

Thereupon the other altar-boys hastened out to the sanctuary ; and they, too, perceived the human countenance which none but the pastor had noticed during the Holy Sacrifice. In the meanwhile most of the congregation had left the church. The pastor sent for a number of Sisters who were still in their pews near the sanctuary ; and, without telling them what he himself had seen, asked them to look at the ostensorium. They did so, and beheld the holy face of Our Lord just as the priest and his altar-boys had done.

The news of the marvel spread like wildfire through the little town ; and within an hour, practically the whole population had betaken itself to the church. All saw the prodigy, — practical Catholics and nominal, the pious and the scoffers, fervent Christians and those who had long neglected the sacraments. In many cases, indeed, the impious appeared to see the figure even more distinctly than the devout.

Entering the sanctuary from time to time during the day, the priest perceived at each visit the same features, which at first looked a yellowish white like the face of a corpse, and later, in the afternoon, took on the coloring of a living countenance. Naturally enough the abbé desired to take a closer view of the apparition and examine more minutely into all its details. He accordingly mounted the little step-ladder ordinarily used when the ostensorium was placed above the tabernacle ; but when he reached the top he found that a black veil, like a heavy coating of ink, was spread over the glass face of the lunette, rendering it absolutely opaque, so that he could see nothing whatever.

Keeping his gaze fixed on the ostensorium as he descended, he saw the features reappearing ; but on his arresting his descent they again vanished, and not until he got off the step-ladder did he once more behold in common with the other spectators, the adorable face of Jesus Christ.

Behind the altar in Father Lecombe's church there is a sort of stairway built just for convenience in arranging flowers and other altar decorations. In the course of the day one of the parishioners glided to the rear of the altar and went up this stairway until he came to the level of