

The Dream of Life.

BY K. A. SULLIVAN.

Two cooling, helpless, loving babes— Two chatting, toddling, sunny babes— Two playmates 'neath the cooling shades Of oak trees, grim and tall.

Two pupils in the selfsame school— Two youth and maiden fair— Nought know they of the dreary rule Of life, so full of care.

Two lovers in the eventide— Two lives now bent in one— Two graves upon the hillside— And thus the dream goes on.

ST. ROSE OF LIMA.

A CHARMING NARRATIVE OF THE FIRST AMERICAN EVER CANONIZED.

In the year 1536, and on the feast of the holy Virgin Agnes of Montepulciano, a child came into the world at Lima, a town in South America. The child was of Spanish origin. The child was baptized on Pentecost, which the people in those parts call the "Easter of Roses," and she received, after her grandmother, the name of Isabella or Elizabeth.

One day, three months after the child's birth, her mother saw a lovely rose bending over the cradle of her infant. At this sight the thought may have come to her, that her child, too, might well be a rose, which should blossom into beauty before God and men. So she changed her name, and from that day called her "Rosa."

Rosa was, by nature, a sweet and lovely child. Always quiet and gentle, she was never known to scream or cry, even when she lay in the cradle; and every one who looked at her took delight in the little child.

Her first knowledge of God came to her in a wonderful way, when she was just five years old. One day, when she was playing with her brother and some other children, her brother squirted some muddy water, from the street, upon her hair. Rosa was displeased at this, for she always, and in all things, liked to be clean; so, with a face full of trouble, she turned and walked away. Then the brother went up to her, and, half in joke, half in earnest, said to her, like a preacher:

"Little sister, why art thou so touchy because I have soiled thy hair a little? Dost thou not know that the beautiful hair of a maiden is a rope, with which the devil captures the souls of young people, and drags them down into hell? Surely God has no pleasure in that beautiful hair of thine, in which thou takest so much delight!"

These words fell heavily upon Rosa's heart. At the same instant the Holy Spirit let His divine light stream into the soul of the little child. For the first time, she knew what sin was, and what was meant by offending God. She was seized with a horror of hell, about which her brother had spoken. At once, she began to pray earnestly, and kept on saying over and over again, sometimes to herself, sometimes aloud, the self-same words: "Jesus, be praised! Jesus, be with me! Amen." And then she went her way, sought out a pair of trowsers, and cut off her hair to the roots.

From that day forth, she sought to put aside whatever might attract attention to her, or win for her the vain praise of men. But her mother was badly educated and worldly minded, and she wanted to make her daughter, who had a very beautiful face, more beautiful still, by tricking her out in all kinds of finery, as children will do with their dolls.

It happened, once, that the mother and Rosa were in the company of other people. There was a table there, and on it lay a beautiful wreath of flowers. The mother wished to see how beautiful Rosa would look with the wreath upon her head, and ordered her to put it on. The modest child, who was afraid of vain praise, begged to be excused. But it was of no avail; she had to obey. Then Rosa put on the wreath, but in doing so, she pressed a needle into her head, which she had purposely hidden among the flowers.

Another time, the mother wished Rosa to adorn herself with beautiful chains and bracelets, and to crimp her hair, and paint her face, so that her daughter's face might be more striking. But Rosa took fright at this command, and begged her mother to give her leave to go and ask her confessor whether or not she might do it.

The mother granted her wish, and Rosa hastened to her confessor. When the latter had heard of the matter, he went back with the girl to her mother, and begged of her, in serious words, not to grieve her God loving child, by insisting on her to sinful pride. The mother took the words to heart, and left off, in future, all such vanities.

With her mother's leave, Rosa henceforth always chose quite a plain, dark garment for her dress, so that nobody might notice her, and in order that her beautiful form might be an occasion of sin to no one. She had a great horror of sin; all the people in the house knew it, and they, therefore, took care to say nothing before little Rosa that was not quite pure. When her brothers and sisters would sometimes bring home a rude word or song, which they had heard elsewhere, Rosa would begin to cry, run away to her mother, throw herself down before her, and complain to her, amid her tears, that God was being offended. Whenever she was, anything sinful was done before her, and she could not prevent it, she would cry aloud, and shed hot bitter tears.

She detested lying so much that her favorite saying was: "Man may not lie, either for the sake of heaven or earth; for God is truth." And when she heard some story related that was not quite true, she would interrupt and say, "I beg your pardon, but such is not the case," or, "I think it did not happen in that way." The holy and spotless purity of her body and her soul she preserved with the tenderest care. She kept her body under severe restraint, so that it could not rebel against her will. How can we wonder, then, that God, too, on His part, showed Himself most gracious to her? He took her under His protection, in such a way that she never felt even the least thought against holy purity.

