



## EASTERTIDE.

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**L**IFE ! How all nature craves for it ! What a fierce struggle for existence is going on about us ! Mother earth, after shrouding herself in her mantle of snow and ice, is flinging it off with exuberant life revived in her teeming bosom by the sweet kisses of the dazzling sun, more dazzling than ever as it flashes from the melting crystals of dying winter. Soon the first leaves will be sprouting, and the flowers budding, and the insects humming, and the birds chirping, and every living thing that grows, or creeps, or walks, or flies will be tingling with life renewed, and stretching itself out unto life as complete as it can compass.

Of all beings that live and die, none is so fond of life as man. Even when, mummified by age, or stupefied by disease, he merely vegetates, yet does he cling to his shred of life and grapple with the grim destroyer, as if there were something more than bare existence at stake. Should reason be dethroned by excess of mental anguish, the animal within us will often take a new lease of life,

a fresh respite from death ; the body will fatten and batten at the expense of the mind, thus asserting in its own gross way its desperate love of life. How much more beautifully is this strange tenacious love exemplified in the survival of mind over matter ! Look at that poor shrivelled frame. It can hardly crawl. Speech has become a whisper. Ninety winters have frozen the very blood in the once throbbing veins. But mark the eye, bright with an unearthly brightness whenever a chord is struck that speaks to the intellect. Though the voice may be but as the zephyr's echo, the words which the still active brain distinctly formulates are words of wisdom deep as the experience of a century. What is left of the great man, the leader of his fellows, energizes in the undying splendor of his intellect, and exhibits the highest kind of natural life exulting in the very jaws of death. And well may it triumph, for the mind will never die. Blessed is that mind if it is clothed with the still higher, because supernatural, life of grace. Without this supernatural gift, intellect will but feel all the more keenly the agony of eternal loss. With it the weakest mind overtops immensely the strongest grace-bereft intelligence.

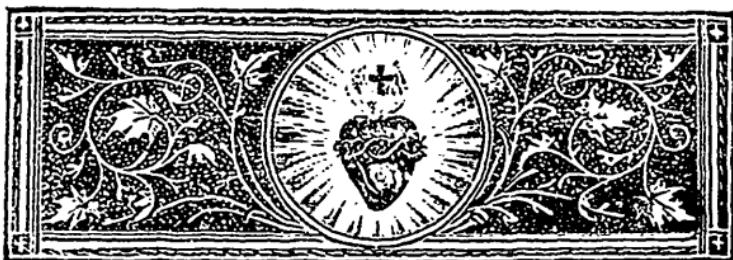
Yon old woman, crippled with pain, clouded in mind, but loving God's Holy Will, cleaving with her whole pure heart to the behests of the Heart whose love surpasses the love of mother, father and earthly lover, has a firmer grasp on life, true unending life, than the proud genius whom all the vain world belauds in acknowledg-

ment of the fine systems he has spun from the dark recesses of his godless brain. She longs to be dissolved and be with Christ. Aye ; there's the rub ; there must be dissolution : the inchoate death of pain, or the utter severance of body and soul for a time. Only for a time. Courage, Christian soul ! You must die to sin, to sinful pleasure, if you would live the life of grace. You must one day die outright, shuffle off this mortal coil ; but then, if you have lived aright, if life vegetative, life sensitive, life intellectual, if these three lives we all live perforce have been willingly subordinated to the life of grace, oh ! then will begin for your purified soul the rapturous life of glory.

This is what reason and faith tell us with the organ-voice of Holy Church at this blessed Eastertide. The King of angels and of men came to give us life, and life more abundantly. Nay, He spoke of Himself as the Way, the Truth and the Life ; the Way that leads to Life, the Truth that lights up that Way, and the Life Substantial, Life in all His fulness, Who is to pour into the faithful heart of the Christian those torrents of delightful life that ever flow from the throne of the Lamb. Now, He was emphatically the Man of Sorrows, the central truth He taught was the necessity and priceless value of suffering. If He rises in glory on Easter morning, it is because He has borne His cross, despising the shame and the pangs thereof for the sake of the everlasting joy to come. So, too, if we want to be co-heirs of glory with Him, we must suffer ; we must, like the Apostle, die every day to

our evil inclinations; we must bear our cross unto the bitter end. That is the price we have to pay for life everlasting. If in a miserly, mistrusting spirit we refuse that price, we shall have no part with Him.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life," Jesus said to Martha when His Sacred Heart was moved to tears for the death of her brother. And only when the sisters and the Master had mourned together did He exert his divine might and call Lazarus from the stench and the cerements of the grave. Resurrection and life, what a joyous hope for the suffering soul! Brother, sister, father, mother, all ye who are burdened with grief, taste the sweetness of Eastertide. You will one day be glad for evermore: for you have endured pain in union with the Heart of Jesus. Each Easter is for you a trumpet-call to fresh courage in the battle of life. How, in this happy season, the angels of God rejoice over converted sinners! Their conversion was painful, else theirs were no true contrition, no bruising of the heart; there was a ripping up of old wounds, but there followed fast the peace and joy of a spiritual resurrection. Once more their souls are alive and well. Once more they begin an earnest joyous, struggle for eternal life. God grant they may realize that as "the wages of sin is death," so most truly the wages of death—daily death to the world, the flesh and the devil—is life.



## GENERAL INTENTION FOR APRIL, 1891.

LEARNED CATHOLIC MEN.

**L**HAT Catholic faith may shine steady and bright amidst the errors of the world, it is of vital importance that there be learned Catholic men—men who, to wide, varied and solid learning, join unswerving fidelity to Catholic principle. It is the few holding the supremacy of mind and intellect who impress their ideas and views on the multitude, just as among the angels the higher orders transmit illumination to the lower. Where there are no lofty minds, the people are handed over to false and fickle guides, and become a prey to the impostors of the hour.

