



THE SINNER'S CONFESSION

After a painting by Plockhorst.



“ GOD IS THERE ”



O judge whether a family is good and happy, one most note, if the law of respect is observed there ; where children and servants are submissive and respectful, you can truly say that is a happy family.

The respect and honor rendered to Parents, constitutes the religion of the the family, as respect for a sovereign, or his representatives is the religion of society ; in either of those, Parents or Sovereigns, it is not the qualities one is asked to honor ; but the dignity which comes from God.

Our first obligation to Our Lord is respect, instinctive, spontaneous, unreasoning. We must honor Our dear Lord everywhere. His dignity as Man-God demands it. At His name every knee must bend in heaven on earth, and in hell.

In heaven the Angels are prostrate before His Majesty in trembling adoration. The place of His Glory, “ Heaven,” is also the place where sovereign respect is rendered Him. All creatures on earth obey Our Lord, the waters at His command stood still, adored Him, the sun and stars honored Him, and kept over Him when men despised Him ; and in hell the damned tremble under the severe justice of the Judge of the living and the dead.

II

Respect for our Lord present should be unreasoning. The Court, the King is announced, instinctively all stand ; the sovereign passes, all salute ; there is a spontaneous movement of deference and respect. He who has not this sentiment or who wishes to destroy it in others, is not a man. Catholics should blush at their want of respect in Our Lord's presence. I am only speaking of the respect of instinct. Go into any synagogue, if you speak or act disrespectfully you will be expelled. Before entering some pagan temple, one must remove their shoes, nevertheless there is nothing real in these temples ; they have nothing, we have all, yet, their respect is greater than ours. Our Lord could well say the *de vil* is more honored than He. " I have nourished children and they have despised me." I ask mothers, would they be pleased to be unrecognized by their children in public? If the slight would wound them sorely, why should we inflict it on Our Lord, who is the most sensitive of the children of men? Why are we less susceptible when there is question of His honor, than when there is question of our dignity? Nothing could be more erroneous ; our dignity only comes from God by reflection. In allowing the respect due to Our Lord to be slighted, it is our own we are destroying. Oh ! if our dear Lord should punish us as our want of respect deserves ! He caused Heliodore to be scourged for having profaned His temple ; but, here there is more than a temple. Let us then willingly, gladly on entering our Lord's presence, give Him as first greeting our homage of respect ; if thoughtlessness, or indifference, precedes in us the first homage, we are unhappy indeed. Truly our greatest sin against Faith, is our want of respect.

III

He who has faith, when we goes to Church, knows where he is going, into the presence of Our Lord Jesus-Christ. He enters, saying with St. Bernard, to all his pre-occupations : Remain outside, I go to God to be comforted. Can you not do likewise? You know how much time you can spend in church ; during that time lease all the

rest. You come to pray and not to transact business. Despite distractions, weariness, preoccupations, remain in respect and loving reparation in God's presence, and prove to Him, that if you cannot control your distractions, in spite of them, you will profess His divinity by the faith and respect of your posture, and if you only did that, your prayer is already meritorious.

A Saint going into a church, enters without looking around to see who is there ; he forgets all, to fix his eyes on Our Lord. When the Pope is present, one does not think of the Cardinals and Bishops ; and in heaven the saints are not occupied in honoring each other. No, to God alone belongs all honor and glory, Do thus, remember that in the Church there is only Our Lord. Having entered remain a few moments in silent adoration ; silence is the greatest mark of respect, and the first disposition for prayer is respect. The greater number of our distractions and indevotions in prayer, come from the fact, that we were wanting in respect to Our Lord in entering, or else that our posture is not respectful. Let us take a firm resolution to cultivate this instinctive respect, we need not reason about it ; should Our Lord prove His presence every time we enter a church ? should He send an Angel to tell us He is there ? It would show but little faith on our part ; but oft'times it would be necessary.

IV

We owe exterior respect to Our Lord ; respect of the body, nothing aids prayer so much ; see with what care the Church regulates the slightest details of exterior worship ; because that prayer is very glorious to our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave us the example by kneeling in prayer Himself, and tradition shows Him to us, praying with his arms extended in the form of a cross ; the Apostles preserved that manner of prayer, and the priest uses it in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Our bodies which receive the life of God, which live by its benefits of every instant ; do they owe nothing to God ? Yes ; we must make them pray by a posture full of respect. Negligent positions weaken the soul, while a mortified posture strengthens and helps the soul ; never allow yourself familiar

postures in God's presence ; not necessary they should be painful ; but very necessary they should be respectful ; familiarity breeds contempt. Love be tender and affectionate, but never familiar. Coldness and indevotions in prayer, have nearly always there source in the irreverence of the posture. If you are travelling, or at home, take the position which will help you most ; but in Our Lord's Sacramental presence, you must make your senses adore also. Remember how severe God was on this point in the old Law ; through what minute preparations the Levites had to pass : God wished to make them feel their dependence and prepare them to pray properly.

Because we are lacking in this exterior respect our piety has no life. You must not tremble and be afraid to enter God's presence, neither must you appear by levity to despise Him. This respectful posture is a help in our prayers, and we refuse it to satisfy our sensuality. How often our fatigue is only imaginary ! If the Pope were passing our fatigue would not prevent us from kneeling ; and even if we are really tired, let us not be so much afraid of enduring it, for suffering opens the wings of prayer. Let us always have and maintain a firm and reverential posture. If you sit, do so respectfully, do not take those lazy positions which weaken the soul. If our heart is not full of burning love, let our bodies, at least, attest our faith and our desire to love and to be pleasing in God's sight.

Let our bodies pray, let them adore ; let us be the court of our King Jesus. Think the Master is There, penetrate your intelligence with that true respect for Our Lord Jesus-Christ, " Who is There."



THE BLESSING OF THE LAMBS.

In the latter part of last year, in a crypt under the altar of the Church of St. Agnes, outside the walls of Rome, near the gate known as Porta Pia, the mortal remains of that glorious virgin saint were found in a coffin of silver, in which they were placed during the pontificate of Paul V. The discovery was made during an exploration of the catacombs of the old church conducted by Cardinal Kopp, the prince Bishop of Breslau.

