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A

SHORT NOTICE

ON THE

Origin and Object

OF THE

SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY

BETTER KNOWN AS

SISTERS of the GOOD SHEPHERD

Rejoice with me, because I have found my Sheep that was lost.

S. Luke xv. 6.

OTTAWA.

Printed at the Asylum
OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

1882.

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no. 0527
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APPROBATION.

It gives me great pleasure to approve of this Short Notice of your Order and of the good work it is doing. I hope that this edifying little book will not only be instructive to those who read it, but also profitable to your pious Community.

J. O. ROUTHIER, V. G.
ADM.

Ottawa March 12, 1882.

In presenting to their many devoted friends and well-wishers this Short Notice, written by a friend of the Institution, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd hope, that it may be, under God, the means of inspiring charitable persons to aid in the good work by their prayers and alms, and that to some chosen souls it may be the seed of a vocation to a life of constant sacrifice for Jesus Christ.

BLESSED BE GOD.

Feast of St. Margaret of Cortona, Feb. 23rd. 1882.



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Sisters
OF THE
Good Shepherd.

ORIGIN AND OBJECT.

Rejoice with me because I have found my sheep that was lost. — S. Luke, XV. 6.

The life of man, says holy Job, is filled with many miseries. This is a truth re-echoed by the testimony of all ages and which cannot be gainsayed. These miseries and sufferings, though they are manifold, may, however, be classed under a few heads; they can all or nearly all be included under the loss of friends, loss of property, loss of health, loss of reputation. Christian charity comes gladly to the relief of those who suffer from one or more of these misfortunes. There are asylums for the orphan, for the poor aged or infirm, there are hospitals for the sick. Yet apart from these asylums and hospitals, private charity can do and does much for their relief. Christian families often adopt the child left without father or mother, the poor sick man or woman is frequently the object of the care and attention of a number of charitable neighbours. But there is a suffering greater than that of the orphan or the sick patient — it is the agony of the bruised, though sinful heart, that in some haunt of vice, is sighing for its deliverance from sin and misery. It alas! finds no charitable hand to raise it up, while it finds hosts to deride its regrets and agony and false friends and its own passions who try to keep it where it is. To the relief of that poor heart no one can come; even the most charitable persons dare

not approach — the more pious and charitable they are, the farther they will keep away, partly from that disgust which virtue feels for vice, partly through fear, lest by contact with persons so degraded, their own fair name may be tarnished and their good intentions misconstrued by foul minds or calumniated by malicious tongues.

Where then can that poor degraded being, flying from a life of sin, find shelter? No family however poor, if respectable, can run the risk of harbouring her. What will the neighbours say if that father and mother allow such a person to cross their door, nay even if they are but noticed speaking to her? Perhaps her good intentions are only feigned and she seeks the ruin of some of their own children? They have daughters of their own to be protected. Yet is there no relief for her misery? Must she perforce stay in sin? Christ pardoned the woman found in adultery — He forgave the penitent Magdalen and even said "many sins are forgiven her because she has loved much." Has that merciful Savior no followers who will walk in His footsteps and endeavour to bring to Him these poor sinful creatures who are disowned even by the father and mother who weep over them, and scorned and rejected by the very persons who have compassed their ruin? Yes, Christian charity knows no sorrow or distress that it may not relieve, and the highest embodiment of Christian charity is to be found in those different communities, those religious orders established in the bosom of the Catholic Church, whose members have left all to follow Christ — parents, wealth and pleasure, and have devoted their lives to the support and solace of the suffering and miserable of every class and condition.

Apart from those religious orders that devote themselves to teaching, there are Sisters who relieve the poor in their homes and in asylums, who take care of the orphan, who attend the sick and dying; there are others who receive that wandering sheep, of whom Christ said "Rejoice with me because I have found the sheep that was lost," the poor outcast of Society — To her they give a shelter, that is a *home* and the means of earning

pure daily bread, thereby keeping her from the contagion of the world and from that poisoned cup of vice of which alas! she has drunk so deeply, and teaching her to take all her affections from the world and fix them on Jesus Christ, and henceforward to lead a life of penance in atonement for the past.

Who will say there is a charity greater than this? No doubt, it is a repulsive work of charity; for a pure maiden grown up in the bosom of a pious family, innocent of sin, not knowing even what vice means, to have to approach the degraded creature who has lived in wickedness and shame for years, to hear the foul words she utters almost unconsciously they have been her language for so long a time, words which sound like an unknown tongue in the ears of that innocent spouse of Christ, — to calm by her kind words and deeds, those passionate longings for liberty, that terrible disguised temptation, which haunts the penitent for years. What more revolting to a pure and innocent heart? But the love of Christ overcomes these natural feelings of aversion and the difficulty of the work is compensated for by the floods of heavenly joy with which Christ inundates the hearts of those who have consecrated themselves to this great work of charity.

Such a work of heroic devotedness is the sole End of the Institute of Our Lady of Charity, better known as The Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

This religious congregation was founded by the Venerable Father John Eudes, the Apostle of Normandy, in 1641.

