

THE VOICE OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

You were not redeemed with corruptible gold or silver,.... but with the Precious Blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled.

1 PET. 1. 18, 19.

VOL. 3. ST-HYACINTHE, QUE., JANUARY 1898. NO. 3.

A Happy New Year!

Our Forty Hours will open on the First of January.

During two days and nights, we shall then be continually before the Blessed Sacrament, which contains, in all its entirety, the Blood of Our Saviour.

We shall offer this Blood, and all our homage of love and gratitude, together with our most fervent prayers and good-wishes for our patrons, friends and benefactors, that the year 1898, and all their coming years, may be most prosperous and happy, most serene and holy.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

My gentle friends, upon thy fair New Year,
As on the linen white,
The Precious Blood is shining. Oh ! revere
Those Drops with strange delight ;
And may the name of Jesus consecrate
Each thought and word and work that on it wait.

Eleanor C. Donnelly.

THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

IN the mystery of the Circumcision which is commemorated on the first day of the year, the Infant God began to fulfil His mission as the Saviour of men. He had come on earth as the world's Victim. Eight days after His Birth in the stable of Bethlehem, He hastened to offer to His Eternal Father the first drops of that Precious Blood

which purifies souls, restores innocence, confers grace, beauty and everything that constitutes new life.

Jesus, being God, could have dispensed Himself from this painful rite imposed on the Jews ; but He preferred, for our instruction, to comply not only with the law but with the pious customs of His people ; consequently, on this day He assumed His Name—Jesus, when shedding His Blood for the first time.

Circumcision was the seal of the covenant which God had made with Abraham ; it also formed a distinctive mark separating the children of that holy Patriarch from all other nations of the earth ; it was, lastly, a pledge of the blessings promised in his person to all who would be faithful in obeying God's ordinances. Its most salutary effect was the remission of original sin, not by its own virtue, but through faith in the Passion of Our Lord of which it was a figure.

Saint Epiphanius, who was born in Palestine and was thoroughly acquainted with the sacred traditions of his country, says that Our Saviour was circumcised in the stable of Bethlehem. What would be the feelings of the Blessed Virgin on seeing His Blood flow beneath the knife ! She knew It was of infinite value, and we may feel sure that she offered those priceless Drops to God the Father in satisfaction for the sins of the world. This was the " morning sacrifice " of our dearest Saviour, to be followed in after years by the " evening sacrifice " on Calvary.

With Mary and Joseph, with all the inhabitants of heaven and earth, and with all ages, let us on this day contemplate the August victim of our sins and those of the world. While adoring His greatness, let us not refuse to assist in spirit at His first immolation. As we look upon His infantine grace and beauty, unconsciously before our eyes rise the dread scenes of the Passion, when, by the outpouring of His Precious Blood, He will again establish His claim to the sacred name of Jesus. We see the prostrate Blood drenched Form in the Garden of Olives ; the lacerated unrecognizable figure at the pillar ; the thorn-crowned Man of Sorrows—" the outcast of the people "—the Just One ascending slowly and painfully the

rugged path to Calvary ; finally, the Redeemer of the world breathing His last sigh on the Cross.

The first effusion of Our Saviour's Blood was the proof of His infinite love for the human race. What should we give Him in return ? Is it not our duty to humble ourselves in His presence, confessing, to our shame, that His Blood has fallen on our souls as on barren and rocky ground since they have borne no fruit.

But let us never lose confidence in the divine mercy, but rather give ourselves completely to Him who suffered for us from the first moment of His existence on earth. He exacts a spiritual circumcision of all His followers. This consists in the retrenching of all irregular affections and desires, in complying religiously with all the requirements of God's holy law and in submitting patiently to all the trials He may send us.

In this consists the veritable circumcision of the mind and heart. It is a spiritual blood-shedding and merits its reward, for it true to say : " Give blood and you will receive spirit."

This explains why the Circumcision of Our Lord has such an important share in the work of Redemption. His atoning Blood was, in that mystery, shed for the first time; and through It alone are souls ransomed : " Without Blood there is no remission of sin."

Glory throughout all ages to this Adorable Blood !
And to mortals, pardon, mercy, light and enduring peace,
assured results of a generous and faithful circumcision of
mind and heart.

Written for The Voice of the Precious Blood.

" DILECTUS MEUS CANDIDUS."

(Cant. 5.)

I

White, as the lonely snow-fields
Beneath the arctic night,
White, as the whitest lily
That e'er beheld the light ;

White, as a pearl sea-hidden ;
 White, as an Angel's wing,
 In purity celestial
 Is Christ, Our Virgin King !

White were His herald angels ;
 White is His Mother pure,
 That Mystic Rose which Heaven
 Gave to this earth so poor,
 White in the Cave's dark shadows
 Like a white star shone He,
 While the white stars above Him
 Sang His Nativity.

White upon Thabor's mountain
 His earth-morn vesture glowed ;
 White was the robe of mocking
 That Herod base bestowed ;
 White upon Easter morning
 His glistening raiment shone ;
 White His sweet earthly altars ;
 White, His Eternal Throne.

His virgin's hearts are dowered
 With a whiteness earth's above ;
 White in each Host uplifted
 Is Jesus whom we love.
 Lo ! through that veil resplendant
 Of dazzling *white* we see
 The spotless Agnus Dei,
 Whose Blood pleads ceaselessly.

“ DILECTUS MEUS. RUBICUNDUS.”

(Cant. 5.)

II

Red by His Love eternal ;
 The Precious Blood He shed,
 An Infant in the Temple,
 To Calvary's summit dread
 Red, by the Sweat that bathed Him
 In dark Gethsemani ;

Red His cruel scourging
That night of Agony.

Red, by the crimson mantle
That Pilate's soldiers threw
Upon His bleeding shoulders ;
Red, by the Crown that drew
With sharpest thorns the blood-drops
From His fair Wounded Head.
Red, by the stream which issued
From His pierced Heart when dead !

Red, by the blood-wet foot marks
The Via Crucis dread
And by each gory nail-print
In Hands and Feet that bled.
Red, by the Cross uplifted
His wounded shoulder bore ;
Red—red through all the ages
In the chalice we adore.

