the Alpine shepherdess grew older, her visits became more frequent and no doubt more fervent. She always made them barefooted,—sometimes in the day, often at night, neither the winter snow nor ice daunting her piety. The old manuscripts at Laus declare that more than twenty times her feet were completely frozen after these icy pilgrimages. There, at the foot of this Alpine relic of piety, whose origin was forgotten by all, Benoite received celestial favors which God deigns to accord only to His most cherished servants.

While she was praying before the cross one day in the beginning of the year 1673, angels came beside Benoite, gently telling her she was to behold what our dear Lord had suffered for us. Instantly raising her eyes, she saw our crucified

Saviour on the cross, blood flowing from all the wounds of His sacred body. He then spoke to His servant, saying that from that time she would be permitted to suffer the dolors of His Passion. And each week, from Thursday at four o'clock until Saturday at nine, Sœur Benoite lay on her bed, her arms extended in the form of a cross, her feet crossed one on the other; her whole body, says an old document, "as rigid as an iron bar."

Her suffering during these long hours were excruciating; but the more she endured, the greater her desire to be more closely united to Our Blessed Saviour's sufferings. After some time she received the impression of the sacred stigmata; and from that moment her sufferings were intolerable, and blood flowed continually from the wounds. The pilgrims seeing these marvels, Benoite became an object of the deepest veneration; all regarded her as a Saint, and her humility took alarm. She implored of our Divine Lord to increase her sufferings, but to hide their exterior manifestations. Before long the wounds on her hands closed entirely, but blood continued to issue from her side; her sufferings being always incessant.

The Blessed Virgin had predicted to Sœur Benoite that she would ever be engaged in all that took place at the sanctuary during her lifetime. The building of a monastery for the missionaries having been decided upon, her sufferings ceased in order to permit her to take an active part in the work. During the two years the building lasted she enjoyed perfect health, aiding the workmen in their most fatiguing labors. When at length all was finished, Benoite's agony recommenced and lasted without intermission for twenty years; during which time our Lord frequently appeared to His servant, consoling and encouraging her.

No illness preceded her death: she simply "languished and pined away," say the chronicles. On Christmas Day she received a warning that she had but three days to live; on the morning of the feast of the Holy Innocents she announced that she would die that evening. She remained perfectly conscious till the last moment; and she whose life-agony had been so

awful knew no agony at the hour of death. Before the prayers were finished the angelic soul of Sœur Benoite had passed peacefully away, into everlasting happiness. Two days later her precious remains were laid to rest at the foot of Our Lady's altar. Despite the snow-covered mountains and the Alpine glaciers, the people flocked to Laus: never before had such a crowd assembled in that valley.

The marble tablet covering the tomb of Sœur Benoite bears the following simple inscription:

TOMBEAU DE LA SŒUR BENOITE,
MORTE EN ODEUR DE SAINTETÉ,
1718.

In 1788 a workman named Jullien, repairing the sanctuary, let fall a heavy stone in passing over the tomb. The marble tablet fell in; and, lest some injury might have been done to the coffin, the tombstone was raised. A portion of the lid was found broken, the splinters having caused a wound on Sœur Benoite's cheek, from which issued blood as fresh and red as if she were still alive. When the lid was removed, the body was disclosed perfectly preserved. This marvel greatly increased the veneration felt for the memory of the saintly shepherdess. In 1854 the coffin was again opened, and Benoite's habit found intact, though of her precious body nothing remained save the bones.

The cause of Sœur Benoite's canonization was introduced at Rome by Mgr. Bernadon, Bishop of Gap, and later Cardinal Archbishop of Sens; and on the 7th of September, 1871, Pius IX. declared her Venerable, signed the decree introducing her cause; and, "struck by so many heroic virtues," ordered it to be expedited. May it yet attain a happy termination!

The sanctuary of Laus has known many guardians. The Jansenists even watched over this favored Shrine, their sojourn there being looked on by the enemies of Laus as a sure destruction to the pilgrimage. The celebrated Père Bertet, generally known as the Apostle of the Alps, banished them from the spot, the Pères de Ste. Garde replacing them. At the time of the

Revolution these devoted religious were at their post. Unhappily, they were dispersed, Père Jouvent alone remaining hidden in the neighborhood, and returning to the sanctuary as soon as the revolutionary blast had passed. Later on, the Shrine was confided to the Oblate Fathers, and is now under the care of diocesan missionaries.

The mountains around the valley of Laus are studded with chapels, erected to perpetuate some of the most remarkable events in the life of Sœur Benoite; and these scattered oratories give to this part of the Alps an aspect of piety rarely seen anywhere. They are always open, and many are enriched with precious indulgences applicable to the souls in purgatory.

The most beautiful of these oratories is the Chapel of the Precious Blood, the gift of the brothers Tulasne, the celebrated botanists and members of the Academy of Sciences. This chapel, built in 1859, contains the Croix d'Avançon, on which Sœur Benoite's saintly eyes so often contemplated her crucified Saviour. On the Avançon road another cross was erected to mark the spot on which the original cross stood.

On the anniversary of the taking of Sebastopol by the French troops—the 8th of September, 1855—Notre Dame du Laus was solemnly crowned, Pius IX. sending a beautiful golden diadem for Our Blessed Mother's venerated image. The ceremony was presided over by Cardinal Donnet; nine archbishops and bishops assisting, together with about six hundred priests and forty thousand pilgrims. A year later Mgr. Depéry offered a splendid cross to the Queen of Heaven in remembrance of the coronation. This cross is always carried by the missionaries as they go to meet a procession on its way to the Shrine; the custom at Laus being, as soon as a pilgrimage is descried on the mountain side, for the priests to go forth to bid the pilgrims welcome in Mary's sweet and hallowed name.

Few pilgrimages have ever inspired so many religious vocations as Notre Dame du Laus; and surely no sanctuary of Our Blessed Lady has ever inspired musician, artist, and poet as this Alpine Shrine.

THE MYSTICAL ROSE

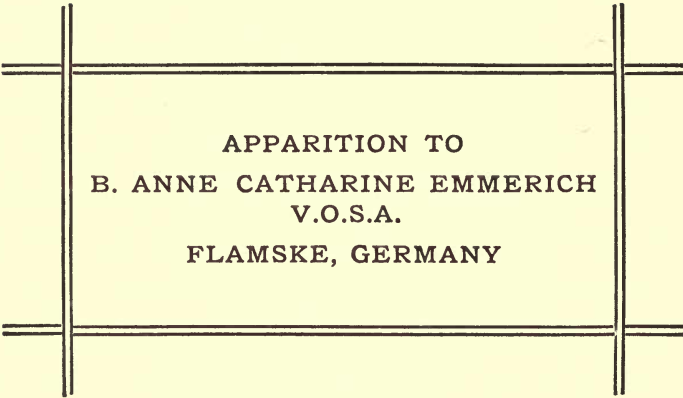
“O Virgin mother, daughter of thy Son,
Created beings all in lowliness
Surpassing, as in height above them all,
Term by th’ eternal counsel pre-ordain’d,
Ennobler of thy nature, so advanc’d
In thee, that its great Maker did not scorn,
Himself, in his own work enclos’d to dwell!
For in thy womb rekindling shone the love
Reveal’d, whose genial influence makes now
This flower to germin in eternal peace!
Here thou to us, of charity and love,
Art, as the noon-day torch; and art, beneath,
To mortal men, of hope a living spring.
So mighty art thou, lady! and so great,
That he who grace desireth, and comes not
To thee for aidance, fain would have desire
Fly without wings. Nor only him who asks,
Thy bounty succors, but doth freely oft
Forerun the asking. Whatsoe’er may be
Of excellence in creature, pity mild,
Relenting mercy, large munificence,
Are all combin’d in thee.”

Dante Alighieri.

PRAYER FOR A GOOD DEATH

O Mary, conceived without stain, pray for us who come to thee. Refuge of sinners, Mother of those who are in their agony, leave us not in the hour of death, but obtain for us perfect sorrow, sincere contrition, remission of our sins, a worthy reception of the most Holy Viaticum, the strengthening of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, so that we may be able to stand with safety before the throne of the just but merciful Judge, our God, and our Redeemer. Amen.

100 days, once a day.



APPARITION TO
B. ANNE CATHARINE EMMERICH
V.O.S.A.
FLAMSKE, GERMANY

APPARITION
TO
B. ANNE CATHARINE EMMERICH,
V.O.S.A.
FLAMSKE, GERMANY

1785

Virgin of virgins! thou who art
Of all the dearest to God's Heart,
Thou glorious Queen of all the blest!
To thee our fervent hymns we raise,
Salute thee, bless thee, love and praise.
Ah! hear the prayers to thee addressed.

Cardinal de Geissel.



HIS greatly favored servant of God was born in the village of Flamske, in the diocese of Munster, Germany, on the 8th of September, 1774. Her parents were poor country people, God having elected her to be an instrument in His Church, and a witness for the Holy Faith. She was from her childhood remarkable for her pious and graceful conduct. Her guardian angel was always present to her sight, the Child Jesus played with her, and Jesus the Good Shepherd assisted her in the care of her sheep. The Blessed Mother of God often appeared to her, and instructed her in every grace. Catharine responded to these wonderful graces. Whilst yet a little child she denied herself meat and drink, and many childish pleasures out of love for her dear Saviour. She shared her last morsel with the poor children around her. She was always in haste to bring comfort and consolation wherever she found it needed. She hated sin as the greatest evil in the world, and was often heard to pray: "Ah, dear Lord, let me die; for those who grow up to grieve Thee." Prayer was her delight. When her parents had gone to rest at night she would rise from her bed and pray in com-

pany with her guardian angel for two or three hours, and frequently until morning dawned.

At twelve years of age she received her first Communion, and, as has been the case with all the Saints of God, it was a day of great joy for her.

At sixteen years of age whilst working in the fields with her parents, she heard the bell of the convent, which awakened in her the first time the desire of a religious life.

At eighteen she went to Koesfeld to learn sewing. She begged at various convents to be received, but partly on account of their poverty, and partly on that of her own, she was refused. With great industry she saved twenty crowns, with which she desired to learn to play on the organ, that she might thereby succeed in being admitted into a convent. But her great desire to be of use to the poor, and her charity, left her no time for learning music, and her savings were soon distributed amongst the needy, so that at last she was obliged to beg for means of support from her mother. "God will reward you, dear mother," she said. "I have nothing left." It has been the holy will of God to assist others through me; He must now take care of me. I have given them all; He will know well how He will help us all."

Catharine had attained her twenty-fourth year when she received a grace which the Lord has granted to many compassionate sharers of His bitter sufferings, namely, the visible conformity in the suffering of His adorable Head, the crown of thorns.

Catharine being one day in the Jesuit church at Koesfeld, was kneeling before a crucifix in earnest prayer. The organist's daughter was by her side. Being rapt in contemplation, Catharine saw the Heavenly Bridegroom, in the form of a resplendent youth, proceed from the tabernacle towards her. In His right hand He held a crown of flowers, in His left a crown of thorns. These He presented to Catharine in order that she might take her choice. Immediately she seized the crown which had been upon His own head and, with both hands pressed it upon her own. At the same time great pains took

possession of her, and never left her during her life. The Apparition left her. The pain increasing, she inquired of her friend, did she perceive anything on her head. Her friend could see nothing. Nevertheless, her forehead and cheeks began to swell, although as yet no blood flowed from the wounds.

On the Thursday and Friday in Passion week, the crown of thorns became visible; she pressed it to her head, and every time the thorns entered more deeply. When she entered the convent blood began to flow through her head-dress. It was not, however, at first noticed by the sisters, and Catharine kept silence.

At length she was received into the convent of the Augustinians at Dulmen; her poor little cell seemed to her like the gate of Heaven. She had come there to follow Jesus in His poverty, and by suffering and the Cross to be conformed to Him. She longed for greater discipline, but she found it not. Her convent was relaxed, and the dress alone separated the religious from the world. The Lord Himself, therefore, became her Novice Master in the school of the Holy Cross. She was exposed to every kind of hardships and misconception; her manner of prayer, her union with God, and her wonderful gifts of grace were all misunderstood by the community. No priest had any comprehension of her hidden life, no doctor knew how to treat her physical ailments. Everything she bore with patience and love. God endowed her with the gift of tears, which she shed in abundance for the sins of mankind, and which were understood by God alone. Her confessor accused her of vanity, and even hypocrisy. Her trial was at its full when she had an illness which lasted for years, and which she bore in meek silence. When at work in the garden the birds would fly and perch on her head and shoulders, and sing with her the praises of God. Her guardian angel was always visible to her, protecting, helping and warning her.

The Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar was the source of that consolation and joy which gave her strength to endure and patience to persevere. When employed as sacristan, she was overjoyed to be occupied in the service of the Blessed Sac-

rament, although it was with great bodily pain that she accomplished it, for she knew that she served the King of kings, and that the angels themselves would envy her if they were capable of such a feeling.

At the end of the year 1812 she received the sacred stigmata. She was lying ill in bed, and contemplating the sufferings of our Lord, when she prayed to share his sufferings. After saying five "Our Fathers," in honor of the five wounds of Our Blessed Lord, she felt a fervent desire to suffer with Him. Then she perceived a light descending from above, and in the midst thereof her living crucified Lord, who approached her, His wounds shining like five bright rays of light; and it was as though her desire flowed from her own hands towards the sacred wounds of our Lord. Then did it appear to her that threefold rays of light darted from the hands, the feet, and side of the Crucified, in the form of arrows and pierced her hands, feet, and side. She lay for a long time senseless, and when she recovered she perceived the drops of blood in the palms of her hands.

From that time she desired nothing but the Blessed Sacrament. As soon as she received it she was fortified and consoled in the midst of her sufferings. Her greatest sufferings were caused by the honor which she received. Again and again she prayed that the outward signs of the presence of the wounds might be removed; but in vain. She received but one answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee." And so she bore her cross after her dear Lord until the end.

On the 9th of February, 1824, she had finished the work given her to do, which was none other than to suffer for the Church and her members. She lay many days in the agony of death, and, at length she died with these words on her lips. "Help, O Lord! O Lord, come to me!" And her pure soul fled to her Heavenly Bridegroom, to join the glorious train of those virgins who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

SENTIMENTS OF A CHILD OF MARY

The following hymn was composed by Rev. Prince Hohenlohe, and is from the papers of Thos. Lloyd's daughter, Mrs. Rudolph, through the kindness of Mr. Griffin :

"Sentiments of a pious child of God before the picture of His holy Mother."

"O thou supremely blest
Unsullied glories rest
On thy bright seat above.
Our sighs to thee ascend,
Thy gracious help extend,
Mother of beauteous love.

"In thy maternal arms,
Full of celestial charms,
Rests Jesus, sweet and mild;
His eyes look down with thine
On us; and light divine
Beams from thy holy Child!

"O that for us be made
A place by thy kind aid
Near thy beloved Son;
When His redeeming grace
Shall all our sins efface
And virtue's crown be won.

"His heavenly voice we hear,
Bid all through thee draw near,
To reign with Him above;
Thy voice invites us, too,
His Word to hear and do,
And follow Him in love.

"How sweet and mild thy voice,
O be my happy choice
This day before thee made;
May thy dear Son by me
Be ever, as by thee,
Loved and in all obeyed."

(Translation of the line under the picture:)

“Mother! to thee myself I yield,
 Console me in the hour of pain;
 Be thou my life’s support and shield,
 And by me in my death remain.”

“Would forbidden joys deceive thee—
 Dost thou sigh while sorrow grieve thee?
 Look on God’s eternal Son.
 If revenge thy soul would harden,
 If thy heart refuse to pardon,
 Think on all thy God has done!

Is it grievous to fulfill
 Duties for God’s holy will?
 Think that Jesus speaks to thee—
 ‘Take up thy cross and follow Me!’”

Rev. Prince Hohenlohe.



APPARITION
TO
B. MARGARET M. ALACOQUE, V.
PARAY LE-MONIAL, FRANCE

1673

The priest comes down to the railing
Where brows are bowed in prayer;
In the tender clasp of his fingers
A Host lies pure and fair,
And the hearts of Christ and the Christian
Meet there—and only there!

Rev. A. J. Ryan.



BLESSED MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE, who was particularly chosen by God to reveal to the world the immeasurable graces flowing from the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, was born at Lautecourt, in France, in the year 1647. Her noble father was very good to the poor, and on this account the blessing of God rested on his family. Of his four children, Margaret was the most specially favored, for, at a very early age she consecrated herself to God by a vow of chastity.

At four years of age she was received into the house of her godmother, and instructed in the Christian religion. She was always thoughtful, and, without the knowledge of her instructress would often go into the church in order to think over, in the simplicity of her heart, those holy truths which were being taught her; and even then her heart began to feel the love of Jesus, whom she knew to be dwelling in the tabernacle. As time passed on she became so much attracted to the presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament that she spent every moment of her time that she could spare from her duties

in the church before Him. At nine years Margaret lost her father. She was then sent to be educated in a convent.

There Margaret made her First Communion; and there also she was confirmed, and took in addition to her baptismal name that of Mary, which is so inseparably connected with her memory; and it was only after four years of suffering and invalid life that she recovered her health.

During those long lingering years of suffering the young girl's heart was drawn to prayer. Fearing that in spite of her fervor she did not know how to pray rightly, Margaret implored God to teach her the secret. Even in those days our Blessed Lord made His presence manifestly known to her, and spoke to her in a way that was palpable to her senses and not only to her soul. She was never surprised at this, for she thought that everyone who prayed experienced the same that she did. In this sensible manner He showed the sick child how to pray, in a way that she has herself described. "My sovereign Lord," she says, "taught me how to do it, and to this method I have kept all my life. He made me kneel humbly before Him, and ask pardon for everything whereby I had offended Him; and then, having adored Him, I offered to Him my prayer, without knowing how to set about it. Then He presented Himself to me in the mystery He willed me to contemplate, and He so fixed my mind on it, holding my soul, and all my powers, so absorbed in Him, that I felt no distraction. My heart was consumed with the desire to love Him; and this desire gave me an insatiable longing for Holy Communion, as well as for suffering."

Still more touching is the Assumption vision of Blessed Margaret Mary, showing how the heart of this benign Queen, so like her Divine Son's, yearns, amid all the glories that surround her, for the salvation and sanctification of souls: "On the feast of her triumphant Assumption she made me see a crown which she had made of all her holy daughters whom she placed in her train, wishing to appear with this ornament before the Blessed Trinity. But she told me sadly, that the flowers with which she was eager to deck her head were too

deeply rooted in the earth,—making me comprehend how important it is that a religious soul be detached from all and from herself, that her conversation may be in Heaven.”

The girl craved for privacy, not only in order to continue her self-macerations, but also to conceal the fervor of her prayers, and the favors with which our Divine Lord now began to load her. He almost habitually presented Himself sensibly to her, either as crucified, as carrying the Cross, or as the *Ecco Homo*, thus increasing tenfold her thirst for suffering. “It was at this time,” she writes, while describing her domestic persecutions, “that my Divine Master disclosed to me, without my comprehending the manner of His doing so, that it was His wish to be absolute ruler of my heart, rendering my life in all things conformable to His suffering life. He wished to make Himself present to my soul, so as to enable me to act as He Himself had acted in the midst of His cruel Passion, which He endured for love of me. From that moment my soul was so deeply impressed that I could have wished my sufferings never to cease for a single instant. . . . I desired to consume myself in His Presence like the wax which I saw burning on the altar, so as thus to give back love for love.”

The mode of these manifestations is difficult to comprehend, for though our Lord made His Presence sensibly felt by her, He did not at that time, nor till some years later, appear to her in person, as He did when He made to her His revelations of the Sacred Heart, when she nearly died from the effects of what she saw. “I see Him,” she writes when trying to explain what she experienced, “I feel Him near me, and I hear Him much better than I could with my bodily senses.”

The time came speedily when her Divine Master would no longer permit His chosen spouse to vacillate. “Learn,” said He to her one memorable day, after she had received Communion, “Learn that if thou despisest Me, and doest this thing, I will leave thee forever. But if thou art faithful I will not forsake thee, and will gain for thee the victory over thine opponents. I excuse thine ignorance, for thou knowest Me not yet; but if thou art faithful I will teach thee to know Me.”

A mission was preached at Verosvres by a Franciscan friar; and Margaret, having opened her heart to him and related her trials and difficulties, he undertook to remonstrate with Chrysostom, and persuade him that in resisting his sister's vocation, he was resisting God. His words were effectual; and on the 25th of May, 1671, her brother took her at her request to the Convent of the Visitation at Paray, to make inquiries whether she could be received there.

Her final choice was made, and after a few last weeks spent at home, she left it for good, on June 25, 1671, having nearly completed her twenty-sixth year. Her desire was accomplished, and she was filled with an apparent calmness as she bade farewell to her family; but suddenly her human heart broke down, and she shed such torrents of tears as to scandalize those who beheld her.

Even before she had left the world, one day kneeling before her crucifix she exclaimed: "My dear Saviour, I should be so happy if you would imprint your suffering image upon me," to which our Lord replied: "That is what I desire, provided that you do not resist, and that you correspond on your side." Scarcely had she entered the monastery, when, upon asking her mistress to teach her how to pray, she received this answer: "Go place yourself before God like canvas before a painter." Predestined to sanctity, Margaret Mary's soul was the prepared canvas upon which the Divine Artist reproduced the sufferings and humiliations of His sacred Passion. Suffering was not new to the humble novice. As a child she had spent four years chained to her bed with rheumatism and partial paralysis, of which she was miraculously cured after having made a vow to the Blessed Virgin. Sorrow in her home, the separation from her mother, all formed part of that school of suffering which was to close only with her life. When she first made her religious vows, Margaret Mary was filled with such sweetness and consolation that she complained to our Lord that He left her without suffering. Our Lord then revealed a large cross, the end of which she could not see; it was covered with flowers, but He said to her: "The flowers will

soon fall and only the thorns will remain; you shall feel their pain so sensibly that you will need all the strength of My love to accept the martyrdom."

The two special devotions of the Convent of Paray, were love of suffering, and love for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. There, Margaret Mary received all her light and strength. On Sundays and Feasts she spent almost the entire day before the Blessed Sacrament on her knees, and immovable, and on Holy Thursday, for several consecutive years, she knelt before the Blessed Sacrament from seven in the evening until the next morning without the slightest movement. It was in 1673, on the feast of St. John, the Beloved Disciple, that our Lord first revealed His Sacred Heart to Margaret Mary, and it was on that very day, three hundred and fifty-three years before, that St. Gertrude had learned, from the Beloved Disciple, that our Lord would reveal His adorable Heart to the world at a later day, when the world would have grown cold. That day had come. We have it in Margaret Mary's own words: "The Lord said to me: 'My Divine Heart is so passionately in love with men that it can no longer contain within itself the flames of its ardent charity. It must pour them out by means of thee, and manifest itself to them to enrich them with its precious treasures, which contain all the graces of which they have need to be saved from perdition. I have chosen thee as an abyss of unworthiness and ignorance to accomplish so great a design, so that all may be done by Me.' Before disappearing He asked for my heart, and I begged Him to take it. He did so, and put it into His own Adorable Heart, in which He allowed me to see it as a little atom, being consumed in that fiery furnace. Then drawing it out like a burning flame in the form of a heart, He put it into the place, whence He had taken it, saying: 'Behold, my beloved, a precious proof of My love. I enclose in thy heart a little spark of the most ardent flame of My love to serve thee as a heart, and to consume thee till thy last moment. Until now thou hast taken only the name of my slave; henceforth thou shalt be called the well-beloved disciple of My Sacred Heart.'" On the first Friday of every month, our Lord again showed her

His Heart. She describes it as a sun brilliant with sparkling light, the burning rays of which fell directly upon her heart, inflamed it, and almost reduced her to ashes. The second Apparition occurred about six months later. The exact date is not given, but circumstances seem to prove that it was on the Friday within the Octave of Corpus Christi. She wrote: "Once when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, my soul was absorbed in extraordinary recollection, and Jesus Christ, my sweet Master, presented Himself to me. He was brilliant with glory; His five wounds shone like five suns. Flames darted forth from all parts of His sacred Humanity, but especially from His adorable breast, which resembled a furnace and which displayed to me His loving and amiable Heart, the living source of these flames. He made me repose for a long time upon His breast. He showed me the inexplicable wonders of His pure love, and to what an excess He had carried it for the love of men, from whom He had received only ingratitude. He said: 'This is much more painful to Me than all I suffered in My Passion. If men gave Me some return of love, I should esteem as little, all that I have done for them, and should wish, if it were possible, to suffer it over again, but they meet My eager love with coolness and rebuffs. Do you, at least, console and rejoice Me, by supplying as much as you can for their ingratitude.'" When the humble Margaret urged her weakness and inconstancy, our Lord showed her His open heart, and said: "Fear not, behold here is wherewith to furnish all that is wanting to thee. Fear not, I shall be thy strength. Listen only to what I desire of thee for the accomplishment of My desire." It was then our Lord asked her to communicate on the first Friday of each month and to make Him the Act of Reparation, to rise on every Thursday night, to lie prostrate for an hour between eleven o'clock and midnight, with her face to the ground, in expiation for the sins of men, and to console His Heart for that general desertion, to which the weakness of the Apostles in the Garden of Olives had been only a prelude.

Margaret Mary tells us in her Memoirs, that, unconscious and unable to stand on her feet, some of the Sisters led her

to the superior, trembling and almost fainting. Mother de Saumaise feigned not to believe what she said, and humbled her deeply, which gave her great joy, as she felt she was such a criminal. Consumed by a burning fire, her health gave way under the sixty consecutive fevers which resisted all remedies. Mother de Saumaise stood by the bed of the apparently dying sister and commanded her in the name of the holy Obedience to ask our Lord to restore her to health, and if this should be granted, she would believe in the supernatural character of what had taken place, and allow her to communicate on the first Friday of every month, and to make the hour of prayer on every Thursday night. At the word *Obedience*, Margaret Mary breathed a short prayer, the fever ceased and the astonished physician pronounced her cured. The Sisters saw the change in her health, but was it an illusion? Margaret Mary was only twenty-six years old, and had been professed only two years; was she deceived? She was looked upon with suspicion; some said she was governed by her imagination, others that she was under the influence of the evil spirit. It was at this period that Father de la Colombière was sent by God to Paray, to bring light out of darkness.

On June 16th, 1675, during the Octave of Corpus Christi, while Margaret Mary was kneeling at the choir grate with her eyes fixed on the Tabernacle, our Lord appeared to her on the Altar. He showed her His Heart saying: 'Behold this Heart which has loved men so much that it has spared nothing even to exhausting and consuming itself, in order to testify its love. In return I receive from the greater part only ingratitude, by their irreverences and sacrileges, and by the coldness and contempt they have for Me in this sacrament of love. And what is most painful to Me is that they are hearts consecrated to Me.' Then He commanded her to have a special feast established in the Church to honor His Sacred Heart. He added: "It is for this reason I ask of thee that the First Friday after the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament be appropriated to a special feast to honor My Heart by communicating on that day and making reparation for the indignity it has received. And I promise

that My Heart shall dilate to pour out abundantly the influences of its love on all that will render it this honor, or procure its being rendered." Margaret Mary answered: "Lord, how can I?" For how could she establish a feast in the Church, who could not convince her Superior and her own community? Our Lord reassured her, telling her to address herself to that servant of God, Father de la Colombière, who had been sent to her expressly for the accomplishment of this design. Margaret Mary confided this third revelation to Father de la Colombière, who asked a written statement of it, which he examined carefully before God; and, after praying for light from on high, was satisfied that it had come from heaven.

