

HOLY SEASON OF ADVENT.

THE Advent of the Redeemer, the Coming of the Saviour, what holy thoughts and pious affections and good purposes must it not awaken in the soul! It is the event of events, the central fact of the universe, the pivot on which the world's history hinges. The Creator becomes a creature, God comes in person to dwell in His own creation, *leaping o'er the mountains, skipping o'er the hills*, to find "his delights among the children of men." Kings desired to see His day, patriarchs sighed for it, prophets saluted it afar off, Abraham saw it and was glad, and yet it was only through the mists of time in the shadows of the remote dawn that but dimly announced the Sun of Justice.

Geologists, who make a study of the earth's crust, tell us that the present condition of the globe, which makes it a fit habitation for man, is the outcome of cycles of change, of moulding and remoulding, of earthquakes and volcanic upheavals, of rising and sinking, of flood and stagnant deposit. So the history of the world for four thousand years, the wanderings of tribes, the migrations of peoples, the rise and fall of empires, the triumphant marches of conquerors, all led up to the central fact of history, to the crib and manger of Bethlehem. It was only God's preparation of the world for the advent of its Redeemer. Men seem to be making history, but like the busy myriads in the ant-hill, they are only bringing about the fulfillment of the designs of the Almighty Ruler. "*When the fulness of the time was come, God*

sent His Son," when the preparation was complete, every decree fulfilled. Four thousand years! what time of preparation God takes for His work!

When at length all is ready, how noiselessly, how secretly, how obscurely He comes. "While all things were in silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, the almighty Word leapt down from heaven from His royal throne."

The Word is still dwelling among us. His Advent has not ceased. The first advent in Bethlehem was only a step to His advent in the Christian heart. He was born in the crib to gain entrance to the heart. The crib is the porch from which He knocks at the door of the heart. "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man shall hear my voice and open to me the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him." Each Christmas is the day of his special coming. What is *our* preparation going to be? Of the Bethlehemites it was said:—"He came unto His own and they received Him not." The Church assigns four weeks of preparation in memory of the four thousand years preceding the first Advent. They are a *holy season*, to be sanctified by flight of sin and its occasions, by prayer and penance, and worthy reception of Sacraments. A voice of one crying in the desert: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight its paths. Every valley shall be filled, every mountain shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways plain, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."



GENERAL INTENTION FOR DECEMBER, 1891.

Named by Leo XIII with his special blessing and given to His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda—the Protector of the Holy League of the Sacred Heart—for recommendation to the prayers of all the Associates.

THE AFRICAN MISSIONS.

FOR more reasons than one, Africa is entitled to the name lately given her of the Dark Continent. The teeming races which inhabit her zones are not only dark of color but have succeeded until our time in shrouding themselves under a mysterious veil from all light of civilization. They have found in the full blaze of a tropical sun a more efficacious screen than the inhabitants of polar regions in their mountains and seas of ice and snow.

Lying at the gate of civilized Europe, separated only by an inland sea from Rome, "the city of the soul," boasting once of her proud Carthage its rival, Africa came to be thought but a vast region of empty deserts and sandy oceans. The accounts left by the Jesuit missionaries who, two hundred years ago, penetrated into her wilds were lost sight of and forgotten, till in our own day the immortal Livingstone, followed by the venturesome Stanley,

forced a passage into the mysterious solitude, and behold ! instead of wastes of burning sand and inhospitable deserts, they have found plains of luxuriant growth watered by majestic streams and mighty rivers, broken here and there by immense lakes and inland seas comparable only to our own Ontario, Huron and Superior. The products were among the most sought after in commerce, and several of the tribes were found to be tranquil, meek and industrious.

What enthusiasm did not the startling discoveries of the Stanley expeditions evoke in Europe, and what civilizing movements did they not give rise to? It was no exaggeration on the part of the president of the London Geographical Society to affirm, that since the great discovery of Vasco de Gama Christian civilization has seen no vaster fields opened out to the zeal of its apostles and the gains of its merchants. All of a sudden, Europe, which hitherto had been seeking fields for colonization across oceans in the torrid climes of the Indies, or in the Northern regions of the St. Lawrence and Hudson Bay, cast her eyes on the Dark Continent revealed to her at her door, and began at once to divide its zones among her crowned heads and princes. States and kingdoms were mapped out along the banks of the rivers and in the territories spreading away behind them ; exploring expeditions were equipped ; railway lines surveyed ; and large sums of money invested.

At the present moment, Europe is so taken up with her newly discovered prize, that there is no danger of its slipping from her hold. And well it were so, for, as a Catholic missionary writes, the Mussulman yoke is beginning to loosen, light is penetrating into the darkness, the black is becoming acquainted with the white, and though uncertainty still hangs over the future, as the nineteenth century draws to a close, the signs betoken a change favorable to Catholicity.

The Catholic missionaries have followed close on the tracks of the explorer and the merchant. In the North and East, and across the great desert, Cardinal Lavigerie and the Fathers of the Holy Ghost have pursued the kidnapping caravans of Arabs and Mohammedans, to rescue the poor natives from the cruellest slavery and slaughter. Lower down a band of Belgian and English Jesuits pushed their way up the Zambesi, under an equatorial sun, till they reached the territories of Lo Benguela, chief of Matabeland, death from exposure and fever ever thinning their ranks. South in the country of the Zulus, Father Weld established a mission on a solid basis, over which one of our own Canadians was many years Superior, whilst the Portuguese pushed inward from the West.

