

lowed Jesus. He loved his fellow-men and gave his life for them. Although the greatest writer and one of the most famous men of his time, he sought seclusion among the brethren of his order. He longed for his vocation, and through giving up self and appealing to God was led into it. He became the Thomas Aquinas of the nineteenth century.

LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART.

Pilgrimages to Paray-Le-Monial. GENERAL INTENTION FOR MARCH 1900. Recommended to our prayers by His Holiness Leo XIII.

American Messenger of the Sacred Heart. Soon after the Holy Father had issued the Bull announcing the Jubilee we are celebrating this year, he addressed to the bishops, clergy and laity of the Church, a letter calling on them to consecrate the world to the Heart of Jesus Christ. He looked to this consecration for a renewal of the spirit of devotion which would help to make the Jubilee successful, not only by turning the eyes of all men to the vicar of Christ, but also, and specially by inspiring all of them to join in the solemn act of homage to Christ, by which he wishes this century to be distinguished from every other.

But a short time ago, as you well know, were the opening words of the letter, "We, by letters apostolic, and following the customs and ordinances of our predecessors, commanded the celebration in this city at no distant date, of a holy year. And now to-day, in the hope and with the object that this religious celebration be more devoutly performed, we have traced and recommended a striking design, from which, if all shall follow it out with a hearty good-will, we not unreasonably expect extraordinary and lasting benefits not only for Christendom but also for the whole human race."

The striking design was to consecrate the world to the Heart of Jesus Christ as a more signal act of devotion, and in a manner the crowning perfection of all the honors that people have been accustomed to pay to the Sacred Heart. How significant His Holiness considered this decree is clear from the emphasis he lays on the fact that the decision has been made after twenty-five years' deliberation.

Having thus placed the celebration of the Holy Year under the auspices of the Sacred Heart, it is not surprising that he should bless the project of renewing, during this year of Jubilee pilgrimages to Rome, the pilgrimages which have been made from time to time to Paray-Le-Monial, the cradle of devotion to the Heart of Jesus.

It is now two hundred and thirty years since an humble Sister of the Visitation, cloistered in her monastery at Paray, gave to the world the message about the love of Christ for men, which has given such an impulse to Catholic faith and piety in every corner of the earth. Margaret Mary Alacoque, now venerated as one of the Blessed Servants of God, was a simple nun, cut off from the great world, often misunderstood and regarded as an enthusiast by her superiors, rarely favored with the counsels of an experienced director, and still charged with a mission which seemed not only beyond her powers, but even utterly inconsistent with her vocation.

Margaret Mary lived in an age when the charity of men had grown cold, when the pride which had led to Luther's revolt had already culminated in the blasphemous conceit of Calvinism and had begun to infect Catholic France, so much so that traitorous men were attempting to rob the people of their faith, first by depriving them of a sure ground of hope, teaching that Christ did not love all men, because He had not died to save them all; and, secondly, by depriving them of the very source of Christian life by persuading them to abstain from the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist. Hidden away in the cloister, unacquainted with the men or women who were resisting this heresy of Jansenism, she could not have known its evils nor devised its remedy without some extraordinary light from Heaven, and even when that light had been vouchsafed her she could not have uttered, without some special assistance, the cry which would resound in the uttermost parts of the earth and keep ringing loud and clear until our own day. No one who knows the marvels of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as practised in the Church during the past two centuries, according to the teaching of Blessed Margaret Mary, doubts that she received special communications from Christ Himself, as she relates to us so much sincerely in her letters and autobiography. In fact, it is a sign of little faith, of the slowness of heart to believe, so plainly rebuked by our Lord, to counsel or practise this devotion without making mention of the extraordinary graces by which the simple nun of Paray was moved to propagate it.

