

Jacqueline.

(In 1835 Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published his "Ozma Mer sketches. Our readers will appreciate a reprint of this sweet, thoroughly Catholic description of a typical deathbed scene from the pen of the favorite American poet.)

Death lies on her like an untimely frost,
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

'Dear mother is it not the bell I hear?
'Yes my child; the bell for morning prayers. It is Sunday today.

'I had forgotten it. But now all days are the same to me. Hark! I hear sounds again—louder—louder, under the window, for I love the sound. The sunshine and the fresh morning air revive me. And the church bell—O, mother—it reminds me of the holy Sunday mornings by the Loire—so calm, so hushed, so beautiful! Now give me my prayerbook and draw the curtain back, that I may see the green trees and the church spire. I feel better today, dear mother.

It was a bright cloudless morning in August. The dew still glistened on the trees; and a slight breeze wafted to the sick chamber of Jacqueline the songs of the birds, the rustle of the leaves, and the solemn chime of the church bell. She had been raised up in bed, and reclining upon the quiet scene without. Her mother gave her the prayerbook, and then turned away to hide a tear that stole down her cheek.

At length the bells ceased. Jacqueline crossed herself, kissed a pearl crucifix that hung around her neck, and opened the silver clasps of her missal. For a time she seemed wholly absorbed in her devotions. Her lips moved, but no sound was audible. At intervals the solemn voice of the priest was heard at a distance, and then the confused responses of the congregation, dying away in inarticulate murmurs. Ever long the thrilling chant of the Catholic service broke upon her ear. At first it was low, solemn, and indistinct; then it became more earnest and entrancing, as if interesting and imploring pardon for sin; and then arose louder and louder, full; harmonious, majestic, as it waded the songs of praise to heaven—and suddenly ceased. Then the sweet tones of the organ were heard—trembling, thrilling and rising higher and higher, and filling the whole air with their rich, melodious music. What exquisite accents!—what noble harmonies!—what touching pathos! The soul of the sick girl seemed to kindle into more ardent devotion, and to be swept away to heaven in the fall harmonious chorus, as it swelled onward doubling and redoubling, and rolling upward in a full burst of rapturous devotion! Then all was hushed again. Once more the low sound of the bell smote the air, and announced the elevation of the Host. The invalid seemed entranced in prayer. Her head had fallen beside her—her hands were clasped—her eyes closed her soul retired within its secret chambers. Then a more triumphant peal of bells arose. The tears gushed from her closed and swollen lids; her cheeks were flushed; she opened her dark eyes, and fixed them with an expression of deep adoration and penitence upon an image of the Saviour on the cross, which hung at the foot of her bed, and her lips again moved in prayer. Her countenance expressed the deepest resignation. She seemed to ask only that she might die in peace, and to the bosom of her Redeemer.

The mother was kneeling by the window and her face concealed in the folds of the curtain. She arose, and going to the bedside of her child, threw her arms around her child and burst into tears.

'My dear mother, I shall not live long; I feel it here. This piercing pain—at times it seizes me, and I cannot—cannot breathe.'
'My child you will be better soon.'
'Yes, mother, I shall be better soon. All tears, and pain, and sorrow will be over. The hymn of adoration and ecstasy I have just heard, I shall never hear again on earth. Next Sunday, mother, kneel again by that window as today I shall not be here, upon this bed of pain and sickness; but when you hear the solemn hymn of worship, and the beseeching tones that wail the spirit up to God, think, mother, that I am there, with my sweet sister who has gone before us—kneeling at our Saviour's feet, and happy—O, how happy!'

The afflicted mother made no reply—her heart was too full to speak.

'You remember, mother, how calmly Annie died. She was so young and beautiful. I always pray that I may die as she did. I do not fear death, as I did before she was taken from me. But, O—this pain—this cruel pain! It seems to draw my mind back from heaven. When it leaves me, I shall die in peace.'

'My poor child! God's holy will be done!'

The invalid soon sank into a quiet slumber. The excitement was over, and exhausted nature sought relief in sleep.

