

"Where has he been moved to?" Father Charles asked in astonishment.

The old men around the ward were still, as if they, too, were bewildered. Then the nurse explained.

"Mr. Dwyer is gone," she said. "He died at 2 in the morning; a most peaceful and effortless death."

David's prayer was answered in God's own way. His eyes were at last closed to the light of the earth; but they were already opened—so was Father Charles' conviction as he knelt that morning in prayer for David's soul—to the unutterable glory of the Eternal Light.—John La Farge, S. J. in *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*.

**ON READING ALBAN BUTLER**

By Redfern Mason

Did you ever dip into Butler's "Lives of the Saints"? If you did, you must have been at once fascinated and overwhelmed—fascinated by the magnificent company whose tale is told in those portly volumes, overwhelmed by the thought of the many-sidedness of the problem which that tale unfolds. And yet the basic idea of all lives of the saints is simple enough. It is the setting forth of the struggle between the powers of darkness and light in the souls of those men and women whose death is "precious in the sight of God." These are the men and women who fought the good fight and won. Their story is of infinite diversity. Whatever the trials with which we are beset, we shall find them illustrated. Have we fallen into the quagmire of sin, the saints will show us how to extricate ourselves and, in the words of Tennyson,

"Rise on stepping stones  
Of our dead selves to better things."

It was the reading of the "Lives of the Saints" that brought about the conversion of the wounded soldier Ignatius of Loyola; St. Augustine blushed to think that tender youths had achieved a mastery over self which, willing and yet not willing, as he expresses it, he long found impossible. Sometimes a word of the Holy Scripture set them on the true way, as when St. Anthony heard Christ's counsel to sell all and give to the poor; an appeal to the mercy of Our Lord turned the vengeance of St. Gualbert into pity and won him from the world to the monastery.

Is it heroes you love? Turn to the saints. See St. Felicitas encouraging her seven children to give up life rather than deny Christ; see the tender Agnes display a fortitude beyond the force of strong men. Every saint, indeed, is a hero; but every hero is not a saint. Which is the greater, he who by sheer animal courage slays hundreds in battle, or he who, like St. Thomas of Canterbury bows his head to the murderer's axe rather than betray the rights of the Church; or, like little Tarcisius, gives up his life to protect the Blessed Host which he carried concealed in the folds of his garments?

The world may laugh, indeed, when it hears how St. Simeon Stylites spent thirty odd years on the top of a column, fasting and praying. "What a waste of a valuable life," men will exclaim. A waste, indeed, if the measure of success is the heaping up of riches or the winning of temporal honors. But God has another standard and it is by that standard that St. Simeon, St. Francis, St. Thomas of Aquin, St. Teresa and their glorious fellowship are to be judged.

If St. Thomas had chosen a worldly career, he might have risen high in the world of affairs. But he chose to perfect the intellectual armour of the Church. His inspiration was not the hope of kindly favour; he found it in the contemplation of the crucifix. "Thou hast written well of me, Thomas," said Our Lord, "what shall I give thee?" "Nothing else but Thyself," replied St. Thomas.

But a blind world misconceives the saints. It thinks of them as being so out of touch with life as ordinary folk think of it that no real sympathy between us and them is possible. Never was greater error. The saints were people "of like passions with ourselves." St. Catherine of Sienna was tortured by thoughts of impurity. She battled against them with all her might and, when, at last, the fiend was put to rout, she said to Our Lord: "Where wast Thou, Lord, all this dreadful time?" "Never nearer to Thee, daughter, than then" was the answer. "He treats you as a valiant soul," said St. Teresa to one in trouble. If we could see things in their eternal aspect, we should rather rejoice than repine when we are called upon to suffer.

Wherein does the secret of the triumph of the saints consist? That is the important question. Is it to be found in some virtue of their own, or do they win the fight in spite of a hundred frailties that forever conspire to drag the soul downward? If there is one note of sanctity which stands out in higher relief than all the rest, it is distrust of self. "St. Teresa and three ducats are good for nothing," said the great contemplative; "but God, Teresa and three ducats can do all things." If St. Paul had confided proudly in his own will-power, the demon that God gave him to buffet him would have won the day. But he trusted in Him Who can convert our weakness into strength. It was not the saints acting by their own unaided virtue

who overcame the powers of evil. They placed themselves in the hands of God; weeping, they confessed their own nothingness; weak in themselves, God was strong for them. How otherwise could St. Lawrence and St. Sebastian and a thousand others have stood the torments to which they were subjected?

