

Catholic Record.

London, Sat., May 14th, 1887.

THE EARLY MARTYRS AN EVIDENCE TO CHRISTIANITY.

The term Martyr is originally a Greek word signifying witness. It was applied to those who, having actual knowledge of an event by participation therein or by presence thereof, gave freely their testimony as to its truth. The New Testament, written for the most part, originally in Greek, frequently employs the word in this sense. Its transition of meaning to the sense in which it is at present used took place at a very early period, and followed very naturally from the application of the term by our Lord to His Apostles. In charging them to preach His gospel, He said to them, immediately before His Ascension into Heaven: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." Acts i, 8. They were, therefore, commissioned to declare, first to the Jews, and afterwards to the Gentiles, the coming of Christ as the Messiah. The necessary consequence of their testimony thus given had already been foretold to them by Him: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall put you to death: and you shall be hated by all nations for my name's sake." St. Matt. xxiv, 9. "That which I tell you in the dark, speak ye in the light; and that which you hear in the ear, preach ye upon the house-tops. And fear not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body into hell. . . . Every one, therefore, that shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven." x, 26, 32.

It thus appears that the early witnesses who, in the presence of Jews and Gentiles, attested the miraculous events of Christ's life on earth, especially His divine mission, His Resurrection and Ascension, as the basis on which Christianity was founded, could expect nothing else than that they should be persecuted for Christ's sake. Persecution was to be their lot, and it was to be utterly destroyed, for the sentiments of pride, ambition, greed, which actuated men, the new virtues of humility, self-sacrifice, fraternal charity, were to be substituted. One God was to be adored instead of the many to whom temples were erected and public worship was offered. The Jews were in expectation of a Saviour who should deliver them from the power of the Romans, and re-establish the Jewish kingdom. The doctrines preached by the apostles were therefore entirely at variance with the wishes or expectations of all, and could not but excite the most strenuous opposition, especially from those who had interested motives to retain the old order of things. Thus when St. Paul and Alexander taught in Ephesus, "They are not God's which are made by hands," the divines under the leadership of Demetrius raised a tumult against them because their "craft was in danger," and easily excited the populace with the cry that "the temple of great Diana shall be reputed for nothing, and her majesty shall begin to be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipeth." (Acts, xix.) By becoming Christians, none could hope for earthly gain; and in the whole period down to the establishment of the Christian Empire by Constantine the Great, in the early part of the fourth century, torture and death were to be expected. Thus Tertullian called the Christian faith "an engagement to martyrdom." This was foreseen by our Lord, and foretold by Him, and the only consolation he offered was in the future life: "You shall be hated by all men for my name's sake: but he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved." (St. Matt. x.) Thus we see how the name martyr came to be applied to those who had sacrificed their lives in testimony to the facts on which Christianity is based.

The testimony of the early Christian martyrs, vast as their number is, forms an irrefragable proof of the divinity of the Christian religion. There is no stronger evidence of sincerity of belief than readiness to lay down one's life in testimony to that which is asserted, and when this testimony has reference to facts which have occurred, rather than to merely speculative opinions, sincerity becomes an evidence of truth. A person may be sincere, yet mistaken, when he states merely his opinion. But if he is sincere in his testimony regarding a fact of which he has certain cognizance through his senses, or otherwise, his testimony is true. Yet, even in this case, though the testimony were in fact true, there might be room for us to suspect either the sincerity of the witness, or the certainty of his knowledge of the fact, if he were alone. There is a strong antecedent probability in favor of the sincerity even of a single witness who is ready to suffer, or if necessary to endure death in attestation of his statement of facts, yet cases have been known of persons who would do so through some human motive, as pride, or arrogance, or love of notoriety, but it is

contrary to the nature of mankind that a multitude of men differing from each other in manners, habits, position in life, and in physical endurance, should conspire to attest fictions when they have no temporal interest to deceive, and that they should persist in their testimony though they know that for so doing they shall be condemned to a cruel death. If they are, besides, men of known probity and virtue, their testimony is irrefragable that their testimony is true. Such is the case with the Christian martyrs. Their number, during less than the first three hundred years of the existence of Christianity, would be incredible if the evidence of it were not most positive and conclusive. A moderate estimate is that they exceeded twelve million throughout the Roman Empire. This would give over 1,333,000 for each generation. These comprised young and old, weak and strong, men, women and children, rich and poor, officials of the Empire, members of the imperial household and family, artisans and peasants, Apostles of Christ, Popes, Bishops, Priests, soldiers, laics of every degree.