Red, by His Holy martyrs
Who bravely bore their part ;
Red, by Love's sweetest symbol
His thorn-wreathed bleeding Heart.
Lo ! through that veil of crimson
His Precious Blood we see
The mysteries of His Passion
His love's immensity !

Aneleh.

Alameda-California, U. S.
Feast St-John of the Cross, 1897.

REPARATION AND THANKSGIVING.

THE closing year of the present century will be marked in the history of the Church by strenuous and universal efforts to respond to the desire of our Holy Father Leo XIII, who wishes to have it impressed with a special seal of Reparation and Thanksgiving. These manifestations of piety on the part of Catholics throughout the world are intended to serve as a solemn homage to

Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the human race, as an all-embracing testimony of love and gratitude, and as a protest against the impiety of the wicked.

While the faithful children of the Church, by their prayers and penance, are doing their utmost to atone for the outrages and crimes which have sullied the century, we may confidently hope that God, whose mercies are above all His works, will be moved by this earnest and general appeal to His clemency. Neither it is presumptuous or over sanguine to feel a conviction that a particular blessing will rest upon the coming century which, at its birth, will be thus solemnly consecrated to the glory of God.

Every catholic acknowledges with sorrow the existence of a lamentable need of Reparation on account of the prevalence of iniquity. God's anger which, at times, seems about to vent itself on our guilty race, is appeased by the "Clean Oblation," the offering of the Most Precious Blood ; otherwise, would not His vengeance have long since fallen on the world. Divine Justice is conciliated by the voice which cries for pardon, while Mary, the mother of the human family, intercedes for her children. " No one is ignorant," says a distinguished authoress, " of the blessed impulse which at the present hour is directing men, with ever increasing force, towards the Mother of mercy. Amid the general agitation, souls are turning with a common accord, to the one who is, by so many titles, the Advocate of the posterity of fallen Adam, the powerful Mediatrix between God and man. Never has Mary's name been pronounced with so much confidence and tenderness, never has she been so widely honored as in our unhappy era when the crimes and blasphemies of sinners mount to heaven, threatening to provoke and call down God's vengeance. Since it is thus, men must know that the Blessed Virgin can avert His just anger and act as a rampart and shield."

As a proof that the gigantic conspiracies formed against Christ and His Church have been foiled, we need only glance at the present position of catholics and at the progress made by the Church during the last twenty first years. This retrospect will show how much reason we

have to unite thanksgiving to our petitions for pardon, according to the Holy Father's intention.

Some time ago the Hierarchy did not exist in the Indies, Japan, Scotland nor in the Danubian Principalities. To-day it is established in those regions, in which Catholics have increased in number and have become more prosperous.

The Hierarchy has also been recently founded by the Holy Father among the Copts.

In Africa missionary priests are daily penetrating more deeply into the recesses of the continent. The light of christianity has now reached Loanda, Congo and Zambesi.

Australia, which, a few years ago, was the field of labor for a few zealous missionaries, scattered over a wide space, now claims twenty five bishops and six hundred thousand catholics, at the lowest figure.

In South America the Apostles of the faith continue their labors.

Oceania is bringing in its harvest of souls.

During the pontificate of Leo XIII., twenty three new dioceses have been created in the United States ; and over three thousands churches have been built.

Conversions to the faith are multiplying, more particularly in England.

An international committee has been constituted at Rome to organize plans for the religious demonstrations which are to be a solemn proclamation of love for Jesus Christ. His Eminence Cardinal Dominic Jacobini has been named Honorary President by the Holy Father. In a letter to the bishops throughout the world, he says :

" Here, assuredly, is a sublime undertaking. We resolve to devote ourselves with all possible energy to this work of Reparation for the outrages offered to Our Lord ; this movement which consecrates the new century to the sacred name of Christ who is the splendor of God's glory and the figure of His substance. . . .

Amidst universal enthusiasm the voice of nations will celebrate this grand solemnity through which new and more brilliant light will be cast on the close alliance of hearts, the marvellous unity of the Church and the

complete attachment of the faithful to the Chief of Christendom."

An indulgence of one hundred days once a day—applicable to the souls in Purgatory—may be gained by reciting the following prayer. This favor will last till the end of the year 1901.

"Most merciful God, grant, through the intercession of the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin, that by the tears of our penitence we may expiate the guilt of this expiring century and so prepare for the opening of the coming century, that it may be entirely consecrated to the glory of Thy name and the reign of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, whom may all nations obey in one faith and in perfect charity. Amen."

SUSCIPE.

All of the coming year, dear Lord,
I offer Thee,
The hopes and fears, the joys and pains
It holds for me.

Whether it bloom with brightest joys
To crown my life,
Whether it bring but pain and woe
And endless strife.

In sorrows I will try to see
Thy loving Hand,
With wisdom guiding me unto
A better Land.

Through its veiled future, Lord, be this
My prayer, my plea,
That it may bring me nearer still,
Dear Lord, to Thee.

F. B. S.

REFLECTIONS.

If the heart be right with God, He will weigh the rest in a balance of compassion.

What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. They are but trifles, to be sure, but scattered along life's pathway the good they do is inconceivable.

The silver trumpets proclaimed the jubilee once only in every fifty years, but the Precious Blood cries to us in the Sacrament of Penance at all hours, by day and night.

Repentance is the threshold of the invisible sanctuary where the Saints are gathering, and here they must fall down before entering. None but they who have either a pure or a broken heart shall see God.

By a silent and even life of faith and purity, by a patient following of Christ's footsteps, by a mastery over temper, by mortifying self, by a steady gaze on His mysterious passion, by loving and praying Him to make us like Himself, we shall bear within us the kingdom and presence of God.

Onwards and upwards ! Onwards against the resistance, both within and without, which hinders our advance in the life of God ; onwards without fear or doubt or wavering. Upwards, aiming as high as we can ; for we have to ascend the mountains of God's House, which are very high.

Let everything turn upside down, not merely about us, but within us ; let the soul be sad or gay, in sweetness or bitterness, at peace or in trouble, in light or darkness, temptation or repose, gratified or displeased ; let the sun burn us or the dew refresh us, we must rest with eyes fixed upon the will of God, our one sovereign good.

SAINT FRANCIS OF SALES.

A CHILD'S SOUL.

ONE day a priest in Paris sat in his room composing a discourse destined perhaps to set the seal on his reputation as an orator. His attention was concentrated on his task.

