

THE PAGE OF JAMES V OF SCOTLAND.

Translated from the French by S. A. C., with the author's permission.

CHATELAIN XI, HAVED FROM THE WATERS.

Whilst all at the Manor of Wedderburn are rejoicing and feasting, let us return to the Pine branch Inn, where we left poor Francis prostrated with sorrow.

"Who are you?" asked Francis, "that you take such interest in my welfare?"

"A laddie who loves you because you are good, and who wishes to save you."

"Save me?"

"Yes, I do not know what danger threatens Your Grace, but I am sure they have designs upon your life."

"On!" suddenly thought Francis, "those papers that my poor father had made me take such care of, and which he said would compromise some person of high rank if our enemies found them."

"Perhaps it was the Cardinal! Yes, yes," he went on aloud, "if I cannot save myself, I would at least save them."

"We must save you in every case," replied his companion.

"But how?" asked Francis.

"I dinna ken," said Harry, "but we shall see; we will find a way. Ah," he continued, as if struck by some thought, "if you will put on my ragged dress, I will put on yours. We are nearly the same height. The soldiers are drunk, and night is coming on. They will easily mistake me for you, and then, if there should be danger, it will not be you who will be exposed to it."

"What!" exclaimed Francis, "you would put yourself in my place, poor boy? What have I done that you should show such devotion to me?"

"You do not recognize me, then Your Grace?"

"No, truly. Have I seen you before?"

"Without you I should have been drowned yesterday in the lake. You threw yourself into the water to save me from danger; to-day I will change clothes with you to save you from peril."

"What! are you the boy I drew out of the lake?"

"Yes," answered Harry, "I am."

"And you would risk your life to save mine?"

"I am only a peasant," rejoined the boy, "but I do not forget a kindness done me."

"But I risked nothing in saving your life, for I can swim, whilst now you would expose yourself to certain dangers for me."

"What does that matter? You did me a kindness yesterday; I wish to repay it to-day," said the lad with simplicity.

"You are a noble boy," said Francis warmly, forgetting for an instant his own sorrow in the presence of such heroic devotion; "but I will not, must not, agree to such an exchange!"

"You are wrong, Your Grace, and you deprive me of a pleasure—a happiness; and that is wrong, too; for your poor children do not often get one."

"No, no," interrupted Francis, "I will not accept such a heroic offer; but since you love me so much as to mean to die for me, I will take you with me. I am going to the Court, and you shall follow me there."

"Oh, no, I could not; I am a vassal of the Lord of Wedderburn, whom I now hate on account of the wrong he has done you," replied Harry. "They would recognize me, and bring me back to the village. No; I cannot leave without the laird's permission, and I have not that."

"Listen to me," said Francis. "You shall change your name. You have been saved from the water, and I have read in the Bible that Moses was called by that name because, like you, he had been saved from drowning. I will call you Moses, and will not be recognized. But let us fly, for I cling to life; yes, I wish to live to avenge my father."

"That is so," replied Harry. "Let us seek a means of flight—for you, but not for me."

"What! you would remain here? Ah! I understand; you have parents whom you fear to grieve!"

"No," answered the boy; "that is not my fear, my parents are dead, and now I belong to anyone or no one. I mind the cows of one, the sheep of another, and each in turn gives me my food. No; it is not that which keeps me here."

"What then?"

"Because there must be someone here to replace Your Grace when they come for you, and that is why I will not fly," said Harry, clinging more firmly to his generous resolve.

"Very well," rejoined Francis, not a whit less determined than his friend but nevertheless amazed at such nobility of soul in a peasant—"very well, I will not go either. If you will stay here, I shall remain also; for if there is danger, I could not bear the thought of anyone being exposed to it in my place."

And so the discussion between the boys continued, until at last Harry, convinced by the arguments of Francis, consented to escape with him. Then they began to consider ways and means. The chimney was barred across, so that egress that way was an impossibility. They tried the bars of the window, but alas! they were far too well secured, and resisted all their feeble attempts to move them. Having, in vain, sought for a way of escape, they were fain to acknowledge that flight was impossible, and Francis, who could not be induced to adopt Harry's suggestion of an exchange of clothes, prepared himself bravely to meet his fate.

