

The exertion had been too much for poor Granger; he closed his eyes for the last time. Gradually the expression on his face changed; he gave a slight shudder and his head sank back. Just then the minister appeared—Edward Granger was not a Catholic, but to God, the soul had passed to its lot. Let us hope that his efforts to make reparation, even at the eleventh hour, were favorably received by his Maker.

Mary and Frank were quietly married the second week in June, as they had originally intended. At first Mary had demurred, but Frank and her mother overcame her objections. After a short honeymoon, the young people returned to the little home, and Mrs. Murphy's declining days were made happy by the love and devotion of her son and daughter, for Frank, as she often said, was as good and kind to her as if she were his own mother.

"VENERABLE THOMAS A KEMPIS"

The celebration of the 450th anniversary of the death of Venerable Thomas a Kempis, native of the quaint town of Kempen in the diocese of Cologne, recalls to the memory of all Christians the sublime figure of one who, in a quiet corner and with a little book, has wrought a work that is a lasting monument of the spiritual life, coming close after the New Testament in its sacred value to the world.

An early writer, speaking of the character of this illustrious man, describes him for us in these words: "By his most holy life, his venerable companionship, his honeyed words, his sweet replies, his abundant writings, his opportune exhortations, he so bruised and broke and crushed all the pride and malice of the world, all the allurement and follies of the flesh, all the wiles and illusions of the devil, that if we were to imitate his life and attend to his words and writings, we should certainly triumph over these three great enemies of the human race. We should so utterly defeat them, that they would not have courage left to attack us again."

When but a child of thirteen years, Thomas a Kempis left his home and departed for the School of the Devout Clerics of the Common Life at Deventer, a journey of over a hundred miles from his home. The humble parents of this predestined boy little thought that he from whom they parted with so much sorrow, was destined to become the most famous man of his age. Under the guidance of this community of simple austere, devout men, and far from the noisy distractions of the world, Thomas imbibed those principles of the Christian life which at a later period he was to embellish in such exquisite manner to give to all mankind.

Dom Vincent Scully, C. R. L., in his appealing Life of the Venerable Thomas a Kempis has left a series of truly admirable pen-pictures of this truly admirable soul whose message has touched the hearts of those outside as well as those within the fold of the one true Faith which he loved. Desiring to remain all the days of his life in the House of his Lord, Thomas entered the order of Canons Regular, and donned the white habit with the greatest joy. In the composition of his "Soliloquy of the Soul," he has left us a few of the thoughts which were sheltered in his heart at this solemn period of his life.

He was now to take up his work of meditation and prayer among a small and select army of men, who, we may truly say, were as children in their Father's House. Dom Vincent cites the following incident to illustrate the simplicity of soul of these early monks: "One of the community, a priest, Gerard of Zutphen, was a man of remarkable learning and zeal, but with the spirit of a child. At the end of a long life spent in the service of God, one of his companions warned him of his approaching end, saying: 'I think you are going to die.' Whereupon he replied simply: 'I think so too.' And soon afterward fell into a gentle slumber.

All simple childlike and holy men were the members of this little community. One, who had been a rich merchant in the world was now a cook and humble Brother, and here it might be said that the last was the first and the first last. Thomas a Kempis says of this holy man: "He was often found on his knees, praying near the fire, and while with his hand he stirred the pot, with his mouth he devoutly engaged in singing the Psalms."

All the biographers of Thomas agree in assigning the date of the ordination as the time wherein he composed that beautiful treatise on the Blessed Sacrament which is known as the Fourth Book of the Imitation of Christ. In the years immediately following he seems to have been engaged in working on the three other Books, and it was completed in whole before its author had attained his fortieth year. At a comparatively early stage in his life, Thomas was able to produce a masterpiece, but this is not to be wondered at when we consider that the ears of his soul, undisturbed by the tumult of the world, were ever ready to catch the whisperings of the Holy Spirit, the sensitive instru-

ment of his heart ever attuned to the gentle touch of God. Leibnitz says of the Imitation that it is one of the most excellent treatises that have ever been composed, and Fontelle calls it "the most perfect work that has come from the hand of man."