It is difficult, nay, impossible, after the lapse of from sixteen to eighteen centuries to demonstrate to the satisfaction of all minds the number, exactly, of those who suffered. But there is evidence abundant to prove that the number was immense. All who have visited even cursorily the Roman catacombs are stricken with wonder at the extent of these ancient underground Christian cemeteries, and the vast number of bodies interred in them; and those who have studied the inscriptions are well aware of the very great proportion of martyrs who are there "deposited in peace." The length of these streets of the dead is said by Northcote to be certainly not less than three hundred and fifty miles, while March places it at eight hundred or nine hundred miles, and the number of graves at between six and seven millions. The persecutions of Christians during the first three centuries were not confined to Rome, but extended throughout the Roman Empire, so that the total number of sufferers must have been exceedingly great. There are, besides, testimonies of history to show in many instances the wholesale character of the slaughter. The general persecutions were ten in number, besides those that were local. The first general persecution was under Nero, A. D. 64 to 68, during which St. Peter and Paul suffered; the 10th began under Diocletian, A. D. 303.

Accounts of these persecutions are given both by Christian and Pagan writers: Tacitus, Sulpitius, Tertullian, Pliny, Suetonius, Hegeppius, Orosius, Origen, Lactantius, Melito, Eusebius, Jerome, Justin Martyr, Cyprian, Dionysius of Alexandria and many others. At Lyons, nineteen thousand suffered with St. Irenaeus. Six thousand six hundred and sixty six were in the Theban legion, put to death by order of Maximian; two hundred thousand perished under Sapor II. in Persia, according to Susemen.

Of the remorseless cruelty with which tortures were inflicted, Tacitus is a sufficient witness. He states that Nero inflicted most cruel punishments. "Some enclosed in the skins of beasts were devoured by dogs, some were crucified, others were wrapped in pitch garments, and were set on fire to serve as lights to illuminate the night."

Further: These sufferings were endured as a testimony to the truth of the miraculous facts on which Christianity is founded. The sufferers were not accused of any other crime but that of being Christians. It is true this crime was made under pretext that they were impious towards the gods, refusing to adore them and to sacrifice to idols, and that they were guilty of pernicious superstition, but these accusations were merely various forms of the one supposed crime. Pliny acknowledges in his letters to Trajan that no other crime could be found against them.

From all this it follows that this immense multitude of sufferers were willing to endure the most exquisite tortures to attest the truth of miraculous facts, of which they had been themselves witnesses: the miracles of Christianity. It is recorded that the twelve apostles were among the number of those who suffered, besides nearly all of the most illustrious and learned Christians of the first three centuries. The sincerity of such witnesses cannot be doubted.

The facts they attest are such that it was easy for them to know their truth or falsity. Many among the martyrs were eye-witnesses to these facts, others were contemporaries with them. The facts themselves were public, and were such that the senses could take cognizance of them. It was, therefore, impossible that they should be deceived in regard to them. They were, therefore, neither impostors, nor were they themselves mistaken, and the facts must really have occurred as related. Hence it necessarily follows that Christianity is founded upon supernatural events, and is the work of God.

Besides: These sufferings, which were beyond the endurance of physical nature, were endured only through the grace of God. The martyrs relied not on their own strength, but prepared themselves by prayer, fasting and penitential works.

Their constancy, therefore, was itself the work of God, and frequently the pagans were themselves obliged to acknowledge this. Christ himself in foretelling these sufferings promised the grace to enable His martyrs to endure them: and thus also St. Paul admonishes the Philippians: "For unto you it is given, for Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him." (1, 29)

A GREAT TRIUMPH SCORED.

