

BEFORE THE ALTAR.

So weary! so weary of struggling! Thus I thought, this bright summer afternoon as I paced along in the sunshine.

After the week's cares and worries, Sunday came like a blessing. Yet—ah, yet the six days' worry cast a shadow over the seventh, and my thoughts strayed on the coming week, which seemed to promise no better outlook.

Just then I passed before an old-fashioned, blue-stone church, almost covered with a beautiful mantle of green ivy.

Slowly I passed through the church yard and ascended the three steps, then noiselessly and with reverence entered the sacred house.

Far in the distance stood the beautiful altar; a bright ray of light through the stained window threw a rich crimson band over the gleaming white marble and glittering silver.

The marble steps were flecked with radiant colors, as though set with jewels. The white lilies seemed to take a sudden glory in the rich light.

So beautiful, that my heart went out in impulsive adoration. Then like a magnet the beautiful altar drew me on. Down the long shadowed aisle I moved towards the glory, even unto the altar rails.

Then I said reverently, "Jesus Christ." I said it softly, yet with loving reverence, and even as it died away on my lips, I saw that into the sweet eyes seemed to come life; the lips moved as if breath was fluttering on them.

Surely I must be mistaken! As one dreaming, I watched the crimson sun-ray, as slowly, slowly, it grew over the altar piece, touching all with singular beauty.

My eyes followed the sunbeam until it reached the beautiful figure of Christ, the soft light of which played on the calm, sweet lips, throwing shadows in the loving eyes, lighting with strange radiance the broad, thoughtful brow.

Then I said reverently, "Jesus Christ." I said it softly, yet with loving reverence, and even as it died away on my lips, I saw that into the sweet eyes seemed to come life; the lips moved as if breath was fluttering on them.

But it was the face of the dead. Who now would close the lonely parents eyes for their last long sleep? I thought of my brave, strong boy, and I wept with the bereaved.

The vision faded, and the altar came back, the light still played on the lilies, and Christ was speaking. "Hast thou not enough to eat, and priceless health? Thy dearest are ever with thee. All these thou hast, and yet thou grovest weary when the road of life is hard and thorny."

My troubled eyes looked into the eyes above. "Give of thy love and thou shalt have a thousand fold. Feed the little ones and the widow; comfort the mourners. Heal and help those who are sick to bear their cross, and, in so doing your years shall be lightened."

Slowly He raised His hands over my head and blessed me. "Peace be with you." New strength entered me, a burst of heavenly music filled the sacred air. I arose and—

The light had faded from the altar, the lilies were gleaming purely white in the shadowy evening light; and Christ was standing with raised hand as before.

The music was real, for from the old church organ a master hand was drawing tones of penetrating sweetness. Had I dreamed? or had Christ really spoken to me?

I know not! Only still I hear that wondrous voice blessing me, and see the tender eyes beaming with love. Then I arose from the altar steps, and reverently left the sacred place as the music rolled on through the darkening aisle, on to the beautiful altar and Christ.—David Gray in the Astral Light.

A Heroic Priest.

The yellow fever scourge has visited Brunswick, Ga., and made sad havoc with the population. Those who could afford it ran away from the town, but the larger portion of the inhabitants were compelled to remain and face the terrors of the plague.

Among those who voluntarily cast their lot with the afflicted poor was Rev. Joseph Henry, the pastor of St. Francis Xavier's Church. This heroic priest fully realized the dangers of his position, but he faltered not. There was need of his ministrations and of his comforting words at the death-beds of the victims.

He wrote at the death-bed of the victims: "At this writing the outlook is as dark as it was last Sunday when the fever was declared epidemic. It is now showing its true colors and mortality is the word in every mouth. I am fully prepared to meet any emergency. I have trusted fellows who will carry me to my people who are scattered through the islands adjacent."

Dr. Murray has accorded full privileges possible and the board of health is doing all they can for me. There are about thirty of my congregation remaining and they are too poor to leave. Pestilence is imminent, ay, certain—it has come to stay a long time—unless God in His mercy disposes otherwise. But I fear famine more. No employment, no money, no hope for the poor, either black or white. Pray for me, then, and ask your friends to pray for me, that I may go through this epidemic with honor, or die a good death right at my post.