Margaret Mary no longer hesitated. She knelt before the Divine Heart of Jesus, solemnly consecrated herself to it, and thus rendered it the first act of homage, and one of the purest that it was ever to receive on earth, or in heaven. Father de la Colombière, wishing to unite with her, also consecrated himself to the Heart of Jesus. It was Friday, June 21, the day after the octave of the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament; the day that had been designated by our Lord to be forever the feast of His Adorable Heart. Thus He received from a holy priest and a humble religious the first fruits of those acts of adoration which to-day ascend to that Sacred Heart from every part of the world. On the first Friday of every month, hundreds and thousands prostrate themselves before the Sacred Heart of Jesus in adoration, and in reparation for the ingratitude He has received, and then approach the holy table to receive Him in the Sacrament of His love. Each one wears the badge upon his heart to show that all its pulsations are consecrated as unceasing aspirations. *Adveniat regnum tuum*, is the constant and fervent prayer of those who watched with Him on the previous night, for while faithful men flock to the churches to make the Holy Hour before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, who can tell the number of religious in their cloisters, mothers and maidens in their homes, who have watched with and consoled Him in that Hour of Agony? And in this year 1900, where is the spot too remote to hear the invitation of Jesus through

His Vicar, Leo XIII., or where is the heart so obdurate as to not unite in the consecration which fills the earth and resounds in the heavenly courts? We quote the words of the Holy Father in speaking of the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus when we say, "it may be called to-day a distinctive characteristic of the Church, the Ark of salvation, the foundation of our hopes for a better future."*

Father de la Colombière departed from Paray soon after Margaret Mary had received the third revelation of the Sacred Heart, but he wrote to the fervent religious to abandon herself to God and to the practice of holy humility. For a moment Margaret Mary was troubled, feeling herself alone with such a mission to fulfill, but in the interior of her soul she heard a voice saying to her: *Will not God suffice for thee?* As the time approached in which she was to proclaim to the world the mysteries of the Heart of Jesus, she learned them herself in intense suffering, for the Sacred Heart crowned with thorns and pierced with a lance, was to impress its image upon the canvas prepared for it. Her health vanished and a severe accident explained to her a vision she had a short time before. In the centre of the Sacred Host she saw our Lord holding a crown of thorns in His Hand, which he laid upon her head with these words: "My daughter, receive this crown as a sign of that which shall be given to thee, to render thee conformed to Me," and from that day Margaret Mary's head was encircled with a band of fire. She made no complaint, but when questioned she answered: "I confess that I am more grateful to my Sovereign Master for this precious crown than if he had given me the diamonds of the greatest monarchs in the world; and this all the more, because no one can take it from me. It often affords me long hours of wakefulness in which I can converse with the only object of my love; for, like my Good Master, who could not rest His adorable head on the bed of the cross, I am unable to rest mine on my pillow."

That she might share in the thirst of her crucified Lord, she abstained from drinking anything from Thursday to Saturday

*Alloction, October 18, 1898.

of each week, and once she passed fifty days without taking liquid of any kind. "Neither her hands, nor her feet, nor her side received the visible marks of the Saviour's wounds, and never was she favored with the precious stigmata that glorified St. Francis of Assisi and many other Saints; but her conformity with the Divine Master, though more hidden, was not less real. Like Veronica's veil, Margaret Mary received the impress of the features of Jesus bruised and humbled."* She made a kind of last will or testament in which she gave to our Lord to use as He should please, and make over to whom He wished, not only her prayers and sufferings, but even all the prayers and sacrifices that should be offered for her after her death, thus despoiling herself of all merit in favor of Him, whom alone she loved. Then taking a knife she cut the name of Jesus above her heart, and with her own blood signed her will with these words: Sister Margaret Mary, disciple of the Divine Heart of the Adorable Jesus. It was then our Lord said to her: "I constitute thee the heiress of My Heart and all its treasures."

Father de la Colombière returned to Paray in August, 1681, scarcely alive; but his Superiors hoped that the mild, pure air of the Val d'Or would be beneficial to him. Margaret Mary knew from God that his end was near and that he would die at Paray. He lived six months, and his last sigh was an approbation of the revelations of the Sacred Heart. In conjunction with Margaret Mary, he had established a hospital in Paray, which still exists under the name of the Hospice de la Colombière. His death occurred on the 15th of February, 1682, and our Lord revealed to Margaret Mary, that, on account of some slight negligence in the exercise of Divine love, he was debarred from the Beatific Vision, until his body was laid in the tomb. Mgr. Bougaud tells us that "this was not the only revelation that Margaret Mary had of the supernal happiness of her holy director. God showed her in a celebrated vision, at one and the same time, the glory of Father de la Colombière and the double and distinctive mission confided to the Visitation

*Mgr. Marguerie, Bishop of Autun.

and the Society of Jesus, relative to the Sacred Heart." Margaret Mary wrote of the vision in these words: "It seemed to me that the place was very high and spacious, admirable for its beauty. In the centre was a throne of flames upon which was the loving Heart of Jesus shedding forth rays so fiery and luminous that the whole place was lighted and heated by them. I saw the Most Blessed Virgin on one side, and our holy founder, St. Francis de Sales, and Father de la Colombière, on the other. The daughters of the Visitation, each holding a heart in her hand, were there also, and their Guardian Angels at their side. The Blessed Virgin then spoke: 'Come, my beloved daughters, approach, for I wish to make you the depositaries of this precious treasure, the Sacred Heart.' Turning to Father de la Colombière, the Mother of Mercy addressed him: 'And thou, faithful servant of My Divine Son, thou hast a great part in this precious treasure; for if it is given to the daughters of the Visitation to make it known and loved, and to distribute it to others, it is reserved to the Fathers of thy Society to make the value and utility of it understood. In proportion as they shall console the Heart of Jesus, that Divine Heart, fruitful source of graces and benedictions, shall pour itself out so abundantly on the functions of their ministry, that they shall produce fruits above their hopes and labors; and the same for the perfection and salvation of each one of them in particular.'"

Many times our Lord made known to the beloved disciple of His Sacred Heart that He wished pictures of it to be publicly exposed for veneration, making those consoling promises which shine forth amid the dark clouds of life as a rainbow of hope, for all who practise this devotion, and which are ordinarily formulated as follows:

"I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.

"I will establish peace in their families.

"I will console them in all their difficulties.

"I will be their assured refuge in life, and more especially at death.

“I will pour out abundant benedictions on all their undertakings.

“Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.

“Tepid souls shall become fervent.

“Fervent souls shall advance rapidly to great perfection.

“I will bless the house in which the image of My Sacred Heart will be exposed and honored.

“I will give to priests the power of moving the most hardened hearts.

“Persons who propagate this devotion shall have their names inscribed in My Heart, and they shall never be effaced from it.

“I promise thee, in the excess of the mercy of My Heart, that its all powerful love shall grant to all those who receive Communion on the first Friday of every month, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance, and that they shall not die under My displeasure, nor without receiving the Sacraments, and My Heart shall be their secure refuge at that last hour.”

In the garden of the Monastery of the Visitation is shown the Court of the Seraphim, near the sacristy where Margaret Mary went with her Sisters to pick hemp. She retired a little apart, where, kneeling at her work, she could look through the sacristy window at the Tabernacle. Suddenly she was surrounded by Seraphim, who sang:

“Love triumphs, love rejoices,
The love of the Sacred Heart gladdens.”

and who invited her to join them in praising the Sacred Heart. The vision lasted two or three hours, and the spot is marked by a marble tablet, upon which, in letters of gold, is engraved the seraphic song. In 1684, while Mistress of Novices, Margaret Mary either made, or had made by another, a pen and ink picture of the Sacred Heart, which she placed on the little Altar of the Novitiate. Her feast day, July 20, 1685, was near at hand, and her novices, knowing what would please her most, erected a little altar under a stairway that led to the belfry. One of the novices seized her brush and palette and covered the

walls, ceilings, rafters and planks with glowing hearts surrounded by flowers and stars, which may still be seen. On the altar, embowered in roses, they placed the little picture of the Sacred Heart from the Novitiate. On the next morning, when they led Margaret Mary to this new oratory, the holy Mistress radiant with joy prostrated herself before the picture, and publicly consecrated herself to the Sacred Heart, and her novices did the same; but the community, fearing innovations, did not join in this consecration.

The first pictures of the Sacred Heart ever distributed were twelve little pen and ink drawings, which Mother Greyfié sent to Margaret Mary as a Christmas gift. The happy recipient immediately sent one to the Jesuit Fathers at Paray, and another to Mother de Saumaise at Dijon, imploring her to have a copper-plate engraving made—"for if we had a plate, we could scatter them far and wide." How this wish has been fulfilled! In every church, in every home however poor, there is seen the Divine Heart, the source of all benedictions, and no day passes that does not witness some cure or favor granted through the application of a badge or picture of the Sacred Heart.

The first chapel erected in honor of the Sacred Heart is that which still stands in the garden of the Monastery of Paray, which was built under the supervision of Margaret Mary and dedicated with great solemnity September 7, 1688. The records of the monastery read thus: "The curés of the city and neighboring parishes, accompanied by immense crowds, assembled at the parish church and then came in procession to our enclosure to dedicate the chapel to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The ceremony began at one o'clock, and lasted two hours."

This chapel is built of wood, and wonderfully preserved, notwithstanding the constant humidity, arising from a defective foundation. Over the door are the words: *Venite ad me*, in letters of gold. The interior walls are almost covered by paintings of the Apparitions and the apotheosis of the dear disciple of the Sacred Heart. The first Mass ever said in the Church in honor of the Sacred Heart was celebrated in the chapel of

the Visitation at Dijon on February 4, 1689, the first Friday of the month.

Margaret Mary's mission on earth was finished, and in the beginning of 1690 she said repeatedly: "I must die, for I am an obstacle to this sweet devotion: I shall certainly die this year, in order not to prevent the great fruits that my Divine Saviour expects to reap from a book of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus." This book was written by Fr. Croiset, S.J., whom Margaret Mary always called her very dear brother in the Sacred Heart, but at this time he had not spoken of his book to anyone.

The time of the Annual Retreat drew near; and, although she had made one of forty days during the summer, she was not dispensed from that prescribed by the Rule, which she said would be for her the *great* retreat. On October 15, she had some fever, but the physician said it was not serious, and would not cause her death. On the 16th, the eve of her blessed death, from early morning she implored the grace of Holy Communion, and with extended arms and seraphic fervor she thanked our Lord for coming to her. On the next day, October 17, 1690, at 7 o'clock in the evening, while receiving Extreme Unction, with the holy name of Jesus upon her lips, her pure soul went forth to rest in the Sacred Heart of her Celestial Spouse. Throughout the monastery and throughout the town were echoed the words, *the Saint is dead*. When a child in her native parish of Verosvres, the people had called her *the angel*; for the Sacred Heart had darted upon her a ray of heavenly love, which gave her that ardent faith, humility and modesty, and which increased until it reached its perfection here on earth. She was only forty-two years of age, eighteen of which had been spent in the cloister. Her pure body was laid to rest, under one of the choir flagstones, near the spot where our Lord first appeared to her. The spot is holy. For so many years the apostolate of Margaret Mary was hidden, but in silence and in suffering she fulfilled the mission confided to her; and to-day, from all parts of the globe, pious pilgrims come to her feet to adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to plead for mercy.

Though many temporal favors have been obtained at Paray, it must be said that spiritual favors are more frequently asked for, as they are more precious than those of the body, and here the heart of the God-Man acts upon the hearts of men. We do not know precisely the date of the first pilgrimages to Paray, but we read in old notes that during the plague in 1745 and 1746 the pilgrims multiplied; and, although they were not admitted into the monastery where Margaret Mary was buried, they had the consolation of praying in the chapel where our Lord appeared to her, and they knelt outside the enclosure wall, with their faces turned towards the little wooden chapel consecrated to the Sacred Heart. The annals mention Blessed Benedict Joseph Labre among the pilgrims who knelt for a long time near the convent wall in prayer; and Cardinal de Bouillon, during his stay in Paray from 1705 to 1707, went often to visit the tomb of Margaret Mary, which he compared to the catacombs of Rome, and where he said he felt no less fervor. Living, Margaret Mary had been the glory of the Visitation of Paray; dead, she did not cease to be their greatest treasure.

On June 21, 1786, the first centenary of the establishment of the public devotion to the Sacred Heart was celebrated in the monastery of Paray, which now held also the precious remains of Father de la Colombière, confided to the care of the Sisters by the Jesuit Fathers at the time of their dispersion in 1763. When the Sisters of the Visitation were expelled from their monastery on September 23, 1702, the relics of Margaret Mary and Father de la Colombière were entrusted to Sister Marie Térèse Petit, who, notwithstanding the visits of the police, proved herself a worthy custodian until 1801, when the Community began to reunite, coming from their own homes in secular dress. In the sad years of their separation death had spared only nine of them, and these under the direction of Mother Verchère reunited in some of the apartments of the old monastery, but under the most trying conditions; for it had been confiscated by the government. Having lost everything by the revolution, they opened a school for their support, and

in 1809 the ancient Priory of the Benedictines was offered to them. But their hearts clung to their old monastery, so favored by our Divine Lord, and they kept their eyes fixed upon it as the Promised Land, hoping that in God's own good time they might repurchase it.

But as the years rolled on, some of the Sisters, weary of waiting, determined to join the Community of Visitandines at Charité-sur-Loire, and secretly made arrangements to carry with them the body of Margaret Mary. Sister Marie Térèse Petit and Sister Marie Rose Carmoy alone kept the invincible hope of recovering the old monastery, and no sooner were they informed of the intention of removing the relics than they at once made it known to the curé of the parish and the mayor of the city. The news excited extraordinary emotion, and both the religious and civil authorities appealed to the Bishop of Autun for a final decision. It was decided that the bodies of Father de la Colombière and Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque belonged by right to the diocese of Autun and the city of Paray, the cradle of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. By order of the Bishop, both Shrines were placed in a little tribune of the parish church, where many of the faithful kept watch over the sacred treasures until the Sisters had set out for Charité-sur-Loire. Then they were again placed in the hands of Sister Marie Térèse Petit and Sister M. Rose Carmoy on the 25th of September, 1817. In January, 1821, Mgr. Vichy, Bishop of Autun, made an appeal to the people to restore to the faithful religious the convent, now old and out of repair, yet sacred because of the manifestations made within its walls. The appeal was followed by a generous response. The convent was repurchased and placed in the hands of the Visitandines on the 16th of June, 1823, when the Bishop, surrounded by his clergy and an immense concourse of the faithful, solemnly blessed the monastery. The remains of Margaret Mary were incased in a new Shrine of cherry-wood bearing the inscription: "Here lies the body of our Venerable Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque." The body of Father de la Colombière was placed near that of his colaborer in making known the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

The Sisters had now only one thought and one ambition, to preserve the monastery, with all its sacred memories and associations. They found the arched roof of the chapel cracked, and the pictures of the Sacred Heart upon the walls torn in a thousand places. The architect wished to demolish the old building, and presented plans for a grand chapel; but the Sisters shrank back with horror; and, thanks to their pious persistency, the spot sanctified by the communications of the Sacred Heart was repaired and preserved to the veneration of the faithful. The Sisters had not forgotten the cause of their holy religious in Rome, and God blessed their efforts. In March, 1824, His Holiness, Leo XII., signed the commission for the introduction of the cause of Margaret Mary, and declared her Venerable.

In 1830, the Commissaries Apostolic delegated by the Holy See arrived in France, to inquire into the virtues of the Venerable Sister. On the 22d of July, 1830, the tomb was canonically opened and the body identified. As soon as this was made known, it attracted many pilgrims to Paray, not only from the surrounding country, but from the different dioceses of France, who crowded around the Monastery of the Visitation waiting with impatience for the happy moment, to draw near the blessed body to present their petitions to the lover of the Sacred Heart. Two miraculous cures took place at the opening of the Shrine. Sister Marie Térèse Petit, who had so faithfully guarded the holy treasure, had been confined to bed with heart disease, from which she had suffered for thirty years, and on that day she was reduced to such an extremity that she could scarcely speak in the faintest whisper; but as soon as the tomb was opened, with the faith of the woman in the Gospel, she placed upon her breast a piece of linen that had touched the holy relics. Entirely cured, she rose and joined the community to make her thanksgiving at the tomb of her loved and venerated Sister. The other cure was wrought upon a poor woman of Lyons whose disease of twenty-four years' standing was pronounced incurable by the physicians, who declared that amputation of her limb was imperative. She was instantly cured, and walked

out of the city. The Shrine of the Venerable one was carried by the Sisters, followed by the Bishop and his clergy, and tenderly placed in a new tomb, where it remained until the second canonical opening in July, 1864.

No sooner had Pius IX. ascended the pontifical throne, than he raised his eyes to the Heart of Jesus, and in the month of July, 1846, he went on foot to the Convent of the Visitation in Rome, to say Mass and to announce to the Sisters that the hour had come to promote the devotion to the Sacred Heart and to Venerable Margaret Mary. Again on the 23d of August of the same year, His Holiness carried to the Visitandines of Rome the news of the future glory of their holy Sister. But in the designs of God, eighteen years were to elapse before this precious hope was realized. In 1859, the Visitandines of Paray addressed a circular to their Order, begging for a union of prayer to obtain the Beatification of their Venerable Sister; and on August 3d, 1861, they received a paternal letter from the Holy Father Pius IX., in which he assures his well-beloved daughters of the Visitation of the most intimate love of his heart for them, and his great desire for the advancement of the cause of the Venerable Margaret Mary Alacoque, which he has recommended to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and that he sends them his Apostolic Benediction. When M. l'Abbé Boyer, a native of Paray, expressed to His Holiness the prayerful earnestness of the Sisters of the Visitation for the Beatification, the Pope replied: "Ah! my dear daughters of the Visitation, they write to me so often, and they make others write to me, to beg me to advance the cause of their Venerable Sister; but they must be tranquil; with the grace of God it will come to pass."

On the 4th of September, 1864, the cannon of Saint Angelo announced to Rome that the Apostle of the Sacred Heart was to be proclaimed Blessed. On the evening of the same day the Holy Father, with an immense retinue, including about two hundred French priests, knelt before the picture of Blessed Margaret Mary, while the Bishop of Autun advanced and offered His Holiness a small bouquet of flowers, emblematic of

the virtues that his diocese had seen flourish in the humble garden of the Visitation, the sweet odor of which was now about to spread over the whole Church. In 1865 the Feast of the Beatification was celebrated in all the Visitation Convents throughout the world, and in Paray the festivities were prolonged for three days. More than one hundred thousand persons attended the ceremonies and visited the Shrine. The Cardinal Archbishop of Besançon presided, attended by many Bishops, Mitred Abbots, priests and religious of various Orders. The holy relics were removed from the wooden casket and placed in a magnificent Shrine of silver gilt, set with precious stones; and for three days it was borne through the streets of the city on the shoulders of twenty-four priests in dalmatics. The triumphal procession recalled the splendor of mediæval times, and a holy joy shone on every face. The Shrine was sealed by a prothonotary, and bears this inscription:

In the peace of Jesus Christ
Reposes here, His glorious Spouse of predilection
Margaret Mary Alacoque,
of the Order of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
Advance in glory, reign, and pray for your brethren.
Paray-le-Monial, Feb. 25, 1865.

The Shrine was then placed beneath the main altar, on the base of which we read:

Jesus Christ, Priest and Host,
United to Himself as a victim during her life on earth,
The Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque,
Whom He had inflamed with the love of His Sacred Heart;
Here He has consecrated to Himself an
Altar of her venerated body.
The Sovereign Pontiff, Pius IX., in the joy of his soul
Has proclaimed her blessed in Heaven.
September 18, in the year of grace 1864.

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Her pure body lies almost directly under the spot where our Lord opened to her His Sacred Heart. It is a holy place, the very atmosphere is redolent of sanctity. Go pray on that spot so blessed by our Divine Lord, look at the seraphic virgin whose heart like the prepared canvas received the impression of His suffering life, and then describe if you can the feelings that overwhelmed your soul and made your eyes fountains of salutary tears.

The Shrine is principally the gift of the Catholics of Belgium. It is elaborately ornamented with marguerites, set with amethyst and topaz and six large medallions in enamel, representing the Blessed Virgin presenting her Divine Son to the Blessed one; our Lord showing her His Heart; Saint Francis de Sales and Saint de Chantal appearing to her; Pius IX. proclaiming the Beatification; the Arms of the Visitation, and a picture of the Blessed Sister. From the first of May until the 17th of October, the Shrine rests upon a massive catafalque, against the choir grate, in full view of the pilgrims; during the remainder of the year, it is placed under the main altar. The body is clothed in a black velvet habit, with white silk guimpe and black silk veil. In the right hand is a heart; in the left, a bunch of white lilies. The head is encircled with a crown of gold, set with diamonds, pearls and emeralds, interwoven with lilies and the indispensable marguerites, which are seen everywhere. The yellow marble floor is strewn with marguerites, they bloom upon the altar, ornament the handsome missal and sacerdotal vestments; the carpets are gardens of marguerites embroidered in profusion upon white velvet, some wrought by the ladies of Annecy, and some by the ladies of England; the cushion of marguerites upon which the body lies is the work of the Sisters of the Visitation of Caen, all sent to do homage to the queen Marguerite which now blooms in the garden of Paradise, while the sweet perfume descends to earth, to attract the hearts of the faithful. The Tabernacle is a real work of art, surmounted by a beautiful canopy for exposition. The walls are covered with fine paintings, representing the Apparitions and other scenes from the life of the Blessed One.

But these mural decorations disappear during the summer, under numerous *ex-votos*, the silent, but eloquent witnesses of the mercy of the Sacred Heart, the power of Blessed Margaret Mary and the gratitude of those who received favors in this holy place.

In another beautiful Shrine, near the choir gate, are relics of Saint Lazarus, Saint Mary Magdalen, Saint Martha, Saint Maximin and St. Mary of Salome; and a handsome reliquary, which contains a large relic of the true cross, hangs in the Sister's choir.

Among the many lamps, we are more especially attracted by one of massive silver, which bears three superb medallions in enamel, that represent America savage, America civilized by Christianity, and America consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. One on one side, between white marguerites, is the inscription:

To the Sacred Heart of Jesus
The Church in America

Consecrates the hearts of all her children, that they may burn
more and more with His Divine love.

On the reverse, an angel with outspread wings carries the escutcheon and colors of the United States, while an American eagle, in an azure sky, bears aloft the familiar motto: *E Pluribus Unum*, to which the dim religious light gave a significance we had never felt before: *Many hearts* in *One* divine heart. The soft light from this lamp does not reveal the tears of the American pilgrim, but it falls like a halo around the head bent down in prayer for our own loved land, ever foremost in devotion to the Sacred Heart. He has much to say, but his lips move not; it is the heart that speaks. He has many thanksgivings to make, and as his eyes rest upon the painting of the Apparition, his heart flies back with loyal pride to the first church in the world ever dedicated to the Sacred Heart, the little church at Conewago, where, in its shadow, his forefathers sleep in the faith of Christ. There, as here, he sees the altar-piece of the Apparition, with Father de la Colombière, all so

indelibly imprinted upon his heart. He thanks God for the pioneer fathers of the Faith who planted the devotion to the Sacred Heart in the new soil, where it has produced fruit a thousand-fold; and he prays that America as a nation may find a secure refuge in that adorable *Ark of Salvation*. The *ex-votos* at Paray have become so numerous that the chapel will no longer hold them, and a room in the monastery has been appropriated to their preservation. In the sacristy is shown the spot where Father de la Colombière vested for Mass, and his confessional is the same to-day as it was when he assured the humble Visitandine that her mission was from God. Near the choir gate an inscription announces that in this place our Lord revealed the riches of His Heart to Blessed Margaret Mary, and a corresponding tablet on the other side says: "This blessed virgin Margaret Mary was beatified September 18, 1864."

On the exterior of the chapel, the eyes of the pilgrim rest upon a large statue of the Sacred Heart with outstretched arms, under which are carved the words: *Come unto Me*, and below, "In this Church Our Lord revealed His Heart to Blessed Margaret Mary." The monastery is small—small in its material dimensions, but great in the history of the Church. In the convent garden a marble slab shows the exterior of the Infirmary, and golden letters tell us that "Here, in the odor of sanctity, died Margaret Mary Alacoque, October 17, 1690." This Infirmary is now a little chapel, and through the glass door of the tabernacle may be seen the copper thimble used by the Blessed one, her veil and discipline, her iron girdle, her office book, a copy of the Imitation which she had used even before she came to the convent, and a reliquary containing a portion of her brain.

On each side of the altar are glass cases which hold the *Livres d'Or*, or Golden Books, in which are inscribed the names of nearly two million Christian families of every nation of the globe. Four of these magnificent volumes "fit for the eyes of the Angels," preserve the names of devout souls in England, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland and Canada. Another,



ST. JOHN AND THE VIRGIN MARY

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not less handsome, contains the names of loyal hearts in the United States, Honduras and Uruguay. Two beautiful volumes were sent from this country in 1889, containing the names of eighty thousand Catholic families dedicated to the Sacred Heart in June of that same year; and in 1891 the Apostleship of Prayer sent two superb tomes with the name of two hundred and thirty-one thousand children to be placed near the Shrine. At the same time an American Catholic sent an offering of pictures of the Sacred Heart, on the reverse of which were printed the Promises of Our Lord to Blessed Margaret Mary in one hundred and eight different languages; and after the pictures had touched the Shrine, they were distributed to foreign missions to propagate the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The Argentine Republic alone sent nine great volumes of names; five were sent from the diocese of Naples, eight from Mexico, and seven from Spain. Another artistic volume contains the names of the members of the Guard of Honor; and still another, truly unique, encloses the names of thirteen thousand Chinamen, heads of families consecrated to that Heart which extends its protection over every race and every clime. This book is bound in wood elaborately carved. The Sacred Heart, surrounded by rays, forms the centre piece; on the sides, in the midst of unmistakable Chinese decorations, shine forth the arms of Leo XIII. The first leaf is of white silk embroidered in the tints peculiar to the Chinese. It shows our Saviour revealing His Divine Heart, which sheds its rays over the entire globe. Below this is represented a Chinese family, kneeling, making the Act of Consecration which is well brought out in exquisite handiwork. The inscription reads: *Heads of Families devoutly consecrated to the Most Sacred Heart*. The letters are formed of little pearls, and an arabesque of pearls forms a frame to the first leaf, an offering to the pure Pearl of Paray.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

Hail, Jesus, hail, who for my sake
 Sweet blood from Mary's veins did take,
 And shed it all for me;
 Oh, blessed be my Saviour's blood,
 My life, my light, my only good,
 To all eternity.

To endless ages let us praise
 The precious Blood, Whose price could raise
 The world from wrath and sin;
 Whose streams our inward thirst appease
 And heal the sinner's worst disease,
 If he but bathe therein.