A few words will not be out of place with regard to that wonderful man, who was the eldest of three brothers remarkable for their talents and virtue. He was born November 14th, 1601 of pious parents, in answer to a vow made to God if he would bless them with offspring, and was baptized by the name of John. In his pure childhood, as in that of St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane Chantal, who lived in his time, were seen the germs of those virtues which were afterwards to make him so glorious in the sight of God and men.

He had but one desire, one steadfast purpose, to devote himself

to God — to adore the Heart of Jesus and to honor His Blessed Mother. At twelve years of age John Eudes was allowed to make his First Communion: up to this time he was of a delicate constitution, and was under the care of a private tutor, but now day by day his health became stronger, and when he had completed his fourteenth year, his parents no longer having any reason to fear the effects of study, sent him to the Jesuit College at Caen. There he was a model of virtue to all the students and was distinguished for his fear of sin, his docile obedience to his Superiors and his great attraction for *purity, prayer and charity*, the virtues which were to shine so brightly in his after-life. He was remarkable for his tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, of whose Sodality he was a fervent member.

John Eudes went through his rhetoric and philosophy with the greatest success. By the advice of a prudent director he resolved on embracing the ecclesiastical state, and having received tonsure entered the Congregation of the Oratory, a pious community of ecclesiastics, in which however no religious vows were taken.

He received subdeaconship, Dec. 21st, 1624. He was ordained deacon in the Lent of 1625, and in Dec. of the same year he received the holy unction of priesthood from Mgr. Boivin, Bishop of Tarsus and coadjutor of the Bishop of Avranches.

John Eudes had then completed his 24th. year. At his first mass which was said on Christmas night in a Chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, he seemed to be quite filled with God and with the holiness of the Sacrifice he was offering.

He was afterwards accustomed to say - "We should need three eternities to say mass right — the first to prepare for it, the second to say it, and the third to make our thanksgiving for it."

Such was the instrument that God, in his mercy and goodness chose as the founder of a pious congregation, whose sole object was to be, the reformation of fallen women, — the most necessary, the most noble, and the most difficult

work of charity that exists. This was in 1641 and is thus beautifully described by his biographer.

"In his various wanderings, Father Eudes had often met with unfortunate beings, fallen angels whom want or passion had cast into the depths of depravity.

"Many of them when they heard the priest's words, longed to return from the paths of sin, for the greater their fault, the greater tenderness and compassion had he shown them, and he had never failed to stretch out a helping hand to them. But he knew that the world is merciless, and casts aside those who have given up domestic joys to become its playthings; he felt that he had little power to save these young women, whom his departure would leave destitute of shelter, support, and counsel; he saw that want and misery would again seize upon them, and plunge them more hopelessly into the abyss. Waifs and strays from the wreck, the surges seemed to play with them for a while, and then dash them against the cruel rocks.

"At his request some pious persons had received several of these unhappy beings into their houses, but such an expedient was attended with many practical objections. Father Eudes was anxious to place them together under the same roof, and to keep them under the special direction of those who would undertake to bring them back to a better life. The idea was good but difficult of execution, however God provided the means.

"A woman named Madeleine Lamy, who was herself in great poverty, had received some of these penitents into her lowly abode; she taught them to live according to the precepts of the Gospel, endeavoured to enable them to earn their bread, and provided for their most pressing wants by means of alms, which Father Eudes and other charitable persons placed in her hands.

"One day Father Eudes went with M. de Boanieres and M. & Madame Blouet de Camilly to visit a church in the neighbourhood. Madeleine Lamy appeared suddenly before them, and thus addressed Father Eudes' companions, "Where are you going Vi-

siting churches, and admiring holy pictures; you think that this is true piety? Far from it, this is not what you should be doing. You should set to work and found a house for these poor girls who are being lost for want of care and of a way of living."

"These simple but energetic words made a great impression upon her hearers. They began to consider how they could best satisfy her, and when she returned to the charge the day was gained. One of them undertook to pay the rent of a house, another to furnish it: M. and Mdme. Camilly promised the food required for the support of the penitents.

"A house near the Millet gate, opposite the chapel of St. Gratien, at Caen, was hired; on the 25th November, 1641. the penitents were installed there, and, with the aid of some pious women who had consented to take care of this little flock, all was so far arranged by the 8th of December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, that they began to keep enclosure and to observe Rules drawn up by Father Eudes.

"He often visited these poor girls, gave them instructions in private, and endeavoured to provide temporal assistance for them, in order that they might acquire a taste for a mode of life so different from the one they had given up. Mgr. d'Angennes approved of all that had been done, and gave permission for the erection of a chapel in the house the spiritual direction of which was entrusted to Father Eudes.

Such was the modest origin of the Order of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd.

Every good work meets with crosses and contradictions, and it was not to be otherwise with the Congregation instituted by Father Eudes. St. Francis of Sales however assisted and encouraged him, and gave him from the Order he himself had founded, the Nuns of the Visitation, an energetic woman. Mother Patin and several companions. Aided by these she put the work on a solid footing, and when the infant community was able to take care of itself and had a competent superior to govern it, she withdrew with her spiritual daughters to her own monastery of the Visitation. Letters patent of institution were granted to the new community by Mgr. Molé, Feb. 8. 1651. These letters

--7--

were to serve as the rule and guide of future establishments.

The number of penitents constantly increasing rendered a larger house necessary and soon required several new foundations.