It may interest the readers of the *Sentinel* to know that it is in this church that occurs, on Jan. 21, the feast of St. Agnes, the blessing of the Lambs, from whose wool are made the palliums worn by the Archbishops of the Church throughout the world. In the first volum of her fascinating work, the late Miss Starr thus describes a visit to this church on this occasion :

“ Outside the walls of Rome stands the church of St. Agnes, built by Constantia, the daughter of Constantine, over the very crypt where the remains of the virgin martyr were “deposited in peace” on the very day of her martyrdom. The villa Agnes is close by, and to this villa, from which opened a way to the catacombs, with passage which led to it open at the top so as to admit both light and air. To this open crypt the faithful of the early Christian ages were accustomed to bring their many needs, imploring the assistance of St. Agnes for their relief, not only such humble clients as her dear foster sister, Ementiana, who thus earned martyrdom at the hands of pagan ruffians who cast down dirt and stones on the head of the innocent child ; but such persons as Constantia, the daughter of the reigning Emperor. Although not yet a Christian, the pains and disgust attending a virulent ulcer had not only been dispelled by a vision while praying at St. Agnes' tomb, but the ulcer perfectly cured. Her conversion followed, then her baptism, and as a tribute of gratitude she built over the humble chamber in which lay the precious remains of St. Agnes the beau-

tiful basilica which is called " St. Agnes outside the Walls." Visiting this church on Jan. 21 for a moment we despaired of catching one glimpse of the beautiful ceremony performed nowhere in the world but in this Church of St. Agnes and on this one day of the three hundred and sixty-five, which we had longed to see for so many years. We found the side aisles less crowded and made our way carefully until we were really close to one end of the altar and with a pillar behind us. Here, surrounded by priests of all nations and visitors from all countries to the city of St. Peter, we assisted at two Masses, when the hurrying of acolytes to and from the sacristy seemed to show that the ceremony was soon to take place. The silk vestments of the celebrant were of a bright blood-red, delicately embroidered with gold as were those of his deacons; but those in the choir wore white wool soutanes, over which hung their lace surplices. A faint cloud of incense, and then appeared two acolytes, each bearing in his arms a lamb, white as the driven snow, its feet tied with rose colored ribbons, and on the side of the gentle creature, plaited ribbons of the same rosy tint were set in the form of I. H. S. Thus adorned as symbols of the Lamb of God, offered for us, the two lambs were laid each on its side, upon the altar. No sooner did the lambs appear in sight in the arms of the acolytes than a murmur of admiration ran through the whole church, hushed only when the celebrant, with the formal invocation of the ritual, the sprinkling of holy water and clouds of sweet incense, solemnly blessed the lambs, from whose wool were to be made the palliums which are worn by the Archbishops of the Church, as a symbol of meekness belonging to their high office. When all this had been done, the lambs, hitherto dumb, not opening their mouths, gave a low bleat, as much as to say: " We are living lambs and symbols of a living Lord and a living sacrifice." At this low bleat, even the celebrant smiled, and the crowd felt at liberty to express their admiration aloud, as the lambs were carried again, in the arms of the acolytes, to the sacristy.



HOW MY BOY WENT DOWN.

TIS only the same old story
That mothers so often tell,
With accents of infinite sadness,
Like the tones of a funeral bell ;
But I never thought, once, when I heard it,
I should learn all its meaning myself ;
I thought he'd be true to his mother,
I thought he'd be true to himself.

But alas for my hopes, all delusion !
Alas for his youthful pride !
Alas ! who are safe when danger
Is open on every side ?
Oh ! can nothing destroy this great evil ?
No bar in its pathway be thrown,
To save from the terrible maelstrom
The thousands of boys going down ?

It was not on the field of battle,
It was not with the ship at sea,
But a fate far worse than either
That stole him away from me.
'Twas death in the tempting dram
That the reason and senses drown ;
He drank the alluring poison,
And thus my boy went down.

Down from the heights of manhood
To the depths of disgrace and sin ;
Down to a worthless being,
From the hope of what might have been.
For the brand of a beast besotted
He bartered his manhood's crown ;
Through the gate of a sinful pleasure
My poor, weak boy went down.





The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

SEE that venerable old man, who for long years has desired and awaited the Redemption of Israel; with what tears and prayers he had petitioned heaven! and, behold a little child is presented to him in the Temple; instantly he feels and knows he holds in his arms the Desired of Nations.

See this pious widow who has consecrated her life to God's service; she also, is eagerly awaiting, expecting the Messiah promised to her ancestors. How many sighs and ardent wishes have escaped her! As if in response, the Holy Ghost directs her steps to the Temple, and she also recognizes in the little child Simeon holds, the object of her desires.

Not many days had elapsed since simple shepherds had heard an Angel say "Go to Bethlehem where the Saviour is born;" they went, and at the sight of the child Jesus, their hearts were filled with hope and love.

A little later came the Kings, the wise men: how many

nights had they anxiously scanned the skies hoping to see the mysterious star foretold by the prophets; at length, the star appeared, they followed it, and it conducted them to a crib, where lay a little child. By a celestial instinct they recognized the child Jesus, and knelt in humble adoration.

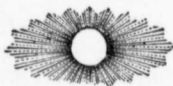
Years afterwards, God Himself is heard speaking from the clouds and saying. "This is my well-beloved Son, He whom I have sent to redeem the world, He in whom I am well pleased;" and that no testimony may be wanting to the Truth, Moses, the minister of the law, Elias the representative of the prophets, are there, recalling by their presence, the long years humanity had waited for its King.

Do you see that soul whom the longing for happiness torments; who is full of desires and aspirations for a higher nobler life, tormented by a void which nothing can fill; that inexorable weariness which Bossuet says is the base of human nature. She has thought to satisfy her heart with human affections; and human affections have responded with indifference, forgetfulness and death.

In her vain pursuit after happiness she has sought it in pleasure, ambition, only to be disappointed, disenchanted; always seeking and desiring happiness, and asking herself what will satisfy the void which causes such unrest: and behold one day — perhaps it was after Holy Communion, perhaps on some great feast day, when Jesus was elevated on His Throne, shedding around Him the blessing of His presence, calm and peace, or mayhap some twilight when only her heart and the sanctuary lamp kept guard, that a sudden inspiration felt in her very soul, made her understand why nothing earthly could fill her heart and soul with happiness; but only God, He who alone can give true happiness and satisfy fully every longing aspiration.

He it is whom my heart waits for, whom it desires, calls, expects, He the Eternal, Immense, Infinite God: God made man, God made Eucharist.