"Ah, well," he said, "if I must die, I shall not be able to avenge my poor father, but, at least, I shall have the happiness of soon meeting him again."

Whilst this generous strife had been taking place between the two boys,

Shell was on his way back to the Pine branch Inn. His first care on arriving there was to relate to Cessford all he had seen at the castle. Then he gave him the barbarous orders concerning Francis. But Andrew now perfectly drunk, only took in clearly the first part of the story, viz: that at Wedderburn roast beef and bear were to be had at discretion and he immediately conceived the idea of proceeding there at once.

"By St. Andrew, we will go there!" he said to Shell in an unsteady voice. "Ask for a sack," he continued, "and execute the laird's orders. Whilst you are doing this, we will saddle our horses and take the road to Wedderburn that goes along the shore, and you can throw the boy in as we pass."

He then staggered to his feet and went towards the stables followed by his two companions, who were no more sober than their chief. Mean while, Shell, indignant at being called upon to carry out the cruel command of the Baron, stood undecided before the door of the room where Francis was confined.

Shell was not a thoroughly vicious man, though he associated with lawless bandits. He had been constrained by poverty to tell his services to the King Cessford, but he had long since grown disgusted with the life, and would gladly have abandoned it. But if poverty had brought him into the service of this chief, fear retained him in it. He dared not excite the enmity of Cessford, to whom he had sold his services, neither dared he desert him, for he was well aware that, wherever he might be, Cessford would seek him out, and would punish him without mercy.

"Cursed commission!" he muttered to himself as he stood hesitating before the closed door, with the sack that was to serve as the instrument of execution in his hand—"cursed work! I shall never have the heart to bind that innocent boy in this sack and cast him into the sea. I might help others to do it; I might possibly steel my nerves sufficiently for that. But to take the whole responsibility of the crime on myself alone—how can I find the heart to do that? I am but a coward. There, I had better go to Cessford at once, and tell him I refuse to be the instrument of his cruelty—that I shall leave at once his hateful service. But I know the man: he would kill me on the spot. My God! what can I do? Here goes: since I have not courage enough to disobey Cessford, I suppose I must be brutal enough to obey him."

With a heavy sigh he entered the room, where the two children were shut up.

"Here, you!" he cried with an oath, at the same time throwing the sack on the floor and assuming a violent manner, hoping thus to strengthen himself for his distasteful task. "Get in there, my young spark; I must carry you off."

"What purpose?" asked Francis with alarm.

"To throw you into the sea."

"Oh, sir soldier," cried Harry, now showing himself, "I beg of you to take me instead. What does it matter to you if it be I or the young lord, as long as you have a child in the sack?"

"Where has he come from—this boy?" asked Shell.

"No, I will not allow it," said Francis in his turn. "Sir, you know your orders; they concern me, and not this boy. Remember, your duty is to execute your cruelty upon me."

"Poor little creatures!" murmured Shell, quite melted. "Oh, I shall never have the heart to do it." Then he added aloud: "To dispute amongst themselves which is to die! You care for each other very much, then?"

"Yesterday I did not even know this child," said Francis.

"But yesterday he saved me from drowning, and to-day I must die for him," continued Harry with frank simplicity. "Isn't it my duty, sir soldier, to die in his stead?"

"Good little man!" said Shell, patting him on the shoulder. "Happy is he who can inspire such devotedness in another."

Poor Shell had quite forgotten his fatal mission, but the thundering voice of Cessford recalled it to him.

"Oh! he exclaimed. "My God! what can I do?"

"Listen!" said Francis, for he saw and understood the man's repugnance for his work, and thought he might make him a friend and helper. "I am called to Edinburgh to be with the Cardinal. He is powerful; and if you will save me, I promise you his protection."

"Oh yes, sir soldier—yes!" cried Harry eagerly. "Save the young lord, and do as I have asked you."

"Shell! Shell, you animal! will you never have done? If the young gentleman is so cereceronious," cried Cessford, "I'll make him go!" and here an oath followed.

