

# THE PICTURE.

It was one of those thinly populated regions of the United States, in which sometimes a traveller is obliged to traverse miles and miles before reaching any kind of a dwelling place, and where very rarely two or three can be found in very close connection, that John Lafayette and his only daughter Regina dwelt. Their little residence was one of the old-fashioned kind, with a large stone porch, the admiration of all who had the pleasure of passing that way.

Regina was but a little girl, but she had been mistress of this little home about three months, having been summoned home from school by the serious illness of her mother, who died in the month of September, just a few weeks before this story opens.

Regina had been educated at a boarding school which was taught by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. A very tender devotion to the Sacred Heart was instilled into the young minds of their pupils by the nuns, and, consequently, all the principal devotions in honor of the Sacred Heart were practiced by them. They were especially taught the pious practice of venerating a picture of the Sacred Heart. In every school-room the first thing that greeted the pupil on her entrance was that image with its little red light burning before it.

When Regina was obliged to leave school and return to her home, naturally her first thought was of the unpleasant tasks—yet pleasing if accomplished—which awaited her arrival. Her parents had not kept their faith as they should have done. A priest only came about every five or six months to the small mission. They had put off receiving the sacraments once or twice and their hearts, of course, became hardened, and they had latterly neglected their duties entirely.

When she arrived home, Regina's first act was to do all in her power to enable her mother to be properly prepared for the dread summons of the Angel of Death. As her father in no wise concerned himself with the spiritual affairs of his wife, Regina was compelled to attend to everything in this respect. She accordingly sent for the nearest priest, who, on account of the distance, was unable to get there until the following afternoon. Regina had said nothing about what she had done until the priest had arrived, when she brought him to her mother and then left them alone. Mrs. Lafayette, however, could not be induced to make her confession. She seemed fully aware of the fact that she was going to die, but could not be made to realize the terrible state of her conscience. She had not received this sacrament for three years; every time the priest came there during the past year she had put it off, till now she hated even to think of it. The priest, being unable to do anything for her, was obliged to depart without giving her the last sacraments.

In the meantime her daughter had written to the sisters telling them of her trouble. They at once sent her a small picture of the Sacred Heart, telling her to hang it in the room just where her mother would not fail to see it; also to keep a light burning before it, and at the same time to make a novena.

Their advice was faithfully followed by Regina, who fervently prayed for her mother's conversion, frequently speaking to her on the subject of death, especially of the necessity of preparing well for it. Her words seemed to be unheeded. The third day of the novena, however, it appeared that a miracle had taken place. The heart of Mrs. Lafayette was softened and she called for a priest. She then received, with the best disposition, the last consolation of our holy religion and died a most happy death.

The end of Regina's novena was more joyous than the beginning, for although she had been overwhelmed with grief at her mother's death, yet when she thought of the great grace Heaven had granted her, her sorrow was turned into joy, for are we not to seek first the life of the soul and then that of the body?

Regardless of all that took place at the time of his wife's death, Mr. Lafayette still remained hardened. Regina now transferred her picture

of the Sacred Heart, now more prized than ever, together with her little lamp, from her mother's to her father's room, placing it in a very conspicuous place in the latter's apartment. She then waited with all the patience of a little missionary for the result.

Once Charles Odell, a boy of about thirteen years of age, and the son of an old schoolmate of Mr. Lafayette, came on a visit. His mother was a Protestant, but the child had been taught little about religion. One day Regina overheard a conversation between her father and the little lad.

"Mr. Lafayette, who is that in the picture?"

"It's our Saviour, I suppose," said the man shame-facedly; the name was an unfamiliar one to his lips.

"What is He doing?"

"Oh, I don't know; Regina will tell you."

"He has a beautiful, kind face; and there's a lady in the picture. What is she doing?"

"Praying."

"Do you ever pray, Mr. Lafayette?" asked the boy.

He did not want his young inquirer to learn that for years he had scarcely ever bent his knee.

"Mr. Lafayette is too busy," he added aloud.

"If you will tell me how, I will," said the boy.

Something like an expression of pain crossed the old man's face, as he rose and left the room. He was a skilled workman and had risen to be foreman of the factory where he had worked for forty years. No one could replace him when he was absent, and he taught many of the new hands their work; but he had never taught anyone to pray. It might be said that he had never even taught himself, for if he had, in the true sense of the word, he would certainly now be a better Catholic, and, religiously speaking, a better man.

Ten years passed away after that first visit of Charles Odell. Many reverses and changes had taken place in that length of time. Regina is no longer a little girl, but a young lady, tall, graceful, beautiful, attractive in every meaning of the word. Many new residences have also been erected, yet they are still at a great distance from each other. But that most wished-for of all changes, the reformation of Mr. Lafayette, is at the same stand, still.

