

THE URSULINES.

Interesting Sketch of the Order Founded by St. Angela.

It was in the sixteenth century that the Ursuline Order took its rise. The epoch was one peculiarly disastrous to the faith. Luther's heresy was eating its evil way into the fairest countries of Europe, spreading ruin and desolation. The torrent of corruption looked as though, in its fully gathered strength, it might one day inundate the world. Where find a barrier to stem its further progress? The question, says a writer in the *Messenger*, was a momentous one, involving the honor even of Him who had given His life-blood to save the souls of whom Satan was making an easy prey. All unknown to each other, two faithful children of the Mourning Church were just then occupied in studying the grand problem, and both succeeded in discovering the solution. Both were animated with one desire—"the great glory of God;" their end, the preservation of pure Catholic faith, the means to gain that end, the education of the young. Yet a few years, and they would give to the world the practical result of their researches in the institution of their respective orders—the Jesuits and the Ursulines.

On November 25, 1535, the year that followed the establishment of the Society of Jesus, Angela Merici and twenty-eight companions offered their vows to God in the Church of St. Afra in Brescia, and devoted themselves to the education of young girls. The decay of faith and piety had long weighed heavily on Angela's heart; she sighed for the power to check it; when she asked herself what could a feeble woman do, the answer came, clear as daylight, educate the young and little by little God's work would be done.

Each mind enlightened would be a heart converted. Each child trained to piety would impart to others the good impressions she had herself received. Thus Angela reasoned, and yet for years she hesitated in her humility to obey the voice of our Lord Himself, calling her to establish an order of women whose chief end should be the education of children of all classes.

Warned in a vision of the British Virgin Martyr, St. Ursula, not to delay, and encouraged by the words of the Saint, who promised to take the order under protection, and that it should last until the end of time, Angela at length began her divinely appointed work. The members of the "Holy Company," as it was called, first lived in their own homes. They met at their oratory for spiritual exercises and business matters. In the troublesome times in which they lived they could thus exercise a wider influence for good.

In 1540, St. Angela died. Feeling her end approach she gathered the senior Sisters round her to receive her last counsels. Happily the golden words of her "Testament" have descended to her spiritual children of all generations. In this Testament St. Angela gives an anticipated sanction to such changes of the primitive rules as might be found necessary in the development of the great work she had lived to found but not to perfect.

Four years after St. Angela's death, Pope Paul III. approved the new Institute under the title of the Company of St. Ursula. Shortly after, on receiving St. Ignatius in private audience, His Holiness said: "Father Ignatius, I have given you Sisters," and, indeed, since the foundation of the order, the Jesuit Fathers have proved themselves the Brothers and friends of the Ursulines.

St. Charles Borromeo, anxious to consolidate a work whose utility to the Church he clearly foresaw, obtained from Pope Gregory XIII. a Bull authorizing the Ursulines to live in community. The order spread rapidly; many congregations arose, those of Milan, Paris and Bordeaux being the chief.

In the seventeenth century the Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation, "the St. Teresa of New France" with a few Sisters from the house of Tours, set out for the New Dominion of Canada. The Monastery of Quebec, the first educational house founded in the New World, is a monument of her zealous labors among the wild tribes of the far West. In almost every clime, wherever Daughters of St. Angela are working for souls, obedience and self-sacrifice are the spirit of the order. To train the hearts and cultivate the minds of their pupils is the life work of the Ursulines. Not only for the years passed under the convent roof, but all through life, the children know that their Ursuline mothers are ever mindful of them, offering prayers and sacrifices to the Sacred Heart for their temporal and eternal welfare. Since St. Angela founded her society, many other institutes have arisen, the members of which devote themselves to education. It is the want of the day; yet the order which owes its birth to this blessed servant of God may never forget that she led the van. Its chief aim, therefore, must be to keep the standard of education as high as the exigencies of all times may demand. To secure this end no sacrifice can be deemed too great. Every class of society, every creed, every nationality are equally welcomed by the Ursulines, in whose numerous houses separate schools are provided where all can be taught the truths of religion and every branch of science.

The remains of St. Angela repose in the Church of St. Afra in Brescia, in a state of wonderful preservation. They are clothed in the brown habit of St. Francis, with its white cord, thus testifying to the sanctity of the lowly

Violet of Brescia. The statue of St. Angela at St. Peter's occupies the first niche on the upper row to the left of the Confession of St. Peter. It is a common tribute of love and veneration from all her children throughout the world.

TEMPERANCE NOTES.

Bad as he is, says a great saint, the devil cannot get drunk.

Many crooked lives have been shaped by means of a corkcrew.

Drunkenness will make you a pauper, an invalid, a lunatic. It will send you an empty purse, an empty wardrobe, an empty shelf. It gives you a taste for swearing, obscenity and impurity. It inclines you to choose begging for a profession rather than independence. It qualifies you to become an undutiful child, an unnatural parent, a cruel husband, or a disgusting wife. These are but a little of what drunkenness does.

