

FRIDAY, JULY 2.]

Heroic Obedience.

FRANCIS O'MEARA IN "CATHOLIC TELEGRAM," LITTLE FALLS, N. Y.

Once in the hallowed olden time, In a convent far away, An abbot dwelt, a holy man, In virtue's path grown gray.

One day, from out the convent gate, With nun anglic passed, Two youthful monks, of brown serene, Their modest eyes downcast.

They spoke and sang in prayer, They stretched their weary limbs to sleep Upon the desert bare.

When morning dawned, they rose and prayed, For strength and grace, And spite of thirst and hunger's pangs, Resumed their weary pace.

But ere the day was half past, Their strength and courage down, Upon their dreary desert couch, They sank their heads to slumber.

Five times the sun sank on high, Five times it sank to rest, And still they staggered blindly on, In vain and fruitless quest.

No path they found, all hope was gone, Alone in desert drear, Where not a human foot might tread From weary year to year.

No food had crossed their lips for days, Though thence they bore, They felt they were not dead, They felt they were not dead.

But not to stain, by slightest fault, Their souls still white and pure.

"O brother mine," one feebly said, "Sweet death has come at last; Temptation's hour is past; My God, my God, receive my soul, My God, my God, receive my soul."

His brother still for weary hours, Then sank upon the ground, And slept to wake no more.

And thus many days had sped, Their forms upon the ground, Shed perfume on the air; And all unknown, their bodies lie, In the soft earth, their bodies lie.

THE PASSION PLAY.

ITS WONDERFUL ATTRACTION.

LIFE AND DEATH OF CHRIST.

Though many may doubt the propriety of a tragic representation of the life, sufferings, and death of our Saviour, the fact is that it has been dramatized in a most solemn manner by a priest, and that its appearance is attracting thousands to witness this theatrical exhibition of the most awfully solemn scene that has ever occurred.

The following is a condensed account of the plot of "THE PASSION PLAY."

The "Passion Play" is opened by the chorus of Schutzgeister, or guardian angels. Their appearance on the stage is solemn and majestic. They advance from the recesses on either side of the proscenium, and take up their position across the whole extent of the theatre, forming a slightly concave line. After the chorus has assumed its position the Chorus gives out in a melodramatic manner the opening address, or prologue, which introduces each act; the tone is immediately taken up by the whole chorus, which continues in solo, alternately, in chorus until the curtain is raised to reveal a tableau vivant. At this moment the Chorus recedes a few steps backward, and forms with one-half of the band a division on the left of the stage, while the other half withdraws in like manner to the right. Thus they leave the centre of the stage completely free, and the spectators have a full view of the tableau which is thus revealed. The first typical picture of the play represents the fall—the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. The angel with the flaming sword stands ready to drive our first parents out of Paradise. While the picture is still exposed to the gaze of the spectators the Chorus continues to give in song the sad story of its significance.

The curtain falls after the Chorus has sung the first stanza. When the Schutzgeister have taken up their positions across the entire extent of the stage, the leader proceeds with clear tone the message of salvation. Then the chorus again retire, so as to leave the central space free, and the second tableau—the "Adoration of the Cross"—is revealed to the spectators. Before a large cross planted on a rock a number of heavenly geni (little children of the village clad in white garments) and mantles of bright colors stand or kneel in the attitude of worship.

THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM. The chorus has scarcely disappeared when a dramatic act of the "Passion Play" commences. From the distance, beyond the city as were, sounds of rejoicing, of glad shouting and singing are heard. Down the slope of Olivet (we follow here the authority of the "Passion Album") comes the Messianic procession, and one hears the singing and rejoicing of the crowds of Passover pilgrims and the people of Jerusalem who welcome Jesus to the Holy City. It is some time before the procession comes in view; but presently, in the background, the head of the procession is seen, and by and by hundreds of persons, all waving palm-branches and singing from the fulness of their hearts, appear upon the scene. In the midst of the crowd we can distinguish Christ himself seated upon the ass, and his disciples following, but still too far in the distance for

the spectators to see their faces with distinctness. The scene that follows is one that defies description. We have now the Saviour as delineated by Joseph Maier, before us. Perhaps for a moment or two there may have been a feeling of repugnance against the personification of Christ, but it soon vanishes. When the majestic form stands before our eyes and begins to speak in a clear, gentle, but commanding tone, the spectator soon loses all his preconceived notions concerning the impropriety of treating sacred subjects upon the stage.