At that moment a little chimney sweeper, half singing, half shouting his refrain, passed by. His services were needed and he was called in. He climbed up with professional alacrity, sang some couplets while working and reappeared, sweating and grimy, beside the writer's desk.

"Mister, it's ten cents ;" said he.

"Ten cents? Well, here they are," answered the priest, taking a coin from his purse. "Now we're even." The boy went away, and the priest picked up his pen once more, but it seemed as if an iron hand gripped his heart. Pangs of remorse seized him.

"Even!" I said we were even ;" he murmured to himself. "How could that be? Was that child a machine? Had he not an immortal soul, a soul for which Jesus shed His Blood?"

At this reproach, the priest bounded, called after the boy, questioned him about God, and his mother, catechism and First Communion. But he knew nothing of catechism and First Communion.

Yet the two seemed to feel a mutual attraction. The child fixed a long look of hopeful expectancy on the priest's face. What was he going to do? What was going to happen?

This is what happened. The little sweep was instructed, and two months afterwards, in a retired chapel, the priest clad in feast day vestments, laid on the child's pure lips the Bread of the strong and happy.

On that day they were *even*. The salary, the debt of affection, was paid in full. Later on, the Child thus saved from danger, might be seen mounting the altar in his turn, and blessing the Angel of his life. The two priests, one aged, the other young, realized that the gift of oneself is worth far more than the most brilliant oration, and that, in forming a child's career, in training him to a

manly life, nothing equals the gift of God contained in the bestowal of wise affection.

This story is in no way a fictitious one. It was narrated during the Eucharistic Congress of Rheims, by Mgr Du-long de Rosnay one of the two heroes.

THE LIVING ROSARY AND THE PERPETUAL ROSARY.

The terms " living " and " perpetual " applied to the rosary are misused.

They refer to two entirely distinct associations, and should not be confounded.

The living rosary, founded at Lyons, in the early part of the century, when, on account of the troubles of the times, the devotion had been greatly neglected, had for its object its restoration in France. In consideration of the laxity then prevailing, nothing more was required than the daily recitation of a decade, with meditation on one of the mysteries. By degrees the Confraternity of the holy rosary, source and focus of the devotion, and which, like the rosary itself, was established by Saint Dominic, having, been founded or restored, even in the smallest villages, the faithful began to say the whole rosary once a week as exacted by the rules of the confraternity. The *living* rosary was reserved for children,

The devotion spread rapidly. The chaplet became a daily prayer and thus led to the formation of the Association of the PERPETUAL rosary. Every member pledged himself to say the whole rosary at a certain hour. Day and night, uninterruptedly, this prayer ascended to heaven and the seal was set on devotion to the Blessed Virgin through the rosary. The association of the perpetual rosary, founded in Italy at the beginning of the XVII. century, by a Dominican, soon spread over the world.

THE THREE KINGS OF COLOGNE.

From out Cologne there came three kings
 To worship Jesus Christ, their King.
 To Him they sought fine herbs they brought
 And many a beauteous golden thing :
 They brought their gifts to Bethlehem town.
 And in that manger set them down.

Then spake the first king, and he said :
 " O, Child, most heavenly, bright and fair !
 I bring this crown to Bethlehem town
 For Thee, and only Thee, to wear ;
 So give a heavenly crown to me
 When I shall come at last to Thee ! "

The second then : " I bring Thee here
 This royal robe, O Child ! " he cried ;
 " Of silk 'tis spun, and such a one
 There is not in the world beside ;
 So in the day of doom requite
 Me with a heavenly robe of white."

The third king gave his gift and quoth :
 " Spikenard and myrrh to thee I bring.
 And with these twain would I most fain
 Anoint the body of my King.
 So may their incense sometime rise
 To plead for me in yonder skies ! "

Thus spake the three kings of Cologne,
 That gave their gifts and went their way,
 And now kneel I in prayer hard by
 The cradle of the Child to-day.
 Nor crown, nor robe, nor spice I bring
 As offering unto Christ, my King.

Yet have I brought a gift the Child
 May not despise, however small ;
 For here I lay my heart to-day,

And it is full of love to all.
 Take Thou the poor, but loyal thing,
 My only tribute, Christ, my King.

—EUGENE FIELD.

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA.

PATRONESS OF THE ADORERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

"In the Blood you find the fire."

ST. CATH. OF SIENA

(Continuation.)

THE aged Cardinal of Saint Peter alone remained faithful to Urban. When dying, he solemnly called God to witness that the election of the Pope had been free and legitimate.

Never had the Church fallen into more profound a distress. The Pope created twenty new Cardinals and, in his anguish, summoned Catherine near to him.

As soon as the Pope's order was received, the Saint, with a numerous retinue, set out on the journey to Rome. Those who accompanied her, records one of her historians, were happy to make themselves as the poor of divine Providence ; and great lords, on foot like mendicants, followed the daughter of the dyer of Siena.

Great was her joy on arriving at Rome, to tread that soil bedewed with the blood of martyrs.

She felt that blood budding up again, she said, inviting her to suffer for the glory of God and the holy Church.

The Pope assembled the Cardinals and demanded that Catherine should address a few words to them, which she did with admirable eloquence, exhorting them to courage and reminding them that Providence, who watches over all, watches especially over those who suffer for the Church.

Charmed with her discourse, Urban exclaimed, in presence of all the Cardinals : Verily this humble woman makes us ashamed. The weakness of her sex

would excuse her timidity and behold, on the contrary, it is she who encourages us. Why fear then for the Vicar of Jesus Christ, joined to the Pontiff, though even the entire world were leagued against him ? Is not Christ more powerful than the world ? Neither can He ever abandon His Church.

Catherine admired Urban's zeal and courage, but the excellence of his intentions did not prevent her from deploring the violence of his character which often rendered his best efforts useless. She ceased not to recommend to him meekness and patience.

In the meanwhile, Clement VII prepared himself to sustain his election by force of arms. After having taken into his pay those terrible bands which had attached themselves to him by the pillage of Italy, he raised the siege before Rome.

Catherine bitterly deplored the necessity in which the Pope found himself on drawing the sword in defence of the rights of the Church, but when recourse to arms had become inevitable, she nobly encouraged the combatants.

