



"The Kingdom of Heaven is for those who resemble them."
From a painting by C. Vogel



CONFESSION

From time to time, we have received requests from readers of the "Sentinel" for instructive article on the subject of Confession. We, therefore, publish for their benefit the following treatise which was originally written in Italian by the Rev. Joseph Frassinetti, and has been translated into English by an able contributor to the pages of the "Sentinel."

Confession is One of the Seven Sacraments

IT is of faith that confession is one of the Seven Sacraments instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a truth proved by the Gospel of St. John, Chapter XX., taught by all the Fathers of the Church, and defined by the Council of Trent. The following is the definition of the Council: "If any one says that, in the Catholic Church, Penance, that is, Sacramental Confession, is not really and truly a Sacrament instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ to reconcile the Faithful with God whenever they fall into sin after Baptism, let him be excommunicated." Sess. 14, ch. 1.

They, then, who affirm that Sacramental Confession was not instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, or that it is not really a Sacrament, ought to be looked upon as heretics and excluded from the true Church of Jesus Christ. Such are, for instance, those that, in our day, declare Confession to be an invention of priests, of popes, or of some one or other of the Councils, that deny that it is a Sacrament, and necessary to obtain the remission of sins committed after Baptism.

Which Sins it is Necessary to Confess

The only sins that we are obliged to confess, are mortal sins, because they alone deprive the soul of sanctifying grace. It is very praiseworthy to confess venial sins, also, but there is no obligation to do so.

Sanctifying Grace

Every Christian ought to know what sanctifying grace is. Sanctifying grace is a divine gift, a lasting quality that God pours into our soul, which renders us friends of God, heirs of heaven, and brethren of Jesus Christ.

We receive this grace at the moment of Baptism, and it remains in us as long as we commit no sin. Mortal sin alone can make us lose it.

This grace is the true life of the soul, in as much as the soul that possesses it is truly living before God ; if she should pass to the other world in that state, it would be impossible for her not to obtain eternal life, namely, paradise. The soul deprived of sanctifying grace, on the contrary, is really dead in the eyes of God ; and if called from the world in that state, it would be impossible for her to escape eternal death, namely, eternal damnation. Now, this grace, note it well, is the portion of all souls not in mortal sin ; and it is wanting to all souls that are in mortal sin, had they committed only one.

This grace is called sanctifying, because it sanctifies souls ; consequently, every soul exempt from mortal sin, is truly holy, even had she committed thousands and thousands venial sins. It is this grace that sanctifies the just on earth and even the saints in heaven, so that the blessed and Mary, their Divine Queen, are saints by means of sanctifying grace.

Do we comprehend the price of this treasure ? He who possesses it, is really the friend of God and His adopted son. He is the brother of Jesus Christ, " the First-born among many brethren," and by all these titles he is by right the heir to eternal beatitude.

He who has sanctifying grace is, besides, holy with the holiness of even the saints of heaven and of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Again, do we comprehend the price of this treasure ? If Christians understood it, never would they admit into

their soul mortal sin, the only robber able to deprive them of that good so precious. It is a great misfortune that this treasure should be so little known among Christians. Ask them the meaning of sanctifying grace, and the majority know not what to answer.

We must further observe that this grace, like all other treasures, is susceptible of increase. It is an article of Faith that souls adorned with sanctifying grace, merit its increase in proportion to their good works. Every time they make the sign of the Cross, or invoke the Name of Jesus, they receive an increase of grace ; with how much more reason, then, when they make an act of the love of God, hear Holy Mass, approach the Holy Table, etc.

Let us judge from what has been said of the treasures that are accumulated in the soul of good Christians habitually exempt from mortal sin. By every one of the thousands of good works which they perform, they acquire new degrees of grace, which go on multiplying to infinity. Now, to the degrees of grace acquired in this life, correspond the degrees of glory that they shall possess in Paradise.

Examination of conscience

Let us return to our first proposition. It is an Article of Faith, defined by the First Council of Lateran and the Council of Trent, that the sinner, in order to obtain pardon, must confess all his mortal sins without excepting any. There is question here of mortal sins recalled after a proper examination of conscience. Those that are not recalled after such an examination, are pardoned at the same time as the others. If, however, sins thus omitted, return to the memory, we must, although they are already pardoned, accuse ourselves of them in our next confession.

We must, then, accuse ourselves of all the mortal sins that we can remember after a proper examination of conscience. Then, such an examination of conscience is necessary. This necessity is, however, not absolute, but only relative. In other words, the examination is not required for all, but only for those that, by omitting it, expose themselves to forget mortal sins.

For Christians who, by the grace of God, never commit mortal sins, evidently there can be no danger of forgetting them in confession. Nor does such danger exist for such as rarely commit them, and who confess them at once, or soon after their fall. Such Christians are, then, even by the rigor of theology, dispensed from examining their conscience, either because they commit no grave faults, or because, if it should happen that they commit one, it would be impossible for them to forget it even without the least examination.

It is very different with those that ordinarily commit a great number of mortal sins, and that confess but rarely. By making no examination of conscience, they expose themselves to the actual danger of omitting some such sins; they are, in consequence, bound to examine their conscience before confession. These are truths that no theologian has ever questioned.

Our intention is not to induce the timid to neglect examination of conscience. We merely wish to enlighten them upon their real obligation, and to calm the exaggerated fears of many. It is a fact attested by experience, that they who have no need of examining themselves, are precisely they who give themselves most trouble on this point. The anxiety with which they apply themselves thereto greatly retards their spiritual advancement.

We, therefore, exhort all Christians, even the most timorous, always to make their examination of conscience before confession, for it is a thing eminently proper. If for many such an examination is not necessary, yet it will be of great advantage to them. It will help them better to confess their light faults and to correct them. They should, however, be very careful not to become disquieted on the subject. The examination of conscience ought to be a subject of disquietude for no one, not even, as we shall presently explain, for the greatest sinners; surely, then, not for souls who habitually live in the holy fear of God.

This examination ought to turn upon what constitutes the obligatory matter of confession, namely, upon the species of sins, their number, and the circumstances that change their species. There is no necessity to examine

one's self upon circumstances that only increase the malice of the sin, since there is no obligation of accusing one's self of it. Let us take, for example, the child that gives his father a blow. It would not suffice for him to say : *I struck my neighbor*. He must say : *I struck my father*, because such an injury to a father offends not only against the virtue of charity, but also against the other virtue of filial piety. The circumstance of the person struck changes, then, the species of the sin, and it ought to be mentioned in the accusation.

But if, instead of one blow, that wicked son had, in the same outburst of rage, given his father two or three blows he would not be obliged to indicate the number of blows given. It would suffice for him to say : *I struck my father*, because the fact of having given one or two blows more in the same fit of passion, constitutes a circumstance which, indeed, aggravates the sin, but which does not change the species.

Examination of Conscience made by the Devout

We now address you in particular, pious souls, who frequently approach the tribunal of penance. Some instructions on the subject of the examination preparatory for confession, may be of great use to you. How many of you, every time you go to confession, are beyond measure preoccupied with that examination ! You devote to it, or rather you lose, considerable time in it, fearing not to be able to recall all your sins, fearing to forget some fault and, on that account, to make a bad confession.

By what has already been said, you understand that, by confessing without previous examination, you confessed well, provided you were not obliged to examine yourself. The reason that frees you from such obligation is, that there is in your case no danger of forgetting a mortal sin, since you do not commit such sins. If it should happen to you (which may God forbid !) to commit one, that fall would make such an impression on your soul that you would not be able to forget it even should you try to do so.

Moreover, three things are necessary, as you know, to constitute a mortal sin : first, grave matter ; secondly, full understanding ; and thirdly, the deliberate consent

of the will. Now, when you have committed an act or yielded to a thought grievously culpable, having perfectly remarked the gravity of the sin that you are going to commit, and having resolved upon it with full and entire will, how could it happen that, confessing some days later, you could forget the sin committed? Why, more easily would you forget the way that leads to your own home!

You abhor not only mortal sin, but also venial sin fully consented to, and that to such a degree that you never, or almost never, commit such sins. Under such conditions, if you have the misfortune to commit one, the impression that it will make upon you will certainly prevent your forgetting it when you go to confession.

If you have told an officious falsehood, or been guilty of a slight slander with full deliberation, such faults will remain impressed upon the memory until you have accused yourself of them. After that, can you think that you have forgotten in confession any mortal sin you might have had the misfortune to commit? Come, now, let us be sincere. Say that you yourself do not believe such forgetfulness possible. You must, then, be persuaded that you are not bound to examine yourself before confession. By accusing yourself of the faults that come of themselves to your mind, you will, without any examination, make an excellent confession.

Would that you attentively reflected on these words, because, in truth, it is deplorable to find among souls so many who, examining their conscience every time that they confess, even every eight days, are troubled and disquieted at not finding sins of which to accuse themselves. What wonder, we may say to them, if, not wishing to commit sins, you do not commit them! The wonder would be for you to commit sin when you do not wish to do so. On the contrary, what more simple, and shall we dare say it, what more natural than, wishing not to commit sin, you do not commit it? What! Could any one sin with the express will not to do so?

It is impossible for a Christian to sin as long as he does not will it. This is an Article of Faith. Are you surprised to see accomplished in yourself what Faith teaches? Are you at all surprised when you hear it said

that the wicked rich man dying in the state of mortal sin, was buried in hell? No, you answer, for Faith teaches that the sinner dying in his sin, goes to hell. And yet you are surprised at this statement, that you commit no fault, neither mortal nor venial with full deliberation, if you do not want to commit it. Does not Faith teach us that without the will, no sin is possible? If, then, you find no fault of which to accuse yourself, do not be troubled on that account, but thank the good God who, by His grace, has strengthened your will, in order to prevent you from yielding to temptation.

You will, perhaps, ask: It is possible that one can have no fault whatever with which to reproach one's self? The saints committed some, and do not we commit some, too? Yes, we may fear, and with reason, it seems to us, for how many faults our blindness prevents us, perhaps, from recognizing!

By the foregoing remarks, you mean, doubtless, that having no knowledge of the sins into which you think you fall, you are bound to hunt them up, and, for this end, to examine your conscience anxiously in the hope of discovering them.

We answer: Above all, recall what we have already said, namely, that mortal sins alone are the obligatory matter for Sacramental Confession, and that, consequently, there is obligation to examine one's self only upon mortal sin.

Coming now to venial sin, to which we alluded in saying that the saints themselves are not exempt from them, we shall show you that the faults committed by the saints, were not sins of full deliberation. They were faults proceeding less from malice of the will than from human frailty. They were such sins as no one escapes without a special privilege from God, such privilege, we know having been accorded to no saint, the Blessed Virgin Mary excepted. (1) They were sins committed rather through surprise than from a perverse will. Now, it is certain that you constantly commit such sins unless you, too, have received the privilege granted to the Blessed Virgin. Such sins are more known of very enlightened persons such as were the saints, than of the less

(1) Council of Trent. Session 6. ch. II.

avored by divine light, in which latter number you, perhaps, ought to be classed. In either case, however, they are not faults upon which it is necessary either to examine one's self or to confess.

On the other hand, not having so many lights as the saints had, you cannot pretend to know such faults as they knew them ; consequently, you ought to be satisfied with examining yourself upon sins committed with full knowledge, and which, on that account, are soon perceived by him who is examining his conscience. And if, we repeat, you commit no sins of this kind, it is evident that you will not be able to find them when making your examination. Calm yourself, then, and do not obstinately insist upon finding sin where there is none. Consecrate some moments to this examination of which, *theologically speaking*, you have no need, and cease to disquiet yourself, to trouble yourself as you do, to the great detriment of your soul.

We say *theologically speaking*, because according to the principles and teachings of theology, you have no need of examination.

Let us here observe that the principles and teachings of theology ought to serve as a guide and rule in all things regarding Christian piety. On this point, we may here express our regret that certain books of devotion have been written by men either little familiar with theology, or who, though sufficiently familiar with it, have not taken it into account in their writings. We are here referring to those books that fill the mind of pious persons with false ideas, that are tainted with rigorism, and are calculated to excite fear and doubt. Thus it happens that such souls walk painfully in the path of piety, always hesitating, always disquieted and disconcerted, and consequently, deprived of that peace which the Apostle desired to see reigning in all hearts.

It is for this reason, without wishing to prohibit in any way examination of conscience before confession, on the contrary, rather advising it in view of the advantages that it may procure to those even that have no need of it, we exhort you to make such examination very briefly, without fearing by that to fail in your duty.

Examination of Conscience for Sinners.

All who, by omitting the examination of conscience, expose themselves to forget mortal sins, make bad confessions if they neglect such examination. Consequently, the examination becomes necessary for those that confess rarely, and even for those that, although confessing often, live in the habit of mortal sin. By omitting it, such sinners evidently run the risk of forgetting grievous sins.

Besides, the more rare their confessions and the more frequent and multiplied their falls, the more diligent should be their examination, and to it they should devote a proper and sufficient time.

On the other hand, such sinners ought not on account of it, torment themselves, become disconcerted, and lose their peace of soul. According to all theologians, this examination ought always to be proportioned to the capacity of the penitent. It ought to be *human*, as the celebrated De Lugo expresses it.

Penitents in general are not theologians ; consequently, they are not obliged, they are even incapable of examining themselves according to all the rules and distinctions of theology. It suffices for every one to examine himself as well as he can. He who is more intelligent and better instructed, is bound to more ; but he who is less, is bound to less. God is satisfied as long as every one does good according to his capacity.