The winter had been unusually severe, with almost continual snows. During these nights, when there is no moonlight, the country is in total darkness. Nothing but the faint glimmer of light which the red gleam of the lamp, which still burned in its place before Regina's picture of the Sacred Heart, shone out upon the road. There was nothing around but this little light to guide the weary traveller to his destination.

One particularly wild and stormy night came about the end of December. Drifts of snow were whirling, blizzard-fashion, up and down the road. The wind howled about the house and rattled the frost-bound trees. Just as the father and daughter sat down to supper, they were startled by a stamping of feet outside and a loud knocking at the door. John Lafayette threw it open, and discovered a young man, evidently belonging to the upper classes. The stranger briefly explained that being on his way to the residence of a gentleman—whose name John Lafayette at once recognized as one of the new inhabitants in that place—some distance further on, he had got off the direct road and lost himself.

"You had better stop here to-night," said Lafayette, with rough civility; "there's no chance of making your way before daybreak, and not then, unless this blizzard holds up."

"But I have a horse and sleigh," objected the traveler.

"There's an outhouse for them. I'll see that they're all right."

The stranger yielded, and having partaken of the humble but plentiful supper, sat in the little sitting-room watching Regina knit and her father smoke. All at once he said, glancing with a smile, at the lamp before the picture:

"That must have been the light which guided me here. It was like a tiny red spark in the darkness. But it answered the purpose. Had I not seen it, I should have wan-

dered on in the drifts, or have gone down an embankment."

"If you hadn't found your way here somehow," said Mr. Lafayette, "you wouldn't have been a living man to-morrow."

"And a very little thing to save a life," said the stranger. "Will you permit me to inquire," he added, involuntarily addressing Regina, "what the picture is intended to represent, and why you burn a light before it?"

Regina, summoning up all her convent lore, gave as clear an account as she could of the significance of the picture and her reason for burning a lamp before it. The stranger listened attentively, asking many questions. He read over the "Promises" more than once, and then sat pondering, as it were, over some incident of long ago, which he but vaguely remembered, at the same time gazing intently on the picture. Where had he seen the picture before? Had he not seen it in a room which corresponded in every particular with the one in which he now sat? Was there not also a man and girl connected with that incident? These were the thoughts which then passed through his mind.

The reader will, no doubt, at once recognize the stranger as Charles Odell. 'Twas he, indeed, yet how unknown by his two benefactors. Of course he was very much changed, now a young man, while at the time of his last visit he was but a mere lad.

Was it his good angel or what that brought to John Lafayette the conversation which took place between him and the child, especially the last words of it: "If you tell me how to pray, I will."

Having made inquiries as to each other's names, after much thinking and doubting on both sides, they discovered to their astonishment that their visitor was really Charles Odell. Regina was very glad to see him, although she could hardly believe that the fact was true. Her father, while giving him a kind and friendly greeting, could not welcome him as he was wont to do, for that sentence of years ago kept ringing in his ears.

Charles now clearly remembered that conversation, but refrained from speaking of it, fearing that it might—as it really would have done—cause Mr. Lafayette pain.

On rising in the morning the blizzard had so much cleared off as to enable Mr. Odell to continue his journey.

Again years have passed. John Lafayette is dangerously ill. During this illness he seems to have fastened on Regina's picture of the Sacred Heart, for in his ravings he talks of it.

A doctor was summoned, and having carefully examined him, announced that he might live a month, but that his case was hopeless. After leaving his instructions with Regina, he departed and she was left alone with her thoughts.

The dusk was coming on, reminding her of that other twilight when, having come home from school, she found her mother on her death-bed. She now sat and thought that her father was about to appear at that terrible judgment unprepared. Oh, if only a priest could come, she thought.

Were her hopes to be realized, her wishes to be gratified? The sound of carriage wheels and footsteps on the porch aroused her from her reverie.

To her wonderment, when she opened the door, Charles Odell, in clerical dress, accosted her. His explanations were not lengthy.

"I am a priest," he said, smiling. "I will just briefly sketch my actions so that you can guess the rest. I can attribute it all to your picture of the Sacred Heart. When I last left here my heart was longing to know more about religion, yet I dared not tell you so. I sought a priest at my first opportunity and told him all. I was instructed in your religion and soon became a Catholic. After scrupulously practicing its precepts for almost a year, I discovered my vocation to the priesthood. I was ordained only a month ago, and I begged to be allowed to come here this time, instead of the priest who generally comes, in order that I might thank you for your kindness and explanations of long ago."

"Oh, Father Odell" (as he was now called), exclaimed Regina, "you can do so much for me now."

My father is dying; go in and speak to him and he will see that our devotion to the Sacred Heart is not in vain."

