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# THE MAKING OF A SAINT.



O the Sacred College of Cardinals has refused to canonize Joan of Arc. This is the last news from Rome. What, then, is the process established by Rome for canonization? In other words, how are saints made?

You will remember that one of the first Popes after St. Peter, either St. Pius I., or St. Clement, collected the names of the valiant martyrs of the early faith and had them inscribed on Dptychs, so-called, or a Canon to be read at each assembly of the Christians. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, too, was offered on the spot where the martyr fell, or, if the sanctified body was brought to another resting-place the altar was erected over these precious relics, consecrated by the shedding of blood in defence of faith, for "martyr" means simply "a witness."

Such public homage, always subject to the approval of the Bishop, was the first and simplest form of canonization, yet contained all the essentials of the present most exalted honors. It was, however, local, and each church, or, as we now say, diocese, following Rome, by law or by example, was expected to defend and honor its own privileged ones. Naturally some of those valiant heroes of God were more illustrious than others, the Apostles always holding the first rank. In one case it was social condition, as St. Justin: in another it was youth age gave distinction, as for the venerable Polycarp of Smyrna; special dignity of a bishop always won respect, and many bishops were martyrs; at times a more striking profession of faith merited canonization, as in St. Ignatius of Antioch. In these and similar cases the honors were not local only, but the name, deeds and virtues of the saint were transmitted from one church to another by the Bishop. Thus, little by little, was established the long roll of honor, and when the Church walked forth from the catacombs and secret places at the end of 300 years of struggle, the glorious record of her heroes and heroines were shown to an admiring, if conquered, Pagan world; and were handed down as the illustrious "canonized faithful," never to be forgotten. Prosperity and success, however, always bring trouble, and the ambition to secure these almost divine honors was sure to stir some unruly souls. Who was to receive them? By what tests would claims be allowed? Within what limits must the homage be maintained?

Heretics likewise rose up in that age of triumph and claimed saintly martyrs in defence of their tenets; how was a just discrimination to be made so as not to give false honors or honors to false witnesses! Moreover, cities and nations, eager to show forth their faith and perseverance, were anxious to claim extraordinary suffering and endurance in their fallen defenders of the faith. There were times, too, when, as our Lord had predicted, men proud in their own conceits broke the unity of the Church. Ought the unconscious witnesses on both sides to be sharers in these ecclesiastical titles and homage? Rulers, oftentimes, set themselves up against the very Pope of Rome, and one, to curry favor in hope of powerful support, dared to canonize the Emperor Charlemagne. There was need, then, for set distinctions. In the first place miracles must be shown as a proof of power with God. Miracles, therefore, became, by custom or unwritten law, necessary to distinguish the genuine martyrs of God from the false claimants; hence miracles must be proven before the Church would bestow the crown. Given a miracle, a martyr death was not indispensable to sainthood. The virgin mother, though she did not lay down her life in sacrifice of blood, was nevertheless gloriously crowned and canonized queen of martyrs and queen of all saints. Holiness, consecration, the persevering practice of virtue in an heroic degree, a consuming, a wearing out of one's God-given faculties of mind, heart and body in the love of God and one's neighbor—not only drew applause from the world but challenged the admiration and sanction of the Church. Indeed, so true was this that the great Bishop, doctor and apostle of Spain, St. Isidore of Seville, openly

proclaimed such souls "martyrs" because their breath and pulse-beat was a new act of faith in God, an outpouring of the love of God, the burning in their hearts of a new manifestation of the grace of God. Thus, then, St. Chrysostom of Antioch and Constantinople, who dared be a bishop on the apostolic model, even if he lost his see thereby, was declared the "light of faith," the "herald" of the gospel, a "saint" and "confessor" to be honored in the calendar of the Church and at her altars. Quite similar, too, was the case of St. Jerome, who exhausted his body with penance, while creating homes and nurseries of young ascetics at Bethlehem and Rome. There came forward also a species of martyrdom hitherto unknown. That was the sacrifice of paternity—and, in woman, maternity—that the mind and heart and body might be consumed wholly in bringing forth spiritual fruits in children unnumbered. These were the "army of virgins."

Quietly, then, and beautifully did the Church crown her virgin queen, apostles, martyrs, bishops, confessors, doctors and holy women, taking them from every rank in life; from the Pontiff's chair, the priest's sanctuary, the monk's solitude, the virgin's cell, from the humble cottage and the public forum; from tribunals of justice, from queen's canopy and emperor's throne.

