

The Seven Sorrows of Mary.

BY FATHER FABER.

"Tuam animam pertransibit gladius—Thy own soul a sword shall pierce." Of all the prophecies concerning the Immaculate Mother of God, none were ever more truly verified than these words of Holy Simeon, uttered when that most pure Virgin carried her divine Son to the temple, "to present Him to the Lord." In fact, we may almost say that it was immediately fulfilled, for divines tell us that no sooner were these prophetic words spoken than Mary became aware of all the sufferings her beloved Jesus was to undergo; she clearly foresaw the bitter chalice He would drain to the very dregs; the mockeries, the insults, the savage cruelty, all the black ingratitude of the Jews, which would be shown to the world's Redeemer, rose up like lightning before her eyes, and her soul sank within her. But it was only for a moment; and then like the valiant woman (Proverbs xxxi) "she girded her loins with strength and strengthened her arm;" her soul was filled with courage and fortitude; she offered her cup of suffering as an oblation to the Most High, she gave her son in sacrifice to His Eternal Father for the redemption of sinful man; and she never—even in the bitterest hour of her suffering—when the Church makes her to cry aloud: "All ye who pass by the wayside, attend and see if there be sorrow like unto my sorrow"—she never repented the sacrifice she had made.

When, at the feast of the Passover, she sought in sorrow and affliction her darling Boy of twelve years, the wound became still deeper in that maternal heart; and yet, when, having found her Beloved whom she had lost, He told her He had been about His Father's business, no murmur nor word of complaint escaped her lips. She knew it was the will of God, and she prayed that His holy will might be accomplished—Fiat voluntas Tua. Again, when she saw Him dragged before the judgment seat of His deadly enemies, the chief priests and ancients of the people, the memory of the oblation she had made sustained her, though she well knew it was but the beginning of the end. And then, who can ever fathom the grief—deep, hidden, secret, and, therefore, more poignant grief—which filled her soul during the mock trial, the cruel scourging, the crowning with thorns, the blasphemous "Hail! King of the Jews!" No; it is impossible for any one, except by a most wonderful revelation, to conceive what that dolorous Virgin suffered; for no one but her has loved Jesus as she loved him—the love of a most pure and spotless creature for her Creator, the love of a mother for the best of sons. She meets him bearing His cross to Calvary, falling again and again under its weight, and being dragged up with kicks and blows from the savage multitude. Their eyes meet: but that look, instead of bringing consolation, is another sword of sorrow for that Mother's wounded heart. She penetrates beyond the mere outward expression of suffering, and perceives from that single glance the bitter anguish of His soul—weighed down with a twofold affliction, namely, the thought of the base ingratitude of those whom He had loved and loaded with favors, the little use so many thousands would make of His bitter Passion, endured to redeem man from eternal perdition, from the slavery of hell; and, secondly, the thought of His desolate Mother, sharing all His sufferings, all His woes.

But the end is yet to come. The procession arrives at Calvary, Mary following in its train. The garments are torn from the back of that innocent Lamb—those garments which, tradition tells us, Mary's loving hands had woven for her beloved Son. He is then stretched upon the hard wood of the cross, and the executioners pierce, with savage violence, His hands and feet with nails. But those nails do more than transfix Jesus to the cross, they transfix that Mother's heart with deep-piercing swords of sorrow, and each blow of the hammer drives them deeper and deeper still. But all is not yet over; the cross is raised with its sacred burden, and falls into the place prepared for it with a sudden jerk which renews the racking pain in those wounded hands and feet. The three hours of agony now begin for Jesus; but they are three hours of agonizing sorrow for that desolate Mother. "There stood by the cross of Jesus His Mother," says the Evangelist St. John. Yes; in spite of what Mary had already suffered, and was still suffering, she stands by the cross of Jesus. Her heart is broken within her; her soul, like that of her Divine Son, is sorrowful even unto death, but she does not shed a tear. Nobly she has borne her sufferings during the whole course of the sacred Passion, first, because she offered her Son to God, and, secondly, because she did not wish to increase

His affliction by the exhibition of her own. Her heart is full to bursting, but, martyr-like, the pent-up grief—the hardest grief to bear—remains within her throbbing bosom; and when all the disciples, save one, have fled, while Mary Magdalene laments and weeps with passionate grief at the foot of the cross, Mary stands at her post to take a willing share in the three hours' agony of her dying Son. In the strength of her unflinching weariness she stood through it all, and Scripture is careful to mark the posture, as if this miracle of endurance was of itself a revelation of the greatness of the Mother's noble courage in the very midst of such unparalleled suffering and grief. But all is not yet over. Jesus is speaking to His Mother. "Woman, behold thy Son," are the words that reach that martyred Mother's ear. "O what a change to thee!" exclaims St. Bernard, "thou art given John for Jesus, the servant for his Lord, the disciple for his Master, the son of Zebedee for the Son of God, a mere man for very God."