If your soul has not yet found its Beloved, Him who calls and attracts it; the center away from which she knows but unrest and agitation, oh come to the foot of the Tabernacle, fix your eyes in the Sacred Host residing there, and you will then understand, you also, that the Eucharist is all here below, simply because the Eucharist is Jesus.



AN EVERY DAY SAINT

THERE is an old legend that long, long years ago there lived a saint so good that the astonished angels came down from Heaven to see how a mortal could be so holy. He simply went about his daily life, diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfumes, without even being aware of it.

Two words summed up his day : he gave, he forgave. Yet these words never fell from his lips ; they were expressed in his ready smile, in his kindness, forbearance and charity.

The angels said to God : " O Lord, grant him the gift of miracles ! " God replied : " I consent ; ask him what he wishes. "

So they said to the saint : " Should you like the touch of your hands to heal the sick ? "

" No, " answered the saint : " I would rather God should do that. "

" Should you like to convert guilty souls, and bring back wandering hearts to the right path ? "

" No ; that is the mission of angels. I pray, I do not convert. "

" Should you like to become a model of patience, attracting men by the lustre of your virtues and thus glorifying God ? "

" No, " replied the saint ; " if men should be attached to me, they would become estranged from God. The Lord has other means of glorifying Himself. "

" What do you desire, then ? " cried the angels.

" What can I wish for ? " asked the saint, smiling. " That God give me His grace ; with that should I not have everything ? "

But the angels insisted : " You must ask for a miracle, or one will be forced upon you. "

" Very well, " said the saint ; " that I may do a great deal of good without ever knowing it ! "

The angels were greatly perplexed. They took counsel together, and hit upon the following plan : Every time the saint's shadow should fall behind him or at either

side, so that he could not see it, it should have the power to cure disease, soothe pain, and comfort sorrow.

And so it came to pass. When the saint walked along, his shadow, thrown on the ground on either side or behind him, made arid paths green, caused withered plants to bloom, gave fresh color to pale little children, and joy to unhappy mothers.

But the saint simply went about his daily life, diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume, without ever being aware of it.




A WORD TO THE WISE.

IT is a great thing to be an honest man ; it is a great thing to be a good citizen, ever ready to maintain social order and public tranquility ; a good father, a good husband, a good son, a good neighbor, and a good friend. All this is very necessary, and those who fail in such duties fall far short of what is absolutely required of them. But all this is not sufficient, these duties are not religion, although they are commanded by religion. Some thing more is required of a man, and that something is Christianity.

And why ? Because there is a living God, who is your Creator and your Father. Because this Almighty God has created you to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him, and thus to merit an eternal union with Himself, an eternal happiness in the life that is to come. Because when this world shall have passed away, there shall be another which shall never pass away ; a world in which God will bestow an everlasting reward upon these who have been faithful, and will visit with everlasting punishment these who have neglected to serve Him. Because Jesus Christe the Incarnate Word came into our midst to teach us how to live in order to gain this glorious eternity ; because He pointed out to us clearly and unmistakably the path of right, the path to Heaven, and declared that whosoever would not hear His words should be rejected by His Father in Heaven.



The Holy Eucharist a Power on Earth.

 PART from the relations of the Holy Eucharist to each individual soul, there is a large, noble, and broader view of its operation as one of the vast constituent facts of the universe, whose influence, unacknowledged if it be, has direct control of the whole course of the world. Any scheme of criticism that ignores or leaves aside this supernatural factor must be false or imperfect, and might as well leave aside the Incarnation itself. It will be seen how vast and interesting a question is thus opened; and it has been touched in a sermon, short but of much significance, delivered at York by Cardinal Manning more than twenty years ago. He here seemed to develop, in a Catholic sense, Butler's masterly argument, dwelling on the strange inconsistency or philosophical blindness that ignores what is as palpable and potent as other great Christian 'epoch-making' events. As F. Faber puts it: 'All the doctrines of the Church — Creation, Incarnation, Grace, Sacraments — run up into the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament, and are magnificently developed there. All the art and ceremonial, the liturgical wisdom, and the rubrical majesty of the Church are grouped round.'

'The presence,' the Cardinal says, 'of the Incarnate Word in the Blessed Sacrament is the basis and the center of an order of divine facts and operations in the world. They spring from it, rest upon it, and are united to it, so that where the Blessed Sacrament is, they are; where it is not, *they cannot be*. Men believe, then, in the whole order of natural facts, because they are palpable and immutable. They believe in the succession of day and night, of seasons, tides, and growth; but they are so immersed

in sense that they cannot realise that there is a higher order of divine facts and of supernatural operations more permanent, more immutable, more unerring, of which Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the creating and sustaining centre.'

To see the effect of this operation of our Lord's continued presence upon earth, we have only to look back and look around us. In all the changes of the world, we shall find this to be the sustaining power of one side and its irresistible force. Nor is this a mere fanciful agent to be appreciated by metaphysicians only or by pietists. 'It underlies everything, and is as distinct as Christianity itself. "By Him all things can exist." For there are faculties of appreciation rising in degree — viz., sense, reason, and faith — each having its sphere. Sense, unless misdirected is infallible in its reports. Reason elevates and corrects sense. But faith is above both, and is expressive and infallible. Thus the few who saw our Lord by sense believed Him to be "the carpenter whose mother and sisters we know." Sense carried them no further. Nicodemus, by reason, knew him to be "a teacher sent from God, for no man could do the miracles he did, except God were with him." This was a dictate of reason. But Peter knew him by faith.

'The working of this wonderful force is to be traced back to the beginning of Christianity. There is "a perfect chain of these divine truths. His omnipotence has called into existence two creations — the old and the new, and He is always *in contact* with His works." From this contact arise five divine facts: the Creation, Incarnation, Holy Eucharist, Mystical Body, and Resurrection. This chain of divine truths the Blessed Sacrament unites as by a clasp.'

This public Presence and power of our Lord is recognised to work in the most striking way; though agnostics, atheists, *e tutti quanti*, struggle hard to ignore it, it seems to be the whole Christian life, and this can be forcibly realised by striving for a moment to imagine it withdrawn, or as having never been given. But here imagination fails us; for it is of the essence of the whole scheme of life. We might as well strive to conceive of man with four senses only, or without the notions of time

or space. For the Catholic believer, of course, the sense of the actual presence needs no proof.

