

## HALF HOURS WITH THE SAINTS.

## Saint Nicophorus.

INTEGRITY OF THE FAITH.—There are not in the Christian faith any articles which it is permissible to accept or reject according to one's own good pleasure; all are equally holy and equally true. Faith teaches that it is good to hold in reverence the images of the saints; and this article of belief, apparently so little important, has been upheld by martyrs. Nicophorus, elected patriarch of Constantinople in 595, despite his opposition, furnished us with a striking example. The emperor Nicophorus, who had been instrumental in bringing about this election, was not mistaken in the estimate he had made of his former secretary. On the emperor Leo the Armenian succeeding to Nicophorus, he renewed the persecution in the matter of images, but found on the part of the patriarch an amount of resistance as unbending as it was determined. Unable to conquer him, he banished him to a monastery, where the saintly old man spent fourteen years, accounting himself happy to suffer this long disgrace for the sake of religion. He there died in 825, after having composed several works in defence of the faith. The Greeks celebrate his festival on the 2nd of June, and the Latin Church on the 13th of March.

MORAL REFLECTION.—How shall we venture to cavil at the faith, when St. Paul himself proclaimed that he had received the apostleship not for the control of, but for obedience to the faith?—(Rom. 1. 5.)

## Saint Matilda.

GOOD WORKS.—St. Matilda, queen of Germany, seemed to have borrowed from the royal authority only the power of doing good. Open-handed and munificent, after the manner of saints, she knew no other limit to her bounty to the poor than that of the revenues placed at her disposal by her husband Henry, surnamed "the Fowler." She did not deem it unbefitting the dignity of the throne to go herself to visit the poor, not becoming her royal hands to minister to the wounds of the sick. Abounding in gentleness and charity towards the servants of the palace, like a very mother in the midst of her family, she instructed some in the knowledge of the truths of religion, and aided others in the accomplishment of their duties. While bearing herself worthily and with majesty in the midst of the great, she showed herself ever benignant and gentle with the lowly, and pious and humble in the family circle. Having become a widow, her ungrateful sons despoiled her of everything. On her possessions being restored, she applied them as she had heretofore done. She died in 968, in a convent to which she had retired.

MORAL REFLECTION.—"Therefore, whilst we have time," says the great apostle, "let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith."—(Gal. vi. 10.)

## Saint Longinus.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.—The evangelical precept the most difficult, perhaps, to observe, is that which prescribes to us to do good in return for evil and to love those that hate us. Our Saviour having given us, however, the example simultaneously with the precept and encouraging us to the grace which renders the precept possible, there remains no excuse for our not accomplishing it. This admirable example did not fail to produce speedy fruits, for one of the Roman soldiers present at the time of His suffering—according to some the very one who cried out while he saw the Saviour expire, "Verily, this was the Son of God," while others believe it was the guard who pierced His side with a lance, and on whom the name of Longinus, probably in mere ignorance of his right name, has been conferred—was converted, and began to announce the Gospel. On learning this, Pilate caused him to be arrested in Cappadocia. Now Longinus, knowing by revelation what the soldiers who were seeking him intended, received them into his house, acted towards them as one does with friends, and ultimately discovered to them who he was. They decapitated him without further delay.

MORAL REFLECTION.—Behold the divine precept, which calls for no commentary, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you."—(Matt. v. 44.)

## "PREACHING CHRIST" IN A POPISH CATHEDRAL.

A Nonconformist contemporary publishes the following account written by a young English lady—of what denomination is not stated—of a sermon at High Mass at the Cathedral at Barcelona.

"We went to the cathedral on Easter Sunday, intending afterwards to go to the English service, but curiously enough we were so impressed with what we saw and heard that we remained through the service."

"You must imagine a very fine cathedral, with thousands of people kneeling on the floor, the ladies all in black mantles. When the preacher began all stood up, and for forty minutes stood motionless, listening as I think I never saw men listen. The preacher had a splendid voice, and I shall never forget the first Spanish sermon I heard. I understood a great deal, which surprised me. He began, in a low deliberate way to speak to the people of their duty to consider Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, on this morning of His Resurrection. Then came a description of the Resurrection, the influence it has had in the world, leaving now in our lives, and to us have hereafter. Then came a description of the sins of the world, the awful nature of sin, the great need of repentance and confession. Lastly, he made an earnest appeal to the people—oh, so earnest—to come to Christ. He showed God's love to us, Christ's love to us, the joys of holy life, and the terror of neglecting salvation; and from his own experience spoke as a minister sent by God to entreat them to *believe in, love, and follow Christ*. The men and women all around us were in tears. Papa said that merely from watching the man he was so moved that he is determined henceforth to preach the Gospel with more earnestness and fire, so as to touch people's hearts as well their heads. Such a man as this priest must carry a blessing to the people, even if there are coverings that at times hide what is true. We came away feeling that we had indeed met with Christ, though as unexpectedly as the woman of Samaria, when she went to draw water at the well."