The persons between whom this scene passed were a widow and her sick daughter, from the neighbor-

An Ancient Foe

To health and happiness is scrofula—as ugly as ever since time immemorial. It causes blemishes in the neck, disfigures the skin, inflames the mucous membrane, wastes the muscles, weakens the bones, reduces the power of resistance to disease and the capacity for recovery, and develops into consumption.

'Two of my children had scrofula sores which kept growing deeper and kept them from going to school for three months. Ointments and medicines did no good until I began giving them Hood's Sarsaparilla. This medicine caused the sores to heal, and the children have shown no signs of scrofula since.' J. W. Motture, Woodstock, Ont.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

will rid you of it, radically and permanently, as it has rid thousands.

hood of Tours. They had left the Banks of the Loire to consult the more experienced physicians of the metropolis, and had been directed to the 'Maison de saint' at Auteuil for the benefit of the pure air. But all in vain. The health of the uncomplaining patient grew worse and worse, and it soon became evident that the closing scene was drawing near.

Of this Jacqueline herself seemed conscious; and toward evening she expressed a wish to receive the last sacraments of the church. A priest was sent for; and ere long she tinkling of a little bell in the street announced his approach. He bore in his hand a silver chalice containing the consecrated Host, and a small vessel filled with the holy oil of the extreme unction hung from his neck. Before him walked a boy carrying a little bell, whose sound announced the passing of these symbols of the Catholic faith. In the rear, a few of the villagers, bearing lighted wax tapers, formed a short and melancholy procession. They soon entered the sick chamber, and the glitter of the tapers mingled with the red light of the setting sun that shot his farewell rays through the open window.

The vessel of oil and the silver chalice were placed upon the table in front of a crucifix that hung upon the wall, and all present, excepting the priest, threw themselves upon their knees. The priest then approached the bed of the dying girl, and said, in a slow and solemn tone:

'The King of kings and the Lord of lords has passed thy threshold. Is thy spirit ready to receive Him?'
'It is father.'
'Hast thou confessed thy sins?'
'Holy father no.'
'Confess thyself, then, that thy sins may be forgiven, and thy name recorded in the book of life.'

And, turning to the kneeling crowd around, he waved his hand for them to retire, and was left alone with the sick girl. He seated himself beside her pillow, and the subdued whisper of the confession mingled with the murmur of the evening air, which lifted the heavy folds of the curtain, and stole in upon the holy scene.

Poor Jacqueline had few sins to confess—a secret thought or two towards the pleasures and delights of the world—a wish to live unmarried, but which to the eyes of her self-accusing spirit, seemed to resist the wise providence of God—no more. The confession of a meek and lowly heart is soon made. The door was again opened; the attendants entered, and knelt around the bed, and the priest proceeded:

'And now prepare thyself to receive with contrite heart the body of our blessed Lord and Redeemer. Dost thou believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary?'
'I believe.'
'Dost thou believe that the Father is God, that the Son is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God—three persons and one God.'
'I believe.'
'Dost thou believe that the Son is seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead?'
'I believe.'
'Dost thou believe that by the holy Sacraments of the church thy sins are forgiven thee, and that thou art made worthy of eternal life?'
'I believe.'

'Dost thou pardon, with all thy heart, all who have offended thee in thought, word, or deed?'
'I pardon them.'
'And dost thou ask pardon of God and thy neighbor for all offenses thou hast committed against them, either in thought, word, or deed?'
'I do.'

'Then repeat after me: O, Lord Jesus, I am not worthy, nor do I merit, that Thy divine majesty should enter this poor tabernacle of clay; but, according to thy holy promise, be my sins forgiven, and my soul washed white from all transgressions.'
Then taking a consecrated Host from the vase, he placed it between the lips of the dying girl, and, while the assistant sounded the little silver bell, said:

'Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi

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Digby, N. S.
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JOHN R. BOLDON,
Witness, Perry Barr.

Habits.

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The field that is left unown will throw up a crop of weeds. Plant these things daily:
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A new ambition.
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A high ideal.
A good deed.
A good friend.

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June 16, 1910—14