'The Greek schism,' goes on the Cardinal, 'has valid orders. The presence of Jesus is recoverable, and one day may rise again as from the dead. Not so those bodies which have lost the perpetual presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. They are in dissolution, and must be recreated by the same divine power. For where the Blessed Sacrament is not, all dies, as when the sun departs all things sicken and decay, and when life is gone the body returns to its dust.

'Does anyone know the name of the man who removed the Blessed Sacrament from York Minster? Was it in the morning or in the evening? But a change which held both in earth and in heaven had been accomplished. The city of York went on the day after as the day before. But the Light of Life had gone out of it; there was no Holy Sacrifice offered in the Minster. The Scriptures were read there, but there was no Divine Teacher to interpret them. The *Magnificat* was chanted still, but it rolled along the empty roof, for *Jesus was no longer on the altar*. So it is till this day. There is no light, no tabernacle, no altar, nor can be, till Jesus shall return thither. It stands like the open sepulchre; and we may believe that the angels are there, ever saying, "He is not here. Come and see the place where the Lord was laid."'

So striking and original a passage as this supplies an ennobling idea of the great Sacrament, and lifts us into a new domain. Thoughts such as these fill the soul with wonder and fix our reverence upon a solid foundation.

Here arises another speculation, infinitely interesting, the tracing the connection between the two great mysteries — that of the Eucharist and the Incarnation. 'It was love that prompted our Lord to seek by the Incarnation to contract a most intimate alliance with man by becoming man. But here He becomes united with the body and soul of one man only; and He provided the Eucharistic Sacrament to unite Himself with all, and thus engage all by this double union to love Him the more.' Various of the Fathers have thus considered the Eucharist a sort of 'extension of the Incarnation.'

'Now, what is the secret,' asks Faber, 'of this undy-

ing energy' (of the Incarnation) 'which crosses over ages of time and continents of earth, and waxes no weaker by distance and duration? It must be looked for in that perpetual presence within His Church which our Lord promised in the Gospel, in His Blessed Sacrament itself. *Nothing will explain the phenomena of the Church except the Blessed Sacrament.'*



“GOOD NIGHT MY JESUS.”

JESUS dear, the day is over,
 Now I leave my labor light,
 And before I seek my slumber
 Come to say a sweet “Good-night.”

Would that I might tarry near Thee,
 Rest before Thy lonely shrine;
 Thou wouldst whisper loving secrets,
 And I'd tell Thee all of mine.

But I cannot linger, Jesus,
 I must leave Thee for awhile;
 Now bestow on me a blessing
 And a fond, approving smile.

I will leave my heart beside Thee,
 It will rest securest there,
 And within Thy fond embraces,
 It will grow to Thee more dear.

So “Good-night” once more, my Jesus,
 Grant, no matter where I be,
 All my day thoughts and night dreamings
 Be of Thee and only Thee.



A Mother and a Guardian Angel

THE MOTHER.

BLESSED Angel, tell me, what hast thou done with my child ?

THE ANGEL.

From the hour of his birth I spread my white wings above him. Being appointed to be his guardian, I watched beside him. Dost thou not remember the thousand infantile graces which were to thine eyes so sacred. They were the exhalations of my presence. Even in sleep I watched above him. Have I been wanting in my guardianship ?

THE MOTHER.

Thanks, good angel, for thy brotherly care, but why didst thou not join thy prayers to mine in order to obtain for him a longer life ? Hadst thou wearied of thy charge ? Was he not happy with me ? And oh ! I was so happy in him ! Would it have lessened thy bliss to have obtained a longer life for him ? The earth to him was so beautiful, so full of sunshine and joy !

THE ANGEL.

Dear Sister, speak not thus. It is not their own bliss which the Saints and Angels seek, but the glory of God, who is the source of all their happiness. Earth does not comprehend the designs of Heaven. The language of the world gives forth echoes of egotism and inordinate love ; its thoughts are not the thoughts of God or of His Saints.

Above all, the divine will is always ours because it is directed by the paternal love which He bears all His creatures, and which decides their destiny.

Thou speakest of the happiness, the beauty of earth.

Oh, dear Sister, couldst thou but see the rays which illuminate the brows of the elect, the sun would seem as the dark night. Thy beloved child, encircled as he is, by the resplendent light of the chosen of God, regards as a dim ray that glorious sun which shines by day, and so grandly proclaims the glory of the Master.

THE MOTHER.

If my son had been spared he would have learned from my lips to know and serve God. He would have loved thee too, and I trust no action of his would have grieved thee.

THE ANGEL.

Poor mother ! Art thou ignorant of the wickedness of the world where thou wouldst have retained thy son ? Is not the field which they call Life chocked with thorns and difficult to cross ? It is full of hardships to encounter and enemies to overcome. Each age has its dangers and trials, infancy, manhood, old age, unite in one cry of woe.

There are, it is true, some, who, guided by heavenly winds, sail safely over this tempestuous sea, but would thy child have been of the number ? Who revealed to thee his destiny ?

Thou sayest that he had already shown a good disposition and a quick intellect, which a well directed education would develop into noble and generous actions.

Oh, poor mother, what reason hadst thou to tremble ! In this age of corruption and selfishness the good have most to suffer.

Through life their candor is often chilled by misunderstanding and their hopes blasted by delusion. Often there exists in them the lack of power to carry out the good they thirst for, and this makes them miserable, resembling in some measure those blessed souls who in Purgatory, sigh for the supreme beauty which they know but cannot enjoy. They are like the sons of kings imprisoned in the peasant's hut.

Thy son has been spared these trials. In mourning over his tomb thou weepst over the early acquisition of his happiness.

THE MOTHER.

Yes, I know that the innocent are often deceived by the wicked, who look on candor and amiability as weakness and narrowness.

Oh ! my Emmanuel, safe from this deceitful world, enjoy your happiness. You saw naught around you but smiling faces. Your life was short but it was without a cloud. Blessed be your present joy ; may the remembrance of it replace to me your smile and wipe away my tears.

THE ANGEL.

Christian mother, in comparing the joy of heaven with the misery of earth, thou wilt learn resignation, and perchance some day happiness.

Who can paint the miseries of this earth ! And if they seem so terrible to those who are still pilgrims how must they appear to us who view them from our heavenly home !

