

a moment, and she only remained outside the cloister for the next twelve years in order that her son should be old enough to be left with the Jesuits before she made her vows. Never for a moment did she relax her self-imposed ascetic rules for the mortification of the flesh. She literally clothed herself in sack-cloth, and practised so many other physical discomforts that her spiritual directors always had great difficulty in keeping her penitential macerations within due bounds. During four years she lived in utter self-abasement, as the servant of the servants at her brother-in-law's. This relative, who was at the head of a great forwarding business, was only too glad to promote her at the suggestion of her director; and she suddenly passed from below the menials to the local superintendence of sixty horses and a hundred men. For eight years the business prospered exceedingly; and she completed an apprenticeship in practical affairs which served her well during her pioneering life in Canada.

But none of these alien years of successful business management saw any worldling interlude in her religious life. They were, indeed, only more steps up the *Scala Sancta* of her soul. Her visions were no longer childlike dreams, but such as led her Spanish prototype, St. Theresa, through the seven abodes of the spiritual castle—*el Castillo Interior o las Moradas*—and so toward divine espousal with the Son of Man. On the eve of the Incarnation, in 1620, she had recommended herself to God's providence in her usual formula—*In te Domine speravi, non confundar in aeternum*—and had set out for her daily work. Then, as she walked beside the city moat, came the flash of apparition. Her whole being stood at gaze; while the panorama of her past was unrolled before her, with all her sins standing out in the shamed dark, against the accusing whiteness of the light of truth; and with the life-blood of her crucified Saviour pulsing to her feet.

The vision over, she entered the nearest church and begged the first priest she met to hear her full confession. Returning next day for absolution she determined that her true conversion was to be counted from this anniversary of the Incarnation; a circumstance which suggested her name in religion, La Mère Marie de l'Incarnation.

Some years after, in a re-birth of unquestioning hope, she was at last caught up again within the highest rapture of heavenly delight; as once before, in her first dream-vision when a child. *Je conversais familièrement avec Notre-Seigneur, et mon cœur s'élançait par un mouvement extraordinaire vers ce bonheur que je ne pouvais comprendre. Jésus-Christ me dit distinctement ces paroles: Sponsabo te mihi in fide, sponsabo te mihi in perpetuum—Je t'épouserai dans la foi, je t'épouserai pour jamais.*