The popular voice, then, controlled or approved by the Bishop of the diocese or bishops of a province was the determining authority; martyrdom, faith, sanctity, proven by deed and attested by miracles, were the only means by which the crown could be won. The distinction of titles was unknown and all were saints, the degree of homage to be paid unfixed, though nearly alike for all; the exact laws of judging each one's cause unwritten, often not even settled, except by that unerring intuition believed to come from the divine guidance to authorities.

But highest privileges of the Church may be abused, and so it happened in this power and process of crowning the saints. In the twelfth century the honors of a saint were decreed to a false claimant, and Pope Alexander III., in 1170, issued a decree that "no public homage to any person, as a saint, was to be given without the previous authority of the Roman Church." This was the beginning of that strict, judicial process of canonization which was gradually perfected during nearly five hundred years, and has now for one hundred and fifty years remained the most exact and severe, judicial test in the whole world.

Was this a new law, or only the promulgation of an old right? Was it to include all public homage, whether local in diocese, city or convent, or was it only to apply to that world-wide homage given to saints? The Holy See did not explicitly say, and though here and there a few cases of Episcopal sanction alone for local saints were perhaps tolerated, the purpose and spirit were made forever clear and irrevocable by Pope Urban VIII., in 1634, when he decreed "that all things pertaining to the public homage of the blessed or saints, were entirely reserved to the Apostolic See." Such has been the practice of the Church ever since.

Now watch these principles in action. The "servant" is put on trial, the court opens—a court composed of Cardinals. Interested witnesses are absent, for the tomb must have closed over the silent dead for many a long year, before even the first advances are made. The spell of temporary enthusiasm or popular excitement is not allowed to sway the mind of the church. Was the dead servant regarded as "holy" in the highest meaning of that word by those best placed to discern? If this be judiciously proved then the first decree is signed, and the title "Venerable Servant of God" is granted. No public veneration follows this title, and any premature homage might render void the whole cause. Years often elapse, while tests, accurate and severe, are applied. "Was the doctrine sound?" is the next proposition, and no other aspect is allowed to cloud the issue. There is one, styled the "Promoter of Faith," whose duty, under oath, is to find every possible flaw in evidence, every false or weak point in the "servant's" cause, for he is the guardian of the interests of the Church, and must not allow her honors to be given to any unworthy soul. If this question or doubt, as it is canonically called, be decided unfavorably, delay—perhaps failure—is inevitable. If it be a favorable decision, years again elapse, while the virtues of the "servant" are examined. Faith, hope and charity, one at least in a supreme degree must be shown, hence making the others certain; then the special gifts of the Holy Ghost; then the cardinal or moral virtues, one after the other, must be manifest as clearly ad-

orning the life of the candidate, not however, all in an equal or heroic manner, for that would be impossible. Time again is allowed for mature judgments.

The miracles (at least two) wrought by the "servant's" intercession during his life or after his death, must now be proved, and the special witnesses, according to the nature of the alleged miracles, are subject to tests of every kind. If that ordeal be passed successfully, then the cause is presented to the Holy Father. Prayer, often long continued and shared by all the friends of the holy servant, is the last act in the trial, and the Pope, if all seems favorable at last signs the decree, changing the title "venerable" into "blessed" servant of God. This is called "beatification," and permits public homage, beautiful, though restricted, to the newly "beatified." A festival day in the yearly calendar is fixed for the "blessed." Indulgences are granted in his honor. His pictures, not with the "crown of glory," but only divided rays of light upon his head, are unveiled for the veneration and prayers of the faithful. An office in the breviary and a Mass are frequently permitted. All these honors are, however, restricted to a locality, one city, diocese, perhaps one nation, or to one religious community, which has espoused the cause or had the "blessed servant" among its members.

