

wakened up in the beams and glowed like a flame and the dark-green bilberry bushes and russet bracket.

Something in the air, in the Sunday brightness, in the gay bravery of the furs, took Pat's mind back to a certain Sunday his wife had sat on the bridge beside him. He remembered how black her hair was, and the smile in her eyes, and how bravely a wee hand nestled in his, and the swell of his own heart as he felt it there!

The river had not changed, and Pat, looking down on it, sat and dreamed.

So absorbed was he that he forgot to wonder at Martin's non return from Mass.

Perhaps for the first time he had forgotten his existence. He was living again the old days with Mary, the days when the world was always bright, and there was nobody but the two of them in it.

He was startled by a ringing footsteps. "Martin," he cried, but the newcomer was not Martin, it was young Mr. Walker of the Bank who, in spite of his Presbyterian upbringing, was by no means adverse to a little Sunday sport after the mountain rabbits.

He whistled back his dog, which had started off on the other turning, and stopped to discuss the chances of the hare with old Pat, who was an acknowledged authority.

Suddenly, however, a thought seemed to strike him, to which at first he could only give utterance in a prolonged whistle. "By Jove," he said at last, "I want to know why you're not at the wedding."

"What wedding?" said old Pat.

"Why, your own son's of course," replied the banker, "didn't I see the cars driving down Bradley's loan?"

"If you seen them drivin' down Bradley's loan?" it wasn't my son's wedding, was it?"

"Well, perhaps I may have made a mistake," said the latter, "but I really thought the man looked uncommonly like Martin. I'll have to be off. Over by the Hannies you think there'd be a chance of something? So long."

When he was gone, old Pat still sat on the bridge, but the brightness had all gone out of his eyes. He rose a little stiffly and walked slowly back to the house. The fire was but a poor affair. He built it up, and when it was burning brightly again, he sat down beside it and looked into its glowing depths.

He grew tired at last of what he saw there—or perhaps the tale it had to tell him was ended. He walked over to the door, and then, almost unconsciously, down the hill again to the Crooked Bridge.

There were two people sitting on it, looking into the river. The girl's hand was nesting in the man's, and old Pat knew how the man's heart was swelling as he felt it there. How was the river to know that it was not the same couple which had sat above it on just such another Sunday, thirty years ago?

He cleared his throat bravely, but even then his voice was a little unsteady, though his face wore its old drab look.

"It yez hav' no objection," said he, "there's a good fire on and the kettle's boiling, and maybe—maybe Breedyven would come home and make us some tea."

The "showin' off" next Sunday was as nice a one as ever came to Glen. And it is recorded in the Annals of the Parish that as old Pat followed the young couple, in the place which etiquette consigned him by the side of Mrs. Bradley, he wore in his button-hole something which closely resembled a nasturtium.—Eileen Walsh M. A., in the Rosary Magazine.

FRENCH BISHOPS ADDRESS THE FAITHFUL.

PREPARED FOR SPOILIATION AND POVERTY RATHER THAN BETRAY THEIR TRUST.

Paris, September 19. — The Figaro publishes the text of a pastoral letter addressed to the clergy and the faithful of France by the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops who met in Paris to confer upon the Church and State separation law and the Pope's encyclical upon it. This letter, it is said, has now been returned and will be read from every pulpit next Sunday.

The letter begins by declaring that the hierarchy accepts the words of the Holy Father with the most complete and entire obedience. It affirms the union of the clergy around the Sovereign Pontiff and repeats that the separation law ignores the Catholic hierarchy. The Pope, says the letter, pointed out that he had no choice but to condemn the law. In this His Holiness had no other object in view than the salvation of the Church.

Continuing the letter says the Bishops and Archbishops have no concern save that France shall not only have the name of being a Catholic nation, but shall have true liberty of religion. They have nothing to do with political interests. All they ask is that the constitution of the republic shall not contain falsehoods that are anti Christian. They desire to wash their hands of all responsibility for the calamity that is threatening France. The separation law, it is declared, deprives France not only of its name of a Catholic nation, but of true religious liberty.