Long had Father Eudes and the good Sisters sighed for the Papal approbation which would crown their work. Their desires were to be satisfied sooner than they expected. On the 2nd. of January 1666, the reigning Pope, Alexander VII. issued a Bull erecting the new Order, under the Rule of St. Augustin approving the Constitutions drawn up by Father Eudes, and giving leave to add new regulations, if necessary.

Filled with joy and gratitude for so great a favour, the Sisters delayed not a moment their solemn consecration to the new work, and after several days spent in silence and prayer, they devoted themselves for ever to God by the three usual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience adding a fourth binding themselves to labour for the reformation of fallen women. Father Eudes who had borne all the toil of the foundation was filled with joy at the result of his labours, now certain to be successful, since they had the sanction and the blessing of the Holy Father.

He preached on that solemn occasion, and his words are too beautiful and expressive, not to be inserted here.

“Speaking to you, my dear Sisters, I would say. O! daughters of the Sacred Heart and of the Mother of Fair Love, behold the long-expected day, the day on which you are to renew your holy vows; do it with a large heart, *corde magno et animo volenti*,

“You, like other nuns, will take the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but you will be distinguished from them by a fourth vow of labouring for the salvation of souls purchased by the Precious Blood of the Son of God. Remember, dear daughters, that this is the objet to which you have devoted your lives, and that at the hour of death God will require of you an account of the manner in which you have fulfilled this obligation. Woe to the daughter of Our Lady of Charity who has won no soul to be presented by her to

God on that day :

"Think of this, my dear daughters in Christ. Be firmly persuaded that you are absolutely bound to do all that care, diligence and prayer, and above all the example of a holy life can do to win for your Spouse the souls that He has redeemed with His Blood. Bear it constantly in mind. Oh! if it were possible that you should ever be so unhappy as to neglect it, I now pray with all my heart that our Heavenly Father may chastise you so severely as to compel you immediately to return with fervor to your divine and holy vocation."

Like the grain of mustard seed spoken of by Our Divine Saviour in the Gospel, which though being the smallest of all seeds grew to be a tree and spread its branches far and wide, so the Order of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, grew from such a beginning to be a powerful means of salvation to thousands, not only in the town where first established but in almost every part of the known world. At the time of the French Revolution it had houses in the following towns in France, Caen, Rennes, Guingamp, Vannes, Tours, La Rochelle and Paris.

Like all communities in France, at this period, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity suffered severe losses. "But in vain" says the illustrious M. de Montalambert, the spoilers constantly recommence the work to which revolutionary writers incite them; devoted charity is ever ready to begin its works anew." And in truth no sooner had these troublesome times ceased than the old houses were opened again and new foundations began to be made, and ever since the Order has continued its course and God alone knows the good that has been done by it, since the day when poor Madeleine Lamy began with Father Eudes to provide a suitable dwelling for the women whom he had rescued from degradation and misery. Among the later foundations may be mentioned Versailles, Nantes, Lyons, Valence, Toulouse, Le Mans, Blois, Montauban, Marseilles (two houses) Besançon, in France; Dublin Ireland; Buffalo, U. S. Ottawa,

Toronto, Canada; Bilboa, Spain; Herefordshire, England and Loretto, Italy.

And now let us speak of something that is most interesting ; the working of the Institute. And first as regards the dress of the Sisters. As a mark of devotion to the Blessed Virgin, who is the Patroness and Mother of the Institution, and in order to keep the symbol of purity constantly before the nuns, their dress is white even to the shoes. The choir sisters only, wear black veils to remind them constantly that they must pray and do penance for their adoptive daughters.

Over the heart inside of the habit, is a cross worked in blue, worn as a remembrance of the passion of Christ and of the duties they have taken upon them. The habit, scapular and long white cloak are all blessed on entering the noviciate. The nuns wear hung at the right side, a large ivory Rosary, and around the neck, a silver heart two inches long, blessed on the day of profession. On one side of this heart is the figure of the Blessed Virgin with the Infant Jesus, surrounded by wreaths of roses and lilies ; on the other side are engraved the words, "VIVE JESUS ET MARIE." The band on the forehead and the wimple encircling the face and neck of each Sister are of linen ; all the other garments are wollen.

As the chief occupation of the nuns besides prayer, is to reform those who have strayed from the path of virtue, the novices are carefully trained in their duties towards the penitents: The principle of the sisters is to unite firmness with gentleness in their treatment of these poor stray sheep. It was written of one of their earliest Superioresses, Mother Mary of The Holy Trinity, "gentleness was her rule even with the most refractory penitents, and by it she soon won their hearts" The penitents are always called by the sweet name of " children, " and in respect for her feelings each one is given a name different from that which she bore in the world. They are never allowed to speak to one another of their relatives or of their past life.

One who visited a Monastery of the Sisters of Our Lady of

Charity speaks thus of what he saw, and as the rule is practically the same in every house of the Order, to speak of one is to speak of all.

“The first class which we visited was that of the *Preservation*, composed of young girls, who had not given open scandal, but whose position had been such as to expose them to great danger. They are completely separated from the penitents, and are divided into classes according to their age.

“The second division of the establishment is set apart for women who had forsaken the path of virtue, and who have entered the house by their own free will, if of age, or have been sent there by their relations, if minors.

