

MARGARET.

New Orleans, with its orange-trees fragrant with white blossoms and golden fruit, with its verandaed homes overgrown with roses, with its house-lawns bordered with sweet blue violets, is a city long to be remembered by a stranger.

I was glad to see all this; I was glad to touch the warm Southern hand with its genuine hospitality; but I was especially glad to see—remembering what it represented to New Orleans—the marble statue of "Margaret." It stands in a large open square, and is the first, I believe, erected to a woman in this country. "Margaret" is represented sitting in a rustic chair, dressed in her usual costume—a plain skirt and loose sack, with a simple shawl thrown over her shoulders; her arm encircles a pretty orphan child.

The face of the woman is very plain but very kindly. There is no indication that "Margaret" was a woman of great power or of great fame; the statue is simply the thank-offering of a whole city for a beautiful, unselfish life lived in its midst.

Who was this "Margaret" so honored above others?

More than a half-century ago, there came to Baltimore, among the Irish emigrants, a young man and his wife, William and Margaret Gaffney, to seek their fortunes in the New World. They were poor, of course, but they loved each other, and were happy to struggle together. By-and-by a little daughter came into their home, whom they naturally called Margaret, after the mother.

They were not long to enjoy the little daughter or she to know their love, for both parents died of yellow fever, leaving the helpless child to the tender mercies of the world at large. Fortunately, some friendly people, Mrs. Richards and her husband, had crossed from Wales on the same steamer as the Gaffneys, and though Mr. Richards had just died also of yellow fever, the stricken wife took the wee child into her own home.

The girl Margaret grew to womanhood in this shelter; and in due time was married to young Charles Haughery. They commenced life together, as did her parents, with empty purses and full hearts. But shadows soon began to steal over the little home. The husband's health failed. Advised by his physician that sea-air might prove beneficial, he said good-bye to his young wife and baby-child, and sailed for Ireland. The good-bye proved to be the final farewell, for he died soon after reaching his destination.

Though this loss was hard for the wife to bear, a second loss followed, the hardest a woman can ever know—the loss of her only child.

Did she sink in despair? No. As ground is made mellow by harrowing, so oftentimes are hearts made fruitful.

What should she do for self-support, and to fill her lonely life? She who was an orphan herself, a widow and childless, wished that she might work for orphans, and to this end she entered the domestic service of the Poydras Orphan Asylum for Girls. Here she toiled early and late, sometimes doing house-work, and sometimes going out to collect food and money. How she was dressed, or whether she had ordinary comforts, seemed to her of no moment. Her life was centered in the asylum.

One day when she appealed to a large grocery establishment for aid for the orphans, one of the firm laughingly said, "We'll give you all you can pile on a wheelbarrow, if you will wheel it to the asylum yourself."

Margaret promptly agreed to this, and in a short time returned with her wheelbarrow, filled it to its utmost capacity, and trundled it home along the sidewalk, saying she would cheerfully wheel a barrow-load every day for the orphans if it were given to her.

Sister Regis, the Superior of the Sisters

of Charity, much beloved for her self-sacrificing life, in time became Margaret's warmest friend and adviser. When it was necessary to erect a new Orphan Asylum, a large and commodious one was built on Camp street (in front of which Margaret's monument now stands), and in ten years Margaret and Sister Regis, working together, had freed it from debt. For seventeen years Margaret had lived in the asylum, managing the large dairy, and doing any and every kind of work that would aid fatherless and motherless children.

In 1852, she decided to open an independent dairy in the upper part of the city; in this enterprise she soon demonstrated her financial ability. Everybody knew Margaret's milk-waggon, and her kind plain face as she went from customer to customer.

Then she added the old D'Aquin bakery to her business.

She opened her bakery in 1860. Says George W. Cable, who knew her: "But long before that, as well as long and ever after it, any man might say to you as a strange woman passed in a dingy milk-cart—or bread-cart in later years—sitting alone, and driving the slow, well-fed horse, 'There goes Margaret.' 'Margaret who? "

thing but give, give, give, give to the orphan boy and the orphan girl, Catholic, Protestant, Hebrew, anything. Yes, one thing more; she gave and she loved. But that was all. Never a bid for attention. Never a high seat in any assembly. Never a place among the proud or the gay. No pomp, no luxury, no effort to smarten up intellectually and take a tardy place in the aristocracy of brains. Nothing for herself. Riches and fame might spoil Solomon; they did not spoil Margaret.