JUDAS ISCAARIOT. In the next act (the fourth) is depicted the journey of Christ and his disciples to Jerusalem. By the way of episode we are brought face to face with Judas and his temptation. Christ and his disciples have left the scene; Iscaariot remains behind, and is struggling with the terrible thoughts that have arisen in his mind. In clear, nervous soliloquy he gives utterance to the hopes and fears of his abject soul.

Julius has sunk into deep meditation, which is soon followed by still deeper agitation and doubt. He continues to struggle with his own conscience, trying to decide what course to pursue, when the spies sent out by the Sanhedrin, Dathar, and the other exasperated buyers and sellers of the Temple arrive. It only wants the additional temptation agency reward to complete Judas's fall. Avarice gets the upper hand. The unhappy man tries to quiet his disturbed conscience by calling to mind the miraculous power of Christ, trusting that he may have recourse to it to save himself from his enemies.

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE. The seventh act—the Garden of Gethsemane—is powerful in its simplicity. We have a vivid representation of the agony in the garden, and the subsequent exhibition of strength and majesty when the conflict is over. The Saviour then returns to the three disciples who are with him, and, finding them still asleep, greets them with the term, incomprehensible words: "Sleep on and take your rest." The climax approaches; the din of arms is heard in the distance, and anon Roman soldiers appear, led by Judas, who steps up to Jesus, who is surrounded by his disciples, and exclaiming, "Ho! Rabbi, be thou such a representation." Being then an invalid, I was sitting up, doubtful if such a manifestation were really apparent. Soon afterwards, and whilst thinking of the mystery of the crucifixion, I saw a beautiful, steady light, somewhat resembling a star, glide slowly from a canopy of the high altar towards the arch of a window of the sanctuary wall, and then vanish. This light, or star, continued visible for about six seconds; it was exceedingly beautiful, and altogether unlike anything I had ever seen before. At this time I saw a large, bright cross, which continued visible for fully half an hour.

THE CRUCIFIXION. Next day, on Holy Thursday, or, strictly speaking, on Good Friday morning, for it was past midnight. It was a representation of the crucifixion manifest on the side wall of the sanctuary, and was witnessed by three or four of those stationed within the rails. Though I repeatedly directed by eyes to this wall I could not at any time discern such a representation. Being then an invalid, I was sitting up, doubtful if such a manifestation were really apparent. Soon afterwards, and whilst thinking of the mystery of the crucifixion, I saw a beautiful, steady light, somewhat resembling a star, glide slowly from a canopy of the high altar towards the arch of a window of the sanctuary wall, and then vanish. This light, or star, continued visible for about six seconds; it was exceedingly beautiful, and altogether unlike anything I had ever seen before. At this time I saw a large, bright cross, which continued visible for fully half an hour.

THE AFTERNOON PERFORMANCE begins with the leading of Jesus before Annas, the high priest, and thence into the presence of Caiaphas. Christ is condemned to death; but the sentence has to be confirmed by the Sanhedrin.

The curtain is dropped, and after a pause is raised again, showing the anteroom of the Sanhedrin, where the soldiers abuse their captive while awaiting the arrival of the high council. During this short interval Judas is introduced once more. The traitor is writhing under the stings of conscience. He passed across the stage muttering words indicative of the despair filling his soul. First, while the soldiers are waiting for Christ to be led forth, we have the denial of Christ by Peter; then when the condemned captive had been brought out and placed under the guard of the soldiers his mocking and ill-treatment. A dramatic portraiture closes this act. Peter, filled with a ray and mortification at having denied his Lord, appears and expresses his contrition.

JUDAS'S MONOLOGUE. When the High Council is met to condemn Jesus, Judas bursts into the assembly, overwhelmed with his guilt. He asks what has been done with Jesus, and when he learns that he is to die he charges them with being guilty of condemning the innocent, and casting at them the money he has received for his betrayal, he hastily leaves. Christ is again brought before the Sanhedrin.

In the next act (the tenth) we have the despair of Judas. This character is one of the most elaborately drawn in the Ammenag play. It is designed as a contrast to the beauty and calm grandeur of Christ. Cast off by those who had seduced him to crime, Judas appears alone, persecuted by his conscience.

There is an unanimous approval of the death sentence. It is now decided to hurry Christ before Pilate, who alone can pass judgment.