One of the separations which this age of divorces has been working hard to bring about is that between learning and religion, science and faith, the Church and intellectual progress. The enemies of the Church strove to cast her down from her throne as teacher of the nations, and snatch from her brow the crown she had won by gathering, preserving and spreading among the barbarous races that entered her fold the treasures of ancient art and learning. They took advantage of the false systems of

religion based by the Reformers on private judgment, of distorted facts like the imprisonment of Galileo, and latterly of the new-fangled theories of evolutionists and agnostics, to misrepresent her and blacken her before the world as the enemy of intellectual progress, the enslaver of minds and the foster-mother of ignorance.

Knowing that her strength lay in mental philosophy, which is the science of truth, and her most powerful weapon in logic, which is the sword of truth, they conspired to cast discredit on them, to belittle them, to hold them up to ridicule and contempt. For philosophy they have endeavored to substitute experimental science limited to the study of matter and nature, to the sphere and methods of which they would confine all scientific knowledge and research. Because the Church, forsooth, will not give herself up to the study of fossils, to the application of steam and electricity in locomotives, telegraphs, air-ships and telephones, to the discovery of lymphis for the destruction of microbes and bacilli, she is estranged from modern science and an enemy to progress. Likewise, instead of logic they have substituted mathematics, which drill and sharpen the faculties of the mind without directing their tendency to truth, or supplying them with the principles on which all truths rest; like the bar and trapeze of the gymnasium, which serve to exercise the limbs and render them agile, but supply no food to the muscular tissues. They dread truth, especially that of the highest order, and the methods which lead to its discovery, because their works are evil and cannot stand the light. In its full blaze their systems of religion and of philosophy and social science would melt and flounder like icebergs in the sunny southern seas.

Combined with false science against the work of the Church is the greed for money, which exaggerates the benefits and importance of a commercial education. It

will insist on developing the business aptitudes of youth to the neglect of higher talents and the stifling of nobler aims and aspirations. It will send them out at a tender age, before principles of truth and faith have been able as yet to take root in the mind, or habits of virtue in the heart and character, to meet the errors and corruption of the world, and to fall under the influence of its maxims, bad examples and prejudices.

Even the children of the Church, in her colleges, in her universities and schools of philosophy, were becoming entangled in the new theories and methods, after drifting from the channels that had borne to them the truest kind of learning. They were thus beginning to play into the hands of their enemies and unfit themselves for their work of opposing error and defending supernatural truth, when Leo XIII ascended the Chair of Peter, and set himself to the task of his Pontificate,—the restoration of Catholic philosophy. He has succeeded in spreading throughout the Church the teaching of true science, solid in its principles, sure in its method, and conformed to the doctrines of faith.

In this he but followed the footsteps of his predecessors ; for at all times the Roman Pontiffs have been the patrons of true learning. How could it be otherwise, since they were appointed the light of the world, the pillar and ground of truth ? Can truth come into conflict with truth ? Do not all orders of truth emanate from the same source—the Word in whom all things were created, who was made flesh, who sent the apostles to teach the world ? Light cannot hide light, ray cannot darken ray or dim its lustre. On the contrary, each illuminates the rest, and all blend together in one glorious sunbeam. Only men of shallow minds and superficial knowledge, who do not go to the depths and last causes of things, imagine they see contradictions between the truths of faith and the facts of science.

The Church cherishes human learning because it is necessary for the fuller knowledge of the truths of faith. The supernatural is grounded on the natural; and the foundation on which faith immediately rests, the faculty in which it is received, is the intellect. The broader, keener and loftier the intellect, the greater shall be its grasp of supernatural truth, the greater also its influence on the religious life and character. St. Teresa used to pray ardently for the thorough conversion to God of university professors. It would cost them so little, she used to say, to become great saints. Nothing can be a better preparation for a spiritual life than an intellectual life, not only on account of the empire wielded by the latter over flesh and blood and animal passions, but also because in the intellect, nature and grace, the natural and the supernatural, blend together, if there be no wall of pride to separate them. Thus the Church demands a long course of training from the candidates for her priesthood, that the reign of intellect and virtue may be solidly established before the Levites are entrusted with her sacred ministrations.

Again, the Church encourages learning and demands it of her children, because it is necessary for her defence against the attacks of her foes. "Their own arms must be turned against them, and to do this she needs men familiar with every branch of knowledge. This is especially true of our epoch, when war is waged against her, not so much in the field of scriptural controversy and supernatural truth as of philosophy and science, when she has to uphold the beginnings of faith and those natural truths which lie at the foundation of all rectitude.

In return for the help she derives from his learning, she will bestow upon the learned Catholic man two priceless gifts,—first, a surpassing knowledge of her divine truths and mysteries, like that which made the Doctor of

the Gentiles exclaim in ecstasy: "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God." This is the highest order of knowledge crowning all earthly wisdom, and the beginning even in a mortal life of the beatific vision of the blessed.

The second is an infallible rule by which he may protect himself against dangerous error in every department of learning and science; for, whatever is at variance with the teaching of the Church must be also in contradiction with the light of reason.

What, therefore, God hath joined together let no man put asunder—science and faith, learning and religion. During this month let us pray the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the lustre of all light, to raise up a few of those providential men, who, by the authority of their genius and learning, matched only by their simplicity of faith, will bring back human science to the channels that lead to justice and truth.

#### PRAVER.

O Jesus, through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer Thee the prayers, works, and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of thy Divine Heart.

I offer them in particular for Catholic men of learning, that, giving their knowledge in service to the Church, they may strive to lead the victims of deception, ignorance and error back to the truth. AMEN.

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## THE MEN'S LEAGUE.