There is no use, however, in blinding ourselves to the formidable obstacles which oppose the spread of the true religion of Christ among those benighted tribes. The climate of the lowlands, in the rainy season, is fatal because of the malaria rising from the rank soil, hence the defeat of many a missionary's hopes. Another great hindrance is the Protestant propaganda barren of results, but setting up before the natives the blind of a counterfeit christianity to which they are attracted by money and human blandishments. In Africa, too, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, and the preaching of the missionaries neutralized by the scandalous lives of unworthy European Catholics.

But the great difficulty inherent to the work of conversion is the condition of the natives resulting from the long ages of abject creature-worship and bestial degradation that have weighed like a curse on the unhappy race of Cham. The very idea of God seemed to be erased from their mind, and every whisper of conscience hushed. It is only the almighty grace of Him who from the stoves of the wilderness is able to raise up children to Abraham,

that can enlighten those darkened hearts and convert them into fleshy tablets bearing the impress of His law.

To the enslavement of souls by sin and vice the enemy of mankind has added the merciless yoke of the Moham-medans. They continue to pour down from Persia and Arabia on the populous regions of the South, and carry away what remains of their butcheries into the most in-human slavery.

Nevertheless, the horizon of Africa gleams bright with hope. The organized army of apostles invading it on every side, are preparing the way, especially by the Christian education of the children, for a moral regeneration. Already precious fruits have been gathered, notably in the infant Church of Ouganda, whose glorious martyrs recall the heroic deeds of the first Christian centuries. To these sources of consolation we must add the consecration of all the new missions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the fervor with which the neophyte children have taken up the practices of the Holy League. The badge of the Sacred Heart must prove in Africa as elsewhere the sign of victory.

Let us strive this month, in obedience to the behest of the Vicar of Christ, to hasten the day of triumph for the children of the Dark Continent.


PRAYER.

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

I offer them in particular for the African Missions, that, blessed by Thee according to Thy promise, they may rescue the unhappy natives from the slavery of Satan, and conquer them to Thy sweet yoke. Amen.

THE MEN'S LEAGUE.

ORGANIZATION!

“ work so simple as a union of prayers and intentions, with reception of Sacraments at stated times, cannot, to my mind, Father, give room for an organization with Officers and Councillors and Promoters. Whatever authority there may be in matters of this kind ought to be exercised by the priest. Presidents and Vice-Presidents can be at best but *figure-heads*. And what is the use of a Treasurer where there is no money rattle, or of a Secretary where there are no collections to gather and report ?”

You have already, dear Associate, admitted the utility of an Association for prayer and the frequent reception of sacraments. Our Lord himself taught it when He said : “Where two or three are united in my name there I am in the midst of them.” The Church likewise has set the seal of her approval on the Statutes of the Holy League, thus encouraging “the *faithful* to enkindle in themselves and others zeal for prayer,” and “the *associates* to employ not only prayer but all other sorts of good works, whether of religion or charity, such as the frequent reception of the Sacraments and everything which tends to effectually promote Catholic piety, the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.” “*Promoters* should exert themselves by every means in their power to more and more advance the Divine glory, and for this purpose may on fixed days be assembled in council.” Mark, dear Associate, how according to the idea of the Church the Holy League is a lay association. It is the faithful who *enkindle* in themselves and others zeal for prayer, and *employ all other sorts of good works*, whereas *Promoters exert themselves* by every means in their power to more and more advance

the divine glory: The movement springs from the lay element. Priests as such may exhort and encourage and direct; but unless the people bear hand and set *to work*, the fundamental condition of the League is missing. It is well it were so, for the most zealous priest would not be equal to the task of carrying on a work of this kind. Most frequently the ordinary ministry is a strain on time and resources; and even if it were not, the Holy League would prosper better as a lay association, because of its peculiar spirit and the statutes given it by the Holy See.

"But, Father, would you not consider this an intrusion into the purely spiritual sphere belonging by inalienable right to the Church and her ministers, just as things-temporal belong exclusively to lay direction?"

Your objection, dear friend, sounds like a plea for one of those divorces so prevalent in our days, which we frequently hear mention of, namely, that of the spiritual from the temporal. Are not soul and body, the spiritual and the temporal, in every man bound together in closest union by the same personality, and must not every society partake of the nature of the individuals that make it up? The Church herself, though entrusted with spiritual interests, is composed of members who have bodily life and health to maintain and temporal wants to satisfy. The very priests who represent her spiritual authority have lives to provide for and support. They have not renounced the blessings of freedom, good laws and good government. They are interested in the wise administration of civic and national affairs. The blessings which they are prompted to acquire for themselves justice and charity will often urge them to procure for their neighbor, to bestow upon their flocks the help of their lights, of their example and guidance, even in purely temporal and national concerns. Often in such matters priests are the

best advisers and guides, as being the most disinterested, the freest from trammels of prejudice and party and the least open to bribes.

On the other hand the lay element cannot disown responsibility in spiritual matters. Salvation is essentially each one's personal affair. Priests, Bishops, the Church herself, are but helps given to man in that great personal affair. They are appointed to *minister* to his spiritual wants. He will be judged on his own responsibility. Here, also, it is true that the spiritual blessings he owes himself he owes likewise to his neighbor, according to the laws of justice and charity. By word, example, association,—in short, by all the means which men employ to help one another along, he is bound to advance his neighbor's spiritual welfare.