And let no one object that many sinners are ignorant, because they will to be so, inasmuch as they have neglected the reading of pious books or have failed to assist at religious instructions. When, in effect, the sinner returns to God and, in order to be reconciled with Him, disposes himself to make a good confession, he cannot instantaneously change the state in which he then is. If he is an ignorant man, he cannot metamorphose himself into a learned one. He has sinned in not instructing himself as he should have done, and if such negligence has been gravely culpable, he ought to confess it. For the present, however, the good God Himself must take him as He finds him, that is to say, ignorant, unless he infuses into his mind the knowledge in which he is wanting.

Shall we assert that the sinner ought to delay his confession until he is well instructed? No theologian has ever laid down so strange a requirement. Let the sinner confess as well as he can, and for that let him make what examination of conscience he can. God is satisfied for the time being, and the sinner is restored to grace. He will later on fulfil whatever obligation may rest upon him to instruct himself better in the truths of Faith and christian morality. (It is evidently supposed that such a sinner is not without some knowledge of the principal mysteries of Faith. If ignorant of them, he ought to be instructed before receiving absolution.)

In short, if the examination of conscience, however imperfect it may be in itself, is proportioned to the capacity of the penitent, the confession cannot fail to the good and to restore the sinner to the state of grace. There is, then, no cause for such a penitent to torment himself on the subject.

The examination ought, besides, to be *human*, that is to say, it ought not to be rendered too painful. Consequently, theologians say, the penitent is not obliged to employ in it all possible diligence, but only that discreet care which prudent men bring to affairs of some importance.

Let us note one difference, and that is, in affairs of material interest, there are books containing statements of the sums and giving an account of the smallest differences; whereas for conscience affairs, the registers are wanting. The only means of calculating them is the memory, in many persons very short-lived, and in all weak and inefficient. Now, to wish to force the memory to recall exactly things and, above all, actions and thoughts which date far back, is to impose upon one's self a painful, and very often, a very fruitless, task.

If we were obliged to bring to the examination all possible care, and to constrain the memory to recall things with rigorous exactitude, it would be an obligation hard, painful, and insupportable. The Sacrament of Penance would thereby become the executioner of souls, as Protestants call it. Christians would remain far from it, abhorring this means of salvation which Jesus Christ has

made necessary for all who have fallen into mortal sin after Baptism.

For this reason, the greatest sinners, even those that have grown old in vice, ought to take care, when they return to God, not to trouble and torment themselves on account of examination of conscience. It suffices that they quietly review the years of their sinful life, remarking as well as they can their bad habits and the probable frequency of their sins, monthly, weekly, or daily, without aiming at precision or certitude utterly impossible. After having made their examination in this way, they ought to remain tranquil, not thinking themselves obliged to examine more and more under pretext that, by doing so longer, they would find new sins of which to accuse themselves in confession. Cardinal De Lugo expressly teaches this when speaking of the discretion that the confessor ought to observe in the questions that he puts to his penitent. "It is bad reasoning," says that theologian, "to say: Such and such questions will make me discover more clearly the number or the species of sins committed. — Then, we must ask: How could it be bad reasoning on the penitent's part to say, If I examine myself another hour, I may discover the sins that now escape my notice, and then I shall very likely make a more exact accusation. If this be so, I ought to examine myself another hour." — Under such conditions, there would never be an end to these examinations.

Let us now see how sinners ought to act who have not confessed for a long time, or who have made a great number of null or sacrilegious confessions.

They ought to fix the date since their last confession, or since their last good confession, for example, say ten years. Then they should examine the species of sins into which they have fallen, whether theft, unjust contracts, blasphemy, hatred, impurity, failing to hear Mass, &c.

The species of their sins being known, they must next consider their number. If there is not question of habitual sins, but of those committed at rare intervals, we can easily calculate the precise, or, at least, the approximate, number. This happens, for instance, when the penitent has, in the space of ten years, failed to hear only five or six Masses of obligation, so that naturally he ought to

accuse himself of that number. If, on the contrary, there is question of sins of habit, — if, for example, the penitent has blasphemed every time that he got angry ; if he defrauded his customers whenever he could ; if every day, or almost every day, he committed sins of impurity, above all, in thought, it would be utterly impossible for him to decide even upon the approximate number of his sins. It would be necessary for him to understand arithmetic and, pen in hand, make numberless calculations, which, however, would give only very doubtful results, especially in what regards sins of thought which, in persons living without the fear of God, sometimes count a hundred or so in the day.

What, then, ought the penitent to do in the case of bad habits continued for a long time, nay, even for long years ? He ought to examine, as well as he can, the frequency of his falls into such sins, whether it has been several times a month, a week, or even a day. This is very easily done, provided he recalls with certainty, at least in a confused manner, the greater or less frequency of those sinful acts.

If a penitent was troubled at not being able to make this examination, simple though it be, it would suffice for him to declare the evil habit, and answer the confessor's questions on that point.

We meet some persons who are absolutely incapable of making such calculations. They are unable to recall anything. They can say to the confessor only : *I have always blasphemed. I have always wished evil to my neighbor. I have always committed such and such a sin.*

Ought such persons to confess ? Yes. Let them confess as well as they can. If the confessor desires to have a more distinct knowledge of things, he can gain it by questioning.

Do not think us too easy with regard to sinners who have lived in the habit of sin, in satisfying ourselves with so general an examination. We can cite illustrious theologians more indulgent than we in this respect, such as, Melchior Canus, Pierre Soto, Navarrus, Cajetan, Billuart, and Cardinal Gousset. Speaking of persons who for long years have exercised some criminal profession, or who have lived in the occasion of sin, these theologians teach

that an accusation like the following would suffice for them : *For ten years, for five years, I have led such or such a life. You understand me clearly enough, Father, so I need say no more about it to you.* (1)

The reason for such indulgence is this, the habit and the time of its continuance being once known, the confessor can judge of the species and the number of sins arising from it, as well as he could from a long and detailed accusation.

The important thing is, that no one omit, or even defer, his confession, on account of the difficulty of examination of conscience. Let him do what he can ; the confessor will do the rest. The chief point is, that the sinner, as soon as he hears the call of God, hearkens to it without delay, and casts himself at once at the feet of a good confessor, who will aid him according to the lights that God will give him, to rise from the deplorable state in which he is.

There is still a word to say on the *method* of examination, namely, whether it is necessary to examine one's self on the Ten Commandments of God, and the Precepts of the Church, or upon thoughts, words, actions, or omissions in their regard. I shall briefly observe that the first method is suited to great sinners who acknowledge themselves guilty of all sorts of sins. Let them examine themselves seriously upon all the Commandments, since they have sinned against all or almost all, and they will without trouble discover the various kinds of sins they have committed. They will in this way run no danger of forgetting any.

For the devout who confess frequently, it would be something almost ridiculous for them to wish to examine themselves on all the Commandments. Why should they ask themselves whether they have blasphemed, sworn falsely, stolen, failed to hear Masses of obligation, omitted their Paschal Communion? They know very well that they have never committed such sins ; and, therefore, we say that such an examination would be for them something almost ridiculous, (2)

Speaking in general, also, the second method is preferable, namely, that which consists in examining thoughts,

(1) *De Lugo cit.* sect. 15; Gousset, Vol. II. n. 417.

(2) In the sense in which Frassinetti is here speaking, such a

words, actions, and omissions, and noting the faults of which one has rendered himself guilty in those four ways of offending God.

They who confess frequently, however, need not put themselves to the trouble of following any method. If they have committed sins with full deliberation, they will not fail to recall them perfectly. If there is question of simple venial sins, there is no obligation to examine one's self, as we have repeatedly declared and still more easily will mortal sin be recalled if they should happen to fall into it.

Grand Corpus Christi Celebration, of the People's Eucharistic League.

At St. Patrick's Cathedral.

THE Corpus Christi Celebrations of 1902 at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City, will long be remembered by all those who had the good fortune to witness them.

method would, indeed, be absurd and ridiculous, though it might, perhaps, be very reasonably employed. Naturally pious persons would examine themselves not on the mortal sins against the Commandments, since such persons are supposed not to commit grave faults. But nothing can prevent them from examining themselves on the Commandments, in order to discover the venial faults that may have escaped them on those heads; for example, voluntary distractions in prayer and at Holy Mass, which faults fall under the First and the Third Commandments; disobedience and want of respects to parents, under the Fourth; detraction in small matters, under the Fifth and the Eight, etc.

In such an examination, they should, indeed, pass over the Commandments against which they know for sure that they have not sinned.

In fact, it is in this way that many pious persons make their examination, and we see no real motive for them to give up such a method, which has been followed by them from childhood. It is even preferable to the second, which, as it seems, is rather vague. There are, moreover, so many ways of sinning by action, that it would even be necessary to establish a certain order among them. Why not, then, the order of the Commandments?

Some persons use the following order: Sins against God, against the neighbor, against self, against the duties of one's state. We see no reason for changing such a method.

This remark is meant for those that follow a method, though none is necessary for those that confess often and live habitually in the state of grace.

Such magnificent exhibitions of devotion are rarely seen, any where, outside of Rome.

The first celebration took place on the feast itself, at four o'clock p. m. and was devoted entirely to the women of the League. The great procession composed of Zelatrices from the various churches of the city encircled the great edifice. There were three benedictions, the first at the Sacred Heart altar, the second at the Holy Family altar and the third at the main altar. A more beautiful or more edifying sight would be difficult to imagine than that presented by the procession as it moved along the broad aisles of the Cathedral. Clear and true, the sweet solemn strains of the never old *Tantum Ergo Sacramentum*, rose and fell, and died away amid the soaring Gothic arches. At certain parts of the service appropriate Eucharistic hymns were sung by the hundreds of voices assembled, while softly breaking through the waves of music, there seemed to sound the exultant voice of one, not of earth, crying : " Rejoice greatly, O Daughters of Zion — Behold Thy King Cometh unto Thee."

An eloquent sermon on the Eucharist was preached by the Rev. Edward M. Sweeney, rector of the Church of the Ascension.

The celebration of the men's branch of the League took place the Sunday following the feast at eight o'clock in the evening. The immense edifice was filled with men, belonging to every age and grade of life. The earnest devotion that filled their hearts expressed itself in one grand outpouring of divine praise, as their rich, deep voices swelled the notes of the precious old hymn ;

" Sweet Sacrament, we Thee adore
O, make us love Thee more and more ! "

The reverent conduct of this large gathering of men proved, that their love for the Blessed Sacrament is a constant part of their lives. Their presence represented a large number of the principal parishes of the city. We are sure that every man in the great procession that preceded the Blessed Sacrament was made happier, better, and nobler for this act of homage to Our Eucharistic Lord. Such an outpouring of Catholic men, such a demonstration of Catholic faith, loyalty and enthusiasm

presented an awe-inspiring sight that touched the hearts of all present.

The sermon at the men's celebration was preached by the Rev. P. F. McSweeney. It showed careful study and was listened to with close attention.

At both celebrations the Blessed Sacrament was borne under a rich canopy, by Bishop Farley.

SUBJECT OF ADORATION

FOR THE USE

Of the Associates of the Congregation of the Priests
of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

THE EUCHARIST, THE SACRAMENT OF LIFE.

{ *Ego sum panis vite.*
} I am the Bread of Life.

I. — ADORATION.



LET us with respectful love penetrate into the Holy of Holies, the Soul of Jesus, and try to discover therein the loving designs that He had over us in instituting the Eucharist.

He had made full reparation to His Father and given Him the full complement of glory, by the sacrifice of His Body and Blood. But His soul was still thinking of us, of us His purchased ones, of us His well-beloved. He does not want to leave us orphans. He has promised us that He will stay with us even till the consummation of ages. — How will His love realize this design? — Is He going to remain with us as a God full of majesty? No, for He knows that men cannot see God

and live. — Will He remain with us under the veil of His Sacred Humanity? — But that Humanity is now glorified, and our weak gaze could not support Its splendor.

What did Jesus do? — O prodigy of love! He will remain with us as God and man, but He will hide His Divinity and His Humanity under the lowly appearance of bread and, revealing His design of love, He will call Himself the Bread of Life. The Bread of Life! — Behold the true name of our Jesus, the name that expresses at one and the same time His love and the secret desire of that love. The angels were amazed. They adored that prodigy without comprehending it. They adored that unheard-of abasement, that excess of love in their God for man, a creature so weak and so ungrateful.

O let us, the happy privileged ones of that love, adore the ineffable abasement of our God! Let us study to know under the lowly and fragile accidents of the Host, Him who in heaven receives the unending adoration of the angels and saints, Him who alone is holy, alone is great, alone is powerful, alone is Most High, as sings Holy Church: *Tu solus Sanctus, Tu solus Dominus, Tu solus Altissimus!* The more His love has abased Him, the more our love magnifies Him, exalts Him, and renders Him a perpetual homage of praise and adoration.

II. — THANKSGIVING.

Our soul received at Baptism a life of grace, a life all divine. Now, as the life of our body is preserved, strengthened, developed, and cheered by nourishment, so for the life of the soul a divine aliment is necessary, a divine strength, a divine joy. Let us thank Jesus, since He has provided for the need of our soul that life, that strength, that joy. He comes Himself to give it to us in person in His Eucharist.