"There's not a moment to lose," said the poor soldier, quite frightened. "Creep under that bed, and hide there till we are gone, he said to the two boys. "Yes, happen what may, I must save you. It may cost me dear, but at the day of judgment this good action may turn the scale in my favor against all the crimes I have committed. And, besides, I cannot make up my mind to such cruelty. Go, hide yourselves; I will fill this sack with anything; never mind what—here! this bolster of bracken and these large bricks."

Suiting the action to the words, he set about his work with haste, increased by the fear he felt of being surprised at his task.

"That will give it weight enough," he said. "As to you, my poor children, wait here for me. I will come back to night for you, and we will all three set out for Edinburgh."

The children were hidden, and Shell had just finished tying up the sack, when he heard a voice behind him cry: "Will you never have done, you awkward brute?" and a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder.

It was Cessford, who, with unsteady gait, had entered without Shell per-

ceiving it. But how long had he been there? Shell turned pale at the thought. "Perhaps he has seen all," he thought to himself, and he was just beginning to stammer forth some excuse, when Cessford continued:

"If you do not make haste, stupid, you see there will be nothing left to eat or drink at Wedderburn, for to reach the sea we must go out of the direct road."

"If Your Honor would go on in front," Shell suggested, trembling all the while, "I will go alone to the seashore, and take on myself that business of the sack."

"Yes," replied Cessford roughly, "to let that upstart froe. No, I won't have that. I know your foolishness; I can't trust you alone my boy. I will go with you, and the others also. Come, make haste and bring out the thing."

Shell, however, did not hurry himself. He feared, and justly, too, that from the stiffness of the sack Cessford would discover the fraud. Happily for him, the chief came to his help in an unforeseen way.

"To prevent his moving about," he said, "we must stun him;" and raising his formidable fist, he brought it down with all his strength upon the sack before Shell had time to step up to him.

"Malediction!" cried Cessford, quickly drawing back his hand. "That little clown has a hard head; but now, never fear, he won't move again, that's certain. But he has a hard skull!"

We, who are in the secret, know that he had struck one of the bricks. Whilst he stood there rubbing his hand, Shell hastened to lift up the sack and lay it across his back, after which he sprang into his saddle, and cried out impatiently: "Come! come! I shall arrive late at Wedderburn, and there will be nothing left for us!"

This appeared to Cessford a most judicious reflection, and drew from him a prompt order for departure. Fortunately for Shell, it was almost dark, and a thick fog had come on; otherwise his trick must infallibly have been discovered, notwithstanding the drunk state of his comrades. The stiff froe could not possibly have contained a child. In vain the poor man tried to make it bend; the bolster would lie horizontally across his saddle. But he rode on in advance, hoping thus to escape detection.

"If I am found out," he said, "it's all up with me. If they should discover that this is a bolster instead of the child, that bull Cessford would break my head with his word; then back he would go to the inn to find my little man and make an end of him; thus the service I wished to render him would avail nothing except to give me a broken head."

"And save your soul," whispered a voice close to him.

Affrighted at the sound, Shell bounded in his saddle, and, unable to discern the speaker owing to the fog, which had now become dense, he was on the point of asking aloud, "Who are you?" when the voice again murmured: "Be silent; your comrades are only about ten paces overhead. As I am the chaplain from Wedderburn. After reading the letter from Angus, I heard the impious and barbarous order given you by Lord Home, and whilst all the manor are feasting and rejoicing over the murder already committed, I have come out to hinder if possible another—that of the poor child deprived of his father this morning. But the child is saved; thank to my impudence, I have now leapt in just as you left, I followed you especially, as you carried the sack in which I believed the child was confined. I intended to watch your movements, and as, thank God! I can swim, I should have made every effort to save the poor child, but you have imprudently let me know that you have forestalled me."

"What impudence do you tax me with, Father?"

"Of making your reflections aloud. Yes, you spoke out quite loud, and so I learn that the sack contains only a bolster. But, now, what is your plan?"

"When I have thrown the sack into the sea," answered Shell, "I shall accompany the others to Wedderburn, and as soon as they begin to drink I shall return to the inn, and set out at once with the child for Edinburgh; for I will no longer remain among these bandits."