Mr. Gladstone has just scored a magnificent triumph. The grand old man has badly cornered his Tory opponents on the breach of privilege committed by the Times in its assaults on the Irish national party. For many days the Tories howled themselves hoarse to know why Mr. Parnell and his associates did not court enquiry into the Times' charges. Mr. Gladstone has moved for a Parliamentary investigation into charges whereby the Irish members had been maligning to an enormous extent, holding that no matter what the government might do, the country had determined to give the Irish members full justice, even indulgent justice, seeing that their honor and character were at stake. The Tory government, controlling the present Commons by a majority of more than 100, clearly dreads an investigation by a Parliamentary committee of its own choosing, and in the face of precedent, reason and prudence, seek to shirk its responsibility in the matter. Even the ultra Tory Standard condemns its course: "The Government's proposal for getting rid of the question of privilege partakes too clearly of the character of a makeshift to satisfy Parliament, the public, or even, we should think, the ministers themselves. The proposal is not practical because the Parnellites will not accept it. It is not justifiable because, first, the Government have no quarrel with the Times, and second, no public offence has been committed. If a breach of privilege has been committed it is a matter for Parliament. If not, we are at a loss to understand why the Government should take it upon themselves to prosecute the Times. Mr. Gladstone's amendment, though so narrowly that it is impossible for the house to accept it, indicates the direction in which the only safe solution can be looked for. The Government must improve upon his suggestion by enlarging the scope of the enquiry so as to make it apply to the entire indictment against the Parnellites. If no action is taken the Parnellites will be in a better position than they were before and will make capital out of the whole affair." United Ireland is quite just in maintaining that none but a fool or an enemy would advise the Nationalists to court enquiry before an ordinary court of law. Parliament is the only court of competent jurisdiction in the matter.

SOUND ADVICE.

Calmness should be one of the chief characteristics of the Irish race in the present phase of its struggle. Mr. Wm. O'Brien, who is by a certain section of the press, ignorantly, if not maliciously, denounced as a "firebrand," just before leaving Ireland made the following speech in the presence of a justly exasperated body of his fellow countrymen: "We can afford to follow the advice of your illustrious leader, to bear things patiently. We can afford to wait until that tremendous tide of English opinion that is rising will overwhelm this Tory Government of coercion and extermination, until it will bury them and bury landlordism a thousand leagues under the sea. The future is on our side, and believe me that the knees of our enemies to-day are trembling, and they are groaning in their secret hearts. Sir George Trevelyan has deserted them. The worst and the most venomous enemy we have got—Mr. Chamberlain—two days ago was repudiated by his own town of Birmingham. Lord Hartington, another of our enemies, made a speech the other night which sounded from beginning to end like one moun of despair, and the very policemen—seven of them resigned in Castle Island. The Irish blood of these men's mothers is beginning to stir and to revolt in their veins against the work they have to do."

A SEVERE REBUKE.

Birmingham has long been known as one of the most intensely Liberal organizations in England. Liberal organizations there had been reduced to practical perfection. Two of its representatives, Messrs. John Bright and Joseph Chamberlain, having gone over to the enemy on the Irish question—the party has since grievously suffered there, both in discipline and organization. At the last general election these two gentlemen were not only able to secure seats for themselves as opponents of Mr. Gladstone, but also won a seat for the Tory Mr. Matthews, now Home Secretary in the Salisbury Cabinet.

The Liberals of Birmingham seem now at last to have risen and recovered from the stupor caused by Mr. Chamberlain's treachery. At the time of his defection, he had control of the Birmingham Liberal organization. The following despatch shows that he has lost his hold upon his old friends and constituents: "The coercionist cause has received its severest final rebuff in the heart of the Birmingham caucus. In the newly elected Liberal Council a resolution was moved condemning coercion. The Unionist section adjured the council, in the sacred name of John Bright, not to pass what practically would be a vote of censure on their honored representative. The appeal was in vain, and the resolution was carried by a vote of 97 to 61. The full import of this can hardly be appreciated outside of Birmingham."

EDITORIAL NOTES.

His Lordship Rt. Rev. John Walsh, Bishop of London, will preach at St. Mary's Church, Hill street, city, on next Sunday, at High Mass, which begins at half past ten o'clock.

BISHOP BORGES, of Detroit, has resigned. The resignation was sent to Rome six weeks ago, and the formal acceptance has just been received. Bishop Borges was consecrated bishop April 24, 1870.

MR. GLADSTONE, in a letter asking to be excused from attending a meeting in favor of the anti vaccination movement, gives as one of his reasons the statement that he is busily engaged in opposing the compulsory inoculation of the whole Irish nation with the Coercion Bill.