Ah, yes! Jesus well knew that our supernatural life would be a combat often rude and difficult, and always crucifying. He knew that in that combat our strength would often fail; that sadness would seize upon our soul; and that, like the Prophet Elias of old, we would fall exhausted, beseeching Him to call us to Himself. An angel from heaven appeared to Elias in his discouragement, and offered him some mysterious bread. After having

eaten it, the Prophet was able to resume his journey, and arrive at the mountain of the Lord. For us, also, Bread comes down from heaven, and this Bread of Life, this Bread of Strength, this Bread of Joy is Jesus, Jesus in the Sacrament ! Every day we take part in His struggles, in His burden of sufferings ; but every day, also, a Host awaits us in the tabernacle, which having received, we can cry out with the Apostle : " I can do all things in Him who strengthens me ! "

Let us give thanks to Jesus for this admirable invention of His divine wisdom, placed at the service of His infinite love, and may the thought that He has made Himself our Bread of Life, be to us a remedy against all our weakness, and sadness ! May it be our strength in combat, and our hope in victory !

III. — REPARATION.

If Jesus has made Himself the Bread of our soul, His desire is, to be received, to be eaten, by those whom He has loved even to excess. How great, then, is His suffering when He beholds souls dying for want of that nourishment which He prepared for them at the cost of all the sacrifices of His Incarnation, His Passion, and His Death !

He chose the form of bread, in order to invite all to nourish themselves with Him, for bread is as good for the table of the poor as for that of the rich. It is the food of all men. " Come," says Jesus to us, " come, My well-beloved, eat the Bread that I have prepared for you ! — Come, for I desire that you have life, and that you have it in abundance. — This is My Body. Take ye all and eat ! " The ardor that consumed the soul of Jesus on the evening of the Last Supper, and which made Him cry out : " With desire have I desired to eat this Pasch with you," has lost nothing of its divine fire. From every Host it causes this loving cry to be heard in our soul : Come, weak souls, I will be your strength ! Come, sad and discouraged souls, I will console you ! Come, all ye who, breaking the bonds of sin, fear new assaults of the enemy, I will be your shield to ward off all his blows ! Come, just and innocent souls, for you bear your treasure in a fragile vase. Come, come, all ! The Table is set, the Ciborium is full, I am waiting for you. Come, for, if you

do not eat of this Bread, which is Myself, you shall die !

And this appeal of Jesus is often despised. Too often has He the inconceivable sorrow of becoming the condemnation of those of whom He wishes to be the salvation, of remaining in the midst of them and of seeing them perishing under His eyes without being able to restore their life, by giving them His own Sacred Host. O let us repair for that love despised and unknown !

IV. — PETITION.

Give us this day our daily bread !

Let this be our incessant prayer. We know the price of this mysterious Bread, we know Its delights, for It is Jesus. O let us ask It ! Let us hunger for It ! As the thirsty stag pants after the fountain of waters, let us sigh with all the ardor of our soul after that sacred nourishment which sustains and strengthens against weakness, which gives joy to the bosom weighed down by trial, and which brings peace in the midst of struggle. Let us often say to Jesus : Give me to-day and every day my Bread, the Bread of my soul ! To-day I have to struggle ; to-day I must labor, suffer, renounce self ; to-day I must follow Thee, O Jesus, and the way over which Thou dost conduct Thy friends is often rough and difficult ; to-day I need strength, I need generosity. O Jesus, give me my Bread, give me my Host, for the Host is Thyself, and with Thee all is easy and possible.

But give, also, this Bread of Life to so many souls that need It badly, but who, alas ! remain far away from It. Discover to them the delights of that Sacred Nourishment, in order that It may become for them impossible not to participate in It. O Jesus, they will die if Thou dost not go to them ! In the name of Thy love, give them that Bread !

Practice. — Make every sacrifice to obtain daily Communion, and supply for Its want by frequent Spiritual Communions.

Aspiration. — Lord, give us always the Bread of Life !



The Coming of the Poor Clares from France

Adorator.



THE persecution of the religious orders in France, which is causing the whole Catholic world to mourn, has forced many of these orders to turn their eyes to the hospitable shores of America for a future home, and a field to labor in the good works for which they were founded, and to which their members have consecrated themselves by the most sacred vows. And surely when we recall the debt of gratitude which we American Catholics owe to the noble clergy of France who, in the dark days that are past, at the cost of self-denial and all manner of hardships, ministered to the wants of the faithful, scattered here and there throughout the country, our hearts will not be slow in extending a heartfelt welcome to these exiles of the cross, men and women, who have been so ruthlessly and unjustifiably attacked by the rabid anti-clericals and religion-haters, who are a stain upon that beautiful country, once the home of saints and the "eldest daughter of the Church of God."

How our hearts throb with love for France when we pore over the pages on which are recorded the heroic accounts of the establishment of Catholic missions in America ! These accounts abound with stories of zealous French Jesuits making their way through trackless forests, bearing the blessed tidings of the faith to those who sat in darkness ; of a French Jesuit tortured by savages ; of French priests swimming half-frozen rivers to minister to the sick and dying ; of French priests hewing long for a hut in which to celebrate Mass ; of French priests crossing and recrossing the Atlantic and traversing France collecting money to build churches and schools in this country of ours ; of the noble daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, filled with a saintly zeal, imbued with the charity of their founder, laying the foundation of hospitals and orphan asylums ; and then the great teaching orders of women erecting log cabins for schools, which have since developed into great institutions of learning, and are filling our land with virtuous wives and mothers.

We Americans are not to forget these things, for they are precious and sacred events which ought to ever burn before our memory as a lamp before a shrine. At our family firesides let us relate to our children the saintly zeal of dear old Catholic France, and what it did to plant the faith in America.

These thoughts have been suggested by the coming to New York a few weeks ago from Lourdes — France — of a little band of Poor Clares on their way to Valleyfield, Canada, where they are to make a new foundation of their ancient order. Their prayerful presence in the midst of the tumult, the distraction, the pleasure seeking of a great city was like a breath wafted from the hills of old Assisi or from the far off days when the seraphic St. Francis aroused all Europe by his preaching and his life of heroic virtue. These, his daughters, clad in gowns of gray wool, knotted girdles, white coifs and black veils, keep alive the example of their foundress, St. Clare.

They who say that these orders have outlived their usefulness, that they have no mission in this age of activity, err indeed, and know not what they say. What age ever needed them more than the twentieth century? What country ever needed the bracing air of their example more than America? The agnostic may look upon their life as folly, but to the eye of the Christian soul it presents a picture beautiful and helpful to contemplate, — it speaks of a life in this world of sin and frivolity where the heart renounces all to lay itself in simplicity before the Eternal as it would upon a naked, solitary rock of the desert, and offer itself as a holocaust.

We need not wonder that the little band of Poor Clares who passed through our city attracted the notice of curious worldings. The deep shades of cloistral life, its close seclusion, its silence and its prayer had invested these consecrated souls with a demeanor which is not after the pattern or fashion of the world. What was the outward scene of the great city to them, its pleasures, its pursuits, its honors, its cares and contrivances, its personages, its multitudes of busy slaves, what where they to them? nothing — no more than a show, for they had well pondered the truth that "The world passeth away and the lust thereof."

The very existence of such souls in the world is a living sermon. The world is led by a mad ambition for material things, but these souls led by the Holy Spirit, and walking by faith in what is unseen and future, are a constant reminder to worldlings of the life beyond this, of the judgment that is to come, in a word, their life forces upon the minds of men the unprofitableness and feebleness of the things of this world. I repeat, the existence of such souls is a living sermon — a living sermon which seems to have but one text which is ever old and yet ever new and which reads thus: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil; wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

We must mention, however, that the coming of the Poor Clares to our shores a few weeks ago, does not mark their first coming. They came to us as far back as 1876 and have remained with us. The two that came in that long ago endured numerous trials before they succeeded in establishing their community. Heaven only knows the hardships and painful experiences through which these two valiant daughters of St. Clare passed. But they found at last a sympathizing friend and adviser in the saintly Father Hecker whose love for contemplative orders was unbounded. He made the two great contemplatives St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross patrons of the Congregation he founded. A work on the Poor Clares recently published in this country contains several letters from Father Hecker to the two nuns mentioned. They all breathe the same spirit of encouragement and admiration. We quote the following passage from one of them which the reader may take as characteristic: "It now rests with you to make the beautiful flower of divine contemplation take root in the virginal soil of the church in our young Republic. I cannot conceive a nobler design, a greater work, and one fraught with more precious fruits. It will be my constant prayer that God may give you the grace of receiving the spirit of your holy foundress, St. Clare, and that you may be the nucleus of gathering together those souls on whom God has bestow-

ed the vocation of contemplative life.”

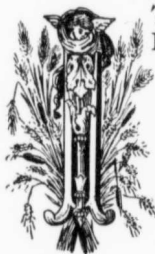
Many of us are so absorbed in practical affairs — so accustomed to estimate everything after the world's standard of profit and loss, that we have come to regard a study of the lives of the mystics as time wasted, while in reality it is just this very thing we need to do if we would save ourselves and others from that state of irreligion of which Father Hecker speaks.

No one can ponder over the beautiful life of St. Clare of Assisi, without feeling an attraction for a life of virtue. It is interesting in a pre-eminent degree, owing to the wonderful way in which she was led by the Holy Spirit.

On account of her high rank, great wealth, and extreme loveliness she had many offers of marriage, many temptations to enter into the gayeties and luxuries of the world. But she preferred the thorny path of mortification and the crown of celestial beatitude. The melting pathos of the preaching of St. Francis, with the penetrative charm of his spirit, drew her to throw herself at his feet and supplicate his guidance. He approved her desire to devote herself wholly to the religious life in seclusion; and, when she had made her escape by night from the proud castle, clad in her festal garments, and with a palm branch in her hand, he and the poor brotherhood met her at the chapel door, with lighted tapers and hymns of praise, and led her to the altar. Francis cut off her long golden hair, and threw his own penitential habit over her. She became his disciple, daughter, and friend, never wavering, though exposed to dangers and trials of the severest character. Under his direction, she formed the famous order of the Poor Clares.

When the body of St. Francis, on its way to burial, was borne by the church of San Damiano, where Clara and her nuns dwelt, she came forth with them weeping, saluted the remains of her friend, and kissed his hands. The memory of the relation of these sainted friends is perpetuated in many pictures of the Madonna, wherein Clara is portrayed on one side of the throne of the Virgin, and Francis on the other, both barefooted and wearing the gray tunic and knotted cord emblematic of poverty.

The Ishmaelite's Return



T was the first day of June, and Central Park was wearing its loveliest garb in honor of the Month of Roses. The air was full of sunshine and of the scents and sounds that form part of the indescribable charm of early summer. Children tumbled over the grass that stretched out like a green velvet carpet, and their elders sat under the trees watching the carriages turning in from Fifth Avenue through the 81st Street entrance.

trance.

On the bench near the driveway was a man whose broken boots, frayed trousers, and patched coat might have proclaimed him as belonging to the tramp species, only that his face was refined and intellectual. His hands, too, although sunburned, were shapely and well-cared for, and there was a subtle something in his aspect that indicated good birth and breeding.

He had been sitting motionless for some time, gazing at the dance of the leaf shadows on the ground, but now he looked up and began to quote softly,

“ And what is so rare as a day in June ?

Then, if ever, come perfect days ;

Then heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,

And over it softly her warm ear lays.

Whether we look, or whether we listen,

We hear life's murmur, and see it glis.... ”

A cry of distress interrupted him, and he turned quickly. In the same instant a crutch whizzed by and falling in the path of an automobile was reduced to splinters.

He took in the situation at a glance, and charging into the midst of a crowd of boys, picked up the crippled lad whom they were teasing, and carried him to the bench.

“ It's too bad, little man, ” he said gently, “ I wish I'd seen you before the young brutes got hold of your crutch. But you have one left still. Do you think you can manage with it ? ”

"I'll h...have to!" sobbed the boy, "Coz why, dere's on'y me mudder an' me to buy anythin'. She's a scrub-lady an' I sells papers, an' we ain't very rich. But she's a good 'un, you bet, an' I ain't a-goin' to fret her by lettin' on I feels bad 'bout this." He wiped his eyes with the back of a grimy hand, and squared his thin shoulders.

"Bravo, you plucky youngster! What's your name? How old are you? Tell me all about yourself?"

"Dere ain't nothin' much to tell. I'm Jeremiah Buckley, ...called Jerry for short, ...an' I'm eleven years old. Me legs was always kinder twisted, so I'm no great shakes, but if anyone else said dat, me mudder 'ud make pie-crust out of dem! What game are *you* workin'? You're a beggar, I guess?" He glanced doubtfully at the handsome, worn face, and shabby clothes.

The man flushed, then said slowly, "Why no, my boy, I'm not a beggar, ...at least, I've never begged. Hunger, and cold, and many privations have been my closest friends for the past five years, but I've learned much, ...Oh, I've learned much!"

He spoke in the abstracted tone of one who has suddenly fallen into a retrospective mood. For the moment he forgot that the keen eyes of the New-York gamin were upon him. His present surroundings seemed to melt away, and in thought he was back again in the old days before his rashness and lack of self-control had made him an Ishmaelite, ...an outcast and wanderer.

