



The Ant's Monstrance

ONE of the most curious and instructive wonders of nature to investigate is the little republic of ants, who by dint of hard work, industry and discipline, build most complicated constructions, and gather up a considerable supply of provisions. History gives more than one example of their habits of order, and perseverance, God apparently wishing to inculcate those wise lessons to us from such seemingly useless creatures.

Not only moral but sometimes deep and salutary lessons of faith are given to proud mortals by humble ants.

Ecuador one of the most luxurious countries of the new world was the scene of one of those examples, in reference to the Blessed Eucharist.

Quito, the capital is furrowed by deep gutter floods, which in early Spring fall from the heights of Pichincha, emptying their muddy waters into the river Machagara ; one of those ravines bearing the peculiar name of Quebrada of Jerusalem, bounds the city on the south side, and is of a melancholy and sombre appearance. On the other side, and close to the green and picturesque hills of Pichincha, rises a lovely Church surmounted by a cupola, and as seen from a distance, appearing to form part of the monastery and Church of St Clare, in reality, being only separated from them by a narrow street.

○ In the porch of this humble sanctuary, hangs a painting, more damaged by weather than age ; representing our Lady of Dolours sadly contemplating Sacred Hosts lying on the ground. This Chapel is still commonly called Chapel of theft.

We quote the tale from the chronicles of that date. On the night of January nineteenth, in the year 1649, the church of St Clare was desecrated by an awful sacrilege.