"Very well, my son: I will wait for you there, for I also intend to leave Wedderburn, to quit for ever that house of iniquity, and to abandon the impious Babylon, where fresh murders are every day committed, and where crime and vice find both altars and temples. No, I will return there no more, and as I pass the boundary line of the domain I will shake its dust from my shoes, so that nothing may again recall to me that cursed habitation. Go now my son; you will find me again with the boy you have so bravely snatched from the jaws of death. May you be successful to the end, and if you have any crimes to repent yourself with, God will no doubt pardon them, and may His blessing be with you now for your good deed."

As he said these last words, the chaplain, who had been riding by the side of Shell's horse, stretched out his hand and blessed him; then, urging on his mule, he turned back, passing close to Cessford and his men, just as the latter, momentarily roused from his state of stupor, cried out, "En, Shell, you scoundrel! where is the marmot?"

"Here, captain!" shouted Shell. "He and I are both here."

"That is right," said Cessford. "By St. Andrew! I have never seen a worse night—so black, and such a thick fog! Shall we soon reach the shore?"

"We must be close upon it," answered Shell, "for I can hear the noise of the waves, and my horse is now treading on sand."

"In that case," commanded Cessford, "we two will dismount, and the two soldiers, who were half asleep, remain on horseback. Hold our horses, brates

that you are! By St. Andrew! I believe you are drunk, both of you, on a pint of wine a piece. You ought to be ashamed!"

He then staggered after Shell, who walked on in front towards the sea, well pleased that his anxiety with regard to his brave trick would now be at an end.

"Ah!" cried Cessford, "here is the sea, and the tide is coming in. Give me the youngster, Shell, so that I may throw him far in."

"Why should you take the trouble; I have got him, and I will do it," hastily replied Shell, making ready to throw.

But Cessford laid his hand upon his arm.

"No, no," he said; "I wish to give him his last bath myself. Yes, you see what I am—always a man of duty. I must be able to say I am certain the boy perished in the waters, for I threw him in myself; so now hand him over to me." And, in spite of Shell's efforts, he wrenched the sack from him and raised it aloft, but suddenly stopped short. "He is very light," he remarked—"already cold and stiff, too. A child is very weak," faltered Shell, terrified.

"Ah, by St. Andrew! It was a good blow; my hand still hurts me. I feel curious to see what kind of injury it inflicted on him; and he let the sack fall and began to feel it over. "Ah!" he said, with an oath, as he grasped at the mouth of the sack, "where is his head?"

Shell felt he was undone, when a sudden inspiration seized him, and he called aloud: "The tide! the tide! save yourself!" and he set off running.

Andrew, notwithstanding his intoxicated condition, had not forgotten the danger he ran; in remaining on the shore in a place where the tide advances so rapidly, and did not require a second thought to get away from the water, and he threw the sack into the sea as far as he was able, and then ran back with all the speed he could muster to rejoin his comrades.

"That's done!" he exclaimed, as he remounted his horse. "It's all right, though I should have liked to have seen the effect of my blow; but I had not time to find his head. Ah! am I mistaken? I believe I hear the sounds of rejoicing from Wedderburn. Forward, my sons! By St. Andrew, from the way in which they cry one would say they had drunk the cask dry, and that we shall find nothing left. Forward!"

Five minutes later Cessford and his three men dismounted in the courtyard of the manor. Shell took charge of the horses, and by a wise precaution left two of them outside the gate, thinking that, if Francis meant to take the peasant boy with him, a third horse would be required. The one on which Francis had ridden had been left, and in the manor, he had his mule, and so, thanks to Shell's forethought, the whole of the little party would be well mounted. When Shell returned to the stables, he led the two horses destined for the journey to a place whence he could take them without attracting attention. Then he went to the barn where the feasting was going on. Wishing that all should see him, he sought out Cessford, went up to him, and wished him a good appetite. The chief was at that moment engaged in devouring a large slice of roast beef, which he was washing down with copious draughts of beer.

"Here," he said, on seeing Shell, "sit down, you clown, and eat. You have worked enough to-day, and I give you leave to drink till you can't stir. Ah!" he went on, as if thinking aloud, "I certainly should have liked to see the effect of my fist."

Shell thought it would be unwise to refuse the invitation of his chief; also he needed food, having had none since the morning. So he sat down and hastily swallowed a few mouthfuls, drank half a pot of beer, and was rising to go, when Cessford detained him. With a sort of mania common to drunk people, the chief again reverted to the same topic.

