

St. Agnes.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

Deep on the convent roof the snows  
Are sparkling to the moon:  
My breath to heaven like vapor goes:  
My soul follows soon!

The shadows of the convent towers  
Slant down the snowy ward,  
Still creeping with the creeping hours  
That lead me to my Lord:  
Make thou my spirit pure and clear  
As are the frosty skies,  
Or this first snowdrop of the year  
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soiled and dark  
To yonder shining ground,  
As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
To yonder argent round,  
So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
My spirit before Thee  
So in my earthly house I am,  
To that I hope to be.  
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,  
Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
Draw me, Thy bride, a glittering star  
In raiment white and clean.

LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART.

General Intention For February.

THE BEATIFICATION OF VENERABLE DE LA COLOMBIERE.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

On the feast of the Annunciation 1895, after having promulgated the decrees of beatification of Blessed Bernadine Roaling, the Sovereign Pontiff added: "There still remains Claude de la Colombiere who is extremely dear to us: his cause is already advanced and almost assured (fere in tuto positum): we ardently recommend it to the solicitude and diligence of the Cardinal Prefect of Rites."

The beatification of the great Apostle of the Sacred Heart should interest all our Associates. Venerable Claude de la Colombiere is already well known to our readers as the spiritual Director of Blessed Margaret Mary and the instrument that Our Lord used to give to the world the marvelous proofs of the love for us which He had revealed to the holy nun.

God had destined him from all eternity to be the coadjutor of Margaret Mary and spoke to the young man's heart with a vocation of ineffable sweetness and strength. He entered the Society of Jesus at a comparatively early age and brought with him many admirable qualities of mind and heart: a fairly robust constitution, an intellect keen and naturally refined, a judgment solid, accurate and discerning; a great soul, of a manner which made him agreeable to all. These gifts received their highest culture during subsequent studies; and when he entered at last upon his active apostolic career he was fully prepared for his task.

After a few years teaching in the College of his Order at Avignon, and Lyons, he was sent to Paris for theology, and was ordained priest in 1669.

In the book of his papers after his death, we have recorded many extraordinary graces received. He tells us with admirable simplicity what he said to God and what God said to him. This precious book is a clear but solid epitome of his interior life: the light which illumined his intellect, the gentle but powerful graces which moved his will, the keen unsparring scrutiny of his own soul: complete self-contempt, and burning love of God. In the Thirty Days' Retreat, which members of his Order make at the close of their scholastic studies, the fervent priest made one of those resolutions which, even in the lives of the Saints, are accounted as acts of exceptionally heroic virtue and as proceeding from a more than ordinary movement of divine grace. Desiring to break all the bonds of self-love, and once for all gain an ascendancy over fallen nature, he bound himself by vow to observe the Rules and Constitutions of his Order. To many of our readers this may sound but little, but those, however, who have any knowledge of the Society of Jesus, know that some of these Rules reach even to the sublime folly of the cross, and cannot be faithfully observed without a solid virtue which attains to true heroism.

Father de la Colombiere was this true hero; and throughout the various stages of his after life, those who lived with him, both in France and England, have given testimony to the fidelity with which he observed the tremendous vow.

In 1675, he was named Superior of the residence of the Jesuit Fathers at Paray-le-Monial, the town wherein dwelt the soul chosen of Our Lord, whom He call Margaret Mary Alaconne, and who, unequalled in her sublime mission, was to stand ambassador of Heaven between the Heart of Jesus and the world. De la Colombiere was appointed her spiritual director, and recognized at once in his humble peasant the spirit of God working out its designs. His co-operation with the Blessed Margaret, in this admirable work, was the direct wish of Our Lord Himself. In the great vision of 1675, when the Saviour solemnly demanded from Margaret Mary the institution of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, He told her, among other things, to consult her holy director whom He called His servant. Here are the exact words: "Have recourse to My servant Father de la Colombiere, tell him from Me to do his

utmost to establish this devotion and give My Heart this pleasure. Let him not be discouraged by the difficulties he will meet with: for these will be many. But he must know that he is all powerful who distrusts himself and trusts only in Me."