Somehow inconsistently in this connection our contemporary finds it necessary to describe Spain as a "land of priestly misrule." That "preaching the Gospel" is not a Catholic practice is one of the myths on which Protestantism rests; but it is not necessary to travel so far as Spain in order to discover that the Protestant view of our clergy and their doings is founded on an ignorance which might be easily overcome by a little inquiry and observation. How many of those who glibly denounce the Catholic Church—even among "advanced" Anglicans—have ever read a Catholic book, or troubled themselves to ascertain what the teaching and practice of Catholics really is? But experience is not always enough. Even the preacher at Barcelona could not convince his Protestant hearers that there are no "coverings that at times hide what is true."—London Register.

## SAVED BY PRAYER.

How a Pagan Son Became a Saint Through a Mother's Supplication.

St. Augustine, the famous preacher and one of the fathers of the early Christian Church, was in his youth a profane, dissolute pagan. He had great natural gifts, which had been improved by study and association with learned men; but evil companions and unruly passions and the seduction of a life led him astray, and he wasted much of his time in riotous and wicked amusements. His dissipation and impiety were the source of constant sorrow to his mother, St. Monica, an ardent Christian, whose prayers and efforts were unceasing for her son's conversion. In the month of June, in the year 386, she died, and her death was the turning point in the life of the young man.

During his studies at Carthage, where he learned *belles-lettres* and eloquence under the most accomplished Greek masters, his letters to him were full of the most pure and touching sentiments, breathing the fondness of a mother with the wisdom of a Christian. With the most fervent language she entreated him to leave off his vicious course and to lead a holy life. These exhortations for a long time had no effect. Augustine himself in his "Confessions," written long after he became a Christian, says that he read his mother's entreaties with impatience, and looked upon them as mere "woman's talk," not worth regarding.

In the meantime he was winning fame as a scholar and teacher in the pagan culture of the times he had no superior; but his distinction could not distract his mother's thoughts from the misfortune of his heresy.

## A REMARKABLE DREAM.

Her sinking hope was sustained by dreams and prodigies. One night she dreamed that while standing on a piece of timber alone and sorrowing, a radiant youth approached her and tenderly kissed her on the cheek. When she told him that it was for the soul of her guilty son, he bade her to be comforted, for that she was like her Augustine should be. She then looked around and saw him standing beside her.

The next day she related her dream to the young man, but he only laughed at it, telling her if it meant anything, it pointed to the possibility of her adopting his faith some day. "Nay," was her reply, "it was not said to me. 'Where he is you shall be.' 'Where you are, there shall he be.' The quickness of his reply and her earnest faith impressed Augustine more than the dream itself; but his heart continued as hard as ever.

Nine years longer he resisted all the entreaties and warnings of Monica, still clinging to his evil habits and his false belief. His genius and his eloquence made him a marked character, and his fame as teacher grew yearly. His mother, half hopeless, yet did not give up praying. Nightly her pillow was wet with tears, daily she wept by word and deed, and thus the heart of the philosophic doubter to the Christian scheme of salvation.

## A CHILD OF PRAYER AND TEARS.

One time she sought the presence of an eminent Christian Bishop, and entreated him to see and converse with her son. This he refused to do, telling her that her argument would be of no avail, and that the young man would one day discover his error himself. But the unhappy mother still persisted, and with many tears besought him to have pity upon her. Worn at length by her importunity, he exclaimed: "Go, my good woman, persevere as you have begun; it cannot be that the child of so many prayers and tears should remain a heathen as a prophecy."

The mother struck Monica as a prophecy. She died her tears and went home, and from that day felt certain of his ultimate conversion. Nor did she have long to wait. Augustine grew weary of the world and its pleasures, weary of philosophy and astrology, which had been his favorite studies, and sought a new field of labor. He resolved to visit Rome. Not yet thirty years of age, learned in all the wisdom of the heathen, greatly of fame, Augustine crossed the sea to Italy.

The prayers of his mother still followed him. St. Ambrose, one of the greatest reformers of his age, was preaching in Milan, and the pagan rhetorician went to hear him. God opened his heart, and he was brought to see the evil of his way. But his conversion did not come at once. Only after many prayers, severe conflicts of soul, the strife of passion with conviction, and many providential occurrences, did his obstinate heart yield to Christian persuasion. Monica was with him during the latter part of his struggle, and her presence doubtless did much toward subduing his reason to the faith of his childhood.