The curtain of the central stage now falls, but is again quickly raised. The scene represented is the "Field of Blood." Judas is the sole moving figure. His conscience has wrought him up to an agony of despair, in which he determines to put an end to his life. He tears the girdle from his waist, throws the end of it over the limb of a tree, ties it about his neck, and the suicidal act is all but completed, when the falling curtain hides the fearful scene.

We must hurry over the next two scenes, which represent Christ brought before Pilate and before Herod. We then have the scourging and crowning with thorns—a most realistic picture. There are no mild features to the brutal scene, which is presented with its full medieval characteristics. The rule treatment of the captive is carried perhaps too far for a modern audience.

THE SCENE ON GOLGOTHA. The Schutzgeister then retired from the proscenium, and the rising curtain reveals the scene on Calvary, the most intense

portraiture of the entire drama. The two malefactors already hung on their crosses. On the ground is a large cross, on which the Saviour is nailed, and which the executioners proceed to erect. "Let us now raise up the King of the Jews," exclaims one of them. "Our orders must be executed," says the Centurion. "The inscription must be first attached," says another. An executioner takes the document and nails it to the cross above the head of Christ and then he calls his companions, who at once begin to raise the cross with heavy jerks, which appear to tear each limb of the sufferer. It is now settled firmly in its place, and the crucified is stretched before us—a heart-piercing reality. The scene is a realization of the pictures we have been acquainted with from childhood.

In the two following and concluding acts are depicted the Resurrection and the Ascension.

THE KNOCK APPARITIONS.

ABSORBING NARRATIVE.

MARVELLOUS CURES.

[We have received from a reliable source the following narrative, related by a member of the order of Christian Brothers, regarding his wonderful experiences at Knock.—*Nation, June 5.*]

I proceed to give an account of the apparitions which I have witnessed at the chapel of Knock.

I arrived at this now famous sanctuary on the eve of the Feast of the Annunciation; but, owing to the vast concourse of pilgrims gathered there from all parts of the country, I failed to get admission till the following day.

Towards the evening of Holy Thursday I succeeded in obtaining a seat quite close to our lady's altar. This was within the sanctuary, and here I had resolved on remaining during the night. The little edifice, which is of cruciform shape, was crowded to excess, and the fervor and devotion of the whole congregation surpassed immeasurably anything I had ever witnessed in public.

So far as I know, the first vision seen during Holy Week was on the night of Holy Thursday, or, strictly speaking, on Good Friday morning, for it was past midnight. It was a representation of the crucifixion manifest on the side wall of the sanctuary, and was witnessed by three or four of those stationed within the rails. Though I repeatedly directed by eyes to this wall I could not at any time discern such a representation. Being then an invalid, I was sitting up, doubtful if such a manifestation were really apparent. Soon afterwards, and whilst thinking of the mystery of the crucifixion, I saw a beautiful, steady light, somewhat resembling a star, glide slowly from a canopy of the high altar towards the arch of a window of the sanctuary wall, and then vanish. This light, or star, continued visible for about six seconds; it was exceedingly beautiful, and altogether unlike anything I had ever seen before. At this time I saw a large, bright cross, which continued visible for fully half an hour.

I could scarcely so prize on this cross. When I saw the star I knelt down, and after a quarter of an hour spent in prayer I beheld distinctly a second star, exactly similar to the first, and moving apparently in the same direction. There was no mistaking the supernatural character of these stars. After seeing the first, I became so highly agitated, and begged that I might see no more, lest I should give public expression to my feelings. I remained kneeling for an hour and a half, experiencing the whole time a fervor and a happiness which would be difficult here to describe.

Of all the trades which have grown as a horrible exorcism on our civilization, there is none more frightful in the curses it entails on humanity—both body and soul—than the traffic in ardent spirits and savages. Without the physical stamina of the white man, with no moral restraint whatever, the most cruel temptation that can be thrown in his way is a noble of the lowest type of humanity can descend to, to make up the pit of degradation to which South Sea Islanders can be lowered by what they apply describe as "fire-water." Whole races are deteriorating, and are fast dying out under the baneful effects of ardent spirits. If once a savage has acquired the habit of stimulants, there is no hope of reclaiming him—he is a demon until it kills him. Here is one of the giant evils which, one would think, any missionary, be he Catholic, Anglican, or Wesleyan, would most anxiously encounter. It is a curse for which our race is naturally responsible, for which only an act of atonement for the fearful wrong we have done the poor creatures, we should use every effort to keep temptation out of their way. Now what are we doing—and we say we, not we Catholics, but as white men, for all creeds are alike to savages—what are we doing to keep them out of their way? The day the *John Williams*, a Wesleyan missionary ship, cleared the Customs, on a voyage to carry the blessings of the Gospel to the heathen in the South Seas. We commend the following to the consideration of our readers:—