“They are called Penitents, and are divided into different classes, according to the greater or less guilt of their previous life and their conduct after admission. The remedies in the case of these wounded souls consist for prayer, silence and frequent confession, and above all, gentle guidance and supervision. These poor creatures, who have often previously been treated with great harshness, find themselves all at once surrounded with a care and consideration quite new to them, and many are filled with grief when the moment comes for leaving this place of protection.

“The Sisters who have care of the classes are the only ones who hold communication with the penitents. They never leave them alone by day or night; their cells commanding a complete view of the dormitory of the Penitents.

“A number of the rescued women, fearful of their own weakness, beg to remain for ever in the Asylum. These form the class of *Perseverance* or Magdalens. They are all clothed in black, and wear a crucifix on the breast; and a rosary at their side. Their calm, and peaceful countenances bespeak the grace of Christ which reigns in their hearts and their heavenly lives are the blessed fruits of the fourth vow imposed by Father Eudes.

“Many, we were told, are highly favoured by God, their souls, like those of Magdalen and Thais, are flooded by torrents of grace.

Such spiritual miracles are of constant occurrence in these blessed abodes; from the height of heaven, Father Eudes seems by his intercession to obtain moral reformatiions in cases that might well be deemed hopeless by the world. "The most perverse are won," said the Very Reverend Mother Superior, "as soon as we can prevail on them to seek the intercession of our Revered Founder and Father."

These different classes are under the patronage of different Saints, who like these poor penitents had once been great sinners, such as St. Mary Magdalen, St. Margaret of Cortona, St. Mary of Egypt, St. Augustin. Thus the highest class, those who have resolved to spend their whole lives in penance, spoken of as being in the class of Perseverance is named after St. Mary Magdalen. Those who have only lately left the world and the scene of their crimes, belong to the class of St. Pelagia; thus they all have a patroness in heaven who knows the trials and struggles of their poor hearts. Moreover each "child" of the Magdalen class bears a religious name, as Magdalen of the Seven Dolours, Magdalen of the Crown of Inorns. These good creatures lead lives of extraordinary penance and prayer, yet for obvious reasons, no matter how pious a penitent may become, no matter what talent, rank or fortune she may have possessed, she can never be received a member of the Community of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. On this point the rule knows no exception.

We spoke of the piety of those penitents who are so despised by the world and yet so dear to God. A few examples of their edifying lives and consoling deaths will not be out of place here. Those whom we shall mention have all passed from this world to the next within the last six or seven years. This record is taken from the Chronicle of one of the Monasteries; and was never intended for other eyes than those of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity.

"But of the sheep in the fold, what shall we say? Does the Shepherd know them? Do they know Him? Are they faithful to fly to Him for protection when the raging wolf comes to devour

them? These are interesting queries. That the Good Shepherd knows and loves the Sheep, for whom He has left behind the ninety nine, who never strayed, to seek the lost one, we have a proof in their miraculous conversion from a life of sin, from which it would seem the Good Shepherd draws them Himself, takes them by the hand, and leads them into His pasturage. And they in their turn know the Shepherd's voice, by their daily mass, their life of prayer, their assiduity in attending religious instruction; yes, and obey him too, by avoiding strifes and contests and all that is contrary to the law of God. Though these poor erring ones are not without faults, they are rarely of a serious nature. And it is a balm to our hearts and a heavenly compensation for our labours amongst them, to see them persevering in spite of the constant struggle between nature and grace, in which they have to drag their weary limbs over the stony-soil of penance, on their way to the golden fields of the eternal pasturage. The majority are anxious to persevere in a life of labour and retirement, fearing the danger they would be exposed to if they returned to the world. Thus they know the Good Shepherd and He knows them, and anxious to fly to Him for protection from the ravening wolf who goes about seeking whom he may devour, they enter into the Society of the Children of Mary, who is the Help of Christians and the Mother of poor strayed souls. A Retreat is given to them every year, preparatory to the feast of their holy Patroness, St. Mary Magdalen. It is generally conducted by a son of St. Dominic. Last year it was preached by Rev. Bryan O'Dwyer, an Oblate of Mary Immaculate. If this good priest had gone into the heart of each, to learn its dispositions, trials, and temptations, so as afterwards to adapt his discourse and make it suitable for all, he could not have succeeded better. Pray, our very dear Sisters, that the seed of the divine word dropped into their hearts may yield fruit a hundred fold.

“ Since our last circular, four of our dear children have been we hope, safely landed on the shore of eternity. The first