He recalled the night on which he had left all that he held most dear. With the completeness of a framed picture the whole scene rose before him. He saw the widowed mother who would have forgiven and shielded him even after he had sinned most deeply. He saw that other woman whom he loved, and who had lashed him with bitter words and pitiless scorn. He remembered how he had cowered beneath her just anger, and had said, "I will go now, since you wish it so. I will never come back until I've achieved something that will make you proud of me, and until I've atoned for the madness of a moment!"

He had gone away then, leaving his luxurious home and the society of those who had flattered and carressed

him throughout the twenty-five years of his life. He had journeyed to the far West, shunned companions of his own class, and worked hard to make a man of himself, ...a *man* in the best sense of the word. In a hard school, and after bitter struggles, he had learned to control the violent temper that had helped in his undoing, and had conquered the other vices inherited from his forefathers. But ill-luck pursued him, and now he was back in the city of his birth, wearied, disappointed, and discouraged.

His plans for the future were vague. Although homesickness had impelled him to return to New-York, he was determined never to enact the role of Prodigal Son until he was in a position to furnish his own fattened calf. He knew his mother would greet him joyfully whether he came in the guise of prince or pauper, but there was some-one else to be thought of, and that some-one was the dainty, fastidious girl whose beauty of character had always been marred by hauteur, and who would surely shrink now from his poverty and patches, very much as she would shrink from a leper. Decidedly he could not ask her to be proud of him...yet !

His reverie was broken in upon by Jeremiah's shrill voice :

" Say, Mister, wake up, why don't you ? You looks like a stuck pig ! Well, I'm goin' to hop along home now. I lives on 76th Street near the Church of St. Jean Baptiste. Git on to me French twang ! By-by. "

" Wait a minute, Jerry, I'll go with you. Perhaps my arm will serve instead of your broken crutch.

They left the Park and went down Fifth Avenue. As they passed a beautiful house near 76th Street, the boy felt a tremor shoot through the arm that sustained him, and his companion came to an involuntary stop. The pause was only for an instant, however, and he hurried on at so rapid a pace that the boy said complainingly.

" May be you're trainin' for a race, but I can't go it so fast, nohow ! "

" Excuse me, boy. I was thinking of...of something else. Long ago I knew the mistress of that house, and... now what are you laughing at ? "

" Yah ! D'y'e take me for a greeney ? How could *you* know old Missis Seaton ? Why, she was a swell, ...a

reg'lar tip-topper ! Me mudder used to scrub an' do odd jobs in dat house up to a month ago ; den de old lady died, an'.....Gee Whizz ! I never seed such a chap ! Are you goin' to t'row a fit ? You're as green as de skin of a boiled gooseberry. What's bitin' you anyway ? " He looked at the trembling figure that leant against a lamp-post for support, at the startled eyes, and the gray face contorted with pain ; he listened to the exclamation, " Dead ! And I never knew ! Dead...Oh, my God ! " and with a delicacy one would not have expected to find in a street-arab he hobbled away a few paces, leaving the stranger alone with his sorrow.

Presently a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a voice said brokenly, " Come, Jerry, take my arm again and we'll walk on. Won't you please tell me all you know of...of Mrs. Seaton's death ? "

" Me mudder can do dat better'n me, coz her an' de old lady's cook was chummy. I on'y heard she caught a cold an' died quite suddent. Say, yer great on askin' questions, like dem chaps wots writes pieces for de papers. But you ain't told me nothin' about yerself, not even yer name ! "

" My first name is Donald. You're welcome to know that, if it is of any interest to you. I'm anxious to see your mother, lad. Is she at home now ? "

" Naw. She'll be back bime-by. Here's de Church of St. Jean-Baptiste. Come in dere an' I'll show you somethin' orful queer. It's yer own name up on de wall. "

Jerry limped into the basement of the church, followed by his new acquaintance.

The man looked curiously around the quaint little place ; at the rose-decked altars, the beautiful statues surrounded by lighted candles ; the table on which stood the case containing a relic of Saint Anne, and the pile of crutches that had been left before it by grateful sufferers whose faith had made them whole. It was a touching sight, and although he, unfortunately, had been a careless, lukewarm Catholic, he regarded it with reverent eyes.

Jerry led him to the side-wall near the door and pointed to the marble slabs with which it was covered, and on which were inscribed petitions and thanksgivings signed

with the initials of those who had caused them to be placed there.

"Mother of Mary, cure my child", was printed on one; "Holy Saint, I thank you for procuring for me relief from pain", read another; "Dear Saint, help my sister to obtain the boon of restored sight" said another; and at the end of the long list appeared the supplication:

"GOOD SAINT ANNE, SEND BACK OUR DONALD TO US! M. S. AND A. B."

"See dat 'Donald'", whispered Jerry, "I knows wot dem letters stands for. M. S. is for Missis Mary Seaton, de old lady wot lived in de swell house; an' A. B. is for Miss Adrienne Beaucaire, de grand young lady wot used to come here all de time wit de crippled boy dat got cure....." He stopped and drew back as he saw his companion fall on his knees and with a smothered sob hide his face.

Half an hour later Jerry's mother was talking volubly to the mysterious stranger.

"Yes, sure, I know all about it," she said, "I heard it manys the time from me friend, the old lady's cook. It seems that Missis Seaton spoiled her only son. He grew up wild as a colt an' with a terrible temper. He steadied down a bit when he fell in love with Miss Beaucaire, but he couldn't give up all his bad habits right away. He used to take a lot of that fizzy stuff they calls *shampagne* water, an' then he wasn't himself at all, at all. So one night when he found the cook's little son in his room pawin' his books an' things, he got cican off his head with rage. The child ran like a hare, but he caught him, an', God between us an' all harm, flung him down the whole flight of stairs! The little fellow lay for dead, an' there was a terrible to-do. He'd have been arrested on'y his mother an' lady-fren' hustled him out of the way, an' from that day to this nobody has laid eyes on or heard from him."

She paused in her dramatic recital, and looked at her visitor. His face was averted and he breathed as though he had been running hard.

"There's...there's something more to tell?" he said unsteadily, "The boy did not die?"

"Bless your heart, no! He's alive an' kicking, an'

Sally, that's his mother, is fit to bust with pride because Miss Beaucaire sent him to a grand school. But she needn't be so stuck-up about it, for 'twas myself that helped to bring it to pass. I was sorry for the little shaver, seein' as how my own Jerry is so bad on his legs, an' when I heard that the big doctors couldn't fix his hip, I told Sally to try him with the relic of Saint Anne, for it nearly always cures them that has faith. She spoke to the ladies, an' though Miss Beaucaire was a black Protestant she went an' took the boy every day to the Church of St. Jean-Baptiste. He went there for two long years, an' one fine morning, ... 'tis well I remember 'twas the feast-day of Saint Anne, ... he left his crutches on the altar-steps an' walked down the aisle by himself ! It's Gospel truth I'm tellin' you ! I was there an' saw it with my own eyes. Up to that time Miss Beaucaire was awful proud. They said her heart was like a lump of ice, an' in the church she used to draw away her skirts from the poor people that come nigh. Many's the day I've seen her turn up her nose at 'em ! Well, when she saw the boy marchin' down alone, she fell on her knees an' moved on 'em down to the relic, an' she kissed it, while the tears streamed down her face like rain ! 'Twasn't long after that when I heard she was baptised, an' herself an' Mrs. Seaton put up the tablet that my Jerry showed you. An' now she ain't proud or cold or hard any more. She does a power of good in the parish, an' no one is too poor or too dirty for her to shake hands with ! Mercy on me, ... is it cryin' you are ! Stop, Jerry, you'll pull my skirt off ! What, you want me to come out with you, an' leave him alone ? Why, to be sure I will ! "

Outside the door the boy raised a pair of shining eyes to his mother's face, and whispered excitedly, " Don't you see... can't you tumble to it ? He's the old lady's son ! I felt it in me bones while we were in the church ! Hurry, mudder, hurry ! Let's go to Miss Beaucaire. Gee ! It's like de t'ird act in a play ! "

Mrs. Buckley felt bewildered, but she had faith in her son's sagacity, and followed him without demur.

They went to the house on Fifth Avenue near 76th Street, which had formerly been the home of Mrs. Seaton, but which had been bequeathed to Miss Beaucaire.

The servants of that lady had orders to open wide the doors to the needy and infirm, and they had no difficulty in gaining admittance.

Miss Beaucaire rose as Jerry entered, and looked kindly at him. He ran to her as fast as his deformed limbs would permit, and clutching her white gown, panted, " Saint Anne has sent your Donald back ! Come an' git him ! "

Donald Seaton was sitting in a chair, his faced buried in his hands, and his shoulders heaving convulsively. Mrs. Buckley's hot little kitchen was stiffling, but he gave no heed to that.

Suddenly he felt a caressing touch on his hair. He looked up and saw....Adrienne Beaucaire, the woman whom he had never ceased to love with all the intensity of his nature, although she had driven him from her with harsh words. And now she was holding out welcoming hands to him ! Her face was even lovelier than in the old days. It had become spiritualized, tender, and pitying as an angel's.

In broken words he told her the history of his years of exile, of his struggles against himself, and his victories and defeats. In turn she spoke of his mother, and gave him her last messages of love and forgiveness. At last silence fell between them, and she waited expectantly. But he dared not voice his love and longing ; he felt unworthy, and he had half-formed plans of disappearing again until he could fulfil his promise to make her proud of him !

" Well, have you nothing more to say to me ? " she asked with a tremulous laugh, " Is there no question you wish to put to me ? "

But still he was mute.

" Must I take the initiative ? " she went on, " Donald, you've fought a good fight, and...won ! Dear, I would like, if it can be arranged, to be married in the Church of St. Jean-Baptiste, before the relic of Saint Anne ! " Her voice faltered and she blushed rosily.

And then he found speech !

KATHLEEN EILEEN BARRY.

A Remarkable Conversion.

THE story of a remarkable conversion is told in the Missionary Record of the Oblates of Mary by a priest who signs himself "L. C. P. F." It occurred many years ago in Dublin, when the narrator was attracted by the gathering of a crowd in Sackville Street, and found that it had collected to watch a poor man fallen in a fit. It was evident from the style of dress that he was a gentleman, but as no one could identify him his religion of course remained unknown. Under these circumstances, the priest gave him conditional absolution, had a cab called and sent him to the Jarvis Street hospital. He tells the story as follows: "On the following day I was told that a gentleman was in the parlor who wished to see me. On going to see him he told me he had not sent me his card because I did not know him. He then told me that he was the same man who had a fit on the previous day in Sackville Street, and that I had done something to him before I had either taken him or sent him to the hospital. He continued his relation by begging me to tell him what I had done for him. After I had explained what is meant by the conditional absolution and the sign of the cross which was made over him, he concluded by first thanking me and the good Sisters of Mercy who had so kindly nursed him, and then asked me to give him the necessary instructions, as he was determined to become a member of the Catholic Church. I found that he belonged to one of the leading mercantile firms of Dublin, and to a family that was conspicuous among the proselytizing circles. After due preparation I gave him conditional baptism, and as he remained in Dublin for more than a year subsequent to that time, I had ample opportunities of knowing that he became a model, practical Catholic, and he assured me that although previous to his conversion he had been subject to epileptic attacks, sometimes as often as two and three times a week, he had never once been troubled in that way since I had done something to him as he lay on the ground in Sackville Street."



Book Notices.

COMMUNION DAY, by Rev. M. Russell, S. J. is a devotional book of practical reflections on Communion. It contains some very edifying and instructive chapters calculated to be used in devotion before and after Communion. Benziger Bros. New York, have published the work in a style at once becoming and convenient, \$ 0.60.

THE PRINCESS OF POVERTY, by Rev. Father Marinus, O. M. Cap. is a work which all lovers of the great Franciscan order will gladly welcome. It portrays in a very unique and attractive way the life of St. Clare. Our people should know more about this great servant of God, who sacrificed her high rank, great wealth, and turned aside from the most alluring temptations to enter the gayeties of the world, in order that she might take up her cross and follow Christ in the narrow way. One cannot read of the marvelous manner in which divine grace led her, along the thorny path of mortification and poverty to the heights of celestial beatitude, without realizing the power of the human soul, when once given to God, over all the passions and evil tendencies of nature.

Aside from the value of the book itself, there is a worthy charity connected with it which ought to appeal to all who desire to see the Christ-like spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, and his devoted daughter, St. Clare, fostered in this age when it is so much needed. The proceeds arising from the sale of the book will be devoted to paying off a debt on the Monastery of the Poor Clares, at Evansville, Indiana. Orders for the book may be sent to St. Mary's Rectory, 609 Cherry St., Evansville, Indiana.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST, by Rev. Walter Elliot, C. S. P. is a work of priceless value. Perhaps it may be truthfully said that no life of Our Savior has ever appeared that has given so much satisfaction as the one under consideration. Father Elliot undertook a good work and he has done it well. When the reader comes to the last page of the book, he feels conscious of having undergone an unusual influence. It brings the mind into the closest touch with Christ and His Apostles. One can easily see that it has been written with the truest feeling and sympathy. We consider it one of the most valuable productions of late of the Catholic press. The price of the book is \$ 1.00. Catholic Book Exchange, 120 West 60th Street, New-York.

A MOTHER'S prayer, silent and gentle, can never miss the road to the throne of God.

WHEN the secret of a blessed life is made plain to us, we see that each one must learn it for himself.