### IS IT A TEMPERANCE LEAGUE?

"I frankly avow, Father, that my objections have been removed against a devotion and work so in keeping with the mind of the Church, confirmed by so many Papal acts, and blessed by so many indulgences. I desire with all my heart to avail myself of its advantages, and were it not for that temperance clause, I would readily give ~~in~~ my name. I can see no special reason for associating devotion to the Sacred Heart with the profession of temperance. There are vices that work deeper ravages in the heart and on a far wider scale than indulgence in strong drink. Is it not a kind of hypocrisy and real cowardice to set the weaker passion in the forefront and hide from view the real enemy more violent in his assaults, more deadly in his aims and unrelenting in his tyranny over his unhappy victims?"

Dear friend of the Sacred Heart, I cannot restrain the pleasure I feel in finding that we are sailing in the same boat. There is, indeed, no particular connection between the practice of devotion to the Sacred Heart and the profession of temperance, so far as it concerns abstinence from strong drink. It is possible and advisable for a man to join the Sacred Heart League, even though he should be unwilling to make any special profession of temperance. He will find in the practice of prayer and frequent reception of the Sacraments which the League

inculcates a safeguard and remedy, not against one only, but against all the vices to which our fallen flesh is heir. Take, for instance, the monthly Communion of Reparation with the confession preceding it, which is the Third Degree, or at least the Communion five times a year, which is an approach to the Third Degree. Does it not contain first the noblest of pledges, instituted not by Father Matthew or any other mere man but by Jesus Christ himself? Is it not, secondly, a universal pledge not against one sin or vice, but all sins? Is it not, thirdly, a sacramental pledge, that opens in the heart a fountain of grace and divine strength, lifting man to a higher spiritual level and enabling him to maintain himself there? On this pledge, or supernatural resolution, taken in every good confession, he sets the seal of another—the divine pledge of his Saviour's love in his Body and Blood, containing a fresh and unspeakable infusion of supernatural and enduring power, with the promise of everlasting life and a glorious resurrection. What more can any man desirous of saving his soul hope for? After all, it is not pledges and good resolutions that we need—it has been said that hell is paved with them—but strength of will and purpose, to *keep* our resolutions. However, more of this on a future occasion.

To come to the second point on which we agree, that excessive indulgence in drink is not the most degrading of vices, nor the most hateful in the sight of God, nor the most disastrous in its consequences present and future. I think it is Aquinas who holds that the kinds of sin which are most offensive to the eyes of men are least so to the eyes of God, and *vice versa*. Take, for instance, those which go by the name of respectable sins, certain forms of intellectual pride, rationalism, agnosticism, contempt of authority in matters of belief, no class of sin gives more dishonor to God or is visited by more dread-

ful chastisements. The world, however,—such is its hypocrisy, contemplating only the outside of the dish—may pay them a kind of homage like that it gives to the fashions. The loss of faith, we have said, is the most terrible of all the effects of divine vengeance; rarely do we find mere drunkenness punished with it, whereas it is the natural consequence of other vices.

Nevertheless, Christian man, do not take it, I beseech you, that I wish to palliate the awful sin of intemperance or hide from view its chastisement—for “drunkards shall not possess the kingdom of God,”—or minimize its woe-ful consequences in the heart of the drunkard, if he has got one, in his home, if it is not already broken up, and in the community in which he lives, if it continues to tolerate him. On the contrary, so great and manifold is the evil and such is its nature, that I stoutly maintain, where a men’s branch of the Holy League is organized in a centre where this vice lifts its hideous head, it would only be beating the air, unless it unfurled the banner of temperance and added to the ordinary practices a special declaration of war against intemperance.

It is a maxim of heavenly wisdom, handed down by the saints, particularly by St. Ignatius, that we must aim our first blow in the spiritual combat against the fault in our conduct which is most offensive to our neighbor’s eye and the cause of scandal or disedification. So heavy is the obligation weighing on the Catholic man, especially if he be head of a family, of giving good example, of letting his light shine before men, and not proving a stumbling block in their path, that his religion and piety, unless it had a special regard for this first duty of charity, would be a mere illusion. Such faults also appearing on the external surface of his life are more tangible and easy of attack. Their hideousness strikes the senses and imagination, excites horror, fixes the

attention, and arouses a holy indignation in the will of the delinquent as well as in the bosom of his family. Victory over these faults is not only easier, but it strengthens the soul and disposes it to carry the war into the stronghold of the interior vices and passions. The vices as well as the virtues are leagued together; the exterior opening a way to the interior, and giving them their food. Strike one and you strike all; subdue the exterior passions and you cut off the base of supplies from the interior.

Now, what is true of the single-handed, spiritual combat of each one is more widely applicable to an Association like the Holy League, directing its united efforts to the spiritual welfare of its members and neighbors. If it is established in the bosom of a community ravaged by intemperance, being a League of the friends of Jesus, that takes His interests to heart, and sets the good things of eternity above the transient advantages of time, it will unite against the enemy that attacks it in front, rally to the war-cry of temperance, and desist not till it has overcome. What cannot even a small body of earnest men effect in a town or parish, when united in a holy cause and supplied from a source of supernatural strength? Their zeal will be inflamed by the havoc this fatal vice works in souls, depriving them of grace, and opening a door to every sort of sin and wickedness, leading infallibly to eternal destruction. Their pity will be moved at the sight of the unhappy wives, the desolate homes, the neglected and scandalized children. If their lot is cast in a mixed community amongst sectarians whom they esteem and respect for their natural virtues, and whom they desire to lead back to the true fold, they are filled with indignation at the obstacles thrown in their way by their unworthy brethren, and they exclaim with the Apostle, "The name of God is blasphemed among the

nations through you, brethren." Well they know and feel that the brightest and clearest note of the true Church, whereby she excites attention and draws souls to her bosom, is holiness, and by every outward degrading sin its beauty is dimmed, by every unworthy member addicted to vice, it is hid as though behind a cloud.