When the Master commands us to bring hither to Him in all its innocence a newly born child, we hasten with joy to obey. We tarry not with the message to his cradle ; we bear the treasure back to heaven and place it pure and unstained in the divine bosom. All the choirs of angels rejoice and congratulate the newly chosen one who is to be their companion in everlasting bliss. Dear Sister, raise thine eyes from the tears of earth to contemplate the scene. Christian mothers, if you did but know the gift of God when He bestows Heaven upon your little ones, far from weeping and sighing you would join your voices to the eternal hosannas in praise of the Most High.

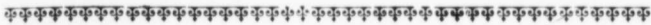
THE MOTHER.

How can we sing our exile ? Thou dost not know, good Angel, that when a mother loses her child life becomes a banishment, for her heart is in heaven with her treasure. Guardian Angel of my lost darling, come take his mother home.

THE ANGEL.

No, dear sister, life is yet left to you as a trial and a talent which you must multiply. Each day is full of merit. You must live for your husband, and if it be God's

will to bestow upon you other children, you must live for them. Together we will bear life ; and the prayers of your child in heaven will protect the whole family. Oh, how powerful is the prayer of innocence ! What can be refused to the prayer of a spirit praying for its mother. Sometimes you see the members of a family growing marvellously in virtue and knowledge, and you wonder. Mothers ! do you forget that your prayers are borne to the great white throne by the innocent hands you gave to Heaven ?



ANGLICANS HONOR MARY

THE "Angelus" is an Anglican paper published in the city of Chicago. The editor of the periodical takes offence at a criticism made by some one of its readers in reference to the Catholic tone displayed in many of its articles. The particular objection alluded to by the correspondent is the various commemorations of the Mother God. It is surprising to find non-Catholics manifesting devotion for the spotless Mother of the Redeemer, yet judging from the following answer of the editor of the "Angelus" to his correspondent we are inclined to be edified and to believe that such souls are not far from the kingdom of God, and that the day is not distant when they will properly embrace the tenets of the old faith by becoming members of the one true Church. Here are the words of the editor of the "Angelus" with which he defends himself for honoring Mary in its columns :

" We are sorry that our correspondent should object to various commemorations of our Blessed Lady which have appeared in the Angelus calendar from time to time. Nothing so isolates the Anglican communion from the rest of Catholic Christendom as the lack of devotion to Our Lady, which unfortunately characterizes so many Anglicans. Finally, doubtless nothing so retards the progress of the Catholic revival in the Anglican com-

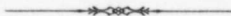
munion as the neglect on the part of even advanced High Churchmen to secure by invocation of Our Lady those inestimable blessings which would surely flow from the special exercise by the Mother of God of her strictly subordinate and derived, but none the less important, intercessory function. It is for the purpose of suggesting special devotions to her that we notice so many of her commemorations in our calendar.

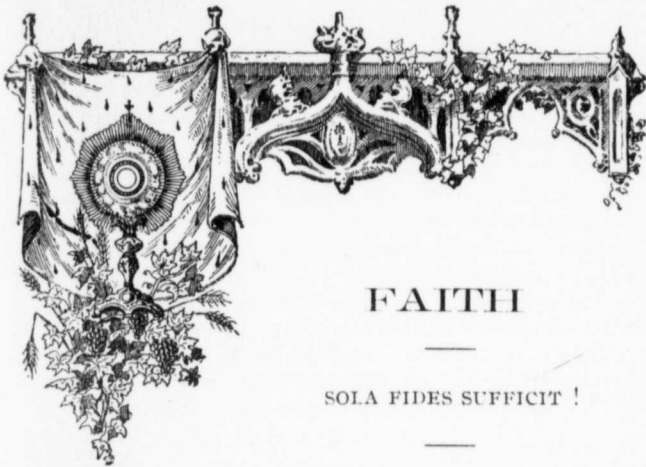
"We strongly incline to the belief that not a few of the miracles effected at Lourdes are miracles worked by Our Divine Lord at the intercession of our Blessed Lady, and in response to the prayers of faithful Catholics. We think it not at all unlikely that the Queen of Heaven, Our Lady of perpetual mercy, Our Mother of Sweet Grace, did actually appear to the blessed Bernadette and announce to her, "I am the immaculate Conception." At any rate we wish we could see manifested by equal large numbers of persons in the Anglican Church the same supernatural faith which is shown by the pilgrims at the shrine of our Lady of Lourdes. Perhaps if we had here in America a Lourdes grotto we should be without Christian Science temples, and if we had a blessed Bernadette we should be without a Mrs. Eddy and a blasphemous Dowie.



PARENT AND CHILD IN HOME LIFE.

ONE of the most important requisites of home life, and one perhaps most frequently overlooked, is the intimacy that should exist between parent and child. This is indeed the foundation on which all good influences may be most securely laid. The control which is obtained through force, or fear, or bare authority, has nothing abiding in it. But the influence at work where real sympathy and friendship exist between parents and children will abide long after the relationship itself is severed, and will enter as a powerful factor into the whole life. This ought to be one of the good features of our Catholic homes.





FAITH

SOLA FIDES SUFFICIT !

WHAT mainly hinders the freedom and happiness of our intercourse with Christ our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament is the account we make of *feelings*. In spite of all that can be said to us, we persist in applying this untrustworthy test to our relations with God, the result being discouragement and all its evil consequences.

Feelings are wayward children, all the more refractory often for blandishments and coaxing. Our wisest plan is not to notice them overmuch ; to be glad certainly when they show themselves friendly, and when they are unpropitious to let them alone.

Feelings we may dispense with, but faith never. Faith we must follow, lean upon, cling to, with all the more tenacity as the days draw on of which our Lord said : "The Son of man when He cometh, shall He find, think you, faith on earth?" (1) With the vehemence that will take no refusal we must constrain her, saying : "Stay with us, because it is towards evening." (2) Where faith enters and takes full possession, all good things enter with her. We need not go about to seek anxiously for anything else : *Sola fides sufficit !*

(1) Luke XVIII. (2) *Ibid.* XXIV.

Give me, my God, a deep and lively faith in all Your Holy Spirit has revealed and Your Church teaches. Give me this one thing necessary, and it is enough for me. *Sola fides sufficit!* The faith I ask is a living faith that must needs prove its vitality by good works. Give me the faith that lit up the lives of Your saints. Strengthen my hold on all revealed truth. But give me above all an intense, ever-growing realisation of the mystery of the altar, the central Mystery of our faith.