called to receive her just reward was Winifred, who had spent thirteen years in atoning for her past transgressions. Though of an irritable disposition, she had many redeeming qualities. Notwithstanding the weakness of her constitution she applied herself to her work with an energy that never flagged, and in fact she never gave up till the two months preceding her death; when she repaired to the Infirmary which she was destined never to leave till carried to the silent tomb. Although this poor child through human frailty often stumbled in her path, yet she never forgot that she had entered the House to do penance. The religious placed over her often admired that spirit of virtue which caused her to fly the worldly conversations of the new comers, and led her equally to disapprove of every word and act which she considered unbecoming in a house of penance. And what was still more remarkable, she was singularly sincere, upright, and truthful. On her entering the Infirmary (her lungs being seriously attacked) her Mistress thought proper to remind her of the uncertainty of life. Ah! Mother, she replied quite calmly, you need not fear for me, I will not die until St. Joseph's month; which prediction was literally fulfilled. Now this poor child was about to receive the reward of her life of persevering penance. She had been in earnest during the days of her poor strength, she was still more so in preparing for her last end, which was close at hand. "As we live, so shall we die." The morning of the day she died Saturday 15th. March, she seemed, with that keenness of vision which some souls have at their approach to the invisible world, to foresee her last hour, for when the Mistress, after making her round of visits in the Infirmary, came to her, she said, "Mother I will die this evening." And she did die that evening, and a beautiful, edifying death it was. She fell into her agony at 3 o'clock P. M. Immediately the toll of the bell summoned her companions to the Infirmary, who with some of the Religious remained with her till she breathed her last. She answered the prayers and aspirations made for her, as long as she was able. About a half hour before she died, she looked as if she wanted something. The Infirmary

striving to interpret her looks and the signs she made, saw her eyes fixed on the white veil which, as a child of Mary, she used to wear when communicating. The Infirmarian put it on her head, and the dying child, summoning the little strength that remained, arranged it on her head after her own fashion, then her face lit up with a smile and gazing on her medal of the children of Mary she seemed to say, "now I am furnished with arms to fight my last battle." It was while a Religious who stood beside her, recited these words, "Depart Christian soul" that she calmly breathed her last

"At that moment, in another bed, in the same apartment (Infirmary it could not be called) lay Julia, who for seventeen long years had been an invalid and whose only desire was to be dissolved and to be with Christ. She had entered quite young, but after a short time she had thoughts of returning to the world, which she would have done, if God had not mercifully deprived her of health, and from henceforth she was destined to be on the cross to which the most acute sufferings fastened her. Never to enjoy freshness of health, often to be prostrate on a bed of sickness, was Julia's portion during many long years. When this poor child entered, she was completely ignorant of the truths of our holy religion, that there was a God she knew, her knowledge did not extend much further. Her temper too was unrestrained and her tongue flippant, therefore the work of her conversion would have been of slow growth, had she not been thrown into the crucible of suffering, in which her soul was purified from every secret particle of sin and all that was fiery in her nature was subdued. But grace triumphed, she became a true penitent and gave great satisfaction to those placed over her. She was a constant example to her companions of unalterable patience, under long and cruel sufferings. Occasionally, there were intervals during which Julia rallied a little, and was able to make herself useful by doing some needlework. She was several times at the gates of death, so that her life of penance had glided by in expectation of it. For many years she had desired and prayed that at her

death bed there might be a priest to console her and to pray for her. Her prayer was heard. Had she died at any other hour, than mass-time, it would have been almost an impossibility to get one, the chaplain living at some distance. But God would not refuse the humble prayer so often addressed to Him; therefore it was His most holy will that her agony should come on whilst the Community Mass was being celebrated, after which the good priest hurried to her side, and never left her till her spirit had burst its bonds and she stood face to face, with her Maker.

“Last year, two of the Magdalens, Mary Catherine and Rose were summoned to meet their Judge. Like the two former, they had passed several years in the Asylum. Mary Catherine had been left an orphan in her tenderest years, and was given in charge to an aunt who lived in the country, with whom she remained till her fifteenth or sixteenth year. But, unfortunately for this poor child, she heard some one speaking of the city of..... of its beauty, its size and of all the fine sights to be seen in it. Dazzled by this seductive description she fled from her aunt and went to..... only to find her ruin. Poor bird, once caught in the net laid to ensnare her, she made no effort to disentangle herself, but rather wound round and round her the cruel meshes of sin, sorrow and despair. After leading for some time a sinful life, chance threw in her way some good person, who advised her to enter an Asylum; and almost without knowing it, still less desiring it she found herself directing her steps towards the Asylum, into which she was received. She was as wild as a deer, and much tact was necessary to manage her, yet through all her failings it was discernible that the head more than the heart was at fault. But, alas for poor human frailty! Illness obliged her to be sent to the hospital; and sad to relate the first use she made of the return of health, was to plunge herself anew into the abyss of sin. Then were verified in her the words of our Divine Lord on the relapsing sinner, her last state became worse than the first. For three years she led a most wicked life, but one Christmas morning in a maudlin state she entered

a Church just as Miss was about to be celebrated. The lights, the flowers, the strains of sacred music which floated round her, the throng of pious worshipers, formed a strange contrast to her own wretched self, recalling to her the bitter remembrance of the time when she too, once young and innocent, had knelt before the altar and offered her fervent prayers to God. It was a moment of mercy; a ray from the light of grace descended upon her soul, and it touched a chord in her poor, faded, dried up heart, and a sound came, forth, and a cry, and she who had not prayed for many weary days, turned to the Good Shepherd and said to Him, with all the earnestness of a remorseful soul: O. "God am I to live this way for ever? Oh! take me from this life of sin." But she had not strength to break her sinful chains herself, it was necessary that the Divine Mercy should snap them asunder. At a late hour one night, a cab man was driving a gentleman passenger through the streets of.... suddenly the cab stopped, it had struck against some obstacle which lay on the pavement. The gentleman and his driver got down to see what it was. What was their horror to find the body of a woman in a state of ebriety, this woman was the unfortunate Mary Catherine. To lift her into the cab, drive her home, and have all done for her that her unhappy state required, was the work of the humane cab man. But he did not stop there, he called to see her the next day, and so effectually reasoned with her as to prevail on her to permit him to drive her to the Asylum, which she entered never to leave again. She returned a shadow of her former self, carrying with her the germs of a consumption which was destined seven years later to cut the thread of her frail existence. Mary Catherine entered into herself, turned to God and firmly resolved to spend the years that remained to her of life in expiation of her former wanderings. And we are convinced that her life of labour, her fidelity to the rules of the House, her respect and obedience to those placed over her have been amply recompensed by Him who loves an humble and a contrite heart. She spent the two years preceding her death in the Infirmary, and up to the last, edified those around her by her gentleness and