“I don't see what that has to do with the officers and councillors of a Men's League.”

Well, it has all to do with it. If you admit that laymen ought to associate for mutual help in spiritual affairs, it follows that officers and councillors to whom the Association entrusts its interests bear a great responsibility. The prosperity of a local centre of the League means the success of the interests of the Sacred Heart, so far forth as they can be advanced by the association. The officers and councillors are the men into whose hands the members have given the management and success of the work they have so much at heart. The interests, therefore, at stake, and the proof of confidence, even though there be no question of sin, ought to prompt officers to take the initiative and devote themselves with earnest zeal and energy to their duties. The president of a bank, of an insurance or railway company, with great strength of purpose, will use all the resources of his mind to make the institution or enterprise a success, because of the grave interests he represents. If officers and councillors

of local branches displayed similar earnestness and zeal, what results would be reached? Yet there can be no comparison between money speculations and the interests of the Sacred Heart, which are gains in immortal souls.

It is the waiting for the priest, the unconscious endeavor to shift the whole responsibility in spiritual matters upon his shoulders, which is the bane of men's religious associations. Women's societies and sodalities flourish and prosper, because women follow their lights when they see a good work to be done. They take the initiative without waiting for advice from one and permission from another, as though they needed a special permission to say their prayers and save their soul. If Magdalen and the holy women had waited for the advice of Peter and the other apostles they would not have gone to the sepulchre, nor been favored with the first apparition of their Lord. Through them Peter and the rest learned the mystery of the Resurrection. So has it been down through the history of the Church. We have a striking instance in the Devotion of the Sacred Heart, which was first revealed to an humble nun of the Visitation, and by her means spread over Europe before it came to the notice of the successor of Peter to receive his authentic approval and encouragement. Likewise the Holy League has been spread over the universe, chiefly by the pious efforts of the laity desirous of sharing with their neighbors and friends the treasure it put themselves in possession of. It is usually the laity who force it on the notice of the priest in order to secure his aid, encouragement and direction for themselves and a canonical place in the parish for their work.

In conclusion, dear Associate, if you are elected a president or an officer of the League, be no figure-head, but assume the responsibility of your office, and breathe life and spirit into the whole body of Associates, under the guidance of your Rev. Local Director.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Immaculate! Immaculate! oh hear the clarion cry
In royal triumph pealing over ocean, earth and sky,
Great brazen tongues are telling it in turret and in tower,
And white-robed choirs are singing it with music's thrilling power—

Immaculate! Immaculate!

Oh Mother of Our Saviour, no dark doubt e'er oppressed
The children's hearts—they knew it—that thou wert
ever blessed,

Most pure in thy conception, a lily at thy birth.
Oh fairest among women! oh undefiled of earth!—

Immaculate! Immaculate!

But Rome to-day hath spoken and placed another gem
More lustrous than the morning star within thy diadem;
Another name to honor thee to nations is unfurled,
And million voices joyfully proclaim it to the world—

Immaculate! Immaculate!

Majestic music's swelling on the sweet incensed air,
And poesy is soaring to the realm sublime of prayer;
And art brings peerless offerings to lay upon thy shrine.
Each heralding thy spotlessness, oh Mother most divine!

Immaculate! Immaculate!


And in celestial spheres above where Eden waters flow,
And seraphs gazing on thee with rapturous ardor glow,
There cherubims with snowy wings on harps of glistening
gold
Make opal halls ring with thy name in praise a hundred-
fold—

Immaculate! Immaculate!

Immaculate! Oh let the word rise like a trumpet tone,
In proudest exultation to the Queen of Heaven's throne.
Immaculate! oh lead us to the light of Jesus' face
Immaculate! 'tis by His will we hail thee full of grace—
Immaculate! Immaculate!

BELLELLE GUERIN.

A CHILD'S PRAYER.

 Missionary priest in broken health was ordered a few months of rest. His superiors sent him to England, telling him to spend as much time as possible in the open air. Relieved of his many hours of arduous toil, he roved through the beautiful English meadows clad in the glowing verdure of spring. He drank in the pure air, listened to the sweet songs of the birds, and viewed the charming landscape, his heart all the while going up in praise to the great Maker of the universe. His thoughts went back to the happy days of long ago when the cross of Christ gleamed on the churches, when the fragrant meadows were tilled by holy monks who fed Christ's poor, and the heart of king and peasant alike throbbed in unison with the representative of God on earth, the successor of St. Peter, the one shepherd who cared for the one true fold. And as he meditated on these things, tears filled his eyes, for everywhere they lighted on objects that spoke but of heresy and unbelief.

But suddenly the sweet voices of children at their innocent play drove these gloomy thoughts from his mind. "At least," he said to himself, "these little ones rejoice the heart of Him who made them. I shall endeavor to implant in their young minds some knowledge of that God who, in the one visible form He condescends to take on earth, has been thrust out of this fair land where once He dwelt in many a holy tabernacle."

He joined the youthful group, and soon was pouring into their willing ears the story of Him who dwells ever on our altars, oftentimes lonely, yet ever waiting to receive with love all who come to tell Him their troubles and ask relief.

At length he went on his way, and the children returned to their fun.

One, a rosy little fellow of five, in whose soul the seeds of true faith had already been sown by the Sacrament of Baptism, ran off in the direction of a little Catholic chapel, with its cross-topped spire appearing among the trees.