The Pope, we are informed by cable, has received a letter from Emperor William, in which the Emperor thanks the Pope for his wise and conciliatory cooperation in settling the Ecclesiastical Bill, and expresses the hope that the present religious peace will never be disturbed.

WE ARE pleased to be able to announce that the Life and Poems of our Holy Father, Leo XIII., have been published. Not only the Catholic people, but, indeed, all who value true poetry, will hail with delight the appearance of this volume. It will be sold by subscription only. To the People's Publishing Co., Toronto, we are indebted for the appearance of this beautiful book, and we trust they will be abundantly rewarded for their enterprise. We will refer at length to the poems in our next issue.

BARRY and FAY, the "Irish Comedians," recently gave a performance in Philadelphia entitled "McSwiggan's Parliament." The nasty thing was very properly hissed off the stage by the Irishmen among the audience. This is the same "combination" which occasionally presents us with "Muldoo's Picnic," a low and vulgar and meaningless exhibition which they term an Irish play. Such men and such performances are no credit to and should not be patronized by Irishmen.

THE Parnellites a few days ago demanded that a committee of the House of Commons be named to investigate the charges made by the London Times against the Irish members. Mr. Dillon said he would be satisfied to have it so constituted as not to include a single Irish member. The Government refused, having as their purpose the prosecution of the Times in a court of law wherein it could easily be arranged to return a verdict against the Irish party.

REV. DR. W. H. PURCELL, a ruling elder of the Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, recently made the following public declaration: "When I was a young man and unconverted, I used to think I did God service in denouncing the Church of Rome. Now I see that I was wrong." We would be glad if our Protestant neighbors of London were to commit this sentence to memory. The clerical tramps who come here from the East to enlighten them in regard to "Popery," and take up a collection—should be given the cold shoulder by men of intelligence.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, who at one time was a Radical of the Radicals, and now a Tory of the Tories, still fondly imagines he is leader of the Liberal party and that his few followers constitute that party. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain lately said he would willingly welcome Gladstone and his followers back to the old Liberal party. Home Rule, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain says, is the new heresy. Little doubt is there, however, that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain would to-morrow become a "heretic" were Mr. Gladstone and his followers to acknowledge as their leader Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.

A COLONIAL DELEGATION recently waited on the Queen to present an address. It is not proper for these gentlemen to speak in behalf of the colonies without credentials. It is not, indeed, the correct thing for them to speak at all, either in behalf of themselves or others, unless they speak the truth. In their address this sentence

occurs: "No one in the Queen's wide dominion is subject to any other way than that of even and impartial law." This sentence we hold to be untrue, and our witness is General Buller, who declared that the law in the county Kerry was administered entirely for the benefit of the rich. Had he visited other parts of Ireland, doubtless he would report a like condition of affairs. Multitudes of other witnesses could be found amongst those who crowd the emigrant ships, flying as they are from a country where the classes revel in luxury and the masses live in squalor. It might be mentioned as of interest to our Canadian readers that Sir Alexander Campbell and Mr. Sanford Fleming occupied on this occasion a "We the people of Canada" posture.

A GREAT DEAL has within the last few weeks been said and written concerning the visit of Mr. William O'Brien to Canada. He comes here entirely on his own responsibility, and asks the Canadian people to give him a hearing. He proposes to lay before us the true state of affairs in Ireland as regards landlords and their tenants, and will refer more particularly to the case of the people evicted from Lord Lansdowne's estate by his agent the cruel Townsend Trench. It must be borne in mind that Canada is a free country and that any man, so long as he keeps within the law, has a right to express his views on any given subject. A section of the people of this country will perhaps not agree with us in this assertion. Those who favor the policy of coercion and oppose Home Rule—more especially the Orangemen, who are less Irish than the natives of Bulgaria—will assert that Mr. O'Brien has no business here. That is entirely the affair of Mr. O'Brien and those who think with him. Those who do not want to hear him—those who prefer to shape their views of Irish affairs on statements made by Ireland's persecutors—are at liberty to stay away. We will now see whether those who proclaim themselves from the house-tops lovers of "free speech" are really sincere, or if they mean they are lovers of free speech—for themselves.

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE CATHOLIC RECORD.

THE CATHOLIC COLORED MISSION OF WINDSOR, ONT.