The associates of the Holy League will therefore pray and do more. They will unite word and action, example and association with prayer. They will brave human respect, scorn criticism and ridicule, bearing in mind that virtue, like truth, gives out a double ray : one, lighting on the wicked, engenders hate ; the other, falling on the good, begets love. Gaining strength from the good results which, with God's blessing, will crown their first endeavors, and encouraged by the approbation of the wise and the good, they will add to their numbers and extend the sphere of their influence, until vice will soon yield or at least hide its head. According, too, as the obstacles are removed, the devotion and symbol of the Sacred Heart, under which they rallied, and from which they drew their strength and earnestness, will spread among men, and they will find verified in it what Holy Writ says of Eternal Wisdom, of which it is the fountain head : "All good things came to me together with her."

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## THE VIRGIN'S PRAYER.

Within the humble cot of Nazareth  
The Blessed Mary knelt in earnest prayer :  
Her very soul seemed trembling on her lips,  
Her eyes all radiant with supernal light ;  
The pearly pink that mantled o'er her cheek  
Had deepened to a glowing, crimson flame,  
As though the ardor of her burning prayer,  
Too great to be confined within the soul,  
Burst forth, a beacon to the sin-stained world.  
Before her lay the mighty Prophet's word,  
A message sung by the inspired lips,  
A message from the mighty Maker, who,  
In pity, promised to the guilty race  
A Saviour ; and, as Mary read the words  
Of deepest mystery, she saw : "Behold !  
A virgin shall conceive and shall bring forth  
A Son, who shall be called by heaven and earth  
The Holy One, the Son of the Most High."  
And, bowing o'er the book her virgin brow,  
She kissed the sacred page, and, with clasped hands  
And eyes to heaven raised, she poured in love  
And ecstasy her aspirations to the throne of God :  
"Oh ! Thou ! the Maker of this guilty world,  
Who hast been pleased to promise to mankind  
A Saviour, born e'en in our human state,  
I give Thee thanks for this, Thy clemency.  
I thank Thee in that Thou dost will  
A woman to take part with God Himself

In thus repairing woman's fatal sin.  
Oh, blessed woman, who in thy pure eyes  
Hath favor found. Oh ! all unworthy I,  
And lowliest of Thy creatures though I be,  
Yet grant to me to see that woman blest,  
To be her humble handmaid ! This one boon  
I crave, and with it will my inmost soul  
Be inundated all with deep delight."

And, as she prayed, the heavens opened wide  
And budded forth the Saviour long foretold ;  
And she, who, in her sweet humility,  
Had begged to be but servant to the one,  
The peerless Virgin Mother of the Lord,  
Was hailed herself God's Virgin Mother blest.

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### NEW AGGREGATIONS.

Society of the Children of Mary, Kingston, Ont.  
Curran, Ont.  
Fort Erie, Niagara, attended by the Carmelite Fathers.



## A VISIT TO OUR HOLY FATHER LEO XIII.

**L**O have wished all your life to see Rome, to have read, thought and dreamed of it, and at last to awake on a beautiful morning, with the bright sun of Italy pouring into your window, and say : "To-day I shall kneel in St. Peter's," is a joy that can scarcely be equalled and cannot be surpassed. Yet, marvellous though the temples of Rome are, wonderful its art treasures, and sacred its relics to the Catholic heart, the Vatican is the centre and soul of it all. Without the Holy Father, Rome would no longer be Rome.

We had been several days in the Sacred City,—each one filled to overflowing with delight of rare sights and rarer emotions,—when the supreme moment came. We learned that the greatest of favors awaited us. We were invited to assist at the Mass of His Holiness, in his private chapel, and receive Holy Communion from his hands !

It was on a Sunday morning, late in November. The clear air had a touch of frost in it, very like a September day in our own country. What a drive that was to the Vatican ! Through the narrow streets, over the old stone pavements, which kings and conquerors, saints and martyrs have trod, across the Tiber, by the bridge of St. Angelo, passing under the shadow of the Great Castle, till at last the Piazza of St. Peter's came upon our view, and a few moments after we were mounting the royal stair-

way of the Palace of the Pope. Not the purity of the gleaming marble that we trod upon, nor the lofty corridors we passed through, nor the soldiers of our King, the Swiss guards in their yellow and black uniforms, who met us at every step ; no, none of all these took up our attention at this moment. There was room for only one thought. Beneath this roof dwelt the Representative of Christ, the successor of St. Peter ; here was the rock upon which the Church was built.

In the Chapel, there were about twelve other favored ones like ourselves, already kneeling ; when the number was completed there were about twenty. The deep silence that reigned seemed to hold a throb of expectancy. The tapers were lit. We heard a solemn murmur of prayer, and in the archway before the little altar behold ! We saw Leo XIII. Feeble and slightly bent with age he seemed as he entered, but he stood tall and erect when he turned, with hand uplifted, to give the *Asperges*. Shall I ever forget that sight ? A man etherealized ! his clothing, his hair, his childlike skin, all white of beautiful whiteness. One could easily imagine a halo round his venerable head. Involuntarily, we bowed our heads before him. "He is a king," I thought, "he is a saint," and tears of loyalty and love blinded my eyes as I followed him through the Holy Sacrifice. Never before, it seemed to me, had I heard Mass said as on that morning, slowly—slowly—with deepest devotion, every word seemed to dwell upon his lips before being uttered. It was the Vicar of Christ offering Christ to His Father, and then, as we approached His feet, bestowing Christ upon His little ones. Oh priceless gift that angels envy !

