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THE FLOWER OF THE VOW.

Rev. Father Ryanin " A Crown for our Queen."

Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear and forget thy people and thy father's house. And the King shall greatly desire thy beauty, for He is the Lord thy God and Him they shall adore." (Psalm,

Calmly went on the days in the home

of Joachim and Auna.

It was the happiest home earth ever had. What cared the holy couple about the great noisy world without them? They never had mingled in it much; and now since Mary had come to bless the evening of their days—and the mornings and evenings of all days;—and they had a beautiful world of their own, little thought they of the great world lying without. A journey to Jerusalem, a visit to the Temple on the Feast days of the Law, —a brief stay, and a hurried return were the only things to in

terrupt the quietness of their life.

They had been childless so long that Jerusalem wondered much when it heard of Mary's birth. They would ask Joachim about his little child; but, unlike the aged, Joachim was not garrulous. He kept his own counsel. rulous. He kept his own counsel. His words were few, and his questioners saw that somehow he seemed shy of speaking about her. Two years passed away. The child had begun to speak. I wonder what was the first word lisped by the child's pure lips? Seldom did the feet of strangers or visitors pass the threshold of that see cluded home. But, betimes some would come. But whose came, went away in wonderment of her beauty; and some wonderment of her beauty; and somehow they were moved by a something in her face and ways and words difficult to divine. It was as if they had caught a glimpse of Heaven, or seen an angel in earthly form. They went their way carrying in their hearts the memory of the lovely child. And so Jerusaiem heard of her wondrous beauty and began to busy itself about the child's future. Marriage was the the child's future. Marriage was the dream of the maidens of Judea -a marriage is the dream of most of their Christian sisters. To be the mother of the Messiah,—to bring forth Him who was to be King of Kings forever and to save their nation, -this was the unspoken thought and intense desire of their hearts. And who could blame the Hebrew insidens whose souls were the shrine of a desire so pure and holy But ah! how little they and their priests knew of the ways of God Their ideal of the Messiah was carnal They looked for Him coming in the pomp of secular glory. The clearness of the meanings of prophecy had grown dim. True, they read or heard read the words, but their spiritual significations were hidden from their

Joachim belonged to one of the priest ly orders,-so around the temple courts where, after the evening sacrifice had been offered, the priests and their children congregated, there was frequent talk of Joachim's designs about his beautiful child. Is it curious or not that world talk seldom touches God's thoughts? Little did those talkers know the future of Joachim's Mary In her home there was a stillness abou her like the silence in the Holy of Holies. She spoke not often; and when she did, her voice was very low as if she were afraid to let it speak,lest it might tell some secrets hidder as yet down in her heart, -and its tones were tremulous with a sweetnes indefinable. And how she loved her holy parents! Nor was child ever loved as she was leved by them. She learned the prayers prescribed by the Law. In morning and evening times she would kneel down beside her mother, wards the heavens, and pray as none had ever prayed before. Did the angels hush their songs in heaven when the breath of her prayer as sended? Did now stranger and the words to Many are dead and gone;—but a few father's "Let light be made:" was my poor name was given into thy learning that long gone evening when my poor name was given into thy cended? Did new, strange glories, never by the hosts of heaven seen before, gleam from the face of the Allbeautiful God, as He listened to the child-prayers of His future mother? And did the Father feel a divine impatience for the coming of the hour when He was to send Gabriel, the Angel of the Th one, with His prayer to the Virgin?

Sometimes, as quietly as the sunshine, she would steal away into the garden that surrounded the house,and breathe her prayers where the were resting, -but sweeter the breath of her lips than the breath of their leaves. Ah! happy flowers that heard her prayers! Ah! blessed roses that

know, was in her soul clear as a ray or dim as a shadow? They sometimes saw the mist of tears

in her eyes, - and they wondered why. In her sleep they heard her sometimes

sign,—and they were sad.

But she often smiled and then the very light of heaven shoue upon her face. Only Joachim and Anna and the child Mary in that humble home No more?

Ah no! The Archangel of the Throne, Gabriel, hovered unseen round his ward, with ceaseless vigilance; — and hosts of other angels were with him there. That home was a very Heaven for its Queen was there. She had not won her crown as yet,but she will surely win it. Did she ever see them? If she did, she made no sign. And, meantime, her sinless soul was ascending higher and still higher in the immense sphere of

Those were still days on earth. The mystery kept its hiding-place. But those were grand days in Heaven. To the clear vision of the angels, as from the face of God, come new reve-lations of glory hour after hour in the cycles of eternity.—so to them came from the soul of Mary, day after day, new unfoldings of ineffable beauties.

