

*A PILGRIMAGE TO LA CHAPELLE MONTLIGEON
(ORNE), FRANCE.*



A Chapelle Montligeon, or Mount of the Legions, for it appears probable there was a Roman encampment here, is only a humble village of Perche, situated not far from the ancient Chartreuse of Val Dieu, and about ten kilometres

from Mortagne. The soil here is rich, and the country fertile and well cultivated. A rivulet (La Villette) runs between the trees and empties itself into the Huisne.

Above the valley, the houses rise in tiers upon the slope of the hill, sheltered on the north by a belt of poplars and on the east by the Forest of Reno Val Dieu, which formerly re-echoed with the mystic chant of the Druids, and where, later on, the sacred songs of the pious Cenobites were heard. At the foot of this hill, surrounding the Church, is the village properly so-called. Some years ago new buildings were added, and now others are in course of erection, so that in a few years the transformation of the village will be complete.

It is in this highly favored spot that the *Œuvre Expiatoire* has taken root, and now spreads its branches far and wide.

La Chapelle Montligeon contains about seven hundred inhabitants. Simple and industrious in their habits, they might have remained forever unnoticed by the world, had not their good curé been inspired with the idea to found a confraternity in his parish, the aim of which would be to obtain, by means of Masses and prayers, relief for the most forsaken souls in Purgatory and their deliverance from its torments. He had heard their piteous cry for help; his compassionate heart responded to the appeal, and he sought how to aid them in their distress. Working unceasingly, sacrificing nights as well as days, he brought into form the idea that he had conceived of a "Work of Deliverance," on behalf of those suffering captives of God's justice.

Approved and blessed by Mgr. Trégaro, Bishop of Séez, (in whose diocese La Chapelle Montligeon is situated), in 1884 the *Œuvre Expiatoire* became a striking reality. Since that time its progress has been marvellous. Springing up as if by

magic in a small, unknown village, it has already spread itself over the world and its associates number over two millions of every rank and condition, from the prelates of the Church to the humblest priest; princes, peasants, noble ladies, simple servants, masters and working people, rich and poor, all vie with each other in their zeal to make known this magnificent work, and help it on for the benefit of the beloved dead.

Naturally it flourishes best in France, but it has taken deep root in Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, the United States, Canada, Holland, Algeria, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Venezuela. Already it has become popular in England, Ireland, Australia, Germany, Austria and Asia Minor, and has made a beginning in South Africa, Tasmania and New Zealand. When M. l'Abbé Buguet founded his work, he wished to celebrate at least seven Masses weekly, as mentioned on the "Statutes of the Association," approved by Mgr. Trégaro, Bishop of Séez, but that number has long been surpassed, for the *Œuvre* celebrates 1,000 every week. In order to assure the future of the *Œuvre Expiatoire* subscription lists are opened in the "Bulletin." These subscriptions are reserved for foundations of Masses in perpetuity. The retribution for a yearly Mass in perpetuity is £4; for a monthly Mass in perpetuity, £44. This capital is invested in first-class land and house property and the title deeds are deposited with M. Brière, Notary, Mauves.

Already several Masses are assured in perpetuity for the forsaken souls of priests, governesses, soldiers, sailors, servants, working people, etc. Besides the Masses, which are the principle means of helping the souls in purgatory, every day the "Office of the Dead" is recited in the sanctuary in the name of the Associates. "Matins and Lauds" are said by the priests of the *Œuvre* in the morning, and the nuns recite the "Vespers" and the "Rosary" in the afternoon. Then, when the day's work is over all the employes meet in the church for evening prayers. This is the time when the recommendations received during the day are read out and six "Paters," "Aves," and "Glorias" are recited for all the intentions specified.

M. S. L.