piety She bore all her sufferings with invincible patience and in a perfect spirit of the most sincere repentance, acknowledging them to be far less than her sins deserved, and awaited with joy the moment when her soul, disengaged from her body, should enter into the possession of eternal bliss. It is a remarkable fact that almost all our poor penitents, now in eternal rest, have had in their dying moments, the greatest confidence in the protection of the great St. Joseph. Mary Catherine had a little statue of St. Joseph, it was to her a treasure valued most highly. she hugged it as a miser does his gold. She kept it with her night and day, and requested that it might be buried with her. May we not hope, very dear Sisters, that the great St. Joseph repaid the tender devotion of this poor child, and that when she breathed her last, it was his office in union with her Angel Guardian, to conduct her soul crowned with the laurels of victory, and present her as a radiant trophy ransomed by the Precious Blood.

"Rose was the last one summoned to eternity. She had been twenty five years in the Asylum. Of a volatile and capricious nature, she was attracted by the world, as a moth is by the flames of a candle. Her mistresses found it difficult at first to retain her in the house; but after sometime the temptation to leave vanished and left her in peace for the remainder of her life. However, as she was never perfectly contented, it might be said that she was never happy; and such was her disposition that when she had no real cross, she made imaginary ones for herself: so, dear Sisters, it will be very easy for you to suppose that she gave her mistresses occupation. Being superior to the generality of the penitents, and delicately constituted, she was usually employed at needlework, in which she excelled. Rose was a very clever woman and could do every thing. Notwithstanding the varied and unceasing mental tempests in which her life was passed, she always attended to her work and her prayer. Poor Rose! she worked well and she prayed well; and were not these two very good points in her character? Her death was caused by a complication of diseases. It

was humiliating too, as she was unable to stir hand or foot. For a long time, the old spirit of pride strove to gain the mastery; she found it difficult to accept—hard to endure. The cross of fancy had made way for the real cross, with the thorns, the lance and the nails. But, at last grace gained the victory, and she submitted to be nailed to the cross, and accepted death with all the pains and humiliations that accompanied it. She too had a great devotion to the dear St. Joseph, and used to say his office every Wednesday, for the grace of a happy death. It was her desire, that she might die on a Wednesday, and this favor was granted her, through the intercession of the Saint whom she invoked with so much love and confidence, for it was on a Wednesday that she calmly expired, with every sentiment of sincere sorrow for her past offences, and ardent desires to be united to her God.

“Since we began the narration of the edifying deaths of our adopted children, one more has been freed from the burden of mortality, and has entered, we trust, the portals of unending bliss.

“This poor creature’s death is a source of sweet consolation to us when we consider from what misery she had been rescued. Oh! if she had died outside, how far different her end might have been, and now we hope her name is inscribed in the book of the Elect. Little is there to be said, save that some months ago, she came to our gates in the last state of poverty and wretchedness. She was received into the fold, and shortly after by the holy Sacrament of Penance, her sin stained soul was purified from all its offences, and in the Holy Communion she was folded in the embraces of the Good Shepherd who gave her the sweet kiss of peace and reconciliation. This poor child was quiet, tractable, and docile. Though from her entrance she seemed in bad health, yet it was only a few days before her death that she lay down on the bed from which she was never to rise again. The Doctor being called in, declared her in a perilous condition, and although he apprehended no immediate danger, yet he deemed it advisable that she should receive the last sacraments, which he thought would be time enough the following day. But, alas! for the fallacy of human judgment, the

next day's setting sun gilded the room in which Mary Augustine lay cold and rigid in the icy embrace of death. For the next morning, there came a sudden change which the experienced recognized as the touch of the Destroyer. The priest was summoned in all haste, he came quickly and gave her all the rites of our holy Church. After which he went to say the community mass, and as the Sacrifice was completed, the lot of Mary Augustine was decided for eternity — she had passed away.

