Half-way up the road stood a Calvary worn with age and storms, and over the steps in places the soft clinging

moss had grown. Jean had passed it on his way, but had only lifted his cap in salutation, without making the usual invocation.

It was a lovely, balmy day, which ned to breathe the first thoughts of seemed to breathe the first thoughts of spring, but the very joyousness of the air was out of harmony with Jean's mood. He was slowly coming back after a fruitless journey, and, as he approached the Calvary, he noticed a figure sitting on the steps, with his head on his arm, as if in slumber.

Coming nearer Jean saw it was his on the steps, and then his eye wandered to his crutch.

An evil thought rose in his mind ; he had forgotten the Divine Figure above, and the devil stood at his elbow showing him the contrast between his crooked figure and the splendid physique of the man at his feet. Jean grasped his crutch. One awful

blow and the sleeper, happy in his Power. dreams, would wake no more.

"He has everything; you are a cripple—a hunchback fit for nothing, and out of the friendship of the world. whispered the tempter. "No one can see you; who is to know?"—The same

temptation that has made many Cains since the first great murder. Jean's face blanched, and a wild look crept into his eyes.
"No one to see!" he almost whis-

his brother out of the world. He lifted his heavy crutch, but in the

swinging his eyes caught the look of the crowned Head on the Cross. In his wildness the Face seemed to look sadly pitiful on the poor soul who was turning his back on Him.

In terror the crutch fell from Jean's nerveless hand, and with a wild sob for mercy, he covered his face and fell

Pierre slept peacefully on, little dreaming as he lay under the shadow of the Cross of the awful tragedy beside Humbly Jean rose slowly, and with a prayer in his heart for mercy he trudged wearily home.

Pierre and Annette were married soon after Easter, and Jean quietly left the village to take up his work elsewhere. But his heart was in that village by the sea, and he had no love

In his holiday he returned, and they thought he had become even more reserved than before. He spent all his days in his boat, as of old, till they were afraid that one day he might get overtaken, and his strength not be able to resist a sudden storm. But, as Pierre remarked to his wife in his light-

"Oh, Jean is stronger than we im agine; his body may be crooked, but his arm is straight and like his heart. Jean is a good sort, though queer and quiet, you know, at times." How could Pierre realize what life was under the burden his brother carried?

It was autumn, and squalls had up-set the weather early. Jean's last day of holiday has come, and he was pre paring to spend it in his boat.

I think you had better keep by the Jean; I don't like this

weather," said Pierre.
"It is fine to-day," said Jean, looking at the bright blue sky above. "No squalls to-day, and even so I am safe. I landed her well the other evening. "Ah, yes ; perhaps once too often, you know, Jean."

Pierre said no more, for Jean shook his head, smiling, and went off in the direction of the beach.

Pierre was right. In the middle o the day a squall blew, and the sea was terrible for the short time. At the cot tage they all looked anxious. Marie and Annette said their rosaries and Pierre went off the beach, though in the heavy mist he could see nothing. Gradually, as it lifted, he fancied he saw a dark speck in the distance.

"If he had his sail up he can not have weathered this," thought Pierre with an anxious heart.

Slowly the dark clouds rolled away, and the sun smiled out brightly, while the sea danced in little ripples as if forgetful of the temper of a moment

Still Pierre felt worried, and won dered what the distant object could be With a curious sensation of misgiving Pierre hunted up two sailors, and to gether they searched for that distant black speck.

"We are just on it," said one of the men, "Pull together, and—" but the man hesitated; he had seen it was a small boat bottom uppermost. His sud They came alongside, and 'Star of the Sea." It was the name of Jean's boat!

Pierre lifted his cap. 'He has gone under, mates. Poor Jean. God rest his soul," and the three men crossed themselves piously A day or two later the body drifted Jean was at rest-he had sailed

into God's harbor. - Catholic Fireside. A Quebecer's Confidence in Dr. Chase's Catarrh Cure-Gives Relief at once,

He says Danville, P. Q., April 9th, 1898

Religious Communities in Italy.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR APRIL, Recommended to our Prayers by His Holiness, Leo XIII.

American Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

The Intention recommended to our prayers this month must be on e of es pecially dear to the heart of the Holy Father, and the blessing which he be-stows upon it must come to us freighted with his most earnest desire for our cooperation. A recent Papal document has shown in what light the Pope re brother and asleep; evidently the gards the religious orders, and how warmth of the day and the long walk had tired him. At the moment Jean and are now doing for the Church. To proceded he was half smiling as if pray then that they may be increased the drawn. Lean stood a in a pleasing dream. Jean stood a in the number of their subjects and in the spirit of their vocation, is an object most consonant with the aim and pur pose of our Apostleship. But we can well understand that his paternal eyes must rest with special affection on the religious communities of his own native land, those of whose virtues and trials he himself is a witness, and whose sufferings are bound up inseparably with the passing away of his Temporal

The bread riots last year at Milan made strikingly manifest to the world the misery and want that have followed in the train of the Revolution which created a so-called United Italy under the domination of an usurping king and a parliament of radicals and free thinkers. Disastrous war and public robbery had depleted the National Exchequer, and excessive taxes must needs be levied to meet governmental pered, looking round on the sun-lit extravagance. But the famine which landscape, and the demon jealousy, that at last aroused to frenzied action the had long worked mad riot in his mor-bid mind, was urging him fast to dash life, had years ago been felt by the religious communities. breach in the Porta Pia there had rushed into the Eternal City, not only the forces of an invading army, but in its ranks, and particularly among its leaders, men whose avowed object was the extirpation of all religion.

It is not, therefore surprising that among the early acts of the new government was a decree depriving all the religious orders of a legal existence, and confiscating to the crown not only their monasteries and their furniture, but even in defiance of all law and order, laying hands on the dowry of individual religious. True it is that in place of the principal thus unjustly seized, there was substituted a yearly pension, but this was so small and paid at such irregular intervals, that it practically amounted to nothing or at most did not average more than twenty or twenty-five cents a day. Even this pittance was to cease with the death of the older religious, and as all these orders were further forbidden to re ceive novices, their extinction appeared only a question of time. The evident object of these laws, besides enriching the government authorities, was to force the religious to abandon their rocation and return to the world, but thank God, as one of their superiors expresses it, "the bonds of charity hold us so firmly together that neither hunger, nor thirst, nor nakedness, nor any other misfortune can separate us from our Lord." This object is made clear from an answer given as far back as 1860 to a Camaldolese monk by Cavour, the ablest and most unprincipled of the leaders of the Italian Revolutionary Harrassed by vexations of all party. Harrassed by vexations of an kinds, this old religious, not crediting all that he had heard or seen done by the officials of the State, resolved to "No leave his narrow cell and adjoining safe. little garden patch in the mountains, give to patch them." "At sunset," to make a personal appeal to the sense of justice and humanity of his persecut-Ushered into the presence of the Prime Minister, he humbly asked what reproach could be made to himself or his brethren in religion. We live entirely apart from the world. Our converse is only with God. What conspiracy can Your Excellency fear from us?" "That of your prayers," Cayour made reply. "You conspire Cavour made reply. You conspire against Italy by praying, and that is A singular admission and enough." charge, and one that gives an unexected insight into the motives by which the founders of modern Italy were actuated.

But the iniquitous laws did not stop here. Hard as it would have been to remain in poverty and suffering as caretakers for the government of what is rightly their own property, to be subjected to arbitrary annoying official inspection, and to see their houses stripped of all that was most valuable in art and archives, there would at least be the consolation of living in the homes of their predecessors, of keeping in touch with the traditions and souv enirs of the saintly men and women who had been their progenitors in the Such encouragemen religious life. and aids to resignation were, he den silence fell on Pierre's heart like a in many cases denied. Religious orders of men were ejected from their through the water they read across the monasteries, which were made to serve as barracks, or post offices, or police stations, and forced to break up into small communities to live as best they could in narrow private apartments in out-of-the-way streets and alleys, while the cloistered communities of women, at the caprice of the municipal author ities, were frequently huddled together in some one convent, often in a ruined condition, and there, despite the fact that they had embraced distinct religious rules, were merged into one com-munity. The Jesuit Professed House, adjoining the Gesu in Rome, made EDMANSON, BATES & Co., Toronto.
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gone in the same direction, though not | LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART. the work of spoliation and confiscation, although perhaps sadder still are the impressions arising from a visit to Subiaco, the cradle of Western monasticism, whose deserted halls that once re-echoed to the footsteps of a thousand nonks, shelter at present a dozen Benedictines, allowed by the pretended generosity of the Government to remain with a small pension as custodians of