That is the sort of man who is denounced by the dark lantern bigots, in their lodges, as an enemy to progress and humanity and a foe to American liberty! No doubt he is accused in his vicinity of concealing firearms in the basement of his church with a view to organizing and leading an attack upon the Protestants of Brunswick. But while his defamers are thus maligning him he sees his duty as a Christian minister and does it with the sublime courage which is the chief characteristic of his creed.

He faces death without a murmur, and if he falls another will be ready to take his place. It is such devotion as this that confounds and puts to shame the brutal, narrow and fanatical A. P. A. howlers.

No better preparation for the hair has ever been invented than Ayer's Hair Vigor. It restores the original color to faded and gray hair, and imparts that natural gloss and freshness, everyone so much admires. Its reputation is world-wide.

Do not delay in getting relief for the little folks. Mother Graves' Worm Expeller is a pleasant and sure cure. If you love your child why do you let it suffer when a remedy is so near at hand?

The Most Excellent Remedy. DEAR SIR: I have suffered greatly from constipation and indigestion, but by the use of B. B. B. I am now restored to health. I cannot praise Burdock Root Bitters too highly; it is the most excellent remedy I ever used.

DR. WOOD'S LARVON PINE SYRUP cures Coughs, Colds, Asthma, Bronchitis, Hoarseness & Consumption, if taken in time. TESTIMONIALS published in behalf of Wood's Sarsaparilla are as reliable and worthy of confidence as if from your most trusted neighbor.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

A Graceful Tribute to the Gentle Saint's Love for Animals.

The following sketch is taken from a paper published in the interest of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to animals and is a beautiful illustration of the truly Catholic nature of our faith. "All roads lead to Rome."

All types of perfection are found in the company of her saints. There is no work of charity or mercy that does not find its prototype in the annals of the Church, and the tender hearted Saint of Assisi may justly be chosen as the patron of those who preach mercy to the dumb, suffering brutes, whose abuse is a shame to our humanity.

The most uncompromising of Protestants may safely allow himself to love the memory and to venerate the character of St. Francis of Assisi, gentleness of all the saints whose names adorn the diptychs of the Middle Ages.

His short life of only forty-four years (A. D. 1182-1226) was passed during a troublesome period of the world's history. The struggle between the Crescent and the Cross was still undecided. Into this seething world of wars and wild ambitions, Francis of Assisi was born; but, like the Master whom he loved, he was "not of this world." He took no part in its contentions.

He engaged in none of its controversies. He accepted the religious doctrines of his time, and submitted without dispute to the authority of the Church. In one sense he was no reformer; but if the best of all reforms is to revive the spirit of love among Christians, then St. Francis of Assisi was the noblest of reformers, since he was at once a preacher and an example of the loveliness of Christian love.

At the age of thirty St. Francis became persuaded that his special vocation was to preach, and he thenceforth gave his whole life to the preaching of the Gospel. An extremely simple Gospel it was, for it was simply the love that man owes to man, and to every creature of God. We need not wonder if we find the story of his later life full of miraculous wonders.

Even in the Roman Catholic Church it is not a matter of obligation to believe them in the form in which they have come down to us. One is not required, for instance, to believe that St. Francis once went boldly into the forest, where a savage wolf had made itself the terror of the country people, and so tamed the wild beast by his eloquence that it followed him submissively into the village, meekly it would no longer injure any living creature, and from that day forward lived, like St. Francis himself, on the daily alms of the people. No one is required to believe that these things (as Matthew Arnold would have put it) ever really happened. But there is a sense in which the story is sacredly true, for what was the life of St. Francis, from his conversion to his early death, but one continuous work of taming wolf-like dispositions and inducing them to the obedience of love?