So far from being of an inhuman aloofness from flesh and blood, the saints are of all people the most human. If they had been immersed in a triple wall of unsympathetic sanctity, how could they have won friend and enemy to Christ? All they did, whether it was a great thing or a small, they did to the greater glory of God, and, because they felt that even the poorest living creature was still the image of the Maker, they felt a sympathy for fallen humanity so intimate that mere philosophic philanthropy can not form an adequate idea of it. "When thou seest a poor man," said St. Francis, "thou oughtest to think of Him in whose name he cometh, to wit Christ."

Yet these humble great ones—and no proud man was ever a saint—stood in the courts of princes. St. Leo faced Attila and turned him aside from Rome; the courage of St. Genevieve saved Paris from the destroyer. St. Ambrose valiantly withstood the Empress Justina in defense of the churches of which he was the guardian. St. John Nepomuk suffered a martyr's death rather than betray secrets confided to him under seal of the confessional.

Do you want a rule of life? Imitate the saints. Their sole desire was to do the will of God. "Only he of good cheer," says St. Basil; "only work, only strive cheerfully; for nothing is lost. Every palm thou singest is recorded; every marriage duly observed is recorded; but the first crowns in record are those of virginity and purity, and thou shalt shine as an angel. But, as thou hast listened to the good things, listen without shrinking to the contrary. Every covetous deed of thine is recorded, every fleshly deed, every perjury, every theft, every murder. All these things are henceforth recorded, if thou do these after baptism: for thy former deeds are blotted out."

To tell the tale of the saints would be a task like numbering the sands of the sea. Like a gorgeous masque they pass by, fulfillers of God's will in manifold ways. Where would be the culture of today if St. Benedict's monks had not transcribed the deposits of the classic past in the scriptorium, or if St. Ignatius had not elaborated a system of education with which modern theorists feebly seek to vie? It was the monks who drove leprosy out of Europe, a Damien who grappled with it heroically in the isles of the Pacific. Doubtless I shall be told that it was the Crusaders who brought leprosy into Europe. But how then is it that there were leper hospitals in England before the first Crusade?

The saints are no opponents of progress; they have never stood in the way of culture. But their conception of progress includes the Christ ideal, and culture to them, without the illumination of the Gospel is a mental darkness compared with which the mind state of the illiterate peasant who believes in noontday light.

Their joy was to live in the continuing presence of God and the feeling that their slightest acts were done to His greater glory gave a transcendental significance to drudgery itself. The very brute creation testified to their sanctity. The fishes listened to St. Anthony; wolves forgot their wildness in the presence of St. Francis; the very birds joined in the chanting of St. Rose of Lima. Nothing seemed impossible to them; for, of themselves they did nothing, but God did all things through their instrumentality. The prayer of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus removed a mountain; the relics of St. Bonaventura, borne in procession, arrested a plague at Lyons; they raised the dead; they healed the sick; they saved their clients from violent death.

One of the open secrets of their sanctity was the serious consideration of what the world deems trifles. "Shrink from the beginnings," said St. Augustine, speaking of sin. "It is necessary to mortify one's self in things which seem trifles to us," said St. Philip Neri: "it is in that way we accustom ourselves to conquer in great combats."

The fellowship of the saints is the only true democracy. None so poor in this world's goods that he may not put on the royal robes of sanctity. No condition of intellectual eminence is imposed, only the higher eminence of holiness. Slaves have been saints; one was a beadle, another a shepherd, a third a beggar. St. Yves was a lawyer and pleaded the cause of the poor for nothing. Nor are princes and emperors denied their part in the glorious company. Every child born into the world may be a saint, if he or she will listen to God's voice and let the divine virtue operate through him. "No sinner so base that he might not have been a saint," says Cardinal Newman; "no saint so holy that he might not have been a sinner."

Would you read history through a glass that does not distort its perspective; would you see what this lowly human nature of ours is capable of under Divine guidance; would you have a lamp to guide you to the port of eternal salvation? If you would do these things, then read with loving attention, asking Almighty God to read with you, the lives of the saints.—The Monitor.

**HOW A GERMAN SOLDIER BOY DIED**

Monsignor Bickerstaffe-Drew, an English army chaplain, tells in *The Month* how a dying German soldier boy called him to receive the last sacraments.

One day the chaplain was summoned by a series of nods and beckonings to a mere boy, pathetically childish-looking, who was sitting up, the better to attract attention, in the middle of his stretcher. He was badly shot in the head, and his bandage had a queer, caricature-like resemblance to a turban. Coming down a little over one eye, it caused him to hold his head sideways, and peer up sideways in an inquisitive, alert fashion that was like a starling. There was not much of him; and what there was, was very lean.