THE man who is fond of books is usually a man of lofty thought and of elevated opinions.



ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

From a painting by Hoffmann.



"The Kingdom of Heaven is for those who resemble them."
From a painting by C. Vogel



CONFESSION

From time to time, we have received requests from readers of the "Sentinel" for instructive article on the subject of Confession. We, therefore, publish for their benefit the following treatise which was originally written in Italian by the Rev. Joseph Frassinetti, and has been translated into English by an able contributor to the pages of the "Sentinel."

Confession is One of the Seven Sacraments

IT is of faith that confession is one of the Seven Sacraments instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a truth proved by the Gospel of St. John, Chapter XX., taught by all the Fathers of the Church, and defined by the Council of Trent. The following is the definition of the Council: "If any one says that, in the Catholic Church, Penance, that is, Sacramental Confession, is not really and truly a Sacrament instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ to reconcile the Faithful with God whenever they fall into sin after Baptism, let him be excommunicated." Sess. 14, ch. 1.

They, then, who affirm that Sacramental Confession was not instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, or that it is not really a Sacrament, ought to be looked upon as heretics and excluded from the true Church of Jesus Christ. Such are, for instance, those that, in our day, declare Confession to be an invention of priests, of popes, or of some one or other of the Councils, that deny that it is a Sacrament, and necessary to obtain the remission of sins committed after Baptism.

Which Sins it is Necessary to Confess

The only sins that we are obliged to confess, are mortal sins, because they alone deprive the soul of sanctifying grace. It is very praiseworthy to confess venial sins, also, but there is no obligation to do so.

Sanctifying Grace

Every Christian ought to know what sanctifying grace is. Sanctifying grace is a divine gift, a lasting quality that God pours into our soul, which renders us friends of God, heirs of heaven, and brethren of Jesus Christ.

We receive this grace at the moment of Baptism, and it remains in us as long as we commit no sin. Mortal sin alone can make us lose it.

This grace is the true life of the soul, in as much as the soul that possesses it is truly living before God; if she should pass to the other world in that state, it would be impossible for her not to obtain eternal life, namely, paradise. The soul deprived of sanctifying grace, on the contrary, is really dead in the eyes of God; and if called from the world in that state, it would be impossible for her to escape eternal death, namely, eternal damnation. Now, this grace, note it well, is the portion of all souls not in mortal sin; and it is wanting to all souls that are in mortal sin, had they committed only one.

This grace is called sanctifying, because it sanctifies souls; consequently, every soul exempt from mortal sin, is truly holy, even had she committed thousands and thousands venial sins. It is this grace that sanctifies the just on earth and even the saints in heaven, so that the blessed and Mary, their Divine Queen, are saints by means of sanctifying grace.

Do we comprehend the price of this treasure? He who possesses it, is really the friend of God and His adopted son. He is the brother of Jesus Christ, "the First-born among many brethren," and by all these titles he is by right the heir to eternal beatitude.

He who has sanctifying grace is, besides, holy with the holiness of even the saints of heaven and of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Again, do we comprehend the price of this treasure? If Christians understood it, never would they admit into

their soul mortal sin, the only robber able to deprive them of that good so precious. It is a great misfortune that this treasure should be so little known among Christians. Ask them the meaning of sanctifying grace, and the majority know not what to answer.

We must further observe that this grace, like all other treasures, is susceptible of increase. It is an article of Faith that souls adorned with sanctifying grace, merit its increase in proportion to their good works. Every time they make the sign of the Cross, or invoke the Name of Jesus, they receive an increase of grace ; with how much more reason, then, when they make an act of the love of God, hear Holy Mass, approach the Holy Table, etc.

Let us judge from what has been said of the treasures that are accumulated in the soul of good Christians habitually exempt from mortal sin. By every one of the thousands of good works which they perform, they acquire new degrees of grace, which go on multiplying to infinity. Now, to the degrees of grace acquired in this life, correspond the degrees of glory that they shall possess in Paradise.

Examination of conscience

Let us return to our first proposition. It is an Article of Faith, defined by the First Council of Lateran and the Council of Trent, that the sinner, in order to obtain pardon, must confess all his mortal sins without excepting any. There is question here of mortal sins recalled after a proper examination of conscience. Those that are not recalled after such an examination, are pardoned at the same time as the others. If, however, sins thus omitted, return to the memory, we must, although they are already pardoned, accuse ourselves of them in our next confession.

We must, then, accuse ourselves of all the mortal sins that we can remember after a proper examination of conscience. Then, such an examination of conscience is necessary. This necessity is, however, not absolute, but only relative. In other words, the examination is not required for all, but only for those that, by omitting it, expose themselves to forget mortal sins.

For Christians who, by the grace of God, never commit mortal sins, evidently there can be no danger of forgetting them in confession. Nor does such danger exist for such as rarely commit them, and who confess them at once, or soon after their fall. Such Christians are, then, even by the rigor of theology, dispensed from examining their conscience, either because they commit no grave faults, or because, if it should happen that they commit one, it would be impossible for them to forget it even without the least examination.

It is very different with those that ordinarily commit a great number of mortal sins, and that confess but rarely. By making no examination of conscience, they expose themselves to the actual danger of omitting some such sins; they are, in consequence, bound to examine their conscience before confession. These are truths that no theologian has ever questioned.

Our intention is not to induce the timid to neglect examination of conscience. We merely wish to enlighten them upon their real obligation, and to calm the exaggerated fears of many. It is a fact attested by experience, that they who have no need of examining themselves, are precisely they who give themselves most trouble on this point. The anxiety with which they apply themselves thereto greatly retards their spiritual advancement.

We, therefore, exhort all Christians, even the most timorous, always to make their examination of conscience before confession, for it is a thing eminently proper. If for many such an examination is not necessary, yet it will be of great advantage to them. It will help them better to confess their light faults and to correct them. They should, however, be very careful not to become disquieted on the subject. The examination of conscience ought to be a subject of disquietude for no one, not even, as we shall presently explain, for the greatest sinners; surely, then, not for souls who habitually live in the holy fear of God.

This examination ought to turn upon what constitutes the obligatory matter of confession, namely, upon the species of sins, their number, and the circumstances that change their species. There is no necessity to examine

one's self upon circumstances that only increase the malice of the sin, since there is no obligation of accusing one's self of it. Let us take, for example, the child that gives his father a blow. It would not suffice for him to say : *I struck my neighbor*. He must say : *I struck my father*, because such an injury to a father offends not only against the virtue of charity, but also against the other virtue of filial piety. The circumstance of the person struck changes, then, the species of the sin, and it ought to be mentioned in the accusation.

But if, instead of one blow, that wicked son had, in the same outburst of rage, given his father two or three blows he would not be obliged to indicate the number of blows given. It would suffice for him to say : *I struck my father*, because the fact of having given one or two blows more in the same fit of passion, constitutes a circumstance which, indeed, aggravates the sin, but which does not change the species.

Examination of Conscience made by the Devout

We now address you in particular, pious souls, who frequently approach the tribunal of penance. Some instructions on the subject of the examination preparatory for confession, may be of great use to you. How many of you, every time you go to confession, are beyond measure preoccupied with that examination ! You devote to it, or rather you lose, considerable time in it, fearing not to be able to recall all your sins, fearing to forget some fault and, on that account, to make a bad confession.

By what has already been said, you understand that, by confessing without previous examination, you confessed well, provided you were not obliged to examine yourself. The reason that frees you from such obligation is, that there is in your case no danger of forgetting a mortal sin, since you do not commit such sins. If it should happen to you (which may God forbid !) to commit one, that fall would make such an impression on your soul that you would not be able to forget it even should you try to do so.

Moreover, three things are necessary, as you know, to constitute a mortal sin : first, grave matter ; secondly, full understanding ; and thirdly, the deliberate consent

of the will. Now, when you have committed an act or yielded to a thought grievously culpable, having perfectly remarked the gravity of the sin that you are going to commit, and having resolved upon it with full and entire will, how could it happen that, confessing some days later, you could forget the sin committed? Why, more easily would you forget the way that leads to your own home!

You abhor not only mortal sin, but also venial sin fully consented to, and that to such a degree that you never, or almost never, commit such sins. Under such conditions, if you have the misfortune to commit one, the impression that it will make upon you will certainly prevent your forgetting it when you go to confession.

If you have told an officious falsehood, or been guilty of a slight slander with full deliberation, such faults will remain impressed upon the memory until you have accused yourself of them. After that, can you think that you have forgotten in confession any mortal sin you might have had the misfortune to commit? Come, now, let us be sincere. Say that you yourself do not believe such forgetfulness possible. You must, then, be persuaded that you are not bound to examine yourself before confession. By accusing yourself of the faults that come of themselves to your mind, you will, without any examination, make an excellent confession.

Would that you attentively reflected on these words, because, in truth, it is deplorable to find among souls so many who, examining their conscience every time that they confess, even every eight days, are troubled and disquieted at not finding sins of which to accuse themselves. What wonder, we may say to them, if, not wishing to commit sins, you do not commit them! The wonder would be for you to commit sin when you do not wish to do so. On the contrary, what more simple, and shall we dare say it, what more natural than, wishing not to commit sin, you do not commit it? What! Could any one sin with the express will not to do so?

It is impossible for a Christian to sin as long as he does not will it. This is an Article of Faith. Are you surprised to see accomplished in yourself what Faith teaches? Are you at all surprised when you hear it said

that the wicked rich man dying in the state of mortal sin, was buried in hell? No, you answer, for Faith teaches that the sinner dying in his sin, goes to hell. And yet you are surprised at this statement, that you commit no fault, neither mortal nor venial with full deliberation, if you do not want to commit it. Does not Faith teach us that without the will, no sin is possible? If, then, you find no fault of which to accuse yourself, do not be troubled on that account, but thank the good God who, by His grace, has strengthened your will, in order to prevent you from yielding to temptation.

You will, perhaps, ask: It is possible that one can have no fault whatever with which to reproach one's self? The saints committed some, and do not we commit some, too? Yes, we may fear, and with reason, it seems to us, for how many faults our blindness prevents us, perhaps, from recognizing!

By the foregoing remarks, you mean, doubtless, that having no knowledge of the sins into which you think you fall, you are bound to hunt them up, and, for this end, to examine your conscience anxiously in the hope of discovering them.

We answer: Above all, recall what we have already said, namely, that mortal sins alone are the obligatory matter for Sacramental Confession, and that, consequently, there is obligation to examine one's self only upon mortal sin.

Coming now to venial sin, to which we alluded in saying that the saints themselves are not exempt from them, we shall show you that the faults committed by the saints, were not sins of full deliberation. They were faults proceeding less from malice of the will than from human frailty. They were such sins as no one escapes without a special privilege from God, such privilege, we know having been accorded to no saint, the Blessed Virgin Mary excepted. (1) They were sins committed rather through surprise than from a perverse will. Now, it is certain that you constantly commit such sins unless you, too, have received the privilege granted to the Blessed Virgin. Such sins are more known of very enlightened persons such as were the saints, than of the less

(1) Council of Trent. Session 6. ch. II.

favored by divine light, in which latter number you, perhaps, ought to be classed. In either case, however, they are not faults upon which it is necessary either to examine one's self or to confess.

On the other hand, not having so many lights as the saints had, you cannot pretend to know such faults as they knew them ; consequently, you ought to be satisfied with examining yourself upon sins committed with full knowledge, and which, on that account, are soon perceived by him who is examining his conscience. And if, we repeat, you commit no sins of this kind, it is evident that you will not be able to find them when making your examination. Calm yourself, then, and do not obstinately insist upon finding sin where there is none. Consecrate some moments to this examination of which, theologically speaking, you have no need, and cease to disquiet yourself, to trouble yourself as you do, to the great detriment of your soul.

We say *theologically speaking*, because according to the principles and teachings of theology, you have no need of examination.

Let us here observe that the principles and teachings of theology ought to serve as a guide and rule in all things regarding Christian piety. On this point, we may here express our regret that certain books of devotion have been written by men either little familiar with theology, or who, though sufficiently familiar with it, have not taken it into account in their writings. We are here referring to those books that fill the mind of pious persons with false ideas, that are tainted with rigorism, and are calculated to excite fear and doubt. Thus it happens that such souls walk painfully in the path of piety, always hesitating, always disquieted and disconcerted, and consequently, deprived of that peace which the Apostle desired to see reigning in all hearts.

It is for this reason, without wishing to prohibit in any way examination of conscience before confession, on the contrary, rather advising it in view of the advantages that it may procure to those even that have no need of it, we exhort you to make such examination very briefly, without fearing by that to fail in your duty.

Examination of Conscience for Sinners.

All who, by omitting the examination of conscience, expose themselves to forget mortal sins, make bad confessions if they neglect such examination. Consequently, the examination becomes necessary for those that confess rarely, and even for those that, although confessing often, live in the habit of mortal sin. By omitting it, such sinners evidently run the risk of forgetting grievous sins.

Besides, the more rare their confessions and the more frequent and multiplied their falls, the more diligent should be their examination, and to it they should devote a proper and sufficient time.

On the other hand, such sinners ought not on account of it, torment themselves, become disconcerted, and lose their peace of soul. According to all theologians, this examination ought always to be proportioned to the capacity of the penitent. It ought to be *human*, as the celebrated De Lugo expresses it.