their own monastery. In this war of systematized oppression and injustice against religious men and women, the active and contemplative orders alike have been the victims. For a time the Catholic laity were able to render some assistance but with rich families pushed to the verge of bankruptcy by excessive taxa tion, and the simple peasantry so poor that their houses were sold over their heads, and they themselves compelled to emigrate to the Americas, North or South, this aid was scon withdrawn. Hundreds of the priest members of these communities do not receive a stipend for a Mass the whole year The religious institutes for the round. education of girls still continue in ex istence, but in most cases under such straitened circumstances and sur rounded by so many hardships and privations, that it is hard to see how the Sisters have even the physical strength to teach their classes. ourselves have visited one such school in a town among the Alban hills. It occupied three rooms in the third story of a tenement house. The chapel was the smallest of hall bedrooms, so small indeed as to barely admit the narrow-est of altars, on which the priest's vestments were placed before and after vesting. The two other rooms, both small, served at once as schoolrooms, dormitory, refectory, kitchen and parlor for the community of four Sisters, who each received from the Government the munificent salary of ten cents a day for their services! It was a painful reflection that we were consuming half of their day's pay when we partook of the cup of coffee and two unbuttered rolls that were so graci ously offered us for breakfast after we had said Mass.

But deplerable as is the lot of the religious orders of men, and the teaching orders of Sisters, its misery is not at all comparable to that endured by the cloistered contemplative orders of women, and these, be it said, constitute a large part of the religious communities of Italy. Perhaps it is because they are from the very nature of their vocation archconspirators in the league of prayer which Cavour so greatly dreaded, that they have been singled out for special persecution. Rome glories in the number of martyrs who in centuries gone by bedewed with their blood its erstwhile sacred soil, but we doubt not that no less acceptable in the eyes of God are the hidden victims of this unbloody martyrdom, who day by day amid hunger and thirst, well nigh to starvation, are surrendering their pure souls into the hands of their Creator for whom in the fair promise of youth they had voluntarily given up up all that the world holds most sweet. One Review, the Civilta Cattolica, has three hundred and ninety such destitute convents regularly on its list of charitable beneficiaries, and twice each year at Christmas and Easter, makes appeal for them under the title L'Obolo per le Povere Monache, "The Mite for the Poor Nuns." No sadder reading do we know than their pleadings for a share in this charitable fund, or the words of gratitude in which they tell the good make a few extracts from these letters:

The Superioress of an Umbrian convent writes: "My daughters hold up to me their torn and worn-out habits, but the real sinner. writes the member of another commun ity, "we retire to our cells, there to remain in utter darkness till the dawn of the next day. And why this? Be cause we have only enough means to buy oil for the lamp before the Blessed Sacrament. We even use no oil as seasoning, that our Lord may not be left without His flickering sentinel light."

Many of these communities are poorer than the very poorest in our large cities, and are absolutely in want of even their daily bread. "Father, I even their daily bread. have not a single penny to buy a mouthful of bread for my dear com munity." "We have exhausted all our flour," are the words of another Superioress. "No one will give us Superioress. "No one will credit, and I have no money. make use of you as a channel to transmit to us what is absolutely necessary to sustain the life of my Sisters. All we ask is the means to buy bread. And yet," to quote from the letter of a Reverend Mother whose community had been reduced to this same extrem ity till aided by an alms, "we accep all our sacrifices. We have made row of poverty; we are the spouses of Him who was born poor and died poor for us to strengthen us by His example. I can tell you in all truth and sincerity that my religious suffer in peace, even