O sweetest blood, that can implore
 Pardon of God, and heaven restore,
 The heaven which sin had lost;
 While Abel's blood for vengeance pleads,
 What Jesus shed still intercedes
 For those who wrong Him most.

Oh, to be sprinkled from the wells
 Of Christ's own sacred blood, excels
 Earth's best and highest bliss:
 The ministers of wrath divine
 Hurt not the happy hearts that shine
 With those red drops of His.

Ah, there is joy amid the saints,
 And hell's despairing courage faints
 When this sweet song we raise:
 Oh, louder then, and louder still,
 Earth with one mighty chorus fill,
 The precious Blood to praise.

F. W. Faber.

To all the faithful who say or sing the above hymn, Pope Pius VII. grants an Indulgence of 100 days; applicable also to the souls in Purgatory.

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF BON-SECOURS
MONTREAL, CANADA

1675

Blessed Mother, Maid divine,
Raise to thee this heart of mine;
Fill with heavenly warmth my frame,
Bid my soul ascend in flame,
In eternal jubilee,
Singing ever more with thee, Alleluia.

Agnes Strickland.



SHOULD you make a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Bon-Secours (and a more edifying devotion you will not find on this continent) you will see its quaint structure on the hillside, fronting Notre Dame Street, and overlooking the broad sail-covered St. Lawrence. Its not ungraceful, rather oriental looking, steeple with its two open lanterns, one above the other; its steep, snow-shedding roof and old-fashioned ornamentation of the doorway, will at once carry you back to the date of the Jesuit martyr and the Indian missions.

In 1675 the Rev. Mr. Souart, of St. Sulpice, headed a procession of all the people upon the feasts of SS. Peter and Paul, and solemnly blessed and laid the corner-stone. The walls rose swiftly; a bell was cast from a bronze cannon which had been burst in the Iroquois War; the miraculous statue of Our Lady was placed in a Shrine, gilt and enriched with jewels, and Bon-Secours stood open to the faithful, the first stone church on the Island of Montreal.

The first church was destroyed by fire in 1759, and in consequence of the wars which finally brought Canada under a Protestant sovereign, was not rebuilt till 1771. Then once

more pious hands labored to restore the sanctuary of Mary, and in 1774 the Canadian, as he sailed along the mighty river, could once more behold the spire of Mary's church, and commend himself to her motherly care.

When the ship-fever was ravaging the city of Montreal, and the ranks of the clergy and sisters, who devoted themselves to the sick, were daily thinned, the Bishop of Montreal, Ignatius Bourget, publicly bound himself by vow to do his utmost to re-establish the pious pilgrimage of Our Lady of Good Help, which had ceased to be frequented as it once was.

The prayer was heard, the long procession to the ancient Shrine, the constant stream of devout souls, imploring the intercession of Mary, were not unheard. The epidemic that menaced all, died away. In a pastoral letter, the pious bishop exclaims: "We would be the most ungrateful of men, indeed, and our tongue should cleave to the roof of our mouth, if we were to forget that we owe to the fervent prayers in the chapel of Bon-Secours the health we enjoy to-day."

A new statue replaced that which disappeared in 1831, and the constant visits of the pilgrims show that all regard it as one of those privileged spots where God is pleased to show His great mercy, through the intercession of Mary.

Not far from Quebec is another sanctuary of Mary, founded in 1674, by the Jesuit missionary, Father Peter Mary Joseph Chaumonot, known, too, as one of the institutors of the Confraternity of the Holy Family. It was built in exact imitation of the Santa Casa, had a statue copied from that venerated in the Italian sanctuary. "Some years after the establishment of the Huron mission," says Father Chaumonot, "Mary Wendraka, a fervent Huron Christian, was reduced to extremity by a violent fever. She had received the last sacraments, and we expected only her dissolution, when I called John and Teresa, her two surviving children, and made them promise that if it pleased the Blessed Virgin to restore their mother's health, they and I would say the Beads of the Holy Family nine times in the chapel. Then I felt inspired to go and pray for this poor sick woman. I had not been there ten minutes in prayer when

the daughter came to tell me that her mother was asking for me. I ran at once, with the idea of reciting by her the Commendation of a departing soul. I entered the cabin, and lo! on my arrival my sick woman rose and courtesied to me in the French style. At first I thought it a last rally of nature, or the last effect of the violent disease. I told her to lie down again; she told me she was as well standing as lying down; again I urged her; she told me that she was perfectly cured and, as she saw that I took her words for delirious ravings, she sent her children out so as to tell me privately how her health had been restored. 'A little after you went out of my cabin, Father,' said she, 'two persons appeared on my mat; I saw one at my feet, the other at my head. The latter, who was a young woman, or rather a girl, said: "Just touch the hem of my robe and you shall be cured." I would not presume to think, said I to myself, that blessed spirits from heaven would be sent to cure me, they must be evil ones trying to lead me into vanity. While this thought filled my mind, the same one passing her skirt over my face, touching it, said: "There, mother, you are cured," and at the same instant she disappeared with the little boy who had appeared at my feet. Then I thought of trying whether these two persons had really restored my health. I began by moving my arms, then I rose and walked, I even went out, and all with as much ease as though I had never been sick, although but a moment before I had been as immovable as a stone. My children were so astonished that they fled from me as a spectre. I reassured them, and sent my daughter for you, that you might yourself judge of this wonderful event.' "

Father Chaumonot expresses his opinion that the two were her two pious children whom she had buried; and who were thus sent from heaven by the Blessed Virgin to restore life to her who gave them life.

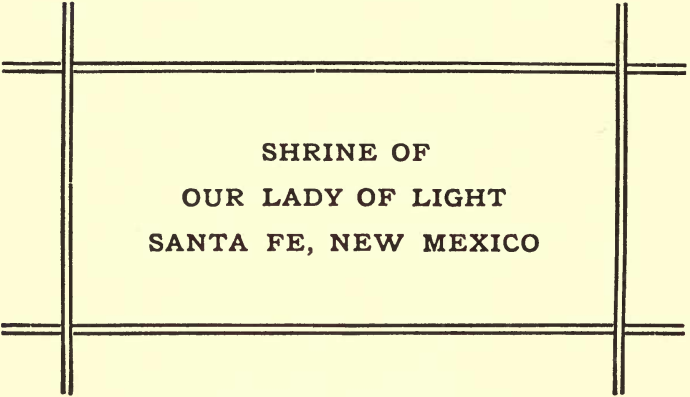
THE GUARDIAN OF AMERICA

It is not mine a tale to tell
Of past and glorious days,
When heroes toiled and martyrs bled,
And poets sang their lays
In noble strains of noble deeds.
The past I must resign;
Yet in the future, dawning days
Of promise fair are mine.
And still, since first Columbus moored
His bark upon our shore,
Since first he raised the holy Cross
Upon San Salvador.
Though heavy clouds have lowered since,
Through which could scarcely shine
The blessed sun of Faith, yet still
It has been ever mine.
From other favored lands it came;
And, in return, my own
Welcomes each stranger to her shore,
And offers him a home.
The sun of Faith shines far and wide,
With its celestial ray
Chasing away the heavy clouds,
Turning the night to day.
May every stranger in our land
An ark of refuge find,
And may the blessings of all climes
Be in our own combined!
'Tis meet; for though to each fair land
An angel guide is given,
To mine belongs the whole bright band—
The regal court of Heaven,
Attendant on our Virgin Queen,
Enthroned in heavenly state;
She is our glorious Patroness,
Mary Immaculate.
So royal honors do I claim,
America, for thee!
My fair young land desires no crown:
She asks but liberty;

Yet for the love of her whose smiles
Our hearts illuminate,
I'd crown her Queen of our dear land,
Mary Immaculate.
I'd weave her crown of prairie flowers,
Crimson and white and blue—
The color of the western sky,
The sunset's glorious hue!
Then forth upon my mission high
I'd speed with heart elate
To conquer nations for Our Queen,
Mary Immaculate!

M. A.





SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF LIGHT
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF LIGHT
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

1702

Virgin, purer than that star,
Gleaming chastely from afar
 On my way,
Be thou, too, a guiding light,
Shining ever thro' the night,
 And the day.

Ave Maria! Chosen one!
Holy Mother of the Son,
 Heed my call!
Jesus died for me and mine,
Let thy light forever shine,
 Lest we fall.

Mary M. Redmond.



F the many tourists who visit the quaint old city of Santa Fé, New Mexico, very few, probably, have not wondered at the title of the Academy of Our Lady of Light.

Throughout the United States, there is no other convent or academy, I think, dedicated to God under this invocation. The name is happily chosen. The Sisters of Charity, like truly valiant women, guided by the venerable Archbishop Lamy, went forth in the "early days" into that region buried in the darkness of ignorance, to found a centre of education and virtue from which rays of enlightenment were to penetrate to the most remote districts of the then almost unknown Territory of New Mexico.

This interpretation, although in perfect accord with the aim of those heroines and with the results of their efforts, is somewhat fanciful, as will be discovered by the readers of this little sketch.

Let us go back to the first years of the eighteenth century. At that time, the island of Sicily presented a scene of wild confusion and disorder. Oppressed and irritated by foreign troops, embittered by political strifes and private brawls, terrorized by armed marauders and estranged from happy home-life, the Sicilians had so far given up the practice of their religion that the churches were unfrequented, the sacraments were neglected, and impiety and vice were enthroned in their stead. Bands of zealous missionaries traveled up and down the country, but their heroic exertions were fruitless. Often enough the only reward of their labors was a share in the contempt which was heaped upon religion and all things sacred.

Among the preachers in this desert of sin was a religious remarkable for zeal and fervor in the service of God, who was known to cherish a tender and filial devotion to Our Blessed Lady. This religious was Father John Anthony Genovessi, of the Society of Jesus. Filled with sorrow at the utter fruitlessness of the labors of the missionaries, he felt moved to call upon his Heavenly Mother for some new means to touch the hardened hearts of the Sicilians and, to ensure the success of his plan of operation, he sought the co-operation of a holy nun who had already been the recipient of many celestial favors.

One day while this good nun was recommending the project to Our Lady's loving care, she was rapt in spirit and beheld herself in the presence of the Refuge of Sinners. The Blessed Virgin appeared, with a look of ineffable tenderness upon her countenance, amid brilliant rays of heavenly light, and attended by a throng of heavenly spirits, two of whom held a gorgeous diadem above her head. On her left arm, she supported the Divine Child who was reaching out His little hands toward a basket of flaming hearts, presented to Him by an angel. With her right hand, she was snatching a youth from the gaping maw of a hideous dragon.

"Daughter," she said, "heed well what thou seest and have it reproduced by the painter's art; the picture shall be called 'Holy Mother of Light;' the abundant and extraordinary graces

that I shall bestow under this invocation shall be the proof and earnest that thy prayers are heard." The vision then disappeared.

Father Genovessi accepted without hesitation the saintly nun's relation of the Apparition and forthwith set about the execution of the commission. The artist whom he chose was a painter of no mean ability and, what was much more to the purpose, was a man of virtuous and edifying life. But when the picture was finished, the nun was not satisfied. As work of art it might pass, but it was not Our Lady of Light.

The artist, therefore, having prepared a new canvas, betook himself to the convent. The nun, who was favored once more with that heavenly vision, directed the movements of the painter's willing brush. Praying for guidance as he worked, and hearkening to the nun's description of the vision as it there and then appeared to her, the artist at last reproduced, according to the measure of human skill, the Apparition of Our Lady of Light.

The result was in keeping with Mary's promise. Armed with this new weapon, Father Genovessi began with renewed courage his missionary work, which was thenceforth as fruitful in conversions as it had before been in trials and sufferings. The picture of Our Lady of Light was the constant companion of his missionary labors, until he was called hence to see Our Blessed Lady in the light of heaven, which "hath no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God hath enlightened it, and the Lamb is lamp thereof."

But what is the further history of the heaven-given picture?

A railway journey of two days from El Paso, Texas, into the heart of Mexico brings us to Leon, the metropolis of the State of Guanajuato and the chief manufacturing city of Mexico. Stopping at the Hotel de Diligencias, we inscribe our names with a lump of chalk on a large painted board, and, having thus duly registered, we are shown to commodious rooms on the ground floor. We next admire the great courtyard with its wealth of oleanders, cactus, and other shrubs and plants. After our evening meal, we retire to recruit our strength for the next day's pilgrimage.

On the morrow, after a breakfast of delicious Mexican chocolate, we are ready to begin our sight-seeing. Did time permit, we could inspect the manufacture of gold and silver braid and filigree work, for which the city is so famous, but we are bent on another errand, and turn our steps toward the old and impressive Cathedral. The canons are chanting Tierce. We listen with something akin to awe to the solemn tones of the public Office of Holy Church, and tarry with devout attention until the last note dies away. We approach the high altar. At the very summit of the reredos two cherubim hold a golden crown over a small picture. It is the picture of Our Lady of Light! The painting that gladdened the eyes of Father Genovessi and moved to repentance so many sin-hardened hearts in distant Sicily is in this niche of the Cathedral of Leon. After his death it was given, in 1732, to the Jesuit church of Leon, which, after the suppression of the Society of Jesus, became a cathedral church.

The good citizens of Leon, who are very devout to Our Lady of Light, relate many favors granted by her both to the community at large and to individuals. The history of Mexico since its separation from Spain has been a stormy one. While contending factions struggled for supremacy, much misery was inflicted upon the suffering people who took no part in the hostilities. Scenes of pillage and death form the history of almost every city. Leon has escaped the calamities which have fallen with such untold violence upon unoffending citizens. In 1857, when all Mexico was torn by intestine strife, so great was the tranquillity that reigned in Leon, that honored citizens from other States, and notably from Jalisco, flocked thither in such numbers that it was called the "City of Refuge."

But the favor that particularly confirmed the people of Leon in their devotion to Our Lady of Light was the deliverance of the city from the cholera in 1850. When the epidemic first reached the city the people were paralyzed with terror; but the parish priest of the Church of Our Lady of the Angels urged them to place their confidence in Our Lady of Light, and vowed a triduum of thanksgiving for the feast of her Assumption, in perpetuity, if she would come to the relief of the terri-

fied people. On the 14th of August every vestige of the cholera disappeared. The memory of the grace is perpetuated by a votive tablet in the church.

Copies of the holy picture are objects of devotion throughout Mexico, and many a little maiden is named "Luz" (light), in honor of Our Lady of Light.

Such is the origin of one of Our Blessed Mother's titles, and such is the history of a picture of her predilection. Happy people of Leon who possess this pledge of Mary's love! Happy we if the filial trust of others awakens us to more fervent charity and to more unshaken confidence!

How sweetly it sounds—Our Lady of Light, pray for us! This beautiful invocation, though comparatively unknown at the present day among English-speaking people, was familiar enough in the Ages of Faith. In the "Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury" it is stated that the Blessed Virgin herself suggested the title in an Apparition to the holy Archbishop. The Apostle of the Indies enrolled himself and his companions in a confraternity of Our Lady of Light before setting out for the Indies. In 1777 a similar organization was introduced into Mexico, where devotion to the Queen of Heaven under this title still exists. The title "Our Lady of Light" is a beautiful one, and will commend itself to the clients of the Mother of God, who will look forward to the day when it will find place in the Litany of Loreto. It has already been indulged by our Holy Father Leo XIII.

It is fitting that in a work devoted to the honor of the Mother of God there should appear some explanation of "The True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin." Perhaps the best way to do this is to give an account of the Blessed Grignon de Montfort, the "apostle of Mary," of the devotion so earnestly inculcated by him, and of the Association of "Our Lady of Light, Spouse of the Holy Ghost," which has been formed for the purpose of practising and of spreading so beautiful and so pious a cultus of Our Lady.

"There are few men in the eighteenth century," says Father Faber, in his preface to his translation of the treatise (p. 29,

et seq.), "who have more strongly upon them the marks of the man of Providence than this Elias-like missionary of the Holy Ghost and of Mary. . . . He comes forward like another S. Vincent Ferrer, as if on the days bordering on the Last Judgment, and proclaims that he brings an authentic message from God, about the greater honor and wider knowledge and more prominent love of His Blessed Mother and her connection with the second advent of her Son. He founded two religious congregations, one of men and one of women—the Company of Mary, or Fathers of the Holy Ghost, and the Daughters of Wisdom; . . . and yet he died at the age of forty-three, in 1716, after only sixteen years of priesthood."

What, then, is this "true devotion of the Blessed Virgin" taught by the Blessed Grignon de Montfort? "The fundamental principle on which the doctrine of the venerable servant of God is based is that of the life of Jesus in the soul regenerated in holy Baptism. . . . It is well expressed in the prayer: 'O Jesus, living in Mary, come and live in Thy servants,' " etc. That is to say, the teaching of the necessity of the entire consecration of ourselves to the Blessed Mother of God, and *through her* to her Son, was the life work of this apostle of Mary. He taught constantly that in her and through her and by her we should draw near to her Son; that by her hands we should offer up our whole selves, body and soul, to our Divine Lord; that by her and in her we may approach most nearly, most surely, most easily to Him.

But, though we all admit this truth, how much or how little does it affect our daily spiritual life? Are we not living in the midst of a critical, Protestant population, too much inclined to apologize—if we may use the word—for our devotion to the Blessed Virgin? And yet is not that very devotion one of the marked characteristics of our faith? If so, can we do better than to use every means which God, by the intercession of His Holy Mother, shall be pleased to give us in order to increase in our own hearts and in the hearts of others this "true devotion" to her who, immeasurably and inconceivably beyond all others, is so dear to Him?

It is earnestly to be hoped that those who may read these words will be led to study for themselves the treatise of Blessed Grignon de Montfort. When the writer was requested to prepare this paper, he applied to the secretary of the Association of Our Lady of Light, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, for all the information possible. In return, the treatise was sent to him, which must be the excuse—if excuse be needed—for the fact that the article will consist in great measure of quotations. But the writer feels very strongly that no words of his own, however carefully thought out, could convey the teaching of the apostle of Mary so well as those of the blessed author himself.

The Association (now a confraternity) of Our Lady of Light, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, was founded in England in 1834 for the purpose, as already stated, of perpetuating and spreading the “true devotion to the Blessed Virgin” in the ancient Dowry of Mary. It is a devotion so beautiful, so helpful and so necessary, that on being made aware of its existence, the writer at once communicated with the Rev. Editor of *The Ave Maria*, in the hope that in America, as in England, this ancient and most pious practice might be revived among Catholics. The conditions of membership are very simple, the benefits to be derived from such a devotion untold.

This is, in its final issue, the end and object of the teaching of Blessed Grignon de Montfort,—the surrender of ourselves as “slaves of love” to our dear Lord in and through His Holy Mother. “In our humble opinion,” writes Cardinal Vaughan, “no one can do better than spread the knowledge of this golden treatise on devotion to Our Blessed Mother.” Such a devotion must surely appeal to all who really love our Divine Lord.

We have, all of us, as Catholics, a professed devotion to the Blessed Virgin. But that we should, in consequence of such profession, consecrate ourselves wholly to her may seem to some an “excess of devotion.” And yet is it not true that “Mary is no less necessary to the redeemed than she was to the Redeemer?” Is it not “most reasonable to suppose that we shall find Him the more quickly and the more certainly if we

approach Him by the very path which He Himself trod in coming to us—no other than the path of His Blessed Mother?”

This is the beginning, as it were, of His teaching: the fact that, as through Mary “our salvation began”—to use the Church’s own words,—so through her God is pleased to bestow on us *all* the graces necessary for our salvation.

But may it not be said that we are dependent for salvation and for grace, not on the Blessed Virgin, but only on our Divine Lord? May it not be feared that such devotion to her is “excessive;” that, as non-Catholics affirm, we shall “put the Mother in the place of the Son?” How is that possible? “If we establish the solid devotion to Our Blessed Lady, it is *only to establish more perfectly* the devotion to Our Lord.” How can our devotion to Him be perfect if our devotion to her is not perfect also? She was and is so intimately and so indissolubly united to Him that in finding her we find Him. Is not this the teaching of Catholic theology? Why, then, do we not put our belief in practice, and by true devotion to her learn true devotion to her Divine Son?

Again, it may be answered that though this be true, it is to Him we are to yield ourselves with entire consecration rather than to her. That to call ourselves her slaves is, if it were possible, to put her in His place. That we are children, not slaves. And yet “there is nothing among men which makes us belong to another more than slavery. There is nothing among Christians which makes us more absolutely belong to Christ and His Holy Mother than the slavery of the will, according to the example of Our Lord Himself, who took on Him the form of a slave for love of us.” “What I say absolutely of Christ I say relatively of Our Blessed Lady. Christ . . . has given her *by grace*, relatively to His Majesty, all the same rights and privileges which He possesses by nature.” “Our Blessed Lady is the means Our Lord made use of to come to us: she is also the means of which we must make use to go to Him.”

Since, then, Our Lady is endowed by grace with *all* the rights and privileges which her Divine Son has by nature; since

by her we draw near to Him most surely, most safely,—by her indeed alone; does it not follow that if we are to be, as the Catechism of the Council of Trent declares, *mancipia Christi*—“slaves of Christ,”—we must be her slaves as well, to the end that we may be more truly His? Is it not a necessary consequence of our being united to her by an entire consecration of ourselves that we should be more closely united to Him than by any other way; since “the strongest inclination of Mary is to unite us to her Son, and the strongest inclination of the Son is that we should come to Him by His Holy Mother?”

What, then, is implied by an entire consecration of ourselves to the Blessed Virgin? “Mary being the most conformed of all creatures to Jesus Christ, it follows that of all devotions that which most consecrates the soul to Our Lord is devotion to His Holy Mother; and that the more a soul is consecrated to Mary, the more it is consecrated to Jesus. Hence it comes to pass that the most perfect consecration to Jesus is nothing else than a perfect and entire consecration of ourselves to the Blessed Virgin.”

That surely is most true and most reasonable. But in spiritual matters, as in temporal, much that is true is to us nothing but a truism,—that is, something which we consider as self-evident, and therefore, alas! not worthy of serious attention. Much that is reasonable makes absolutely no appeal to our reasons. We are, to use a term employed by certain “evangelical” Protestants, “Gospel-hardened;” that is, so used to the wonders of God’s grace that we make little account of them. But “the merciful and gracious Lord hath so done His marvelous works that they ought to be had in remembrance.” So it is that a treatise such as that from which these quotations have been made may, if it so please God, awaken in our hearts a fresher, truer, keener remembrance of what God has wrought for us through His Immaculate Mother. Then, by the consecration of ourselves to her, we shall be led to know Him “as He is.”

“This devotion consists, then, in giving ourselves entirely and altogether to Our Lady, in order to belong entirely and

altogether to Jesus by her." This is the devotion which the Association of Our Lady of Light, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, was formed to spread. The title itself, Our Lady of Light, is a very ancient one; Spouse of the Holy Ghost, since He "overshadowed her," and through her "brought the First-Begotten into the world,"—Him who is the true light. Moreover, the devotion itself, being "in other words a perfect renewal of the vows and promises of holy Baptism," is surely neither new nor strange. Hence, following most carefully the central idea of the devotion taught by Blessed Grignon de Montfort, the Association requires of all its members to use daily this morning offering, indulgenced by our Holy Father Leo XIII.: "Our Lady of Light, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, I give thee my whole self, soul and body, all I have or may have, to keep for Jesus, that I may be His for evermore. Our Lady of Light, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, pray for me!"

What, then, is implied in this "entire consecration" of ourselves to the Most Holy Mother of God? "By this devotion we give to our Lord, in the most perfect manner, since it is by Mary's hands, all we can give Him. . . . Here everything is given and consecrated to Him, even the right of disposing of our interior goods, and of the satisfaction which we gain by our good works daily. This is more than we do even in a religious order." "By this devotion we give ourselves to our Lord expressly by the hands of Mary, and we consecrate to Him the value of all our actions." "This devotion makes us give to Jesus and Mary, without reserve, all our thoughts, words, actions, and sufferings. . . . Whatever we do is, by virtue of our offering, . . . done for Jesus and Mary."

What has our dear Lord not given to us in and through His sweet Mother! His life, His death,—His whole self; and her to be our Mother, intercessor, and our path to Him. Shall we keep anything back from Him? And if from love of Him, we would fain "present our souls and bodies a sacrifice to God, which is our reasonable recompense," being "not our own, but bought with a price, even with the Precious Blood of Christ," desiring, indeed, that it may be "no more we that live, but

Christ that liveth in us," how present the sacrifice acceptably unless by the Immaculate hands of His Mother; how yield ourselves His slaves except through her; how shall He live in us except it be in her and with her?

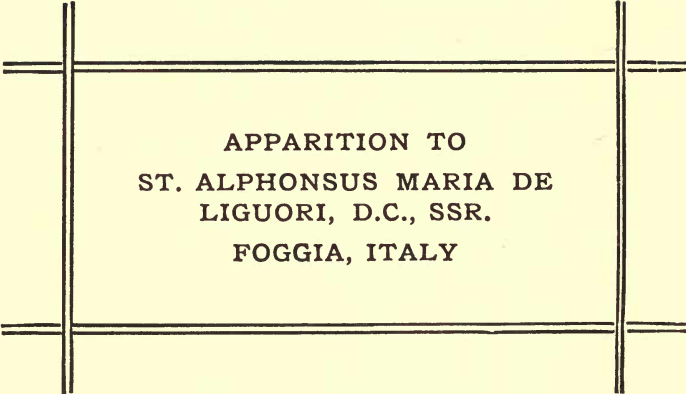
LEAD KINDLY LIGHT

Lead kindly light,
Amid th' encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark,
And I am far from home—
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet;
I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus,
Nor pray'd that Thou
Shouldst lead me on,
I loved to choose and
See my path, but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day,
And spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will;
Remember not past years.

So long Thy pow'r hath blest me,
Sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen,
O'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angels faces smile,
Which I have loved long since,
And lost awhile.

Cardinal H. Newman.



APPARITION TO
ST. ALPHONSUS MARIA DE
LIGUORI, D.C., SSR.
FOGGIA, ITALY

APPARITION

TO

ST. ALPHONSUS MARIA DE LIGUORI,
D.C. SSR.

FOGGIA, ITALY

1748

Mary! I bear your sacred Name;
Allow me then, the Filial claim,
Remember, I in you confied,
In all the sorrows that betide:
Ah! be that trust, my blameless pride.

Mary Scholastica Dean, O.S.B.



T. ALPHONSUS MARIA DE LIGUORI was born of a noble family, September 27, 1696, in the paternal castle at Marianella, near Naples. His father, Don Joseph de Liguori, and his mother, Ann Catherine Canalieri, were of exemplary virtue. They regarded Alphonsus with pride, and they had good reason, for a Father of the Society of Jesus, Francis Jerome, now a Saint, had predicted of him: "This child will live to be very old; he will not die before the 90th year of his age. He will become a bishop and perform great deeds for Jesus Christ."

We know how this prediction was fulfilled.

Once, when Alphonsus was at play with some comrades at a country seat belonging to Prince della Riccia, one of them said to him angrily: "I thought you said you did not know the game?" And he added an indecent word. Alphonsus was shocked, and said: "Why offend God for such a trifle? Here is your money." So saying, he threw it on the ground and left his playfellows.

In the evening, after seeking him in every direction, they

found him in a solitary part of the garden, kneeling before a statue of the Blessed Virgin, and so absorbed in God that he heard nothing of what took place around him.

