

St. Agnes.

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THE Feast of the sweet Saint Agnes, the model of christian girlhood, is celebrated on the altars, wherever the christian name is known, on the twenty first day of January.

How beautiful and pleasing in the sight of God, was her short life ! She was like a lovely flower, gathered as soon as it attained the fullness of bloom :

“ In the fresh and dewy morning,

Not in the glare of noon ; ”

Not left to fade and wither on the stem, but transplanted to the garden of the Lord where decay is never known.

Every little girl should make herself familiar with the story of Saint Agnes, in order to know, love and imitate her.

St. Agnes lived in the early days of the Church, when the Roman emperors were at the height of their power, and fearing the new and mysterious doctrines of christianity, determined to stamp them out. However, all the weight of the greatest empire the world had ever seen, could not destroy the seed of holy doctrine, which Christ declared should flourish and spread its branches into all nations ; promising his Apostles : “ Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world,” St. Matthew XXVIII-20. And again, in reference to his Church, “ The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.” Matt. XVI-18.

The parents of St. Agnes were rich and noble, besides being sincere christians, she therefore was born a christian, and brought up carefully in the light of the true Faith. At the age of twelve her hand was asked in marriage by a young nobleman, the son of the prefect of Rome. But the youthful saint, even at that tender age, had consecrated herself to God, and she refused her Roman lover, telling him that she had already bestowed her heart on one who had loaded her with priceless gifts.

Procopius, her suiter, thought that it must be some