

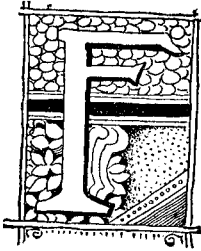
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MONTMARTRE.



FROM the midst of one of the suburbs of Paris, rises a lofty eminence whose sandy summit is crowned by a monumental church. This elevation is Montmartre, the Mount of Martyrs. The imposing edifice is the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, the votive temple of penitent France.

Reader, ascend the Mount of Martyrs. Enter the temple of the Sacred Heart. The church is ablaze with lighted tapers, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed upon the altar, and a throng of people bow the head in silent adoration. Be the day, be the hour what it may, the scene is always the same. What means this forest of burning tapers? This never lessening throng of worshippers? This perpetual adoration of the Eucharistic God? To find the explanation we must turn back the pages of history to the end of the 17th century.

In 1689, Our Lord appeared to Blessed Margaret Mary, a Visitation Nun, and revealed to her the longings of His divine heart. He wished to establish on earth the universal reign of the Sacred Heart, and to France He desired to confide the accomplishment of this glorious mission, but on condition that she erect a temple wherein should take place the solemn consecration of the whole land. To Louis XIV, who then occupied the throne of France, this message was addressed. The *Great King*, however, was engrossed in his schemes of conquest and dreams of worldly glory, and so heard not the appeal of the Sacred Heart. Louis XV, absorbed in idle pleasures, made no move towards

accomplishing the divine request. In the days of his imprisonment, the unfortunate Louis XVI remembered the message to France, and vowed to consecrate himself and his kingdom to the Sacred Heart, should it please the Divine Will to deliver him from his perilous situation. It was too late. He left his prison only to ascend the scaffold. When the storm had exhausted its fury over the land, many looked to their sovereign for the fulfillment of the vow of the royal prisoner of the revolution, but they looked in vain, for the new king was Louis XVIII, and "he had read Voltaire." For nearly two centuries, then, the rulers of France had done nothing to further the mission entrusted to them. Yet in the hearts of the people the words of Our Lord were deeply engraven and at times of danger and distress they recalled with hope and joy the message delivered to Blessed Margaret Mary. Hence it was, that amidst the disasters of 1870, the feeling gradually spread that France must find a remedy for her evils in the Sacred Heart, and that the time had at length arrived for the erection of the temple and the formal pronouncement of the National Vow. This religious movement was at first directed by a few pious laymen, who soon recognized the necessity of having a bishop at their head. They addressed themselves accordingly to Mgr. Guibert of Tours. Archbishop Guibert, however, did not see his way clear to the acceptance of such a charge, in view of his engagement in an important enterprise within his own diocese, and in face of the general impoverishment of the country at that unhappy period. The promoters of the National Vow then applied to several other bishops, but all to no purpose. Still they