Realised by me as it was by Your saints, what a change that Presence would make in my life! Mind, heart, imagination, will, views, aims, desires directed to it, absorbed by it — O Jesus, what a transformation this would be! *Sola fides sufficit!* Lord, increase my faith!

Thou Who of old didst love Thy hand to lay
 On the dull, vacant eyes that craved for light,
 Behold, I come to Thee, and crying, pray:
 O Christ, O Son of David, give me sight!
 A faith scarce clouded by the mists of earth,
 A faith that pierceth heaven I ask of Thee,
 Faith to prize all things by their lasting worth:
 Thou canst, Thou wilt — O Lord, that I may see!

If we would think more about arousing our faith than exciting our feelings, would not our visits and our communions be the gainers? And would not the affections of the heart often follow the lead of faith? A few minutes spent in trying to bring home to ourselves that He Who is really present a few yards from where we sit or kneel is the world's long-promised Messiah, Whose advent kings and prophets desired to see; Whom in His own time all men desired to see and hear; He at Whose feet Mary sat at Bethany, unmindful of all but that Face and that Voice; He Whose words — "Peace be still," "Thy brother shall rise again," "Go, and now sin no more" — brought hope and joy to the troubled heart; He Who fell on His Face under the olive trees, crushed to the earth by my sins; Who died with the thought and the love of me in His Heart that Good Friday long ago; Who is to come again in the eastern sky where every eye shall see Him — a few minutes of earnest dwelling on thoughts such as these will rouse in our souls faith and hope and charity, will kindle humility, sorrow, gratitude, desire — for fuel is furnished for the fire.

“Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief.” I believe that beneath Your humble veils You are here truly present, O hidden God ! I believe the day draws near when You will be the hidden God no more ; when I shall see You coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and majesty, all nature trembling at Your approach ; whilst the elect lift up their heads because their redemption is at hand.

O Judge of the living and the dead, in that awful day remember me ! Remember me when You come to gather Your own into Your kingdom ! Remember, I beseech You, in that second coming, how often I have welcomed You at Your hidden coming, and let my heart welcome and leap up to meet You then.

O Jesus, Whom by faith I now descry
Shrouded from mortal eye :
When wilt Thou slake the thirsting of my heart
To see Thee as Thou art,
Face unto face in all Thy glad array,
Tranced with the glory of that everlasting day !



The Roman Catacombs.

THROUGH the preaching of the holy Apostles Christians began to multiply in every city, so that in the year 66 the heathen historian Tacitus spoke of them in Rome as being innumerable. No wonder, then, as Satan found his reign coming to an end, that he should arise, and with hellish devices endeavour to root out the Christian name from the face of the earth. The heathen, to whom the preaching of the Cross was foolishness, were his willing agents, and so much the more as the pure lives of the Christians were a silent judgment upon their own. ‘Ye shall be hated of all men, for My name’s sake.’ began from the earliest days to be verified.

The combination of simplicity and mystery which surrounded the name of Christians, and which defied all

attempts to be unravelled, excited so much the more distrust as it was impossible to find any true and specific charge to lay against them. Every kind of imaginable wickedness was therefore imputed to them ; and the mysterious tradition which reached the ears of the heathen through the mouth of the Jews, that in the feast of the Christians they made an offering in which they received the flesh and the blood of the victim, was the cause of the frightful accusation laid to their charge of offering up innocent children in order that they might eat their flesh and drink their blood. The meaning of the doctrine of the Most Holy Eucharist as well as the solemn ceremonies connected with it were hidden from the heathen, seeing that this supreme Mystery belonged to the secret teaching of the Church.

So secret, indeed, were all the circumstances relating to this most glorious Sacrament kept, that no unbaptised person was permitted to receive instruction on it, and catechumens were dismissed from the churches ere the most solemn part of the Mysteries began. To speak of them before the uninitiated was so great a crime that only heretics and apostates dared to do it.

But however carefully the first Christians concealed the teaching of the Church from Jews and Pagans, they have left behind them the clearest proofs of their belief in the Real Presence of our Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament, and of the adoration due to His most Sacred Body and Blood therein received. Had they in their assemblies offered and consumed but ordinary bread and wine, they would have done so before the whole world without danger or fear of persecution.

This mystery extended not merely to words and writings, but even to the places where our fathers in the Faith assembled together for the worship of God in times of danger and persecution ; and here they have left behind them memorials of a most striking kind, which witness to their belief in the Most Holy and Adorable Eucharist.

Without the walls of the city of Rome there exists a subterranean city — the city of the dead of the first centuries of the Christian era, and commonly known as the Catacombs. The ancient name for them was cemeteries, ' sleeping-places ; ' but in modern times they have re-

ceived an appellation which originally belonged to one cemetery, the Catacombs. Under this title are now understood all those consecrated places underground where in times of persecution the early Christians buried their dead. They consist of long labyrinths of intersecting passages, varying in height and width according to the nature of the ground. Occasionally there are excavated chambers, of every size and description, ornamented with frescoes. These passages are to be found in clusters, at distances varying from two to six miles from the walls of ancient Rome, along the high-roads ; and it is calculated that the united length of these subterranean corridors exceeds three hundred and fifty miles in extent. There are reckoned to be about forty-three Catacombs, twenty-six larger and seventeen of smaller size, according to the extent of the beds of *tufa*, a soft volcanic rock, out of which they are excavated. They were first commenced in the earliest Christian ages, and have been proved by the recent discoveries of M. de Rossi to have been exclusively the work of Christians. These, bearing in mind how the body of our Divine Lord was laid in a new sepulchre which had been hewn in the rock, were anxious to provide for their departed ones a similar resting-place, so that in death as well as in life they might be followers of Him.

This mode of burial was practised by the Jews in Rome in the first century ; and some few ancient Roman families, like the Scipios, still kept up the practice of their Etruscan ancestors, and refused to bury their dead. But an entirely new feature is found in the Christian cemeteries, marking them off sharply from both their Jewish and Pagan contemporaries. Christian charity urged many of the noblest patricians who had embraced the Faith to open their private burial-places to their humbler brethren ; and thus as early as the third century each of the *tituli*, or parish churches, in Rome had its own cemetery outside the walls. Down to the middle of that century the Christian burial-places continued under the protection of the Roman law, which held all graves to be holy and inviolable.

History has handed down to us the names of many noble women — Domitilla, Lucina, Priscilla, Cyriaca, &c.