"Ship, *John Williams*. Manifest, I case wine, 1 case port, 2 cases ale and stout, 1 case champagne, 5 cases wine, 65 cases stout, 25 cases claret, 25 cases whiskey, 65 cases beer."

Of course all idea that such a cargo as this being for "home consumption" is out of the question, for we defy the right gentlemen and their crews to drink 25 cases of whiskey on a voyage, to say nothing of the champagne, beer, ale, stout, and wine. What then was it for? Now we shall refer our readers to the homebound cargo of the *John Wesley* which we published some years ago. She was loaded up to the decks with oil and other natives' produce. Our readers must also remember that somehow or other, the Wesleyan missionaries are almost invariably rich men by the time they claim their sick leave. Is it very uncharitable of us to suppose it possible that this wine and beer and spirits, the cargo of the *John Williams*, has gone to be exchanged for native produce. On such a

supposition in what a light must these Wesleyan missions appear. The ship was bought by public subscription to enable a Christian minister to visit the various points of his mission in order that he might bear the glad tidings. She is used to degrade the heathen, to turn them into demons with drink. The man who hails in the chapel, and pleads the "good cause" at missionary meetings, is but a low, unprincipled trader, after all. He may come back and brag about his conversions and his schools, and the great progress he has made in—we do not intend to be blasphemous—his "Master's cause"—but the facts are against him. He went with ardent spirits; he came back with oil. He found the natives savages; he left them drunkards as well. No doubt as long as the public are prepared to be gulled there will be people to gull them; but can the public be any more gulled by such a patent imposture as the Wesleyan missions to the South Seas?

A MEMORABLE DOCUMENT. The following is a copy of the most memorable judicial sentence which has ever been pronounced in the annals of the savages, with the remarks which the journal *Le Troit* has collected, and the knowledge of which must be interesting to every Christian. Until now we are not aware that it has ever appeared in the German papers. It is worth for us to follow.

Sentences pronounced by Pontificus Pilate, incumbent of the Lower Province of Galilee, that Jesus of Nazareth shall suffer death by the cross.

In the 17th year of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, and on the 24th day of the month of March, in the most holy city of Jerusalem, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the intendat of the Province of Lower Galilee, sitting in judgment in the presidential seat of the Praetor, sentenced Jesus of Nazareth to death on a cross, and notorious testimonies of the people prove:

1. Jesus is a misleader. 2. He has excited the people to sedition. 3. He is an enemy to the laws. 4. He calls himself the Son of God. 5. He calls himself falsely the King of Israel.

6. He went into the temple followed by the young and old, to the number of thirty-three, having resolved for some time past to visit the now memorable Chapel of Knock, selected Sunday last, the "Feast of the Protection of our Lady," as the day for their pilgrimage. They all met at an early hour in their beautiful oratory in the Convent of Mercy, assisted by six o'clock Mass, and received Holy Communion. They drove through the town of Claremorris on their route to the shrine, and the members were led by him to the altar steps, where, as they knelt in humble adoration, the Rosary, followed by the Office of the B. V. M., was said by the president, in which they all joined.

METHODIST MISSIONARIES. WESLEYAN GROC-SELLING IN THE SOUTH SEAS. (Sydney Freeman's Journal.)

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sole exception of the Senator. What good the writer in the *Sentinel* expected to accomplish by his denial, we are at a loss to conceive, and beg the privilege to correct the rash assertions contained in his letter. We do this not only to vindicate ourselves, but also for the sake of justice and truth. It is not surely the credit of our faith to say that one could be a devoted child of the Church, and yet live in open violation of her teachings, as would be concluded if the words of our writer were true. The Church never could sanction what was wrong, nor prove recalcitrant to her own teachings, and hence such a contract, as that positively insisted upon by our friend, never could have been tolerated.—H. in *Catholic Columbian*.