"Do you think I broke his skull?" he asked, "and how I feel sure I did. By St. Andrew! it was a famous blow I never made such a good one in my life, and I still feel it. Ah!" he cried, suddenly interrupting his conversation with Shell to address a man carrying a pitcher, "what have you there? I believe it is wine. Ah!" and he rose from his place to run after the man, who was going in a different direction.

Profiting by this race for drink, Shell quickly left the barn, crossed the courtyard, and mounting his steed, set off at a gallop towards the inn, leading by the rein the second horse destined for the peasant boy. On his arrival he found the chaplain awaiting him; but, without wasting a moment in talk, Shell went to the stable to saddle the horse Francis had ridden, placed the two boys on their steeds, and set off without further delay. The master of the inn was mystified. He had seen the soldiers carry away the boy in a sack; he saw him now again mount his horse in company with the peasant boy and Harry and the same soldier who had lately borne him away; further, all this was done in the presence of the Wedderburn chaplain, who had also gone with them. He would have much liked to ask for an explanation, but respect for the chaplain prevented his questioning him, and when, as he helped Shell to saddle the horse for Francis, he tried to obtain some information, Shell had sworn roundly at him, but vouchsafed nothing further. So he returned to the common room, where several men, as anxious as himself to know what it all meant, sat drinking.

"Yes, yes," he said, in reply to the many questions put to him, "I know; but I cannot reveal it, for they have bound me to secrecy. To-morrow will be known, and you will see then why I could not say anything."

Fatal words, of which he soon had cause to repent. Next morning, at the ebb of the tide, the sack was found, and Sir Home and Cessford discovered that they had been duped. The keeper, who had boasted so loudly of his pretended knowledge, was at once

accused as an accomplice in the deception. His protestations to the contrary were not believed. His inn was taken from him, and he was cast into prison, from which, with great difficulty and after a long captivity, he was at last liberated.

Our travellers meanwhile pursued their way in safety, meeting with no further accident. Francis, his liberty now secured, had again become a prey to the sorrow caused by the untimely fate of his father, and was the object of the most solicitous care on the part of the chaplain. The good man strove to assuage the grief of the boy, and his words of pious consolation were not spoken in vain; for when they entered Edinburgh, Francis, though still deeply affected, was more resigned to his loss.

On arriving at the capital, they hastened to the Cardinal's palace. Leaving Shell and Harry in the courtyard to await their return, Francis and the chaplain sought an interview with the Cardinal Chancellor. Beaton was at that moment in his private apartment, a prey to the disquieting thoughts that assailed him, and he could not find a moment to receive them.

He and the Queen-nephew had united their efforts to prevent Angus obtaining the Regency, but the scheme concerted for supplanting the Douglas in the affections of the young King had, to his bitter disappointment, failed through the precautions of his enemy Angus. While engrossed in these troubling thoughts, it was announced to the Cardinal that a priest, accompanied by a young boy, presenting himself to an audience with him.

Though the Cardinal was far from suspecting that this youth was the one whose absence he had been deploping, he gave orders for their admission. We can picture to ourselves the joy of the Chancellor when he discovered that his youthful visitor was none other than Francis D'Arcy, who now returned to the Cardinal the letter Beaton had written to Sir Antony, together with the reply of the unfortunate knight.

But great was his indignation on hearing of that tragic scene enacted at Wedderburn which had deprived poor Francis of a beloved father and himself of a valued friend. He promised Francis to be a father to him, and to treat him as one of his own family. He engaged to provide for Shell. The chaplain he at once appointed one of the most important parishes in the Lowlands; whilst as to Harry, young D'Arcy's rank entitled him to keep him about his person as his servant.

Now remained the task of introducing Francis to the young King. But it had become necessary to depart somewhat from the manner in which it had been originally proposed to effect this introduction. Francis must be presented to the King by Angus himself, and with the view to inducing Angus to taking this step the Cardinal devised the following plan: The chaplain of Wedderburn, who was known in that capacity to Angus, was to present Francis to the Earl as a young Scots noble who had lost his parents and was in great poverty—a young man who would be wholly devoted to the interests of the Douglases, being allied to them through his mother, the niece of Sir Gawain Douglas, great uncle of Angus. As a matter of fact, the Cardinal had only a short time before received news from Scotland that Sir Gawain's niece had been there shipwrecked with her son, a lad of about fourteen, and that all on board had perished. Francis, therefore, could easily pass as this boy, who had, after all, been saved.