A short time after he entered the Church of the Redemption of Slaves, knelt before the altar, and besought Jesus and Mary to accept the offer of his person. He renounced his right of primogeniture, made a resolution to enter a religious order, and placed his sword on the altar of the Blessed Virgin as a pledge of inviolable fidelity to his promise. This day of grace was a marked one in his life, and he always spoke of it afterwards as the day of his conversion.

The grace of God prevailed in him: his greatest pleasure was in prayer, meditation, spiritual reading and visits to the hospital for incurables.

Once, while visiting there, he heard a voice say: "Why remain any longer in the world?" At first he paid no attention, thinking it a trick of his imagination, but, when about to leave the hospital he saw himself enveloped in a splendid light, the house seemed to fall down, and he heard again the same voice saying: "Why remain longer in the world?" Then he stood still, and exclaimed, weeping: "O Lord, too long have I resisted Thy grace; here I am; do with me according to Thy will."

APPARITION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN TO THE SAINT

St. Alphonsus was called by God to found a Congregation of Missionaries, who should assist the most abandoned souls. In spite of the greatest opposition he laid the foundation of his Congregation by erecting the first house at Scole, November 9, 1732. He and his first companions devoted themselves to the work of their own sanctification and the instruction of ignorant sinners. In the neighborhood of their house was a grotto, where the Blessed Virgin appeared to her servant, and bestowed on him the most exalted graces. In his old age he

was heard to exclaim: "O my grotto, my sweet grotto!" Ah, might I but visit you again, since, long before, Mary revealed to me there so many delightful things.

His father was opposed to his leaving the world, he being his only son. "Dear father," said Alphonsus, "I see that you suffer for my sake. However, I must declare that I no longer belong to this world; God has called me, and I am determined to follow His voice. I pray you, bless your child."

On hearing this, his father became silent from emotion. For three hours he clasped his beloved son in his arms, weeping and repeating these words: "My son, why will you leave me? Oh, my son, I don't deserve this treatment. Never could I have believed such a thing of you. My son, do not leave me!"

It was a bitter struggle, and Alphonsus declared that he had never had such another trial; that but for his confidence in God, he would have been overpowered.

The Saint loved to mortify himself at all times. Even when he was ninety years old he used to mix bitter herbs in his food, and could not be persuaded to take meat on the days of abstinence ordered by the Church; nor on Wednesdays. Every Saturday he fasted, and abstained the whole day from drinking. In fear of making a mistake, he often asked Brother Antonio what day of the week it was. Once, on a Friday, when at Rome, he was troubled with pain and fatigue. His superior ordered him to be served with meat, but Alphonsus refused to eat it; then pronouncing a benediction, he made the sign of the Cross over the meat and, at the same instant the meat was changed into fish.

In every poor and unhappy creature Alphonsus beheld the living image of Jesus Christ: hence arose his great charity. From the very beginning of his episcopate he resolved so to save the revenues of his See as to employ it all in the service of the Church, and the poor, keeping only a small portion for his own subsistence; even his patrimony and his personal income was used for that purpose. Very often he exhausted all, so that he had nothing left to give, and found himself in want. When, during the famine of 1763, he was at a loss what to do

in order to assist his beloved poor, he sold his episcopal cross and ring.

Another event occurred, which raised still higher at Foggia, the already high idea that they had of the sanctity of Alphonsus. He was preaching one evening before the holy picture of the Blessed Virgin under the title of Our Lady of the Seven Veils, which was exposed, in the presence of all the people, over the high altar. Whilst he was extolling the glory of the Mother of God, his hearers thought that they saw an angel, rather than a man. Suddenly they beheld a beaming ray of light detach itself from the countenance of Mary, shoot across the Church, and rest on the face of Alphonsus. At the same instant he was ravished in ecstasy, and raised several feet above the pulpit. On seeing this the people burst into shouts of joy, which were heard at a great distance from the church, and which drew thither a large number of spectators. More than four thousand persons witnessed the miracle, and several striking conversions were the happy result of it.

No sooner had the tidings of Alphonsus' last illness spread, than all the Rectors and the Fathers and Brothers desired to receive the last blessing of their beloved and holy Founder, and to witness his happy death. God glorified His servant, who now, as during life, gave proof of the highest perfection. Though quite insensible, he was ordered under obedience by Father Villani, his director, to give his blessing to the Congregation. At the word obedience, he revived and, raising his hand, blessed the Fathers and Brothers, then the physician who attended him, afterwards the king, princes, and all the magistrates; finally he blessed his former diocese and the nuns of the Order of the Most Holy Redeemer.

He died August 1, 1787, surrounded by his weeping children.

It pleased God to glorify His servant immediately after his death, and to perform miracles at the invocation of his name. Among many facts, the following may serve to prove the truth of these words.

On August 2, 1787, Maria Fusen brought her nephew Joseph, a child one year old, who was almost dying, to the body

of Alphonsus, and made him touch the holy remains: the child was instantly cured. Next day some images were spread before little Joseph, among which was one of Alphonsus; on seeing it the infant grasped it in its tiny hand, kissed it, and pressed it to its forehead; then pointing to Heaven, exclaimed: "Alphonsus in Heaven, Alphonsus in Heaven!" The child had never uttered a word before, and had never heard the name Alphonsus.

In order to ascertain the truth of this miracle they changed the image with another similar one, but the child would not take it, and called out: "No, no; it is not he!" It was soothed after receiving the image of Alphonsus in its hands, and cried out: "The Saint in Heaven, Alphonsus in Heaven!" This wonderful evidence of a child, as yet unable to speak, increased greatly the veneration for Alphonsus.

The day after the death of the Saint, a painter, uninvited, came from Naples to take the portrait of Alphonsus; he also took a cast of his face in plaster. Then the body was put in a leaden coffin provided with six seals of the cathedral chapter, four of the town council of Pagani, and two of the Congregation. Besides this, it was locked with three different keys, one of which was confided to the care of the Prince of Polleca, Don Joseph Capano Orsini, who represented the family at the funeral; another key was given to the municipal council, while the third remained with the rector of the house.

These precautions having been taken, the coffin was laid at the left of the altar.

A Carmelite nun, who died in the odor of sanctity at Rapa Candida, said she saw Alphonsus in the eternal glory, encircled by a radiant light.

GOOD USE OF TIME

"Let us do with all our heart the duty of each day, leaving the result to God, as well as the care of the future. Consider every occasion of self-denial as a gift which God bestows on you, that you may be able to merit greater glory in another

life; and remember that what can be done to-day cannot be performed to-morrow, for time past never returns."—St. Alphonsus.

THE LOVELINESS OF MARY

Raise your voices, vales and mountains,
 Flowery meadows, streams and fountains,
 Praise, oh, praise the loveliest Maiden
 Ever the Creator made.
 Murmuring brooks, your tribute bringing,
 Little birds with joyful singing,
 Come with mirthful praises laden—
 To your Queen be homage paid.

Say, sweet Virgin, we implore thee,
 Say, what beauty God sheds o'er thee:
 Praise and thanks to Him be given,
 Who in love created thee.
 Like a sun with splendor glowing,
 Gleams thy heart with love o'erflowing;
 Like the moon in starry heaven,
 Shines thy peerless purity.

Like the rose and lily blooming,
 Sweetly heaven and earth perfuming,
 Stainless, spotless, thou appearest—
 Queenly beauty graces thee.
 But, to God, in whom thou livest,
 Sweeter joy and praise thou givest,
 When to him in beauty nearest
 Yet, so humble thou canst be.

St. Alphonsus Liguori.

PRAYER TO ST. ILDLEPHONSUS

I come to thee, O Mother of God; I implore thee to obtain the pardon of my sins, and the grace which will cleanse me from all the faults of my life. I pray thee to obtain for me the grace that I may be united in love to thy Son, and to thee: to thy Son as to my God, and to thee as to the Mother of God. Amen.

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY IN THE WILDERNESS
PITTSBURG, PENNA.

1754

Sweet orb of dawn, it was thy ray
That creeping through the western wilds,
Kissed the broad streams and kindled day
Along the woodland's dark defiles,
And woke a song of praise that wound
Where mighty lakes majestic flow;
Memnon's famed lyre were harshest sound,
To anthem blest that hailed thy glow:
The touching strain, so old, so new,
The words we ne'er shall cease to frame,
Those mystic syllables that drew
A God from Heaven, at thy sweet name.



IN the middle of the last century, the French laid claim to the valley of the Ohio, and as the claim was opposed by the English they prepared to assert it by force of arms. They entered the State of Pennsylvania at Presqu' Ile, the spot where Erie city now stands, and were preparing to descend the Allegheny River, when Lieutenant-Governor Robert Dinwiddie, of Virginia, consulting for the interests of the British crown, sent Major George Washington as the bearer of dispatches to the commander of the French at a fort not far from the present city of Meadville. He arrived at the site of Pittsburg, November 23, 1753, and is believed to have been the first white man to set foot upon the spot, which was then a forest. Having returned with such information as he could obtain, the Governor sent Ensign Ward, in January, 1754, with forty men, to throw up a fortification to command the entrance to the Monongahela River at its mouth. While engaged in erecting the fort—which stood between the foot of Liberty and

Ferry Streets—he was surprised, on the 16th of April, by M. Contrecoeur, commander of the French, who had suddenly landed a large force of French and Indians on the bank of the Allegheny, near by. He summoned Ward to an immediate surrender, with which the latter was forced to comply, and on the following day he was permitted to retire with his small band to Redstone Old Fort (Brownsville). The French then built a fort on the point of land lying between the two rivers at their confluence, with a view of commanding the entrance to both, and named it Fort Duquesne, in honor of the Governor-General of Canada. There they remained until, after several unsuccessful attempts, they were finally driven out by the English under General Forbes, November 25, 1758. And with this we come to the matter on hand.

During the stay of the French they had a Catholic chaplain and a chapel for Divine service, as they are well known to have belonged to the old Faith. The chapel was dedicated to the Mother of God, under the title of "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin of the Beautiful River." The French, it may be stated, by way of explanation, designated the Ohio and Allegheny Rivers by the common name of Ohio, or rather Oio; but on account of its limpid waters and enchanting scenery it was generally known as "The Beautiful River." The Chaplain, Rev. Denys Baron, kept a register of baptisms and deaths. When Bishop O'Connor learned this, he sought it out, and found it in the archives of the city of Montreal, and had a copy, duly attested, made from the original in March, 1859, from which a small number of copies were printed in the original French by John G. Shea, New York, in the same year, one of which is now in the library of Father Lambing of the Point. It bears the following title: "*Registres des Baptemes et Sepultures Qui se Sont Faits au Fort Duquesne, Pendant les Annees, 1753, 1754, 1755, et 1756.*" The first entry from Fort Duquesne—there are a few at the beginning from other posts,—is an interment, dated June 5, 1754, in which there is no other title than that of "Fort Duquesne of the Beautiful River." So the other entries until August 6th, when the designation

is changed to "Fort Duquesne under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin." But from September 12th of the same year, the entries to the end of the Register are made "At Fort Duquesne under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin of the Beautiful River." The last entry is dated October 10, 1756. Whether the chaplain withdrew at that time, or, which is more probable, the Register for the remaining two years was destroyed with the Fort, or lost, cannot now be determined. Writing of this chapel in the Diocesan Register, Bishop O'Connor says:

"It is presumed that it was dedicated under this title on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, after their (the French soldiers) first arrival, as it is only after that day that it is designated by that name in the Register. It would appear that this dedication was accepted by the Holy Virgin, as at the first Synod of the new diocese of Pittsburg the new diocese was placed under the protection of the Blessed Virgin under the title of the Assumption, though no one was aware at that time of the previous dedication under the same title, the Bishop having been induced to make this selection of a patron in consequence of the Bull of erection being dated a few days before that feast, and he himself having been consecrated as its first Bishop on that festival."

With the view of perpetuating the memory of so important an event, the pastor of the church of St. Mary of Mercy, the congregation of which embraces that portion of the city in which Fort Duquesne stood, had a beautiful altar of the Blessed Virgin erected, and a Munich statue of the Mother of God placed upon it. The blessing was deferred until Tuesday, September 24th, that being the titular feast of the church and the second anniversary of its dedication. The old church—now used as a schoolhouse,—which stands on the Point, occupies almost the precise spot upon which the venerable chapel must have been built. On the evening of the blessing the church was crowded by Catholics and others from all parts of the city, while a number of the Reverend Clergy of the diocese occupied places within the sanctuary. The exercises opened

with a very appropriate and eloquent sermon by Rev. Joseph Suhr, of SS. Peter and Paul's church, East End, in which he took for his text Genesis xxvii, 17-19. He traced the history of the old chapel, dwelt on the importance of perpetuating the memory of it, and congratulated the congregation of the Point on the honor conferred upon them in being permitted to occupy the first spot in the diocese consecrated to the august Mother of God. In conclusion, he urged them to come frequently to the foot of this altar to make known their wants, and to pay the tribute of their homage to the Mother of Mercy.

In the absence of the Right Rev. Bishop, who was not able to be present, the altar was then blessed under the title of "The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin of the Beautiful River," by the pastor of the church, Rev. A. A. Lambing. The exercises concluded with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

It is worthy of remark that the chapel in old Fort Duquesne dates from a period twenty-eight years before the organization of the first Protestant congregation in Pittsburg,—the German Evangelical Protestant Church, which claims to have been the first, dates from 1782. But Arthur Lee, who visited Pittsburg in December, 1784, said there were there four attorneys and two physicians, "but not a priest of any persuasion, nor church nor chapel, so that the people were likely to be damned *without the benefit of the clergy.*" It also dates back fifty-eight years prior to the organization of the first Catholic congregation,—“old St. Patrick's,”—now existing, in Pittsburg.

THE FIRST MASS

AT THE SHRINE OF MARY, ON "THE BEAUTIFUL RIVER"

Celebrated by Rev. Denys Baron, at Pittsburg, April 17, 1754.

The sun flashed up, on "the Beautiful River,"
 Changing its ripples to ruby wine;
 It danced and glittered with many a quiver,
 It flowed as smoothly as poet's rhyme,
 And the grand hills stooped to the River's flow,—
 The "Beautiful River," long ago!

And then in the light of the April sun,
In the glorious flush of the morning sky,
A wonderful scene on the shore is begun,
A scene half earth, half heaven brought nigh,
While the musical waves of the River flow
Past the wonderful vision—long ago!

Red men bow down on the humid sod,
With the dark-eyed soldiers of sunny France,
And the vested priest of the living God,
Lifts the Sacred Host to their rev'rent glance,
And naught breaks the hush but the River's flow,
That April morning—long ago!

'Tis the Holy Mass! in that wilderness!
And the leaf screened altar,—our Lady's Shrine;—
This virgin forest her name will bless
With a title brought o'er the stormy brine,
"Our Lady's Assumption!" close to the flow
Of the "Beautiful River"—long ago!

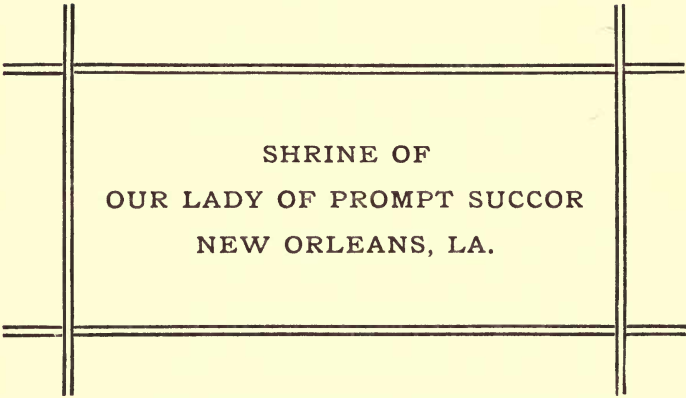
But the Red men flee, and the warriors die,
And the smouldering ashes seem to tell
To the moaning silence as years roll by
That all is lost, and the name as well;
But Faith has a seed that the Angels know
Sowed deep, by the "Beautiful River's" flow.

Sweet Mother of Mercy! 'twas thine, thine own,
This favored spot of a city's birth,
Ere our spangled flag to the world was known,
Or our cry of freedom awoke the earth,
Thine was The Shrine at the River's flow
The "Beautiful River"—long ago!

And thus, as the years roll on and pass,
We kneel at a sweet Memorial Shrine,
And our thoughts drift back to that First lone Mass,
When a stranger-tongue, called this chapel thine,
Where the Beautiful River seemed to bless
"Mary's First Shrine in the Wilderness"!

By Sister Antonia.

St. Xavier's, 1885



SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

SHRINE
OF
OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

1786

The priest beheld, and passed
The way he had to go;
A careless glance the Levite cast,
And left me to my woe;
But Thou, O Jesu, Mary's Son, console:
Draw nigh and succor me, and make me whole!

Ave Maria.



THE weather is gloomy; the wind is blowing; the Mississippi, in front of my lowly dwelling, has thrown off his usually placid appearance to assume the airs of an angry ocean; while I, seated by the fire, am musing. However, I take up my pen, remembering that this is the anniversary of a glorious miracle.

In the afternoon the various military associations will parade the streets; they will repair to the inauguration of the Historical Museum, in which are to be preserved memorials of Louisianian exploits, with trophies of the principal battles won; but the cause of Louisiana's most signal victory will probably never have its memento there—it is unremembered. On this, the seventy-sixth anniversary of the battle of New Orleans, the patriotism and valor of Louisiana's sons will deservedly be extolled; the national flag will be unfurled in token of their country's gratitude; but where will be the banner which should, on this joyful occasion, wave above every other? In this morning's *Picayune* appears an article relative to the battle of Chalmette, from which I quote the following just appreciation: "The result seems almost miraculous. It was a remarkable victory, and it can never fail to hold an illustrious place in our national history."

Now, all this is quite true; for Jackson, with only six thousand men, had to fight against the flower of the British troops, fifteen thousand strong; so that if the three thousand slain on the side of the English declared their defeat a miracle, the six killed and seven wounded on the American side proclaimed far more eloquently the victory of Jackson to be miraculous. But nowadays people seem to have forgotten that marvel.

For many a long year priests were wont on this day to remind their congregations of the miracle wrought by the right hand of the Almighty on the plain of Chalmette, whereon were once more verified these words of the divine oracle: "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but the Lord giveth safety." Jackson and his valiant few seemed to have been convinced of this truth; and if they remained unalarmed by the overwhelming number of their enemies, it was probably because they bore in mind, the words of the royal psalmist: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God."

While the men were fighting bravely on the plain of Chalmette, many a devoted mother, wife and sister was praying in the Ursuline chapel; and soon could the victorious army exclaim: "They are bound and have fallen; but we are risen and are set upright." For a long time these heroes and their descendants, though not failing to "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," did not forget on this glorious anniversary, to "render to God the things that are God's;" saying to Him, in the words of Holy Scripture: "Not unto us, O Lord! not unto us, but unto Thy name be glory given." But who is yet mindful?

For a long time the religious festival commemorative of this glorious victory surpassed in splendor the military festival. An old journal, giving an account of January 8, 1841, says: "Archbishop Blanc, accompanied by the Bishops of Mobile and Natchez, and all the clergy, presided at the ceremony, during which the Governor and the members of the Legislature occupied the seats of honor in the cathedral." To-day, while surveying the streets adorned with flags, while admiring the splen-

dor of the military costumes, and hearing the flourish of trumpets and the thundering of cannon, people will say to themselves: "It is the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans." How many will add, "It is the anniversary of the day on which, through the intercession of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, the wondrous victory was gained, the city saved from pillage and ruin?"

The monastery which contributed to the success of the battle is, perhaps, the only institution in New Orleans that has cherished the memory of this glorious event. It is remembered at the Ursuline Convent, where this morning, for the seventy-sixth time, a solemn Mass of thanksgiving was sung in honor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, to whose intercession is justly attributed the victory of 1815. Our Lady of Prompt Succor! Who knows the Blessed Virgin under this title? Who thinks of her and invokes her? And, still, it seems to us that she is entitled to the gratitude of Louisiana, especially to that of New Orleans, whose confidence she has merited by her numerous benefits. Let us now examine her claims.

The foundation of the Ursuline Convent, New Orleans, is essentially French, having been founded, in 1727, by French religious, under the auspices of Louis XV. In 1763 Louisiana became a Spanish possession; hence it was only natural for the community to recruit subjects from that nationality. The retrocession of Louisiana to France in 1800 created great excitement at the convent, whose inmates feared a repetition here of the horrors of the French Revolution. The majority of the Sisters being then Spanish, the superioress, Mother St. Monica Ramos, a native of Havana, addressed, in 1802, a petition to Charles IV., King of Spain, begging his Catholic Majesty to allow herself and community to retire to her native city. Without waiting for the royal answer, she, with fifteen religious, left the monastery of New Orleans on the evening of May 29, 1803.

Not a gleam of hope seemed left to the seven Sisters who remained. However, they courageously set to work; and their zeal succeeded in keeping up the boarding-school, day-school,

and orphan asylum, as well as the instruction of negresses in the Christian doctrine. In this conjuncture, Mother St. André Madier felt inspired to address herself to a cousin of hers, whom the Reign of Terror had driven from her convent, and with whom we must now become acquainted.

Agatha Gensoul, in religion Madame St. Michel, besides being remarkably pious, was endowed with talents of a high order, and possessed of amiable and distinguished manners. Though expelled by the Revolution from her Convent of Pont St. Esprit, separated from her Sisters in religion, and compelled to conceal even her title of religion, she continued to preserve the spirit of her holy vocation. On the first indication of religious toleration, she quitted her solitude, and did her utmost to clear away the *débris* with which the impiety of the Revolution had encumbered the vineyard of the Lord. Where now are her former colaborers? In vain does she seek them. Privations, exile, the scaffold have cut off nearly all. She understands the futility of her efforts to re-establish her community; but she remembers that a real Ursuline ought never to lose courage. True, no convent of her Order then existed in France; but she was still an Ursuline, obliged by her vocation to instruct young girls, to train their hearts to virtue, and to store their minds with useful knowledge. This explains why Madame St. Michel, aided by another Ursuline, known in the world as Miss Sophie Ricard, opened a boarding-school at Montpellier. It was then that she received the letter of Mother St. André, telling how much the New Orleans convent stood in need of subjects. Immediately she felt inspired to abandon her own foundation, and hasten to the relief of her Sisters in Louisiana. Here let us note the obstacles in the way of her carrying out this generous resolution. The more numerous and powerful they are, the better will they serve to establish the miraculous result of the intercession of Our Lady of Prompt Succor.

France was just recovering from the baneful effects of the Revolution, which had left behind it only ruins. For many years there were no priests or religious to teach the children,

who had grown up in the shadow of deserted convents, desecrated churches, overturned altars. . . . Madame St. Michel was a person of no ordinary abilities, and already had her zealous labors been crowned with wonderful success. Therefore, her bishop could not even think of dispensing with her services in his diocese. Aware of this, her spiritual director, who was first consulted, gave no answer. She then addressed herself to the bishop. To form an idea of his surprise and grief, as well as of the force of his opposition, one need but reflect on his answer: "The Holy Father alone can give this authorization."

The Pope was still at Rome. There were no railroads or steamboats; the distance was considerable; and, besides, it was not so easy then as it is now to obtain an audience with the Head of the Church. But the greatest obstacle of all, and that which seemed humanly insurmountable, was that Pope Pius VII. was a real captive at Rome, while awaiting to be dragged as such to Fontainebleau. Napoleon held close custody; and the jailers of the Holy Father in the Eternal City had received strict orders to prevent every communication, even by letter, with the Vicar of Jesus Christ. Consequently, writing to the Pope and expecting an answer from him was, humanly speaking, an act of folly. This, however, Madame Gensoul felt inspired by God to attempt. Accordingly, on December 15, 1808, she wrote to the Pope. After having set forth her motives, she concluded thus: "Most Holy Father, I appeal to your apostolic tribunal. I am ready to submit to your decision. Faith teaches me that you are the voice of the Lord. I await your orders. 'Go,' or 'Stay,' from your Holiness will be to me the same thing."

The letter was written, but how could it be made to reach its destination? Three months passed, and still there was no opportunity of sending it. Madame St. Michel knelt before a statue of Mary, to whom she recommended the success of her enterprise; and while thus praying she felt inspired to address the Queen of Heaven in these words: "O Most Holy Virgin! if you obtain for me a prompt and favorable answer, I promise

to have you honored at New Orleans under the title of Our Lady of Prompt Succor."

Now, if this inspiration had come from Heaven, if Mary was pleased with this new appellation, if she desired being honored under this beautiful title at New Orleans, let her fulfil the two conditions laid down by the suppliant, and doubt would no longer be admissible. The letter left Montpellier on the 19th of March, 1809; and the answer is dated Rome, April 29, 1809. Hence the first condition, that of receiving a prompt reply, was accomplished. Let us here note that, owing to the reasons already stated, the promptitude of the Pope's answer is remarkable. We shall now see how the second condition was fulfilled, bearing in mind that Pius VII. knew the state of affairs in France, and the need of laborers like the applicant to regenerate it. Still, he did not hesitate to approve of her coming to Louisiana. No better proof can be given of the accomplishment of the second condition than the following passages from Cardinal Pietro's letter to the pious petitioner:

"I am charged by our Holy Father Pope Pius VII. with answering in his name. . . . His Holiness cannot do otherwise than approve the esteem and attachment you have retained for the religious state, and the spirit you have maintained within yourself of the institute of St. Ursula. The Holy Father has experienced the greatest consolation on learning that a monastery of an Order so useful, and which has rendered such signal services to the Church, is established in Louisiana; and that piety, peace, and the most exact regularity reign therein. . . . His Holiness approves of your putting yourself at the head of your religious aspirants, to serve as their guide during the long and difficult voyage which you are about to undertake."

Good Mother St. Michel unquestionably obtained a prompt and favorable answer. The Bishop of Montpellier was so surprised that he acknowledged himself vanquished. The devoted Ursuline began to fulfil her promise, by ordering a fine statue of Our Lady of Prompt Succor to be sculptured. Bishop Fournier himself was so convinced of the Blessed Virgin's

desire of being honored under this title that he expressed a wish to bless the statue, which was to be the shield of the pious missionaries during their passage across the Atlantic. On their arrival at New Orleans, December 31, 1810, this precious statue was solemnly installed in the convent chapel. And from that time may be said to date the public worship offered to the Blessed Virgin under the title of Our Lady of Prompt Succor.

It is a fact worthy of mention that this statue had been preceded by another smaller one, brought in 1786 from the monastery of Pont St. Esprit. We know not if Mother St. Michel Gensoul had, during her stay in that monastery, become acquainted with the history of this statue, of which the one brought by her seems to have been a reproduction; and which had, under somewhat similar circumstances, been instrumental in showing the Blessed Virgin's power with her Divine Son. Let us now see how this came to pass.