Thus, then, stood Rosa in the eyes of God, pure and stainless, and full of sweet odor, like unto a white rose armed with the thorns of chastity.

Since Christ Himself has said, "Whoever keeps My commandments faithfully, he is who loves Me," it will be seen,

from what has been said, how brightly the love of God shone out from little Rosa.

DEVOTION. The love of God is like the love of our parents. A good child, who loves its parents, will like to be much with them. And so, it will probably give up many harmless sports with other children; it will seldom be seen upon the street, where there is much turmoil and noise; it will rather play, and work, and read, in the quiet room with its mother.

And so it was with the dear child Rosa. Her heart was early open to God; for God, by His special grace, drew her to Him, and she offered not the least resistance.

So it came about that she found no joy in the games that children play. Often enough, her little neighbors would come to Rosa, bringing with them their pretty, gaily dressed dolls, and would tell her that she ought to play with them. But Rosa would refuse, and withdraw herself to some hidden corner, where, all alone, she could speak to her Father in heaven. Her brother once found her there. He asked her why she did not play with the other children, and why she would rather be all by herself in that dusty place. She answered, after her childish heart, "Let me be alone; I am not at all sure that, with your dolls, you have also the dear God with you."

By her pious and frequent thoughts about God, it became sweet and easy to her, even amid her homework and other occupations, to have God with her; and to speak to Him inwardly in her soul, just as a child, in a strange land, might often think of her mother at home, and talk to her without moving her lips.

Rosa was like a sunflower, which, with its great, yellow, blossom-eye, looks ever at the sun, and turns itself towards him, from his rising in the morning to his setting in the evening sky. She might spin, sew, embroider; she might read, eat, or talk to others; she might stay at home, or cross the street, or kneel in the church; but always and everywhere she thought of God, and her soul always looked up to Him.

This constant thought of her God and Father did not disturb her in her occupations any more than it would disturb a child to talk to its mother while knitting. Rosa did everything so orderly, so neatly, and so cleverly; she gave such apt answers to every question that was put to her; she was so quick and diligent in all her work that one would have imagined that all her thoughts and efforts were directed to these alone. And yet her soul, with its thoughts and its inward eyes, was ever fixed upon Christ.

As she grew somewhat older, and her joy in God grew also with her years, she wished, oftener than before, to be alone with Him, and undisturbed.

So she sought out a place within the garden wall, where there stood a great juniper tree. And here, away from the eyes of the household, she built herself a little hut, like a hermitage. Her brother Ferdinand helped her to make it. In the wall she built a little altar, and on it placed a cross, which she cut out of thick paper. It was higher and broader than herself. Thither she brought all the holy pictures she could ever find. She decked the altar with flowers from the garden.

Here, to this garden chapel, she often came. When the sun rose, it's first walk was to this dear little cell, and she would remain there, working and praying, sometimes the whole day long. If any one wanted her for anything, and wished to seek her, the people in the house would merely say, "If you wish to find Rosa, you have only to go into the garden."

Once she had been praying, and stayed in the garden till late in the evening. It was already dark. She was afraid of ghosts, having inherited this fear from her mother. Now, it so fell out, that on this evening, her mother wished to seek her, but she dared not go alone through the dark garden. So the father went with her. When Rosa saw her parents coming, she went at once to meet them, and walked back with them into the house. On the way this thought came to her: "See how my mother goes through the garden without fear, because my father goes with her. And shall I be afraid of the terrors of the night, when I have God, my Lord, not only at my side, but in my very heart?"

From this time forth, she lost all fear and anxiety, in the hours of the night, or in lonely, dark places.

Yet dearer to her than this cell in the garden-wall, was the cell in which Christ the Lord dwells upon earth—the holy tabernacle in the church. Often and often she would go there to visit our Saviour. She had chosen, once for all, a certain little place in the church, where she always went, and where she prayed. It was just opposite the high altar. If the Blessed Sacrament were exposed in any church, there she would go to pay her devotions.

After her Holy Communion the child expressed a great longing. In answer to her wishes, and on account of her innocence and modesty, her confessor allowed her to approach the Holy Table twice a week. She prepared herself most worthily for Communion, by every time first going to Confession. For that, also, was she also rewarded with the most extraordinary graces. Her confessor once asked her how she felt after receiving the holy Body of the Lord. She gave this answer: "It seems to me as if the sun had risen in my heart. For, as the sun in the firmament, by its brightness and warmth, maketh the whole face of nature glad, bringing the plants to growth and maturity, ripening the fruits, adorning the mountains and the valleys, calling forth the sweet song of the birds, and with silver and golden rays, lighting up all things—so worketh Christ's holy presence in the depths of my soul."