As we have repeated so often in these pages, and as the Apostle of devotion to the Sacred Heart recounts so often in her writings, our Saviour manifested Himself to her, appearing to her eyes in visible form, and spoke with her, declaring His love for men, showing His Heart as the symbol of His love, deploring their ingratitude, inviting their cooperation in His efforts to repair the evils of their sins, specifying the practices which would enable them to honor Him, and urging her to make known His message to all the world. Sometimes in the chapel of the monastery, sometimes in its garden, He appeared to her, often He

spoke to her heart in the silence of her cell, but the burden of His message was always the same, never adding what men had not known before, but always repeating what had already been revealed and written in the Scriptures about His love and sacrifice for all men, and about His yearning for their love in return. This is why the Catholic world, since Blessed Margaret Mary's time, has looked upon Paray-Le-Monial as a shrine or sanctuary of the greatest devotion the world has ever known. From out that little city of but a few thousand inhabitants, has come forth a spirit which has renewed the earth. The message of the holy Visitation cloistered within its walls has brought home to a world of men and women, whose faith was in decay, the form and figure of Christ as vividly as when He stood before the doubting Thomas; nay, it has enabled them to see with the eye what he searched for with his hands, the Heart of Christ: broken and pierced for our iniquities; it has crushed the hidden serpent of Jansenism, and challenged and overcome every insidious effort of liberalism to show that Christ is here or there according to its accommodating assumptions, by manifesting Him as He is divine and human, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, with a heart like ours capable of suffering pain, of seeking sympathy, feeling for our infirmities, throbbing with love for us, and yearning with all the craving of an infinite love, to infuse life and love into every member of the mystic body of which He is the head, to impart His spirit unto all men whom He has adopted as His brethren and made after His likeness to be the sons of God.

It is no exaggeration, therefore, to consider Paray-Le-Monial as the shrine which is most like the holy places in Palestine, like Nazareth, the Temple, the Passover, Calvary, consecrated by the presence of Christ in His mortal life. Without comparing it with other shrines or sanctuaries, or claiming for it precedence over them, it has one distinctive merit, and it is, that though it is but little frequented by the faithful in pilgrimage, it is never out of their minds or hearts, and it has done more than any other spot in Christendom to make almost every Catholic church, nay, more, almost every Catholic home a shrine in which the Sacred Heart of Jesus is adored and praised. If crowds do not congregate in Paray-Le-Monial, if there be no miraculous grotto or statue there, the multitudes of communicants who approach our altars, and on every first Friday of the month, the worshippers who kneel before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on our altars, the crowds attending the monthly or weekly services in our churches to honor the Sacred Heart, and the Catholic households in which an image or picture of the Sacred Heart is set up for worship, all attest the universal veneration in which Paray and its chief sanctuary are held in the hearts of Catholics. While the influence of other shrines is to lead Catholics to visit them in pilgrimage, that of Paray-Le-Monial seems to be to invest every corner of the earth with its own sacred associations. Margaret Mary's special endeavor was not to make Paray a shrine not to draw people to invade the sacred precincts of her monastery, but to multiply the places all over the earth in which the image of the Heart of Jesus should be held in veneration.

After describing, as we have done at length in the opening pages of this number, the city and the sanctuary in which devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus had its origin, we need not dwell further on the reasons why a call should be made for pilgrimages to Paray from every part of the world during this Jubilee year. The time is opportune even for ourselves, distant as we are from Europe, since the Jubilee and the Paris Exposition will naturally attract to Rome and Paris so many who will wish to visit Paray also. The year is favorable, because it has been set apart by the Church for a Solemn Act of Homage to Jesus Christ, and what act could be more solemn than that which brings men to the shrine where He manifested in a special manner His sovereign love for mankind and His desire to reign over their hearts? Even should no large pilgrimage be organized in this country, what Promoter is there who would not, if it were possible, make this pilgrimage? Whether possible for us individually or not, it is a worthy object of our prayers, since we should wish to obtain by God's mercy that thousands of people may be so favored as to make this pilgrimage, to go in all piety to the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, to take part in a magnificent manifestation of devotion to Christ where His Heart was revealed to us as the symbol of His love, to be filled there with the spirit of His charity, and to return in safety to spread among men the abundant graces they would surely obtain in such a blessed journey.

of detail of those treasures which have been poured forth for their erection, to those long years of persevering effort which have been devoted to them and to those flights of genius which religion alone could inspire.—Cardinal Logue.

BAREFOOTED ANGELS.

