

A LOURDES MIRACLE.

A Most Interesting Account of an Extraordinary Event.

The following, writes the Reverend E. Martin in the London Tablet, is an account of a wonderful cure of a young woman living in the neighborhood of Eltham who has lately been to Lourdes with the French National Pilgrimage. The young woman and her mother came to live at Eltham last April. Before that they lived in South Kensington. Since they settled here I have been a constant visitor at their house, and what I shall state I have either seen or have learnt directly from themselves. I will endeavor to tell the facts without, I hope, any exaggeration. Indeed the truth is so wonderful that it does not need any addition of mine.

Sarah Arter, aged 35, has been suffering more or less since she was 18 with some disease of the stomach. For the last five years she has been bedridden. As to the precise nature of the disease, the doctors did not seem to agree. Some said it was cancer in the stomach; others a tumor, others ulcers. She had been an inmate of several hospitals; among others Saint George's five times, and the Cancer Hospital once. At the latter they said it was cancer in the stomach, and treated her for it. The symptoms seemed to favor that opinion. She was habitually in great pain and for years had taken no food without vomiting directly afterwards. She could not even keep down a cup of tea and bread and butter. At times she would vomit blood, which had a fetid odor. Besides this disease of the stomach, she was quite paralyzed from her hip downwards. This paralysis came on by degrees. Ten years ago she began to lose the use of her legs, but walked with two crutches till five years next November, when she lost the use of her legs entirely and has been bedridden ever since. One leg then became contracted. They measured her at the Cancer Hospital, and said one leg was two inches shorter than the other. She also had the last bone of the spine projecting, and this caused her additional suffering. The doctors at the hospitals told her that they could do nothing more for her, and they seem to have tried everything. Three years ago Doctor Foulerton put a tube down her throat into the stomach to wash it out, and for three weeks administered her food by means of injections. Having been told by the doctors that she was incurable she sought for help from Him who can give it if He will. She at length decided to go to Lourdes and ask the intercession of Our Blessed Lady, that if it were God's Will, she might be cured. At the same time she was quite resigned to suffer and die if God willed it. When she told Doctor Foulerton, who is a Protestant, that she was going to Lourdes, he laughed at the idea, because he naturally did not believe in the miracles of Lourdes. He used to say to her in joke, "Well, Sarah, if you are cured at Lourdes I shall believe in the Catholic Church." But what an undertaking this journey was for her! She an invalid, who could not even stand, poor, and her mother who looked after her 70 years of age. She used to employ her time while in bed in doing needlework and sold the work to make up an income. Out of her earnings she tried to save up enough to take herself and her mother to Lourdes and determined to go this next September. Fortunately, however, she had some kind friends, and they arranged for her to go with the French National Pilgrimage, which leaves Paris every year about August 18. They also paid her fare to Paris and sent Sister Julienne of the "Bon Secours," Haverstock Hill, with her to wait on her. Since this Sister was French and could speak English perfectly she was well suited in every way for the task. Miss Arter was accepted by the Committee of the National Pilgrimage and was told to be at Paris by August 18, to travel in the White train. The White train is one which takes all the great invalids. It is well described by M. Zola in his recent novel "Lourdes". She now began to prepare for her journey; since Sister Julienne was going to take her, we all thought that there was no need for her mother or anyone else to go with her. All we could do was to help her with our prayers. She made a general confession and prepared for death if it should be God's Holy Will to take her; for humanly speaking, it was madness for her in her weak state to undertake that journey.