His mother's heart was full of joy. Her prayers had been answered, after many years, and she could say with the father of the prodigal son, "This my son was dead, is come to life again; was lost and is found."

Mothers who have prayerless, ungodly sons, remember Monica and be as faithful. No one can pray as a mother can for any erring son, and prayers are not lost. Sooner or later the flinty heart will be

touched and the sinner brought to the cross. Prayer is the Christian's touchstone; it performs wonders. But do we pray enough? How many of us follow the apostolic injunction to "pray without ceasing?"

## Ireland and Mormonism.

Young men and old men, young women and old women, pretty little girls and sturdy little boys, and infants just able to crawl and infants lying in arms, crowded the pier of the Gaillon Line Monday morning. They were 350 emigrants who had just landed from the steamship Nevada, and who are on their way to Salt Lake City. They were met by Mr. J. H. Hart, the Utah Emigration Agent in this city in the person of Mr. King, secretary to this company of Latter Day Saints, told a reporter that he would be happy to give any information in his power. "I have been missionary to Great Britain," he said, "for two years, and I have spent sixteen months laboring in Scotland and was rewarded by 125 converts. During the thirteen months I was in London I made only sixty converts, but then there are many others working in the city, while in Scotland I made only one."

In September last I was again called to the 350 people we have now brought over, 103 are from Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and the remainder are English, Scotch and Welsh. We have not a single Irishman or woman among them. In the month of June I was sent to Ireland, and in the North, which is Protestant and Presbyterian, I found a liberal spirit toward Mormonism; but in the South and West I found it unsafe to preach, so great is the aversion of the people to the Roman Catholic faith. I was again called to Ireland in January, but the political troubles made it inadvisable to go, as Americans were then liable to arrest as suspicious persons on account of their nationality. We have no missions in Ireland—they have no Catholic faith. I was again about a hundred miles in England and 250 in Europe altogether.—N. Y. Ex.

## Onion-Eating.

I know this: An onion is the most vilified and worst tolerated esculent there is, and yet it is one of the most delicious to some people, that the earth produces. There is one thing that it lacks, and that is popularity. I know men who, if they experience the slightest whiff of an onion, become so sick that they are in the deepest imaginable misery for hours thereafter. What I say is no exaggeration in the least.

On the other hand there are those who are so passionately fond of onions that they would rather eat a mess of onions than sit down to the finest banquet in the land.

To the traveling man, the onion is the best friend in the world. You can't think of any shape that an onion is not good. Boiled, stewed, fried, baked, fried-sliced, celloped, roasted, pickled, or raw, they are palatable and delicious. Cooked with potatoes, beefsteak, turkey, or duck they are exceedingly savory.

Just let a fellow hanging around the country, disgusted with the fare he receives at out-of-the-way hotels or boarding houses, eat a raw onion and see how it will brace him up. If you have taken too much tea of an evening, and feel that worse for your bout next morning, manage to get outside of an onion or two, and see how it will help you.

Onions are excellent cures for heavy colds, as everybody knows. Rub the onion a few times, and just let him fill up on nice sliced onions. Gracious to goodness what a comfortable drowsiness will come over him! He forgets all care, and will sink into a regular old-fashioned, forty-hour snooze that does him no harm of good, I tell you.—Springfield Globe.

## Childhood.

We think little children the poetry of the world, the fresh flowers of our hearts and homes. Little conjurers, who with "natural magic" evoking by their spell what delights and enriches all ranks, and equalizes the different classes of society. Often they bring with them anxieties and care, and live to occasion sorrow and grief, but we should get on very badly without them. Only think—if there were never anything anywhere to be seen but grown-up men and women how we should long for the sight of a little child. Every infant comes into the world like a delegated seraphim, the harbinger and herald of good tidings, whose office it is "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," and draw "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." A child softens and quickens the heart, warming and melting it by its gentle presence, and enriches the soul by new feelings, and it wakens within it what is favorable in virtue. It is a beam of light, a fountain of love, a teacher whose lessons few can resist. Infants recall from far back that engenders and quickens the heart, the harbinger and herald of good tidings, whose office it is "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," and draw "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." A child softens and quickens the heart, warming and melting it by its gentle presence, and enriches the soul by new feelings, and it wakens within it what is favorable in virtue. It is a beam of light, a fountain of love, a teacher whose lessons few can resist. Infants recall from far back that engenders and quickens the heart, the harbinger and herald of good tidings, whose office it is "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," and draw "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." A child softens and quickens the heart, warming and melting it by its gentle presence, and enriches the soul by new feelings, and it wakens within it what is favorable in virtue. 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