And so went on the days. Did you ever see a golden cloud in the sun sky, full of water by the heavens purified, and all wrapped round with the robes of the sun? And in its waters floats the very life of the flowers of the earth. And the cloud bends low in love for the earth. And it opens its heart and the rain comes down with the warmth and the light of the sun in its every drop. And they fall on the nowers and on the trees and the humble grasses—when lo! a new life comes into them all. And though they were nearly a-dying, they brighten again and are filled with joyous, abounding life, by the beautiful baptism of Nature. in those days, Mary's soul was the golden cloud that had risen on high from the earth, robed with the rays of the Sun of Justice-and containing the very waters of life eternal. Wai awhile—and the golden cloud will open its bosom-and bend down to earth again, and out of it will come, the pure human divine drops of the mercy of

the blood of Jesus Christ. It was a long day in the ending of summer. She was never demonstra-tive—but all that day she was hovering around her parents. Her very heart seemed to be going out of her to them. A new strange expression shone on her face. And it was a day of many questions, too, about God and the Messiah. She looked as if she were going to reveal something. They remarked it wonderingly. But the day passed— and not a word. When the twilight's shadows fell around their home. Joachim and Anna and Mary entered the garden. She was holding her father's hand. They went into the garden to pray. With their faces towards the Temple they said together the evening's prayers; -and ah! how fervent were their blended voices when they besought the Ged of their fathers to remember the Promise and send the

The prayer over—then spoke the voice of the child in trembling way. Her hand was resting in her father's hand. She asked them to give their consent to her desire to dedicate herself by the vow of virginity forever to the service of God. They did not feel surprised. It was as if they had ex-pected it. Silence fell between them ust a little while. Ah! how deep and full of mystery is silence! Did the flowers listen for her father's answer? to the service of the Temple! here was listening in heaven then such as had never been before. At shrined within that silver heart! Joachim's words to Mary: "Child! let it be so" But like the Eternal Father in Creation—though swift to give his glad consent-he moved slow ly to fulfil it. He must wait awnile. He must lay the matter before the High Priest, and the priests of the Temple. Their consent was necessary. And that night a wondrous spiritual happiness filled that home. Joachim fell a dreaming about the olden words of prophecy. Anna's soul was full of joy. And the second great ecstacy after the Immaculate Conception was filling Mary's soul with rapture. And second step in the Redemption was

made, on earth-and by the feet of a little child.

who will ever know if what, she did feel, as the mother felt, still a quiet, feel, as the mother felt, still a quiet, deep pain lay on his heart shadowing the gladness that was in it for giving his Mary to God. September passed. They quietly kept the third birth-day of their child. October came and went with falling leaves and fading flowers. Closer and closer grew the bonds of tenderest human love between those three hearts as nearer and nearer drew the hour of separation. A part of our October and November formed the eighth month of the Hebrew year. In November, Joschim and Anna, accom panied by many of their kinfolks who were in amaze at Joachim's folly, went

up to Jerusalem with Mary.

And no one else? St. Germanus, the Patriarch of Constantinople, describing that journey to Jerusalem, says that hosts of unseen angels surrounded and accompanied Mary. The world may laugh at this as a fable. Let it laugh. For us are the testimonies of the saints. They presented her to Zachary, the

father of John the Baptist.

Aud before the Altar of Perfumes she silently made the vow of virginity. Did the Royal Prophet, her ancestor sing to her across the ages. "Hearken O Daughter-and consider, and incline toine ear, and forget thy people

and thy father's house, and the King shall love thee for thy beauty; for He is thy Lord and worship thou Him?" Did the singer of the song of mysti cal love, chaunt for her Presentation-Feast when he sings: "Rise up my Love, my fair one, and come away, for lo! the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land."

The vow was made. Then the temple sounded with gladsome song. Aged priests, young levites, all the assembled people Joachim and Anna swelled the canticle with their voices. Mary's lips were moving in silent

prayer. Then came the parting moment She knelt before her parents for their blessing—and then arose. She clasped her arms around their neck—first Joachim's. He was weeping tears of sorrow and of joy. And then she clasped her arms around her mother -and lingered longer in her embrace while from the eyes of Mary fell such tears as are seldom shed. They are the most tenderly human who have gone deepest into the divine. Her parents went away ; she remained the little prisoner of divine love in the Holy Temple.