Penitents in general are not theologians ; consequently, they are not obliged, they are even incapable of examining themselves according to all the rules and distinctions of theology. It suffices for every one to examine himself as well as he can. He who is more intelligent and better instructed, is bound to more ; but he who is less, is bound to less. God is satisfied as long as every one does good according to his capacity.

And let no one object that many sinners are ignorant, because they will to be so, inasmuch as they have neglected the reading of pious books or have failed to assist at religious instructions. When, in effect, the sinner returns to God and, in order to be reconciled with Him, disposes himself to make a good confession, he cannot instantaneously change the state in which he then is. If he is an ignorant man, he cannot metamorphose himself into a learned one. He has sinned in not instructing himself as he should have done, and if such negligence has been gravely culpable, he ought to confess it. For the present, however, the good God Himself must take him as He finds him, that is to say, ignorant, unless he infuses into his mind the knowledge in which he is wanting.

Shall we assert that the sinner ought to delay his confession until he is well instructed? No theologian has ever laid down so strange a requirement. Let the sinner confess as well as he can, and for that let him make what examination of conscience he can. God is satisfied for the time being, and the sinner is restored to grace. He will later on fulfil whatever obligation may rest upon him to instruct himself better in the truths of Faith and christian morality. (It is evidently supposed that such a sinner is not without some knowledge of the principal mysteries of Faith. If ignorant of them, he ought to be instructed before receiving absolution.)

In short, if the examination of conscience, however imperfect it may be in itself, is proportioned to the capacity of the penitent, the confession cannot fail to the good and to restore the sinner to the state of grace. There is, then, no cause for such a penitent to torment himself on the subject.

The examination ought, besides, to be *human*, that is to say, it ought not to be rendered too painful. Consequently, theologians say, the penitent is not obliged to employ in it all possible diligence, but only that discreet care which prudent men bring to affairs of some importance.

Let us note one difference, and that is, in affairs of material interest, there are books containing statements of the sums and giving an account of the smallest differences; whereas for conscience affairs, the registers are wanting. The only means of calculating them is the memory, in many persons very short-lived, and in all weak and inefficient. Now, to wish to force the memory to recall exactly things and, above all, actions and thoughts which date far back, is to impose upon one's self a painful, and very often, a very fruitless, task.

If we were obliged to bring to the examination all possible care, and to constrain the memory to recall things with rigorous exactitude, it would be an obligation hard, painful, and insupportable. The Sacrament of Penance would thereby become the executioner of souls, as Protestants call it. Christians would remain far from it, abhorring this means of salvation which Jesus Christ has

made necessary for all who have fallen into mortal sin after Baptism.

For this reason, the greatest sinners, even those that have grown old in vice, ought to take care, when they return to God, not to trouble and torment themselves on account of examination of conscience. It suffices that they quietly review the years of their sinful life, remarking as well as they can their bad habits and the probable frequency of their sins, monthly, weekly, or daily, without aiming at precision or certitude utterly impossible. After having made their examination in this way, they ought to remain tranquil, not thinking themselves obliged to examine more and more under pretext that, by doing so longer, they would find new sins of which to accuse themselves in confession. Cardinal De Lugo expressly teaches this when speaking of the discretion that the confessor ought to observe in the questions that he puts to his penitent. "It is bad reasoning," says that theologian, "to say: Such and such questions will make me discover more clearly the number or the species of sins committed. — Then, we must ask: How could it be bad reasoning on the penitent's part to say, If I examine myself another hour, I may discover the sins that now escape my notice, and then I shall very likely make a more exact accusation. If this be so, I ought to examine myself another hour." — Under such conditions, there would never be an end to these examinations.

Let us now see how sinners ought to act who have not confessed for a long time, or who have made a great number of null or sacrilegious confessions.

They ought to fix the date since their last confession, or since their last good confession, for example, say ten years. Then they should examine the species of sins into which they have fallen, whether theft, unjust contracts, blasphemy, hatred, impurity, failing to hear Mass, &c.

The species of their sins being known, they must next consider their number. If there is not question of habitual sins, but of those committed at rare intervals, we can easily calculate the precise, or, at least, the approximate, number. This happens, for instance, when the penitent has, in the space of ten years, failed to hear only five or six Masses of obligation, so that naturally he ought to

accuse himself of that number. If, on the contrary, there is question of sins of habit, — if, for example, the penitent has blasphemed every time that he got angry ; if he defrauded his customers whenever he could ; if every day, or almost every day, he committed sins of impurity, above all, in thought, it would be utterly impossible for him to decide even upon the approximate number of his sins. It would be necessary for him to understand arithmetic and, pen in hand, make numberless calculations, which, however, would give only very doubtful results, especially in what regards sins of thought which, in persons living without the fear of God, sometimes count a hundred or so in the day.

What, then, ought the penitent to do in the case of bad habits continued for a long time, nay, even for long years ? He ought to examine, as well as he can, the frequency of his falls into such sins, whether it has been several times a month, a week, or even a day. This is very easily done, provided he recalls with certainty, at least in a confused manner, the greater or less frequency of those sinful acts.

If a penitent was troubled at not being able to make this examination, simple though it be, it would suffice for him to declare the evil habit, and answer the confessor's questions on that point.

We meet some persons who are absolutely incapable of making such calculations. They are unable to recall anything. They can say to the confessor only : *I have always blasphemed. I have always wished evil to my neighbor. I have always committed such and such a sin.*

Ought such persons to confess ? Yes. Let them confess as well as they can. If the confessor desires to have a more distinct knowledge of things, he can gain it by questioning.

Do not think us too easy with regard to sinners who have lived in the habit of sin, in satisfying ourselves with so general an examination. We can cite illustrious theologians more indulgent than we in this respect, such as, Melchior Canus, Pierre Soto, Navarrus, Cajetan, Billuart, and Cardinal Gousset. Speaking of persons who for long years have exercised some criminal profession, or who have lived in the occasion of sin, these theologians teach

that an accusation like the following would suffice for them : *For ten years, for five years, I have led such or such a life. You understand me clearly enough, Father, so I need say no more about it to you.* (1)

The reason for such indulgence is this, the habit and the time of its continuance being once known, the confessor can judge of the species and the number of sins arising from it, as well as he could from a long and detailed accusation.

The important thing is, that no one omit, or even defer, his confession, on account of the difficulty of examination of conscience. Let him do what he can ; the confessor will do the rest. The chief point is, that the sinner, as soon as he hears the call of God, hearkens to it without delay, and casts himself at once at the feet of a good confessor, who will aid him according to the lights that God will give him, to rise from the deplorable state in which he is.

There is still a word to say on the *method* of examination, namely, whether it is necessary to examine one's self on the Ten Commandments of God, and the Precepts of the Church, or upon thoughts, words, actions, or omissions in their regard. I shall briefly observe that the first method is suited to great sinners who acknowledge themselves guilty of all sorts of sins. Let them examine themselves seriously upon all the Commandments, since they have sinned against all or almost all, and they will without trouble discover the various kinds of sins they have committed. They will in this way run no danger of forgetting any.

For the devout who confess frequently, it would be something almost ridiculous for them to wish to examine themselves on all the Commandments. Why should they ask themselves whether they have blasphemed, sworn falsely, stolen, failed to hear Masses of obligation, omitted their Paschal Communion? They know very well that they have never committed such sins ; and, therefore, we say that such an examination would be for them something almost ridiculous, (2)

Speaking in general, also, the second method is preferable, namely, that which consists in examining thoughts,

(1) *De Lugo cit.* sect. 15; Gousset, Vol. II. n. 417.

(2) In the sense in which Frassinetti is here speaking, such a

words, actions, and omissions, and noting the faults of which one has rendered himself guilty in those four ways of offending God.

They who confess frequently, however, need not put themselves to the trouble of following any method. If they have committed sins with full deliberation, they will not fail to recall them perfectly. If there is question of simple venial sins, there is no obligation to examine one's self, as we have repeatedly declared and still more easily will mortal sin be recalled if they should happen to fall into it.

Grand Corpus Christi Celebration, of the People's Eucharistic League.

At St. Patrick's Cathedral.

THE Corpus Christi Celebrations of 1902 at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City, will long be remembered by all those who had the good fortune to witness them.

method would, indeed, be absurd and ridiculous, though it might, perhaps, be very reasonably employed. Naturally pious persons would examine themselves not on the mortal sins against the Commandments, since such persons are supposed not to commit grave faults. But nothing can prevent them from examining themselves on the Commandments, in order to discover the venial faults that may have escaped them on those heads; for example, voluntary distractions in prayer and at Holy Mass, which faults fall under the First and the Third Commandments; disobedience and want of respects to parents, under the Fourth; detraction in small matters, under the Fifth and the Eight, etc.

In such an examination, they should, indeed, pass over the Commandments against which they know for sure that they have not sinned.

In fact, it is in this way that many pious persons make their examination, and we see no real motive for them to give up such a method, which has been followed by them from childhood. It is even preferable to the second, which, as it seems, is rather vague. There are, moreover, so many ways of sinning by action, that it would even be necessary to establish a certain order among them. Why not, then, the order of the Commandments?

Some persons use the following order: Sins against God, against the neighbor, against self, against the duties of one's state. We see no reason for changing such a method.

This remark is meant for those that follow a method, though none is necessary for those that confess often and live habitually in the state of grace.

Such magnificent exhibitions of devotion are rarely seen, any where, outside of Rome.

The first celebration took place on the feast itself, at four o'clock p. m. and was devoted entirely to the women of the League. The great procession composed of Zelatrices from the various churches of the city encircled the great edifice. There were three benedictions, the first at the Sacred Heart altar, the second at the Holy Family altar and the third at the main altar. A more beautiful or more edifying sight would be difficult to imagine than that presented by the procession as it moved along the broad aisles of the Cathedral. Clear and true, the sweet solemn strains of the never old *Tantum Ergo Sacramentum*, rose and fell, and died away amid the soaring Gothic arches. At certain parts of the service appropriate Eucharistic hymns were sung by the hundreds of voices assembled, while softly breaking through the waves of music, there seemed to sound the exultant voice of one, not of earth, crying : " Rejoice greatly, O Daughters of Zion — Behold Thy King Cometh unto Thee."

An eloquent sermon on the Eucharist was preached by the Rev. Edward M. Sweeney, rector of the Church of the Ascension.

The celebration of the men's branch of the League took place the Sunday following the feast at eight o'clock in the evening. The immense edifice was filled with men, belonging to every age and grade of life. The earnest devotion that filled their hearts expressed itself in one grand outpouring of divine praise, as their rich, deep voices swelled the notes of the precious old hymn ;

" Sweet Sacrament, we Thee adore
O, make us love Thee more and more ! "

The reverent conduct of this large gathering of men proved, that their love for the Blessed Sacrament is a constant part of their lives. Their presence represented a large number of the principal parishes of the city. We are sure that every man in the great procession that preceded the Blessed Sacrament was made happier, better, and nobler for this act of homage to Our Eucharistic Lord. Such an outpouring of Catholic men, such a demonstration of Catholic faith, loyalty and enthusiasm

presented an awe-inspiring sight that touched the hearts of all present.

The sermon at the men's celebration was preached by the Rev. P. F. McSweeney. It showed careful study and was listened to with close attention.

At both celebrations the Blessed Sacrament was borne under a rich canopy, by Bishop Farley.

SUBJECT OF ADORATION

FOR THE USE

Of the Associates of the Congregation of the Priests
of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

THE EUCHARIST, THE SACRAMENT OF LIFE.

Ego sum panis vite.
I am the Bread of Life.

I. — ADORATION.



LET us with respectful love penetrate into the Holy of Holies, the Soul of Jesus, and try to discover therein the loving designs that He had over us in instituting the Eucharist.

He had made full reparation to His Father and given Him the full complement of glory, by the sacrifice of His Body and Blood. But His soul was still thinking of us, of us His purchased ones, of us His well-loved. He does not want to leave us orphans. He has promised us that He will stay with us even till the consummation of ages. — How will His love realize this design? — Is He going to remain with us as a God full of majesty? No, for He knows that men cannot see God

and live. — Will He remain with us under the veil of His Sacred Humanity? — But that Humanity is now glorified, and our weak gaze could not support Its splendor.

What did Jesus do? — O prodigy of love! He will remain with us as God and man, but He will hide His Divinity and His Humanity under the lowly appearance of bread and, revealing His design of love, He will call Himself the Bread of Life. The Bread of Life! — Behold the true name of our Jesus, the name that expresses at one and the same time His love and the secret desire of that love. The angels were amazed. They adored that prodigy without comprehending it. They adored that unheard-of abasement, that excess of love in their God for man, a creature so weak and so ungrateful.

O let us, the happy privileged ones of that love, adore the ineffable abasement of our God! Let us study to know under the lowly and fragile accidents of the Host, Him who in heaven receives the unending adoration of the angels and saints, Him who alone is holy, alone is great, alone is powerful, alone is Most High, as sings Holy Church: *Tu solus Sanctus, Tu solus Dominus, Tu solus Altissimus!* The more His love has abased Him, the more our love magnifies Him, exalts Him, and renders Him a perpetual homage of praise and adoration.

II. — THANKSGIVING.

Our soul received at Baptism a life of grace, a life all divine. Now, as the life of our body is preserved, strengthened, developed, and cheered by nourishment, so for the life of the soul a divine aliment is necessary, a divine strength, a divine joy. Let us thank Jesus, since He has provided for the need of our soul that life, that strength, that joy. He comes Himself to give it to us in person in His Eucharist.