Coming to it, he pushes open the door and looks in. Yes, there is the little house where the holy man said that Jesus lives. But how high up it is! He cannot reach it. He is so little that if he calls through the door Jesus will not hear him. His resolution is soon taken. He goes timidly into the sanctuary, uses all his strength to carry a chair to the top step of the altar, climbs upon it, and, sitting upon the altar-table, knocks with his tiny hand at the door of the tabernacle, tap! tap! tap!

"Dear Jesus, are you there?" No answer.

"Poor Jesus! perhaps he was so tired of being alone that he fell asleep."

Tap! tap! tap!

"Dear Jesus, are you there?"

Wonder of wonders! From out the silent tabernacle of love comes a sweet voice: "Yes, my little brother, I am here. What do you wish me to do for you?"

"Dear Jesus, my father does not go to confession. My mother often weeps."

"Be comforted, little brother. Your father will go to confession. Your mother shall weep no more. Now go. Be good, and always love me and confide in me."

And the little fellow scampered home full of joy.

That evening the father went to confession without a word being said on the subject, and the poor mother was happy once more.

And so, dear little children, will Jesus answer your prayers. Although you are not permitted to enter the sanctuary and approach His tabernacle, ask Him for all you want and He will give it to you. Practise the virtues He loves so much,—purity and obedience,—and He will hear your every request and confer upon you every favor.



HOW PEACE CAME TO THE DOYLES.

MRS. SADLIER.

I.

TWENTY years ago there lived, and probably lives still, in a small town in mid-Canada, some miles west of the border line between Ontario and Quebec, a family whom we shall call Doyle, prosperous, well-to-do people as any in the county. The father and founder of the family had begun life as a railroad-laborer, but had risen by good conduct and steady industry to be the possessor of a large well-tilled farm, then of a thriving general store in F —, and, finally, of a private residence in the outskirts of the town.

So far, all had gone well with the Doyles. The father and, later on, the mother had passed away in a green old age, leaving a good name, a good position and ample means to their three sons and two daughters. In most respects, the second generation of the Doyles was not unworthy of the good parents who had so well provided for their children. As yet none of them were married, and the farm, and the shop, and the dwelling were all common property, the business skilfully managed by three brothers for the benefit of all, while the sisters kept the house, the home of the family, thriftily and well.

The Doyles would have been the envy of their less successful neighbors, had it not been for one fatal drawback to the blessings they enjoyed, which, in the opinion of the old and wise and God-fearing, went far to counterbalance all. Amid so much prosperity and apparent happiness, peace and harmony were wanting. The brothers were hot-tempered, quick to take offence, much given to fault-finding and complaining one of the other and all of their sisters, who were, nevertheless, as gentle and amiable as their brothers were irascible and prone to anger.

The sisters were sincerely pious and faithful to all their religious duties. The brothers were of that class of people who think that going to Mass on Sundays and holy days, and making their Easter duty, is all that can reasonably be expected, especially from men who have business to attend to. Every Sunday and feast-day of obligation saw the three brothers, John, William and James, duly seated at High Mass in the family pew, and they never failed to make their annual confession and communion somewhere within the paschal time, thus barely escaping the sentence of outlawry pronounced by the Church on her rebellious children who fail to comply with that solemn precept.

In vain did Kate and Sarah remonstrate with the young men on this laxity in regard to their religious duties. It only ended in a scene, not unfrequently calling forth a storm of abuse from the brothers, in which threats of "breaking up the house" were sure to be made by one or other of them. This, as they well knew, had always the effect of silencing the girls, whose whole desire it was to keep the home for the family as long as they could and while their brothers remained unmarried.

But it was not only with their sisters the Doyle young men quarrelled on every imaginable pretext. Amongst themselves there was a continual bickering kept up, and

such being the case, it was a matter of supreme wonder to the intimates of the family that the flourishing business, built up so solidly and well by old Jerry Doyle, had not long since gone to pieces. The truth is that his sons were capital business men, steady and clear-headed, and far from deficient in industry or application. They loved their sisters and even each other after a fashion of their own, and were rather fond of their home, although their own ill-temper and the frequent altercations to which it gave rise made it, for the most part, anything but a happy one. Even the presence of guests under their really hospitable roof did not always prevent these ebullitions of temper, in which John, the elder brother, generally led the way.

Many a secret consultation was held between the sisters as to what was to be done under these deplorable circumstances. Long and fervent were their prayers for the sorely-needed change of heart in the brothers, who, apart from that one lamentable fault, were kind and generous to them, and strictly honest and honorable in their dealings with others.

“They are father’s own sons in most ways,” the sisters would say one to the other, “but if they only had his quiet, even temper! Maybe if some of them got married and had homes of their own, they wouldn’t be always fighting and squabbling about every little thing that comes up, as they now do.”

II.

Alas! the specific failed of its effect. William in due time took to himself a wife, and a year or two after James followed his example. But even to their new homes the old and evil habit accompanied both, and it so happened that the wives they had chosen were not by any means models of patience and forbearance like poor Kate and

Sarah. They wouldn't put up with it, not they; and they told their respective husbands so very plainly, adding furthermore that if their sisters spoiled them by giving in to their overbearing ways, *they* wouldn't do it.

When the husband raised his voice in anger, the wife followed suit, and, as she boasted to her fellow-champion of woman's rights, gave him as good as he brought, and paid him honestly back in his own coin. So matters grew worse instead of better. The only difference was that three homes were then made wretched instead of one. William and his help-mate kept up the strife, James and his wife did likewise, and John went on scolding and brow-beating his gentle sisters without stint or measure.

