

JANUARY 16, 1904

ST. AGNES.

FEAST, JANUARY 21.

"Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." (MAT. 5.)

After sixteen centuries of unceasing praise, the Church of Jesus Christ has not yet wearily with the story of the martyrdom of a little Roman child.

The Christian Church was almost three centuries old when St. Agnes was born in Rome.

It is almost a pity at times that there had to be so much bloodshed in the early years of the Christian Church.

It almost seems a pity that the lesson taught by the little Roman girl on this occasion might not be incidentally in some other way.

And so it is with every principle of honest living that the Church lays down. These principles are written in the blood of tens of thousands of the martyred dead.

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raised to Heaven in her Father's face against them. They heard the clear, determined accents of a little Roman maiden's voice, when she calmly gazed defiance at the Pagan multitude, and said to them in words that they could not understand: "You may stain your hands with my blood, for I am only a helpless child. But you never shall profane this body that is consecrated to Jesus Christ."

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ful, because they are pure and white like her," said Coaina, gently, as she held up the white violets. "No they will not do at all," answered Winonah, to whose intense chagrin the young chief had moved away without noticing her. "I won't have them; the crown must be rich in color, and glow among the head like flames of red and gold. Oh, what a crown I will make!"

"What is the dispute, my dear children?" inquired a voice which was gentle, but quick and firm in its tones. Both girls started, as turning, they beheld Father Etienne, who had approached unseen, standing near them. Both knelt, asking his blessing—Coaina with head bowed, Winonah with eyes cast down, but with her head proudly erect.

"Now, my dear children," said the good priest of the mission, "what is the difficulty? Speak, Winonah, my child!" With a flushed cheek Winonah told him frankly of the difference of opinion between herself and Coaina about the garland, without explaining, however, the secret cause of her jealousy and angry interference, and showed him the flowers of her choice, and those of Coaina's.

"Make garlands of yours, my child, and fasten the mossy wails of our Blessed Lady's shrine, they will indeed look rich and brilliant there," said Father Etienne, gently; "but these must crown her—these fair and modest flowers, so symbolic of her pure holiness. Yes, Coaina, my child, you are right—make of them a rare garland, to crown and honor her on the Feast of her Assumption. So far, everything is beautifully arranged—ah—yes—the banner is just in the right place. "See children, that the floor is well strewn with pine blades," added Father Etienne, looking around with an air of satisfaction, after which he walked away, blessing the children who were grouped around the chapel, who clung to his hands, and the skirts of his long soutane as long as he would stay.

"Now," said Winonah, when he was well out of hearing, turning to her cousin with an angry countenance, "as you rule here, tell me what I am to do." "Let us help each other, sister," said Coaina, gently. "I wish to make the wreath from our Mother," said Winonah. "You shall make it, Winonah. I was coming to ask you, because I have the tabernacle to dress, and so many other things to do."

"No; if I can't make a fine flaming wreath of the flowers that I like, I shall make it myself, and do the other things beside," replied Winonah, tossing her proud head. "As you wish, my sister, only let us have the chapel ready for the morrow," said Coaina. "Come, children, bring all in the flowers and mosses, and let us all work together."

"I did want to go to my rabbit snares to see how many rabbits I've caught," said the Indian lad; "I've got nothing but a muskrat."

"Well, Piquet, if you care more for rabbits than you do for our Mother's festival, go and catch some more," said Father Etienne at Mass to-morrow. "I do care for the rabbits, Coaina, but I won't give up the festival. Red-patch's boy and two others have gone into the forest with their bows and arrows, and won't be back until night, but—but—" and the boy's dusky face flushed. "But I want to do something for our Mother!"

"That's brave, Piquet," said Coaina, laying her hand gently on the black elf locks of the boy's head. "You'll be a great hunter some day. The Great Spirit will bless you, because you have courage to do what is right. Run off now to the pines, and look me up as many blades as the day after to-morrow when I shall go with me into the forest to hunt." Just then she saw approaching the young chief Tar-ra-hee, the hereditary sachem of her people, and she turned swiftly and resumed her labors in the chapel.

Winonah, will you fetch in the flowers and mosses which the lads have brought?" said Coaina to a young Indian girl who was busied about the shrine of our Blessed Lady. The girl came forward with an impatient air, and although she bore a family resemblance to Coaina—being her cousin—no two persons could have been more unlike. Winonah's eyes were fierce and defiant, with a certain wild yet repellent beauty in them, her brow was taught and her handsome mouth wore a proud and scornful expression. Her attire, without being immodest, displayed in its gaudy, flaunting style a vitiated fancy, and a vain, ambitious nature. Trinkets glittered in her ears, on her wrists, and around her black hair she wore jauntily an eagle's feather, the totem of her father, who had been one of the great chiefs of her people.

"Why not fetch them yourself, Coaina?" she asked, sharply, "or make a wreath of them?" "I will fetch them myself, Coaina," she said, "but I will not fetch them myself, Coaina." "I will fetch them myself, Coaina," she said, "but I will not fetch them myself, Coaina."

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the hills, and sparkle here and there like sacramental lamps—now upon the jeweled folds of the mission banner, now upon the gilded door of the tabernacle, now upon the burnished head of the crucified Christ, now creeping like a flame along the silver fringe of the altar cloth. A quiet and solemnly now reigns where so short a time before was heard a busy hum. Here and there kneel the preparations for the festival, now examine their consciences for confession. Coaina knelt close beside the shrine of the Blessed Lady, partly concealed by the flower-wreathed pillars near it. Amidst this devout and completed the Sacrament, while every deposit in the tabernacle, while every light bowed low in adoration of that grand and mysterious Presence. He now takes his seat in the confessional, and soon is heard the low whisperings of penitent hearts, as one after another approach the tribunal. Dim shadows, thrown by the purple twilight, steal in at the open door, and with them come the old and young of the mission, walking silently and reverently, wrapped in their toga-like blankets; their dusky, grave faces, and long black hair, hanging loose about their shoulders, their noiseless motions and immobile features adding to the solemn effect and sacredness of the consecrated place. The women knelt apart from the men, before the shrine of the Most Blessed Virgin, their little children kneeling beside them, whispering their innocent prayers—all modestly, tired, and all devout, save one, who, tall and shapely, and of a proud, haughty demeanor, knelt in her own place, where the tinsel embroidery of the altar, and the tinkled embroidery of the chapel arched through her fingers, light of the sanctuary lamp, while her eyes, large and restless, roved critically and inquiringly around her, showing that her heart was but little in unison with the whispered prayers on her lips, as she slipped the beads of her rosary rapidly through her fingers. This was Altoninah, the mother of Winonah, and the aunt of Coaina, whom she had adopted in his orphaned infancy, and reared in her own lodge. Some one in a distant part of the chapel arises to approach the confessional, and when she sees that it is Altoninah, she looks at her with a longer look around, but with an expression of satisfaction appears to recollect herself and attend more devoutly to her prayers. Thus it was within the mission chapel, but outside, wrapped in their blankets, stood two forms, their sharp, piercing black eyes scanning the scene within, while an expression of contempt and disgust pervaded their countenances. One was very old, and was named Makee (Knife). He was by descent half Huron, half Algonquin, and had never been baptized, but lived peaceably among the Christian Indians of the missions, some of whom were his near relations. The other was a dissolute, handsome and uneducated young Ironsides chief, called Ahaseek (the Deer), who, having heard of the preparations, had come down to the Algonquin village to see what was going on, hoping that he should, by some chance, get a glimpse of Coaina, whose beauty and grace had made a profound impression upon him.

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