Tuesday, 5th of May, was a day of gladness and joy for the children attending the Catholic colored mission school of Windsor. For some days preparations had been made for the long looked for visit of the Very Rev. Mother General of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary. The school room had been suitably ornamented with flowers and evergreens, and everything looked clean and trim. The children also were dressed in their best holiday attire, and presented a truly creditable appearance. With the exception of a few who are on the sick list, there was a full attendance. As the Rev. Mother entered, accompanied by half a dozen sisters of St. Mary's Academy, the children arose and intoned a beautiful song of welcome. After another appropriate hymn had been chanted with great glee, a bright and intelligent little girl of twelve, Miss Fina Haynes, stepped forward, and with perfect command of voice and gesture, spoke a beautiful and well-worded address, which was very creditable indeed to one only so short a time under the training of the good nuns.

The substance of the address was, that though the least and humblest of the good mothers' children, they confidently approached her, to thank her for having been so kind as to condescend to gladden their young hearts by this visit to their school, and also for the invaluable benefit she had conferred upon them by detailing one of the devoted religious of her order to take charge of their education. Indeed their gratitude was so great that they had not language adequate to express it, but they knew her mother's heart would be able fully to realize and appreciate it. It would be their most earnest endeavor to profit so well by the wholesome lessons they were being taught, that they would ever prove themselves worthy of the kind interest which was taken in their welfare. They fondly hoped that they might be allowed for many days to remain under the care and tuition of a mistress so devoted to them as was the good sister who had presently the charge of their school, and that the good God might reward a hundred-fold all their kind benefactors for the sacrifices they were making in the behalf. To this beautiful address the Very Rev. Mother, who was deeply moved by a spectacle so novel to her, the first of the kind in her experience, responded in substance as follows:

She was glad, and it was for her a cause of real happiness, to find herself for the first time among her Catholic colored children. She was surprised to find such a large number of children at this school, and likewise to see them so well disciplined. She was sure they were all good children and that they fully appreciated the sacrifices that were being made to procure for them the benefit of a good and solid Christian education. She exhorted them to apply themselves particularly to the study of their catechism, without neglecting the other branches of learning. On her return two years hence, she would be happy to find them, increased in number, installed in a good and comfortable school building, which it was the intention of their good pastor to erect for them in the near future. At all events they could rest assured that she would ever take the deepest interest in their welfare, and do all that lay in her power to procure their happiness and advancement in Christian education. After the close of the little boys, who by the way is a real marvel, performed with perfect accuracy a couple of times on a month organ. Another hymn, chanted by the whole school, terminated the proceedings. The Very Rev. Mother declared to the

writer of this that her visit to the colored mission school has perfectly won her heart in favor of these poor children, and that she thought this good work ought to receive the encouragement of all who have at heart the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

THE MODE OF CONVERSION.

Catholic Review.

There is no more important question for Catholics than, "How shall our Protestant friends be converted to the faith?"

That great work lies before us, and must press heavily upon the mind and conscience of every sincere, devoted Catholic. We know that we have the truth. We believe, without doubting, that the Catholic Church is the true exponent of Christianity, the only true body of Christ—the real home of the soul. We believe that the Catholic religion is just what our friends need to make them truly happy and to give dignity, stability and strength to our nation, and we have not a doubt that if that religion were properly presented to them they would see and appreciate its surpassing beauties and excellencies, and be irresistibly drawn to embrace it. But how shall the Catholic Church be presented to outsiders in such manner as to attract them to it? The Bishop of Nottingham, England, strikes the right key in his recent Lenten pastoral. When speaking of the conversion of England, he dwells upon the great change that has taken place in years past and augurs well for the future. "Signs are not wanting," he says, "of a return from the apostasy with which the land has so long been cursed. Foremost among these is the adoption, one by one, of the truths and practices that were discarded. The dead bones on the plain have come together, and sinews and flesh have come upon them. We await in hope the day when they shall receive their life from the Spirit of Truth and shall rise again as a Catholic nation. 'Meanwhile,' he says, 'what is our duty?' and with great force and pertinency he replies: "It is to be thorough Catholics—Catholics not only in name, but in deed; practical Catholics, fulfilling all our duties to God and to our neighbor, praying, hearing Mass, frequenting the sacraments, keeping the days of fasting and abstinence, avoiding sin, practicing virtue, loving God—this is the way for us to assist in the conversion of our country, and there is no other."