A few more years had passed in the same dreary round. Children were growing up in the homes of the married brothers. John and his two sisters had settled down into middle-aged people. Quiet they would have been, and peaceful, but for John's stormy temper and contentious spirit. And still the sisters prayed, and hoped, and suffered in patient silence, offering up the manifold trials they had to undergo every day and every hour for the conversion of their relatives and the establishment of peace amongst them. In humble hope and assured faith they waited, hoping that the dawn would soon break and the shadows flee away, and that the tear-moistened bread they daily and hourly cast upon the waters would sooner or later return to them laden with God's sweet mercy.

"Where are you off to now?" said John Doyle one day to his sisters as he saw them preparing to go out. "To church, I'll be bound. It would be fitter for you to stay at home and attend to the affairs of the house!"

"And so we do, John," replied Sarah, meekly; "there's not a thing we don't see to in or about the house, and you needn't grudge us the little time we can spare for God. To-day it's the mission that's opening, and we want to be there in good time."

John gave a grunt of dissatisfaction, but said nothing more. An inward voice told him that he ought to make the mission himself, that he needed it far more than his sisters did, but he would not give in. So they went, and he remained moodily at home intent on his usual avocations.

When Kate and Sarah returned they were naturally full of the mission, the zeal and eloquence of the preacher, the crowds of people that filled the church to overflowing, and how Nellie and Bessy, their two sisters-in-law, were there with their older girls and boys.

"Humph!" said John, "it's a wonder Bill and Jim weren't there too! The whole family will soon be as crazy as yourselves about religion."

"O, John, John!" cried Kate. "If you'd only come yourself and listen to even one of the instructions, I know you'd get into the spirit of it and wouldn't want to miss any of them!"

A scornful laugh was the answer as John left the room, banging the door after him.

Next day, John was somewhat taken aback when his sisters told him that both his brothers were at the evening sermon and had announced their intention of making the mission with their wives and children. "And, John, there are to be great doings about the Sacred Heart," added Kate with breathless eagerness. "The new League is to be established at the close of the mission, and Father Barry is to be the Director, and there are to be Promoters and Centres, and devotions every first Friday of the month, and a monthly Communion of Reparation. The missionaries explained it all to us."

"And I suppose Bill and Jim and the whole jing-bang of you will be in the thick of it!" said John.

"Just come with us to-morrow to either the morning or evening exercise, and leave the rest to God."

"I'm not going, that's all about it. There's enough of you there without me."

But he did go for all that. Great was the joy of his good sisters when they found him ready bright and early on the following morning to accompany them to church. Nor did it at all lessen their satisfaction that he kept grumbling all the way about the absurdity of *his* going to the mission. They knew that the grace of God was pursuing and would overtake him then and there, for he was not a bad man, only rough and domineering and somewhat careless about his soul's interests.

III.

Two more years had gone by, uneventful years in the Doyle family, to all outward seeming, and yet they were marked within the circle by many and great changes. Where all had been bitterness and contention in the three households, there was now good humor, harmony and peace. The fathers and mothers between themselves, the boys and girls as they went and came in the daily round of merry child-life, and John, the head of the family, in the old paternal homestead—all were changed as though an enchanter's wand had waved over them one and all.

Kate and Sarah, too, were changed, but in a far different way. With them it was that the wan, care-worn look had vanished from their faces. The overstrained minds and the weary hearts were now at last reposing after the long, long years of patient suffering. It is true that each sister had long since seen amongst her dark brown tresses "that first foot-mark of time," the "mute mementoes" of departed youth and coming age; yet neither gray hairs nor faded cheeks might dim the happy light of assured peace and joy and gratitude that beamed in the calm earnest eyes of Kate and Sarah Doyle.

Three pews were now rented by the Doyle families in

the parish church, and there on Sundays and holy days they might all be seen assembled, while on days of special devotion, and notably on the first Friday of the month and the Sunday of the general Communion of Reparation, not only all the women of the family with such of the children as were old enough, but the three brothers were seen approaching the Holy Table together. Truly a most edifying sight, and one that called forth many an expression of surprise and admiration from the rest of the congregation.

"Did you ever see such a change as there is in the Doyles?" would one neighbor say to another, on their way home from mass. "From being so cross-grained and cantankersome, sure it's good-natured and easy-tempered they are now, and not a bit proud or stuck up for all they have such fine houses, and horses, and buggies, and money to no end."

"I declare to you, Tim," observed another, "I used to be afeard to go into John's store if himself happened to be there! Now he's as civil-spoken a man as you'd want to see, and has ever and always a kind word for every one. Ay! and he's so ready now to help any one that's in need of a friend, and never pushes people that are in his books as he used to do. God be praised, but it's a happy change entirely!"

"What in the world brought it about?" some one would ask.

"Well! that's more than any of us can tell," was the general reply.

But to Kate and Sarah and, indeed, to the whole family the change was no mystery, and the ruby lamp that burned day by day in each of the three dwellings, before a handsomely-framed picture of the Sacred Heart, told the whole simple story. And in the long winter evenings when the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin was said in each

house before that domestic shrine, in the fulness of peace and calm content, how every heart throbbed with grateful love as all eyes turned to the tiny frame inclosing the Divine Promises to Blessed Margaret Mary, and some one repeated aloud the second of those gracious pronouncements of our Blessed Lord :—

“ I WILL ESTABLISH PEACE IN THEIR FAMILIES.”