Thomas a Kempis lived in the ripe age of ninety-one. It is edifying to contemplate the aged Canon passing his declining days in the quiet of his cell, reading, writing or praying as the case might be. His favorite motto seems to have been: "In all things I have sought rest, and have not found it save in little nooks and with little books."

"My Brethren, I must go! There is Someone waiting for me in my cell!" Fearful lest he should betray the sweet emotion of his soul toward its God, Thomas was wont suddenly to withdraw with gentle apology from his companions. In order to converse with Him.

After long years of patient waiting his desire for Heaven was granted and he departed quietly, peacefully to his eternal rest.

Referring to his perfect obedience, one of the Fathers says of him: "Who ever said: 'Come, Brother,'—that he did not immediately come,—or 'Go, Brother,' and he did not at once depart?"

Sir Francis Cruise, M. D., who has written this introduction to Dom Scully's Life of Thomas a Kempis, avows himself to have been influenced chiefly by his desire to make those who love the Imitation familiar with the life and surroundings of its saintly author.

In this one book have been gathered and concentrated all that is elevating, profoundly pious in all the older mystics, and no one is able to resist its power, its short quivering sentences which go to the heart."

In the white light of God's truth Thomas a Kempis regarded all the passing things of time, and counted as the souls who have benefited by the visions that came to the eyes of his undimmed soul.

There is no one who has read the Imitation without experiencing something of the sentiments of Maggie Tulliver in "The Mill on the Floss." "Here is a secret of life, here a conquest to be won entirely within one's own soul,—where a Supreme Teacher is waiting to be heard."—The Pilot.

DIAMOND JUBILEE OF VIRGIN'S APPEARANCE AT LA SALETTE

Paris.—This year, when the whole world is celebrating glorious anniversaries, both sacred and profane, of St. Francis and St. Dominic, of the Pilgrims and of Dante Alighieri, Catholic France is again reminded that she has ever been the favored country of the Blessed Virgin, for she is solemnly and joyously celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Our Lady's Apparition at La Salette on September 19, 1846.

La Salette is a picturesque little village in the diocese of Grenoble, nestling at the base of a high mountain of the Alps of southeastern France. The mountain itself, a peak of some 5,000 feet, is properly called Mont-Sons-les-Baisses, but since the memorable event that has brought this little Alpine spot before the eye of the world, mountain, village and all go by the common name of La Salette. During five months of the year, the mountain, like the neighboring peaks, is covered under a thick blanket of snow, but in the warmer season, the simple peasants of the locality find on its glossy slopes a sufficient pasturage for their cattle.

Thus it was that on September 19, 1846, a little girl of fifteen, Melanie Mathieu, and Maximin Giraud, a boy of eleven, were tending a herd of cows high up on the hill-side. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and the eve of the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. The little cowherds had finished the scanty lunch they had brought with them, they had dozed on the shady side of a little mound, just by the bed of a dried up spring, and now they were going around in search of their cows, when all at once they stopped wide-eyed and open-mouthed at what they saw almost in the very spot where they had rested. It was a dazzling ball of light, it appeared to them, shone with far more brilliance than the sun, lighting up the whole mountain-side and filling the valley with its rays.

Even as they gazed the fiery globe seemed to open out, disclosing to their eyes, the figure of a Lady. She was seated on some rocks that had been arranged in the form of a rude bench, her feet resting in the dry bed of the spring. Her elbows rested on her knees and her face was buried in her hands in an attitude of deep sorrow. Terrified and astonished, the children hesitated whether to flee or approach, when the figure arose, advanced a step towards them and said, "Come near, my children, be not afraid; I am here to tell you great news." Reassured by the gentle tone of her invitation, the little boy and girl drew nearer, so near, in fact, that they were themselves enveloped in the light that radiated from the person of the Lady.