"Of education she had almost nothing; of beauty as little—to the outward eye; accomplishments, none; exterior graces, none; aggressive ambition, the disposition to scheme or strive for station or preference, none; sparkling gaiety, exuberant mirth, none more than you or I; money, some, a little, a trifle; financial sagacity, a fair share, but nothing extraordinary; frugality, yes, frugality—as to herself. What else? religion? Yes, yes! pure, sweet, gentle, upbubbling, overflowing, plentiful, genuine, deep, and high; a faith proving itself incessantly in works, and a modesty and unconsciousness that made her beneficence as silent as a stream underground.

"The whole town honored her. The

having no son or relative in the war, loaded a waggon with bread and crackers, and accompanied by two negro men, appeared before the gateway of the prison, her two men bearing immense baskets filled with bread, on their heads.

The sentry on seeing her approach, slightly depressed his musket and commanded, "Halt!"

Margaret replied, "What for?"

Thrice the challenge was repeated and questioning answer given. Then she, with remarkable quickness for a woman weighing one hundred and eighty pounds, jumped to one side the musket, seized the boy in blue by both shoulders, and lifting him away, marched in, followed by her attendants. The surprised soldier, overcome with astonishment, could but join in the shout of his comrade sentinels, who had witnessed the scene.

During the Fourteenth of September fight a young man, a Protestant, lost his leg; Margaret tried to obtain for him a situation at a toll-gate, but failing in this, gave him one hundred and fifty dollars to buy a leg; then set him up in business as a newspaper-seller, and supplied his family with bread during her life.

In the inundations to which New Orleans is subject from the overflow of the Mississippi River, Margaret could be seen daily in a large boat, standing in the midst of great piles of bread, a colored man paddling her through the river-streets, as she dispensed her loaves to the half-starved families.

The three largest homes for children in New Orleans are almost entirely the work of Margaret, as well as the home for the Aged and Infirm.

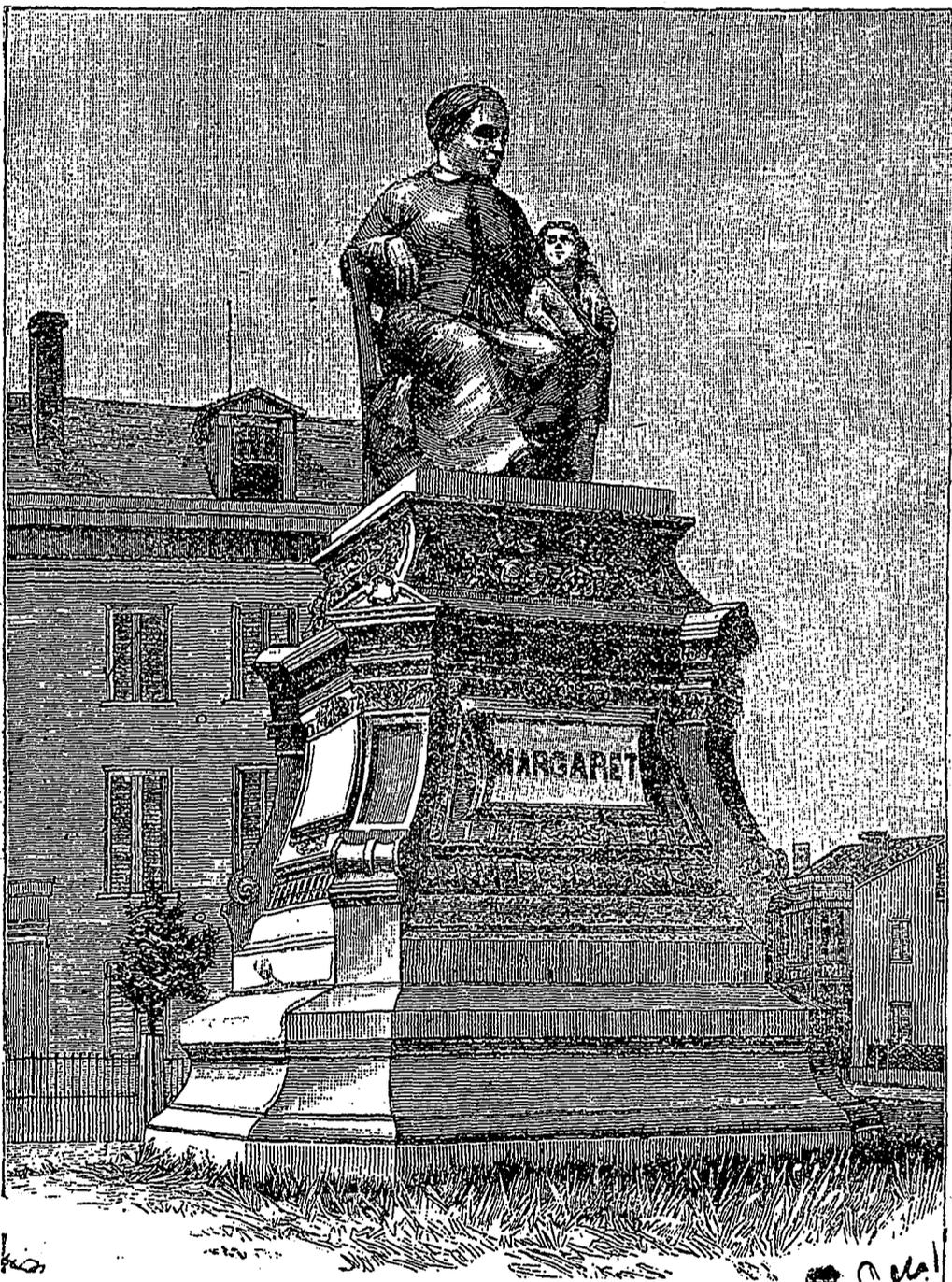
For forty-six years Margaret had carried on these labors of love in New Orleans, making her money with great industry and sagacity, to spend it for the poor and afflicted. But the time drew near for her to leave her work to other hands. Sickness came. The women of wealth and fashion made the sick bed as easy to lie upon as possible. To a lady who said, "I am sorry to see you ill," Margaret answered, "Oh! no, the Lord sometimes has to lay his finger on me to let me know I am mortal and don't belong to myself—but to him."