That strikes at the very heart of the matter. There is no other way. Our Protestant friends will not read, but they will observe and they will judge from what they see and hear. Every man who bears the name of Catholic necessarily bears a portion of the weight of responsibility that rests upon us all of recommending the Catholic religion to outsiders, and we to him who fails in his duty in that regard. We may not be pious, fervent and devoted, like Frederick O'Shaughnessy, for instance, but we can all set an example of virtue, integrity and high-toned morality. We can show to the world that to be a Catholic is the best guarantee they can have of downright honesty and conscientiousness, unswerving fidelity to duty in any and every department of life. In fact, the world expects it of us. They seem to have an intuitive apprehension of the fact that Catholics, by virtue of their very profession, ought to be different from other people, and they are disappointed as well as scandalized when they meet with instances of prevarication and inconsistency.

Our Protestant friends very generally are coming to lack confidence in their own position, and they naturally look to the Catholic Church as a city of refuge from the storms of doubt and uncertainty with which they are assailed. Think what an awful responsibility must rest upon those who profess Catholicism, whether in business, in politics, or in social or professional life, who swerve from the strict line of rectitude, and by inconsistent and unworthy conduct give occasion to the enemy to sneer, if not to blaspheme, and throws doubt upon the mind of the honest seeker after a sure and better way. There is no other preaching so effective as that of example. Our conduct preaches, whether we will or no, and we are necessarily "a savor of life unto life, or a savor of death unto death," to those with whom we come into contact. And we know of nothing more awful in the whole range of Scripture than that solemn declaration of our Lord—"It is impossible that scandals should not come, but woe to him through whom the scandal cometh. It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck and he cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones."

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IRISH NEWS BY CABLE.

Parnell has selected Wm. O'Brien, editor of the *United Ireland* of Dublin, as the Home Rule candidate for north-east Cork, to fill the vacancy in the House of Commons caused by the resignation of Leamy (Home Ruler).

Home Rule agitation has been organized throughout the street of England. The Earl of Rosebery is announced to speak at Plymouth on 30th inst. in favor of the movement. Hon. Jas. Stanfield, ex-President of the Local Government Board, will make a Home Rule speech at Newton, on June 4, and Baron Wilmotson and Mr. Sexton will address a meeting in favor of the Gladstone policy at Exeter in June.

A Dublin despatch says:—"Mr. Parnell's health is better. His physician says he hopes that Mr. Parnell will be able to be in his place in the House of Commons in a few days."

An application for the release of Father Kellan, the priest of Troughall, who was imprisoned at Kilmainham for refusing to testify regarding his connection with the plan of campaign, has been dismissed.

CHURCH DEDICATION.

The new Catholic Church in Dunnville will be dedicated on the 19th of May, Feast of the Ascension. This will be a day of joy and gladness to the good pastor, Father O'Brien, and his faithful flock.

MAY 14, 1887.

O Mary, Queen of Mercy.

BY JAMES CLARENCE MARGAN.

There lived a knight, long years ago,
From carnal vain, devoted
Of God above, or hell below,
He took no thought, but undismayed,
Pursued his course of wickedness,
His heart was rock; he never prayed
To be forgiven for all his treasons.
He only said, at certain seasons,
"O Mary, Queen of Mercy!"

Years rolled, and found him still the same,
Still draining pleasure's poison-bowl;
Yet fell he now and then some shame;
The torment of the Udding Worm
At times wrote in his trembling soul;
And then, though powerless to reform,
Would he, in hope to appease that sternest
Avenger, cry, more in earnest,
"O Mary, Queen of Mercy!"

At last Youth's riotous time was gone,
And loathing now came after sin,
With locks yet brown he fell as one
Grown gray at heart, and oft, with tears,
He cried, but in vain, to win
From the dark desert of his years
One flower of hope; yet, morn and evening,
He still cried, but in vain, to win
"O Mary, Queen of Mercy!"

A happier mind, a holier mood,
A purer spirit raised him now;
No more he thought of pleasure's flood,
He took a pilgrim-staff in hand,
And, under a religious vow,
Traveled, he said, the way to Rome; and
There entered he a humble cloister,
Exclaiming, with a new-found moister,
"O Mary, Queen of Mercy!"