ST. LUCY.

13th December.

It was about the year 304, towards the end of the reign of the Emperor Dioclesian, that St. Lucy gained her crown of martyrdom, and Syracuse, in the island of Sicily, a powerful patron.

Lucy was the daughter of noble and wealthy parents. Her mother, Eutychia, considering chiefly the honor of the family and the temporal welfare of her child, had destined her to become the bride of a prominent pagan. Such, however, was not Lucy's desire. Long since she had chosen Jesus Christ for her spouse, and had pledged herself to Him by vow. Many and hard were the struggles which the young maiden had to go through to change her mother's designs, nor did she succeed until Providence intervened and opened the eyes of Eutychia.

For some years Eutychia had been suffering from a painful disease which resisted the efforts of the best doctors. About this time a pilgrimage was being made to the tomb of St. Agatha in the city of Catana. Lucy and her mother decided to visit the tomb of the saint. While they were hearing Mass, it happened that the Gospel read told of the miraculous cure of a poor woman who had merely touched the hem of our Lord's garment. “ Mother,”

said Lucy, "if you believe what we have just heard, believe also that Agatha, the martyr, who suffered death for Jesus Christ, possesses him now forever; approach her tomb with faith and you will be cured."

After the celebration of the holy mysteries, mother and daughter prostrated themselves on the tomb of Agatha, and prayed fervently. Lucy fell asleep and beheld a vision. She saw Agatha, who assured her of the immediate cure of Eutychia. Upon awakening Lucy found to her great joy that her mother had been the object of a special favor from Heaven, and was now quite freed from her recent affliction.

This was the moment for Lucy to press her suit; so appealing to her mother's better feelings she pleaded to be excused from forming an alliance that was distasteful to her, and begged that she might at once receive her inheritance and dispose of it as she thought best by dividing it among Christ's poor. The mother consented, though somewhat reluctantly, and measures were taken for the sale of her land and her jewels.

The affianced husband, believing that the sale was being made for his own interest, exerted himself to make the transactions as advantageous as possible. But what was his surprise on discovering that the proceeds had been unreservedly given to poor people,—to widows, orphans and wayfarers! He felt he had been duped, and his selfishness gave way to anger and a desire of revenge. He at once denounced Lucy before the tribunal of Paschasius as being a Christian.

Cited before the tribunal, she was commanded to sacrifice to the pagan gods. "What is this you say about sacrificing?" asked Lucy. "The sacrifice which is agreeable to God the Father is to visit and aid widows and orphans in their necessities. For three years past I have done nothing else. That is my sacrifice. I now possess

nothing, but am ready to offer myself as a living victim to my Lord. If this offering is agreeable to Him, may He consummate it Himself."

It was in vain that the consul tried to make her waver in her faith. To all his questions and insulting remarks, she replied with words of such firmness and wisdom as to surprise all present. Paschasius, irritated by her obstinacy, exclaimed, "These beautiful speeches will cease as soon as the scourges begin to be heard."

Incensed by her answers, the consul ordered that she should be cast into a house of ill-repute, and commanded several ruffians to seize the virgin and bear her away. But when their hands were laid on her, they found it was impossible to remove her from the spot where she stood. More aid was called, but all in vain. They attached ropes to her ankles and to her arms, and redoubled their efforts, but she remained as firm as a rock. Beside himself with anger, Paschasius instructed his servants to build a fire about the young maiden and to cover her limbs with pitch, resin and oil. The fire was lit, but the flames refused to attack the bride of the Lord, and only circled harmlessly about the fair form. Thereupon one of the ruffians, seizing a sword, plunged it into the martyr's body. This was her death-stroke. She did not expire, however, immediately, but was carried away, and after having received the last rites of the Church, soon gave back her pure soul to God.

E. G.

NUNZIO SULPIZIO; OR, THE YOUNG APPRENTICE.

(*Concluded.*)

NUNZIO continued to suffer the most excruciating pains till the 25th of March, 1836, when a change took place for the worse. It was now evident to all that the Angel of Death was hovering nigh. A priest having been called to administer the last rites of the Church, at the sound of the bell which announced his approach, he seemed to gain supernatural strength. Despite his weakness, he drew himself on his knees, and at the sight of the Adorable Sacrament he cried out in transports of joy—“Behold the Pledge of eternal life! Behold the King of Heaven comes! Welcome, my Love, my Lord, and my God!”

This act of faith pronounced with beaming countenance and burning fervor made a profound impression on all who were present. “Till my dying hour,” said one, “the sound of the words and the expression of his face will be indelibly impressed on my mind.”

He received the last sacraments with every outward mark of piety, and then fell back into the state of prostration from which he had been aroused by his Saviour’s visit. Just before breathing his last, the crucifix was placed to his lips; a heavenly smile came over his face; one word of prayer inaudible to those around, and his pure soul passed peacefully to God.

In the process that took place at Rome, evidence was given of the almost miraculous change that occurred after death. His eyes remained open, but lost none of their lustre; his countenance was illuminated with a heavenly smile; his flesh had the appearance of one in perfect health; the swelling which deformed his body disappeared; the foot so terribly decayed, and which an instant

before emitted an intolerable odor, became beautiful to look at, and the room was filled with a delightful fragrance. "The saint is in Heaven," cried all present, as they gazed astonished at the change.