On February 9, 1882, the end came of this noble life. And then thousands, the poor and the rich, the City Government and New Orleans' merchants and bankers, gathered at the funeral to do Margaret honor. The services were conducted by the Archbishop of the Diocese. Then followed in carriages, after the pall-bearers as the beloved Margaret was borne to the grave, the children of eleven orphan asylums, white and black, Protestant and Catholic. Many of the fire companies of the city were present, especially "Mississippi Number Two," of which she was an honorary member. Great crowds lined the streets, and all men took off their hats reverently, as the procession moved by.

The following Sabbath, sermons upon Margaret's character and life were preached from many pulpits; upon the woman so poor and plain that she never wore a silk dress or a kid glove; so rich that she gave in charities six hundred thousand dollars, the fruit of her own labors.

"St. Margaret," as she is often called, lived her life in grand heights and breadths. She brought every man and woman who knew her up on higher levels, too, for a moment's glimpse at least.

Her monument, built by the city she blessed, stands now, in place of her, a constant reminder that one's own children are not the only children in the world; that one's home is not the only home into which we are commanded to carry sunshine and love; that though one be poor, there is work for others to do; that though one be ignorant, one may yet carry heaven's own light far and near.—*From Sarah K. Bolton, in Wide Awake.*



THE MARGARET STATUE AT NEW ORLEANS.

'Margaret, the Orphan's Friend.' I suppose we should have forgotten her married name entirely, had not the invoices of her large establishment kept it before us. 'Go to Margaret's' was the word when a counter order called for anything that could be bought of her; but the invoice would read:

New Orleans, March, 15, 1875.  
MESSRS. BLACK, WHITE & Co.  
To Margaret's Bakery (Margaret Haughery) Dr.  
2 Bbls. Soda Crackers, etc.

"And what had she done, what was she doing, to make her so famous? No—

presidents of banks and insurance companies, of the Chamber of Commerce, the Produce Exchange, the Cotton Exchange, none of them commanded the humble regard, the quick deference, from one merchant or a dozen, that was given to Margaret.

During the war, the Fourth Louisiana Regiment was captured at Shiloh and brought to New Orleans. The news of their arrival sped through the city, exciting the sympathies of thousands of women, who immediately sent presents of clothing, food and niceties. Margaret, true to her instincts and principles, though