Here, shorn and cow'd, he laid his cares
Aside, and wrought for God alone;
Albeit he sang no choral psalm,
Nor made his bow to any saint;
He mortified his flesh to stone;
For him no pleasure was to stern;
And often pray'd, on his lonely
Cell-epoch at night, but still said only,
"O Mary, Queen of Mercy!"

They buried him with Mass and song,
A little knoll so green;
But, lo! a wonder-light—Ere long
Rose, blinding, from that verdant
Mound.
The faintly ever seen;
Relieving their transient whiteness,
Did shine these words, in gold-leaf bright
"O Mary, Queen of Mercy!"

And, would God's angel give thee power,
O Mary, dearest, might'st thou behold
The three of Faith, Deeds, and Love,
Uprising from the dead man's
Bier.

In glorious threads of light and gold;
Then would'st thou choose the better part,
And therefore die for us four suggestions;
Thy sole response to mocking questions,
"O Mary, Queen of Mercy!"

THE MONTH OF MARY.

PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS ON PRACTICAL DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

From Father Debonis, S. J.

You have heard very often, my dear Theophile, and always with pleasure, that the devotion to the Mother of God, in the opinion of the holy Fathers, is one of the surest marks of predestination, as well as the most powerful means of salvation, and St. Anselm does not hesitate to assert that a servant of Mary can never perish. Well-beloved daughter of the Eternal Father, Mother of the Incarnate Word, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, she commands, rather than solicits in Heaven, says another holy Father.

Let us love Mary, exclaims St. Bernard, with all our hearts, and with all the tenderness of affection. It is through Mary that He gave us His Son, and through her still flow upon us, the Father's graces. Jesus is the source of all graces, and His divine Heart, the repository; his holy Mother is the dispenser of His choicest gifts, and the mysterious channel through which they are transmitted to us.

Let us love and serve Mary; all the saints invite us to this by their words and example. Let us love and serve Mary, for such is the earnest desire of the Church, our tender Mother, who, ever attentive to the needs of her children, unceasingly reminds us of the claims of the Queen of Heaven to our veneration, confidence and love; hence that universal devotion which throughout the world has raised altars and temples to the honor of Mary; hence those numerous feasts which celebrate the glories and power of the Mother of God; hence those pious associations formed in her honor, which have enriched the spiritual treasures of the church; hence the pious custom of saluting her three times a day in the Angelus, and that touching practice of the ministers of the sanctuary, who commend to her the divine Office by reciting the Angelical Salutation, a prayer so glorious to Mary and so pleasing, and one which, in the opinion of St. Ephrem, has become a new canticle in the celestial hierarchy.

"Devotion to the glorious Mother of God," says a pious author, "brings with it many blessings; it is the gate of entrance to a knowledge of the graces which flow therefrom. The poor find in it riches to assuage their misery, the weak strength, the sick a remedy for all their woes, the ignorant instruction, the afflicted consolation, the sinner finds grace, the just the firmness of his deliverance. In fact there is no condition which does not share in its blessings, no nation or kingdom that does not experience the protection of the Mother of God. All the earth is full of the effects of her compassion. Her heart—this precious heart, which, after the Son's is the most loving, the purest, the tenderest of all hearts—contains in itself mere love and perfection than those of all the angels and the blessed in heaven, and therefore her tender compassionate desire to add to us is greater than that of all the saints, an almost infinite number of blessings flow upon all creatures from this marvellous heart as from an inexhaustible source."

Mary is your Queen, your advocate; merit her protection by your efforts to make yourself pleasing in her eyes. A cause for which Mary pleads can never be lost. Finally, she is your Mother. Jesus expiring on the cross declared it.

This truth will be for you a beautiful occasion of increasing and testifying your love for Mary. Here are some practices which will aid your pious desires:

1. Endeavor to discharge your daily duties of religion as well as those of your state of life, with renewed zeal, and be persuaded that if you are faithful to this counsel, you are sure of accomplishing the will of God, and you also follow Mary's injunction at the marriage-feast of Cana: "Do whatever He may say to you."

2. Commence at once to prepare yourself. All great feasts have their vigil. Place in your room a little statue or image of the Blessed Virgin, and esteem yourself fortunate if you succeed in making