BY E. A. SHERMAN

The strangest stories are true ones. The simplest tales are best. For the true story is always filled with the tremendous longings of human sympathy, and the simple tale has the dignity of chastity and the charm of innocence. Thus it is that the mystery is explained by incidents, seemingly trivial in themselves, are so often carried on the tide of tradition when events of great or moment are lost in the sea of oblivion.

Clinging to a narrow strip of land between the Mississippi River on the one hand and the wooded hills rising to the west on the other, L—, Iowa, has survived the decline of the steamboat, once America's mightiest engine of commerce, and is still the metropolis of that section of the country whose rugged contour has won for it the name of "The Switzerland of the Mississippi Valley."

Many a story of the days when L— was a factor in river commerce may still be heard from the men and women who have dwelt there so long between the river and the hills as to be looked upon by the later generation as indigent. Such stories are passed from brain to lip and from ear to mind much as curious mineral specimens are passed from hand to hand. But more tenacious of life than any of the river stories is one of a little barefooted, starting boy, whose memory has been preserved from oblivion by a single wondering question.

Long before the river trade felt the coming of its sure decline L— was justly proud of a beautiful Catholic church, the wonder of the country. Unpretentious outwardly, its interior was adorned with oil paintings and fresco work then rarely equalled in the middle West. Many a Biblical incident was portrayed in the brighter colored oil paintings and many a white-winged angel trailed its multi-colored robes downward, while many a saint and apostle stood silent in niches around the walls in the graver fresco colors.

Charley Delacy, open countenanced and impulsive, acted as Father O'Hara's altar boy, not so much from his own choice as in conformity with the wishes of his mother. One week day morning in the early summer Charley was hastily summoned by the priest, who had been asked to baptize a child, the mother carrying the infant to the church in her arms for that purpose. Leaving his playground by the river front, Charley obeyed the summons and was soon at the church door. Eagerly, he silently walked toward the altar, but in hand, barefooted, blue denim overalls, suspenders of same material, checked shirt, flushed face, open eyes staring at the mother, light hair disarrayed with scattering locks plastered to his forehead with sweat, reverent but unconventional.

Father O'Hara was horrified at the appearance of his altar boy, always so neat on Sundays, and, turning to him he sternly demanded, "What do you mean, sir, by coming to me here in the church barefooted and looking as you do?"

The boy stopped. He hadn't thought of his looks before. He looked down at his feet which mud from the Mississippi pelted, and clung, grew more red in the face, choked, but made no reply. Flushed, he stood with downcast eyes and then to relieve the strain he raised them, but not daring to meet the eye of his indignant inquisitor, he looked at the wall instead. His eyes fell upon a picture of an angel and lighted up with sudden intelligence and relief, wandered staringly from picture to picture, from oil painting to fresco work. Then slowly his eyes travelled back to his pastor's face and their owner in trembling, wondering accents found voice to say, "Why, aren't all the angels barefooted?"—And he had conquered.

Never again was the boy reproached for soiled hands, plain clothing, or bare feet. Never again was the propriety of anyone's garb questioned in that house of God. Never again were Christianity and clothing there confused, nor did Father O'Hara ever again think religion incompatible with the clothing of the playground.

To-day no one in L— knows where the man Charley Delacy makes his home and Father O'Hara is dead and gone, but the simple story lives after they have passed and the people still tell how the open-eyed boy asked the frowning priest, "Aren't all the angels here bare-footed?"

THE ORIGINAL HIAWATHA.

The Indian story of Hiawatha is even more beautiful than that which Longfellow has told so charmingly in the justly popular poem bearing that title, but it depicts the hero as a very different man from the bold and tender-hearted warrior of whom the poet writes. The Indian story, though in part fiction, is founded on fact; there is no doubt that such a man as Hiawatha once lived, and that he played a leading part in forming the compact of the Six Nations.

According to the story, Hiawatha was the wisest man of the Ojondagas, and when the different tribes were troubled by the Hurons, who lived to the north of them, and the Algonquins, who were their eastern neighbors, he proposed a meeting of the tribes to form a union for mutual defense. But the scheme was defeated by Atarho, a great war chief of the Ojondagas, who was jealous of dividing his power, and Hiawatha was driven out of the tribe. He did not give up his plan, however. As he journeyed toward the south he came to a beautiful lake (probably Onondaga). On the shore he picked up a quantity of beautiful white shells.