“Turning from the sheep in the fold, we cast our eyes on the lambs in the Reformatory. They too, have been torn from the wolf who sought to devour them, and placed under our care; and though not so dear to us as those for whom we have been founded, we know that a few words about them will not be uninteresting to you. The “children” in the Reformatory are in general very satisfactory; they are laborious, obedient and respectful to their superiors. The first and principal care of their mistress, our esteemed Sister..... is to make them good christians, by endeavouring to root out of their hearts these vicious inclinations resulting from early neglect and bad training. And as bad habits strongly resist the best efforts made to eradicate them, you can understand, very dear Sisters, what an arduous task is imposed on our dear beloved Sister in charge. The “children” get a good, plain education, suited to their condition as the servants or workwomen of a future day. They are taught needle work in its various branches, particularly plain sewing of every kind, shirt making, glove making, etc. They are also formed to household and farm work in their various departments, and above all to order and cleanliness. The greater number of these little ones leave our school, thoroughly reformed, and even the exceptions carry away with them the good seeds of instruction, and example, which later on bud forth and produce solid fruits of amendment. One of our girls had lived several years in the world as a servant and by her good conduct had reflected much credit on her former trainers, but falling into bad health and having no one belonging to her, our good Mother thinking it would be a great act of charity and bring

a blessing on the house to give her a shelter; took her back into the Reformatory. She lingered on, three or four years, during which time she was employed at glove making; but at last death came to claim his prey and she died indeed a holy death, blessing and praising God for His mercy towards her, and thanking her good mothers for the kindness they had exercised in her regard."

Who can read without emotion, this simple narrative of the mercies of the Savior to those whom the world despises and rejects? It is but a repetition of the Gospel story: the world represented by the cruel Pharisee despises the poor Magdalen, whom Jesus receives with joy and places near His Virgin, Spotless Mother; for beneath His cross on Calvary, stood Mary His Mother and His beloved Disciple, St. John, both emblems of purity and innocence, but there stood also, the once sinful Mary Magdalen, now so dear to the Heart of Jesus, representing the myriads of sinful souls who were to be rescued by the Precious Blood of Her Divine Master.

Philanthropists and well-meaning men anxious for the preservation of public morals, in their attempts to blot out that terrible stain on society, — the social evil, always imagine when not guided by the true light of the Gospel, that repressive measures, laws, and strict enforcement of laws by the police can put a stop to crime.

From time to time these men zealous for public morality, convene meetings to take action on this subject, speeches are made, the police are blamed for being lax in their duty, and some one or other is censured, then there is a sudden outburst of zeal in enforcing the law, the dwellings of these unfortunate creatures are invaded, the inmates are scattered, or are brought before the magistrates and sentenced to several months imprisonment. A little while and all that zeal which was like flaming tow, has burned itself out. These wretched creatures return again to their haunts of vice and lead the same lives as before. Why was there no good result, at least no result of any consequence, from this severe action of the

authorities? Why? Because the evil was not attacked with the proper weapons. Undoubtedly, the law can do a certain amount of good but it cannot do all—it can only help. The evil is a moral one, it is the heart, that is at fault, and the Holy Scripture tells us "*In the hand of God is the heart of man*" It is God then, it is religion a one that can reach the heart and heal it: the heart once healed, vice is at an end. We do not try to stop physical evils by moral remedies: When the Mississippi over-flows its banks no one ever dreams of using moral suasion to persuade the river to return to its ordinary bed. Why then expect that physical remedies, such as brute force can put a stop to a moral evil, It may no doubt now and then prevent such or such a crime but it cannot reach the source and cure the evil at the fountain head, the corrupt heart. Repressive legal measures are certainly most useful, but they must be not only vindictive but medicinal; in other words, while they punish those who thus offend against public morals, the punishment should be such as may lead to the complete reformation of the offender. How can this be done? By enabling these poor unfortunate creatures, many of whom would gladly give up a life, of which they are tired and which they never loved, to find a shelter, a *home*, where by honest work they may support themselves and no be the objects of hatred to God and of scorn to men which they are at present. Too often, alas! in many monasteries, have the Sisters of the Good Shepherd been obliged to let poor penitents go back into the world, where a thousand dangers awaited their weak hearts, because, the funds of the house being insufficient, there was no means of keeping them in the Asylum. Ought not those whom Divine Providence has called to aid in the government of States — ought they not consider before God, and ask themselves, how can they best prevent crime; how can they put a stop to the fearful deluge of immorality, which floods the world at the present day? Were some of these large sums of money now set apart for costly female prisons, and for high sala-

ries to a host of prison officials, devoted to the providing of asylums for those poor creatures, where they might retire when the time of their punishment would be over, or whither under certain circumstances they might have the option of going instead of being sent to prison; would not the result be highly beneficial to the nation at large? At least it is an experiment well worth trying, and since private charity, although so restricted, can do so much good, how much more could be done if State aid were to supply what private charity is unequal to.

What a difference there is to those poor fallen women, between the cold walls of a prison cell, which only increase their rage and make them hate the unfeeling world that sent them there, and the plain white-washed walls of the Asylum which speak to to their heart, for thereon they behold the Crucifix that reminds them of Christ whom they have offended, the image of that Mother in heaven who prays for them though all their relatives on earth have rejected them; the pictures of the Saints who were once sinners as they are, and yet gained heaven by severe penance, as they should strive to do. Even that colored print representing a sheep in the wilderness caught by its wool in some brambles, which pierce and hurt it, while the charitable Good Shepherd who has just found His lost and loved sheep gently disengages it, goes straight to their hearts, those hearts which have passed through so much sorrow, passion, agony and guilt. How it says to them more plainly than words could say "Come to me, all ye who are burthened and heavily laden and I will refresh you."