This is, therefore, the authentic divine commission to the Ven. Father de la Colombiere as the Apostle of the Sacred Heart. God ordinarily chooses such as are fit for the work to which He calls them; but, above all, He never denies the grace necessary to perform it. Henceforward, to the ardent prayers of the Holy Virgin of Paray will be joined the exhortations of the Apostle: the celestial visions of the religious will be confirmed by the authority of the theologian and of the priest.

Did the chosen Apostle of the Sacred Heart fulfil the sublime mission thus wondrously confided to him? Facts give us a marvellously eloquent answer. He perfectly understood the soul of the Blessed Margaret Mary. While others around her were cast into doubt and alarm, he alone perfectly recognized the spirit which filled the humble virgin's soul. From the first, he recognized the action of God: hence his direction of her was perfect. Whilst confirming her in the practice of humility and obedience—those two infallible signs of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul—he permitted, nay, even commanded her to follow her special attraction for prayer, and for a prayer in which the action of God had far larger part than that of His creature.

He consoled her; but at the same time made her drink deep of the chalice of suffering and humiliation, which is so beloved to those souls who love and are beloved by Jesus Christ.

Father de la Colombiere was not only the enlightened Director of Blessed Margaret Mary; he, himself, practised the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The great revelation to Margaret Mary took place on June 16, 1675; and on June 21, of the same year, which was the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, the very day chosen by Our Lord, he bound himself for life, by a solemn act of consecration to the service of the Sacred Heart. On the same day fell the feast of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, to whose devotion to the Sacred Heart, the well known revelation of St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, bears witness.

From this time he became the unwearied promoter of devotion to the Sacred Heart; everywhere he spread the practice of the Communion of Atonement on the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, and on the First Friday of the month. In many of his letters, as well as in his Retreat, he speaks of his efforts, both in England and France, for the propagation of this practice, which had now become so dear to his heart.

Father Claude, like his Blessed penitent, after having been the Apostle of the Sacred Heart, was now privileged to become its victim. The flames which issue from It, had penetrated and inflamed his soul; the thorns which encircle It, were now to make his heart bleed.

The field of his new apostolate had been chosen. Our Lord, as the Blessed Margaret Mary says, drew Father de la Colombiere from the little town of Paray, in order to employ him in the conversion of souls, in a land which had fallen away from the faith. Some time previously, the humble religious, inspired by a supernatural light, had warned the Venerable Father de la Colombiere of the mission for which God destined him; and the Father, as a true son of obedience, had bowed his head before a disposition of Providence, which no one could have foreseen.

He was appointed chaplain to her Royal Highness the young Duchess of York, who, afterwards, on the accession of James the Second to the throne, became Queen of England. This momentous appointment was in great measure due to Pere de la Chaise, then the confessor of Louis XIV. but who had previously been for a long time Father Claude's superior, both as Rector and Provincial.

Mary of Modena, Duchess of York, to whom Father de la Colombiere was now sent by the Providence of God, was a humble and pious princess; one, indeed, who had been allowed to follow the attractions of divine grace, would have cast away the pomps of the world, to hide herself in a convent. It was by the counsel of Pope Clement X. himself, that, for God's greater glory, she was induced to forego her higher aspirations, and enter the married state. It appeared important for the good of religion, that a Catholic princess should be seated on the throne of England.

"Her Royal Highness," writes Father de la Colombiere, "is truly edifying. Almost every week, she receives the Holy Communion, and spends half an hour in meditation every day." If such were her dispositions at the age of nineteen, at the time of her confessor's arrival, we may judge of the fruits of the direction which she received from him. Mary of Modena had much to suffer: after the king her husband had been driven from his throne by the revolution, she lived for nearly thirty years in exile; and there is copious testimony that those years were spent in innocence, piety, and large charity to the poor. That the great lesson which her holy confessor was sent to teach her would be well learnt, and that she was devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, is made evident by this: that the first petition addressed to the Holy See for the institution of the Feast of the Sacred Heart bore at its head the words: *Maria Regina Anglorum*.