For a long time the decree of "beatification" was not attended with any solemn ceremony at Rome, and the first solemnity, model of all future ones, was paid to St. Francis of Sales, when he was proclaimed "blessed" in the Vatican basilica on Jan. 8, 1662. This high privilege had been paid to many and now is given to all the "blessed" servants, the Holy Father thus inaugurating the devotion to the newly crowned, and then permitting a solemn triduum in all the special places where the honors are to be allowed or may be mandatory. Sometimes this title and homage is final; in most instances it is only the preparatory act to the solemn and definitive, sublimed coronation, called the Canonization of a Saint. Years must again roll onward. The trial is continued. There must not be, necessarily, any new tests for doctrine or virtues; but new miracles, at least two, must be proven, wrought by the blessed one since this title and public homage were granted. Prayer and public testimony of the people's reverence must be assured; then the Pope, placing himself under the guidance of all the saints in heaven, is ready to decree, to define, to command the highest possible homage and praise by giving the title of "saint" during his life on earth, and is now a "saint" gloriously reigning in heaven. The honors then conferred in the Vatican basilica are superb. The rays of light about the head of the "blessed" give way to a "diadem of glory;" the special devotion formerly permitted, is now obligatory, and all restrictions of place or time removed, while the name, statue, relics and praise of the new saint have a right in every Catholic Church and every Catholic home.

One example will perhaps best illustrate the whole process—St. John Baptist de la Salle, who was canonized only two years ago, died on April 7, 1719. His institute and rule was approved in 1725. One hundred years and more of toil and trials on the part of his disciples elapsed, when, in 1835, the process of canonizing the holy founder was opened, and five years later, in 1840, he was proclaimed venerable. His doctrines were examined during twelve years and pronounced sound and Catholic on Jan. 10, 1852. Twenty years more of careful inspection of his life, and his virtues were declared "heroic" in 1873. Another long discussion of the miracles wrought through his intercession, and fourteen years later, those signs of holiness and power with God were bestowed upon him in 1888; hence the title "blessed" was bestowed in 1888. Twelve years more passed away in prayer and discussion of new miracles, and only in 1900, after a judicial process covering sixty-five years, during the reign of three Popes and just one hundred and eighty-one years after his death, fearless champion of Catholic education for boys, St. John Baptist de la Salle, founder of the Brothers of the Christian schools.

The Church herself, in her briefs of canonization, tells us the whole story when she declares canonization to be "for the honor of the Most Holy Trinity, the exaltation of Catholic faith, and increase of Christian religion." It is also clear, says the Catholic Church, that such honors, rightly viewed, must bring an increase of faith in the Christian religion. "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church," cried an early apologist. Canonization, then, is not only to make us admire the

greatness of the saints, but is also a part of the Church's moral system, in placing models before our minds to inspire imitation of their works. Not indeed the singular and marvelous gifts of the saint—raptures, visions, power over demons, power of prophecy, and bodily translation, but preferably the beautiful, quiet acts of Christian virtue that stand forth, often in an heroic degree, at every stage of the saint's life. It is to give sermons, not in stones, but in flesh and blood, heart and mind like unto our own.—Arthur W. Brayley, in Boston Transcript.

## AUTHOR OF IRISH PEDIGREES DEAD.

THE death of the well known author of "Irish Pedigrees" and other works—Mr. John O'Hart—is announced. It occurred on the 7th inst. at his residence, Vernon Avenue, Clontarf. Mr. O'Hart was a native of Mayo, and was originally intended for the Church, but the death of an elder brother, a priest of his native diocese, and other circumstances altered his career, and he became a National Teacher. Deceased who was advanced in years, was an Associate in Arts of the Queen's University, a Fellow of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland, and a member of the Harleian Society of London. In 1875 he published his "Irish Pedigrees," a work which is well known. For its compilation he must have read extensively, and he himself acknowledges over a dozen authorities to whom he was indebted. It reached a fifth edition in 1892, and had had obtained a very extensive circulation in the United States.

## APPRECIATE YOUR PRIESTS.

"A Priest is not an angel," said a priest, at the close of a sermon to a large congregation recently. He is only a man; he is human. He has the faults of human nature, but his life is given to you. His hand is the anointed hand which gives you the sacraments. Respect your priest. Be proud of them. If they have faults, leave their faults to God. "That," says an amiable and thoughtful correspondent, "is just what so many Catholic people do not do. Some people are so constituted, that, as George Eliot has said, they constantly fix their eyes upon the spots upon the sun and not upon its glorious radiance. We are all apt to take the self-sacrifice and willing service of the priest in much the same unthinking, ungrateful, gratuitous way as that in which we accept light and air. Possibly it is in consequence of this airy appropriation, as a natural heritage, of the services of the priest, that we are so free with our criticism and so stingy with our gratitude. It should be vice versa. When sickness assails us and death faces us, the priest is the only one upon whom we can call, knowing that the call will be obeyed. Other friends may fail us; the priest never fails us. His telephone is never spiked. No matter how cold the night or late the hour at which the urgent ring came, it is answered. Truly, indeed, we ought to respect our priests. The Order of Melchisedech, with the wonderful power which it confers, carries with it the blue ribbon of all earthly dignities, but it carries with it also a great power of human loneliness. When he dons the garb of his supernatural brightness, the priest is shut out by a wall of separateness from the fair garden of human love. He must go alone and lonely, and practically homeless through the world. The life of the priest affords the highest ideal that the world holds to-day of the Christian charity embodied in the primary commandment of the Postivist school: "Love for others." Altruism can go no further. In common gratitude the least that Catholics can give to their priest is profound respect and wide indulgence, instead of cold, non-appreciation and flippant criticism."