Ah, yes! Jesus well knew that our supernatural life would be a combat often rude and difficult, and always crucifying. He knew that in that combat our strength would often fail; that sadness would seize upon our soul; and that, like the Prophet Elias of old, we would fall exhausted, beseeching Him to call us to Himself. An angel from heaven appeared to Elias in his discouragement, and offered him some mysterious bread. After having

eaten it, the Prophet was able to resume his journey, and arrive at the mountain of the Lord. For us, also, Bread comes down from heaven, and this Bread of Life, this Bread of Strength, this Bread of Joy is Jesus, Jesus in the Sacrament ! Every day we take part in His struggles, in His burden of sufferings ; but every day, also, a Host awaits us in the tabernacle, which having received, we can cry out with the Apostle : " I can do all things in Him who strengthens me ! "

Let us give thanks to Jesus for this admirable invention of His divine wisdom, placed at the service of His infinite love, and may the thought that He has made Himself our Bread of Life, be to us a remedy against all our weakness, and sadness ! May it be our strength in combat, and our hope in victory !

III. — REPARATION.

If Jesus has made Himself the Bread of our soul, His desire is, to be received, to be eaten, by those whom He has loved even to excess. How great, then, is His suffering when He beholds souls dying for want of that nourishment which He prepared for them at the cost of all the sacrifices of His Incarnation, His Passion, and His Death !

He chose the form of bread, in order to invite all to nourish themselves with Him, for bread is as good for the table of the poor as for that of the rich. It is the food of all men. " Come," says Jesus to us, " come, My well-beloved, eat the Bread that I have prepared for you ! — Come, for I desire that you have life, and that you have it in abundance. — This is My Body. Take ye all and eat ! " The ardor that consumed the soul of Jesus on the evening of the Last Supper, and which made Him cry out : " With desire have I desired to eat this Pasch with you," has lost nothing of its divine fire. From every Host it causes this loving cry to be heard in our soul : Come, weak souls, I will be your strength ! Come, sad and discouraged souls, I will console you ! Come, all ye who, breaking the bonds of sin, fear new assaults of the enemy, I will be your shield to ward off all his blows ! Come, just and innocent souls, for you bear your treasure in a fragile vase. Come, come, all ! The Table is set, the Ciborium is full, I am waiting for you. Come, for, if you

do not eat of this Bread, which is Myself, you shall die !

And this appeal of Jesus is often despised. Too often has He the inconceivable sorrow of becoming the condemnation of those of whom He wishes to be the salvation, of remaining in the midst of them and of seeing them perishing under His eyes without being able to restore their life, by giving them His own Sacred Host. O let us repair for that love despised and unknown !

IV. — PETITION.

Give us this day our daily bread !

Let this be our incessant prayer. We know the price of this mysterious Bread, we know Its delights, for It is Jesus. O let us ask It ! Let us hunger for It ! As the thirsty stag pants after the fountain of waters, let us sigh with all the ardor of our soul after that sacred nourishment which sustains and strengthens against weakness, which gives joy to the bosom weighed down by trial, and which brings peace in the midst of struggle. Let us often say to Jesus : Give me to-day and every day my Bread, the Bread of my soul ! To-day I have to struggle ; to-day I must labor, suffer, renounce self ; to-day I must follow Thee, O Jesus, and the way over which Thou dost conduct Thy friends is often rough and difficult ; to-day I need strength, I need generosity. O Jesus, give me my Bread, give me my Host, for the Host is Thyself, and with Thee all is easy and possible.

But give, also, this Bread of Life to so many souls that need It badly, but who, alas ! remain far away from It. Discover to them the delights of that Sacred Nourishment, in order that It may become for them impossible not to participate in It. O Jesus, they will die if Thou dost not go to them ! In the name of Thy love, give them that Bread !

Practice. — Make every sacrifice to obtain daily Communion, and supply for Its want by frequent Spiritual Communions.

Aspiration. — Lord, give us always the Bread of Life !



The Coming of the Poor Clares from France

Adorator.

THE persecution of the religious orders in France, which is causing the whole Catholic world to mourn, has forced many of these orders to turn their eyes to the hospitable shores of America for a future home, and a field to labor in the good works for which they were founded, and to which their members have consecrated themselves by the most sacred vows. And surely when we recall the debt of gratitude which we American Catholics owe to the noble clergy of France who, in the dark days that are past, at the cost of self-denial and all manner of hardships, ministered to the wants of the faithful, scattered here and there throughout the country, our hearts will not be slow in extending a heartfelt welcome to these exiles of the cross, men and women, who have been so ruthlessly and unjustifiably attacked by the rabid anti-clericals and religion-haters, who are a stain upon that beautiful country, once the home of saints and the "eldest daughter of the Church of God."

How our hearts throb with love for France when we pore over the pages on which are recorded the heroic accounts of the establishment of Catholic missions in America! These accounts abound with stories of zealous French Jesuits making their way through trackless forests, bearing the blessed tidings of the faith to those who sat in darkness; of a French Jesuit tortured by savages; of French priests swimming half-frozen rivers to minister to the sick and dying; of French priests hewing long for a hut in which to celebrate Mass; of French priests crossing and recrossing the Atlantic and traversing France collecting money to build churches and schools in this country of ours; of the noble daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, filled with a saintly zeal, imbued with the charity of their founder, laying the foundation of hospitals and orphan asylums; and then the great teaching orders of women erecting log cabins for schools, which have since developed into great institutions of learning, and are filling our land with virtuous wives and mothers.

We Americans are not to forget these things, for they are precious and sacred events which ought to ever burn before our memory as a lamp before a shrine. At our family firesides let us relate to our children the saintly zeal of dear old Catholic France, and what it did to plant the faith in America.

These thoughts have been suggested by the coming to New York a few weeks ago from Lourdes — France — of a little band of Poor Clares on their way to Valleyfield, Canada, where they are to make a new foundation of their ancient order. Their prayerful presence in the midst of the tumult, the distraction, the pleasure seeking of a great city was like a breath wafted from the hills of old Assisi or from the far off days when the seraphic St. Francis aroused all Europe by his preaching and his life of heroic virtue. These, his daughters, clad in gowns of gray wool, knotted girdles, white coifs and black veils, keep alive the example of their foundress, St. Clare.

They who say that these orders have outlived their usefulness, that they have no mission in this age of activity, err indeed, and know not what they say. What age ever needed them more than the twentieth century? What country ever needed the bracing air of their example more than America? The agnostic may look upon their life as folly, but to the eye of the Christian soul it presents a picture beautiful and helpful to contemplate, — it speaks of a life in this world of sin and frivolity where the heart renounces all to lay itself in simplicity before the Eternal as it would upon a naked, solitary rock of the desert, and offer itself as a holocaust.

We need not wonder that the little band of Poor Clares who passed through our city attracted the notice of curious worldings. The deep shades of cloistral life, its close seclusion, its silence and its prayer had invested these consecrated souls with a demeanor which is not after the pattern or fashion of the world. What was the outward scene of the great city to them, its pleasures, its pursuits, its honors, its cares and contrivances, its personages, its multitudes of busy slaves, what where they to them? nothing — no more than a show, for they had well pondered the truth that "The world passeth away and the lust thereof."

The very existence of such souls in the world is a living sermon. The world is led by a mad ambition for material things, but these souls led by the Holy Spirit, and walking by faith in what is unseen and future, are a constant reminder to worldlings of the life beyond this, of the judgment that is to come, in a word, their life forces upon the minds of men the unprofitableness and feebleness of the things of this world. I repeat, the existence of such souls is a living sermon — a living sermon which seems to have but one text which is ever old and yet ever new and which reads thus : "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil ; wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

We must mention, however, that the coming of the Poor Clares to our shores a few weeks ago, does not mark their first coming. They came to us as far back as 1876 and have remained with us. The two that came in that long ago endured numerous trials before they succeeded in establishing their community. Heaven only knows the hardships and painful experiences through which these two valiant daughters of St. Clare passed. But they found at last a sympathizing friend and adviser in the saintly Father Hecker whose love for contemplative orders was unbounded. He made the two great contemplatives St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross patrons of the Congregation he founded. A work on the Poor Clares recently published in this country contains several letters from Father Hecker to the two nuns mentioned. They all breathe the same spirit of encouragement and admiration. We quote the following passage from one of them which the reader may take as characteristic : " It now rests with you to make the beautiful flower of divine contemplation take root in the virginal soil of the church in our young Republic. I cannot conceive a nobler design, a greater work, and one fraught with more precious fruits. It will be my constant prayer that God may give you the grace of receiving the spirit of your holy foundress, St. Clare, and that you may be the nucleus of gathering together those souls on whom God has bestow-

ed the vocation of contemplative life."

Many of us are so absorbed in practical affairs — so accustomed to estimate everything after the world's standard of profit and loss, that we have come to regard a study of the lives of the mystics as time wasted, while in reality it is just this very thing we need to do if we would save ourselves and others from that state of irreligion of which Father Hecker speaks.

No one can ponder over the beautiful life of St. Clare of Assisi, without feeling an attraction for a life of virtue. It is interesting in a pre-eminent degree, owing to the wonderful way in which she was led by the Holy Spirit.

On account of her high rank, great wealth, and extreme loveliness she had many offers of marriage, many temptations to enter into the gayeties and luxuries of the world. But she preferred the thorny path of mortification and the crown of celestial beatitude. The melting pathos of the preaching of St. Francis, with the penetrative charm of his spirit, drew her to throw herself at his feet and supplicate his guidance. He approved her desire to devote herself wholly to the religious life in seclusion; and, when she had made her escape by night from the proud castle, clad in her festal garments, and with a palm branch in her hand, he and the poor brotherhood met her at the chapel door, with lighted tapers and hymns of praise, and led her to the altar. Francis cut off her long golden hair, and threw his own penitential habit over her. She became his disciple, daughter, and friend, never wavering, though exposed to dangers and trials of the severest character. Under his direction, she formed the famous order of the Poor Clares.

When the body of St. Francis, on its way to burial, was borne by the church of San Damiano, where Clara and her nuns dwelt, she came forth with them weeping, saluted the remains of her friend, and kissed his hands. The memory of the relation of these sainted friends is perpetuated in many pictures of the Madonna, wherein Clara is portrayed on one side of the throne of the Virgin, and Francis on the other, both barefooted and wearing the gray tunic and knotted cord emblematic of poverty.

The Ishmaelite's Return



T was the first day of June, and Central Park was wearing its loveliest garb in honor of the Month of Roses. The air was full of sunshine and of the scents and sounds that form part of the indescribable charm of early summer. Children tumbled over the grass that stretched out like a green velvet carpet, and their elders sat under the trees watching the carriages turning in from Fifth Avenue through the 81st Street en-

trance.

On the bench near the driveway was a man whose broken boots, frayed trousers, and patched coat might have proclaimed him as belonging to the tramp species, only that his face was refined and intellectual. His hands, too, although sunburned, were shapely and well-cared for, and there was a subtle something in his aspect that indicated good birth and breeding.

He had been sitting motionless for some time, gazing at the dance of the leaf shadows on the ground, but now he looked up and began to quote softly,

“ And what is so rare as a day in June ?

Then, if ever, come perfect days ;

Then heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,

And over it softly her warm ear lays.

Whether we look, or whether we listen,

We hear life's murmur, and see it glis.... ”

A cry of distress interrupted him, and he turned quickly. In the same instant a crutch whizzed by and falling in the path of an automobile was reduced to splinters.

He took in the situation at a glance, and charging into the midst of a crowd of boys, picked up the crippled lad whom they were teasing, and carried him to the bench.

“ It's too bad, little man, ” he said gently, “ I wish I'd seen you before the young brutes got hold of your crutch. But you have one left still. Do you think you can manage with it ? ”

"I'll h...have to!" sobbed the boy, "Coz why, dere's on'y me mudder an' me to buy anythin'. She's a scrub-lady an' I sells papers, an' we ain't very rich. But she's a good 'un, you bet, an' I ain't a-goin' to fret her by lettin' on I feels bad 'bout this." He wiped his eyes with the back of a grimy hand, and squared his thin shoulders.

"Bravo, you plucky youngster! What's your name? How old are you? Tell me all about yourself?"

"Dere ain't nothin' much to tell. I'm Jeremiah Buckley, ...called Jerry for short, ...an' I'm eleven years old. Me legs was always kinder twisted, so I'm no great shakes, but if anyone else said dat, me mudder 'ud make pie-crust out of dem! What game are *you* workin'? You're a beggar, I guess?" He glanced doubtfully at the handsome, worn face, and shabby clothes.

The man flushed, then said slowly, "Why no, my boy, I'm not a beggar, ...at least, I've never begged. Hunger, and cold, and many privations have been my closest friends for the past five years, but I've learned much, ...Oh, I've learned much!"

He spoke in the abstracted tone of one who has suddenly fallen into a retrospective mood. For the moment he forgot that the keen eyes of the New-York gamin were upon him. His present surroundings seemed to melt away, and in thought he was back again in the old days before his rashness and lack of self-control had made him an Ishmaelite, ...an outcast and wanderer.