After expressing the hope that France may be spared a religious war, the letter goes on to say that if the separation of Church and State shall be carried out at all costs Catholics ought at least to be allowed the use of the church properties which belong to them and enjoy common liberty as it is enjoyed in really free countries. If an attempt is made, contrary to the wishes of the head of the Church, to establish congregations which can be Catholic in name only, none of the faithful will join them. The priests have submitted to spoliation and poverty rather than betray their trust, and all Catholics are therefore bound, according to their means, to support the church and the clergy.

LOURDES AND ONE OF LAST YEAR'S MIRACLES.

If in the whole wide world there is one spot whereat, more conclusively than at any other, the bankruptcy of science with which Brunetiere has taunted the oracular materialists of the age, is made manifest and glaring, that spot is Lourdes. The famous Grotto of Massabielle is a constant eyecore to the enemies, scientific or other, not merely of Catholicism but of any religious system, because it is a permanent, obvious, and irrefragable proof of the existence of that supernaturalism which such enemies deny.

The recent exploitation of the trumped up charges which M. de Bonfonton has seen fit to make against the most wonderful of Our Lady's shrines—that Lourdes is a hotbed of infection, and that pilgrimages thereto are a menace to the public health, etc.—is merely the desperate resort of impotent antagonists to storn by the foulest of means a position which years of belaboring by all other possible methods have shown to be absolutely impregnable. Of the charges themselves (notwithstanding the importance constructively given to them by their editorial discussion in American papers, which ought to know enough to look with suspicion on present day Parisian dispatches about religious matters), any one who has visited Lourdes and is at all conversant with conditions there will be tempted to say, with Prince Henry to Falstaff: "These lies are like their father that begets them; gross as a mountain, open, palpable."

In so far, however, as this latest organized attack has riveted public attention on the Pyrenean shrine, and reawakened cosmopolitan interest in the prodigies that are everyday occurrences on the banks of the Gave, it may really work for ultimate good.

In any case, it will justify our mentioning here some of the most recent conclusions arrived at by competent investigators of the Lourdes miracles, and may perhaps warrant a summarized narrative of one specific cure which was effected at the Grotto just a year ago, and which we do not remember having seen referred to at any considerable length in such of our exchanges as are published in English.

The latest important contribution to the literature of Lourdes to attract our attention is a study in the Revue Pratique d'Apotheologie (July 1, 1906). The writer is Abbe Georges Bertrin, a distinguished professor of the Catholic Institute of Paris, and the author of an authoritative work on "The Critical History of the Events at Lourdes."

In this supplementary study Abbe Bertrin maintains, and readers open to conviction will add, proves: first, that the reality of the cures operated at Lourdes is nowadays called in question only by superficial minds; secondly, that the number of such cures officially recognized is considerable; and, finally, that "suggestion," which, as is well known, limits itself to nervous maladies only, and which works slowly and progressively, can not explain so many cures of organic diseases that are remedied instantaneously.

The Abbe cites in conclusion the statement of Dr. Vergez, of the Faculty of Montpellier, who has for a full quarter of a century made a very close study of the occurrences at Lourdes. "I am asked," says Dr. Vergez, "what I have seen at Lourdes. Two words will suffice for answer: through the examination of the most authentic facts altogether beyond the competency of science and of art, I have seen, I have touched work that is divine, the miraculous."

As for "suggestion," or "auto-suggestion," as an explanation of the wonders wrought by Our Lady at Lourdes, it is pertinent to quote here the candid declaration of Dr. Bernheim in his work on Hypnotism, Suggestion, etc. (p. 502): "Suggestion addresses itself directly not to the lesion but to the functional trouble. It can, the organic state permitting, assuage suffering, restore sleep or the appetite, augment the motive power, re-establish sensibility and suspended movement, suppress spasms, cramps, and nervous agony, and regulate divers functions. But suggestion does not kill microbes, it does not do away with tubercles, it does not cicatrize ulcers of the stomach."

Quite in line with the conclusions of Abbe Bertrin, and with those inferentially to be drawn from the statement of Dr. Vergez, is the following argument put forward by the late Rev. R. F. Clarke, S. J., in his "Lourdes: Its Inhabitants, Its Pilgrims, and Its Miracles":

"In our investigation we shall have three different questions to examine: 1. Can we find among the various cures wrought at Lourdes instances which are absolutely inexplicable on any other hypothesis except that of a miracle? 2. In those cures which might possibly seem to be explicable in other ways, is there any special characteristic that renders such explanation inadmissible? 3. Is the number of cures of an extraordinary kind sufficient to remove all possibility of fraud or of mere imagination, or of any other natural solution of the effects produced?"