with joy, all their great privations in food and clothing." Letters of similar character might be multiplied without end, but enough has been said to show how earnest should be at least our prayers that this reign of oppression may be shortened and the religious communities restored to their rightful inheritance. It is not long since our hearts were stirred by the re cital of the sufferings of the reconcent rados of Cuba. Large sums of money were collected and numerous relief ex peditions were organized to assist those unfortunates, and the contention was put forward in Congress that their sad condition was in itself sufficient justifi cation of the war with Spain. ciscan convent of Ara Coeli on the Capitoline, may be taken as examples of ciscan convent of Ara Coeli on the Capitoline, may be taken as examples of

meaning than the Cuban insurgents, and scarcely a voice is raised to pro-claim their misery, scarcely a hand is moved to give them the succor which their virtuous lives and helpless cir-

cumstances demand.

There is another and a higher reason why these communities should enlist a sympathy and commiseration which would find expression in prayer. Their spiritual interests cannot but be imperilled by the withdrawal of all the aids to community life. Expelled from their monasteries and convents, they are not uncommonly deprived of the happiness of daily Mass, and the still greater happiness and source strength derived from frequent Holy Communion. Crowded together, as we have seen, in parrow and unhealthy quarters, where the sick and dying call for constant attention, it is almost im possible to preserve the regularity and vigor of religious discipline, or to pur sue in peace and tranquillity of mind the round of community duties pre-scribed by rule. All external helps to devotion, the Annual Retreat, books for spiritual reading, a chapel worthy of the Divine Presence, are often denied them, while we may add to

these the pressure brought to bear by frends and relatives to have them re turn to the world, and the temptation to despondency which would lead them to lose heart in the service of their Master. Perseverance therefore their vocation can only come from great and extraordinary graces, and that such graces may continue to flow to them in the future as in the past, is a

worthy object of prayer.

But there is a third and even more personal reason why this month's intention should come home to us all. Apart from their impoverishment, spiritual as well as temporal, many of these re ligious are members of orders which give to Associates of the Apostleship of Prayer a share in all their merits and good works and sufferings, so that each of their acts of patience and resignation, each hour of privation and want, each moment of desolation, is rebounding to our spiritual profit and making us richer before God. Gratitude, then and the bond of membership in a com mon association should incite us to pray with all earnestness for these afflicted communities, who from the depth of their earthly purgatory are crying out to us to plead their cause

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

BY CARDINAL MANNING

"My soul is sorrowful even unto death. My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (St. Matthew, xxvi., 38-

There, then, in that most awful hour, knelt the Saviour of the world, putting off the offenses of His divinity, as He was, to the assault of His foe.

It is the long history of the world, and God alone can bear the load of it. Hopes blighted, vows broken, lights quenched, warnings scorned, oppor-tunities lost; the innocent betrayed the young hardened, the penitent relapsing, the just overcome, the aged failing; the sophistry of misbelief, the wilfulness of passion, the tyranny of habit, the canker of remorse, the wast ing of care, the anguish of disappoint ment, the sickness of despair; such cruel, such pitiable spectacles, heartrending, revolting, detestable, maddening scenes; . . . they are upon Him, they are all but His

own ; He cries to His Father as if He were the criminal, not the Victim. He is the one Victim for us all, sole satisfaction, the real penitent, all And thus our atoning sacrifice

began with this passion of woe, and only did not die, because at His omnipotent will His heart did not break, nor soul separate from body, till He had suffered on the Cross. No, He has not yet exhausted that

full chalice, from which at first His natural infinities shrank. The seizure, and the arraignment, and the buffet and the prison, ing, and the prison, and the trial, and the mocking, and the passing to and fro, and the scource ing, and the crown of thorns, and the slow march of Calvary, and the crucifixion-these are all to come. A night and a day, hour after hour, is slowly to run out, before the end comes, and the satisfaction is completed.

And then, when the appointed mo-ment arrived, and He gave the word, as His passion had begun with His soul, with the soul did it end. He did not die of bodily exhaustion, or of bodily pain; His tormented heart broke and He commended His spirit to the Father.

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