Just so of the stories of the love of St. Francis for dumb creatures. Probably the particular incidents preserved in popular tradition "never really happened"; but there must be truth, and sacred truth, in them for all that. The truest light that ever brightened this world is "a light that never shone on sea or land." In these stories of St. Francis we may learn what manner of man he must have been of whom they could be told. "His love for animals of all kinds," it has been said, "was one of his remarkable and winning features. Of the birds of the woods, the sheep in the fields, the ass on which he rode, the bees, the hares, the rabbits, he always spoke as his 'brothers' and 'sisters.' When the birds sang, he said: 'Our sisters, the birds, are praising God.' A little rabbit ran to him for protection, and it took refuge in his bosom, as one of his biographers says, 'as if it had some sense of the perfection of his heart.' The very wolves, which all men were afraid to encounter, were tamed by him, and came like lambs and crouched at his feet. So, at least, it is related in one memorable case in the legends of the Little Flowers of St. Francis," a collection of marvelous stories about the saint, which is very popular in Italy to this day. There may be much in these stories that exceeds the limit of credibility; the amount of accurate fact lying beneath them can no longer be traced; but none can hesitate to believe the beautiful depth of love which they reveal in the character of St. Francis and the fascination of personal influence which they show to have been possessed by him.

Whatever be the foundation of these poetic legends, it is very certain that the gentle St. Francis must have thought differently of dumb animals from many more pretentious Christians. They seem chiefly to think how little we have in common with us, perhaps even in the highest hopes that the Christian religion offers to the suffering creature. His is surely the more beautiful belief; and since it can lead to no wrong thought or action, one would rather err, if it were so, with St. Francis, than run the risk of doing cruel wrong through those who differ from him.

The joints and muscles are so lubricated by Hood's Sarsaparilla that all rheumatism and stiffness soon disappears. Get only Hood's. Minards' Liniment is used by Physicians.

CATHOLIC DEVOTIONAL PRACTICES.

The Christian religion is not merely a creed or system of doctrine, nor yet a simple trust in Christ as one's personal Saviour. It is more than all this: it is a law of right doing, a life, and a worship. The faith which does not bring forth the fruits of work and worship, is dead; and the man who foolishly believes that, since Christ died for sinners, al he, a sinner, has to do to be saved is, by faith and trust, to lean on Christ, that man remains in his sin.

The Son of God did not come into the world solely to die for sinners, and thus pay the price of their redemption. He came to give men a new code of morals, not doing away with but perfecting the old Mosaic code. He came also to establish a new worship based on a fuller revelation of divine truth. Christ's creed, if so we may call the sum of religious truths He has taught the world, is thus the norm of Christian worship, as His moral code is the rule of Christian conduct. Of this latter He Himself is the Model; of Christian worship He, as the God made man, is the distinctive Object.

Devotional practices are part of Christian worship. They belong to the service of prayer and praise, as good works belong to the service of imitation; for a devotional practice is but the outcome and practical application of some moral principle or maxim of conduct. Thus the scapular of the Blessed Virgin is, to the person who wears it, a token of his own sign of belief in the graces and prerogatives of the Mother of God. It is the badge of devotion to the best and noblest of God's creatures,—the lively or Heaven's Queen. Again, the practice of saying the rosary or beads is the outcome of a firm belief in the efficacy of prayer, and serves at the same time to call to mind the central facts of the Christian religion, such as the birth, passion, death, resurrection and ascension of our Divine Lord.

Once more, the devotional practice of making the sign of the cross, what is it but a profession of faith in Him who died upon a cross and in the Trinitarian God whose name is invoked? By means such as these the faith is fostered and kept pure, especially in the case of persons who are unable to read. And it is found as a matter of fact that the Catholic who piously practices one or other of the special devotions approved by the Church has a keener and livelier sense of divine truths, and is, other things being equal, a better Christian than the one who does not.