— who made use of their properties as Christian graveyards, and received into their own family vaults the bodies of the blessed Martyrs names have been attached to their respective cemeteries; and the names of St. Sebastian, St. Lawrence, SS. Nereus and Achilleus, and others have been given to those in which the bodies of these blessed Martyrs were laid.

The business of excavating these halls of the dead, with the graves and mortuary chapels therein contained, was intrusted to a confraternity of *fossores* (*grave-diggers*). These devoted men, who belonged for the most part to the working classes, resembled holy Tobias, who hid the dead by day and buried them by night. Their work, besides being extremely arduous, was full of danger. How courageously must they have penetrated into the bowels of the earth, and by the dim light of their lamps hewn out those corridors in the solid tufa! In the side-walls of the passages the graves, called *loculi*, are excavated one above another, to the number of six or more, according to the height of the passage; sometimes as many as fourteen graves being so disposed one above another. When a corridor was filled with the dead it was deepened, and thus more space was found for graves. When this could not safely be carried farther a fresh set of passages was excavated underneath the first; and in this way there is an instance of five such corridors being formed one over the other, frequently crossing each other in different directions.

In the graves were buried one and sometimes two bodies. The Christians spared no pains to get the bodies of the Martyrs out of the hands of the executioner. They would beg or purchase them from the magistrates, secrete them from the watchman, carry them away under cover of the darkness of night through the streets of the city, in order to take them to their resting-places underground, where finally they would wash, embalm, and bury them. The grave was then carefully closed up with tiles or a slab of marble, and furnished with an inscription — generally a rude one — of the name, age, and day of interment of the deceased, with a few touching words annexed, such as '*In pace,*' '*Vivas in Deo,*' '*Vivas in eternum.*' The family and rank are seldom mentioned.

Besides these graves in the walls of the corridors, the fossore excavated separate vaults for private Christian families. For this perpose little square or hexagonal vaulted chambers, called *cubicula*, were excavated, in whose walls the graves were dug, and the vaulted roofs of which were highly adorned, as may be seen in the chromolithographs of De Rossi, taken from the Catacomb of St. Callixtus.

In many of these *cubicula*, or grave-chambers, may be seen a vaulted niche, under which, upon the flat ground, is a raised stone coffin covered with a stone or marble lid. Sometimes the coffin is cut out of the solid rock, and covered in the same way. In such coffins were one, two, or even more, bodies of the holy Martyrs laid. The lid or slat of the coffin served as an altar. This kind of vaulted memorial of the dead was called an *arcosolium*, and the chambers in which they are to be found were sometimes used as chapels. In some cases these chambers have an opening to the surface of the ground overhead, for the admission of light and air; and such a room was called *cubiculum clarum*, a 'light-room,' and the aperture above was the *luminare*.



THANKS to all our zealous promoters who, in the course of last month, have answered our appeal and sent us old and new subscriptions to the *Sentinel*. May our Blessed Lord Himself reward their faith and generosity! We hope many others will follow their example and try such an easy and meritorious apostolate among their friends, with the same zeal and success. During this whole month of february we will continue sending the various premiums for subscriptions collected, as promised in our last number.



The General and his Broom



IN a little village in France lived a retired general, a relic of the army of the first empire, who had preserved among his military souvenirs a deep hatred of religion and its ministers. The very sight of a soutane was enough to make him scowl and almost retrace his steps.

He was elected mayor of the village and the office gave him the opportunity of annoying the poor Curé with all sorts of petty restrictions under the pretext of zeal for reform.

The General's wife, however, was a woman of real piety and as her husband left her free to carry out her kind and charitable impulses she did her best to make amends for his brusque persecution.

An unexpected event brought matters to a climax.

The eve of the Feast of Corpus Christi a severe storm had wrought havoc in the village, and torrents of rain had made the market place, where the repository was to be erected, muddy and impassable to the procession. The peasants to a man, turned out and worked with a will to sweep away the débris at the request of the village Curé.

It was soon in order, except that a space fronting the domain of the redoubtable General remained untouched, respected by the peasants with instinctive accord, for his fame gone abroad and no one had courage to face the enemy.

In vain did the good Curé urge on his forces. No one would venture on the forbidden ground, even for the love of God. But the ground must be cleared. And the Curé was forced as a last resource to besiege the chateau and call upon its commander. He was shown into the parlor.

The General was first to speak.

" Good evening, sir. I suppose you have come to solicit an alms from my wife's purse. I can be of no use, and you will kindly permit me to withdraw. "

" You judge too hastily, General, " said the patient priest. " I know well the charity of your good wife, but it is yourself that I have come to consult. "

" I beg pardon. I will listen then ; but be brief in stating your business. "

" I will gladly be brief, as time is precious. To-morrow we celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi and from time immemorial it has been customary for the procession to pass before your door and for a repository to be there erected. The route is very muddy since the storm and I would beg permission to have it swept and put in order. "

The General's color rose. " Sir, the feast you speak of is not mentioned in the decree of the 28th of September, 1791, treating of rural usages. I will not allow this road to be swept, and I being master of my own premises, have the right to forbid trespassing. "

The gentle wife tried to protest. " Husband, " she said, " Why not be more obliging ? What the Curé asks is a very little thing. I have plenty of servants who will be glad to do it. Let me give orders at once. "

" My dear, let matters alone. This is not your affair. I have a perfect right to protest if I choose and whoever disputes my orders will make close acquaintance with my horsewhip before the night is over. "

" Allow me to say good evening, " said the poor Curé, taking his departure, " I do not want to be a source of discord in your family. Is this your final decision, General ? You will neither allow your servants to sweep the street nor permit me to ask the village people ? "

" I have told you so. Once is enough, " said the General.

The Curé bowed and withdrew.

The General rang his bell. " Nicolas, Peter, François ! "

Three serving men, like ancient grenadiers, advanced to receive his orders. They made their salute and stood straight, silent, immovable, eyes fixed at ten paces, their arms straight at their sides.

" You know, don't you, that I have a good strong fist ? "

" Yes, sir " responded the three lackeys in respectful accord.

" Good ! If any one should ask or command you to sweep the crossing before my house, be it whom it may,

and any one of you obey, I promise to flog the culprit within an inch of his life. You can go."

The three grenadiers saluted, pivoted on their heels, faced to the right about and left the room.