The number of miracles wrought through his intercession is a proof of the influence he now enjoys with God. "The child," says the Acts, "who passed his life in absolute poverty, is now the dispenser of the riches of Heaven. There is no form of human misery but has been relieved through his powerful intercession. Health has been restored to others through the compassionate prayers of one who scarcely knew what it was himself. The tears of misery are dried by him who had cause for shedding so many; joy and happiness are restored to families by one who never knew the happiness of an earthly home."

Behold in the life we have just read the model which the Church proposes to the young Christian workman. Few may ever be called to practise the patience and submission which were the distinguishing virtues of this saintly youth. Though free from sickness and ill-treatment, poverty and its attendant ills are still the lot of many a workman, and these ills bear heavily upon him. The patience and submission necessary to bear them meritoriously are exposed now-a-days to special dangers.

Always hard to practise, these virtues are doubly so when false and delusive hopes are held out that the occasion for them may be removed. Daily we hear of socialists, men who strive by speech and pen to incite the poor to better their condition by unlawful means. The Church, on the other hand, bids her toiling children be patient, and turn with horror from revolutionary doctrines and methods that only render futile the true remedies which she alone can apply. As an encouragement,

she sets before them, in the beautiful life of her son Nunzio Sulpizio, a heroic example of the Christian workman's patience. His sufferings immeasurably surpassed those which fall to the lot of most mortals. yet his patience never once failed. The world, it is true, will laugh at the example, and amongst the poor there may be found some who will treat it as foolishness. But it is a foolishness which takes from suffering its sting, and to which Christ has promised an eternal recompense.

T. G.

ST. JOHN EVANGELIST.

THE NEW LESSON.

The golden sun kissed Asia's burning sand,
 And lingered there as though it fain would rest
 Where Earth was hallowed by a Saviour's steps.
 A group of youthful hermits strayed among
 The wooded vales, made fertile by man's art,
 And, as they walked, they held with earnest tones
 Their converse, till the slanting beams grew faint,
 And twilight threw her shadowy veil around,
 O'er hill and dale, o'er sand and purple lake.

And, coming o'er the distant crimson'd hills
 Resplendent with the blood of dying day,
 They see an old man, bowed with weight of years,
 His hoary locks uncovered to the breeze,
 The golden sunlight shining on his brow,
 And floating o'er like aureole of bliss.
 And at his near approach the youths grow gay ;
 They greet him with a thousand words of love,
 And midst their questions and his sweet replies,
 He says : " What would my children ask to-day ? "

Then loud the answer echoed by them all :
" We are full weary of the lesson (mild
And beautiful and good we know),
But heard so oft we fain would some new lore
Diffused from lips that ever speak of " *Love!* "
The old man smiled. A ray of heaven's own light
Beamed o'er his features, and his soft blue eyes
Seemed limpid lakes, within whose pure, bright depths
Lay gems all shining with celestial light.

" A lesson new? " And once again he smiled.
" Well, will I heed your oft-repeated prayer,
And teach you something new, unlearned by all? "
Then, seated at the saintly master's feet,
They wait with beating hearts that lesson new ;
They hang upon his very looks as though entranced,
And, with his eyes upraised to heaven's dome,
He says, his tone as sweet as angel's harp,
" My little children, God is love! " and then,
In words of thrilling eloquence, expands
Before their gaze his very soul, and, rapt,
He breathes forth strains of a seraphic love.

" My little children, pour your hearts in love !
Love one another, as the Holy One,
The Crucified, has loved, e'en unto death !
And from His Heart, the fountain-head of love,
Draw light and strength, and love in endless draughts !
Oh, Sacred Heart ! the source of life and light,
Of heaven's bliss, of all we dream and dare,
Give of Thy strength, and bid us love like Thee.
Oh ! give to me once more, my Master sweet,
The boon to lay my head upon Thy breast ;
Once more from out Thy Sacred Heart to draw
The draughts of love, that kept this feeble frame

From feeling aught of earth's most poignant grief!
 And fill these children of my soul with love,
 The love of Thee ! 'Tis ever new, the love of God to man,
 The love of Jesus to the sin-dyed soul !”

And so he spake, and evening's shades drew near,
 And still the theme of *Love* was on his tongue,
 Until, at last, as if his hundred years,
 Impatient, clamored for a brief repose,
 The sweet words faltered on the saint's pale lips,
 His eyelids drooped, and sleep with noiseless wings
 Descended. Then uprose the glorious moon,
 And touched with light the sleeper's silver hair,
 And the disciples gazed with love upon
 The gentle teacher of their tender years.

And, as they gazed, the starry sky grew bright
 With radiance not of earth, and brighter still,
 Until at length the heavens themselves were oped,
 And in the highest place, at God's right hand,
 They saw the "Crucified" in splendor clothed,
 And from His Sacred Heart the brilliant light.
 And, as they gazed they saw their master's form,
 His hoary head upon that Sacred Heart,
 As when in youth, the night before the doom,
 At supper he inclined on Jesus' breast.

And, gazing thus, they hear his gentle voice:
 Repeating, as in ecstasy of bliss :
 " My little children, God alone is love !
 Oh ! as He loved you, one another love !"
 And then the vision faded from their eyes,
 And naught remained to them but silent night
 And form of marble beauty whence the soul had fled.

S. M. C.



THE LEAGUE ABROAD.

Rome.