Hiawatha living alone all this time and never seeing any man, learned much from the Great Spirit. It was finally revealed to him that his people were at last ready to unite, and he hastened back to them. Then there was a great meeting, which all the chiefs attended. Atarho still sat back defiant, saying never a word. When at last Hiawatha arose and began to speak the people were charmed by his voice and listened in silence, for it seemed to them that he spoke with the wisdom of the great Spirit Himself. Lifting his strings of wampum, Hiawatha unfolded his plan for the union, telling off on each shell the position and power allotted to each tribe and to its chief. Atarho was to be made the great war chief of the confederacy—which shows that Hiawatha was something of a politician—and at this even he gave way and the treaty was adopted.

While the people were celebrating the treaty with the usual feasting, it was observed that Hiawatha was sad and silent. "Fasting is not for me," he said, when his friends urged him to join the festivities: "I am to go on a far journey." At that moment a beautiful white canoe was seen approaching across the lake, driven by some unseen power. When it reached the shore Hiawatha, bidding farewell to those who had crowded about him, stepped into the canoe which moved rapidly away. As it reached the middle of the lake it suddenly rose into the air. Higher and higher into the blue sky flew the white canoe with its single passenger, until it became a dim speck and then vanished altogether.

That was the last of Hiawatha, but the league which he founded continued for centuries and was never conquered by its enemies, and every year since the wampum has been brought out at the great council and the solemn rites with which Hiawatha had instituted the confederacy have been rehearsed.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

THE BAD CATHOLIC.

By how many a Catholic have the very mercies of God perverted to his own ruin! He has rested on the sacraments, without caring to have the proper dispositions for attending them. At one time he lived in neglect of religion altogether; but there was a date when he felt a wish to set himself right with his Maker; so he began, and has continued ever since, to go to confession and Communion at convenient intervals.

He comes again and again to the priest; he goes through his sins; the priest is obliged to take his account of them—which is a very defective account—and sees no reason for not giving him absolution. He is absolved, as far as words can absolve him; he comes again to the priest when the season comes round; again he confesses, and again he has the form pronounced over him. He falls sick; he receives the last sacraments; he receives the last rites of the Church—and he is lost.

He is lost, because he never really turned his heart to God; or, if he had some poor measure of contrition for a while, it did not last beyond his first or second confession. He soon taught himself to come to the sacraments without any contrition at all; he deceived himself, and so did his principal and most important sins. Somehow he deceived himself into the notion that they were no sins, or not mortal sins; for some reason or other he was silent, and his confession became as defective as his contrition. Yet this scanty show of religion was sufficient to soothe and supply his conscience; so he went on, year after year, never making a good confession, communicating in mortal sin until he fell ill; and then, I say, the Viaticum and holy oil were brought to him, and he committed sacrilege for his last time—and so he went to his God.

Oh, what a moment for the poor soul, when it comes to itself, and finds itself suddenly before the judgment-seat of Christ! Oh, what a moment, when breathless with pain, and dizzy with the strangeness of what is happening to him, and unable to realize where he is, the stunner hears the voice of the accusing spirit, bringing up all the sins of his past life, which he has forgotten, or which he has explained away, which he would not allow to be sins, though he suspected they were; when he hears him detailing all the mercies of God which he has despised, all His warnings which he has set at naught, all His judgments which he has outlived; when that evil one follows out into detail the growth and progress of a lost soul—how it expanded and was conformed in sin—how it budded forth into leaves and flowers, grew into branches and ripened into fruit—till nothing was wanted for its full condemnation! And oh! still more terrible, still more distracting, when the Judge speaks, and consigns it to the jailers, till it shall pay the endless debt which lies against it!

And the poor soul struggles and wrestles in the grasp of the mighty demon which has hold of it, and whose every touch is torment. "Oh, atrocious!" it shrieks in agony, and in anger, too, as if the very keenness of the infliction were a proof of its injustices. "A second! a third! I can bear no more! stop, horrible fiend give over; I am a man, and not such as thou! I am not food for thee, or

ASK YOUR DOCTOR!

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