What a difference too, between the stern harsh voice of a matron ordering No. 25 to be punished severely for some breach of prison discipline and the kind remonstrance of the Sister reminding her dear "child," of Jesus-Christ who died for her, asking her not to offend Him anew by disobedience? Which of the two will the sooner reach the heart of that poor out-cast, for after all the most obdurate person has a heart and there is a way to reach it?

In the Home provided for them, these penitents are never allowed to be idle. There are stated hours in the day for recreation, at other times they work in silence. Occupation of every useful kind is afforded them. Many are engaged in the laundry, drying and ironing rooms, and some in the fields & garden. Others, who have a taste for it are taught plain and fancy sewing; some make gloves; others, artificial flowers; in the Monastery at Ottawa is a printing press; where books relating to the community are printed; in a word, the number of branches taught depends on the number and talents of the inmates.

Besides the industrial occupations, they have catechetical instructions, spiritual reading in common, from some book suited to their condition: morning and night prayer, the hearing of Holy Mass and the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist at different times, according to the dispositions of each one. When sick, they receive the utmost care and attention from the Nuns themselves in the Infirmary of the Asylum, everything is done to ease their sufferings and to restore them to health as speedily as possible. Should there be no prospect of recovery, then the most motherly care is lavished upon them, to make their declining hours happy and to prepare them to meet the Judge of the living and the dead, Jesus Christ whom they offended in years past, but whom they have for a long while loved and served most faithfully. No wonder that their last moments are filled with consolation and heavenly joy, feeling that the time of suffering and trial is over and that the reward is near at hand.

Since the foundation of the monastery of Ottawa, April 3rd 1866, four hundred and fifty five penitents, and two hundred and seventy destitute children in danger of sin, have been received into the Asylum. Nearly all these penitents and children had to be prepared for their First Communion and Confirmation, while twenty received the Sacrament of Baptism. Forty five of these penitents became Magdalens, thirty were respectably married and and of the others by far the greater number are doing well. During these years, five Magdalens, eight Penitents and four destitute

Children were called to their heavenly reward.

Who will say that the Community of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity has not been called by God to do a noble work of devotedness and has not been singularly blessed in doing it? Who will not pray fervently to God for the poor lost Sheep so dear to Him? Where is the heart so hard, as not to be moved to generosity, at the sight of the devotedness of these Nuns of the Good Shepherd and the thought of the many sins prevented by their exertions, aided by the grace of God?

Where is the Christian who does not feel, if he give of his worldly goods to help an undertaking so great, so noble, so pleasing to Jesus-Christ and His Blessed Mother, that when his last hour comes He will hear the voice of our sweet Saviour in his heart, saying "Come, blessed of my Father, possess the Kingdom prepared for you - For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty and you gave me to drink: I was homeless and you sheltered me."

"But Lord" - will that Christian say, "when did I see thee hungry and fed thee; thirsty and gave thee to drink? Or when did I see thee homeless and sheltered thee?"

How sweet! How consoling the answer;

"Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it unto me." S. Matt. XXV. 34 40.



THE FALLEN ONES.

(Written by an Irish Jesuit; first appeared in a Dublin Magazine
in 1875.)

Have we then no tears to shed?
Are our hearts seared or dead,
Humankind, womankind saved from the snare,
Shall we crush the fallen reed
Sisters with all their need,
Hideously, piteously, crazed with despair.

Alas! they are a shameless set,
But are ye blameless yet?
Blighting them, slighting them, cankering their youth,
Forget not who spurn them now—
Many's the burning vow
Winningly, sinningly stole them from truth.

A deeply degraded lot,
Abject and aided not,
Weary hearts, dreary hearts lost to fair fame.
Unpitied ills harden them—
Bless God and pardon them—
Healthy folks, wealthy folks spotless *in name*.

Ignoble and low 'tis true,
Blotting our social view,
Paining us, straining us e'en with their sight.
But think ye displacing them,
Serves for effacing them—
Hiving them, driving them far from the light.

Oh! what's to become of them?
Try to save some of them,
Healingly, feelingly shaping their days,
Afford them a biding place,
Home, *not a hiding place*—
Readily, steadily, teaching God's ways.

'Tis blindly debasing them,
Houselessly chasing them.
Rushingly, crushingly crowded in sin.
Beware! 'Tis a crying curse
When the bad fly to worse ;
Are they all past recall ? Who sees within ?

Woe's me ! There are glaring ones,
Frenzied and daring ones,
Tearlessly, fearlessly, reckless of hate ;
But more are forlorn ones,
Famished and torn ones,
Whiningly, piningly, mourning their fate.

Did each her dark wrongs unfold,
Well might our blood run cold !
Love believed, love deceived, anguish and wrath ;
Sad mothers bemoaning them
Brothers disowning them,
Cast away, fast they stray down by sin's path.

Not harshly abusing them,
No, nor ill using them,
Maddening some, saddening some, makes them amend.
Instruct them to pray instead,
Earning pure daily bread,
Bear with them, share with them ! God will befriend.

Poor outcasts—for peace they sigh,
Sure 'twere release to die
Who shall say, such as they, mercy ne'er found ?
T'were hard all their woes to tell.
Christ alone knows it well ;
Judge no more ! once before *He* wrote on the ground.

C.T.K.