

## DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

There is a grand likeness between the Feast of Corpus Christi and that of the Sacred Heart, both being eminently commemorative of Christ's wonderful love for man. There is, to, a mysterious tie which seems to bind these two feasts to that of the Holy Trinity, for in each of the three the Holy Spirit seems to be initiating us more and more deeply into the mysteries of that divine faith which prepares us for the clear vision of heaven. In our articles on the two first Feasts of this series we have spoken of the mysteries therein commemorated, so now we have to do only with the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

The universal celebration of the Feast itself does not date back to the early ages of the Church, in fact as *universal*, it only dates back to our own century, but the office of the Feast was compiled in A. D. 1670, and from that time was used in certain religious orders and seminaries, etc. In A. D. 1765 Clement XIII., the reigning Pope, promulgated a papal decree in favour of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and approved the Mass and office, but he did not place it in the calendar. The likeness existing between the Feast of Corpus Christi and that of the Sacred Heart is still further increased by the establishment of the two Feasts having been alike accomplished through the instrumentality of a humble nun. We have already spoken of St. Juliana of Cornillon and we will now speak of the Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, a nun of the Order of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial in France. This humble and retiring nun received from our Lord Himself the mission of working for the establishment of a special Feast in honour of His loving Heart, and whilst accomplishing this mission she met with all the difficulties and contradictions which seem always to accompany similar undertakings. Even her own Sisters in religion treated the Saint as a visionary, and it was only after ten years of patient and humble efforts to surmount the apparently insuperable obstacles she met with, that she had the consolation of seeing the community of Paray-le-Monial kneeling before a representation of the Sacred Heart on the very day (Friday after the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament) which our Lord Himself had chosen as the one on which He desired the Feast to be kept.

After this humble beginning there was a long series of contradictions and trials to be passed through by the holy nun and also by those, the other devout persons, to whom God intrusted the fulfillment of His mission. It would take us too long were we even to glance at all the adverse circumstances that delayed the final establishment of the Feast, but in A. D. 1856 our late Pontiff Pius IX., of glorious and saintly memory, promulgated the decree which gave the Feast its present place in our calendar and ordered its observance throughout the universal Church. The Mass and office of the Feast had already been composed in A. D. 1670 by the Venerable Jean Eudes, a fervent apostle of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, who in A. D. 1664 had founded a Church at Caen, Normandy, dedicated to the Sacred Heart. Although there is so much similarity between the Feast of Corpus Christi and that of the Sacred Heart, yet the objects of the devotions are not the same. In the former Feast the special object of devotion is the Body of Our Lord and under sacramental species, in the latter the special object is the adorable Heart of our Saviour, burning with love for men. Both are feasts commemorating our Saviour's love for us; in the one it is His absolute love for men, shown by his giving us, until the end of time, His Body as food; in the other it is His suffering love, so forgotten and abused, of which the material object is the Heart of flesh beating in the breast of the Man-God, hypostatically united to the Divine Word.

Though the feast of the Sacred Heart has not long been universally established, the devotion to that Heart is of ancient date. Its first apostle was St. John the Evangelist who, the Bible tells us, was allowed by our Saviour during the Last Supper to lean on His Master's breast. In every way St. John showed how eminently he was the apostle of love, and surely his naturally great love must have been supernaturally increased by his near contact with that Heart which so loved men. Great indeed must have been his abounding love, since Jesus, who loved His Mother, our dear Lady, with an unsurpassable love, commended her, when dying, to the care and love of His disciple. St. John then may be looked on as the first lover of the Sacred Heart.

It would take us too long were we to mention all the Fathers, Doctors and Saints of the Church who have spoken of the devotion to the Wound which was made in our Saviour's side when His Heart was pierced by the soldier's lance, but we will proceed to speak of the time when that devotion took its present form.

It was in A. D. 1281 at the Convent of Eisleben, in Saxony, that the divine Spouse revealed to St. Gertrude His desire that His Heart should be specially honoured, and He vouchsafed to show her the inmost workings and desires of that divine Heart, which had so large a share in the economy of the divine glory and the sanctification of souls. Wonderful things did our Lord make known to St. Gertrude and to St. Mechtilde, her companion, and wonderfully well have the two saints set forth the mysteries revealed to them, and though no mission was committed to them to ask for the institution of a Feast in honour of the Sacred Heart, yet St. Gertrude predicted that the day would come when that Feast should be universally established. The Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, as we have seen, was the human instrument chosen for this great work, and now in this busy nineteenth century the Feast of the Sacred Heart is celebrated in every part of the Catholic world, and, together with the devotion to that Heart, is instrumental in inflaming "hearts that had grown cold" with a burning and practical love of the Saviour whose Heart is afire and consumed with love for ungrateful man.

G. M. WARD.

## MONTREAL GOSSIP.

"It is what one must expect in a progressive city," said a Montreal *Mark Tapley*, as he emerged from a shower of lime dust the other day in St. James Street, wearing all the outward appearance of a "whited sepulchre." Progress is all very well, but the idea suggests itself that a still higher development of civilization would provide hose to play upon plaster walls in course of dissection, and wooden platforms around the barricaded places on the pavement, so that one need not be perpetually diving under horses' heads, or flying from one side of the street to the other in the vain hope of reaching one's destination without being choked, bespattered or tripped up. The city is literally torn up in all directions—a state of things possibly progressive, but certainly not "jolly."

From the heat and dust and discomfort of St. James Street it is pleasant to turn to the cool white tent in the *Place d'Armes*, where *La Grande Kermesse* is in full swing. It seems to your correspondent that no design for a bazaar could be more beautiful than this one—introduced in Montreal by Madame Thibeaudeau some years ago. The tent, which is in the form of a Maltese cross, is divided into fourteen different departments—all exquisitely furnished according to their various lines of business. The decorations designed by M. Raymond Beullac are, it goes without saying, in perfect taste. The six national tables are draped with the emblems and colours of the various countries which they represent. Upon entering the tent one is struck by the soft mellow light which serves to enhance the beauty of Montreal's fair daughters—who look perfectly irresistible in their simple black dresses, with the muslin cap, fichu, cuffs, apron and sleeve badge which compose the *toilette* of the ambulance nurses, whom they, for the time being, personate. Your papers have doubtless given you many verbal photographs of the affair, so I shall not attempt one; besides, no description can give an idea of the Kermesse. It is unique and lovely, and bids fair to be successful as well, although, while I write, a violent squall accompanied with heavy rain and hail is raging, and may do a little mischief to the beautiful white tents with their precious stock-in-trade.

Various rumours were afloat regarding the opening of the fair—we were promised a visit from our popular Lieutenant-Governor, who was to give the inaugural address, then it was to be the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier; however, both these gentlemen were unavoidably prevented from being present, and the Kermesse was formally opened on Monday at three o'clock by Mr Justice Church.

The proceeds of the first day's sale were \$2000, including a cheque for \$500 sent by Hon. J. A. Chapleau.