"Kommen Sie hier," he kept calling, with volleys of smiles. "Ich wunsche sprechen zu Ihnen. Sie sind Katholisch? Ja! Pralat Ja, ja; ich verstehe."

He was full of impatience. He had been, he said, looking out for a priest, and offering all the money he had to the orderlies to bring him one. They had assured him that he would soon get one for nothing, but he had not been quite ready to believe. He thought they might only want to save themselves trouble. He said he was not quite sixteen, and he certainly looked only fifteen, —a most merry creature, though he fully realized that he was probably going to die.

"Now," he cried triumphantly, "I'm going to confess!"

And he did so, in no subdued tones, with extraordinary preparation, and with a most touching boyish simplicity and devotion. All the time he knelt up in the middle of his stretcher, his little face full of "recollection," his small, thin hands clasped, the bright black eyes tightly closed.

"Now," he said decisively, when he had been absolved,—"now that part's done. Now—anoimt me please!"

He stretched himself out flat, and eagerly turned to the priest each part that was to be anointed.

"And now," when that was finished,—"now, my Father—give me Our Lord!"

"Yes, dear little son; but I must go to a church and—"

"Well, go,—go, Father! Be quick! It wouldn't do to die till you come back."

He did not look like dying so soon; but still there might be no time to lose; and the priest went, bringing back with him more than one Host, as there were several terrible-looking cases.

When the little lad had received the Holy Viaticum, he smiled and said:

"Now it's all right. . . . Auf wiedersehen, mein Vater!" —The Monitor.

**HOMeward TREND**

**AMONG ANGLICANS**

We saw the other day, a letter from an Anglican layman in England to a Catholic priest in this country, who is laboring for the return home of the "Other Sheep." The writer will not, I am sure, object to a quotation which sets forth admirably the present feeling among Catholic-minded Anglicans. "The striking failure of Protestantism in general and of Anglicanism in particular—especially at the seat of the war—will cause all men of good will to look more and more towards the Centre of Unity. The future lies with the Catholic Church and yours is much needed sacred work. I cannot help thinking that the near future holds great developments."

A remarkable article in *The English Church Times*, from a Missionary, entitled *The Standard of Revolt*, says many things and says them well, for instance:

"I write from a corner of the mission field in which to sit still just at present is to learn the hardest lesson of renunciation yet. I write to plead we mission priests may not be forgotten 'after the war.' We expect to be forgotten a little bit just now; it is inevitable. . . . Very well, then, when you wake up at home, as never before, to the failure of ordinary Anglican religion, wake up, too, to the fact that it is that miserable failure of a religion that we are offering, all too often, to Africa, India, China and Japan. If the Church of England has been perilously near 'moderating' itself to death or to an explosion at home, it is no less near doing the same thing abroad. And the danger is even growing more vital here. We are training native ministries in that deadly 'ordinary Anglican religion'; we are offering it, on the veldt and prairie, to the young men who swarm out to the wider lands of the Empire in every year of the world's peace. And those of us who try to do otherwise, are isolated nine times out of ten, or are rebuffed and combated by the 'Churchmen' we meet who tell us (and tell our native converts) that we are disloyal and untrue. What we want is a place in the program 'after the war'; we want a say in those Public school missions, that when 'Dignified Anglicanism' is smashed, the new wine may not all be run into home bottles; and we want an organization that will help us to get for our starved flocks something like Tomlinson's little book, 'My Prayer Book,' in a native language, instead of the exact copy of

the Book of Common Prayer with which we are now almost solely provided.

"What can you expect the boys in the mines at Johannesburg to make of our arrangement of Old Testament Lessons and long Psalms, of the State prayers and our official Catechism? They are designed as if their hearers and disciples were all of the moral and mental calibre of Dean Church or Bishop Paget." God only knows why priests cannot see it! At home I believe people think we exaggerate when we write of it, but I will give an instance. When this war broke out it was thought that a native dependency, genuinely loyal and owing everything to Britain, might be taught to pray for the cause of the Allies, the more so as it lies cheek-by-jowl with a province that seethes with more rebellion than the English papers are allowed to print. So with what were we provided? At considerable expense, and by an individual effort entirely praiseworthy for its intention, with a copy of the Archbishop's Special Prayers literally translated in its entirety, I experienced despair once more at the mere sight of it. Of course, I didn't use it; I went into church and my black children of Mary said the Rosary with intention instead, and we were called Roman Catholics for our pains. Not that that matters.