LOVE OF PARENTS. The parents of the good Rosa were not rich. It therefore came hard to them to support and bring up the eleven children which God had given to them. Rosa took their poverty very much to heart, and her filial love drove her to seek work, in order to help them as well as she could. Often and often, she would stay up working till midnight, so that her parents might suffer no want. In the garden, she laid out some little beds, and planted flowers in them, and made the flowers into nosegays, and then sent the maid-servant with them to the market to sell. The profit she brought to her mother. A priest once asked her of what use her poor

little flower-trade could be to her parents. She smiled and said: "It is of little use, truly; but the Saviour knows well how to increase the gain."

Whenever her parents were ill, she would put all other things aside, and nurse them day and night; watching by their bedside, attending to their smallest wants with anxious fidelity, and praying for them to God.

Indeed, her obedience to her parents was wonderful. She would never drink without leave from her mother; and when, at times, her mother, somewhat crossly, would forbid her to drink, the poor child would suffer a burning thirst for many days.

When she wished to take from the cupboard what she wanted for her work, she would always ask permission first. Her mother once said to her, "Why do you always ask for permission? The cupboard is not locked." Rosa answered, "My work does not bring in much, but I should like to increase the small gain by the merit of obedience."

Rosa had learnt how to embroider beautiful flowers. To put her obedience to the test, her mother once ordered her to make the flowers upon a cushion. Rosa did it at once, without giving it a thought. When the silk roses were made, the mother pretended that she was annoyed, and said to Rosa, "These are lovely flowers—these are! What have you gone and done? It seems to me you have been asleep over your work!" Then the child said quite calmly, "I was afraid it would be no good, my doing what you ordered me; but I did it because you willed it. If it is your wish, I will undo the embroidery again; and I will begin afresh, if it shall please you." But the high esteem and love, which Rosa felt for her parents, shone brightest in the patience with which she bore their fault.

Her grandmother Isabella, after whom, in baptism, Rosa had been called, could not bear that the child's mother should have taken her name from her, and given her another name instead. So she continued to call the child Isabella. And now, when the little one answered to this name, she was beaten by her mother; and when she answered to the call of "Rosa," the child got the rod from her grandmother. But she took it all without a word.

Rosa was, by nature, gentle and quiet. Her mother, on the contrary, was rough and violent, and so she was displeased with Rosa's reserve, and with her devotion, her solitude, and her silence. She often blamed the good child, often abused and insulted her; and even when she was a grown up girl, she would beat her with the rod, or with a tough stick. She did this, for example, when Rosa cut off her hair, so that no one should be tempted by it.

As the mother ill-treated her, so did her brothers and sisters, and even the servants of the house. They called her "a hypocrite and a cheat." But the dear child let this pass quietly by; it did, indeed, give her pain, but the thought of what her Saviour had suffered for her gave her the strength to maintain this heavenly patience.

Rosa did not live long. She died at the age of thirty-two, and was canonized in the year 1671. She was the first saint out of the whole of South America, and is the patron of Peru.

Now you have heard of many pious practices in the life of St. Rosa. Which of these will you take up to-day? Will you, like her, carefully avoid every lie? Or will you obey your parents, just as the word, without first asking, "Why?" Or will you resolve to do some other good?

THE ANGELUS.

We cut from an exchange the following, written by Father Mahoney, a priest of Minnesota: "I know nothing that saddens me more than to return to our country after having been a little while in Belgium or Tyrol. There, the poor people seem so wonderfully to live in the presence of God. If you were to go through a Tyrolean village at 6 o'clock in the evening you would hear from every cottage a hum like that of a hive of bees, every one, father and mother and children and servants, saying their prayers. It is much the same at noon, only then many of the people are out of doors in the field or in their gardens. The church bell rings at 12, and the mothers put down their scythes and take off their caps and fold their hands in prayer for about a minute, and then go on with their work. One market day at Innsbruck I was dining, and there was a party of farmers at another table having their dinner. The church bell rung at 12. They began to rise up, and standing reverently, the oldest man in the party began the prayers and the rest responded. And the women shopping were standing still in the market, and those at the booths selling stock also with folded hands, and the men had their hats off, and instead of the buzz of bargaining rose the murmur of the prayer from all that great throng."

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