Her vow was the coronation of her Immaculate Conception.

Ah! child of grace! these words I write have set my heart a-dreaming and wakened memories of far off happy days! And there are eyes, that will read my words unworthy, sure, of thee; and when they read them, they too will look from the page before them back to olden, golden days, of which they formed a part with me. Sweet St. Mary's of the Barrens in Missouri's wilds! thy children never can forget thee! Ah! well do they remember thy Presentation Feast when thou didst dedicate thyself to God The great High Altar, in that seven Altared Church was radiant every year with lights and fragranced with flowers; and the setting sun shone through the western window, the while the Litany sounded before the Benedicion. And then the names of many who yearned to be priests of Thy only Son were placed in the silver heart hanging from thy statue's neck in promise made to thee that they, like thee, would leave their fathers' house and dedicate themselves

Ah me! how many names were keeping, that 1, so unworthy, would dare to dream of weaving a crown in life unknown,—and silent,—till she

Farther from the world-nearer to God. Now began the hidden, unre vesied life of Mary in the Temple. Around it with its courts and surround. ings there was a circumference of halfa-mile. The High Priest did not live there.

He had a dwelling of his own in Jerusalem. But many priests and levites did live within its precincts. The Scriptures and many holy Doctors give us to understand, that near and around the expectant world went on just the the Temple, within the walls, dwelt same as ever—not knowing that the devout women in cells apart, separated from the men whose duty it was to pray before the gate of the Taber-nacle, to assist at the sacrifices of the leaves. Ah leapyr flowers that nearly the freet of a proper that prepared 1. Ah 'interest or year that the prepare

but faintly and vaguely heard. The world is a loud talker but a very poor thirker. It lives on words—very poor food—and on noices—very poor music. It does not understand that solitude is the home of great thoughts and aspir ations. It will not see, that ever mere human greatness makes a soli-tude for itself amid the little littleamid the little little nesses around it in order to achieve

future triumphs. But so it is. But sanctify which is the greatest greatness, even still more has need of solitude, for growth. Read the lives of the saints. Even while in perpet ual action, -and while in conflict with the world around them,—their souls were solitaries. They lived within themselves a wondrous separated life, even when in daily contact with the tumult all about them. Our Holy Church, in inner life, is as much a hermit to day, as when with cross in hand she began the pilgrimage of

Mary spent eleven years in the Temple. Meanwhile Joachim and Anna died and "went to their Fathers." She was alone,—an orphan in the world. The Temple was her only home,—and the Eternal her only Father; and the Priests of the Old Covenant became the guardians of the Mother of the Christ of the New Dispensation. Beautiful, by her sinless ness in the supernatural order, her natural beauty went on towards its perfection day by day. She was a living picture of God's beauty on earth.

Her companions loved hor, - and in their love there was a strange rever-ence for her person. When they sang together the canticles of the Lord, her pure voice sounded like an angel's.

And she was the humblest one of them all. She was the mystery of the Temple. Many ancient writers and holy Fathers tell us that in her cell,she held converse with the angels, and that they were wont to bring her food. This, will you say, is only a beautiful imagination? And why only that? Ordinary laws,—common rules are for all of the children of our race, because we are ordinary. hers was an uncommon life-and her destiny extraordinary. Canisius says that once she prolonged her prayers to the hour of midnight, when through the Temple's silence sounded the words: "Thou shalt bring forth My words: "Thou shalt bring forth My Son." And she rose and in wonder, went to her cell.

Christian imagination, glowing with the light of Faith and full of Faith' inspirations, can never conceive the superhuman facts in which her life in

the Temple was folded.

In the material world around us what innumerable beauties are lying unrevealed. We see Nature's surface but not her sanctuaries. And if what we do see fill our eyes with rapture, do we not know that all that visible beauty is a veil concealing the invis-

ible beauty beneath it. Yes-" in the world of Nature, as in Super-Nature's realms, there is that which no eye can see—nor heart con-ceive, nor human mind understand." And of every human life given to God, the same is true. We read the lives of the saints—but never know but half. And her life, the saint of saints—the Mother of the life of the Christ of the saints, of it we know only the least little part. And why? Because in her life, the greater part is above and beyond any imitation. It was a life unique, absolutely exceptional—a life that could not be lived by any one but Mary. And this is why her Temple life of eleven years has been revealed to us. It is

inimitable — and therefore gives

CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY Make a Strong Reply to Rev. J. J.