They attributed to her prayers the victory won by the partisans of Urban.

Nearly all the Sovereigns of the world declared in favor of the anti-Pope. Catherine displayed marvellous activity in bringing them back to allegiance to Urban. Her letter to the king of France is admirable in clearness and strength.

As a climax to these misfortunes, the Romans stirred up by the emissaries of the anti-Pope, revolted against Urban. The fire of the sedition rapidly increased, they spoke openly of putting him to death.

Who could describe the sorrows of Catherine when she learned of the revolt of the Romans. . . the threats uttered against the Vicar of Jesus Christ ? Who could say with what ardor she supplicated the All-powerful God to hinder such a crime ?

In spirit, she saw the city of Rome full of devils exciting the people to commit that horrible crime.

Accursed one, said they to the Saint, thou seekest to hinder us, but we will make thee die a dreadful death.

She answered nothing to their threats, but prayed with still greater ardor, supplicating the Lord for the

honor of His name, for the safety of His Church beaten by such terrible tempests, to baffle the plots of the enemy and to save the Sovereign Pontiff.

Meanwhile, the fury of the insurrection continued to spread. Warned that the enraged mob had forced the doors of his palace and were seeking his life Urban IV. clothed himself in his pontifical vestments, placed the tiara on his head, seated himself on the throne and calmly awaited the assassins.

On perceiving him, the miserable creatures were seized with invincible respect. Without doing him any evil they withdrew. Catherine's prayer had saved the Pope.

From that moment, the revolt was appeased ; but the Saint, who had offered herself as a victim, was overwhelmed in her body and in her soul with unspeakable sufferings.

Feeling her end approach, Catherine assembled her disciples once more and said to them : My children, never relax in your desires for the reform and for the prosperity of the holy Church. Offer continually those burning tears, make humble and constant supplications before God, for that sweet Spouse of Christ and for Pope Urban, the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

Resembling a spirit more than a human being, the Saint addressed to the Pope her last counsels.

“ For love of Jesus Christ, said she, soften a little the too hasty impulses which by nature were born in you. It is holy virtue that you can resist nature. God has given you a heart naturally great, I ask you and I pray you to apply yourself to making it supernaturally great. As for me, your miserable and ignorant little daughter, I desire to give my life for you and for the holy Church, in tears and in watchings, in humble, faithful, persevering prayer.”

“ When I leave this body, said she to her weeping disciples, know for certain that I would have given my life for the Church, which is a very glorious privilege. I am going from this world where I have suffered without measure, I am going to my dear and tender Spouse. There, I shall be more useful to you than I could ever have been here below, for I leave darkness to enter into light, true and eternal.”

Stretched on the boards which served her as a bed, Catherine peacefully awaited her end.

On April 29, 1380, wrote one of her disciples, we saw a change in her and it seemed to us that she had entered into her agony. She had all her family called, and with great humility and devotion, made signs that she desired to receive absolution of her faults and their penalties.

“ A little while after she had received Extreme Unction, a great change took place in her, and, by the movements of her face and arms, it appeared that she was sustaining a terrible assault against the powers of darkness.

For an hour and a half she endured this cruel struggle. After having passed more than half of that time in silence, she began to speak and to say : *Peccavi, Domine, miserere mei*, words which she repeated more than sixty times, raising her right hand each time which she let fall upon the bed. Then she changed the words and repeated many times : *O God, have pity on me, and cast me not out from Thy memory.*

“ After this crisis had passed, her face was suddenly transformed. From being sombre and disturbed it became joyous, angelic and resplendent, of such serenity that it was a joy merely to look at her. Her eyes, lately full of tears and almost glassy, became luminous.”

“ It is my last wish, said she to her disciples, that you acknowledge Urban VI. as the true Pontiff and Vicar of Jesus Christ upon earth. And feeling her end approach : O Lord, said she, Thou invitest me to come and I come, not by mine own merits, but by Thy mercy, that mercy which I implore in virtue of the Precious Blood of Thy dear Son. Then, she exclaimed several times : *O Blood ! Blood ! Blood !* and in pronouncing sweetly these words : *Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit*, she expired.

The news of her death caused an immense sensation in the city of Rome. Each one wished to see her for the last time, and the populace, like hurrying, untiring waves, streamed in from all parts.

Her body remained fresh and supple. It pleased our Lord to glorify the remains of His spouse by striking miracles and those who were privileged to touch them esteemed themselves happy.

Catherine was buried at Rome in the Church of the

Minerva, where she reposes even to this day, under the guardianship of her brethren. She was canonized on June 19, 1461, by Pope Pius II.

LAURE CONAN.

THE ROSE-CROWNED KING :

A LEGEND OF NAZARETH.

By "Cuthbert."

IT was evening, and the setting sun dipped gloriously into the Mediterranean behind Mount Carmel, tipping its hoary summit with gold. The slopes of this mountain of the prophets in one direction, and those of Mount Thabor in another, were already tinged with the purple shade of evening, and in the many small valleys of this hilly country was the gathering darkness; yet from the plateau upon which Nazareth stands, the quiet, simple folk of that town could see in the distance, across the valley of Jezreel, an expanse of the great sea all ablaze in its evening golden glory. Close at hand myriads of bright-hued insects made the summer haze vocal with the motion of their untiring wings.

The white, flat-roofed houses of Nazareth appeared pink in the evening sunset, and the red pomegranate blossoms in the gardens grew more brilliant as they caught the slanting rays, and presented to the eye an appearance as of many luminous orbs. The beauty of these rich flowers, and of their companion roses heightened by their dark background of olives and palm-trees, which covered the valleys and even the lower hills in the neighborhood. All was motionless in the evening air, and no sound was heard save the hum of the insects, the tinkling of a distant sheep-bell, or an occasional peal of merry laughter of some happy boys who were at play in an open space near the village.

The workers of Nazareth were resting from the labors

of the day, and many sat before their doors to enjoy the cool breezes that came from the sea. Lithe, graceful maidens, carrying water-pots on their heads, noiselessly passed on their way to and from the common well of the town, and with these exceptions there was no sign of animation on the streets, and to the common observer nothing had occurred to disturb the usual quiet of the place.