Dr. A. Fick, professor of physiology in Wurtzburg, says: "The use of alcohol, even when taken in moderate quantities, has been proved to be particularly injurious in case of great physical endurance is required in cold climates. For decades, consequently, it has been a fixed rule of explorers in polar regions—a rule based on experience—not to give their crew any alcoholic drink whatever. Nansen, the now famous explorer of the northern regions, who recently traveled across Greenland on snowshoes, ascribes the success of his undertaking essentially to the fact that he and his companions did not take a drink of alcohol."

Prof. Gaulle once told the writer, as an experiment during the strain of his "Staatsexamen," that he suddenly stopped his wine and beer, and was surprised to find how much better he could work. An eminent professor in Leipzig once said that the German students could do "twice the amount of work" if they would let their beer alone. Dr. August Smith has found that moderate non-intoxicant doses of alcohol (forty to eighty cubic centimetres daily) lowered psychic ability to memorize as much as 70 per cent.—*Popular Science Monthly*.

The Rev. Dr. T. J. Conaty addressed a meeting of the United Catholic temperance societies in Worcester on Tuesday evening, April 13. He spoke of the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Washington, and commended it to the Worcester societies. The members of the society work among the men whom they know to be afflicted with a desire for drink, and endeavor by example and words to make a better man of the imbibor. The Washington society has places where any unfortunate who will try to keep away from drink is housed and fed, and many who were formerly hard drinkers are now sober, industrious men.

Not Guilty But Don't Do It Again.

Everybody has heard the "funny story" about the jury that returned the verdict of "not guilty" with a caution to the prisoner of "don't do it again." One might suppose it to be almost impossible for such a thing to actually occur, yet we find a case recently in a Dublin paper, which differs from the funny story only in the circumstance that the caution comes from the judge. The trial took place in Limerick, the prisoner being charged with having put a large stone on a railway track with the intent to upset the train, and this is how the case ended, according to the *Freeman* report:

His Lordship (the judge) having addressed the jury, they returned a verdict of not guilty.

His Lordship, addressing the prisoner, said: The next time you do this—I don't know whether any of the jury will be in the train or not—but the next time you put a stone on the railway line you will kill somebody and then you will be tried for murder."

The prisoner (interrupting)—I was crossing the country.

His Lordship—You will be tried for murder the next time. Let him be discharged, this unfortunate vagrant of a man. There have been many scandals in this country in the way of juries, but this is the greatest scandal I ever witnessed. Discharge this prisoner.

The Dublin Castle judges always call it a "jury scandal" when any one is acquitted of a charge made by the Castle police, the judicial idea being that the latter never can, or do, or could, or would make a false charge or commit a mistake. In the case cited there certainly was a "scandal," but it was perpetrated on the bench, not in the jury box. We wonder "his lordship" did not send the man to jail in spite of the verdict of "not guilty." Just as outrageous things have been done in the administration of "law" in Ireland.—*N. Y. Freeman's Journal*.

Some people are constantly troubled with pimples and boils, especially about the face and neck. The best remedy is a thorough course of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, which expels all humors through the proper channels, and so makes the skin become soft, healthy, and fair.

Mrs. S. James, Searforth, suffered for years with what is called old people's rash. She was treated by many physicians without any result. Mr. Fear, the local druggist, recommended Dr. Chase's Ointment, which relieved the irritation at once and speedily effected a permanent cure of the skin eruption. Mrs. James also says Dr. Chase's Ointment cured her of Itching Piles which she had been troubled with for years.

Tired Mothers find help in Hood's Sarsaparilla, which gives them pure blood, a good appetite and new and needed STRENGTH.

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES.

When Moses descended Mount Sinai after speaking with God face to face, his countenance shone and sent forth rays of light, which he endeavored to conceal from the people of Israel by covering his face with a veil.

In a similar manner the saints try to hide under the veil of humility their many virtues and gifts. Hence with all we know of their lives, we know very little. But there are some virtues that cannot be veiled, that transpire in their intercourse with their neighbor, that are exercised in this very intercourse; there are others still, whose powerful rays pierce the veil and shine forth clear and bright.

We have a striking instance of this in St. Francis de Sales. St. Jane de Chantal says: "With a foresight that was part of his humility, he endeavored to keep his virtues hidden from the public gaze so that no one might deem him a saint." And yet, with all his care, he was unable to conceal from the world many of his virtues; and to day he is the beloved saint of the people.

It may not be out of place to say a few words concerning one or two of his principal virtues, a consideration of which will assuredly serve to draw us to love God still more, for the virtues that adorned the Patron of the Association of Salesian Co-operators, ought always to be present to the members, whose sole desire should be to imitate him in everything.