It usually happens that people who are not naturally malicious, but only err from habit, human respect or party spirit, feel after having been in the wrong a certain discontent with themselves that is revealed by ill humor. It was the case in this instance. The General was so cross all the evening that every one went to bed early. He did the same, leaving, contrary to his custom, the evening paper unread.

The house was soon quiet and all slept the sleep of the just except the master himself, who, turn and twist as he might upon his pillows, could not close an eye.

Suddenly, in the stillness, he heard a peculiar noise.

Swish . . . Swish . . . Swish . . .

"What is that?"

"Some one is sweeping, contrary to my orders. I will make short work of him!" And he began dressing in haste.

"It is one of my servants who has been hired to do it secretly. Never mind, Sir Curé. You are at your tricks. We will dislodge the enemy by a bombshell!"

Partly dressed, in his morning gown and slippers, he descended the stairs, horsewhip in hand.

During all this time the broom, for it was indeed this useful implement that had disturbed his slumbers, pursued its avocation.

Opening the door suddenly the General, with his horsewhip, came face to face with the Curé, broom in hand.

"What! sir," said he, "is it you yourself, at this hour, sweeping before my door?"

"Myself, General. You threatened such dire punishment to any one who should undertake this work, that I dared not send any one else. But it is all the same. I am ready to suffer the consequences of this pious duty. Pick up your whip and strike. I am ready—too happy to suffer for my Lord a little of what He suffered for love of me.

The General hemmed and hawed. "Is that the way you take it? Good! We will try something else."

And dashing into the courtyard—"Nicolas, Peter,

François!" he shouted in the voice that once dominated the sound of the cannon. "Wake up, sleepy heads. Bring me a broom!"

They came, half dressed, tumbling over one another, thinking, poor souls, that at very least, the castle must be on fire.

"Bring me a broom!"

"A broom?" cried poor Peter, stupefied.

"Certainly; a broom. I have been calling for one this half-hour."

The broom was brought, and the General, snatching it from the hands of the domestic, began to sweep the crossing.

"But, General," interposed the Curé, "don't fatigue yourself, I pray. You are not used to such work."

"Not at all. You take one side, I will take the other. We will see who will win. It is the battle of the brooms!"

But in ten minutes the General was forced to surrender. The perspiration stood in big drops on his forehead and he panted like a race horse. He gave his broom to the servants and bade them do their best. Turning to the Curé he bowed respectfully. "And you, Monsieur, go home and rest. All shall be in order. In the morning I will give you a proof that you have preached the best sermon of your life to-night."

The next morning at day-break the General was in command of his domestic army. "Hurry up," he said, "we have work to do and the *Angelus* is already ringing."

And the three big lackeys, mounted on ladders, broke off pitilessly the most beautiful branches from the acacia, chestnut and sycamore trees; whole trees even were sacrificed. The general had reserved for himself the lighter duties, but he worked harder than they. He had never done such damage to the enemy. The ground was carpeted with flowers and greenery as he stood with his arms crossed, like Napoleon at Waterloo.

"That will do. If the Curé is not content he will be hard to please. Here François, Nicolas, clean away the rubbish. You, Peter, will help me carry away the flowers."

His orders were so well carried out that in a quarter of an hour the entrance to the castle was a mass of varicolored flowers, and before it was erected the most beauti-

ful repository ever seen in the memory of the oldest inhabitant of the place.

The good wife of the General, looking from her window, rubbed her eyes. Was this a dream? She could not believe her eyes. But what was her astonishment when the General announced that he would accompany her to Mass and walk in the procession! She could not believe it. He was in earnest, however, and kept his promise. The Curé, in truth, had won the day.



OPEN THE DOOR

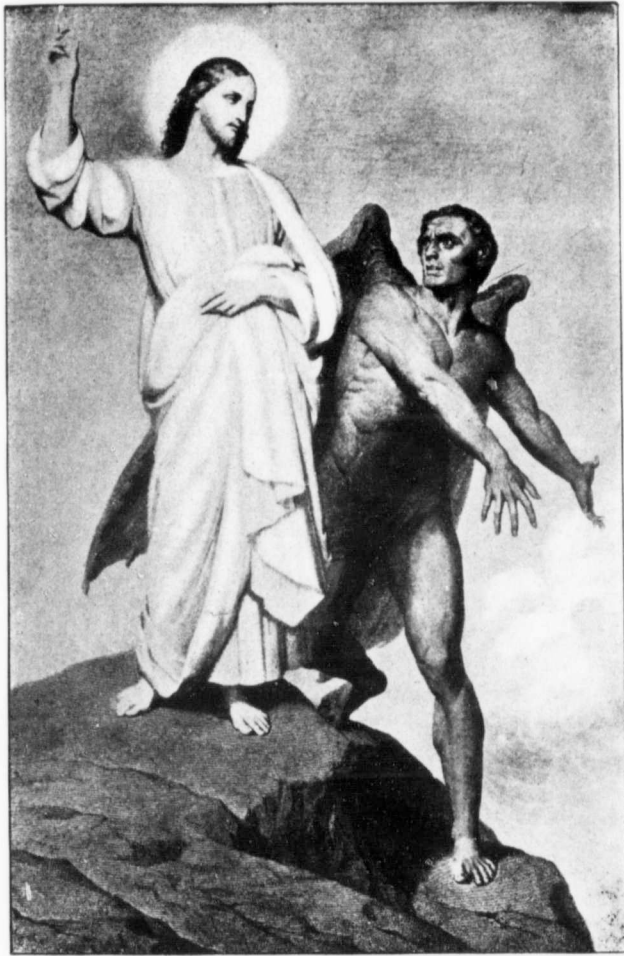
Open the door, let in the air ;
The winds are sweet, and the flowers are fair.
Joy is abroad in the world to-day ;
If our door is wide, it may come this way.
Open the door !

Open the door, let in the sun ;
He hath a smile for every one ;
He hath made of the raindrops gold and gems ;
He may change our tears to diadems.
Open the door !

Open the door of the soul ; let in
Strong, pure thoughts which shall banish sin.
They will grow and bloom with a grace divine.
And their fruit shall be sweeter than that of the vine.
Open the door !

Open the door of the heart ; let in
Sympathy sweet for stranger and kin.
It will make the halls of the heart so fair
That angels may enter unaware.
Open the door !





JESUS TEMPTED IN THE DESERT.