In two houses, however, of the peaceful town there was more than ordinary activity, arising from the pleasant duties of hospitality. Simple and lowly, and even despised, as these Nazarenes were, they were nevertheless remarkable throughout all Galilee for the warmth of the welcome they always extended to their guests, and for the willingness with which they entertained strangers who chanced to come among them.

This cordiality was manifested in no small degree in a dwelling that stood a little apart from the cluster of buildings that formed the town. It was a small and humble house, having only a few rooms. About it could be seen the marks of toil ; shavings and pieces of wood were lying around the ground, which told a stranger that the dweller therein was a worker in wood. It was the home of Joseph the carpenter.

All signs of labor had, on this day, been early laid aside, and Joseph and Mary were busy in making comfortable and attending to the wants of two guests who had honored their dwelling with a visit. No less a personage than a priest of the temple at Jerusalem was Joseph's guest. The venerable Zachary, with Elizabeth his wife, had come on a visit of charity to Mary and Joseph. Old as they were, they had travelled a distance of nearly seventy miles through the hill country of Judea, Samaria and Galilee, to see once more, ere they were gathered to their fathers, that wonderful child whom Zachary, two years before, had seen disputing with marvellous wisdom amid the learned men of Israel, at the temple porch in Jerusalem. The remembrance of this event had remained with him ever since. It had become a part of his life, and was ever present with him in waking moments and filled his dreams at night, and he longed, ere his dust was laid in the grave, to see and know more of this wonderful

Being whom he recognized as the Messiah foretold by the prophets.

Already Joseph, according to the custom of the East, had brought water for the old man's feet, and, notwithstanding his guest's protestations, had washed them himself, and now the two men were sitting outside of the house engaged in earnest, quiet conversation, while Mary was entertaining Elizabeth in a no less kindly manner within doors.

In another house, not a stone's throw away, other scenes of hospitality were also being enacted. That afternoon Zabdai, from the little fishing town at Bethsaida, had brought his wife, Salome, and their two sons, James and John, on a visit of friendship to Geddiel Sodi, who was a relative of his wife. The host, in this case, was a rich farmer, owning more flocks and herds than any one else in this region. His household consisted of Miriam, his wife, and three sons, Subael, Abner and Ezri, together with numerous men and maid servants.

A more sumptuous meal had been prepared for these visitors than that offered to Zachary and Elizabeth. A lamb had been killed to celebrate the event, and delicious grapes, apples and citrons graced the board. Moreover, the master of the house was no longer a strict Nazarene, and therefore did not hesitate to place on his table rich wines, cooled in snow which had been preserved in huge boxes buried underground.

With this display there were to be observed slight traces of ostentation, and both Zabdai or Zebedee, and his wife Salome, as the feast progressed, were conscious of being slightly patronized. James and John were too young to perceive this, and they enjoyed the good things that Geddiel Sodi set before them, as only boys can. James was nearly sixteen and his brother John was two years younger, and both were already learning the trade of their Father, a fisherman on the Lake of Tiberias. Their browned faces and hands told of being much in the open air. They allowed their locks to grow long, after the Jewish fashion, while the other boys affected the Roman custom of cutting the hair short, as did their father, much to the grief of his fellow townsmen, who regarded him as one of the leading men of the place, but deplored the fact

that he had departed from the traditions of their forefathers, and had ceased to be a strict follower of their sect.

After the meal was over, the five boys went out to the plateau where most of the children of the town were accustomed to gather on the Summer evenings, and it was their shouts that could be heard on the hillside where Joseph and Zachary were resting. The two elderly men had now been sitting for some time in silence, quietly enjoying each other's company, with that satisfaction that does not seek to find expression in words, when suddenly Zachary started at the beautiful vision presented to him.

Standing under the arch of the doorway, with the fading light of evening shining full upon him, was a most beautiful youth of fourteen years. He had just returned from an errand upon which Joseph had sent him before his guests had arrived. His gold-brown hair was parted in the centre, and fell in long waves, just reaching the shoulder. The high and noble forehead shone in the light like polished marble. His large, mild, but penetrating eyes were over—arched with rich eyebrows, and the eyes themselves spoke of meekness, ardor and love. The nose was straight and rather long, the lips exquisitely formed, with the redness of health. The chin was moulded into perfect masculine grace, and the partially exposed neck enhanced the noble poise of the head. The outer garment was woven of one piece and reached to the ground.

At the moment that Zachary saw him, there was a glow on his countenance which seemed to light up all his features. The last traces of tears stood in those wonderful eyes, and it seemed evident that he had just risen from the evening prayer.

The Nazarene mothers—those women whose beauty had made them famous even as far as distant Rome—admitted that the son of the carpenter Joseph surpassed their own children in beauty, and conceded to him a winning grace they failed to find in their own. To-day he seemed more beautiful than ever, even to Joseph, for the usually calm and placid face was brightened with pleasurable emotions caused by the visit of Elizabeth and of the priest Zachary.

The youth stood silently behind Joseph's seat, with his arms lightly folded over his breast, in an attitude of deepest respect towards the two men. The old Levite was awed. His whole being thrilled. Trembling with rapture the priest hastily rose and was about to prostrate himself and kiss the feet of the beautiful child. He was prevented from doing this, as Jesus took him by the hand just as he was about to kneel, and, so, instead of kissing his feet, in a half-stooping, half-kneeling, wholly reverential attitude, he kissed the divine child's hand, uttering passionately as he did so :

" My Lord and my God."

The youth then led the aged man back to his seat, saying with wonderful dignity as he did so : " Blessed are they who know the things you know." Having performed this kindly office to their guest, he once more assumed the attitude of modest expectancy on Joseph's will. Joseph, who had risen when Zachary rose, now, sat down again. Once before he had seen this calm dignity assert itself in the youth. That was two years ago in the temple at Jerusalem, when Jesus had said : " Know ye not that I must be about my father's business ? "

Joseph, realizing that, as head of the family, he represented all source of authority, called Jesus forward and said to him :

" The children of Zabdai of Bethsaida are on yonder plateau. Lest we should seem wanting in hospitality, go and bid them welcome to our town."

With a slight inclination of the head towards Joseph, Jesus obeyed with alacrity the behest of his foster-father. Zachary watched him depart and, with the glow of exalted enthusiasm still upon his face, exclaimed :

" O Israel ! O Nazareth ! If you did but know ! if you did but know ! "

" Good master," replied Joseph, " His time is not yet come," and he added prophetically, " nor shall you or I behold the mighty works He yet shall do. Our years shall close before His work begins."