Her husband, the Duke, was also a Catholic; and it seemed as if Provi-

dence were going to restore at this time the true faith in England; but alas! corruption had been born of error, and the sceptre was in the unclean hands of a weak and profligate king.

Father de la Colombiere arrived in London in October 1676, and though living in St. James Palace, he changed nothing in his mode of life, spending his day in retirement and prayer. He was no more distracted by the bustle of the court than if he had been in a desert. But if he was indifferent to the brilliant outside of the gay world, his heart was inflamed with the love of souls.

The state of the Church in England, once so Catholic, was a bitter grief to him. Open profession of the Catholic faith meant at this time persecution. Priests, because they were priests, were held as rebels and condemned to death, and in many letters written at this period to friends in France, he bemoaned the fanaticism of the English people, and their hatred of the Blessed Sacrament, the source and centre of light and love.

To complete his own bitterness there was still wanting persecution. It would be impossible to enter into all the details of the infamous "plot" invented by Titus Oates, which threw London into a frenzy of terror. While the panic lasted, the name of "Papist" was enough to consign a man to prison and to death. Six English Jesuits were called to witness to the faith with their blood; they were hanged at Tyburn in one day.

Father de la Colombiere was accused of being concerned in the pretended conspiracy, and on November 21, 1678, was arrested in his room in St. James Palace. The accusation of treason was brought against him, but he presented himself before the Council and answered all questions with such perfect self-possession that it was evident he could not be implicated in the imaginary plot. Yet his manifest innocence would not have saved him had he not had the protection of the French King at that time the most powerful monarch in Europe.

The charges against the Father were, therefore, reduced to two—that he had seduced others to become "Papists," received adjurations of the Protestant religion, and propagated the faith of the Pope on the soil of England. And as the Father frankly confessed that he had done all these things, and even regarded them as titles of honor, he was sent to prison, and after a few weeks' confinement condemned to exile.

Before his arrest, the first fatal symptoms of consumption had begun to show themselves, and from that time made rapid progress. During almost all his labors in England he had been struggling with the dreadful malady, so peculiarly trying for a priest not yet thirty-six years old. He became so weak that the day of his embarkation for France was necessarily postponed.

But his resignation was perfect; and his letters merely say that he has learnt "that God does not want to make further use of him."

He returned to France and was appointed spiritual Director of the Scholastic House in Lyons. But the ravages of consumption had already made great headway, and he gave up his soul to God at Paray on February 15, 1682, aged forty-one.

He was regarded as a saint by Margaret Mary, and the renown of his holiness had spread beyond the limits of the two Orders to which he was more intimately known. His reputation has continued to grow in the Church since his death, two hundred and fifteen years ago. Benedict XIV. spoke in his praise in his Treatise of *Beatification*. Leo XIII. declared him Venerable in 1880, and the cause of his beatification is now being actively pursued before the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Our Canadian Associates will, we hope, help us with their fervent prayers to hasten the day when this incomparable apostle of the Sacred Heart shall be placed on the altars of God.

PRAYER.  
O Jesus! through the most pure Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all the prayers, work and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of Thy Divine Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in reparation of all sins, and for all requests presented through the Apostleship of Prayer: in particular that Venerable Claude de la Colombiere may soon be honored by the Church with the title of Blessed. Amen.

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CONVERSIONS TO THE FAITH IN ENGLAND.

A movement towards the Church, already resembling in its magnitude the Tractarian Movement of the '30's and '40's, has begun in England.

Fifteen thousand people were received into the Church during the past fifteen months.

A great number of these converts are from the Ritualistic party in the Anglican Communion; and some of the most notable of them have come in since Pope Leo XIII. confirmed the decisions of his predecessors against the validity of Anglican Orders.