If we can answer the first of these three questions in the affirmative, the reality of the miraculous character of the power that is at work at Lourdes will be sufficiently established. At the same time, if there were only one or two or even half a dozen such apparent miracles, standing alone and unaccompanied by a vast number of other cases which may possibly be explicable on natural grounds, we should be justified in regarding such exceptional cases with considerable suspicion. We should call them freaks of nature, and should look out for parallels to them (though we should look in vain) in the course of medical or other ordinary experience. We should say that they were very wonderful, and that we were completely puzzled by them, and could not understand or explain them; but when we had said this and exclaimed, 'Very extraordinary indeed!' we should shake off the impression that they made, if

they stood alone as singular phenomena. But if, on the contrary, these absolutely inexplicable facts were accompanied by a crowd of others, not perhaps also utterly inexplicable, but yet so difficult to explain by any natural laws as to afford a very strong presumption that they were miraculous, the proof would be not a little strengthened.

"If, moreover, were added to these a further set of facts, which could indeed be explained naturally, and to which certain parallels might be adduced from the confessedly natural order, but which were nevertheless very wonderful and extraordinary when regarded in their collective entirety, then we assert that any man of sober sense, free from pre-existing prejudice and from any conscious or unconscious determination not to believe, would accept those various facts as constituting among them many true and genuine miracles. He would divide such facts into three classes: (1) Those undoubtedly supernatural. (2) Those probably supernatural, but not so clearly above the powers of nature as to enable us to find an argument upon them in themselves. This class would be valuable as affording evidence or confirmation of the reality of the miracles belonging to the first class, but would have no value of its own. (3) Those which might indeed be explained on purely natural grounds, but which nevertheless, by reason of some curious coincidence or concurrent circumstances, assume a quasi-supernatural character."

Of cures of the first class, those that were undoubtedly supernatural, the Ave Maria readers do not need to be reminded of Francis Macary, the cabin-maker of Lyons, and of Pierre de Radder, and of the "Lupus of Metz,"—to mention only a few of the more notable historical prodigies that have glorified Our Lady and nonplussed the devotees of agnostic science. Whether or not those readers will place in the same class the case of Marie Therese Noblet which we are about to relate, we know not; but we shall make our guess as to the last sacraments. Contrary to all expectations, the child recovered. As she put it, herself, later on: "The Immaculate Virgin wished even then to show herself my Mother." Her health remained delicate, however, up to 1903.

In that year she began again to experience notable fatigue, and her artemic condition superinduced extreme weakness.

In 1905 she took to her bed; and a specialist, Dr. Chipault, recognizing a localized vertebral lesion, ordered her to wear a plaster corset. This contrivance, so speedily did the patient waste away, soon became too large. It was taken off, but within a week Marie Therese had to be encased in another corset of the same kind. The girl did not fail to notice that this second one was put on on Good Friday; and her remarking to her mother, "What a tender age for this suffering by sacrifice."

In May, 1905, the patient was taken to Avenay and placed in the convent of the Sisters of the Divine Redeemer. It was the parish priest of Avenay who first conceived the plan of having Marie Therese transported to Lourdes. The project being broached to her, she heartily applauded it.

"And if you are not cured," said the Cure, "shall you become discouraged?" "No. If the Blessed Virgin doesn't cure me, I shall easily resign myself; for I'll be certain that if she doesn't wish it for me, it would not be for my good."

So admirable a response from a maiden of fifteen will, at the outset, impress the ordinary Christian as being the sumptuous evidence of her fitness for the Heavenly mansions, pending the date of the departure for Lourdes, now complications arose. Her left arm became paralyzed, her legs grew powerless, and her sufferings waxed all too intolerable. Nothing, however, could alter her determination to go to Lourdes; her sole anxiety was as to the probability of her becoming so extremely feeble that the journey would be forbidden her. "They tried to comfort me," she has since declared, "by telling me that these pains were the last I'd have to endure; that the Blessed Virgin always augmented the sufferings of those whom she intended to cure. All the same, I was very much afraid of missing the journey."