A mass of thanksgiving followed, at which our Holy Father assisted, and shortly after came the moment of our audience.

The Sovereign Pontiff was seated at the foot of the

altar in a low di.an, the draperies of the archway, which separated him from the apartment in which we stood, were half drawn, and each little party, in twos and threes, were invited in their turn to enter. A marquis, blazing with decorations, accompanied by his wife was the first. We did not hear what was said; but we could see the benignant, the gentle, the tender reception with which they were greeted. Then came an humble nun and her seemingly more humble attendant; but the world's ranks have no meaning here; even more kindly did he bend toward them, more earnestly seem to converse. At last our own turn came, we were three who were kneeling at his feet! What words can I use to tell of his paternal kindness,—or how all thought of his great age vanished as we looked into his clear eyes, deep, holy eyes,—and heard the interest which he took in every detail concerning us. We were introduced as Canadians; but on learning that English was our tongue, a shade of regret seemed to pass over his face as he said: "*Oh je ne parle pas anglais.*" Finding that French was not unfamiliar to us, he at once expressed his affection for our native land, mentioning our principal cities and different subjects connected with them. He whose kingdom takes in every nation of the Earth, whose subjects are in every city, town and village of the Universe! I think that it was at this moment I first fully understood the meaning of "the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff" for which we are so often asked to pray. His intentions are our own, his prayers are all for us. Afterwards he addressed us upon more persoual things, his hand resting in affectionate benediction on one or another's head all the time. As he blessed us again, we felt that we faint would have brought all those whom we loved or honored within the circle of that holy benison. We mentioned our home, and once again his hand was raised as he said

*"Pour votre mère, vos frères et toute votre famille."* Need I say that it was with reverence—oh what reverence, and affection, and loyalty!—we bowed down to kiss his hands and feet. Our souls swearing allegiance and glowing with enthusiasm for the Holy See. Yes, Rome is the centre of the world, and the Vatican is Rome to the Catholic heart!

That blessed day shall never be forgotten. It was to be our last day in the Eternal City; so to the Pincian Hill, in the afternoon, we wandered to take our last farewell. Oh Fountain of Trevi, how deep would I drink of thy limpid water, if only I could believe that thou hadst the power to bear my footsteps back to this sainted spot! But thy charm fades before that which lies beneath my eyes; here is the magnet. A chain of dim purple mountains encircles the picture; the World's Cathedral, where human art has outdone itself to make a worthy habitation for the King of Kings, God's most beautiful Temple pencilled against God's most beautiful skies. The turrets of dim and dusky churches, where untold treasures of beauty lie hid. The soft blue air—the same air which has wasted the last sighs of martyrs to Heaven—the same air which has first syllabled the great dogmas of our Faith. Oh Holy Rome, good-bye. The sun has thrown a glory now about thee, and so would I remember thee. Soon thy golden garments shall slip from thy shoulders into the grey shadows of night; but whether thy fate shall long lie in wearing the penitential purple, or whether thou shalt soon again behold the glory of the Easter morn, thy children shall always turn to thee with deepest devotion.

We from our Northern home shall claim thee ever as the native land of our souls.

Beloved Rome, good-bye.

BELLELL GUERIN.



## THAT PICTURE OF THE SACRED HEART.

ANNA T. SADLIER.

### I.

**N**EARLY Spring had come to Canada. It had touched the buds into life; it had clothed the trees with a delicate green. Cattle were lowing, sheep bleating, the air was full of faint fragrance, as in anticipation of those many odorous plants which should later fill the gardens and the woodlands with their profusion.

Mary Leonard sat upon the porch of her father's little stone house. Tangled creepers of honeysuckle fell about her. A lilac-bush beside the door was sending her its grateful sweetness. A bird or two sang in a neighboring tree. Mary was absorbed in a letter, four pages of closely written school-girl news from a convent friend. On the last page a few lines caught her attention particularly:—  
“We are all busy here about the League of the Sacred Heart. I am a promoter and have got a cross. Lots of our old convent friends are in it. But, perhaps, you do not know what all this means.”

A brief explanation followed, and Mary mechanically took up an inclosed printed card, "The Promises of Our Lord to Blessed Margaret Mary." Mechanically, too, she began to read. Her thoughts were busy with that madcap, Lucy Nearn, the wildest girl in the class, transformed now into a promoter of the Sacred Heart. One promise particularly appealed to Mary :

"I will bless the houses wherein an Image of my Heart shall be exposed and honored."

Acting on a sudden impulse, Mary went up to her room and took from a drawer a colored print. It was of no particular value. It had been given as a reward of merit in the young girl's convent days. It was an Image of the Sacred Heart. She brought it downstairs, and with some hesitation hung it up in the sitting-room, just above a rude little shelf. She did not know what her father might say, and she stood considerably in awe of him and his opinions.

She passed out into the garden and gathered a handful of early Spring flowers, and put them in a vase upon the shelf. Then, she sat down at the window, and looked out over the fields just turning green and the road stretching away into the distance. At last she could see afar off her father approaching, a bent and toil-worn figure. His clothing was rough, his air and manner, as he entered the house, dejected and even morose.

Thomas Leonard's life had been one of hard and prosaic labor. He had had but little time to attend to his religious duties, and the suburb where he lived gave but narrow scope for anything more than the baldest practice of religion. It was only occasionally visited by a priest, the Catholics in the vicinity being the merest handful.

After supper, Mary Leonard carried the lamp into the sitting-room, where her father usually smoked his pipe. Scarcely had he seated himself, when the light of the

lamp fell full upon the picture and the fragrant blossoms before it. Thomas Leonard started as if he had seen a ghost. The divine face and figure rudely outlined, but yet full of meaning and majesty, strangely awed him.

"What's that?" he said, shortly, jerking his thumb in the direction of the Sacred Image.