Many things have happened during the past year to throw a fierce light upon the inconsistencies of Anglicanism. The nomination of Dr. Temple, Bishop of London, to the vacancy in the See of Canterbury, caused by the death of Archbishop Benson, was a severe shock to the more religious minded among the Anglicans. The secular press has had its joke against the ineffective protests of the Rev. Messrs. Brownjohn and Greenwood and the Rev. John Kensit against the confirmation of Dr. Temple as Archbishop of Canterbury, and of Dr. Creighton as Bishop of London.

As readers of the *Pilot* know, the nomination to a vacant See is made by the Prime Minister and confirmed by the Crown. Then the dean and the chapter of the See assemble, and go through the formality of an election. The royal mandate is read, declaring the appointment, and citing opposers to appear.

Of course nobody had ever dreamed of opposing the King or Queen, and the vote had been cast unanimously for the royal choice—until in the case of Dr. Temple, when the Rev. Mr. Brownjohn presumed to take the mandate literally, and entered his protest against the confirmation of the Archbishop designate. The ground of his protest was that Dr. Temple held views "incompatible with the teachings of the Book of Common Prayer."

He and his fellow protester were, it is needless to say, refused a hearing; and Dr. Temple was duly confirmed, and the *New York Tribune* calls the proceeding "a solemn farce." It continues: "That certainly is the view of the case which most people take, including many reverend churchmen. When the crown nominates a clergyman for a See everybody knows that any protest will be ineffective. Yet the Church goes through the mockery of asking objectors to come forward and guaranteeing that they shall be heard, when it is perfectly well known that they will not be heard."

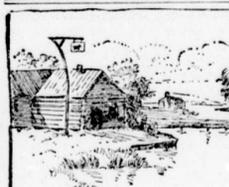
In thus consenting to a sacrilegious farce the Church puts an effective weapon in the hands of unbelievers. The realization of the inevitable result of the inconsistencies of Anglicanism in the above and kindred cases, from the days of the Gorham judgment until now, has forced many honest and earnest men into the one consistent and immutable Church.

The sense of insecurity as to orders and sacraments generally, even before the Pope's Letter, was a potent factor in many conversions.

Let us not forget, however, to give large credit to the missionary work of the Catholic Truth Society of England; and to the good example and unceasing prayers of many an humble apostle, who will be surprised in the life to come to find himself among those instructors unto justice destined to shine as stars for all eternity.—Boston Pilot.

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FIVE-MINUTE Fifth Sunday. RESISTING. "An enemy hath done this to day's Gospel. Lord Himself a answer to a question tells us that by patible are the practical Christi are the cockle at the Church. There are some solves about this should ever have at all; perhaps far on that acco wisdom of God. God is almighty mitted evil to have prevented result of it all is His creatures of were created? Now, while to this problem—same Gospel sug not, indeed, the answer to every but the solution as its practical ties in our own concerned. An to fathom the deels of the Creat not root up the We know, and know, that the wise, All good the other hand, of evil is evid Whether the this fact is the fact itself enemy has sow mixture of goo stares us in the and whitherso Whether we for this or may, in any everything Ge His own suffic folly for us t minds to peme mysterious sig Let us, then, planation of o allowed to ret wheast. It is powers of evil and perfect. History tel who was infor that a certai take possesio foot of ground ons fire of the on top of it or, knowing do, coldly tu senger with then; let the And the rec this was done the part of And so sha have to light, that our trial great they su such as thoufured and su to take the b enemy uses a If we over the victory in his freedom conquers the with evil ma conditions, h son to desp of good and the struggle member, th Bernard: a batant crow How to B There is c away the dr him to give spend it he money he b buy. Mon Give money so much un Even give and he ha purchase, money with Give him w saloon. Gi shop or stor Give him p betrays it. wastes it. goes back o and he abu and he use Give him e for a day's more for de give him t saved. Th alone. It Just in pro will his f gather. A higher an ance crow and woe. SUFFI Ward's Pi and liver m Hollowy remove all costs the sm Wonders parilla, and Hood's Sar