Before setting out from Avenay, on August 28, 1905, it had been decided to make an opening in the plaster corset, so that the miraculous water might touch the afflicted portion of the body, and that the doctors might be able to verify any amelioration that might take place.

Marie Therese did not go directly from Avenay to Lourdes. The journey was broken at Ars, to the Blessed Cure of Ars, in whose honor she had a novena in his honor, hoping for some improvement in her health; but she implored him chiefly to intercede for her to the Blessed Virgin. Naturally enough, the devoted clients of M. Vianney would like to magnify the role of their patron in the matter of Mlle. Noblet's cure; but she herself says that role: "That he helped and protected me. I am firmly convinced, and it was at Lourdes that her cure was this. She reached the Pyrenean shrine in a state of such extreme fatigue and weakness that she herself asked not to be moved from the hospital of Our Lady of the Seven Dolours, whither she had been taken on her arrival. Nevertheless, the zealous litter-bearers carried her forth with her to the Grotto. She spent there the afternoon of August 31, a prey to

deep emotion and to the most atrocious sufferings as well.

Very, very slowly, with infinite precautions, Marie Therese was being borne back to the hospital, when, perceiving the cortege, and thinking that the girl was worse, the Cure of Avenay came up. "My poor child," she exclaimed, "how you are suffering!" She burst into tears, quite overcome. Then all at once she seized Abbe Dieu-donne's arm, saying excitedly, "Father, Father!" Instinctively, the litter-bearers halted. Was the child going to die even before reaching the hospital? Not she. Her next words were: "Thank God, thank God! I am cured!"

The girl was actually transfused; her countenance radiated the purest joy; her arms were stretched up toward heaven. As usual, doubting Thomases were not wanting to the scene; in default of others, the Cure of Avenay filled that role. "Tut, tut!" said he, "you don't know what you are saying. Do you suppose 'tis here on the high which the Blessed Virgin works miracles?" The truth was that the Cure really thought Marie Therese to be delirious. One of the litter-bearers, however, answered him bluntly: "It's a fact, all the same, Abbe Dieu-donne. I know what I'm talking about. Marie Therese is cured."

In vain, nevertheless, did the girl assure him that if they would only set her on her feet she could walk quite well; the Abbe ordered her to be carried back to the hospital. Once there, and a witness of the fact that she could move her legs to which sensibility had been restored, the good Cure was rather perplexed and scarcely knew what to say.

The next day Marie Therese again asked permission to walk. "That's all right," once more replied the Abbe. "But, even he, however, had to give in to the evidence of his senses. The girl smiled, walked, ate, and slept like a person in normal health. Later on, she slyly remarked to Abbe Dieu-donne: "How can you expect me to obey you, who forbade me to obey the Blessed Virgin?"

Finally, Dr. Boissarie and the other physicians of the Board of Medical Verifications pronounced the cure to be perfect. The plaster corset was broken, and not a trace of the malady was visible. Meeting shortly afterward Canon Bonnaire, director of the pilgrimage from Rheims, Dr. Boissarie said to him:

"So 'tis to you that this girl belongs, eh? Well, you may congratulate yourself."

"I do, of course," replied the Canon. "But is the cure a sure thing?" "Oh, yes, altogether certain!" rejoined the doctor.

Writing on July 11, this year, the Cure of Avenay said: "The health of Marie Therese continues to be perfect. She will return to Lourdes this year to make her thanksgiving."

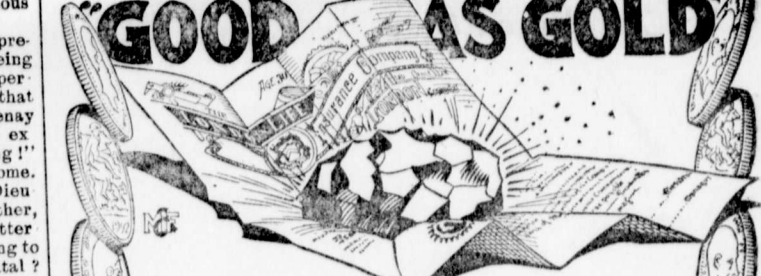
"WHAT ARE THE WILD WAVES SAYING?"