First of all, then, St. Francis was animated by a great zeal for the salvation of souls. To give us an idea of the nature and intensity of this particular virtue, St. Jane de Chantal says: "I am of opinion that his zeal surpasses even his gentleness." We can well believe this when we consider that in all he did, St. Francis had in view to glorify God by the salvation of souls.

It was this zeal that prompted him to despise honors and riches and consecrate himself to God; it was this zeal that induced him to labor for many years amongst the Chablais, suffer their jeers and insults, and oftentimes expose his life to danger.

The words: Give me souls and take the rest, were continually on his lips; and the sight of so many men living in sin caused him to say that he would deem it his greatest happiness to die for their conversion.

Another of his favorite virtues was love for his neighbor. Passis, his servant, says: "I believe that the world has never known anyone who loved his neighbor with such perfect love as Monsignor de Sales."

It was his continual duty to be of service to his neighbor and to succor him in his spiritual and temporal wants. Sufferings, fatigues, dangers, were as nothing when it was a question of doing some little service for his fellow creatures. "It pleased God"—these are his own words—"to give me a heart that desires nothing but to love my neighbor."

Young and old, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, all, in fact, with whom he came in contact, he treated with the same kindness and gentleness. He was the friend and father of them all. If any of these had a particular attraction for him, they were the poorest of the poor, the most wretched and the ignorant. "These creatures," he said on one occasion to a friend who expostulated with him, "stand in need of some one to help them. Little services done them are great in their eyes; and, besides, it is no little service to comfort a poor soul redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ!" And in one of his words he tells us that a tender love of our fellow-creatures is one of the great and excellent gifts that Divine goodness grants to man.

But the most striking characteristic virtue of St. Francis de Sales which above all others renders him so dear to the people, is his admirable gentleness. "I believe," said Mother de Chantal, "that it is impossible to express in words the exquisite sweetness which God has infused into the soul of Francis, and which beams in his countenance and accompanies his words."

This charming trait acted like a magnet and attracted crowds to his side during his life time, and ever since, it has increased in efficacy, drawing both saint and sinner irresistibly towards him. A pious person who had spent a few moments in the company of St. Francis, thus writes: "It seems to be that he is the very type of gentleness. I could never weary in his presence."

But some one might be tempted to ask how St. Francis de Sales managed to carry this particular virtue to such perfection. The answer has been given us by the saint himself. "In order to steep my soul in mildness and sweetness towards my neighbor," he used to say, "I always look at him as if he were in the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

O! the Sacred Heart of Jesus! Here we have the fount of all virtue, the treasure trove of the saints, and if we will, our treasure trove also. We desire to love Our Divine Lord, to be all for Him; then let us nestle in His Sacred Heart, make for ourselves a home therein and study intently, its tender beatings. Let us try to make it the starting-point and terminus of our every thought, word, and deed, and be assured, dear Co-operators, that we shall daily more and more resemble our sweet Patron, St. Francis de Sales, whose sole desire was to love God.—*Salesian Bulletin*.

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THE "STABAT MATER."

I remember when a boy the effect that certain words produced on me, even before I knew their meaning, writes Frederic J. Halm in the *Catholic Mirror*. This was especially the case with the "Gloria Patri" and "et in saeculum." But what made a deeper impression on me than anything else was that hymn which is sung during the Stations of the Cross every Friday evening of the Lenten season, the "Stabat Mater." I recall how I memorized certain portions without effort, merely by hearing the choir sing it, and how I used to delight humming it to the old Gregorian tune, little caring whether I knew the meaning of the words or not. I have learned since that the poem possesses a power, grace and music peculiar to itself, and there is something in the flowing and smooth versification and constant recurrence of the rhymes which is most grateful even to the most educated ear; and I now understand why it delights so many good and pious Christians, although, like Shakespeare, they know no Little Latin.

The "Stabat Mater" was written by Jacopone da Todi—Italian for "Silly Jack." He was born of a good family in Todi, a village in the province of Umbria, in the year 1230. He graduated high with honors at the University of Bologna, taking the degree of doctor of law. He at once entered upon the practice of his profession, and although he led a dissipated life, soon became one of the most successful and wealthy young men in the province. It was then he married Vanna di Bernidino di Guidone, a beautiful, highly accomplished and most virtuous young lady in whose veins coursed the blue blood of the Ghibellines. He had not been married one year when, at the celebration of public games, on a certain festival, which both he and his wife attended, he in the capacity of one of the participants in the game, clad in rich garments, suddenly the temporary structure in which the audience was assembled fell in ruins, and most of it, including the fair Vanna, was crushed beneath the debris. Almost frenzied with grief the young husband sought his wife, whom he found bleeding and fatally injured. It was then he discovered that she wore beneath her splendid gown a shirt of hair cloth.