The Chancellor explained to Francis all the details of this branch of the plan which had died out in consequence of the wreck, so that he might be ready with an answer should Lord Douglas question him closely. Sir Home, who had never seen Francis, could give no aid in detecting the imposture, so that there was nothing to be feared from him. Andrew Cessford and the two men who had accompanied him had probably taken little notice of the appearance of Francis, and in any case they were not likely to meet or see him when he had become the attendant of the imprisoned King. So argued the Lord Chancellor, who concluded by inviting the chaplain to introduce our hero to Lord Douglas without delay. But here he encountered an obstacle. The chaplain, a man of pure and simple manners, and wholly ignorant of diplomacy and political necessities, declined at first to undertake the task, and it needed all the eloquence of the Chancellor to convince him that in the interests of the King; and even of religion itself in the present political crisis, the scheme proposed was of absolute necessity. Before parting with Francis, Beaton led him into an adjoining apartment, and there gave him private instructions how to conduct himself towards the King, whom it was necessary to rescue from the tyranny of Angus, which would make itself felt the moment he had the young monarch in his power. Francis promised fidelity to James V, and swore to serve him by every means in his power, even at the peril of his life.

And thus it came about that the Earl himself presented to the King the very youth whose access to him he had by the commission of a crime sought to prevent. And Francis, greatly humiliated at having to disguise his name, even for so noble a cause, found himself all at once launched into the midst of the most difficult and perilous enterprise.

Before terminating this chapter, we must say one word about the two ferocious men whose crime had been frustrated by Shell. Fearing to encounter the anger of Angus, and ashamed at having been thus duped, they resolved to conceal from him the escape of his victim. All the more anxious was Sir Home to do this, as on the departure of Shell from Wedderburn with the baron's order he had instantly dispatched another messenger to Angus to say his orders had been executed. As to Andrew, he promised to make Shell pay dearly for his bolster, and rejoiced in the thought that he should one day have an opportunity of making him feel the weight of his heavy sword-blade.

TO BE CONTINUED.

A REAL ROMANCE OF RELIGION.

THE WONDERFUL VITALITY OF CATHOLICITY IN JAPAN.

Under the above quoted heading The Tribune, (New York), publishes a most interesting article written by William T. Ellis and copyrighted by Joseph B. Bowles. It is built around the incident of "The Finding of the Christians," with which Catholic readers are more or less familiar. The writer, however, introduces other points, which, coming from a non-Catholic source, are noteworthy. He says:

"Of all the stirring stories that an investigator of religious conditions has uncovered in Japan, no other is quite so dramatic or important as that of the rise, submergence, and, after centuries, the emergence of the Roman Catholic Church there. It is one of the romances of religion."

Any narrative of Roman Catholic mission work in Japan must go back to the year 1549, when Francis Xavier, now canonized, with the flaming sword, has made his name a synonym for aggressive piety, landed on those shores and planted the cross there. Xavier was led to Japan by a Japanese fugitive whom he had baptized in India. Phenomenal success attended his labors, and those of the other priests who followed him, his own term of residence lasting two and a half years. Ere long converts began to enter the Church at the rate of 40,000 a year, coming from all classes of society—noblemen, Buddhist priests, scholars and peasants. By the year 1582 there were 133 Jesuit missionaries in Japan, a larger number than are there at the present time, and the Christians numbered more than 60,000. Twenty years later the number had passed the million mark, despite the beginnings of persecution. At this period splendid embassies were sent by Christian princes of Japan to the Pope as envoys.

Japanese politics, the enmity of Buddhistism, however, created an antagonism to the Church which was first manifested in 1587. . . . The first of persecution smouldered until 1596, when they broke out furiously. All the authority of the Government was exercised to blot out Christianity. The most ingenious methods were devised to discourage Christians and to cause them to recant. Thousands were imprisoned, slain by the sword, or crucified. . . . By the close of the seventeenth century the Church which the Roman Catholic missionaries had reared throughout the islands at the expense of immeasurable devotion and sacrifice, had disappeared. Its buildings had been destroyed and its outward signs obliterated. So far as men could see, Christianity had perished utterly from Japan."