"A picture of the Sacred Heart, father."

"Who put it there?"

"I did."

"Humph."

No more was said. Mary was rejoiced that her father had not ordered the picture to be taken down. So hard and absorbed in material things had he become, that beauty, sweetness, spirituality, paused without the stone porch. Work and economy were all the duties that Thomas Leonard imposed upon his daughter. If she wanted to say her prayers—short ones—well and good. If a priest came, she might go to mass, but there must be no humbug. At first when a priest came at Easter, Thomas Leonard was careful to receive the Sacraments. Of late, he had contrived to be out of the way at that particular time, and his faith was apparently dead.

The picture had been in its place a week or more, when Mary surprised her father, one evening, standing, with a light in his hand, attentively examining it. She stole away, unheeded, and again she caught him painfully spelling out "the Promises," which had been left upon the shelf.

Once a grandchild came from a still more remote country place, on a visit. Its mother was a Protestant. The child had been taught nothing of its father's religion. One day Mary overheard a conversation between her father and the little lad.

"Grandpapa, who is that in the picture?"

"Its our Saviour, I suppose," said the man, shame-facedly, the name was so unfamiliar on his lips.

"What is he doing?"

"Oh, I don't know ; Mary can tell you."

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

"Praying."

"Do you ever pray, grandpapa ?" asked the child earnestly.

Grandpapa growled something in answer. He did not want his young inquirer to learn that for years he had scarcely ever bent his knee.

"Grandpapa is too busy," he added aloud.

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

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 a foreman of the factory wherein 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 one to pray. He had almost forgotten how himself.

As the weeks and months went by, the picture and Mary's daily offering of flowers before it made a spot of beauty in the house. The bare walls of the sitting-room seemed less dreary. The perfume of flowers had replaced that of new carpet or of stale varnish.

Once when Mary spoke of removing the picture to her own room, her father almost sternly bade her "Leave it where it was."

It had so far worked its way into his hardened and toil-worn heart.

## II.

Spring had softly stolen away at the touch of Summer, and the ripe fruits of Autumn had fallen before the vigorous blast of a northerly Winter. Icicles hung upon

the trees, the garden of the little stone house was piled high with snow. The roads were blocked, so that Thomas Leonard could scarcely get to his work in the neighboring town. Mary was shut up in a dreariness, which she enlivened by decorating, as best she might, the space around the picture. She had begun to burn before it a small oil lamp, which was another school-day relic. Her father had at first said something about the danger of setting fire to the house, but he made no very great objection, and seemed at last to look for the light, on his return at evening. The little sitting-room had an end window, through which the red gleam of the lamp shone out upon the road.

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. Thomas Leonard threw it open, and discovered a young man, evidently belonging to the higher classes. The stranger briefly explained that, being on his way to the residence of a gentleman—whose name Thomas Leonard at once recognized—some distance further on, he had got off the direct road and lost himself.

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

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

"There's an out-house 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 Mary 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 wandered on in the drifts, or have gone down an embankment."

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

"A very little thing to save a life," said the stranger, rising and going over to examine the print. "Will you permit me to inquire," he added, involuntarily addressing Mary, "what this picture is intended to represent, and why you burn a light before it?"

Mary, summoning up all her convent lore, gave as clear an account as she could of the significance of the picture and her reasons for burning the lamp. The stranger listened attentively, asking many questions. He read over "the Promises" more than once, and returned to the subject of devotion to the Sacred Heart with a persistency which astonished Tom Leonard.

"What had men got to do," he thought, "with all this religious business. The women were the only ones who had time for that."

Unconsciously, however, he learned a great deal, no less than his guest.

The inclemency of the weather detained the young stranger for two or three days under that humble roof. During his stay he conversed more than once with Mary upon the subject of religion, examining her beads, her prayer-book and a catechism, which last he jestingly begged from her as a memento of his visit. Perhaps it was because of the lamp which had saved his life, but he talked most of all of the Sacred Heart.

## III.

Ten years had passed away, and again the April blossoms had replaced the Canadian snows. The honeysuckle was climbing once more over the porch of the stone-house, and the leaves were fast sprouting on the trees. Mary Leonard was all absorbed by one thought : Her father lay dying, there was no priest nearer than the neighboring town, she dared not go so far, leaving the sick man alone. Besides, he had repulsed her so sternly when she touched upon the subject, and had broken forth into so savage threats, that she was fairly terrified. The picture of the Sacred Heart had been brought with its little red light, and hung in view of the bed. Before it stood the vase of spring flowers. It seemed to have an extraordinary fascination for Leonard. Even in his ravings he talked disconnectedly about it. A doctor came once, and pronounced, carelessly, that the patient might live a month or two, but that his case was hopeless. He gave his instructions, and departed. Mary was left alone.

The dusk of an April evening was closing in, and recalling to Mary that other twilight, when, reading her schoolmate's letter, she had resolved to hang up the picture of the Sacred Heart. She sat now overwhelmed by the thought that her father might pass into that terrible unseen world, unshriven, unprepared. Oh, if she could but get a priest ! If only one were near. A sound of wheels and of voices aroused her from her reverie, then a knocking at the door. Mary threw it open, and found herself confronted by the stranger of long ago. For some time after his visit he had sent them occasional tokens of friendly remembrance, then there had been silence. Mary recognized him at once.

To her wonder, he wore a distinctly clerical dress.

The explanations which followed were not long.

"I shall not try," said the stranger, smiling, "to unravel for you the tangled skein of my experiences since we met. The clue must be looked for in your picture of the Sacred Heart, and the light burning before it, which saved my life. Do you remember how we talked religion during my visit; how you gave me a catechism; above all, how you made me acquainted with that wonderful devotion to the Divine Heart? Once set thinking, reading, studying, the path was clear to the Church and to the priesthood. My friend, Father—, and I, being in this neighborhood, I made it a point to come and thank you for your hospitality of long ago."