Baker. To the Editor of the St. Thomas Times :

Baker.

To the Editor of the St. Thomas Times:

Sir—In the first letter addressed to you based on the distribe indulged in by Rev. J. J. Baker on the 15th ult., we, for the express purpose of preventing him from wandering from the charge he was reported in your columns as having made against the Catho ile Church, and in order to avoid taking up too much of your space, categorically interrogated him, asked him, to leave all other points of difference saide, and simply give precise answers. In his reply of the 25rd ult., in the face of your own declaration that he was correctly reported, he positively disavowed making the oharge ascribed to him and begged the question by thumbing over, and evasively incorporating in his response, several instances of so called tyrannical suppression of alleged "religious truths." We took up his communication seriatim, and asked for direct proof in support of the specific charges he adduced. This he has omitted to furnish: nor has he attempted to supply evidence that he did not use the offens ive expressions in a sermon positively attributed to him by your reporter. He shields himself by saying "it will be interly useless for your correspondent to drag a herring across the trail in the form of many questions and exclamatory comments. A child could do that." And then launches out into another series of weak and hazy accusations. But this evasive method of Rev. Mr. Baker in not fairly and squarely meeting the issue, is a threadbare and transparent plan, resorted to only by those finding them selves in an awkward position and lacking the candor to admit it. Here is the sort of his most enlightened brethren are saying practically the same thing, and more are feeling it. I purpose, therefore, with liberal Catholics on my side, to stand by my state ment.

It is evident that here are men in the Church like Dr. Keane, Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Ireland, Dr. Zahm and Dr. Spalding in this country.

Who wants larger liberty of thought and investigation."

Comment—Well, let us see what some

for themselves on the question of "liberty of thought and investigation." We quote Dr. Zahm:

"The Church, then, does not impede the progress of science. Her influence has not been of that blighting sort that her enemies are so fond of ascribing to her. On the contrary, there is sufficient evidence of the talsity of the charge. Her standing in the scientific world to-day, represented as she is by the most brilliant minds in every department of human thought; her past history in reference to the development of science and fostering care which she has always bestowed upon those who devoted themselves to the study of nature are an irrefragable argument for the validity of the position she has ever assumed and sull maintains, respecting the revelations of the science of nature to reason and revelation."

And Cardinal Gibbons in his celebrated work, "Faith of Our Fathers," says: "I here assert the proposition, whied I hope to affirm by historical evidence, that the Catho licchurch has always been a zealous promoter of civil and religious liberty; and whenever any encroachments on these sacred rights of men were perpetrated by professing members of the Catholic faith, these wrongs, far from being sanctioned by the Church, were authority. Her doctrine is, that as man by his own free will fell from grace, so of his own free will fell from grace, so of his own free will fell from grace, so of his own free will religion and coercion are two terms that can never be reconciled." (Chapter 17, page 264.) He also uttered the following words on Oct. 3, in his own Baltimore cathedral:

"I shall endeavor to show that the Catholic religion, far from blockading the way of

can never be reconciled." (Chapter 14, psg 264.) He salso uttered the following words on Oct. 3, in his own Ballimore cathedra!

"I shall endeavor to show that the Catholic religion, far from blockading the way of science, renders the most serviceable aid in the pursuit of scientific investigation. The Catholic Church teaches nothing but what has been revealed by God or is plainly deducible from revelation. All truth comes if from God, as all light proceeds from the sun. He is the author of natural as well as of revealed truth. No truth of revelation can ever be to another. No truth of revelation can ever be to another. No truth of revelation can ever be to another. No truth of revelation can ever be to another. No truth of revelation can ever be to another. No truth of revelation can ever be to another. No truth of revelation can ever be to another with the sum of the firmarent above us. Religion and accepted the teaching.

(3) Those that felt that they could not rightly relieve belief, but who maliciously refused to do that which they knew to be right. These, last of the fourth class alone, come under the condemnation that attaches to the firmarent above us. Religion and science, like Martha, is engaged in material pursuits; religion, like Mary, is kneeling.

As for Bishop Spalding, we have already quoted his eloquent words on intellectual liberty. We leave it to your readers to judge of Mr. Baker's exercise of holy charity in hinting that such great divines mis-state the teachings of the unchangeable Catholic Church. Evidently the foregoing does not "hitch" with his curious ideas of Catholic intellectual liberty which, as Roman Catholics, they cannot enjoy."