In 1785 Mother St. James, superioress of the Ursulines in New Orleans, seeing with regret that her community, hitherto eminently French, would soon cease to be such if not recruited from the mother country, applied for subjects to the flourishing house of her Order at Pont St. Esprit. Three Sisters—Sister Marie Thérèse Farjon de St. F. Xavier, Sister Françoise Alzas de Ste. Félicité, and Sister Christine Madier de St. André—nobly responded to her appeal; but many obstacles were opposed to their departure. The Spanish Government of this colony seemed desirous of doing away with the French character of the Ursuline community; therefore, we need not be surprised at the difficulties which the religious of Pont St. Esprit had to surmount in carrying out their generous resolution. Weary of waiting for an opportunity of reaching the new field of her labors, Sister Ste. Félicité having one day found in the garret of her monastery a little statue of the Blessed Virgin, picked it up, saying with that childlike simplicity so pleasing to the Heart of Mary: "Good Mother, if you quickly remove the obstacles which lie in the way of my departure for New Orleans, I promise to have you honored there to the utmost of my power." Here the condition laid down is the same

as that which, twenty-five years later, will be laid down by Mother St. Michel: the speedy removal of obstacles. Now for the result.

An aged Father of the Society of Jesus having applied directly to the King of Spain, the obstacles were immediately removed; and the three Ursulines on leaving France brought away with them their little statue, which they regarded as their most precious earthly treasure. Later on, Sister Ste. Félicité, having been chosen to hold the highest offices of the community, found it easy to fulfill her promise to the Blessed Virgin, whose statue, placed over the superior's stall, soon became a special object of devotion. On the Feast of the Assumption it was customary to place this statue on an altar decorated with flowers and lighted tapers; and there did our Heavenly Mother, as a queen on her throne, receive the homage of her devoted subjects; after which the superioress, accompanied by the senior members of the community, advanced to lay at her feet the keys of the monastery, in token of her being their Mother and first Superior. Since 1810 the two statues of which we have given the history have been honored under the title of Our Lady of Prompt Succor.

If the worship which has for over eighty years been paid in New Orleans to Our Lady of Prompt Succor has been pleasing to her, she must have within that period manifested her pleasure in an evident manner. It comes not within our sphere to relate here all the spiritual and temporal favors attributed to her intercession. The chronicles of the monastery sum up these favors by saying: "Under this new title the Blessed Virgin has so often manifested her power and goodness, that the religious repose in her an unbounded confidence." Two facts in proof of this assertion deserve record.

Devotion to Our Lady of Prompt Succor was just commencing to spread through the city when, in 1812, a terrible fire broke out. The wind was rapidly driving the flames toward the convent, and the nuns were told that remaining there any longer would be tempting Divine Providence. The order to break through the cloister was already given, when a lay-

Sister, Sister St. Anthony, placed the little statue of Our Lady of Prompt Succor on a window in front of the fire; and at the same moment Mother St. Michel fell on her knees, exclaiming: "Our Lady of Prompt Succor, we are lost if you come not to our help!" Immediately the wind changed, the convent and its environs were out of danger.

We will not repeat here what we have already said relative to the battle of 1815. From the windows of their convent the Ursulines could see the smoke rising from the battle-field, and could hear the report of guns and the thunder of cannon. The night of January the 7th was spent in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Everything seemed hopeless for the Americans. The disproportion of troops ensured victory to the English, in which case nothing save the horrors of pillage could be expected for the conquered city, the brutal watchword being "Booty and Beauty."

Jackson had sworn that, should he be vanquished, the enemy would find New Orleans a heap of ruin. In order to help in averting this imminent danger, the Ursuline chapel was continually thronged with pious ladies, all weeping and praying at the foot of the holy statue, which was placed on the high altar; and there, as a mother in the midst of her weeping children, did Mary listen to the supplications of her devout clients, and plead their cause with the Heart of her Divine Son.

On the morning of January 8, 1815, the Very Rev. Father du Bourg, V.G., afterward Bishop of New Orleans, offered up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in presence of the statue of Our Lady of Prompt Succor; and the community made a vow to have a Mass of thanksgiving sung every year should the Americans gain the victory. Just at Holy Communion a courier entered the chapel to announce the glad tidings of the enemy's defeat. After Mass Father du Bourg intoned the Te Deum, which was sung with a fervor of gratitude impossible to describe.

Nobody could reasonably doubt of heaven's intervention on this occasion through the intercession of Our Lady of Prompt Succor. Jackson himself, the hero of the day, did not hesitate

to admit of the divine interposition in his favor; and in his first proclamation to the army, he says: "By the blessing of Heaven, directing the valor of the troops under my command, one of the most brilliant victories in the annals of war was obtained." The following day, in a letter to the Very Rev. Father du Bourg, the valiant General wrote:

"Rev. Sir:—The signal interposition of Heaven in giving success to our arms requires some external manifestation of the feelings of our most lively gratitude. Permit me, therefore, to entreat that you will cause the service of public thanksgiving to be performed in the cathedral, in token of the great assistance we have received from the Ruler of all events, and of our humble sense of it."

On the 23d of January, Father du Bourg proclaimed the same truth when, ere placing the victor's crown on the brow of Jackson, he thus addressed him: "How easy it would have been for you, General, to forget the prime Mover of your wonderful success, and to assume praise which must redound to that exalted Source whence every sort of merit is derived! The first impulse of your religious heart was to acknowledge the signal interposition of Providence." The same day General Jackson visited the Ursulines, in order to thank them for the prayers which had helped him to gain so signal a victory.

Have we not here more than sufficient proof of the divine interposition in behalf of the American troops during the famous battle of 1815? The wonderful success of their arms was then attributed to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, invoked in the Ursuline chapel under the title of Our Lady of Prompt Succor.

In 1850 the superioress of the monastery sent, through the agency of the Most Rev. Archbishop Blanc, a petition to the Pope, laying before him the signal favors with which the community had, since 1810, been loaded through the mediation of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, and beseeching His Holiness to authorize the annual celebration of the feast and the singing of High Mass in her honor on the 8th of January. On the 27th of September, 1851, this favor was graciously granted by

Pius IX.; and on the 6th of August, 1852, Archbishop Blanc promulgated the papal decree in favor of the Ursulines of his diocese.

May this devotion be propagated throughout the whole world! What a beautiful title for Mary! Our Lady of Prompt Succor implies the urgent need we have of Mary's help; it proclaims that we expect everything from her; and that, being a good and powerful Mother, she cannot keep her children waiting for what they need.

The crowning of Our Lady of Prompt Succor in the Ursuline Convent, New Orleans, November, 1895, was a memorable event in the history of that city. The fame of the Shrine, its connection with the happy issue of the War of 1812, the ceremonial pageantry, and the fact that Our Lady of Prompt Succor is the Patroness of Louisiana,—all these circumstances combined to make the occasion noteworthy. The ceremony was performed by the Most Rev. Archbishop Janssens, of New Orleans, in presence of a large assemblage of the clergy and laity. In every church of the Archdiocese a solemn novena had been made in preparation for the ceremony, and when the hour for it arrived every church bell in the great Archdiocese of New Orleans rang out in jubilee. The Shrine of Our Lady of Prompt Succor is the second in America to receive this solemn coronation.

THE BURNING BABE

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat, which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,
A pretty Babe, all burning bright, did in the air appear;
Who, scorched with excessive heat, such flood of tears did shed,
As though His floods should quench His flames, with which His tears
were fed.

"Alas!" quoth He, "but newly born, in fiery hearts I fry,*
Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel My fire but I!

*Fry, old use of the word burn.

My faultless breast the furnace is, the fuel wounding thorns;
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, the ashes shame and scorn;
The fuel Justice layeth on, and Mercy blows the coals,
The metals in this furnace wrought are men's defiled† souls,
For which, as now on fire I am, to work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath to wash them in My Blood."
With this He vanished out of sight and swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I called unto mind that it was Christmas Day.

Rev. Robert Southwell, S. J., martyr, 1562-95.

Robert Southwell, priest and poet, was born at St. Faith's, Norfolk, England, about 1560, and was executed at Tyburn, London, February 22, 1595. Educated in France, where his parents, devout Catholics, had sent him to save his life from religious persecution, he entered the Society of Jesus, returned to his native country as a missionary in 1587, became chaplain to the Countess of Arundell and wrote "Consolations for Catholics" and most of his poems. In 1592 he was betrayed to the authorities, was tortured and imprisoned for three years and was tried at Westminster and executed. His most celebrated poem is "The Burning Babe," of which Ben Johnson said; "Southwell has so written that piece of his that I would be content to destroy many of mine."

† Defiled, sinful.



APPARITION
 TO
 CATHERINE LABOURIE, V.
 PARIS, FRANCE

1830

Birds in springtime pour their carols
 At thy shrine, O Virgin Queen,
 While afar the Seine's low murmur,
 Carries with it hope's fond dream.
 Calm thou art among the changes;
 Tumults rise and tumults cease;
 Type art thou of life eternal,
 Mother fair, of hope and Peace.

Mary Hines.



THE sinister predictions of some of the inopportunist bishops at the time of the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Lady have been strikingly falsified by events. Not only has the Church suffered no loss—even among those of her children whose faith was weak and loyalty doubtful—by reason of the honor accorded some years since to the Holy Mother of God, but there has been a remarkable growth of fervor and devotion among Catholics, especially as regards all the various manifestations of love and reverence for the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord, and all the doctrines that cluster round this august mystery. Through Mary Jesus has been honored with a more devoted love than ever; through Mary He has won countless souls who seemed to be lost in the depths of sin; through Mary He has shown His miraculous power, both in the far simpler task of healing the diseased body, and in the more difficult task of healing the soul from which the life of grace seemed to have departed never to return. Witness Lourdes and its countless wonders; witness other places of

pilgrimage honored with miraculous favors scarcely less wonderful from the Queen of Heaven; witness Our Lady of Help and Our Lady of Good Counsel, the devotion to whom, once confined to a single Shrine, has now become world-wide.

Of all these signs of the unceasing love of Mary and of an increasing love for Her, there is none that has been more widely spread than the little medal of the Immaculate Conception, which has been received by the Catholic world with the acclamation of an universal testimony to its wondrous efficacy. Still, familiar as it is to us all, and very dear to many, there are but few who know anything of its origin and its history; and a short account of the manner in which it was bestowed, and the character of the wonders wrought through it, may be interesting to our readers. If any of them in the perusal are led to a greater devotion to Her who communicated it to one of Her faithful clients, and to a more implicit confidence in Her "suppliant omnipotence," it will not have been written in vain.

Among the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul at the convent in the Faubourg St. Antoine at Paris, in 1830, was one called Sister Catherine. Her name in the world was Zoé Labouré. She was born in the village of Fain-les-Moûtiers, in the Côte-d'Or, not far from Dijon. Left an orphan when she was eight years old, she became at a very early age mistress of her father's house, owing to the departure of her elder sister for the Convent of St. Vincent. Poor Zoé's longing thoughts turned in the same direction, but she had many years to wait before God granted the fulfilment of her desires. At home she led a life of obedience, labor, and devotion, preparing for her future life as her Lord and Master in the humble house of Nazareth had prepared for His future ministry. At the parish church she was seen with unfailing regularity, kneeling on the flags even in the depth of winter. She fasted every Friday and Saturday in honor of Our Lord's Passion and of the Holy Mother of God, seeking with pious cunning to hide from her father her practice.

But, though she loved to visit the Convent of St. Vincent at the neighboring town, and had determined, if it were God's

will to enter religion, she prudently abstained from fixing on one rather than on another religious community, until the will of God was definitely made known to her by a dream. She seemed to be at the village church, kneeling in a chapel dedicated to the Holy Souls. An old priest, of reverential aspect and a remarkable countenance, appeared in sacerdotal vestments, and said Mass in her presence. At the end of Mass he beckoned her to him, but in her fear she seemed to walk backwards out of the church, with her eyes continually fixed on him. Then she thought she went to visit a sick person in the village, but she had no sooner entered the house than the venerable priest again appeared to her, and spoke thus: "My child, you run away from me now, but one day you will esteem it your greatest happiness to come to me. God has His designs on you—remember that." Once more she fled in fear, and sought her father's house, seeming to herself to be walking on the air as she did so; but at the moment she entered she awoke, and found she had been only dreaming.

She was then eighteen, of inferior education, and conscious of her deficiencies. It happened that her sister-in-law kept a boarding-school at Châtillon-sur-Seine, which was not far from her home; Zoé asked to be allowed to go there for a short time to improve herself, and her father consented. One day she went in company with her sister-in-law to see the Sisters of Charity at Châtillon. On entering the parlor she stopped in amazement before a picture that hung there. It was an exact likeness of the old man whom she had seen in her dream! Needless to say it was St. Vincent de Paul, and from that time Zoé recognized it as the will of God that she should hereafter become one of his children in religion.

She did not remain long at Châtillon. Her desire to consecrate herself to God now became stronger than ever, and had assumed a definite character, which prompted her to seek for its speedy realization. She communicated her design to one of the Sisters at Châtillon before she left, and on returning home asked her father's permission to enter. But the poor old man, who had already given his eldest daughter to God in religion,

could not make up his mind to part with Zoé, who had now for many years managed his house most prudently. In the hope of turning her from her design, he sent her to Paris to one of her brothers, who kept a restaurant there, and charged him to do all he could to change her mind, by continual occupations and a round of amusements. Vain attempts of poor feeble man to frustrate the designs of God! Life at Paris, so distasteful to Zoé, made her long more ardently than ever after the peace and happiness of a religious life. Cruel indeed were the sufferings of that holy soul, longing after God, during those years of uncongenial occupation and surroundings. After some time, remembering her sister-in-law's kindness to her at Châtillon, she wrote and begged her to come to her assistance. Her sister-in-law invited her to pay her a visit, write to her father, and finally obtained for her the permission so long desired. In the beginning of 1830 she was received into the convent at Châtillon. Happily for her, she had from the first as her director M. Aladel, a most holy priest and true son of St. Vincent de Paul, whose prudence, sound judgment, long experience, and solid piety made him a most suitable guide for Zoé Labouré, now Sister Catherine.

Shortly after she entered the seminary, the ceremony of the Translation of the Relics of St. Vincent de Paul to the chapel at Saint-Lazare took place. Sister Catherine was present, and as she prayed to the Saint for France, for the religious community to which she belonged, and for herself, she saw his heart appear above the reliquary, while a voice within spoke to her of the sorrow that St. Vincent felt for all the troubles that were coming on France. M. Aladel advised her to take no notice of her fancied vision. But others soon followed: during Holy Mass she frequently saw Our Lord present before her, future events became known to her, and the result justified her predictions.

We are not attempting a Life of Sister Catherine, and we must hasten on to the particular revelation with which we are concerned. But a brief sketch of her subsequent career and of her personal character is almost necessary as an introduction

to the devotion which it was her privilege to be the means of communicating to mankind.

Sister Catherine was clothed in 1831, and placed in a hospital attended by the Sisters of Charity, in the Faubourg St. Antoine at Paris. She was employed first in the kitchen, then in the laundry, and after this for forty years in tending the old men in the Hospice d'Enghien, and in looking after the poultry-yard. To these humble offices she devoted herself with all her heart. She never cared to go out for a walk, loving to remain with the poor who were so dear to her,—the only exception being when she had the chance of visiting the house of the community. In fact, the walk from the hospital to the community house was the only part of Paris with which she was acquainted.

During the forty-six years she was in the hospital at Enghien, she was never known to say a word against charity. Her gentleness and sweetness to those placed under her were the more remarkable because she had naturally a very lively temper. She was also of a rather impulsive disposition, and for some time after she joined the Sisters of Charity, the effort to keep herself in check was manifest to all around her. Bodily sufferings were not wanting to her, in spite of her strong constitution. A curious circumstance was observed in connection with them: all the great feasts of Our Lady, and especially the Immaculate Conception, brought her invariably some painful ailment or accident. All her Sisters were struck with her wonderful devotion to the Holy Mother of God, and this although they knew little or nothing of the supernatural revelations vouchsafed to her. Sometimes she would drop a word that showed how much she learned from her heavenly Friend and Mistress. When the Commune was destroying the religious houses of Paris, one of her Sisters was very anxious about the safety of their house, which was in the hands of a band of Communists, and was said to have been pillaged. "Don't be afraid," said Sister Catherine; "Our Lady is keeping it all safe. She has promised to do so." Of course she had a great devotion to the Rosary, and deemed the daily recital of it a matter

of no small importance. Indeed, the only point on which she was inclined to be severe in her condemnation was any sort of carelessness or wilful distraction while saying it. Her Sisters were often struck with the grave, pious, loving tone in which she repeated the Angelical Salutation.

But it is time to speak of the special revelation which has made Sister Labouré's life one of great importance in the annals of the Church. The details of it were repeated by her, in the first instance, to her director, who, though he carefully pooh-poohed the whole story to Sister Catherine, took notes of what she told him. She herself never thought of writing down a word, and showed the greatest reluctance to do so. For twenty-five years she wrote nothing. It was not till 1856, when events had shown the credibility of the revelations made to her, and the wonders wrought by the medal had become famous all over the world, that, by the order of M. Aladel, she committed to paper an account of Our Lady's appearance to her. Twenty years later she wrote out the whole account afresh, and a third narrative, without any date, was found among her papers. These three accounts agree perfectly in all substantial matters, and the little variations of detail are a sufficient proof that they were written independently of one another.

It had long been the ardent desire of Sister Catherine to see the Blessed Virgin, and many and fervent were the prayers which in the simplicity of her heart she offered to her guardian angel, to St. Vincent de Paul, and to Our Lady herself. On July 18, 1830, the vigil of the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul, she had been listening to an instruction on devotion to Mary, which had increased her previous desire. That night she went to sleep recommending herself to St. Vincent, with great confidence that her prayers were going to be heard.

Towards midnight she heard a voice calling her: "Sister Labouré!" The words were repeated three times. She woke up, drew aside the curtain of her bed, and beheld to her astonishment a little child apparently about four or five years old, exquisitely beautiful, with fair hair, and dressed in white. From his whole body there seemed to issue forth bright rays

of light, which illuminated everything around. "Come," he said, in a sweet, melodious voice,—“come to the chapel; Our Lady is expecting you there.” “But,” said Catherine to herself, “I shall be heard” (she was sleeping in a large dormitory), “and shall be found out.” “Don’t be afraid,” rejoined the child, interpreting her thought; “it is half-past eleven, and everyone is asleep. I’ll come along with you.” At these words Catherine could no longer resist. She dressed herself quickly, and followed the child, who walked on her left, pouring rays of light wherever he went. Everywhere the lamps seemed to be lighted, to the Sister’s great astonishment. When they arrived at the door of the chapel, the child touched it with the end of his finger, and lo! the door opened of itself. The chapel was all illuminated, as at a midnight Mass.

Catherine’s guide led her up to the altar-rails, and himself entering the sanctuary stood on the Gospel side of the altar. For a short time (which seemed very long to Catherine) she knelt there and saw nothing, but suddenly the child cried out to her, “Here is Our Lady: here She comes!” At the same moment Catherine heard something like the rustle of a dress and soon a Lady of exquisite beauty came, and sat in the sanctuary on the left side, in the place usually occupied by the director of the community. The dress, the attitude, the general appearance, bore a close resemblance to a picture of St. Anne hanging on the wall of the sanctuary. The countenance alone differed, and for a moment Sister Catherine hesitated as to whether it were Our Lady or not. Then the child, speaking in a deep voice and severe tone, reproved her incredulity, asking her whether it was not in the power of the Queen of Heaven to appear to a poor mortal in whatever form she pleased. At these words all hesitation ceased, and Sister Labouré, following the impulse of her heart, drew near to the Blessed Virgin, knelt at Her feet, and placed her hands on Her lap, as a child does when beside his mother’s knee.

“At this moment,” says the Sister in her account of the Apparition, “I felt the sweetest emotion I ever experienced. Our Lady explained to me how I must behave in all my

troubles, and, pointing to the foot of the altar, She told me to come and throw myself there in time of sorrow, and pour out my heart, and that I should there receive all the consolations I needed. Then she added: 'My child, I am going to confide to you a mission. You will have plenty of troubles, but you will overcome them through the thought that it is all for the glory of God. You will be contradicted, but fear not: you will have abundant graces. Tell all that takes place in you with simplicity and confidence. You will see certain things, you will receive inspirations in your prayers: give an account of them to him who has care of your soul.' "

Our Lady then proceeded to tell of all the dangers that were impending over France, and the terrible crisis through which the country would have to pass, enumerating certain calamities which happened exactly at the time and with the details that were revealed to Sister Catherine. How long she remained there, the Sister could not say; all she knew was that after Our Lady had talked long with her, She vanished like a shadow. The fair child standing by the altar cried out, "She's gone!" and once more placing himself on the left of the Sister, he led her back the same way as he had brought her, again diffusing around him a heavenly brightness. "I think," added the Sister, "that this child was my guardian angel, because I had often asked him to obtain for me the favor of seeing Our Blessed Lady. . . . When I got back to bed I heard the clock strike two, and I did not fall asleep again."

In the course of the same year (1830) Sister Catherine had another vision, which unfolded to her more definitely the work she had to do. We quote the account as it was written by M. Aladel.

At the hour when the Sisters were praying in the chapel (5:30 p.m.) the Blessed Virgin appeared to the young Sister as if in an oval frame. She was standing on the globe of the world, only half of which could be seen. She was dressed in a white robe with a blue cloak edged with silver, having as it were diamonds in Her hands, from which fell streams of golden rays upon the earth. Sister Catherine heard a voice saying:

“These rays are the graces that Mary obtains for men,” and saw these words written in golden characters: *O Marie, conçue sans péché, priez pour nous qui avons recours à vous*—“O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee!” This prayer was in the form of a semicircle; beginning on a level with Our Lady’s right hand, and passing over Her head, it terminated on a level with Her left hand. The picture then turned round, and on the reverse side the Sister saw the letter M, with a cross above it, having a crosspiece at its base, and below the letter the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the former surrounded by a crown of thorns, and the latter pierced with a sword. Then she thought she heard these words: “A medal must be struck on this pattern; the persons who shall carry it with indulgences attached to it, and shall offer the above prayer, shall enjoy a very special protection from the Mother of God.” At that instant the vision disappeared.

This appearance of Our Lady was repeated several times in the course of a few months, always in the chapel of the mother-house of the Sisters of Charity: sometimes during Holy Mass, at other times when Sister Labouré was praying there. In an account of one of these Apparitions from the pen of the Sister herself, we have certain accidental differences from the narrative given above. Our Lady appears at first with a globe in Her hands, which She presents to Our Lord. Her hands are suddenly seen covered with rings and precious stones, whence proceed brilliant rays down upon the earth. She tells the Sister that these rays are the symbol of the graces that She pours out upon the persons that ask for them. As She speaks, a sort of oval picture encloses Her, on which are written in letters of gold the words already given—“*O Marie, conçue sans péché, priez pour nous qui avons recours à vous.*” Then a voice is heard, telling the Sister to have a medal struck on this pattern, and informing her that those who carry it will receive great graces, *especially if they wear it round their neck*; and that these graces will be most abundant for those who have a great spirit of confidence in Our Lady’s intercession.

These Apparitions, when reported to Sister Catherine’s con-

fessor, were invariably received with cold indifference, and even with discouraging severity, and she was forbidden to place any faith in them whatever. But her obedience, to which M. Aladel himself bears witness, could not efface from her heart the delicious remembrance of what she had seen. To return to Mary's feet was her greatest happiness; her heart was always there, and she had ever the firm conviction that she should soon see Her again.

There is one feature in the medal as known to us which has not any place in the accounts given by Sister Catherine of her visions. The serpent which appears under Our Lady's feet is nowhere mentioned by her in writing; but happily a communication that she made to one of her superiors explains its presence. This superior, who had been admitted to her confidence, desired to have a statue of Mary Immaculate made as Sister Labouré had seen Her. "Ought I," she asked, "to put the serpent under Mary's feet?" "Yes," said the Sister; "there was a serpent of a greenish color with yellow spots." She also recommended that Our Lady should not be represented as too young, or to smiling, but that Her countenance should be grave, though beaming with a radiant light of love, which, she said, shone forth especially when She was dictating the prayer to be stamped on the medal.

Although M. Aladel received Sister Catherine's revelations so coldly, they nevertheless made the deepest impression upon him. After waiting for several months, he consulted some persons of experience respecting them, and subsequently laid them before Monsignor de Quélen, Archbishop of Paris. The evidence to their reality was so strong that the Archbishop, in 1832, gave his consent to M. Aladel's proposal to have a medal struck in accordance with Our Lady's instruction to Sister Catherine. It was not easy to settle on the details. The Blessed Virgin had not always appeared under the same form, and a change had sometimes taken place in Her attitude in the course of the Apparition. It was therefore decided to take the already existing medal of the Immaculate Mother, and to add to it the rays of light issuing from the rings on Her fingers, the

globe on which She was seen to be standing, and the serpent crushed under Her feet. Around the oval were inserted the words, "*O Marie, conçue sans péché, priez pour nous qui avons recours à vous!*" The reverse side of the medal was made in accordance with Our Lady's instructions as given above.

As soon as the medal was struck it began to spread rapidly, especially among the Sisters of Charity, some of whom, knowing to a certain extent its origin, had the greatest confidence in it. They gave it to their sick, and at once the most wonderful conversions and cures attested its miraculous efficacy. Then pious mothers begged for it to give to their children, who seemed to have an instinctive love for it, and to value it as a certain mark and assurance of Our Lady's protection. As soon as it became known in a place a throng of pious persons hastened to procure it, and boys and girls began to discover its value as a preservative of innocence. In some country parishes almost the whole population were invested with it; and a general officer of Paris asked for sixty medals to distribute among various officers who wished to have one.

The Archbishop of Paris, whose great charity made him a constant visitor to the sick, several times informed M. Aladel that he had never given the medal to anyone without having recognized its happy fruits. At length, in 1836, he went so far as to recommend it in one of his pastorals. After speaking of the signal favors and graces of every description obtained by the invocation of Mary conceived without sin, his Grace continued: "We exhort the faithful to wear the medal struck some years ago in honor of the Blessed Virgin, and to often repeat the prayer written above the figure—'O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee!'"

But it was not only in France that the miraculous medal was spread abroad: in Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, America, the Levant, and even in China, it soon became celebrated for its wonder-working power. In Paris alone forty millions of these medals had been struck off in 1879, and about the same number in Lyons. But it is time that we proceed to narrate some of the extraordinary cures both of soul and body wrought by means

of it. Those given in M. Aladel's book are very numerous, and we cannot attempt to cite more than two or three of them. They are but samples chosen almost at hazard out of a quantity of others which we would fain adduce.

This cure is related by the very lady to whom it happened, and who gives her name and address in testimony of its accuracy. "I had been ill," she said, "for eight years, and the doctors could do nothing for me. I suffered from continual hemorrhage, could eat nothing, and drew near to death's door. At length the doctor advised that I should be sent to the hospital, to spare my family the painful spectacle of my death. One of my neighbors, however, suggested that a Sister of Charity be sent for. I consented rather reluctantly, for I thought they came only to poor people; and the next day Sister Mary arrived from a neighboring parish. When she found I had not been to confession for several years, she told me the first thing to do was to make my confession. "I'll go to confession when I am cured," I answered. The sister urged her request. "My dear sister, I don't like to be persecuted with that sort of thing. I have told you that I will go to confession when I am cured." Meanwhile I grew rapidly worse. A violent chill came over me and everyone thought I was dead. When the doctor heard of my condition, he remarked: "I am not surprised at it: she has two fatal diseases—consumption and continual hemorrhage. If she is not dead now, she will scarcely live through the day."