"Perhaps you can do more than that for us," said Mary, quietly. "My father is dying, and has refused to let me go for a priest, even if I could have left him and made my way to town. He will see you. My prayer to the Sacred Heart is answered."

An April evening was closing in dreamily. Sunset was fading from the landscape, a faint breeze was stirring the elm-trees, wherein were heard the songs of birds, an echo, perhaps, of the canticle of joy which the angels were singing for one that had done penance. Thomas Leonard had passed beyond earthly speech or sound. But at his bedside was the priest, the stranger of ten years before, and in his hand was a Crucifix. His last words had been an appeal for mercy to the Divine Heart. His dying eyes had rested upon the picture. The red light from the lamp fell as a benediction over the pallid and stiffening form from which the spirit was passing with the last April sun. It fell, too, upon the bowed figure of Mary Leonard, who, through all her grief and desolation, could perceive that the promise had been realized. Great blessings had come from the honor paid to that picture of the Sacred Heart.

## THE MASTER'S PORTRAIT.

Gaily the "God of the morning"  
Was flashing his pinions of light ;  
He glanced o'er the earth and the ocean  
And flushed them with radiance bright ;  
He shone on the roof of a dwelling,  
And gleamed on the golden-brown hair  
Of an artist of Judea's great city,  
A boy still unbearded and fair ;  
He kissed the clear brow of the Saviour  
As He trod o'er Judea's brown sand,  
Bringing joy to the heart of the mourner  
And health to the sick in the land.  
As He walked in the light of the morning  
No sound nature's harmony broke,  
Till the trumpet that rang from the temple  
The echoes from slumber awoke.  
And on the broad pathway before Him  
Two women now came into view :  
One, so modest and gentle and lovely,  
Half-hid by a mantle of blue ;  
The other, a maiden, who numbered  
Of years still full less than a score,  
And when the Rabboni had joined them  
She lifted her voice to implore :  
" Oh, Master ! Thy friends they have told us  
That far from Judea's fair vale  
Thou art going. How far wilt thou journey ?  
And shall we once more bid Thee ' Hail ' ? "  
" For a little while yet ye shall see me,  
And again, for another short space,  
My voice shall not sound in Judea,

Nor shall ye then look on my face."

"Then, Master," the maiden's voice pleaded,  
"While Thy Face thus our eyes cannot see,  
Oh ! leave us a print of Thy features  
To look on and dream that 'tis Thee !

Thou sayest the time will be *little*  
Thou wilt dwell from Thy children apart ;  
Perchance short if thou count it by *years*,  
But we count it by *tears of the heart*.

There is Luke, Thy disciple, the artist,  
He'll paint me a picture so fair  
That I'll feel, as I gaze on its beauty,  
That in truth 'tis Thyself who art there !"

And the tone of the Master was kindly,  
As He answered the pleading request :  
" Oh ! daughter ! thy prayer shall be answered.  
I'll give thee my portrait—the best  
That artist can trace on a canvas—  
From no painter who here has had birth  
But from one who surpasses Judeans  
As the heaven surpasses the earth."

And the maiden, Veronica, thanked Him,  
But His Mother, who heard and who knew  
All the mystery, spoke not, but, sighing,  
Drew closer the mantle of blue.

The day wore on slowly, the sunset  
Was glowing in purple and gold ;  
Its splendor was painting the hill-tops,  
And shining o'er hamlet and fold ;  
And when the great "day-god" had vanished,  
A flashing of torches was seen,  
And the maiden, Veronica, saw them  
And gazed on their crimson-red sheen.

But she felt a foreboding of evil  
As she heard, coming faint from the East,

The shouts of the far-distant rabble  
Like the cry of the desert's fierce beast.  
And forth on the morrow she wandered  
To the Temple's great courts to repair,  
For she hoped that the Master would see her,  
And answer her yesterday's prayer.  
But she hears a great cry in the distance,  
A shouting of women and men,  
And a vision of horror and cruelty  
Bursts forth on her wondering ken :  
A prisoner, led to the slaughter,  
By a rabble insatiate and fierce :  
On His brow is a garland of thorn-points,  
Which His temples most cruelly pierce.  
A prisoner—and, as she gazes,  
The maiden grows trembling and pale.  
“ ‘Tis the Master !” she cries out in anguish.  
Then, taking her long linen veil,  
She bursts through the menacing rabble  
And kneels at His way-weary feet ;  
She tenderly wipes off the blood-drops  
From those eyes so benignant and sweet.  
She wipes off the sweat from His forehead,  
And faint would more comfort bestow,  
But is seized by the hand of a soldier  
And thrust from His side with a blow.  
But on her veil's deep, snowy whiteness  
Is imprinted a picture of red,  
A portrait indeed of the Master—  
But with blood-stains and thorn-crowned head.  
'Twas no artist of earth who had traced it  
But Jesus himself had impressed  
The print of His sorrow upon it—  
The portrait He wills we love best.



## THE LEAGUE ABROAD.

### England.

Many of our Associates have learned from the little English *Messenger* what earnestness has been manifested in the work of the Holy League, and what a beautiful harvest has been reaped in England. One hundred and twenty thousand children were consecrated last year to the Sacred Heart ! Twenty-three thousand in Liverpool alone ! The question arises, whose children are all these ? What a Godlike vengeance has Ireland taken on England ? How mysterious are the ways of Providence ? Are we beginning to see the dawn of the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning the conversion of England ?