A MOST USEFUL WORK. The following from the Waterloo (N.Y.) *Times* will explain the object and aims of a very useful work which the learned editor of that paper has in course of publication.

THE TRIPARTITE BIBLES, OR HAND-BOOK OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES, compiled from the Latin Work of Philip Paul Merz, by Rev. J. Lambert, Waterloo, N.Y.

The Hand-Book is a Complete Dictionary of all the subjects treated of in Holy Scriptures. These subjects are arranged in alphabetical order, and the texts in reference to them are given in full, with book, chapter and verse indicated. Let us illustrate. Suppose you want to find the book, chapter and verse where some text familiar to you may be found, a text, for instance, referring to confession; you turn to the word *Confession* in the Hand-Book, and there you will find not only the text sought, but also every other text in the *Scriptures* that bears any relation to the subject of *Confession*. All these will be found in full, so that there is no necessity of referring to the Bible for them. The Hand-Book contains over fifteen hundred headings and sub-headings. These cover the whole field of dogmatic, moral and polemic theology.

From these considerations the utility of the Hand-Book becomes apparent. It is a book of ready reference for the clergyman, the student, the editor and the intelligent layman, a book which enables them to put their finger on the text wanted.

Protestants are fond of asking Catholics what Scripture they have for their doctrines. Having the Hand-Book, the Catholics can turn to the doctrine, say Confession, for instance, and convince his doubting Thomas of a Protestant friend by pointing out to him *fifty-nine* texts that treat directly or indirectly of Confession. This translation is preferable to the original Latin work, even to the Latin scholar, because in quoting a text, one desires to give the *opissima verba*, the very words of the authorized English Catholic version.

The Hand-Book will make an octavo volume of about 900 pages. Price three dollars. Those who desire to have a copy of this book will send in their orders immediately, as only a limited number will be printed. Address *Catholic Times*, Waterloo, N. Y.

A REPENTANT SINNER. After the Revolution that disgraced the close of the last century, a chaplain was called to attend a soldier very severely wounded. The priest found a man whose countenance shewed the greatest serenity. He said to the wounded man: "My friend, I was told that your wounds were very serious." Smiling sadly the soldier answered: "Reverend sir, will you raise the bed-clothes a little from my chest?" The priest complied, and then drew back with a shudder, for he perceived that both arms were gone.

"What?" exclaimed the soldier, "you start with horror at such a trifling matter?" The priest did so, and saw that his feet had likewise been carried away. "Ah!" he said, greatly moved, "how I pity you, poor fellow!"

"Oh no," answered the mingled form of humanity; "I suffer only what I earned for myself. Not long since, in an insane fury I chopped off all the limbs of a criminal, and the manager of my Redeemer told to the ground; and in the next battle my own arms and legs were carried off by cannon balls. As I treated him so he treated me. But thanks be to God for punishing me in this world for my crime, that he may spare me in the next, and hope and trust he will in His exceeding great mercy!"

Yes, God is just. And yet there are men that with smiling countenances continue to heap crime upon crime. To them it seems but a trifling matter to insult this Sovereign Being. But how they will open their eyes when they see Him at the Judgment!

GOD'S GOODNESS IN NATURE. The God made the present earth as the home of man; but had he not made it as a mere lodging, a world less beautiful would have served the purpose. There was no need for the carpet of verdure or the ceiling of blue—no need for the mountains and catacarts and forests; no need for the rainbow, no need for the showers, no need for the flowers. A big, round island, half of it arable and half of it pasture, with a clump of trees in one corner and a magazine of fuel in another, might have held and fed ten millions of people, and a hundred islands all made on the same pattern, big and round, might have held and fed the population of the globe.

But man is something more than the animal who wants lodging and food. He has a spiritual nature, full of keen perceptions and deep sympathies. He has an eye for the sublime and the beautiful, and his kind Creator has provided man's abode with affluent nature for these nobler tastes. He has built Mount Blanc, and moulted the lakes in which its shadow lies. He has harnessed Niagara's thunder, and has breathed the zephyr which sweeps its spray. He has made it a world of fragrance and music, a world of brightness and sympathy, a world where the grand and the graceful, the awful and the lovely, rejoice together. In fashioning the home of man, the Creator had an eye to something more than convenience, and built not a barrack, but a palace, not a workshop, but an Alhambra—something which should inspire the soul of its inhabitants and even draw forth the "very good" of complacent Deity.