That afternoon at two o'clock Sister Mary made her appearance. "Have you any devotion to Our Blessed Lady?" she asked. "Yes, I think so." And in fact I always had some sort of confidence in the Holy Mother of God. "Well, then, if you had a real love for her, I would give you something that would cure you." "Oh, I shall be cured soon enough!" (I meant that I should soon be dead, for I felt that I was dying.) Then the sister showed me the medal. "Put this medal on, and if you have great confidence in Our Lady it will cure you." Somehow the sight of that medal cheered my heart. I took it and kissed it devoutly; for I was very anxious to get well. Then

the sister read to me the little prayer that I was to say every day, and I promised to add five "Our Fathers" and five "Hail Marys." She put the medal round my neck, and at that moment a strange sensation seemed to come over me—a sort of general revolution in my whole frame. It was not anything painful: on the contrary, I was shedding tears of joy. I was not cured, but I felt that my cure was coming, and I had a confidence which certainly did not come from myself.

The same evening I found, to my astonishment, that I could sit up in bed. The next day I asked for some soup, and enjoyed it. I was cured. Two days afterwards I felt strong enough to go to church to thank Our Lady. My friends would not hear of it, but I insisted. Alone and unaided I made my way thither. A day or two afterwards I went to confession. From the day of my cure to the present time I have enjoyed perfect health. It is to the miraculous medal that I owe the grace which has cured alike the evils of my soul and body."

This lady had a little girl aged six years and a half, who had from her infancy been unable to speak distinctly. She was not dumb, but was so tongue-tied that it was almost impossible to make out what she said. When Sister Mary saw her she recommended the same remedy which had cured her mother. "Impossible! Why, the child has a natural malformation of the organ of speech!" But the medal was put around the little girl's neck, and a novena begun to Our Lady. The child was to hear Mass each day, and to recite certain prayers. At first no result was visible, but on the fifth day, on coming out from Mass, the child spoke as plainly and distinctly as though nothing had ever been the matter with her. Those who heard her could not believe their ears. Soon the report spread; people came from all sides, listened to her, questioned her. For all little Hortense had but one answer. She showed them her medal, and said: "Our Lady cured me."

The miracles wrought through this wondrous medal are as varied as they are innumerable. A missionary from Macao writes how, through its means, the devil was expelled from a pagan who had long been possessed. From New Orleans comes

an account of the conversion of a Freemason under whose pillow it had been placed. At St. Louis, under similar circumstances, a young Methodist, who was to all appearance dead, came to life again and asked for baptism, dying in reality only half an hour after the regenerating waters had been poured upon him. At Beuthen, in Poland, a young Protestant actress, who consented to wear a medal in order to show how little effect it would have upon her, soon succumbed to its influence, and asked to be instructed and received into the Church. At a prison in Austria a hardened apostate, who had been guilty of fearful outrages against God, was changed by the grace which came with the wearing of it. From every part of the world comes the same story of the countless miracles it has wrought. Most wonderful of all is the story—most of our readers are probably familiar with it—of the Abbé Ratisbonne's conversion from Judaism.

It is easy for the sceptic to scoff at such stories as those we have narrated or referred to above. But we are not writing for sceptics, but for good Catholics, and our object is to increase the devotion they already entertain towards everything connected with God's Holy Mother. If any of them should think the statements of the universal efficacy of the miraculous medal incredible or exaggerated, we would ask them to give it a trial, and they will surely find by their own experience that none who trust in the Holy Mother of God shall be confounded; that she shall heap upon them treasures of joy and gladness; that "her ways are beautiful ways, and all her paths are peaceable; that she is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her; and that he who shall retain her is blessed forevermore."

PEACE

(From the German of Goethe.)

Oh Thou who from Thy heavenly height,
Beholdest every pain and grief,
And where souls pine in blackest night
Dost ever send most sweet relief;

Shall I from erring never cease?
What purpose serve my joy and sorrow?
O holy Peace,
Let me, thy secret of thee borrow!

In highest things,
Is Peace;
E'en zephyr's wings,
There cease
The flowers to woo,
And birds their songs forget:
Wait but a moment yet,
And thou'lt rest, too.

Rt. Rev. J. L. Spalding, D.D.

“This Queen is so compassionate and benign, that when a sinner, whoever he may be, recommends himself to Her charity, she does not question his merits, or if he is worthy, but she hears and succors all.”—*St. Bernard.*

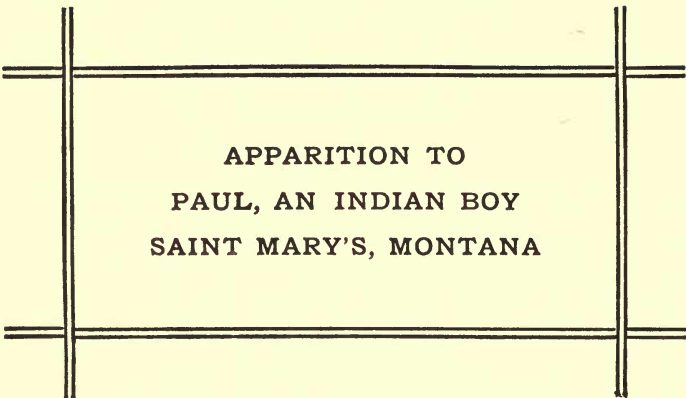
PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

BY ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI

Pius VIII., by his Rescript of the 12th July, 1816, attached to this prayer 100 days' Indulgence applicable to the souls in purgatory:

O Mary who so ardently desirest to see thy divine Son loved, if thou lovest me, obtain for me a tender love for that adorable Saviour. Thou who obtainest whatsoever thou wilt, hear me; attach me so to Jesus that I may never cease to love Him. Obtain for me, also, a great love for thee, who art the most amiable of creatures and the most beloved of God. Amen.

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APPARITION TO
PAUL, AN INDIAN BOY
SAINT MARY'S, MONTANA

APPARITION
TO
PAUL, AN INDIAN BOY
SAINT MARY'S, MONTANA

1841

Sweet is the Ave-Mary bell
In Mary's land of love,
And sweet the vesper hymns that swell
To her dear throne above;
And sweet to me, far, far away,
The hour when Mary's children pray.

F. S. Pierpont.



IN Oregon Territory, the faithful and devoted missionaries have converted many Indian tribes. Father de Smét, in his travels in the Rocky Mountains, gives a most interesting account of the appearance of our Blessed Lady to the good little Indian boy, Paul. This special favor took place on Christmas eve, 1841, a few hours before midnight Mass, in the village of Saint Mary. This is what he himself related with his innocent lips to Father de Smét: "On going into John's wigwam, to learn my prayers, which I did not then know, I saw some one who was very beautiful. Her feet did not touch the earth, her garments were as white as snow; she had a star over her head and a serpent under her feet, and near the serpent was a strange kind of fruit. I could see her heart, from which rays of light burst forth and shone upon me. When I first beheld all this I was frightened; but afterwards my fear left me, my heart grew warm, my mind clear, and, Father, I know not how it happened, but all at once I knew my prayers.

"Several times this same beautiful person appeared to me, and once she told me that she was glad that the first village of the Flathead Indians had been called Saint Mary!" Little

Paul had never seen or heard anything of the kind before; he did not even know whether the person was a man or woman, because the appearance of the dress she wore was entirely unknown to him.

After closely questioning little Paul, Father de Smét was convinced of the truth of the appearance of the Blessed Virgin. In gratitude to Heaven for this signal favor, the pious missionary consecrated the entire tribe to the Immaculate Mother of God, and on the Feast of Corpus Christi a statue of the Blessed Virgin was erected in memory of her Apparition to little Paul.

From the entrance of the village chapel to the spot where Paul received such a special favor, the greensward on both sides was bordered by garlands hung in festoons. Triumphant arches, gracefully arranged, arose at regular distances. At the end of the avenue, in the middle of a kind of repository, stood the pedestal which was destined to receive the statue. At the head of the procession was borne aloft the banner of the Sacred Heart, followed closely by little Paul, carrying the statue, and accompanied by other little boys who strewed the way with flowers. Then came the two priests, in cope and surplice; finally the march was closed by the chiefs and all the members of the colony, emulating each other in their zeal and devotion to the Blessed Virgin. When they reached the spot, one of the Fathers delivered a short address, in which he reminded them of the signal prodigy and assistance of the Queen of Heaven, and incited all to have the liveliest sentiments of confidence in the protection of Mary. Oh, how ardently we wish that all our children of Mary could have witnessed the devotion and recollection of these her forest children, particularly of little Paul, who seems to be an angel of piety and innocence.

THE VIRGIN MARY TO THE CHILD JESUS

Sleep, sleep mine Holy one!
My flesh, my Lord!—what name? I do not know
A name that seemeth not too high or low,
Too far from me or heaven:
My Jesus, that is best! that word being given
By the majestic angel whose command
Was softly as a man's beseeching said,
When I and all the earth appeared to stand
In the great overflow
Of light celestial from his wings and head,
Sleep, sleep my saving One!

And art Thou come for saving, baby-browed
And speechless Being—art thou come for saving?
The palm that grows beside our door is bowed
By treadings of the low wind from the south,
A restless shadow through the chamber waving:
Upon its bough a bird sings in the sun;
But Thou, with that close slumber on Thy mouth,
Dost seem of wind and sun already weary,
Art come for saving, O my weary One?

We sate among the stalls at Bethlehem;
The dumb kine from their fodder turning them,
Softened their horned faces
To almost human gazes
Toward the newly Born;
The simple shepherds from the starlit brooks
As yet in their astonished hearing rung
The strange sweet angel-tongue:
The magi of the East in sandals worn
Knelt reverent, sweeping round
With long pale beards, their gifts upon the ground.
The incense, myrrh and gold
These baby hands were impotent to hold:
So let all earthlies and celestials yait
Upon Thy royal state
Sleep, sleep my kingly One.
That tear fell not on Thee,
Beloved, yet Thou stirrest in Thy slumber!
Thou, stirring not for glad sounds out of number,

Which through the vibratory palm tree run
From summer wind and bird,
So quickly hast Thou heard
A tear fall silently?
Wak'st Thou, O loving One?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.



APPARITION
TO
ALPHONSE M. RATISBONNE
ROME, ITALY

1842

All things about me,
Within and without me,
Forever shall be
Thine and thine only; joyfully, eagerly,
Mary, my Mother, I give them to thee.

Cardinal Geissel.



IN 1841 there resided at Strasburg, France, a wealthy Jewish family, which has long held the first rank in Alsace, and was ennobled, notwithstanding its religion, under Louis XVI. M. Alphonse Ratisbonne, in whose person was wrought the miracle related here, was a member of this family; and at the time it happened was about twenty-eight years of age. He was brought up in a fashionable manner, without the least idea of religion of any kind, first at the Royal College of Strasburg, and afterwards at a school at Paris, where, after taking his degree, he resided, being furnished with ample means by an uncle who was head of a rich banking establishment, of which he proposed to make his nephew a partner. Towards the end of 1841 the prospects of Alphonse seemed to be very bright; he was rich, he was beloved by all his family, and, with their approbation, he was engaged to be married to an amiable young lady, whom he had known from childhood. Throughout his whole life, excepting the loss of his parents, only one thing seemed to trouble him. And that was the conversion of his elder brother Theodore to Catholicity, and his subsequent vocation to the priesthood. This gave Alphonse a perfect detestation for the Catholic Church; he regarded his brother's change

of religion as a kind of madness, saw as little of him as he could help, and nursed in his mind the bitterest hostility to priests, churches, convents and, above all, to Jesuits, the very name of whom used to put him in a fury. Yet Alphonse did not practice his own religion; none of the usages of Judaism were observed in the house; he merely retained the name of Jew, and took great interest in the regeneration of his race.

About a twelve-month before Alphonse was engaged to be married, the Abbe Ratisbonne left Strasburg, not a little to his brother's satisfaction. He was invited to be assistant priest at Notre Dame des Victoires, at Paris, where, as he told his brothers and sisters in bidding them farewell, he would pray for their conversion. Alphonse refused to correspond with him, and only wrote him a cold letter of courtesy on the occasion of his engagement, to satisfy the rest, who felt more kindly towards their Catholic brother.

It was now settled that Alphonse should go abroad for a year before his marriage, his betrothed being still very young. He set out toward the end of November, 1841, intending to return the next summer. In the midst of his melancholy at leaving, he said to himself, "Who knows but God may send me a friend in the course of my journey?" Among the last affairs he transacted at home was the winding up of the accounts of a society for the encouragement of labor among the Jewish poor. He had to sign a number of checks antedated January 15th. "God knows," said he, as he laid down the pen, "where I shall be on January 15th, or whether it will not be the day of my death?" He was at Rome on that day, and it was the beginning of his new life. He went to Rome on January 5th, little knowing what was to befall him.

He devoted his time at Rome to seeing the antiquities, catacombs, churches, and other objects of interest. He was thus employed, when on a day or two after his arrival he met in the street an old schoolfellow, M. Gustave de Bussieres, with whom he renewed acquaintance, and who took him to dine at the house of his father. He met there the head of the family, the Baron de Bussieres, who was a convert to Catholicity from

Protestantism. This was quite enough to give Alphonse a dislike to him ; however, as he was acquainted with Sicily and the Levant, whither the young traveler was to proceed, he engaged in conversation, and he promised, very little to Alphonse's satisfaction, that he would visit him on an early day.

Time went on, and the 20th of January drew near, the limit Alphonse had proposed to stay at Rome. Several of his friends urged him to prolong his visit, but he persisted in his resolution.

On the 15th he went to get a place in the car for Naples, and decided to start on the 17th. All that remained to be done in Rome was to pay some farewell visits, and among these, to the Baron de Bussieres. He had intended merely leaving his card at the Baron's house ; but by another of the many seeming accidents in his visit to Rome, by a mistake of the servant his name was announced, and he was shown into the drawing-room. M. and Madame de Bussieres were there, with their two little girls. The conversation turned on religion, and the Baron spoke of the greatness of the Catholic Church. Alphonse made ironical replies, only restraining his impiety from respect to Madame and to the faith of the children who were in the room. "Well," said the Baron, "since you profess such very liberal doctrines, and have so very enlightened a spirit, will you put your courage to a little innocent trial?" "What shall it be?" "To wear something I am going to give you. See, it is a medal of the Blessed Virgin. You may think it very ridiculous, but for my part, I attach great value to it."

Alphonse was struck by what he thought the singular childishness of the idea, and was about to laugh. But the thought occurred to him that the medal would be an amusing keepsake for his betrothed, and he agreed to take it for that purpose. No sooner said than done. He put the medal around his neck and, bursting into a fit of laughter, exclaimed: "Ha! here I am, Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman!" It was an unconscious prophecy. The Baron perceived his victory. "Come," said he, "we must complete the trial. You must repeat the Memorare morning and evening. It is a short and very efficacious

prayer, which St. Bernard addressed to the Blessed Virgin." "If it does me no good, at least," he said, "it will do me no harm." The Baron gave him the prayer, which he was to copy and return to him. They then parted, and Alphonse went to the theatre, where he forgot all about the medal and prayer. On coming home, he found a note from the Baron, asking him to call next day. He then packed his trunks, wrote the prayer as he had promised, and then went to bed.

Next day he called on the Baron to bring him the copy, keeping the original. The Baron asked him why he was in such a hurry to leave Rome, just before the ceremonies of St. Peter's? He replied that his place was taken, and that letters were waiting for him at Palermo. The Baron urged him to stay, and at length, as before, by a sort of incomprehensible influence, he agreed to do so, though he hardly knew the Baron's intentions, and had already refused to stay when his most intimate friends urged him to do so.

"What, O my God!" exclaims Alphonse in his narrative, "What was this irresistible impulse which made me do that which I would not? Was it not the same which forced me to make a visit I disliked, when I had no time left for those I really wished to make? O Providential Guidance! There is, then, a mysterious influence which guides a man on the road of life. I had received at my birth the name of Tobias, along with that of Alphonse; I had forgotten the first name; but my invisible agent did not forget it. Here was the true friend which Heaven had sent me; but I did not know him. Alas! there are many Tobias in the world who do not know that celestial guide, and who resist his voice!"

The Baron, on the following day, took a walk with Alphonse, and took great pains to lead the conversation to religious subjects. He received, however, no encouragement from Alphonse, who replied to all his arguments in the most sarcastic and blasphemous manner. So confident, however, was the Baron that his friend would be converted in spite of all appearances (O certain mark of an efficacious devotion to Mary!), that, in passing the Scala Santa, he took off his hat and exclaimed with

great animation: "Hail, holy staircase! behold a sinner who will one day ascend you on his knees!" Alphonse could hardly express the contempt he felt at the very idea of thus honoring a *staircase*, and, entering some beautiful garden later in the day, exclaimed, in parody of his friend's expression: "Hail, true marvels of God! it is before you we ought to prostrate ourselves, and not before a staircase!"

Matters went on thus with little change for a few days. On the 19th, calling on the Baron, he observed that he was out of spirits, and therefore left early. Alphonse, all this while had his memory still haunted by the prayer of the Memorare and, in spite of all his efforts to get rid of it, he could not help incessantly running it over in his mind. Still, had anyone said to him on the morning of January 20, 1842: "You have risen a Jew, and you will lie down a Christian," he would have regarded him as the absurdest of mankind. He spent the morning of that day in lively conversation with some old friends whom he happened to meet at a café. If, at midday, someone had said to him: "Alphonse, in a quarter of an hour you will be worshipping Jesus Christ in a poor little church, and you will after that be confessing your sins at the feet of a priest, and spend the carnival in a college of the Jesuits to prepare for baptism, and renounce the world and its pleasures, your fortune, your hopes, your family, your betrothed, and the friendship of the Jews, aspiring after nothing, but to follow Jesus Christ, and to carry the Cross to the day of your death"—again he would have been at a loss for words to express his sense of the unspeakable absurdity of such a supposition.

On January 20, 1842, about one o'clock, M. de Bussiere, on his way to the church of St. Andrea delle Fratte, met M. Ratisbonne. He asked him to accompany him, and the two entered the church together. Leaving his companion, as he thought, intent on examining the building, the Baron passed through to the monastery beyond in order to speak to the monks concerning the funeral of the Marquis de la Ferronnays, which was to take place there the next day. On coming back, ten minutes afterwards, he looked in vain for M. Ratisbonne. At

last he perceived him in a side chapel, prostrate, with his face to the ground. He spoke to him and touched him, but could obtain no answer.

At length the prone man looked up; and then, his face bathed in tears, his clasped hands, and his inability to speak, told that he had that to say which words were weak to express.

"Oh, how M. de la Ferronnays must have prayed for me!" he said at last.

When M. de Bussiere, eager for information, had drawn his friend outside the church, he had to judge from signs, for M. Ratisbonne refused to tell in words what had happened to him. He could only say: "Lead me whither you will. After what I have seen I can but obey." Then, drawing forth the medal which he had reluctantly carried about with him for some days previously, he pressed it to his lips, murmuring over it burning words of gratitude and love. Amid the broken utterances of this man shaken by strong emotion, the following sentences came forth: "How good God is!" "What joy until now unknown!" "How great is my happiness!" and "How those are to be pitied who do not believe!"

M. Ratisbonne refused to be more explicit until at the feet of one of God's ministers. "Take me to a priest," he said. He was led to the Rev. Father Villefort, S. J., of the Church of the Gesu. Then on his knees and still clasping the medal, which he kept pressing to his lips, he exclaimed: "I have seen her! I have seen her!"

He then related as follows: "I had been but a minute or two in the church when I became a prey to an indescribable feeling of distress. When I looked up the whole building around seemed to have disappeared. I could only see one chapel, which had, as it were, gathered all light unto itself, and there, in the midst of the light, standing on an altar, beautiful and majestic, was the Blessed Virgin Mary as represented on this medal. I was drawn towards her as by an irresistible impulse. She made a sign to me to kneel down, and then seemed to say: 'That is well.' She did not speak, but I understood everything."

It is worth while to mention that the chapel in which this

vision took place was dedicated to St. Michael, and contained no picture or statue of the Blessed Virgin.

M. Ratisbonne found it difficult to enter into further details. Questioned afresh, he expressed himself at a loss to account for the, as it were, involuntary impulse which had led him to go from the right side of the church, where M. de Bussiere had left him, to the left, where the chapel dedicated to St. Michael was situated. He said that at first he had looked at the Blessed Virgin in the radiance of her glory and immaculate purity, but that, afterwards he had found it impossible to gaze fully upon her. Thrice he attempted to raise his eyes to her, and each time his glance failed to reach higher than her hands. "I could not give an idea in words," he said, "of the mercy and liberality I felt to be expressed in those hands. It was not only rays of light that I saw escaping thence. Words fail to give an idea of the ineffable gifts that flow from those hands of Our Mother! The mercy, the tenderness, and the wealth of Heaven escape thence in torrents on the souls of those whom Mary protects."

The baptism of Alphonse Ratisbonne took place in the Church of the Gesu in presence of the elite of Roman society. Abbe Dupanloup, afterwards the great Bishop of Orleans, preaching on the occasion, said: "O you, on whom all eyes are fixed at this moment, tell us by what secret ways the Lord has led you hither. It is for you to tell us how the sun of truth first rose in your soul and what was its brilliant dawn." In an eloquent apostrophe to the Blessed Virgin he exclaimed: "Quæ est ista? You are the Mother of our Saviour," he continued, "and Jesus, the fruit of your womb, is the God blessed of all ages. As child of Adam you are our sister. Soror nostra es. You are the masterpiece of the Power Divine and His mercy's sweetest smile. O God, give light to the blind, that they may see Mary, and hearts to those without hearts, that they may love her."

Received in audience by the Sovereign Pontiff, M. Ratisbonne was admitted to His Holiness's bed-chamber in order that he might see there on a wall near the bed a beautiful pic-

ture of the Immaculate Conception as represented by the "Miraculous Medal."

Gregory XVI. ordered a canonical examination to be made of the circumstances attending this remarkable conversion, the result of which was the declaration by Cardinal Patrizzi (June 3, 1842), "that the perfect and instantaneous conversion of Alphonse Marie Ratisbonne from Judaism to the Catholic faith was a true and signal miracle wrought by the all-good and all-great God through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

Alphonse Ratisbonne became a priest and fellow-worker with his brother, Abbe Theodore Ratisbonne, in the foundation of the work known as L'Œuvre de Notre-Dame di Sion, from which were to be born two religious congregations now spread over the world. Forty years after the vision at Rome he died at Jerusalem with the name of Mary on his lips.

MY MEDAL

Only a Medal on
Whose silver gloss
Is carved a Burning Heart
Pierced with a cross;
Beneath whose wreath of thorn there doth appear
Love's last bequest, a Wound made by a spear

Whose soundless depths man's thought
Can never reach,
Not even eternity
Its measure teach;
But lonely hearts find there Home and a Friend
And sinners, coming back, peace without end!

Upon its "other side,"
Star-crowned and sweet,
Stands Heaven's Queen, with earth
Beneath her feet.
Star of the sea, and Heaven's eternal Gate,
Our Mother! evermore Immaculate!

Mother! O blessed name!
How strong thou art
To thrill the pulses of
My drooping heart!
No longer "motherless," ah, "Full of Grace!"
Weary and worn, I seek a little place.

Among the least of those
Who follow thee,
Though, all unworthy, called
Thy "child" to be;
Yet the unworthy and the sinful claim
Sure help from Jesus, asked in Mary's name!

When tempted, I need only
Look on this
Dear Heart, lance-pierced for *me*,
And softly kiss
My Medal, with a prayer, and humbly say,
"Let *me* not wound thee, loving Heart to-day!"

Or, when my daily cross
Grows heavier,
I'll turn the "other side"
And think of *her*
Who bore a sword-pierced heart, her *whole* life long,
And, kissing her blest feet, grow brave and strong.

If friends should change or die,
Or "sail away,"
Leaving me desolate,
Some bitter day,
I will look on my breast, where shines the "star,"
That pointeth heavenward, where no partings are!

So precious Medal, lie
Upon my breast,
Each heart-throb shall proclaim,
Her praises blest;
Lie there, to rise and fall with every breath,
Lie there, till I am cold and dumb in death.

Lie on my *silent* heart,
 And *speak* for me!
 O silver Heart of Christ
 My passport be
 Into Thy Father's house, when, all alone,
 Through the dark gate of death I shall have gone.

When, trembling before Him,
 My Judge most *just*,
 My soul, in dread and shame,
 Cleaves to the dust,
 With not one word to plead why it should not
 Be doomed to endless pain, lost and forgot!

Remember, *then*, O heart
 Pierced for my sin,
 My *Mother* pleads with thee,
 To let me in!
 Saying: "O Son, behold my Child, shall she
 Be disappointed who has called on *me*?"

"O, by those past sad hours
 Of dread and gloom
 When *I* stood by Thy cross,
 And at Thy tomb!
 By all the sorrows I have shared with *Thee*,
 By all the glory thou hast given me,

"Let not this child of mine
 Whose soul hath cost
 So dear a ransom, now
 Be doomed and lost.
 With deep repentance she hath mourned her sin;
 Jesus, Beloved, let my daughter in."

And O, be sure, *that Son*
 Will, smiling, say
 "Have thy sweet will, My *Mother*,
 Mine always!
 No soul you guard shall ever die unshriven,
 Or 'Child of Mary' be shut out from Heaven!"

APPARITION
TO
MAXIMIN AND MELANIE
LA SALETTE, FRANCE

1846

See! Mary dear, what flowers rich and gay,
I bring to thee, as emblems of thy Son:
Bright roses red, His sacred passion tell—
Sweet lillie fair, His earthly mission done
On Calv'ry's heights—to die and sin dispell.
O Virgin Pure! when life's stern course is run
May I, in thy fair land, forever dwell.

John A. O'Sullivan.



FIFTY-SEVEN years ago the name of La Salette was unknown, save only to the inhabitants of its immediate vicinity. It is a small village in the southern part of Dauphine, consisting of eight or ten hamlets scattered about, at no great distance from one another. The principal hamlet where the church is situated, and which gives its name to the whole parish, is not less than 3,700 feet above the level of the sea. The population, about 800 souls, are poor and simple, principally small farmers, with their families and dependents. Late on the evening of Saturday, the 19th of September, 1846, two children, servants of two of these farmers, returned from the mountain where they had been engaged all day in keeping cows, and told their masters a very wonderful story. The eldest of the children was a girl of fifteen years of age, who had been out at service ever since she was nine or ten years old, and had been with her present master for the last six months. The other child was a boy of eleven, who was quite a stranger in the village, having been brought from the town of Corps, a distance of four or five miles, on the previous Monday as a temporary substitute for a cowherd who was ill. These two children then told the following tale:

They said that about midday they had driven their cows, according to their usual practice, to a certain rivulet to drink; that they had at the same time eaten their dinner and, after wandering about a short time, they lay down and fell asleep near a fountain which was at that time dry; that the girl, Françoise-Melanie Mathieu, was the first to awake, and, seeing that the cows had strayed, she immediately awoke her companion, Pierre-Maximin Giraud; that they went together to look for their cattle and, from the brow of the hill soon discovered where they were; but before going to drive them back, they went to get their dinner bags; that their eyes were at once arrested by the appearance of a very extraordinary brilliance, dazzling as the sun, yet not of the same color; and that presently this light appeared to open, and they distinguished within it the form of a lady yet more brilliant. She was sitting on the stones at the head of the dry fountain, in an attitude of the most profound grief.

