

thereof of God himself? And I will demonstrate to you that the Supreme Being has testified, by means of miracles, to the favor in which he holds the Scapular. You know well that God alone can be the author of a miracle. Consequently all the marvels which have been

vouchsafed in favor of the faith or piety of His children are, as St. Augustine says, so many ways by which the Lord Himself gives testimony to the truth of our faith, or the solidity of the pious practices which we have taken upon ourselves.

TO BE CONTINUED.

The Immaculate Conception and the Spanish Army.

BY DON JUAN PEDRO.

DEVOTION to our sinless Mother, the august Queen of Carmel, is not confined to any particular section of the Spanish population. No class can monopolize it. It dwells in every Catholic heart. Neither misery nor happiness can shut it out from the domestic hearth. It is not confined to the innumerable Sodalties of the Blessed Virgin, nor is the exclusive privilege of her countless Confraternities. It so pervades all grades of society, that clergy and laity, the civilian and the soldier, the poor and the rich, the patrician and the plebeian, the burgher and the artisan, are equally animated with this eminently Catholic characteristic.

This is evidenced particularly on the grand national feast day of the "Purissima."

It is on this day, at the beginning of winter, that the Spanish army, exalted by faith, radiant with hope, and overflowing with fraternal charity, celebrates with unusual splendor, the festival of the Celestial Patroness of one of its chief divisions.

The cavalry have chosen St. James, "the Thunderer," as their Patron, ever since the time of the battle of Claverigo, when he appeared, mounted on a white charger, at the crisis of the combat, and secured by his apparition the complete and final rout of the Moslem hosts.

The artillery have chosen St. Barbara, the virgin and martyr, as their Patroness.

But it remained for the great bulk of the national forces—the infantry—to place themselves under the special patronage of their Immaculate Mother "La Purissima."

Therefore, the glorious feast of the Immaculate Conception, is a day specially set apart by this great and distinguished arm

of the military body, to honor their august Patroness with civic and religious festivities, whose splendor goes far to prove the deep Catholic feeling which animates the army of Spain.

On this day of general rejoicing all grades of military life, commissioned and non-commissioned, gather at the foot of the altar and around the sanctuary. Here the venerable veteran, whose grey hair and numerous medals recalls many an historic skirmish and blood-stained battle field, meets in fraternal intercourse with the "quinto," the conscript fresh from his mountain heather, and together they proclaim solemnly, before their fellow-citizens, and in the presence of the Divine Solitary of the tabernacle, their ardent sentiments of faith and piety, their love and devotion to our Immaculate Mother. They profess their adhesion to the Catholic faith and their childlike submission to its dogmas, in whose defence their forefathers performed such noble deeds of valor and heroism, many of them watering their native land with their life-blood in this holy cause. It was for the protection of this holy faith, that, during the historic siege of Granada, was born the Artillery Corps. At this sanguinary conflict, between the Crescent and the Cross, the cannons of the Spanish army first belched forth their fearful missiles of destruction against the Moslem. The daring heroism of the new born artillery, in defence of altar and country at this siege, as well as the later ones of Algiers, Cordova, and last, but not least, of Zaragoza and Gerona, deserves to be written down in letters of gold. Thus, to-day, Spain rejoices with her military sons, who in times of peace, as well as in the stormy days of war, have recourse to