But, it is objected, the New Testament ignores such practices; it makes no mention of rosaries, scapulars, crucifixes, etc. Those who urge this objection ought in consistency to renounce every belief and practice not supported by New Testament authority. They ought to strike out of their Bibles the writings of Mark and Luke, since they can find no sort of warrant in the New Testament for believing these to be inspired. And they should give over the practice of conferring baptism by pouring on the water or by sprinkling, seeing that both the letter and usage of the New Testament are expressly in favor of baptism by immersion. The silence of the New Testament on certain points is easily accounted for by us on the ground that neither is nor purports to be a complete record of the doctrine and acts of Christ and His Apostles. For us Catholics "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim. 3, 15.) "supplies the deficiencies of the New Testament record and unfolds its meaning. The case is different with those who profess to follow the Bible only as their rule of faith and living. To them the silence of the New Testament ought to be no less significant than its utterances—ought to be, but isn't always.

We are not, however, by any means prepared to admit that the New Testament "ignores" our devotional practices. To ignore means to refuse to take notice of, or to shut the eyes to, a subject of controversy, and it is a subject of controversy whether there are more truths in England than America, and whether protection or free trade fosters them. But there is one form of trust against which no one has anything to say. That is the trust the public reposes in Hood's Sarsaparilla.

A "Trust" Which is Popular. There is a great deal of indignation felt against Trusts. The Sugar Trust, the Standard Oil Trust, the English Salt Trust, and other combinations of the kind, are vigorously denounced, and it is a subject of controversy whether there are more trusts in England than America, and whether protection or free trade fosters them. But there is one form of trust against which no one has anything to say. That is the trust the public reposes in Hood's Sarsaparilla.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are manufactured by Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Brockton, Ont., and Schenectady, N. Y., and are sold in boxes (each in loose form by mail) of one hundred, and the public are cautioned against numerous imitations sold in this shape for 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, and may be had of all druggists or direct by mail from Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, from either address.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills contain in a condensed form all the elements necessary to give new life and richness to the blood, and restore shattered nerves. They are an excellent remedy for such diseases as locomotor ataxia, partial paralysis, St. Vitus dance, scurvy, neuritis, rheumatism, nervous headache, the after effects of la grippe, palpitation of the heart, nervous prostration, all diseases depending upon vitiated humors, all diseases, such as scurvy, chronic erysipelas, etc. They build up the blood, and restore the slow effect a radical cure in all cases arising from mental worry, overwork, or excess of what is called "nervousness."

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A CHATEAUGUAY SENSATION.

Physicians Pronounced Recovery Impossible. The Remarkable Experience of Mr. J. J. Beaudin, of St. Urbain—His Friends Called to His Supposed Death—How He Restored His Health and Strength—A Public Acknowledgment of His Gratitude.

From La Presse, Montreal. There has appeared in the columns of La Presse during the past two years, many articles bearing witness to the great good accomplished in various parts of the country by a remedy the name of which is now one of the most familiar household words in all parts of the Dominion. And now comes a statement, from the county of Chateauguay, over the signature of well-known resident of St. Urbain, which speaks in the most convincing manner of the value of this wonder-working medicine.