Mr. Lafayette was very much surprised to see Charles Odell and to hear him called "Father" by Regina. In a few moments he knew all. He then remained quiet for a little while, deeply buried in thought while grace was at the same time working its way within him.

In a very short time he called "Father," but it seemed in his emotion he could not utter the sentence, only one word of it could he say, "confession."

Father Odell, however, understood. He heard his confession, gave him the last sacraments, and in a few moments all was over. John Lafayette yielded his now repentant soul into the hands of his Creator.

Regina, immediately after her father's funeral, settled up all his affairs, and entered as a postulant the convent of the Sacred Heart.

As the little country town in which John Lafayette and his daughter had lived had now increased considerably in population, it was decided to erect a church and appoint a resident priest. Father Odell was chosen for that purpose, and superintended everything. He caused the little house with its stone porch to be converted into a church, the porch serving as the vestibule, and naturally, with the permission of the bishop, he called it the Church of the Sacred Heart, and Regina's picture held a prominent place over the high altar.

Often does the pastor, an ardent devotee of the Sacred Heart, relate to his congregation the story of his conversion and the devotion which was the cause thereof.—Exchange.

## LUTHER AND INDULGENCES.

The "Lamp" (Anglican) has this to say about indulgences in a late issue: "Those who would secure the Great Pardon promised St. Francis must take sacramental confession, receive the Blessed Sacrament, and their contrition be entirely satisfactory to Almighty God, who readeth the secrets of all hearts and cannot be deceived by a sham or superficial repentance. Plenary indulgences of any kind are not the easy things to obtain that Protestants falsely charge the Catholic Church with teaching them to be. As a matter of fact, the Catholic Church is no match for Protestantism when it comes to the question of plenary indulgences. Martin Luther's doctrine of justification by faith only without works makes the obtaining of a plenary indulgence on the part of a Protestant the simplest and easiest thing imaginable; no penance, no confession, no communion, no alms deeds, no visit to any shrine, no saying of any prayers is required,—a mere act of faith is all that is essential; and such an act made at the moment of death completely wipes away every penalty of sin and secures an immediate admission of the soul into the Paradise of God."—Canadian Freeman.

## VALIANT FRENCH BISHOP.

Mon-signor Latencle, Bishop of Vannes, after a procession of the Blessed Sacrament recently mounted the pulpit of his cathedral and addressed the following words to the assembled worshippers: "This is no time for talking," he said, "but for acting. The storm let loose upon us no longer allows the captain to doubt of the danger which threatens his ship. If we are again to see the days of sorrow which have darkened out past history; if, through the increasing fury of the impious, we are called upon to brave anything, even death, in defence of our religion and our liberty, in that case I make oath before God and you all that I shall die at your head rather than betray my post." His audience was deeply impressed at the brave bishop's determined words.—Pittsburgh Observer.

## INFANTS THRIVE

On cow's milk that is not subject to any change of composition. Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk is always the same in all climates and at all seasons. As a general household milk it is superior and is always available.



\$45.00

For Round Trip to

Vancouver

or

Victoria

TICKETS ON SALE

August 1st to 14th, 1903

inclusive

Good till Oct. 15th, 1903

Stop over privileges.

For further information apply to any C.P.R. Agent, or to

H. W. BRODIE, C. E. McPHERSON,

Asst. Genl. Pass. Agt. Genl. Pass. Agt.  
Winnipeg, Man. Winnipeg, Man.



Office, 391 Main St. Tel. 1446

# Through Tickets

TO ALL POINTS

East, West, South

California and Florida Winter Resorts  
Also to European Points,  
Australia, China and Japan.

Pullman Sleepers  
All Equipment First Class

For further information apply to

H. SWINFORD, General Agent,  
391 Main street, Winnipeg; or

CHAS. S. FEE, General Passenger and Ticket Agent, St. Paul, Minn.

W. JORDAN

Telephone 750.

Fort St., cor Portage Ave.

By the hour, 7 to 20	\$1 00
" " 20 to 75	2 00
One hour and 5 minutes	1 50
One hour and 35	2 00
To Depot	1 00
From Depot	1 00
Weddings	\$3 to 5 00
Christenings	2 00
Funerals	3 00
Church and Return	2 00
Ball and Return	3 00
No order less than \$1.	

Carriages charged for from time they leave the stable until return. No trunks carried. No collector, pay the driver.

## Authorized Life of Pope Leo XIII. MANAGER WANTED

Trustworthy lady or gentleman in each district to manage our business and start agents in the sale of the Official and Authorized Life of Pope Leo XIII. Book issued under the imprimatur of Cardinal Gibbons and endorsed by the leading Archbishops and priests throughout the United States and Canada; printed in both English and French; \$20.00 straight cash salary and expenses, paid each week direct from headquarters, expense money advanced; position permanent. Address

David B. Clarkson, 324 Dearborn Street Chicago.