The children on the plateau had been playing a game of war, a popular pastime among the Jewish boys of that period, and which indicated, as most sports of children do, the trend of national thought and desire. Sides were

chosen, and Hebrews were ranged against Romans. The game always ended with the defeat of the Romans, and the triumphant establishment of Jewish independence, by choosing a king and crowning him with myrtle or with roses, amid the plaudits of the victorious side.

"Whom shall we crown king?" shouted Micha, the son of Oziel, just as the mock contest was ended.

"A king! a king!" shouted several at once.

"We want no king," said Subael, the eldest son of Geddiel Sodi, who had been chosen leader of Romans.

"We want no king. Caesar is our king."

"Shame! shame! Subael," said Amarias, a tall boy in the little group. "Even in our games you object to our being free. Oh! that the great deliverer would come in truth! The holy prophecies, so my father says, proclaim this is to be the time when the great conqueror shall come to deliver Israel from the Roman yoke."

Abner agreed with his brother Subael, and it seemed that for once the game would have an unusual ending, but Micha persisted.

"A king! a king!" he shouted again.

Just at that instant Jesus appeared at the outer edge of the plateau. Micha caught sight of him, and said: "See, here comes the son of Mary and Joseph. He is our king."

The group of handsome Jewish youths turned to look at Jesus as he approached. There was a calm dignity surrounding him which silenced the noisiest among them for a moment. Somewhat slowly he walked up to the little gathering, and looking at John and James, he said:

"I bid you welcome to Nazareth."

James bowed low as he would have done to some prince, or the high priest whom he had once seen in Jerusalem, when his father had taken him to the paschal feast in the holy city.

It was different with John. He stood transfixed and motionless. His eyes were riveted on that serene face, and it seemed as if he could never sufficiently drink in the sight. His color came and went. He scarcely breathed. A new life seemed to course through his veins. With unspeakable, ineffable ardor he stepped forward, and, with an almost unconscious movement, laid his head lightly on

the shoulder of Jesus, and said in a low tone, unheard by the others : " Thou art indeed our king, and oh ! I love thee so ! " John was almost fainting under the sudden excitement. His heart beat rapidly ; his temples throbbed, and the whole love of his soul seemed to flow out towards this marvellous youth, whom he now saw for the first time. Two pure souls had met, and that subtle fellowship of the pure had at once asserted itself, and so strongly was influenced by it, that he would willingly have died for this newly found love. His head rested but for a moment on the shoulder of Jesus, but long enough for him to say :

" Thou shalt yet know me better and love me more."

The boys of Nazareth were accustomed to this strange influence which Mary's son frequently exercised over them, and, not being so deeply affected, recovered from it sooner than did the visitors. Micha was still intent upon a fitting termination to their game, and once more demanded that a king be chosen. This time the boys politely referred the question to the strangers from Bethsaida.

John, who was still under the fascination of the searching eyes of his newly found friend, advanced a step from the side of Jesus, and pointing to him, said vehemently :

" Crown him ! crown him ! for he is worthy in very deed to be the king of the Jews—aye, and of the whole world."

A faint color tinged the face of the beautiful youth, showing the pleasure this speech had given him. John's decision met with general approval and immediately there was increased animation in the little band. Some brought clusters of roses from rose trees that had been transplanted from the famous Valley of Sharon, others gathered sprays of myrtle, and busy fingers began to make the flower-crown. Others brought forward a high seat to be used as a throne by the new king. With laughter and shouts they compelled Jesus to sit on the throne, while all, in boyish mirth, bowed the knee before him. Then came the great ceremony which closed the evening's sport—the coronation.

It was the custom in those simpler times for the mothers and fathers to take an interest in their children's games and pleasures. On Summer evenings at Nazareth

this was usually done by the elder people coming out of their houses to the plateau and being present at the coronation, and witnessing the homage the younger people paid to their chosen king of the day, and this evening Joseph and Mary had invited the aged Zachary and Elizabeth to the plateau, and Geddiel Sodi and Miriam had also brought with them their guests, Zabdai and Salome.

At the moment of the coronation, when the merry boys were heartily shouting : " Hail, king of the Jews ! Long live our nation's king ! " and, bowing the knee in homage to the one of their choice, a small band of Roman soldiery came in sight on the edge of the level ground. They had come from Tiberias, on the Lake of Genesareth, and were passing through Nazareth on their way to Naim, which lies at the foot of Mt. Thabor.

Decius, the captain of the band, seeing a gathering of people, and being aware of the frequency of Jewish insurrections against the Roman yoke, halted his company close to the gathering. As he did so, he heard the children shouting their " aves " to their youthful king. The military company appeared to have swooped down suddenly on the harmless and innocent gathering, like ugly birds of prey, and the captain flushed angrily as he heard the words of the children. He hastily descended from his horse. The villagers clustered in a group, with the now-frightened children on one side of the throne, while opposite to them were the Roman soldiers. Mary trembled. She dreaded that insults and indignities would be heaped upon her son from the half-drunken and ribald soldiery. Nor in this was she mistaken.

" A king ! what king ? 'Tis thus you teach your children treason and sedition even in their games," said the officer angrily.

" Nay, sir," responded one of the townsmen, " he not angry. It is mere children's sport. We have no thought of insurrection here in Nazereth."

" 'Tis well, or soon you would taste of Roman steel."

The flower-crowned king had not moved from his chair. The soldier realized the inoffensiveness of the pastime, yet, having come down from his horse with an air of so much importance, he was loth to mount again without letting his subordinates witness some act of authority

on his part. He cast a searching glance over the company of boys, and their frightened faces appeared to satisfy him. Looking at Jesus, however, he perceived in him no signs of dismay. He was still seated, and the chaplet yet adorned his beautiful brow. This angered the rough soldier.

“ You, who would be king, come here and bring me your crown.”

Jesus neither moved nor spoke.

“ Look you, you Jewish dog ; heed you not what I command ? ”

The calm and placid youth remained seated, but now there were ominous looks of anger on the faces of the children surrounding him.

“ Do as I command at once,” shouted the Roman.

“ Nay, I do no harm. The play is innocent and harmless,” answered Jesus calmly.