Her dress, as to its general form, was somewhat like that worn by women of the region, but every-

thing was of the very richest and most graceful. Light and color, these were the only terms the little witnesses could find to describe the texture of her garments; light that dazzled their eyes, and color that was not like any color they had ever seen. For ornament, a glittering diadem of golden rays adorned her brow, encircled by a wreath of sparkling roses. A rather large sort of chain came over her shoulders and down across her breast to the waist, while from a smaller one around her neck hung a very brilliant crucifix with a hammer and a pair of pincers on the arms, and with the figure of Christ of a still more dazzling brilliancy. Around her waist was another wreath of roses, and her feet were encased in delicate white slippers likewise adorned with flowers. Her face the most beautiful that the children had ever seen, radiated tenderness and majesty, but it was very sad, and all the while that she was with them large tears welled from her eyes, that sparkled as they coursed down her cheeks and disappeared as points of light before they reached the ground.

She began by addressing them in French: "If my people will not submit, I shall be forced to let go the arm of my Son: It is so strong, so heavy, that I can no longer withhold it. How long a time do I suffer for you; if I would have my Son not abandon you, I am obliged to pray to Him without ceasing,—and you you pay no heed to it. However much you pray, however much you do, you shall never repay the pains that I have taken for you."

Then assuming the tone of the Divine Messenger that she was, and speaking in the name of God Himself, she went on, "Six days have I given you to Labor, the seventh only have I kept for myself,—and they will not give it to me. That is what makes the arm of my Son so heavy."

"Those who drive the carts cannot swear without taking the name of my Son in vain. It is these two things that make the arm of my Son so heavy. If the harvest is spoilt it is all your own fault. I warned you last year in the potatoes, but you paid no attention to it; on the contrary, when you found them spoiled, you swore, you took the name of my Son in vain. They will continue to decay, so that this year by Christmas there will be none left."

Now as has been said, the Beautiful Lady,—for thus the two witnesses persisted in calling her,—spoke in French. But these latter, untutored and uneducated, knew only the rustic dialect or "patois" of their district, which bore only a distant resemblance to French, and hence it was only in snatches that they caught at the meaning of their Heavenly Visitor's words. At the word "pomme de terre" potatoes Melanie turned enquiringly to Maximin, who cupped the Lady, seeming to realize just then the unfamiliarity of her language, interrupted her discourse with the words: "Ah! you do not understand French; very well, wait, I will speak otherwise. Then after repeating her last paragraph in the "patois" she continued in the same dialect:

"If you have corn, it is no use to sow it; whatever you sow the beasts will eat, and what comes up will fall to dust in the threshing. A great famine will come; but before it comes, the little children under seven years of age will be seized with a trembling sickness, and will die in the arms of those who hold them. Many great persons will do penance by hunger. The walnuts will rot and the grapes will be spoilt."

Just at this point, a very remarkable thing took place. The Lady turned a little towards Maximin, and Melanie declared later that though she could see her lips move, she heard not a word of what was said. It was a secret that she was entrusting to the little boy, and then he in his turn saw the lips move, but heard nothing, while Melanie received a secret also. These, like the first part of the discourse, were spoken also in French.

In 1851, Pope Pius IX. asked to know these secrets, and after some hesitation the two witnesses consented to send them to Rome in sealed letters in care of two priests. His were the only ears to which the children ever revealed their, nor did they ever communicate their own to each other.

After this, the Lady resumed her discourse in the "patois": "But if they are converted, the very stones will become heaps of corn, and potatoes will be sown in the lands." Then she asked her young auditors: "Do you say your prayers well, my children?" "Oh! Not very well, Madam," they replied quite frankly. "Ah my children," she reminded them, "you must always say them, morning and evening. When you have not time, say at least an 'Our Father' and 'Hail Mary,' but when you have time, say more." "There are only a few old women who go to Church, the rest work on Sunday during all the Summer; while in winter they go to Mass only to scoff at religion. In Lent they go to the meat markets like dogs."

Then again she asked, "And have you never seen corn that is spoilt, my children?"