In conclusion, Mr. Editor, we protest against Mr. Baker with an religious liberty, as witness the following:

Mr. Baker sexercise of holy charity in hinting that such great divines mis-state the teachings of the unchangeable Catholic Church. Evidently the foregoing does not "intellectual liberty which, as Roman Catholics, they cannot enjoy."

Comment—'C

ords on the searcies of boly ach great divines mis of the unchangeable to the control of the country of the searcies of boly and religious liberty.

"A finite "I am no, opposed to the country of the same of the sympany, downed a greater part." It does not a jargon of world which there seem the searcies of the country of the sames the sympany, does it? Now. W. Ta laker, we have been de greater part, because we won the regarded in thy hours and a part in the orayers;—and who knows? a despervation of the suppression of the country of the same of the sympany, downed a greater part, because we weathen to day in thy queenly crown beautiful Flower of thy Vow.

Assumation.

Assumation.

Assumation of Thy only because we weathen to day in the greater hand our clore, who, when the suppression of the suppressio

their Church were not Christians at all, but

their Church were not Christians at all, but heathens.

"The only way to avoid this conclusion is to hold that immersion is not necessary to the validity of baptism. But to hold this is to reject a doctrine which they have held for a bundred years as fundamental.

This is the dilemma in which Professor Whitsitt has placed the Baptists, and as a result of his investigation he has had to resign the presidency of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. But he has many friends in the Church and the fight goes on."

Just think of it, he had to resign the presidency of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary! And for having "stumbled upon a religious truth by accident!" And he cannot even have the consolation of "reading Masses for some nuns in a cloister."

M. Bakar—Talk about intallectual liberty.

he cannot even have the consolation of "reading Masses for some nuns in a cloister".

Mr. Baker—Talk about intellectual liberty in the Roman Church! Why, sir, your correspondent cannot read his Bible and ask himself in the light of reason and conscience what it means. He must believe against his own senses what the Church says it means. A Roman Catholic cannot accept the teachings of his little school catechism without giving away his intellectual liberty."

Comment—The following from the pen of Father Lambert, the celebrated demolisher of Robert G. Ingersoll, meets the above timeworn charges completely:

"The Church does not deny the right to search the Scriptures, but she forbids her members to read corrupt and vicious translations. That she has done and will continue to do, as the guardian of revealed truth. Nor does the Church forbid one to read the Scriptures in the light of one's conscience. She teaches and insists that every thing a man does he should do in the light of his conscience, and that under no circumstances whatever should he act against that light, for such an act is always a sin. What the Church condemns is the claim—false in itself and destructive of revelation—that private judgment on the written word is the criterion of revealed truth; in other words, that every man has the right to read the Bible and judge for himself. Even the State, actuated by common sense and experience, does not permit the citizan or subject to read the laws of the land and judge or anarchy. All laws to be living and operative must have an interpreter and administrator, and that individual subject of the law. If an interpreter is necessary in the State to give the law voice and application, it is equally necessary in religion. It is a diseased. must have an interpreter and administrator, and that individual subject of the law. If an interpreter is necessary in the State to give the law voice and application, it is equally necessary in religion. It is a disregard of this common sense principle that has produced religious chaos in the Protestant world. The Bible is a book of revealed truths, principles and laws. It is to concrete Christianity what constitutions and laws are to the State, and as the latter is not subject to private judgment, neither is the former. And as there must be a supreme court of interpretation in the secular State, there must be a supreme court of interpretation in concrete Christianity. While denying this necessity in principle, the Protestants sects recognize it in practice, for each has a central body or court before which the individual may be cited and judged, and approved or condemned. The private judgment which they concede as a right is in practice a Dead Sea apple — attractive to look at, but full of bitterness and disappointment. The individual who is attracted by a concession so flattering to his vanity and egotism is very promptly told on entering a denomination that he must believe the creed of the sect or get out. And that is precisely what the Catholic Church deals fairly with the individual, professes what she practices and practices what she professes, while the sects hold out a false promise and possess what in practice they repudiate."

Mr. Baker—"So a Roman Catholic must believe, in the face of the reading of his New Testament, that no Protestant can be saved."

Comment—Wrong again. The Catholic Church distinguishes four classes of men in this matter:

(1) Those who never heard the true doc-