Before Japan was opened to commerce with the world, by Commodore Perry's mission the Pope sent a band of missionaries to the Loo Choo Islands to await and prepare for the day when the Church could re-enter Japan. With the signing of the treaties in 1858 these men took up their residence in the port cities of Yokohama and Nagasaki, a Church being built in the former city in 1862. Three years later a Church was dedicated in Nagasaki, which had been a Christian stronghold before the persecution, to the memory of the 26 martyrs who had suffered death in that city in 1597.

Within a month occurred a dramatic event, for which Pope Pius IX. proclaimed a special feast, to be celebrated perpetually in Japan, under the title of "The Finding of the Christians." On that occasion, to the amazement and joy of the officiating priest, thousands of Christians came forward to welcome the missionary and to acknowledge themselves to be Christians.

The persistence of the faith, despite these two centuries of persecution, is little short of miraculous. It was found that families had preserved certain prayers and the rite (sacrament) of baptism, and a few Christian books and emblems. The ways in which this was done were most ingenious. Some- times crosses and pictures of the Virgin were placed in shrines and there looked. Over the door of the shrine was placed a warning that it must never be opened. Here for two centuries Christian and heathen worshipped, the latter, of course, all ignorantly. Certain of these shrines, because, with the passage of time, favorite places of worship, and as clear belief passed into dim tradition, nobody knew definitely to whom these shrines were erected, or why. Some of the favorite Japanese deities have since proved to be Christian personalities. Only with the opening of many shrines in recent years has the real nature of their contents been discovered.

This momentous chapter of religious history has several bearings, but at the present critical period in Japan's religious life it is an important evidence to the fidelity of the Japanese character. Those who question whether the native Christians depart are only to read their unparalleled page of the Church's annals to learn a lesson in heroism and steadfastness that is nothing less than thrilling.

RENEWAL OF PERSECUTION. Lulled into a sense of security by the coming of the missionaries, the Christians openly avowed themselves. But in 1868 the present Emperor reitinated the ancient and Christian edicts, in the following proclamation: "The evil sect called Christian is strictly prohibited. Suspicious persons should be reported to the proper officers and rewards will be given."

"With respect to the Christian sect, the existing prohibition must be strictly observed. Evil sects are strictly prohibited."

For several years the Christians who refused to forswear their faith were again called upon to pass through the axes of persecution. They were seized and imprisoned and tortured to the number of more than six thousand—two thousand again paying "the last full measure of devotion." Full religious liberty was granted, however, in 1873, and since then the Roman Catholic Church has made remarkable progress in Japan, especially among the poor and

lowly, to whom it is interested.

There are 243 Roman Catholic missionaries in Japan, Society of Jesus, French. Some sent to them during the side of France's alliance this was generally fact of the mission the self-sacrificed men is praised frequent subject matter in which poverty of the people live. One of says on this point

"The mission reported live a cepts of evangelized aside from lodging monies (\$11.50 a month) It is have no private means there are several themselves with to on such modest relate, it is just the best in evangelizing people, being the more readily to a life of privation to modest competence

Repeatedly I have made between the ed by the Roman the Protestant mission in favor of the fo

Of Roman Cath- usually more pro- sence than the Pro- with 385 preaching ed to by 243 mis- are priests and 1- Japanese priests in publication Roman Catholic far behind other boys' schools, w- 800 pupils, and 500 pupils. In the figures al- creditable work is in works of wh- that the Roman- religious bodies Protestant mis- orphanages and mates, while t- inmates in 14- pits and dis- testants have man Catholic- ber. The forme- "in" patients for "out" pa- treated 200 pa- enormous tota- tion of the latte- leper hospitals moto. In visit- the sick the m- In a word, I- situation with- the missions by preference the obscurity, tak- no advertising, evidence of the in every part- and nowhere h- them, by Prot- other than in- "THE FINDING- briefly referre- subject of a wo- Bernard Petit- who, having- Foreign Miss- sionary, whose dis