## TEMPERANCE NOTES.

A magistrate of New York city—C. W. Mead—is reported to have stated in a recent interview:—"I am not a 'temperance crank,' but after my many years' experience as magistrate in the New York police courts, I give it as my opinion that liquor is the greatest curse of mankind. "There are seven police courts in the borough of Manhattan. "Take run away, and I am certain that two courts will be sufficient to do all the work. "With no liquor there would be no wife-beating, and no cruelty to little children. "Get to the bottom of these fiendish offenses, and you will find the black bottle almost every time. Every ill-used wife who comes before me—almost without exception—tells me that her husband is all right, that he is kind to his children, that he brings his money home until he begins to drink. Then everything is changed. "This statement may startle you:— "I have passed judgment upon thousands of wife-beaters. "This is equivalent to saying that I have passed judgment upon thousands of whiskey bottles, for from my knowledge of human nature I know that it is liquor that is the wife-beater, and not the man. It would amaze you to know the number of men whom I commit to Blackwell's Island eight times a year. "The purpose of this article is to make you moderate drinkers think. Do not be offended when I intimate that you, as a moderate drinker, would ever think of beating your wife, or kicking your little baby across the room. You are horrified at this thought, of course. "But every wife-beater who ever came before me was at one time a 'moderate drinker.' "Think this over. It may prevent you from becoming a drunkard. "It is these wife-beating cases that bring home to me every day this awful curse of liquor. The history of one case is the history of all. The wife is usually the complainant. Her brute of a husband is sent to jail. But if he is a brute, he is also the bread-winner for his wife and children, and the pity of it is there are usually many of the latter. So in nine cases out of ten she is back in court within a week to withdraw the complaint, or with the necessary bail. And it often happens that the bondsmen she brings with her is the saloonkeeper who sold her husband the liquor that made him beat his wife. "There is a lesson in all this to the man who is the moderate drinker now."

## Catholic Indians and The Sign of the Cross.

A writer in the "New Century" recalls the following story told by Colonel Dallas, of the regular army: Once, accompanied by two other officers, he was making a trip on horseback through a wild and lonely section of the Rocky Mountain region. The Indians were restless and in some places hostile, and the journey was not unattended with danger, although they had taken no escort along. One day they encountered on the trail a band of mounted Indians, armed with rifles held ready for action. As they met both parties halted. The customary "How! Co-la!" of the friendly Indians was not uttered and their stern and stolid faces showed no sign of amity. The officers, brave as they undoubtedly were, felt a shiver of dread at this untoward meeting. Colonel Dallas, however, noticed that most of the Indians wore scapulars and some crosses, and turning to his two companions he smilingly said: "Stay here and observe the result of what I do." Then riding forward until within a few paces of the band he took off his hat and reverently made the sign of the cross. The change that came over the demeanor of the Indians was sudden and startling. Their faces relaxed into a smile and with friendly cries, they surrounded him, each eager to shake his hand, for they found in that sign a white brother in the faith. They were Nez Perces, and all devoted Catholics. It was some time before his companions, the two other officers, could understand the magic that had effected such a transformation, but it was a lesson to them of the power of the Cross that they probably never forgot.

Up to July 25, President Loubet, of France, had received not less than 233,000 letters protesting against the expulsion of the religious orders.

## CATHOLICITY IN CEYLON.

A non-Catholic paper of Ceylon (the Independent) noting the fact that of the 350,000 Christians of the island 287,000 are Catholics, and referring to the zeal of the Catholic clergy, says that "but for them Christian teaching and Christian ministrations would be as good as unknown, more especially in the interior parts of the country."—New York Freeman's Journal.

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