"To enlarge the matter. We were told, you may remember, that the Church of England quite distinctly offered the Holy Sacrifice on behalf of the Departed, since it is written, 'We and all Thy whole Church.' Well, no one doubts it, but—good heavens! O, you Anglican priests! do your housemaids know it? And does anyone think native converts, savages and heathen yesterday, know it? Or do you think they will ever learn it so long as they are only taught it when the occasion arises, and never have it impressed upon them in every Mass they hear? Or take another instance. I dare say that the great majority of priests in the Province of South Africa honor the Mother of God. I dare say most of the bishops of the Province add the 'Hail Mary' to their private devotions. Here and there, where there are little books of devotion (usually printed by very great individual effort and expense) the words appear in the light of day. But where are the native converts to whom the Communion of Saints is a joy and a strength, who have the childlike faith of old England when they join with the whole company of heaven to pray, who look for a Madonna among the peach trees, and think of her when an African moon is at its height? And why not? Because we are tied and bound by the formal prayers of the Prayer Book, because of the 'heavy teaching,' the 'unillumined' exhortations to a dreary morality, here as you are at home. . . . A blind man could foresee the end. The Church of England in the mission field is slowly leading a few souls, here and there, out into the religions of the honest Catholic.

"But it is spreading far and wide an atmosphere which carries no courage, no conviction, that will never produce saints or save souls or build up native races."

This is certainly plain writing, and for a good summing up I can do no better than quote the following from the *London Catholic Times*:

"The Church of England is trying to beat a retreat from Protestantism. Gradually a number of the clergy and their flocks have been revolting against it. At first they met with stern opposition from the Bishops, but they persisted in their renunciation of Protestant theories and have impregnated some of the episcopal body with their spirit. To-day the Church of England, though a Protestant institution by law, is no longer a bulwark of Protestantism. . . . Gradually a more correct idea of the Church has been influencing Anglicans and leading to conversions; it is now beginning to enter the minds of Free Churchmen (i. e., Nonconformists). Perhaps the time will come—it is, no doubt, yet distant—when all the Christians in this country will again profess the same faith and work hand in hand for its promotion. What a magnificent triumph that would be for Christianity and what developments would follow to the advantage of the population of the Empire."—The Lamp.

**THE REAL PRESENCE**

Besides the prescribed Liturgy of the Church, by which her children pay eternal honor and reverence to the God Who created and redeemed them, there are many forms of public prayer, instituted or approved by the Church, which are commonly called devotions, says the Brooklyn Tablet. These pious practices depend upon, and are centered about some doctrine or dogma of our faith, of which they are indeed a practical manifestation. They have a threefold purpose: (1) to teach and instruct the faithful; (2) to serve as a means by which the faithful may give evidence of their internal belief and devotion; (3) to increase the piety of the faithful.

The greatest of all Catholic devotions is that which has for its object the abiding presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The Council of Trent speaks of it in the following words: "There is, therefore, no room for doubt, that all the faithful of Christ, according to the custom ever received in the Catholic Church, should venerate this most Holy Sacrament with the same supreme worship which belongs to

the One True God. Nor, because it was instituted by Christ, our Lord, to be received as food, ought it on that account to be any the less an object of adoration. For we believe that in it is present that same God of Whom, when the Eternal Father brought Him into the world, He said, 'Let all angels of God adore Him,'—Whom the wise men, falling down, adored,—and Whom, lastly, the Apostles, as the Holy Scripture testifies, adored in Galilee."

What a price we once in a while see paid for so-called fame; not in silver or gold—far beyond, often the joy of life.

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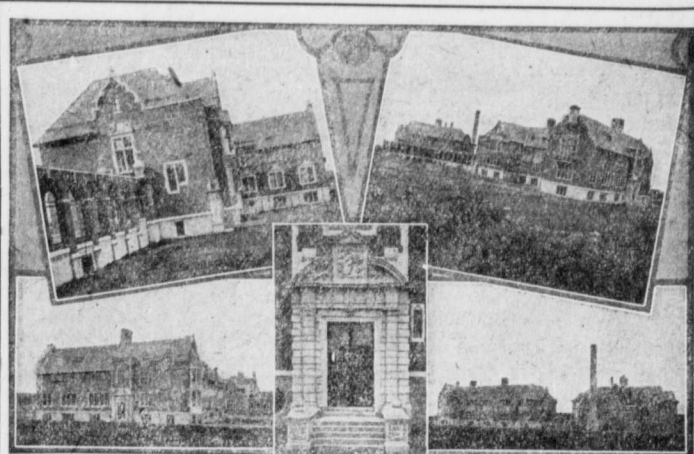
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