And now the final moment has come. The dead Jesus is taken down from the cross and laid in His Mother's arms. For a few moments she gazes upon that divine Son in adoration and love. But now it is time for her to take her last look, for His faithful disciples have come to bear Him to the sepulchre. Mary follows—the chief mourner in that sorrowful procession. The body of Jesus is placed within the rocky cavern; the door is closed; the stone rolled to; and Mary, desolate now indeed, stands without the tomb; the measure of her cup of suffering is filled; her soul is pierced with the seventh sword of sorrow; she has drained the chalice to the bitter dregs.

Gleanings.

Let friendship gently creep to a height; if it rush to it, it may soon run itself out of breath.

In studying character, do not be blind to the shortcomings of a warm friend or the virtues of a bitter enemy.

Words are spiritual forces, angels of blessing or of cursing. Unuttered, we control them; uttered, they control us.

The seeds of love can never grow but under the warm and genial influence of kind feelings and affectionate manners.

Keep your conduct abreast of your conscience, and very soon your conscience will be illumined by the radiance of God. Be pleasant and kind to those around you. The man who stirs his cup with an icicle spoils the tea and chills his own fingers.

It is always good to know, if only in passing, a charming human being; it refreshes one like flowers and woods and clear brooks.

Old age is the night of life, as night is the old age of the day. Still night is full of magnificence, and for many it is more brilliant than day.

The man who is jealous and envious of his neighbor's success has foes in his heart who can bring more bitterness into his life than can any outside enemy.

Stories heard at mother's knee are never wholly forgotten. They form a little spring that never quite dries up in our journey through scorching years.

Even in the fiercest uproar of our stormy passions, conscience, though in her softest whispers, gives to the supremacy of rectitude the voice of an undying testimony.

Heretic Remedy.

'I suppose I shall be an old maid all my life,' sighed a young woman of 25.
'That's a grievous complaint,' responded an old bachelor.
'Very,' again sighed the maiden.
'Do you want to cure it?'
'Of course I do.'
'Take me for a husband?'
'Do you mean it?'
'Certainly.'
'Well, desperate diseases require desperate remedies, and I guess I'll try you.'
They fell upon each other's neck.

Baptist Advice.

Some one suggests the following revised version of a familiar text: 'Finally, brethren, whatsoever things please the masses, whatsoever things bring in the cash, if there be any go in you, think on these things.'

Eccentric, but Accomplished.

Young Lady (at hotel table)—Do you know that vulgar person at the adjoining table who is eating with his knife?
Another Young Lady—Is it possible you don't know Mr. Smith, whose uncle has just died and left him a million dollars?
Young Lady—No; is that he? How gracefully he handles his knife.

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Claims of Half-Breeds and Original White Settlers, Province of Manitoba

WHEREAS since the completion of the allotment of the 1,400,000 acres of and set a Part under the Manitoba Act to extinguish the Indian title of the Children of Half-breed heads of families resident in the Province of Manitoba, on the 15th July, 1870, a large number of additional claimants have come and some are still coming forward with the evidence necessary to prove that they are children of Half-breed heads of families and were residents of Manitoba at the date mentioned:

And whereas, the 1,400,000 acres set apart under the Manitoba Act aforesaid have been exhausted by such allotment, and by Order in Council dated the 28th April, 1885 it has been decided to extinguish such additional claims, known as "supplementary claims," by an issue of \$240.00 in scrip to each Half-breed child entitled;

And whereas, by the Act 37 Vic., Cap. 20, the Half-breed heads of families resident in the said Province on the date mentioned, and the "Original White Settlers," and the children of such settlers, as defined in said act, are each entitled to receive scrip to the extent of \$100.00

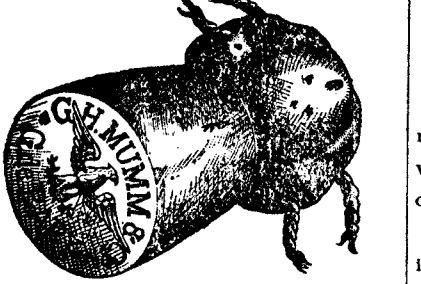
And whereas, His Excellency the Governor General in Council has deemed it expedient to limit the time within which all claims of the nature above specified may be presented; therefore,

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that under the authority contained in the Order in Council above mentioned, bearing date the 20th April, 1885, all claims under and by virtue of the provisions of the said Order in Council, and the Act 37 Vic. Cap. 20, to 'Half-breed' and 'Original White Settlers,' scrip that are not filed on or before the 1st of May, 1885, with the Commissioner of Dominion Lands, together with the necessary proof thereof, shall cease and determine.

By order,
A. M. BURGESS,
Deputy Minister of the Interior
Department of the Interior,
Ottawa, May 22, 1885

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