She received Holy Communion on the feast of the Assumption, and the next day, August 16, after the prayers and blessing given in the Ritual, started by the 11 o'clock train for Paris. I myself and a few friends saw her and Sister Julienne off from Cannon street. She had to be carried in an invalid chair to the carriage, and from the train to the boat. I must admit when I said good bye to them at the station she was so weak that I felt grave doubts as to whether she would ever reach Lourdes. They got as far as Paris the same day, more dead than alive, and after being put to bed she remained there all the next day, till Saturday afternoon, when the White train started for Lourdes. It was arranged that the White train should stop at Poitiers, which is half way, from Sunday morning till the following day, to give the pilgrims time to rest. She was so ill when they arrived at Poitiers that she had to be carried on a stretcher to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, where one of her friends, Mrs. Munster, had arranged for and the Sister to be lodged. When they arrived at the Convent she was too ill to be taken up to the bedroom which had been prepared for her; so the good nuns had a bed put up for her in the school-room on the ground floor. After resting all day Sunday they were to proceed to Lourdes the following day. On Sunday morning it was decided to give the Holy Communion by way of Viaticum, for it was considered very doubtful whether she would ever arrive at Lourdes alive. No sooner had she received Our Lord than she, as it were by inspiration, got up and knelt down. Finding she could stand and walk she went and knelt at the little altar which had been prepared for the Blessed Sacrament. The priest, followed by all the nuns, had by this time gone to administer the Holy Communion to another pilgrim who was very ill a room above. We can imagine the astonishment of the Sisters when they returned and found the dying pilgrim out of bed and kneeling at the little altar some distance off. After making her thanksgiving she dressed and walked to the chapel which was some distance off. After making her thanksgiving she dressed and walked to the chapel which was some distance from the room she was in; and there the candles were lit and a *Te Deum* sung by all the Community to thank God for so great a favor. She walked by herself, but felt weak. At the same time as she regained the use of her limbs the bone in her spine returned to its proper place, and she felt no more pain in the back. Now the malady in the stomach seemed to increase, and she suffered the most acute agony on the journey from Poitiers to Lourdes. The train arrived at Lourdes about five o'clock on Tuesday morning, and she was taken as soon as possible to the Grotto and put into the Piscine. No sooner was she in the water than all the pain in the stomach disappeared, and she felt quite cured. Since she was with the pilgrims of the White train her lodging was prepared at the Hospital des Douleurs. They now lost no time in letting us hear of the cure. Her poor mother nearly fainted when I told her that her daughter was cured. She, who a few hours before could not eat the least thing without vomiting, now found the food given to the patients at the hospital insufficient; so the Sister took her to the restaurant at the Hotel d'Angleterre, where she had two helpings of chicken, bread, and beans, and drank four cups of tea. She walked from there back to the Grotto, which is a quarter of a mile, and then to the Bureau to be examined by the doctors. She was interviewed by a great number of doctors, who, after reading the certificate of her malady which she had brought from London, examined her and pronounced her cured. She had to leave the certificate with the doctors, but she tells that as far as can remember, it ran as follows:

"I have known and attended Sarah Arter for three years, during the whole of which time, and for some years previously, she has been quite confined to her bed with loss of power and wasting of the lower limbs. Added to this she suffers from ulcers in the stomach, which were the cause of great suffering, and are incurable. (Signed) Alexander Foulerton, 122 Brompton-road."

Without a certificate from a doctor saying that she was incurable I do not think she would have been accepted by the Committee to travel by the White train. Miss Arter returned on Monday last, got out of the train, walked down the platform and mounted unaided the



steps of the bridge at New Eltham station. She, who 10 days before was nearly dead with the fatigue of the journey from London to Paris, now returned cured and none the worse for travelling from Paris, which she left at eleven that morning. I saw her home, where she ate a good supper of cold meat and pastry. She has every day gained flesh and strength and walks about but is still weak. I have nothing more to add, except that what I have written is the simple truth without, I hope, any exaggeration. Let others think what they like of this cure, I for my part believe it to be a miracle. Before sending this account I have been to read it over to Miss Arter to be sure that there was no mistake, and she tells me that Dr. Sturges, of New Eltham, who has attended her since she came here, saw her this morning and said he could only regard it as a miracle, and that he will give her a certificate to say that what she was suffering from could not be cured by any natural means.