The officer became more furious, while the youths were getting demonstratively angry. Some furtively picked up stones, and, by their angry gestures and sullen faces, it could be seen in the gathering darkness that the boys were determined to defend their chosen king, and the Roman officer might have departed not without some ugly bruises, had not Jesus calmed the rising tumult by one word :

“ Peace ! ”

At that single word the boys ceased their hostile demonstrations, and the evidences of the eager and hatred of the Roman soldiery died out of their faces. The officer watched this transformation with wonder, and was at a loss to understand the influence this boy-king exercised over his companions. Decius had heard that witches had dwelt, from early times, at Endor, a little to the south of Nazareth, and he half believed in his ignorance that this was some of their magic art.

Amazed as he was, his anger had not subsided. Striding rapidly toward the throne, the rough soldier seized the crown of roses and tore it violently from the boy-king's head. Throwing the flowers on the ground, he trampled them under foot, and then, springing to his

horse, gave a hurried order for instant departure, and the company of soldiers almost instantly disappeared in the gathering gloom.

The rich brown hair of the beautiful youth was disturbed by the action of the rough soldier, and fell forward over the face that was now pale at the indignity He had suffered.

Mary rushed forward and clasped Him in her arms, saying, in any agony and grief:

“ My child ! my son ! my son ! ”

His head rested a moment on her shoulder as a dove nestles in its nest, and, as it did so, Mary saw across the clear, pure brow a blood-red mark which the thorns of the rose-crown had made.

A LITTLE GIRL'S FANCY.

A long time ago—twenty years or a long time, isn't it?—there was a very small girl who imagined that her mind was in her neck. “ Of course it is ; my words come up from there, and words have to be made out of thoughts, and the mind is where the thoughts stay, ” she reasoned. This little girl's mother had a system of her own for keeping the little ones in order. Every evening after hearing their prayers she would draw out her tablets and read the day's record of behavior. “ John, you were cruel to the cat to-day—one cross for you. Harry, your behavior was ordinarily good. So was yours, Jo. Frances, you helped Bridget without my requesting it, because you knew the girl wanted to go to see her sick mother—one star for you, my daughter, ” and so on. “ Ordinarily good ” was matter-of-course and meant just a blank, but the one that had fewest crosses received a pretty prayer-book picture at the end of the month. Winning a star meant the cancelling of five crosses. Frances usually won the pictures, but Jo, the little lass of the neck-mind, didn't often deserve even a blank. But she was honest. “ Maybe I behaved all right, mamma, ” she would say, “ but I wasn't good here in my mind one bit, ” claspng her fingers around her neck. And then the mother would smile approvingly and

tell the little self-accuser that real goodness must dwell in the mind, else outward action can never be genuinely good.

Goodness must be good all the way through. It must have no motive, no reason, except the one sublime desire of pleasing God. To do something good because other people will like us better for our action or because it is most convenient to do right is a poor, flimsy goodness, founded on the shifting sands of self. We must *be* good before we can *do* good. Little Jo's distinction was as sharp as all childish distinctions are. One that realizes the difference between mere politic behavior and the outward expression of inner goodness is likely to shun the former as a shallow pretence unworthy of a child of God.

Standard and Times.

THE PRACTICE OF BURNING A LIGHT FOR THE DEPARTED.

This touching custom seems to have been handed down to us from the Jews, who still observe it. Boudon related that when he once entered a Jewish synagogue and saw several lamps burning therein, he was told in explanation that they were always lighted during the prayers for the departed. Certainly this custom is very ancient in the Church, for even St. Athanasius, who lived in the fourth century, mentions it. These are the words of the great Patriarch and Father of the Church : " Even if the corpse of the faithful departed is interred under the open skies, you must not fail to light oil and wax at the grave, for this is acceptable to God and obtains great reward from Him. For oil and wax are an offering, the Holy Sacrifice is an expiation—the alms given to the poor an increase of every good merit. " The Church manifests her regard for this very ancient practice by accepting and approving of foundations for lights to be left burning continually for the departed and by burning many lights in all her celebrations for the departed. In many monasteries it is prescribed that during the celebration for the dead several lamps be lighted. Again, it is the custom the

world over to keep a light burning for the departed at least before the corpse is buried.

Many examples attest the worth of this pious custom. Boudon writes : One of his relatives appeared to him and complained that his children offered no candles at the Masses offered for him, according to the custom of the place.

Some years ago it happened in the house of a pious family that had been accustomed to burn a light every Saturday night, for the departed, that when this custom was discontinued a great moaning was heard until the custom was resumed. Do the holy souls, perhaps, besides obtaining the merit of this charitable act, enjoy the consolation of seeing this light kept burning for them in the continued darkness to which they are doomed?—Annals of Our Lady of Lourdes.

VANITY FAIR.

Come and take a walk around "Vanity Fair," and watch the motley throng. Everybody has a muck rake and is eagerly looking about for valuables, sometimes there is a scrimmage between two people who try to secure the same thing.

Look at the women, silks, velvets, furs and jewellery, paint and powder ; how they walk ! as though they owned the earth and several other planets as well. But there are some, poorly but neatly dressed, and walking modestly, see how the velvet-clad mondaines sneer, and draw their costly robes away from contact with such creatures, albeit of the same flesh and blood as themselves.

A strident cry from a booth attracts our attention.

"Come and see the wonderful X Ray, ladies and gentlemen, shows your osseous structure, now ready, only ten cents admission." Two richly-dressed and languid-looking women enter the booth -let us follow. The apparatus is arranged, and behold : two awful grinning skeletons clad in the latest fashion.

They giggle a little, but go out looking rather scared. Far away, beyond the din of the crowded streets rises a

lofty hill, bleak and desolate. On its smmit, outlined against the grey sky stand three gaunt empty crosses.

"What is that hill over there called?" we ask a man standing at the door of a booth.

"Thot," he said, carelessly, "Oh! that is Calvary Hill."

"What are the crosses for?"

"Somebody was crucified there, nearly two thousand years ago, so I have heard, but I don't believe the story."

"Can one get to the top?" we ask again.

"Get to the top," said the man with a short laugh; "why, yes, if you are stupid enough to try, but you'll find nothing there, if you go, there is no food or drink."