She was clothed in a white robe studded with pearls, and a gold-colored apron; white shoes, and roses of every variety of color about her feet; a wreath of roses around her head-dress, which was a high cap and slightly bent in front; upon her breast was a crucifix suspended by a small chain from her neck; on the left of the crucifix was a hammer, and on the right the pincers; another and larger chain encircled all these instruments of the Passion, and this again was within a still larger wreath of roses. Such at least was the description of the costume as given at the time by the children, but, as Maximin now very justly observes, "How could ignorant children, called upon to describe such extraordinary things, have been able to find fitting expressions, when the best educated persons sometimes fail in finding them to depict mere ordinary objects? When called upon to describe what I saw, I feel something of the same embarrassment which St. Paul must have felt when he returned from the third heaven, for the eye of man hath not seen, nor his ear heard, what it was then given to us to see and hear. Let not people, therefore, be astonished if what we called a cap, a crown, a handkerchief, chains, roses, an apron, stockings,



MADONNA AND CHILD

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buckles and shoes, had scarcely the real form of these objects. In that beautiful dress there was nothing earthly; rays of light and a variety of hues combined to produce a magnificent whole, which we only diminish and materialize by attempting to describe."

When the Lady stood upright, she was of a tall and majestic appearance—so tall, Melanie told us, that she had never seen anyone of equal height; the children, however, were unable to gaze steadfastly upon her countenance because of its brightness. At first her elbows rested on her knees, and her face was buried in her hands, whilst tears flowed copiously from her eyes. The girl was frightened, and dropped her stick; but the boy bade her pick it up again, adding that he should take care of his, for that if it (meaning the figure which they saw) offered to do them any harm, he would give it a good blow. Then they heard a most sweet and gentle voice, bidding them not to be afraid, but come forward, for that she had great news to tell them. The voice sounded as if of one speaking close to their ears, though the figure was seen at the distance of nearly thirty yards. It at once dispelled all their fears; they ran towards her as to a loving mother, of whose good-will they were well assured. The Lady herself arose and advanced to meet them, not seeming, however, to tread upon the earth as she went, but to be raised a few inches above it. Presently she stood between them, and addressed the following words to them, weeping as she spoke: "If my people will not submit themselves, I must let the hand of my Son fall upon them; it is so strong, so heavy, that I can keep it up no longer. How long a time have I suffered for you! If I wish my Son not to abandon you, I am obliged to pray to Him without ceasing; and you pay no regard to all this. However much you may pray, whatever you may do, yet you never can recompense all the trouble that I have taken in your behalf. I have given you six days to labor in, I have reserved the seventh for myself; yet they will not give it me. It is this which makes the hand of my Son so heavy. Wagoners cannot swear without introducing the name of my Son. These two things are what make the hand

of my Son so heavy. If the harvest is spoilt, you yourselves are the only cause of it. I made you feel this last year in the potatoes, but you took no account of it; on the contrary, when you found the potatoes were spoiled, you swore, and you took the name of my Son in vain. They will go on as they have begun, and by Christmas there will be none left."

Thus far the Lady had spoken in French, and the girl had not understood what she was speaking of in this last sentence, because in the patois of that country potatoes are not called *pommes de terre*, but *truffes*. Melanie, therefore, was going to ask Maximin what was the meaning of this word, *pommes de terre*; but she had not yet spoken, and the Lady knowing her thoughts, anticipated her words by saying: "Ah, my children, you do not understand me; I will speak differently." And she then went on to repeat the very same sentence—beginning with the words, "If the harvest is spoilt"—using the patois of the neighborhood. This she also continued to use in the following: "If you have corn you must not sow it; all that you sow the beasts will eat; any that comes up will fall to powder when you thresh it. There will come a great famine; and before the famine the children under the age of seven years will be seized with a trembling, and will fall in the hands of those that hold them; the rest will do penance by the famine. The walnuts will become bad, the grapes will rot; but if they be converted, the potatoes shall be self-sown in the earth."

Here the Lady paused, and it seemed to Melanie that she was speaking to the boy, but she heard nothing of what was said; then, in like manner, she spoke to Melanie, and the boy saw that she was speaking, but could not hear what was said, or whether anything was really being said at all. Only afterwards, when the vision had disappeared, the children spoke to one another about this mysterious silence, and each declared to the other that the Lady had at this juncture confided to them a secret, which they were on no account to reveal to anyone until the time came for so doing. Neither knew anything about the secret of the other, whether it was the same as his own or different.

The Lady then resumed her discourse to the two children together, asking, in the patois of the country, "Do you say your prayers well my children?" "Not very well, ma'am." The Lady replied, "Take care always to say your prayers, my children, every night and morning. When you can do nothing else, say at least a Pater and an Ave Maria; but when you have time, say more. Only a few old women go to Mass, the others work on Sundays during the summer; and in the winter, when they know not what to do, the youths go to Mass only to make a mockery of religion. In Lent they go to the shambles like dogs. Did you ever see corn that was spoiled, my child?" Maximin answered, "No, ma'am." Melaine, too, gave the same answer, but in a gentle tone, for she was not sure whether or not the question had been addressed to her as well as to her companion. The Lady then spoke to Maximin, and said: "You have seen it, my child, once when you were with your father at Coin. The owner of some ground there told your father to go and see his wheat that was spoilt. You went, both of you, and you took two or three ears of corn in your hands; you rubbed them, and they crumbled into dust. Then you went home; and whilst you were about half an hour's walk from home, your father gave you a piece of bread, and said, 'Take this, my child; let us eat it this year whilst we can get it; I don't know who will be able to eat any next year, if the wheat goes on like that.'" Maximin answered, "Oh, yes, ma'am, I remember now; just now I had forgotten all about it."

Then the Lady spoke once more in French, and said: "Well, my children, you will cause this news to be told to all my people," and with these words she passed on before the children and crossed the rivulet, and ascended the short but steep side of the opposite slope; then she repeated the very same words, and again she walked forward to the spot where the children had gone when they were in quest of the cattle.

"Motionless as statues," we quote the words of Maximin as he published them, "our eyes fixed on the beautiful Lady, we saw her, with feet close together like those of a person skating, gliding over the top of the grass without causing it to bend.

When we had recovered from our rapture, we ran after her and soon overtook her. Melanie placed herself in front, and I behind, a little to the right. There, in our presence, she rose gradually, visible for some minutes between heaven and earth, at the height of two or three feet; then her head, her body, and her feet became lost in the light which surrounded her. We could see nothing but a globe of fire rising and penetrating the firmament. In our simple language we called this globe a second sun. Our eyes remained long fixed on the spot where the luminous globe had disappeared. I cannot describe the ecstasy in which we found ourselves. I speak only of myself; I know very well that my whole being was overpowered; I was, as it were, paralyzed. When we came to ourselves again, we looked at one another without being able to utter a single word, sometimes raising our eyes towards Heaven, sometimes looking on the ground around us. We seemed to be seeking the resplendent figure which, however, I have never since beheld. . . . My companion was the first to break silence, and said: 'It must be the good God, or my father's Blessed Virgin, or perhaps some great Saint.' 'Ah,' I replied, 'If I had known that, I would certainly have asked her to take me with her to Heaven.' "

It was now time to leave the mountain; the children drove their cows to the village. There they first met the mistress of Melanie, to whom Maximin began to talk of the beautiful Lady they had seen. "My expressions," he says, "of a Lady in fire, a second sun, etc., made her think that I was gone mad. Nevertheless she begged me to tell her all that I had seen and heard, and she was much astonished at the recital. I, in my turn, was amazed that she had not seen as well as I, this brilliant light placed on the top of the mountain, and consequently visible, as I supposed, to a very great distance. I could not imagine that I had received a special grace." Then Maximin alone went on to the farm to which he belonged, and as soon as his master came home he communicated to him the same story.

The strange news soon spread among the neighbors, but was not believed. Early the next morning, the master of the boy, who had promised to take him back to Corps on that day,

brought both the children to the parish priest. He was a very simple-hearted old man; and, after having listened to the tale, and questioned and cross-questioned the children, he was so impressed with their truthfulness that he repeated a good deal of the history to his parishoners in the middle of that day's Mass; an irregular and rash act, for which he was afterwards reprimanded and removed. He was so much affected in reciting the story, that those who had heard nothing of it before scarcely knew what he was speaking about. However, as soon as Mass was ended, they lost no time in informing themselves, and all crowded round the children to hear it from their own lips. Our readers may easily imagine the cross-examination to which they were subjected. Still, nobody could succeed in shaking their testimony; they steadily persisted in repeating the same thing over and over again to all inquirers, answered all their questions with a readiness and simplicity truly surprising, and disposed of all their objections with the ease and ingenuity of the most practised advocates; in a word, though their evidence stood alone and unsupported, yet it was impossible to throw discredit upon it by any contradictions or inconsistencies in their manner of giving it. The girl was sent by her master to drive the cows to the mountain as usual. It was a long and tedious ascent, and not one of the neighbors had the curiosity to accompany her; they did not yet believe the story they had heard; the pilgrimage to La Salette had not yet begun. After Vespers (our readers will not have forgotten that it was Sunday), eight or ten people went up, and these were the first pilgrims, led rather by curiosity than by faith; and they made Melanie tell her story again, and point out the precise spots where everything was said to have happened. On her return in the evening, the Mayor of the village came and questioned her; he questioned the boy also in a separate room; he then brought them face to face, and gravely told them that what they had been saying was clearly a lie, and that God would punish them very severely if they persisted in repeating it. He exhorted them therefore to confess the imposture, and promised to shield them from all punishment. His eloquence was entirely thrown

away; the children said they must do as "the Lady" had told them, and proclaim the fact. Next he offered them money, about two pounds, to bribe them into silence; it was in vain; and, lastly he threatened them with imprisonment and other punishments; but this, too, was equally inefficacious, and the worthy magistrate returned to his home baffled and perplexed, and perhaps half disposed to be convinced. At a later hour the same evening the boy was taken back to his parents at Corps, according to agreement; and this was, of course, a means of spreading the wonderful story throughout a wider circle; or rather, there became two centres, as it were, from whence it circulated throughout the neighboring towns and villages, the boy at the town of Corps, and the girl at La Salette. Of those who heard the story, some shook their heads and laughed, and whispered something about priestcraft, ignorance, and superstition; but others, on the contrary, turned it over in their minds, and thought it would be well to go and examine the witnesses for themselves, to confront them with one another and with the scene of the supposed vision. Of those who adopted this latter course, many returned quite satisfied and convinced; and all acknowledged that they certainly were unable to detect the fraud and imposture, if fraud and imposture there were. There was nothing, perhaps, either in hearing the story from the children, or in seeing the places where it was alleged to have happened, that was calculated in itself to enforce conviction upon an unwilling mind; only the most incredulous were obliged to confess that, if the story was really false, it was strange they could not succeed in detecting the falsehood in any of the multiplied examinations, conducted with more than judicial severity, to which these young and ignorant children had been subjected. Daily experience shows us how the most plausible tale is often made to break down, or at least to seem to break down, under the pressure of some skilful cross-examination; but in this instance there was nothing of the kind; the witnesses could not be brow-beaten; the story kept its ground. And this was a great step. A consistent story, however strange, if it be continually repeated and insisted upon,

gradually gains belief; it perplexes and annoys those who would fain disbelieve it, but it slowly gains the assent of the indifferent and unprejudiced. And it was so here. Persons priding themselves upon their prudence, perhaps, again and again made offers to the children of large sums of money if only they would hold their tongues and say no more about it; but their answer was always the same, viz.: that they had been specially charged by "the Lady" to cause it to be told to all the people, and that they must obey this command. Still, it must not be thought that they went about in an excited, gossiping way, neglecting their daily duties, and taking upon themselves the office of itinerant preachers; far from it: they remained steadily in their former humble occupations, the girl continuing in the same service at La Salette, and the boy living at Corps with his parents; only they always repeated the history to those who asked for it, and answered the objections of those who tried to gainsay their testimony, and pointed out the precise spot where it all happened to those who sought their company for that purpose.

We must not omit to mention another circumstance also which tended greatly to give credibility to the children's words, viz.: that an intermittent fountain at the spot where this "Lady" first appeared, and which on that day, and for some time previously, had undoubtedly been dry, was found to be flowing copiously on the following morning, and had never since ceased; nor has it ceased up to the present day, though previously to the Apparition it flowed only at rare intervals, after a heavy fall of rain or the melting of snow upon the mountains.

So much, then, for the original story of the children and their steadfastness in maintaining it. Let us next inquire how this story was received by the authorities of the church. Did they encourage or discountenance it, or did they observe a strict neutrality?

Many of the parish priests in the neighborhood wrote to consult the Bishop (of Grenoble) as to what they ought to do and say under the circumstances; and these inquiries soon became so general that, on the 9th of October, that is, within

three weeks after the story had first been heard of, his lordship addressed the following circular to his clergy:

“Monsieur le Curé:—You have, no doubt, heard of the extraordinary facts which are said to have taken place in the parish of La Salette, near Corps. I beg you will refer to the Synodical statutes which I gave to my diocese in the year 1829. You will find there, at page 94: ‘We prohibit, under pain of excommunication, to be incurred *ipso facto*, the declaration, printing, or publication of any new miracle, under any pretext of notoriety whatsoever, excepting only the authority of the Holy See or our own, after a severe and careful examination. Whereas, therefore, we have not yet pronounced upon the facts above referred to, both duty and prudence prescribe to you the greatest possible reserve concerning them, and above all, an absolute silence about them in the pulpit.

“Notwithstanding this, certain persons have ventured to issue a lithograph print of the scene, to which are appended some verses. I have announced to you, Monsieur le Curé, that this publication has not only not received any approbation from me, but that it has much annoyed me, and that I have formally and severely reproved it. You will be cautious, therefore, and both set an example of prudent reserve in your own conduct and also recommend the same to others.

“Accept, Monsieur le Curé, the assurance of my sincere and tender regard.

“✠ PHILIBERT,

“Bishop of Grenoble.

“By Order, CHARMARD, Honorary Canon, Sec.”

But whilst the Bishop was thus enforcing a wise caution on his clergy, he was far from being an unconcerned spectator of what was going on. He had already removed the parish priest of La Salette to another cure, and substituted a priest brought from a distance; he now required all the clergy of the neighborhood and of his own episcopal city, and all others whom he knew to be traveling in that direction, to institute the most careful inquiries upon the spot, and to communicate the result

to him without delay. He studied with great diligence the mass of documents which were thus forwarded to him and, in consequence of what he learned in this way, he appointed two commissions early in December to draw up a report for him, and to advise him whether or not he should pronounce any decision on what was said to have happened. One of these commissions consisted of the chapter of his cathedral, the other of the professors in the ecclesiastical college of the diocese. On December 15th these reports were presented, and they were perfectly unanimous in the advice which they gave; advice characterized by that extreme caution and prudence which are so uniformly found in ecclesiastical decisions on matters of this kind, but the very reverse of which Protestants, in their ignorance, habitually attribute to them. Both the canons and the professors advised his lordship to abstain from giving any decision whatever: he could not, they said, give an unfavorable decision, for the whole affair was *tres plausible*, and such as they should certainly be disposed to believe at once if it were only an ordinary and natural event that was being called in question; and, moreover, it had produced none but purely beneficial effects; it had excited the devotion of the people, and made them more exact in the performance of their religious duties; it had entirely removed in the neighborhood where it had happened the faults complained of—the swearing, the desecration of the Sunday, etc., etc. The Bishop could not, therefore, declare the story to be false, and prohibit all belief in it. On the other hand, it rested on the authority of two children, who might *possibly* be either deceiving or deceived; and the personage who was supposed to have appeared to them had not required them to communicate it to the ecclesiastical authorities; there was no obligation, therefore, on the part of the Bishop to give any judgment at all; and, considering that all eyes were upon him, and what a serious thing it was to pronounce in such a matter, they counseled a complete silence: “to leave those who were satisfied with the sufficiency of the proofs that could be alleged, free to believe it, yet not to censure those who, from a contrary motive, refused or withheld their belief.

If this event comes from God, and it is God's will that the authorities should interfere in the matter, He will manifest His will more clearly and positively. Then it will be quite time enough for the authorities to break silence; there is no necessity to do so at present; there is no danger in delaying; it is more prudent, therefore, to wait." Such was the language of the Bishop's advisers, and it is language which will commend itself to every sober right-judging man. There is something in it eminently practical which the English mind is singularly calculated to appreciate; and we will venture to say that it is as far as possible from what any of our Protestant readers would have expected.

Matters remained in this state for a considerable time; that is to say, there was no official interference on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities, either in the way of encouragement or otherwise, for a period of six or seven months. But meanwhile, the story spread far and wide, and found many to credit it; laymen, priests, and even bishops, came from a distance, examined for themselves, returned home, and sometimes published an account of their visit, uniformly pronouncing themselves in favor of the reality of the Apparition. Rumors of miraculous cures wrought at the fountain, or elsewhere, upon persons drinking of the water of the fountain and calling upon the intercession of Our Lady of La Salette, grew and multiplied. Pilgrims from various parts of France and Italy, and even Spain, and from Germany, began to arrive in large numbers. The affair was growing serious; it arrested the attention of the government, at that time by no means inclined to look favorably upon anything that savored of religious devotion and enthusiasm. People, it was said, ought not to be allowed to flock together in this way in an obscure corner of the kingdom. What was the secret? These prophecies of famine and distress coming upon the land? There might be some political mystery at the bottom of it; it might be intended to take advantage of the superstition of the people to devise some plot, or to create some disturbance of the peace; anyhow, it was a matter that should be looked into and, if necessary, be put down. Ac-

cordingly, on May 22, 1847, the children were summoned, by order of the higher authorities, before the *juge de paix*, or Justice of the Peace, assisted by the Recorder or Registrar of the same district. They were examined, both separately and together; and after a solemn warning from the magistrates to declare the whole truth and nothing but the truth, they each repeated, almost word for word, the narrative which has been already given. In forwarding the depositions to the Attorney-General, which was done on the following day, the examining magistrate enclosed a private note, saying that the children had given their evidence very much as if they were reciting a lesson; but he added: "This is not to be wondered at; for they have repeated it so often and to such a number of persons, that they have naturally acquired this habit." He further added, that he could vouch for the identity of their present narrative with that which they gave at the very first to their masters; at least he had been assured of this identity by the testimony of one of the masters themselves, who had committed the whole story to writing the very day after he first heard it, and whose MS. is still extant.

Two months later, July 19th, the Bishop of Grenoble again appointed a commission, with authority to institute the most rigid examination, and to collect all possible information on the subject, both as regarded the history of the event itself, and also the authenticity of any miracles which professed to have been wrought in connection with it. This commission consisted of sixteen ecclesiastics of the highest repute in the diocese for learning and piety; the two vicars-general, eight canons, the superior of the seminary, and five parish priests. Two or three of these set out about ten days afterwards on a tour of inquiry, which they prosecuted with great diligence throughout the neighboring dioceses of Valence, Viviers, Avignon, Nimes, Montpellier, Marseilles, Frejus, Digne, and Gap. On August 25th they arrived at Corps, and examined the children; and the next day they ascended the mountain in their company, and in the company of some thirty or forty other persons, ecclesiastics and others. Having thus done all that was

possible to do in the way of preliminary investigation, having collected a good deal of very important documentary evidence properly attested, the members of the episcopal commission were summoned for their first formal session on November 8th. The Bishop presided on the occasion; the proceedings were opened with solemn invocation of the Holy Ghost, and other prayers; a form of devotion was prescribed for the daily use of all the commissioners during the progress of the inquiry; a plan of operations was laid down according to which the inquiry should be conducted; and this was the whole of the first day's business. On November 15th they met again to examine witnesses; first, the Curé of Corps, then the boy Maximin. The next day they examined the girl, and also the Reverend Mother Superioress of a religious community, in whose schools both the children had been taught (reading and writing, and their religion, for they had been grossly ignorant) ever since the Christmas after the Apparition; and on the third day they examined both the children together. On all these occasions the ingenuity of the examiners was racked to the very utmost to discover questions that should perplex and expose the children; there were those upon the bench who, by no means, wished the weight of episcopal sanction to be given to the marvellous narrative which the children told, and who, therefore, suggested doubts and difficulties, and proposed questions which they themselves thought quite unanswerable. But their labor was all in vain; and at the end of the third day they had made no progress whatever towards invalidating the testimony of these dull, uneducated peasants. The acuteness of some of their answers (specimens shall be given hereafter), the simplicity of others, and the unhesitating boldness of all, proved to be more than a match for all the captious objections and subtle refinements of the most practised logicians. The fifth conference was held on November 22d, and the subject discussed was the nature of probability and of moral certainty, the number of witnesses necessary to authenticate a fact, etc., etc.; and at the end of this session a certain portion of the report was read and adopted. The next two sessions, November 29th and Decem-

ber 6th, were devoted to the examination of documents sent from other dioceses relative to certain miracles alleged to have been wrought upon persons drinking the water of the fountain of La Salette, and joining in certain devotional exercises addressed to Our Blessed Lady under this new title. In the first of these sessions, two miracles were admitted as proved according to the strictest rules laid down by the theologians in this matter; and in the second, one only was admitted. The eighth and last session was held on December 13th; in it divers objections and difficulties were started and solved, the remainder of the report was adopted, and the Bishop declared the conference to be now closed. He thanked the members of the commission for their assiduous attendance, and dismissed them, saying that he reserved to himself the right of pronouncing his solemn judgment upon the matter that had been under discussion, at such time as he should deem most suitable.

One feature in the case yet remained which might seem to afford a convenient shelter for doubt and suspicion. "Nothing can be easier," it was objected, "than for the children to say that they have been entrusted with a very precious secret; but as long as they steadily refuse to communicate to any man living what the secret is, we are at liberty to doubt whether they really have any secret at all; we have no proof of it, and therefore we shall disbelieve it." When our readers come to learn, by-and-by, the strength of the temptations by which the children were tried upon this head, and consider the facility on the supposition that the children are imposters, which, of course, is what these objectors professed to believe, of inventing a secret, they will estimate this argument at its true value. However, the pastoral solicitude of the Bishop of Grenoble was not satisfied until he had removed even this stumbling-block from the way of the weakest members of his flock. Accordingly, in the month of July, 1851, the aged prelate sent for the two children, and explained to them that all visions and revelations and supernatural events of whatever kind that happen in the Church ought to be fully and completely submitted to the holy Pontiff; that as head of the Church and Vicar of Jesus Christ upon

earth, it belonged to him to judge in these matters; he therefore required them, under obedience to his authority, to commit to writing the secret which they said Our Blessed Lady had confided to them, and he, on his part, would charge himself with the responsibility of sending the letters by faithful messengers to Rome. As soon as the children were satisfied by the Bishop's arguments that it was their duty to obey him in this matter, they sat down at different tables, and wrote their respective letters, without the slightest hesitation, and exactly as if they had been copying what they wrote from some original before them. They signed and sealed their letters, and the Bishop entrusted them to the Vicar-General of his diocese and another priest to carry to Rome. On the 18th of the same month these precious missives were placed in the hands of the Holy Father by the persons we have named. His Holiness immediately read them in the presence of the messengers, but, of course, without communicating to them any of their contents. He said he must read them again at his leisure, and then added: "They are scourges for France, but Germany and Italy, and many other countries, deserve the same;" and he went on to assure the Abbe Rousselot that his books (the Report and its supplement) had been examined by the Promoter of the Faith, and were approved of. The secret which these two poor ignorant children had professed to be entrusted with, and which for five years they had so jealously and so successfully guarded against the pertinacious efforts of thousands of curious inquirers, was no fiction, but a reality; a reality sufficient to engage and satisfy the mind of the Holy Pontiff, and therefore more than sufficient to assure all reasonable men that at least it was no idle invention of the children themselves.

At length, on September 19, 1851, the fifth anniversary of the Apparition, after so many years of careful and patient investigation, the Bishop issued a formal authoritative decision, and in a pastoral letter solemnly declared the Apparition to be a certain and unquestionable fact. He begins this letter by explaining and justifying his long delay, which arose, he says, from no indifference or slowness of heart to believe, but simply

from that prudence and circumspection which is so necessary a part of the episcopal character. He knew, on the one hand, that any hasty decision in such a matter would scandalize both weak Catholics and avowed unbelievers; and on the other, that no real harm could arise from a cautious delay, "since the religion of Jesus Christ has no need of this particular fact to establish the truth of a thousand other heavenly Apparitions in times past, recorded in Holy Scripture." Although personally, therefore, his own conviction of the truth of the children's narrative was complete at the end of the examination that was conducted in his presence in the months of November and December, 1847, still he had been unwilling to press it upon the acceptance of others who might think differently about it. Since that time he had redoubled his prayers to the Holy Spirit that his mind might be illuminated, and that he might be guided aright; he had scrupulously studied and followed all the rules laid down by holy doctors of the Church as necessary to be observed in affairs of this kind, and was ready to submit and correct his judgment, if the See of Peter, the Mother and mistress of all churches, should declare herself in a contrary sense. "Wherefore," he continues, "considering, in the first place, that we are wholly unable to explain the fact of La Salette in any other way than as an act of the direct interference of Almighty God, whether we look at it in itself, in its circumstances, or in its object, which is essentially religious; considering, in the second place, that the marvelous consequences which have flowed from this fact are the testimony of God Himself, given by means of miracles, and that this testimony is superior alike to the testimony and to the objections of mere men; considering that either of these reasons taken alone, and still more both together, ought to override all doubt and utterly destroy any weight which might at first sight seem to attach to the difficulties and objections which have been raised against it; considering, lastly, that a spirit of docility and submissiveness to the warnings of Heaven may preserve us, perhaps, from those new chastisements with which we are threatened, whilst contrariwise a prolonged resistance may expose us to fresh and

irremediable evils: At the express demand of all the members of our venerable chapter, and of a very large majority of the priests of our diocese, as also to satisfy the just desires of a large number of pious souls, both at home and abroad, who would otherwise, perhaps, accuse us of hiding and imprisoning the truth. Having called upon the Holy Spirit and implored the assistance of the pure and spotless Virgin, We decree as follows: namely, what has been already mentioned—that the Apparition of La Salette is a true and certain fact, which none of the clergy or faithful of the diocese are hereafter at liberty publicly to contradict or call in question; that it may be preached and commented upon in the pulpit, but that no prayers or hymns, or other books of devotion connected with it, may be printed without the episcopal approbation, given in writing; and that a church and house of refuge for pilgrims shall be immediately begun, on the site of the Apparition, for which purpose alms are solicited from all the faithful.”