"No, Madam," replied Maximin at once. "But you, my child," she insisted to the boy, "you must surely have seen it, once when you were with your father near Coin, (a little hamlet near La Salette). The master of the place said to your father: 'Come and see my ruined corn. You went, plucked a few ears and rubbed them in your hands, and at once they fell into dust. Then, on your way back, when still a half hour's walk from Coin, your father gave you a piece of bread saying, 'Here, my son, eat some bread this year, at least, for I know not who will have any to eat next year, if the corn goes on like that.'"

At that the little boy recalled the incident and, "Yes, yes," he exclaimed, "I remember now; just a moment ago I had forgotten."

Then once more the Lady resorted to French, and with more than ordinary emphasis said, "Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people."

With these words of farewell, she turned aside and slowly glided, as it were, for her feet did not touch the grass, up the little mound. The children followed, and without stopping or turning around she repeated: "Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people." A few steps farther on, close observers say that beam of light was a perfect miniature of the Dolores Way of Jerusalem; she paused, rose four or five feet in the air, raised her eyes towards heaven, then to the southwest, towards Italy, they say, and Rome. Then she seemed to "melt away" in the language of the two witnesses, gradually fading till only the bright light remained. In a moment that too was gone, and the children found themselves alone except for the cows that grazed silently below them.

MEANWHILE, it was of course impossible that such a wonderful event should long remain a secret. The little cowherds told the story to their respective masters, and to their Cure on the following morning, not omitting, what is most remarkable, a single word of the unfamiliar French. People climbed to the hallowed spot, and, to their great surprise, found the spring that had been so long dried up bubbling plentifully. They drank of its water, they chipped off fragments of the rocks on which the Beautiful Lady had rested, and kissed the ground over which her sacred feet passed. Miraculous cures and other wonderful favors were multiplied, especially in connection with the use of water from the fountain.

A LABOR JOURNAL ON SHOE PRICES. That wages have been extravagant in certain instances all will admit, and it is clear that a reduction in such cases was imperative for the general good. But labor is justified when it demands that capital bear its adequate share in the sacrifice required. Thus the editor of the Shoe Workers' Journal explains that the labor cost of a shoe retailed at \$8.50 before the War ranged around sixty cents. When this shoe sold at \$12.00 the labor cost advanced to only \$1.00. At present, we are told prices for shoe material have almost been reduced to pre-war rates, yet the prices for shoes sold from all this level. The main reason evidently is not to be found in high wages. Here is an example:

"A manufacturer said he wanted to make a shoe to sell to dealers at \$6.00, to be sold at retail at \$9.00, and would like a reduction in labor costs. The same shoe used to be sold to the retailer at \$2.85 and retailed at \$4.00. Labor receives about forty cents per pair more on that shoe. Labor was thus asked to contribute to its forty cents to help the manufacturer sell at \$6.00 what he used to sell at \$2.85, when his market for raw material is nearly the same as before the War."

The editor concludes that it is not strange that labor is not enthusiastic to cooperate for such ends. He admits that there are extenuating circumstances, such as high rents, freight costs and other expenses, but adds that labor declines to pay for a margin of profits which once would have seemed extremely extravagant.—America.

KINDNESS. If we are responsive for every little act of kindness done to us by a friend or neighbor, and wish in some way to mark our gratitude, what should we not do to show the depth of our thankfulness to our dear Redeemer in the sacrament of His love. Here and here alone shall we find that true and solid happiness which we seek for in vain in creatures. These cannot satisfy the cravings of our heart, which were made for God. If we keep our eyes fixed on the tabernacle, love Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament—or at least, desire to love Him; if when bodily absent from Him, we hold intercourse with Him, through occasional ejaculatory

prayers which like burning arrows, penetrate His Sacred Heart, then we shall have something solid to fill the void in our poor hearts, to detach us from the fleeting things of the world and raise our thoughts up to our true home where we shall see Jesus, no longer hidden under the sacramental veils, but face to face.



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