"It was for you," she told him, and with these words she died. Poor Jacopone! For the first time in his life he realized that he had been treading "the primrose path of dalliance, not wrecking his own rede."

Hereafter, having sold all his possessions, and given the proceeds to the poor, he wanders about his native town bareheaded, barefooted and in rags. The boys gather around and mock him. He feigned madness, in order to punish himself for his love of vain glory and pride of intellect, and he is called Jacopone—the silly one. But often when his deriders hemmed him in, he turned upon them and preached to them, admonishing them to give up their sinful ways and lead better lives. For ten years he led this kind of a life until he entered a Franciscan convent as a lesser brother.

He had hoped to find peace there, but having become involved in difficulties with the Pope he was excommunicated and imprisoned. It is pleasing, however, for Catholics to know that three years before his death he was absolved from excommunication, and died fortified by the Last Sacraments of the Church, on Christmas night, in 1306, just as the priest in the convent chapel was intoning the "Gloria in Excelsis."

It is not known just where he wrote the "Stabat Mater." It is more than likely that it was the work of years, for such masterpieces are not usually dashed off at one sitting. We have said masterpiece—for such it is as unique in its way as any of those painted by Raphael or chiselled by Angelo. "The Catholic liturgy," we are told by Ozanam, "has nothing more touching than this sad lament, whose monotonous strophes fall like tears, so sweet that there can be here recognized a sorrow wholly divine and consoled by the angels." And Ludwig Tieck says of it: "The loveliness of sorrow in the depth of pain, the smiling in tears, the child like simplicity, which touches on the brightest Heaven, had to me never before risen so bright in the soul. I had to turn away to hide my tears, especially at the place *vidit suum dulcem natum*."

It has, moreover, been illustrated by some of the greatest painters, and set to music by some of the world's leading composers. Guido Reni, Salvi Sassoferrato and Carlo Dolce each devoted a canvas to the Mater Dolorosa. Titian added two, and Murillo and Brockman each one. Lazerges devoted a canvas to the illustration of the poem which he calls the "Stabat Mater"; this is the only painting by that name which we know of. As to the musical settings, there is first of all the old Gregorian Chant tune to which the words are usually sung in our churches. Palestrina was first to set it to more elaborate music; he wrote it for double choruses, with an occasional quartet, but the words of the hymn are never repeated, consequently the work is not of any considerable length. Rossini's melodious music is beautiful in itself, but it is rather operatic in its character and but little in keeping with the spirit of the text. The

"Stabat Mater" of Anton Drovak comes nearer to this; it is one of his best creations. The concluding number is especially effective, and we are told by an eminent musical critic that "for rugged power and drastic energy it reminds us of Beethoven in one of his loftiest moods." It has also been put to music by Pergolesi, Haydn, Bellini, Neukamm and Myerbeer.

It may naturally be asked whether this was the only poem its author wrote. We are told by his biographer that he wrote a number of prose articles in which he attacked the corruption of the society in his day, and also quite a number of other hymns. But the "Stabat Mater" was his masterpiece, and it is sufficient to immortalize him.

All for the Glory of God.

It is very obvious to say that if we always knew what God wished, it would be a great help to us in serving Him. We should not surely throw ourselves into open rebellion against the express will of God. Yet practically, in by far the greatest number of our actions, we do know this; and in all of them, if we do not know what He would have us do, we know at least the motive from which He would have us act whenever we act at all. "Whatever you do whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God." Saint John tells us that God is charity. Thus in the whole of the almost infinite and complicated system in which we live God has contrived all things, quite wonderfully for these two ends, if they might not more properly be called one end than two: He has arranged everything, first, so that He may be loved; and, secondly, so as to enable us to love Him. If we may dare thus to speak of the Almighty, He seems to have no other end in view at all; and He manages things by artifices of almighty power in order to bring this about. This is His rule by which He has done everything. The hearts of His creatures are the only treasures He will condescend to accept from His own creation.—*Father Faber*.

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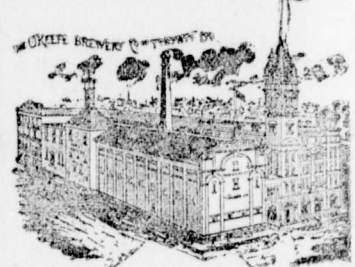
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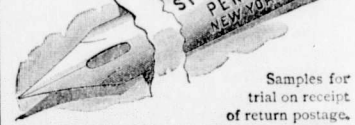
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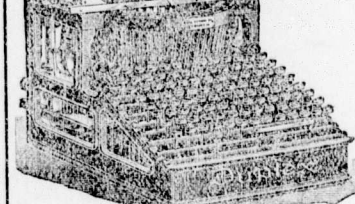
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