MR. BEAUDIN'S STATEMENT. "I feel that I owe my life to your Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I desire to make grateful acknowledgment and to give you a complete statement of my illness and cure in the hope that my experience may be of benefit to some other sufferer. About a year and a half ago I was afflicted with a peculiar ailment, the nature of which I was unable to describe. I had been afflicted with a species of paralysis, caused by the rupture of a blood vessel in the right eye, and which stopped the circulation of the blood on the left side. My illness was attended by a book-keeper by Messrs. Lacaille, Brodeur, Lawrence, Mass. The doctor had advised a change of work so as to have less mental and more physical exercise. This I resolved upon, but I felt too long as I did not leave my home, and requested a local physician who went to see me to call on me. He examined me and declared himself unable to understand my case. However, he gave me some medicine to ease the pain I felt in my head particularly at night. This afforded me relief for a few minutes, and I went to bed. The next morning I awoke and found myself so weak that I could not stand and could scarcely speak. My wife, surprised to see me in such a state, ran to the doctor and requested him to go for a doctor. The doctor arrived and, seeing the condition I was in, told me my case was critical and to prepare for the worst. On the following day both the priest and the doctor advised my wife to telegraph to my friends, as they considered death approaching, and two days later my two brothers arrived. The doctor then asked if I preferred another physician, and on my replying in the affirmative, he telegraphed to a doctor living at a distance of about fifteen miles. They both came to see me, and asked some questions and retired for consultation. The result of this was that my wife was told that I could not possibly get better. The doctor said to her, 'I cannot live a year.' When my wife told me this I determined to try the doctors and discontinue their services. It cost me about \$80 to hear their verdict. Two or three weeks passed with me in a state of extreme weakness, and I was so weak I could barely move around with the aid of a cane. One day I noticed a parcel being sent to me in a newspaper. Having nothing better to do I began to read it, and after a while I came to an article headed 'Sensational Cure.' I read it, and the longer I read the more interested I became, because I saw the case of the person referred to resembled my own in many respects. When I finished the article I saw that the cure had been effected by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. It seemed as though there was a struggle with me between the facts I had read and my own inability, so small was the faith I had in medicines advertised in the papers. I read the article and reread it several times. I seemed to hear the doctor's words 'he cannot live a year,' and then I saw the effects of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in the case of just read about. The result of these reflections was that I decided to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills as a supply. On their arrival I commenced using them according to directions, and before the first box was done I found they were helping me, and it was not long before I was able to walk to the village and return in half a mile, and with the aid of a cane, and I was rapidly gaining health and strength. After the time I had taken I weighed 212 pounds, and at the time I began the use of the Pink Pills I weighed 160 pounds. I took the pills for about three months and in that time gained about 50 pounds. To day I am as well as I ever was in my life, and my recovery is due entirely to the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and I cannot recommend them too highly to those who do not enjoy the blessing of perfect health.

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FIVE-MINUTE BERM

THE TOTAL ABSTINENCE PLAN. The angel said to him: Fear not; for thy prayer has been heard; and thy wife shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt name him John; and thou shalt have joy, and many shall rejoice at his birth. He will be great before the Lord; he shall drink with the Holy Ghost, and shall be called the Son of David, the Son of the children of Israel to the Lord's throne. (Luke 1, 13-15.)

My brethren, the message from heaven by an angel came to me; and I have been a messenger of the message delivered to Zachary the Angel Gabriel contained peculiar prediction concerning total abstinence from wine and strong drink, which St. John the Baptist testified throughout his life.

matters no special direction given regulating his acts of sobriety. No mention is made of his refusal to drink wine; and the angel's message; a notice of the extraordinary approval upon him by our Lord, by which he was canonized, so to speak, death. St. John the Baptist is prominent of all the total mentioned in the Bible.

Considered as an antidote to the vice of intemperance, the total abstinence is now deemed only by examples from Holy also on arguments based on sense and experience. It is as the heroic form of the temperance, which may be practised by those who have been addicted to drunkenness, determination to renounce lawful use of strong drink is commendable as a means of salvation for young men.

any other class of society assailed by temptations to drinking; and by unwise and ungodly friends they are often regard drunkenness as a weakness. Undoubtedly, wise act for a young man of wealth to erect a strong wall of defence, to protect himself from the temptations of the world, and to live in state of freedom, total abstinence is not only necessary. The pledge is simply a firm purpose, a manifestation of will to avoid that which they have been for them a proximate sin. In many cases total abstinence may be a stern, the only sure preventive of the vice, and is imperative for the spiritual and temporal well-being of those who have been addicted to drunkenness, and who cannot do otherwise.

giveness from God he must for past offences, a duty to do better in the future; he must do in the future safety can be ascertained by his past experience. Application of these principles in the tribunal of penance of virtue is fostered and of vice is retarded. In Church preaches to the great lessons were taught by the banks of the sea. To all of her children showing this season of Adventuring uttered long ago by the way of the Lord; make paths.

"When your heart is head is bad, and you through, what is needed Sunday-school teacher I know—Ayer's Sarsaparilla, a little girl, whose cently been restored to medicine.

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