As we stand by the sea side and see the surging billows roll in and dash themselves against the shore, and as we hear their roar in the night's stillness, we ask with the poet, "What are the wild waves saying?" Do they speak to us only of the vast and boundless ocean and its unfathomable depths? Do they tell of tempest tossed ships and lost mariners? Do they speak to us of monsters of the deep, or do they speak of better things in abundance and plenty, and so tell the tale of our peace and plenty through the medium of the sea?

Do they speak to us of the friends of earth, and how nation in rebroadcasts with nation in the greetings of citizens, and that men learn to know and love one another as members of the one great family? Yes, they tell us these and many other things, but they tell us primarily of the great God, the Creator, who has made all things, and has made them, like all things of this earth, for man's use and benefit; that using them and considering them, he may turn them all to the honor and glory of God. The ocean tells of God's immensity, as likewise of His goodness and power. How vast its extent, covering, as it does, three-fourths of the earth, His bounty is shown, not only in the multitude of fish, whence men draw much of their sustenance, but His goodness is manifested in the effects of the briny waters, as their salty savors purify the air and counteract the poisonous and baneful influences generated by the corruption of lands which they wash. But the power of God is displayed in restricting the waters to proscribed limits, lest they overflow the world and submerge in their rising the land and all who dwell on it.

And yet the words which the wild waves are saying are not all contained in these. There is another sea more tangible than that which we behold. It is the sea of life in which we live and into which we come in mystic contact every day of our lives. That sea, indeed, which we cannot behold, but yet which we feel is all around us; that sea which oftentimes threatens to submerge us and in which the unwise and the unwary disappear by the thousands. Now running smooth, again turbulent and angry, always deep and dangerous. Man must course it but little and trail his bark, for this is the voyage of life. On whom will he rely? Not on himself, for that were vain; not on the waves and the winds obey, and Who can say to the sea, be calm and to the storm be still, and the danger will be stayed, and the rainbow of hope will light up the heavens and God's peace will be breathed in the troubled waters and man will be at rest.

What happens to the individual happens to holy Church, to the ark of Peter coursing over the waters of time to the final port of eternity. How often we have seen the ocean of life disturbed by the counter currents of public opinion closing against the



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Church! How often have we seen the angry winds of men's passions rising in stormy revolt around her and driving her far out from them and the land on which they dwell! And, yet, high above the roar of storm and clash of the waves we have heard the voice of Peter's successor calling upon the Lord and the faithful taking up the cry, soon the love and the goodness of God is manifest and peace comes back to the world. The Church is reassured in the love and confidence of her children and the respect of fair minded men.

How sad is life's experience as exemplified by many? There are those who know not God or who care not to know Him and who, when life's trouble come upon them, easily succumb. These are they who have no faith or are faithless to it, and, therefore, have no hope, nor the fortitude which it generates, and so are easily overcome when the sea of life's troubles rises round them.

Oh that they had but the Christian faith animating their souls and felt the power of divine hope lifting up their souls! Then they would go through life's darkest and most uncertain waters with a strength and confidence that nothing could daunt, for they would feel with the psalmist that come what may, all would be well in the end; that God never will be wanting to those who put their trust in Him, or, as the message runs, "Blessed is the man who hopeeth in the Lord, for He will not be confounded."

We see the need of strong Christian faith for the multitude, for where there is no faith there cannot be hope, and without faith and hope man has neither compass nor anchor with which to guide him over the rocks and shoals amidst the many storms on the ocean of life. God is a good provider, and through His Church He gives the means men need to bear them safely through the winds and waves into the port of eternal life. Nay, more Christ Himself is in every bark as He was in that of Peter, the apostle. Let us confide in Him, knowing He knows all and can do all, and He will do all, if we but acknowledge in our weakness and cry out as often as danger threatens, "Lord save us, lest we perish!"

This, then, is what the wild waves are saying. Let us hear and heed these words. They speak of God: not of His anger, but of His goodness; not of His wrath, but of His mercy. Let us be comforted at the thought and go on bravely and resolutely our faith generating our hope, and both prompting and sustaining our charity, till all is brought to a happy end in the boundless and eternal ocean of God's everlasting love.—Bishop Colton in Catholic Union and Times.

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