"Wine, ma'am, rich red wine," cries a man from a brilliantly-lighted drinking booth. "Come and try it."

"Come and have your fortune told, pretty lady," croaks an old gipsy; "there's plenty in store for you, riches, honours, power, a fine husband."

"Not if they go up Calvary Hill," says a woman listener, with a sneer.

But we have reached the gate of the city, and the hill looms up before us bleak and dismal. There are some people tolling up painfully, often falling, sometimes looking back. The hill is covered with thorns which prick the feet, and here are many pitfalls.

The top at last! strange thing, the crosses are surrounded with softest verdure and flowers, birds sing in dulcet tones, the sun is warm and bright, a lovely stream gushes from the foot of the central cross and flows into a drinking fountain, upon which is carved in golden letters: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink."

Far below is the seething, hurrying city, over it hangs a grey mist, an angel flies above the cloud holding in his hand a crown of gold.

But the muck rakes are busy, nobody has time to look upward though the golden crown is within everybody's reach. Its possession involves a journey up Calvary Hill, however, and no one has a wish to toil up a thorn-strewed path to a region of such desolation as the summit appears from below.

Those at the top know better, and in their abode of peace, where nothing can disturb, they hear only the song

of birds and the flowing of the stream of life. Sometimes distant and subdued, there floats up a faint murmuring echo of the din and the turmoil of Vanity Fair.

NOTES, ETC.

The city of Turin, Italy, will, this year, celebrate the third centenary of public veneration of the *Santo Sudario*, a portion of the Winding Sheet in which the Sacred Body of Our Lord was wrapped after the Crucifixion. The Catholics of Piedmont intend commemorating this and other religious events, including the fifteenth centenary of the establishment of the Church in their country, by a grand exposition of sacred art and an exhibit of the results accomplished by Catholic missions.

* * *

During the lifetime of M. Olier founder of the Congregation of St-Sulpice, and while he was Curé of the church of that name, in Paris, two sacrileges were committed in it. The saintly pastor's grief was intense and was shared by the whole parish. All amusements were suspended and voluntary penances were embraced. The principal culprit was punished rigorously, after being compelled to do public penance before the doors of St-Sulpice.

It was in reparation for these crimes that the annual expiatory service which was held recently in St-Sulpice was established.

* * *

THE REV. FATHER JOHN MILANO, a priest who with others was banished from Ecuador during the recent revolutionary disturbances in that Southern Republic, died at Guayquil, in consequence of the cruel hardships and sufferings endured on the road into exile. He died in the arms of his companions in exile, and had the consolation of receiving the last rites of the Church. We recommend this poor Missionary, who, we do not hesitate to say, died a martyr's death, to the prayers of our readers. R. I. P.

* * *

THE MIRACULOUS PREFACE.—The preface of the Mass on feasts of the Blessed Virgin is called the Miraculous Preface ; for, as the legend goes, the greater part was miraculously put on the lips of Pope Urban II, as he was one day singing High Mass in the church of our Blessed Lady at Placentia. He began by chanting the common preface, but when he had come to that part where the prefaces generally turn off to suit the occasion he is said to have heard angels singing. He afterward caused their words to be inserted in the common preface at the council of Placentia in 1095.—Ave Maria.

* * *

The Holy Sacrifice was recently offered at Annecy, the capital of Upper Savoy, under circumstances of particular interest. The youngest son of a family which has already given three priests to the Church was the celebrant. It was his first Mass, and his assistants at the altar were his three brothers, one of whom is a Trappist.

The young priest is destined for service in Cochinchina.

PRAYERS SOLICITED.

1. That the contemplation of the sweet Christ-Child weeping in the cold and misery of the Crib of Bethlehem, may inspire the rich and comfortable to generously aid the poor.

2. That the Virgin Mother may take under her special protection, and guard the innocence of all the little ones born during these blessed days consecrated to maternal joys.

3. That Saint Joseph, the head of the Holy Family, may hasten to assist all those fathers who are out of work, whose families are needy for bread.

4. For all the numerous intentions of persons who recommend themselves to our prayers, and, particularly, for the success of a work eminently patriotic and christian.

LET US PRAY FOR THE DEAD, particularly, for : The Right Revd. MOTHER DU BON PASTEUR, Provincial Superiour of the Sisters of the Presentation, deceased at St-Hyacinthe. For MM. Victor Gladu, at

St-Francois du Lac ; N. Martel, at St-Hyacinthe ; Ubald Payan, at New-Bedford ; Charles B. H. Leprohon, at Joliette ; Pierre Verret and Alfred St-Pierre, at Quebec ; Francois Faulkner, at la Pointe aux Trembles ; Victor Belval, at Ste-Helene ; Napoleon Guay, at Sherbrooke ; J. Bte Charpentier, at Ware, Mass ; Hyacinthe Dus-sault, at St-Hyacinthe ; M. and Mrs. Noiseux, at St-Jean Baptiste of Rouville ; Mrs Josephine Fontaine, at Ashland ; Mrs. Louis Allard, at LaBaie ; Mrs. Widow Frs Pare, at Manchester ; Mrs. Benoit, at Nashua ; Mrs. Gabriel Lachambre, at Lawrence ; Mrs. Barthelemi Neel, at Montreal ; for Misses Dina Routhier, at Willimantic ; Cecile Ouellette, at St-Anselme ; Leda Caumette, at Quebec ; Julie Michaud, at Ste-Cecile ; Norah French, at Trois-Pistoles ; Mrs. Nicol, at Trois Pistoles ; Miss Fleur-Ange Garneau, at Quebec, etc.

For all these persons and intentions, let us say, morning and night :

We pray Thee, O Lord, help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy Precious Blood.

(100 days ind. for members of the Confraternity of the P. B.)

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, enlighten us, assist us, save us. Amen.

200 days ind. once a day.

Leo XIII. 20, June, 1892.

THANKSGIVINGS

FOR FAVORS OBTAINED THROUGH PRAYER TO THE
MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD.

“ Please thank the Precious Blood of Our Lord also Our Lady of good Counsel Saint Joseph, Saint Anthony Saint Expedit and Saint Benedict for many favors they have procured for me. Our Immaculate Mother obtained for me a very great favour on her last Feast after I made a Novena and burned a light in her honour and promised to have her goodness published in the Voice of the Precious Blood.
