

is the human heart in which eternal love became incarnate new. It is as old as the Incarnation. The side against which it had been wont to beat was opened by a lance on Calvary. The stream of commingled water and blood that issued from the wound but figured the Church springing from the Heart of Jesus. So far, you see, Catholicity and devotion to the Sacred Heart are the same in their beginning and end and fountain-head. The principal object of this devotion, the love of the Man-God, is not new ; the material object, the heart of flesh, which is its organ and instrument, is not new ; but what is new is *the manifestation*. Though the side was opened on the Cross to signify that all had easy access through the Church to the love of the Heart of Jesus, nevertheless the heart itself remained buried in the Sacred Humanity. Likewise the devotion of which the seeds were planted on Calvary remained hidden in the Church through the long centuries. A few of the saints like an Augustin, a Bernard, a Gertrude, an Aloysius, and our own Mary of the Incarnation, in the light of contemplation and the ardor of ecstasy, caught but glimpses of it, which served as a preparation for the great manifestation vouchsafed to the Blessed Margaret Mary. Then, for the first time, did the Saviour set forth His Heart to be the especial object of our adoration and love. Then did the devotion to the Sacred Heart begin to spread like a conflagration, till it wrapped the universe, gaining strength from the very obstacles that stood in its way. This rapid spread was doubtless to be ascribed to the authentic approbation of the Church through her ritual, the solemn declarations of her Pontiffs, and the encouragement of her indulgences ; but there is a deeper cause still, namely, the spirit of God stirring in the Church, drawing souls by His inspirations and heavenly consolations, bestowing particular graces and favors, fulfilling, in a word, all those magnificent promises made by our Lord Himself in behalf of those who practised and promoted this devotion.

“ So far so good, Father ; but you are not yet at the root of my difficulty. Why was this special manifestation needed ? Could not the children of the Church go on loving God and our