He recalled the night on which he had left all that he held most dear. With the completeness of a framed picture the whole scene rose before him. He saw the widowed mother who would have forgiven and shielded him even after he had sinned most deeply. He saw that other woman whom he loved, and who had lashed him with bitter words and pitiless scorn. He remembered how he had cowered beneath her just anger, and had said, "I will go now, since you wish it so. I will never come back until I've achieved something that will make you proud of me, and until I've atoned for the madness of a moment!"

He had gone away then, leaving his luxurious home and the society of those who had flattered and carressed

him throughout the twenty-five years of his life. He had journeyed to the far West, shunned companions of his own class, and worked hard to make a man of himself, ...a *man* in the best sense of the word. In a hard school, and after bitter struggles, he had learned to control the violent temper that had helped in his undoing, and had conquered the other vices inherited from his forefathers. But ill-luck pursued him, and now he was back in the city of his birth, wearied, disappointed, and discouraged.

His plans for the future were vague. Although home-sickness had impelled him to return to New-York, he was determined never to enact the role of Prodigal Son until he was in a position to furnish his own fatted calf. He knew his mother would greet him joyfully whether he came in the guise of prince or pauper, but there was some-one else to be thought of, and that some-one was the dainty, fastidious girl whose beauty of character had always been marred by hauteur, and who would surely shrink now from his poverty and patches, very much as she would shrink from a leper. Decidedly he could not ask her to be proud of him...yet !

His reverie was broken in upon by Jeremiah's shrill voice :

" Say, Mister, wake up, why don't you ? You looks like a stuck pig ! Well, I'm goin' to hop along home now. I lives on 76th Street near the Church of St. Jean Baptiste. Git on to me French twang ! By-by. "

" Wait a minute, Jerry, I'll go with you. Perhaps my arm will serve instead of your broken crutch.

They left the Park and went down Fifth Avenue. As they passed a beautiful house near 76th Street, the boy felt a tremor shoot through the arm that sustained him, and his companion came to an involuntary stop. The pause was only for an instant, however, and he hurried on at so rapid a pace that the boy said complainingly.

" May be you're trainin' for a race, but I can't go it so fast, nohow ! "

" Excuse me, boy. I was thinking of...of something else. Long ago I knew the mistress of that house, and... now what are you laughing at ? "

" Yah ! D'y'e take me for a greeney ? How could *you* know old Missis Seaton ? Why, she was a swell, ...a

reg'lar tip-topper ! Me mudder used to scrub an' do odd jobs in dat house up to a month ago ; den de old lady died, an'.....Gee Whizz ! I never seed such a chap ! Are you goin' to t'row a fit ? You're as green as de skin of a boiled gooseberry. What's bitin' you anyway ? " He looked at the trembling figure that leant against a lamp-post for support, at the startled eyes, and the gray face contorted with pain ; he listened to the exclamation, " Dead ! And I never knew ! Dead...Oh, my God ! " and with a delicacy one would not have expected to find in a street-arab he hobbled away a few paces, leaving the stranger alone with his sorrow.

Presently a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a voice said brokenly, " Come, Jerry, take my arm again and we'll walk on. Won't you please tell me all you know of...of Mrs. Seaton's death ? "

" Me mudder can do dat better'n me, coz her an' de old lady's cook was chummy. I on'y heard she caught a cold an' died quite suddent. Say, yer great on askin' questions, like dem chaps wots writes pieces for de papers. But you ain't told me nothin' about yerself, not even yer name ! "

" My first name is Donald. You're welcome to know that, if it is of any interest to you. I'm anxious to see your mother, lad. Is she at home now ? "

" Naw. She'll be back bime-by. Here's de Church of St. Jean-Baptiste. Come in dere an' I'll show you somethin' orful queer. It's yer own name up on de wall. "

Jerry limped into the basement of the church, followed by his new acquaintance.

The man looked curiously around the quaint little place ; at the rose-decked altars, the beautiful statues surrounded by lighted candles ; the table on which stood the case containing a relic of Saint Anne, and the pile of crutches that had been left before it by grateful sufferers whose faith had made them whole. It was a touching sight, and although he, unfortunately, had been a careless, lukewarm Catholic, he regarded it with reverent eyes.

Jerry led him to the side-wall near the door and pointed to the marble slabs with which it was covered, and on which were inscribed petitions and thanksgivings signed

with the initials of those who had caused them to be placed there.

"Mother of Mary, cure my child", was printed on one; "Holy Saint, I thank you for procuring for me relief from pain", read another; "Dear Saint, help my sister to obtain the boon of restored sight" said another; and at the end of the long list appeared the supplication:

"GOOD SAINT ANNE, SEND BACK OUR DONALD TO US! M. S. AND A. B."

"See dat 'Donald'", whispered Jerry, "I knows wot dem letters stands for. M. S. is for Missis Mary Seaton, de old lady wot lived in de swell house; an' A. B. is for Miss Adrienne Beaucaire, de grand young lady wot used to come here all de time wit de crippled boy dat got cure....." He stopped and drew back as he saw his companion fall on his knees and with a smothered sob hide his face.

Half an hour later Jerry's mother was talking volubly to the mysterious stranger.

"Yes, sure, I know all about it," she said, "I heard it manys the time from me friend, the old lady's cook. It seems that Missis Seaton spoiled her only son. He grew up wild as a colt an' with a terrible temper. He steadied down a bit when he fell in love with Miss Beaucaire, but he couldn't give up all his bad habits right away. He used to take a lot of that fizzy stuff they calls *champagne* water, an' then he wasn't himself at all, at all. So one night when he found the cook's little son in his room pawin' his books an' things, he got cican off his head with rage. The child ran like a hare, but he caught him, an', God between us an' all harm, flung him down the whole flight of stairs! The little fellow lay for dead, an' there was a terrible to-do. He'd have been arrested on'y his mother an' lady-fren' hustled him out of the way, an' from that day to this nobody has laid eyes on or heard from him."

She paused in her dramatic recital, and looked at her visitor. His face was averted and he breathed as though he had been running hard.

"There's...there's something more to tell?" he said unsteadily, "The boy did not die?"

"Bless your heart, no! He's alive an' kicking, an'

Sally, that's his mother, is fit to bust with pride because Miss Beaucaire sent him to a grand school. But she needn't be so stuck-up about it, for 'twas myself that helped to bring it to pass. I was sorry for the little shaver, seein' as how my own Jerry is so bad on his legs, an' when I heard that the big doctors couldn't fix his hip, I told Sally to try him with the relic of Saint Anne, for it nearly always cures them that has faith. She spoke to the ladies, an' though Miss Beaucaire was a black Protestant she went an' took the boy every day to the Church of St. Jean-Baptiste. He went there for two long years, an' one fine morning, ... 'tis well I remember 'twas the feast-day of Saint Anne, ... he left his crutches on the altar-steps an' walked down the aisle by himself ! It's Gospel truth I'm tellin' you ! I was there an' saw it with my own eyes. Up to that time Miss Beaucaire was awful proud. They said her heart was like a lump of ice, an' in the church she used to draw away her skirts from the poor people that come nigh. Many's the day I've seen her turn up her nose at 'em ! Well, when she saw the boy marchin' down alone, she fell on her knees an' moved on 'em down to the relic, an' she kissed it, while the tears streamed down her face like rain ! 'Twasn't long after that when I heard she was baptised, an' herself an' Mrs. Seaton put up the tablet that my Jerry showed you. An' now she ain't proud or cold or hard any more. She does a power of good in the parish, an' no one is too poor or too dirty for her to shake hands with ! Mercy on me, ... is it cryin' you are ! Stop, Jerry, you'll pull my skirt off ! What, you want me to come out with you, an' leave him alone ? Why, to be sure I will ! "

Outside the door the boy raised a pair of shining eyes to his mother's face, and whispered excitedly, " Don't you see... can't you tumble to it ? He's the old lady's son ! I felt it in me bones while we were in the church ! Hurry, mudder, hurry ! Let's go to Miss Beaucaire. Gee ! It's like de t'ird act in a play ! "

Mrs. Buckley felt bewildered, but she had faith in her son's sagacity, and followed him without demur.

They went to the house on Fifth Avenue near 76th Street, which had formerly been the home of Mrs. Seaton, but which had been bequeathed to Miss Beaucaire.

The servants of that lady had orders to open wide the doors to the needy and infirm, and they had no difficulty in gaining admittance.

Miss Beaucaire rose as Jerry entered, and looked kindly at him. He ran to her as fast as his deformed limbs would permit, and clutching her white gown, panted, " Saint Anne has sent your Donald back ! Come an' git him ! "

Donald Seaton was sitting in a chair, his faced buried in his hands, and his shoulders heaving convulsively. Mrs. Buckley's hot little kitchen was stifling, but he gave no heed to that.

Suddenly he felt a caressing touch on his hair. He looked up and saw...Adrienne Beaucaire, the woman whom he had never ceased to love with all the intensity of his nature, although she had driven him from her with harsh words. And now she was holding out welcoming hands to him ! Her face was even lovelier than in the old days. It had become spiritualized, tender, and pitying as an angel's.

In broken words he told her the history of his years of exile, of his struggles against himself, and his victories and defeats. In turn she spoke of his mother, and gave him her last messages of love and forgiveness. At last silence fell between them, and she waited expectantly. But he dared not voice his love and longing ; he felt unworthy, and he had half-formed plans of disappearing again until he could fulfil his promise to make her proud of him !

" Well, have you nothing more to say to me ? " she asked with a tremulous laugh, " Is there no question you wish to put to me ? "

But still he was mute.

" Must I take the initiative ? " she went on, " Donald, you've fought a good fight, and...won ! Dear, I would like, if it can be arranged, to be married in the Church of St. Jean-Baptiste, before the relic of Saint Anne ! " Her voice faltered and she blushed rosily.

And then he found speech !

KATHLEEN EILEEN BARRY.

A Remarkable Conversion.

THE story of a remarkable conversion is told in the Missionary Record of the Oblates of Mary by a priest who signs himself "L. C. P. F." It occurred many years ago in Dublin, when the narrator was attracted by the gathering of a crowd in Sackville Street, and found that it had collected to watch a poor man fallen in a fit. It was evident from the style of dress that he was a gentleman, but as no one could identify him his religion of course remained unknown. Under these circumstances, the priest gave him conditional absolution, had a cab called and sent him to the Jarvis Street hospital. He tells the story as follows: "On the following day I was told that a gentleman was in the parlor who wished to see me. On going to see him he told me he had not sent me his card because I did not know him. He then told me that he was the same man who had a fit on the previous day in Sackville Street, and that I had done something to him before I had either taken him or sent him to the hospital. He continued his relation by begging me to tell him what I had done for him. After I had explained what is meant by the conditional absolution and the sign of the cross which was made over him, he concluded by first thanking me and the good Sisters of Mercy who had so kindly nursed him, and then asked me to give him the necessary instructions, as he was determined to become a member of the Catholic Church. I found that he belonged to one of the leading mercantile firms of Dublin, and to a family that was conspicuous among the proselytizing circles. After due preparation I gave him conditional baptism, and as he remained in Dublin for more than a year subsequent to that time, I had ample opportunities of knowing that he became a model, practical Catholic, and he assured me that although previous to his conversion he had been subject to epileptic attacks, sometimes as often as two and three times a week, he had never once been troubled in that way since I had done something to him as he lay on the ground in Sackville Street."



Book Notices.

COMMUNION DAY, by Rev. M. Russell, S. J. is a devotional book of practical reflections on Communion. It contains some very edifying and instructive chapters calculated to be used in devotion before and after Communion. Benziger Bros. New York, have published the work in a style at once becoming and convenient, \$ 0.60.

THE PRINCESS OF POVERTY, by Rev. Father Marianus, O. M. Cap. is a work which all lovers of the great Franciscan order will gladly welcome. It portrays in a very unique and attractive way the life of St. Clare. Our people should know more about this great servant of God, who sacrificed her high rank, great wealth, and turned aside from the most alluring temptations to enter the gayeties of the world, in order that she might take up her cross and follow Christ in the narrow way. One cannot read of the marvelous manner in which divine grace led her, along the thorny path of mortification and poverty to the heights of celestial beatitude, without realizing the power of the human soul, when once given to God, over all the passions and evil tendencies of nature.

Aside from the value of the book itself, there is a worthy charity connected with it which ought to appeal to all who desire to see the Christ-like spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, and his devoted daughter, St. Clare, fostered in this age when it is so much needed. The proceeds arising from the sale of the book will be devoted to paying off a debt on the Monastery of the Poor Clares, at Evansville, Indiana. Orders for the book may be sent to St. Mary's Rectory, 609 Cherry St., Evansville, Indiana.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST, by Rev. Walter Elliot, C. S. P. is a work of priceless value. Perhaps it may be truthfully said that no life of Our Savior has ever appeared that has given so much satisfaction as the one under consideration. Father Elliot undertook a good work and he has done it well. When the reader comes to the last page of the book, he feels conscious of having undergone an unusual influence. It brings the mind into the closest touch with Christ and His Apostles. One can easily see that it has been written with the truest feeling and sympathy. We consider it one of the most valuable productions of late of the Catholic press. The price of the book is \$ 1.00. Catholic Book Exchange, 120 West 60th Street, New-York.

A MOTHER'S prayer, silent and gentle, can never miss the road to the throne of God.

WHEN the secret of a blessed life is made plain to us, we see that each one must learn it for himself.

THE man who is fond of books is usually a man of lofty thought and of elevated opinions.



ST. MARY MAGDALEN.
From a painting by Hoffmann.