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TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

In order to show his gratitude to the American people for the assistance given the poor in Ireland while in distress, Father Mathew promised a visit to America, and set sail early in the summer of 1849. He was well received in New York and in all the principal cities of the Union, while at Washington he was voted a seat in the Senate, an honor which was accorded to one man only and that was to Lafayette. He was also entertained at dinner by the President of the United States, with 50 other important diplomatic personages. While in America his health broke down; this compelled him to remain a few months at Hot Springs in Arkansas. After a stay of 3 years he returned to Ireland.

On reaching Ireland again he found that not only was his health poor but his finances were low. When his friends heard of his troubles they raised enough money to make a compromise with his creditors. Though he kept on working for the cause, it was well known to himself and his friends he was not the man he used to be, and finally when he became unable to say Mass they knew the end was near. He died at Queenstown one morning in 1856 from a stroke of apoplexy. A monument was raised to his memory, in Cork, and was unveiled in the presence of 100,000 people.

It has been characteristic of all those individuals and societies who have voluntarily advocated the temperance cause that they have not been influenced by any desire to elevate any particular class or creed, but they have been actuated by the knowledge of the great good that would result to the human race in general and their efforts have been appreciated and applauded by the whole Christian family.

Father Mathew's sermons were destined for his hearers, no matter of what color or belief, and it is related by O'Sullivan, in his History of Ireland, that the postle of Temperance got such control over his audience that at one of his meetings in the North he made a Catholic crowd cheer an Orange flag, the first time such a thing had ever happened in the annals of the country.

When we look back upon the life of that great philanthropist and thinker of the days and nights he spent in the service of the people, of the 5,000,000 souls he brought to his feet to kiss the cross of temperance, of the poverty in which he lived and struggled, of the sickness and physical infirmities which overcame him in his old age and of the respect and veneration with which his memory is honored as the years roll on, we cannot wonder that here in the city of Montreal,

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Who have lost appetite;
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And to Nursing Mothers,
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PRICE, 40 CENTS PER BOTTLE.

3,000 miles from the scene of his birth and early labors, we are assembled to celebrate his anniversary and sound the praises of his great and glorious career. In conclusion let us say of Father Mathew what Moore said of George Washington:

"Nor yet a patriot of one land alone
For thine's a name which all nations claim
their own;
And every shore where breathed the good
and brave,
Echoed the plaudits thine own country
gave."

A VOTE OF THANKS,

at the close of the address, was proposed in an eloquent manner by Mr. Geo. W. Stephens and was seconded by Mr. J. D. Purcell, B.C.L., and endorsed by Dr. Hingston, each gentleman speaking highly of the address by Mr. Frank Curran and predicting for him a brilliant future.

AN APOSTOLATE FOR SAILORS.

The following letter, which appeared in the London Tablet, Sept. 29th, speaks for itself:—

SIR.—Last Monday evening I was walking the harbour at Queenstown, when a sailor stopped me. He said he was a Roman Catholic but a bad one. He had just returned from a long voyage, and before he wasted his money he would give me something for the poor. He gave me four shillings. He said he was going to the Sailors' Home. He went on to speak about these homes. They are strictly undenominational, that is, strictly un-Catholic. He also said a man must read something sometimes, but that in these homes as well as on board a ship there is only Protestant literature. I think he mentioned the "Chart and Compass."

I have a good deal to do with sailors, and it seems strange that even in the most Catholic countries these Protestant homes are to be found. Hardly is a ship in port before it is boarded by agents who invite the sailors and also ask them to attend Protestant service. It seems a pity that nothing or next to nothing is being done for Catholic sailors. I do not mean simply by Catholics of the British Empire only but by Catholics of the whole world. I know what the Catholic Truth Society is trying to do and I hope God will bless their efforts. But there needs an apostolate for sailors in the whole world. The Church in times past has found a help for every need. In this field Protestants have covered the ground before us. I spent the four shillings in buying sixpenny copies of "The Garden of the Soul." I distribute this book among sailors as much as I can, because of the excellent instructions it contains.

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