This pastoral was followed by another on the 1st of May in the next year, a few extracts from which will serve better than any words of our own as a commentary upon the last. After speaking of the high privilege he had enjoyed in being the chosen instrument to proclaim the truth of an Apparition of the Blessed Virgin, a privilege and a duty of which he was obliged to avail himself under pain of a blameworthy resistance to the will of God and to the unanimous desire of the faithful, the Bishop continues: “Our *mandement* of September 19 has been received with universal satisfaction; for, in truth, public opinion had anticipated our decision, and the formal decree which we issued did but give that sanction which was wanting to make it a full and complete certainty. We have received numerous congratulations, expressions of agreement with our decision, gifts, and promises of assistance from divers princes of the Church and a large number of our venerable colleagues. . . . It could not be otherwise, my brethren, for it was not without a purpose that the Mother of Mercy condescended to visit the children of men. . . . Words descended from on high must needs spread far and wide, and be heard by all na-

tions. Look back at the origin of this great event; see its obscure birth, its rapid diffusion first throughout France and the whole of Europe, then to the four quarters of the world, and, finally, its arrival in the capital of Christendom. To God alone be the honor and glory! We have only been a feeble instrument of His adorable will. It is to the august Virgin of La Salette that this prodigious and most unexpected result must be attributed; She alone has made the necessary dispositions of things to bring it about—She alone has triumphed over all obstacles, solved all objections, annihilated all difficulties—she alone will put the final crown upon her own work.”

He then goes on to announce the arrangements he has made for laying the foundation-stone and blessing the new church, as also for establishing a body of clergy to be called Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette, who shall reside on the mountain during that part of the year when it can be frequented by pilgrims, and during the winter months shall be employed in preaching missions and retreats in different parts of the diocese.

The ceremony of laying the foundation-stone was fixed for the 25th of this same month of May, and the Bishop was assisted in it by one of his colleagues, the Bishop of Valence. More than 3,000 pilgrims assisted at the high Mass, sermon, and benediction.

Thus the pilgrimage of La Salette, whose first feeble beginnings may be said to date almost from the very day after the original announcement of the Apparition, but which had grown so rapidly that not less than 60,000 pilgrims were assembled on occasion of the first anniversary, was now finally and authoritatively established, and from that day forward its celebrity has been more and more confirmed. Between thirty and forty thousand pilgrims visit the Shrine annually, among whom are more than 700 priests, who come to celebrate the holy Sacrifice on so favored a spot. More than 300 chapels or churches, and a countless number of altars, have been dedicated throughout the Christian world under the title of Our Lady of La Salette; 330 confraternities are associated to the Archconfraternity

established on the mountain; and the annals of the sanctuary, published every month by the missionaries, are distributed to six or seven thousand subscribers in every part of the globe. Henceforth, La Salette has taken its place among the most famous of Our Lady's sanctuaries, and as long as the world shall last it will never cease to be an object of the deepest interest and a place of frequent pilgrimage to the pious servants of Mary. Other such places in various parts of the world are venerable with the traditions of fifteen or sixteen centuries; but it is scarcely possible that there should be ever one whose claims upon our devotion can be more thoroughly and satisfactorily sifted than that whose history is here given.

First, then, let us say something about the children whose tale, first told, on the evening of September 19, 1846, was the beginning of the whole story. Born of parents in the very poorest class, and in a part of the country where the people were at that time notorious for inattention to their religious duties, they had been brought up in the grossest ignorance, both secular and religious. The girl was nearly fifteen years of age; but having been at service ever since she was nine or ten, and having been made by her masters to work on Sundays and holidays almost as constantly as during the week, she had a most imperfect knowledge of the doctrines of the Christian faith; she could not repeat two lines of the catechism, and had not been admitted, therefore, to make her first Communion with the other children of her age. She was naturally timid, careless, idle, and disobedient; her memory and intellectual capabilities were so feeble that, even after the Apparition, after having been taught to repeat twice every day for a twelve-month the Acts of faith, hope and charity, she could not be trusted to recite them correctly by herself; matters which many of the children in our poor schools, of the age of seven or eight, or even less, would recite with the utmost facility. She was afterwards for six years under the care of the Sisters of Providence, and the training which she received during that period of course considerably strengthened and improved her mental faculties; we were told, however, by the chaplain of

the convent where we saw her as a novice in 1852, that they were still certainly below the average. This fact was not apparent in the course of the conversation which we had with her ourselves, for we talked only about the history of the Apparition; and upon this subject, as we shall presently have occasion to observe, both the children have always displayed a degree of sharpness and ability altogether beyond their natural powers. Her singular simplicity and modesty of manners was very prepossessing, and the ready straightforwardness of her replies seemed to us thoroughly incompatible with all idea of cunning and deceit. The Bishop of Birmingham, who saw her two years later in the same convent, says that he found "her demeanor singularly modest and recollected, and her manner simple and religious. . . . I put a series of questions, which she answered with calmness, but with readiness." She did not persevere in the community of the Sisters of Providence, but removed to the much stricter Order of Mount Carmel, and "is at this moment," writes one of the missionaries of La Salette, in a private letter addressed to ourselves on September 25, 1867, "at Castellamare, near Naples, where she is gone this year to assist in a religious foundation, of which the mother-house is at Marseilles."

The boy Maximin we have never seen; but the same venerable authority whom we last quoted writes that "his general appearance is frank, and he prepossessed me favorably. His manner is free and easy, but still rustic. He answers readily when questioned, but his hands are restlessly employed about his knees. His voice has an independent drawl in it, and he has not an atom of mere human respect in his composition." All reports agree that he has made but a very poor way in learning, for he is both slow in mind, heedless, and volatile. The farmer for whom he was keeping cows at the time of the Apparition described him to the commission of inquiry as "an innocent, without malice and without foresight." His father testified that it had been a work of three or four years to teach him the Our Father and Hail Mary; and when he was taken into the school of the Sisters of Providence, at the age of eleven years,

a twelve-months' instruction was not sufficient to enable him to serve Mass. His indolence, too, and love of play, retarded the progress of his studies almost more than any natural deficiency of mental powers. When once he had begun to learn, he was very anxious to become an ecclesiastic, and means were afforded him to gratify this desire; as far, at least, as man can help him—that is, as far as his education is concerned. He was sent to the seminary of Grenoble, but after a sufficient trial was rejected as seemingly incapable of steady persevering application; and ten years afterwards we find him serving the Church in a way better suited to his capacity, as a Pontifical Zouave. These, then, are the children who, on the evening of September 19, 1846, came from the mountain, and told the wonderful story here narrated; and we need not say another word to show that they were at least incapable of *inventing* such a story. Had the message which they professed to have received, and to be commissioned to deliver to the people, been short and simple—had it consisted of a single sentence—or had it confined itself to a mere general exhortation to greater strictness and holiness of life, and a general denouncement of evils to come if the people did not repent, the case would have been very different. In this case, though it might have been difficult to have conceived any adequate motive that could have induced the children to invent such a tale, still it would not have been a self-evident absurdity to suggest the suspicion. But now, looking at the message as it really stands, considering its length, the minuteness of its announcements, the boldness and accuracy of its predictions, and the whole character of the language in which it is couched, everyone can see at once that the idea of two ignorant peasant children having been the authors of such a narrative is simply preposterous.

But if the story be not true, and if the children were not the authors of it, it must needs be either that they were the instruments and accomplices of the author, or else the victims of some extraordinary ocular or mental delusion. The refutation of this latter hypothesis may safely be left to the common sense of our readers; and the same may be said also of the idea sug-

gested by the *Times* newspaper, of a "got-up apparition." Had the scene of the plot been laid in some thick wood, and in "the witching hour of night," we might have thought differently; but a "got-up apparition" at noon-day, when there was not a single cloud in the heavens, and on the summit of a bare mountain, where not a tree or a shrub is to be seen, is simply impossible. It remains, therefore, to inquire whether the children may not have been the conscious accomplices of some third party yet undiscovered; for if the story be not true, this is the only explanation of the matter that deserves a moment's consideration. Yet that even this, too, is utterly inadmissible, it will not be difficult to demonstrate, by observing what has been the conduct of the children subsequently to their first announcement of the marvel.

It has been already mentioned that they were strangers to one another until the day before the alleged apparition; the boy had only been in the village of La Salette for five days altogether, and both the place and the occupation being new to him, his master had felt himself obliged to accompany him every day, and to remain in his immediate neighborhood at work, that so he might always have an eye upon him; and he deposes that during the whole of that week the two children had not been in one another's company until the Saturday. Then on the Sunday they were separated again; the boy returned to Corps, the girl remained at La Salette; and they never met, save only to be examined from time to time by some of the numerous visitors, until the following Christmas. At that time the girl was taken into a poor-school kept by some religious in Corps, and the boy frequented the same school as a day scholar. Strangers frequently came to interrogate the children, both separately and together; and sometimes these strangers took the boy away with them for a day or two to go and point out the precise spot upon the mountain; but it was never observed that on any of these occasions the children showed the slightest desire to come together after the examination was over, in order that they might "compare notes" as to the questions that had been asked and the answers given.

On the contrary, it was notorious that they *never* sought one another's society at any time; there was a perfect indifference between them; neither cared to learn how or by whom the other had been examined; nor did they ever make it a subject of conversation with their school fellows. They were always ready to see anybody who came to question them upon the subject, and their answers were always prompt to the inquiries that were put to them; but they never talked of it unnecessarily to their companions, nor communicated to one another afterwards the result of the examination. They never seemed in the slightest degree anxious or oppressed, as with the consciousness of some great mystery in which they had a part to play; but the whole thing appeared to rest lightly and naturally upon them, like any other fact in their past history, which it was not necessary for them ever to speak about, but if interrogated upon, there was no reason why they should hesitate to answer; and in this free and unembarrassed way they have undergone the examination of thousands of curious and cunning inquirers, of priests and bishops, lawyers, magistrates and judges, during a period of several years, and yet have never been detected in any untruth or contradiction.

We have dwelt at such length upon the internal evidence in favor of the story of the Apparition of La Salette, to be derived either from an examination of the narrative itself, or from the conduct of the children towards it, or from any other of its own intrinsic circumstances, that we must pass over in a very hurried way such external evidence as can be adduced for it. It is briefly this: first, the new spring of water upon the mountain; secondly, the universal acceptance which the story has met with throughout the Christian world; and thirdly, the fact of many miracles having been wrought upon persons believing it and calling upon Our Blessed Lady of La Salette for extraordinary help and assistance. The first of these facts cannot of course be anything more than an indirect confirmation of the story told by the children; but certainly it is at least as much as this, and ought not therefore to be set aside as of no value. The children affirm that they saw a lady sitting on a

particular spot, and that this lady communicated to them certain intelligence which they were to impart to the people. The people attracted by curiosity go and visit the spot, and they find that an abundant fountain of very pure water is flowing there, where on the day before there had been no water at all. And the whole population of the neighborhood have now had the experience of fifty-eight years, during the whole of which time they have observed that it has never ceased to flow; yet they knew that before the Apparition it was a most irregular and intermittent stream. Here, then, is a plain sensible change in one of the phenomena of nature upon this mountain top; and it falls in with, and to a certain degree corroborates, the children's story; and at least it certainly predisposes the minds of those to whose knowledge it has been brought, to accept a story which seems to account for the change, and is otherwise well attested. Moreover, it is worth noticing that the children made no mention of this "miraculous fountain" as a part of their story. They are positive that there was no water there on the Saturday; they saw it flowing on the Sunday; but neither of them pretend to know when or how it began to flow.

But secondly, the story has met with universal acceptance; and this, again, is an argument in favor of its truth. How did the tale of the two peasant children command the assent and belief first of those living upon the spot or in its neighborhood, and then of the faithful generally throughout France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, and other Catholic countries? How did their feeble voice suffice to bring together on the first anniversary of the Apparition upwards of sixty thousand pilgrims from different parts of the earth? Their story had been most rudely handled by those public journals which habitually laugh to scorn everything that is religious; on the other hand, it had not been indorsed by the ecclesiastical authority; it stood therefore entirely upon its own merits; and nevertheless it was believed by hundreds and by thousands; and at this moment it has not only outlived all opposition, but it has won, not a mere unreasoning assent, but a most deep and hearty devotion from the great majority of the faithful.

VOX POPULI, VOX DEI

The third and last point of external evidence which we mentioned was the evidence of miracles—that is, of miraculous cures that have been wrought in connection with a belief in this Apparition and, as it would appear, in confirmation of that belief.

We will state the case of a miracle, wrought in confirmation of the Apparition at La Salette, which has received episcopal sanction. On the 16th of April, 1846, when the community of nuns known by the name of the religious of St. Joseph were being removed from one establishment to another in the city of Avignon, the whole population of the place saw one of the Sisters being carried in a litter, because she was unable to bear removal in any other way. She had been a member of that community for twelve years; during the last eight of which she had many severe illnesses, which terminated at last in a confirmed consumption. She was obliged to keep her bed, and only attempted to hear Mass five or six times in the year; being carried to the chapel to gratify her own earnest desire, but soon brought back again in a state of insensibility, having fainted from fatigue. On the 14th of February, 1847, she received Extreme Unction; and the holy Viaticum was administered to her two or three times more in the course of the next month. Both the doctors who attended her had pronounced her case desperate; and had warned the Sisters that they might expect her death at any moment, without any premonitory symptoms whatever; for that the marvel was what kept her alive from day to day. The only food that she took was a few teaspoonfuls of milk and water, or very weak broth; and she seemed in the last stages of exhaustion. Whilst Sister St. Charles (this was her name in religion) was lying in this state, the superioress of the house heard rumors of miracles that were said to be wrought by the use of water from the fountain of La Salette. She herself acknowledges that she did not at first believe in these rumors; but by and by, when she

heard of a miraculous cure having been wrought in the town of Avignon itself, and having ascertained that this at least was no false report, she determined to have recourse to the same remedy in behalf of her dying Sister. She expressly states in her deposition, that although she certainly desired the recovery of Sister St. Charles, yet that her principal object in the novena was the glory of the Blessed Virgin, and the confirmation of the story she had heard of her Apparition, on the mountain of La Salette; and it was for this reason she selected this particular Sister from among others who were in the infirmary, because her illness was so notorious and so inveterate, that, should she be restored to health, her recovery would answer the end of the novena far better than the recovery of any other. When the idea was first suggested to the invalid, she said she had no wish to recover; and that she would rather die or continue to suffer as she now did, according to God's good pleasure. The superioress was obliged to interpose her authority in order to prevail upon her to take part in the novena with the rest of the community; but when once the novena was begun, the sufferer expressed her firm conviction that she should be cured. Nothing, however, occurred during the first seven days to give any encouragement to such an expectation; on the contrary, she seemed to be daily growing worse, so that the Sisters began to think their prayers were going to be answered in a different sense from what they had intended, and the sufferings of their companion would be terminated by a removal to heaven, not by a restoration to this earth. There was to have been a general communion of all the Sisters for the object of the novena on the last day, Saturday, but the unexpected arrival of the Bishop of Chalons caused them to anticipate this arrangement, and they went to Holy Communion on Friday. This was a great disappointment to Sister St. Charles; for she had hoped to have been cured in time to accompany her Sisters to the altar: whereas she now found herself stretched on her bed of sickness, in her habitual state of weakness and suffering, whilst all the rest of the community were assembled in the chapel. Whilst her mind was engaged by this thought, she felt a sud-

den and complete change throughout her body; all her ailment instantly left her; her own expression is, that "it was as though some invisible hand had lifted them all from off her;" she tried to turn in bed, and found that she could do so with ease; whereupon she immediately exclaimed, "I am healed!" Another Sister, who was lying ill in the same room, misunderstood the words, and fancied she was dying; and being unable to go to her assistance, began to cry; whereupon Sister St. Charles jumped out of bed, and went to console her. Another Sister, who had the care of the whole house while the community were at Mass, came running to the infirmary in a great state of alarm at hearing noises as of people moving in a room where she had left but two bed-ridden nuns; she arrives, well-nigh out of breath, and seeing one of these dying invalids sitting by the bed-side of the other, she is seized with a sudden faintness. Sister St. Charles gives her water to drink, and becomes for the moment nurse to her two companions. Then she dresses herself without any assistance, and goes to the chapel, where she kneels without any support during the remainder of Mass. We need not describe the scene which followed; the amazement of the Sisters, the doctors, and the public, who thronged the convent parlor for several days that they might see and converse with the nun whom they had known to have been so long at the point of death, and whom they now saw in perfect health, and whom they listened to talking continually without fatigue. The medical man who attended her testifies both to the suddenness and completeness of her recovery; he says that he found her pulse, which but two or three days before had been at 150, reduced to 100; her voice clear and sound; her face healthy and joyous; her appetite and her strength returned, so that she could run up and down stairs with ease, and even carry a burden of 150 pounds without fatigue. And he concludes his own account of her state with this observation, that if he is asked how this great change has taken place, he can only say, speaking as a doctor, that "it has not followed the ordinary phases; for myself, I must frankly acknowledge that I have never seen anything at all like it." Another physician,

the *medecin en chef* of the public hospital of the town, and a practitioner of thirty-six years' standing, speaks still more strongly: "I declare," he says, "that the unlooked for recovery, from a state judged by medical men to be mortal to a state of perfect health which I have witnessed in the above-named Sister St. Charles, has been wrought suddenly and without the intervention of the ordinary processes of art, '*et que partout il tient du prodige.*'" We are not surprised, then, to hear that the Archbishop of the diocese, who had known her during her long and painful illness, and who saw her now that she was thus suddenly restored to health, used constantly to declare that not even a resurrection from the dead would be to him a more patent miracle than the recovery of this person.

We will not detain our readers by any further details on the subject of miracles; we will only say that there have been very many, both in various dioceses in France and elsewhere, some of which are supported by evidence not less clear and striking than that which we have recorded, and several, after having been juridically examined by the proper ecclesiastical authorities, have been solemnly approved and published; and when we consider the express object with which some of the devotional exercises that have been thus rewarded were originally begun, we need not hesitate to say with Richard of St. Victor, *Domine, si error est quem credimus, a Te decepti sumus.*

Some people will say, the children fancied they saw something which had no existence; the science of optics affords the truest explanations of many marvels. But what? Melanie and Maximin were seized at the same instant with the same hallucination; and, strange to say their ears were deceived as well as their eyes, and heard the same identical words! Must all the laws of nature be thus overturned to prove that nature has not been overturned in one of her laws? This sudden malady, which had had no preliminary symptoms, and has had no subsequent continuance is as extraordinary as the fact which they refuse to believe.

Now make your choice and come to what conclusion you please; only, if you do not accept the testimony, you will always

find yourself in inextricable difficulties on this subject. This is a case in which you must either rise to the supernatural or fall into the absurd. Recognize the truth of the miracle, and what an act of faith will you not be making in an age which is especially opposed to Divine facts? Try to deny it, and what strange suppositions will you not have to invent in order to support this denial? This is the singular alternative in which I leave my readers.

MIRACLES OF OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE

[The following is taken from a letter of the Rev. Bishop of Rochelle to the Curé of La Salette, and dated Blaye, December 24, 1847.]

Mademoiselle Imbert, of Blaye (Gironde), had a cousin, a young person of nineteen years of age, the only child of a widow. This poor lady had lost her husband and several children, who were carried off by a pulmonary complaint. About a year ago, her daughter lost all appetite; she became sick at the sight of food; her tongue was as black as coal. Since that time the medical men have been more than thirty times consulted on the case, and declared there was no hope of recovery. Not to make the patient despair, they ordered iron waters, but told the mother that it would be of no use. For a year this poor girl lived on a few spoonfuls of chocolate in the morning, and water during the day: she became a skeleton. Many novenas had been made for her without effect. About three weeks ago, Mademoiselle Imbert, who had some of the water of La Salette in her possession, wrote to Bordeaux to her cousins, telling them to come and see her, that she would try and cure the sick girl. These ladies arrived; I went to see them on the 5th day of the Novena; I saw the tongue of the poor sufferer, which was frightful to look upon. She drank of the water of La Salette every day, but without a great spirit of faith; for, to the great regret of her cousin, she would not give up the course of iron waters. However, the last day of

the Novena, she took a morsel of cake, which she was able to eat; but in attempting to swallow it, she vomited with great sufferings. The poor child, in despair, at length laid aside every remedy, promising the Blessed Virgin to keep to the waters of La Salette, and prayed for her cure with more fervor than during the Novena. On Monday morning, finding herself alone, she filled a small bottle with the miraculous water, placed it about her, and promised the Blessed Virgin that she would always carry it; in the afternoon she asked to be taken to the church; they took her to St. Martin, a little church near her residence; she placed herself a little behind her mother and her cousin; she fervently prayed to the Blessed Virgin, made many promises to her, and drank some of the water she had with her. At that very instant she felt a sort of shock, she felt that she was cured; her tongue freed itself from the black coating; the skin of it peeled off, she removed it with her handkerchief, and showed it to her mother. They returned home; it was the dinner hour; they sat down, and the girl who had been sick began to eat like anyone else. She had hardly, however, begun, before her tears began to choke her; she rose from table, placed her arms round her mother's neck, and said: "Mamma! The Blessed Virgin has restored you your daughter; I am cured." All knelt down, and thanked with tears of joy. The poor girl finished her dinner with the appetite of perfect health, went next day to Mass to offer thanks for her recovery, and returned to Bordeaux a few days afterwards.

The Bishop adds that he also knew of a still more extraordinary miracle which had happened at La Rochelle, in the case of a young person whom the physicians had abandoned, and considered to be on the very edge of the grave. Her winding sheet had already been prepared, and her teeth were violently locked together, when on Christmas night her friends suddenly thought of forcing them open, to introduce into her mouth a few drops of the water of La Salette. This was done, and those few drops restored her to health.

It had been known in certain circles that Pius IX. was favorable to the cause of La Salette. A succession of Papal Briefs

and Rescripts was about to make this truth public. By a Rescript of August 24, 1852, His Holiness declares the High Altar of the church of La Salette a privileged one in perpetuity; and by another, dated two days later, he grants permission to all priests who go to La Salette to say a votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin on any day of the year, great festival days and those of the privileged *feriae* excepted. By a Brief of the same date the Sovereign Pontiff grants to members of the Confraternity of La Salette three Plenary Indulgences on certain conditions; by another Brief, dated September 3, 1852, a plenary Indulgence once a year to all who shall visit the church of La Salette; and by another, also dated September 3, 1852, a plenary Indulgence on certain conditions to the faithful who take part in the exercises of the missions preached by the missionaries of La Salette.

There were three more Papal Briefs in the same month, two conferring spiritual powers on the missionaries of La Salette, and one raising the Confraternity, founded by Mgr. Bruillard soon after the Apparition, to an Archconfraternity, under the title of Our Lady of Reconciliation of La Salette.

A great and crowning favor on the part of Rome had yet to come. It came in the form of an Indult of December 2, 1852, granting permission to solemnize each year September 19th, the anniversary of the Apparition, in all the churches of the dioceses of Grenoble; or to celebrate the same the following Sunday by a solemn Mass and the singing of the Vespers of the Blessed Virgin.

THE WEEPING MADONNA OF LA SALETTE

I see thee, O beautiful Queen,
At morning, at noon, and at night;
O *Mater amata*, thou art
A vision that haunteth my sight;
Not on thy bright throne above,
So dazzlingly, radiantly fair,
No, tenderest Mother, ah, no;
I see thee not as thou art there.

But on this poor, sad, sinful earth,
Here sitting and weeping alone,
With head bended low on thy hands;
Methinks I e'en catch thy faint moan;
Why, sweetest Queen-Mother, wilt say?
Leavest thou thy bright throne on high,
To descend to this pitiful earth,
To weep, to lament and to sigh?

Not long dost thou leave us in doubt
Of the cause of thy grief and thy tears;
Thine answer hath lived in my heart,
Thro' many long, wearisome years;
Thou weepest that faith is so weak,
That charity, too, hath grown cold;
Dost lament that in blindness most sad,
So many have strayed from the fold.

Oh! Mother, not all thy complaint,
Can I venture here to repeat,
But mingling my tears with thine own,
I cast myself down at thy feet,
And pray from my innermost heart:
Enwrap us about with thy stole,
And shield us, O Mother—thine own—
Oh, pity my sorrowing soul!

Again and again hast thou come,
With warnings, and pleadings, and prayers,
And whene'er thy sweet voice is heard,
To us the same message it bears;
O Refuge of sinners, O Queen
Of the great, starry realms above,
Can it be that men's hearts are not moved
By such wondrous proofs of thy love!

J. F. Fitzgerald.

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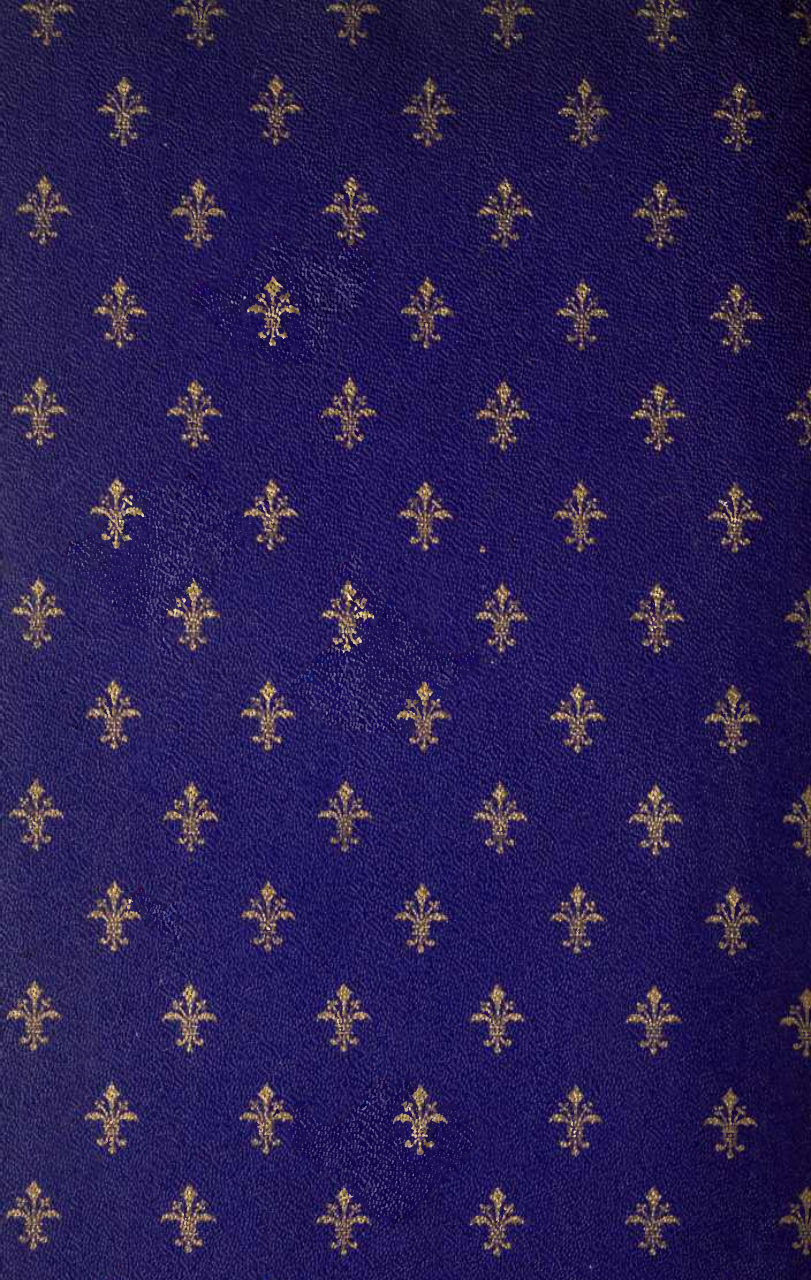
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