### United States.

The Cathedral centre of the League of the Sacred Heart in New York city is about to present St. Patrick's Cathedral with an ostensorium, which shall rival the one at Lourdes. The design has already been chosen, and the artists have begun on what is to be the most beautiful ecclesiastical work of art on this side of the Atlantic. The ostensorium shall be in two parts—the monstrance proper and the Thabor—and shall stand six feet nine inches high. Ornamentation, delicate and appropriate, is to be lavished on this treasure, with its symbols wrought in gold and silver, and its diamonds and emeralds, and rubies, and opals, and sapphires. But shall it not be a throne for God ?

## THE LEAGUE AT HOME.

### Renfrew.

A promoter thanks the Sacred Heart for two temporal favors received.

### Toronto.

A lady correspondent thanks the Sacred Heart for a signal favor received. One of her friends—a widow—had not heard from an absent son for a number of years. She was advised to recommend the affair to the prayers of the Sacred Heart. She did so, and, as a matter of course, shortly afterwards received news from her long-lost boy.

### Curran.

The League was established in this enterprising little parish in the course of last month. The enthusiasm displayed by the four or five hundred new members, during the few days of mission which was preached to them, is an encouraging sign for the future of the parish. Father Pilon is an energetic pastor, and does not retreat before obstacles when there is question of the spiritual welfare of his flock.

### Kingston.

We take the following from a letter sent us by one of the Reverend Sisters of our Lady of the Lake : " Allow us to inform you that we are doing our utmost to interest our pupils in the admirable work of the League. We have enrolled about one hundred and seventy of them—upwards of seventy of whom have already made the monthly Communion of Reparation. All seem enthusiastic over the work ; and we hope it will be the means of promoting the good of souls in this Protestant city."

**DON'TS FOR SOME CHURCH GOERS.**

The following don'ts taken from the excellent Antigonish *Casket* we recommend to associates of the Holy League. They are founded on common-sense as well as on the ritual of the Church, and will contribute much to interior piety and general edification :—

- Don't bring a crying baby.
- Don't dress so as to attract attention.
- Don't forget your prayer book or rosary.
- Don't stand on the sidewalk after mass is over.
- Don't complain that the services were too long.
- Don't take up a whole pew, but move up to the farthest end.
- Don't forget the fasts and the feasts that the priests read out.
- Don't forget to take or send the children that are old enough.
- Don't forget to genuflect before you enter the pew and after you leave it.

Don't turn round to see who is there or to find out what that noise was.

Don't come late to mass. Be in church before the Holy Sacrifice begins.

Don't forget that God is really present and that you are in His house.

Don't go up to the first seat if you come in after mass or sermon is commenced.

Don't pray out loud or in a manner to cause people to look at you.

Don't forget to pray for the deceased persons whose names the priests read out.

Don't fail to bless yourself with holy water when you enter, and again when you depart.

Don't talk in church. Don't leave before the mass is over, unless absolutely compelled to do so.

Don't become over-pious and bury your face in your hand just as the contribution box comes round.

Don't refuse a person a seat in your pew because he or she is poorly dressed. That is not Christian charity.

Don't forget to take along extra money on the Sundays when a collection is taken up for the orphans or some benevolent society.

Don't answer the prayers after mass as if you were afraid God would hear you, but raise up your heart and voice, and answer in a manner that will show that you are not ashamed of your religion.

Don't, gentlemen, stand up, leave the pew and go out in the aisle to let a lady enter. This is entirely unnecessary and causes great distraction. All you have to do is to move along and let the last comer be the first in the pew.

## THE TREASURY OF THE SACRED HEART.

### GOOD WORKS OFFERED FOR THE INTENTIONS OF THE LEAGUE.

Acts of Charity, 166,643.—Beads, 222,832.—Stations of the Cross, 38,492.—Holy Communions, 89,377.—Spiritual Communions, 207,854.—Examinations of conscience, 119,618.—Hours of labor, 113,525—Hours of silence, 115,797.—Pious readings, 32,686.—Masses celebrated, 155.—Masses heard, 74,014.—Mortifications, 70,782.—Works of charity, 12,667.—Works of zeal, 16,096.—Prayers, 999,032.—Charitable conversations, 113,967—Sufferings, Self-conquests, 65,327 —Visits to the Blessed Sacrament, 154,752.—Holy hours, 1,038.—Various good works, 257,873.—Total :—8,808,200 good works, contributed by 175 local centres of the League.

An Indulgence of 100 days, applicable to departed Souls, is attached to every good work offered for the intentions of the League. Use the *Daily Handbooks* or the *Treasury Sheets* to mark down your works.

## PROMOTERS' PAGE.

The Apostolical Resolution for April recommended to our promoters and associates is to work with greater ardor than ever, to propagate the Doctrines of salvation and the knowledge of the treasures of the Sacred Heart. The reading and distribution of good books, pious and instructive books, books that make us wiser and better Catholics, is perhaps the easiest means to do this.

\* \*

And let us begin with ourselves. It is not such a tremendous task to live piously, if we only have a mind to. The saints became saints by reading pious book, meditating on the lives of other saints and practising their virtues.

\* \*

When we set about looking after the spiritual interests of other people, the first thing that strikes us—at this season chiefly—is the Easter Duty, so binding on us Catholics. We trust the councillors and active members of the Men's League are zealously working up the General Communion of Eastertide. Perhaps it may not be amiss to say that the same Communion may be offered for several intentions, so as to fulfil the requirements of several societies.

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Preparations are going on on a magnificent scale throughout the world for the celebration of the Tercentenary of the saintly death of St. Aloysius of Gonzaga. Pilgrimages to Rome, Loretto and Castiglione and other places are being organized. An idea that commends itself to us here in Canada is that of having allegorical processions of children and youths, wherein the various edifying scenes in the Saint's life shall be represented. A short and beautifully illustrated life of the gentle Aloysius will be issued from the *Messenger* office next month.