The eyes of the Catholic world are still turned Rome-ward. The last groups of the French workmen's pilgrimage had not yet left Rome when trains came pouring in with their thousands of Catholic youth from France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Austria, Mexico. They were for the most part students from Catholic colleges, of the higher classes of society, and were come to celebrate the Tercentenary of St. Aloysius by praying at his tomb and paying their homage to the Chair of Peter.

Not for many a day has there been an assemblage in St. Peter's like that which greeted the Holy Father on September 29th. Though admission was by ticket, 70,000 is the lowest figure given for the number of those present at the Pontifical Mass. When the Pontiff entered, carried on his *Sedes Gestatoria*, all heads bowed down with one accord, in profound devotion, to receive his blessing. As he went forth after the celebration of the divine mysteries, he was hailed with intense enthusiasm.

The Catholic youth of the international pilgrimage were admitted to audience on Oct. 1st. What a spectacle it must have been to see the aged Prisoner of the Vatican, with the flower of the Catholic youth of all nations pressing around him, eager to hear his words and receive his blessing! Beautiful were the words which Leo XIII addressed them on the occasion! After expressing his delight at the presence of so many youths, whose piety,

full juvenile ardor, beamed in their countenances, and whom the same faith had led from so many distant lands to venerate the mortal remains of St. Aloysius and the august Chair of Peter, he told them of his extreme solicitude to preserve college students from the perfidious snares which the enemies of religion were setting for them, especially that of a Godless system of education, by which it was intended to bring about an entire separation from the Catholic Church, and hand them over defenceless to the slavery of vice and of secret societies. He enlarged on the blessings of a Catholic education. To behold these blessings imaged as in a mirror, they had only to consider the example of Aloysius. "It was owing to the Church and religious influences that he was able, amid the corruption of morals, to preserve the integrity of his purity to such a degree as to be more like an angel than a man. It was due to religion that, amidst the luxury and dissipation of his father's house, he excelled in the austere virtues, as though he lived in a solitude; that, trampling on all earthly advantages, he was led by the grace of God to renounce a principedom; that, reaching his twenty-fourth year, he became a model of charity and religious perfection; that at last he attained such a high degree of heavenly glory as to make the holy virgin, Magdalen of Pazzi, believe he scarcely had an equal in heaven. We pray to God with earnestness that he may preserve in you this mind and these dispositions.

"With the Church the Roman Pontiff is intimately united. The true church could not exist without him. Hence, respect and love for the Church is inseparable from respect and love for the Pope. You know that on account of the evils of the times the present condition of the Roman Pontiff is an unworthy and intolerable one. Owing to the fickleness of the political situation, free access to our person may at any moment be prevented.

At Home.

“Let it be the fruit of your pilgrimage to unite yourselves more closely than ever to the Apostolic See. When you go home, let it be your endeavor to spread among the people these same sentiments of filial piety. We battle together by all lawful means for the Roman Pontificate ; for on this cause mainly depend the prosperity of the Church, the safety of religion and the tranquillity of the troubled world. As a pledge of heavenly grace, and in testimony of our fatherly benevolence, we grant with affection in the Lord the apostolic benediction to you, your families and acquaintances.”

THE LEAGUE AT HOME.

OTTAWA.

Our Canadian League has just received a large accession of strength from the entrance of the Ottawa University and St. Joseph's parish. It is thought that one of the fruits of the Oblate mission will be the enrolling of a thousand members. Abundant harvests are promised from the missionary labors of the Oblate Fathers in different parts of Ontario.

KINGSTON.

In a few days we shall be able to record the admission of the Cathedral parish of St. Mary's, Kingston, into our ranks. Long since, the League of the Sacred Heart, with the approval and encouragement of His Grace the Archbishop, has been doing good work in the schools and sodalities entrusted to the zealous Ladies of the Congregation and the Christian Brothers. Now under Father Kelly's directorship, its advantages are going to be placed within easy reach of every soul in the city. What a help to our Canadian League shall not be the addition of such an influential centre and the prayers of so many of the fervent faithful !

Our little *Messenger*, sitting down to rest a while from his toil and to cast a glance on the fruits of a year, is overflowing with consolation. All have lent a hand, to forward the interests it represents. With the secular clergy under the Canadian Hierarchy all the religious Orders have fallen into line,—Redemptorists, Basilians, Oblates, Sulpitians, Carmelites, Christian Brothers, even the Jesuits. As to our religious communities of women, they would not have been true to their providential mission in the world and to the rôle they have held in the history of the Church, if, like Magdalen at our Lord's sepulchre, they had not been first to reap the consolations and advantages of the League and to point them out to others.

The *Messenger* finds on its record for the year 1891 in English-speaking Canada about 10,000 Associates enrolled; 500 Promoters; it has received about twenty parishes, besides many smaller centres aggregated; 4,000 Rosary bands furnished with tickets every month; nearly six thousand annual subscribers amongst the laity. As to the solid fruits in souls he has only to refer his readers to the accounts sent in by Promoters, Secretaries and Local Directors, of the prayers multiplied, the conversions obtained, of the crowded communion rails on first Fridays and first Sundays, of the ardor of the school children in adopting and carrying out the practices of the League.

Quebec.

We had a very large number at our last General Communion; the promoters' meeting, too, was well attended. Rev. Father Oates told them to prepare themselves, and get their lists well filled for a grand ceremony on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, when diplomas and crosses will be conferred. There shall be a reception of

about *one hundred and fifty* promoters, including all the Redemptorist Fathers and the men who preside over circles. Our Cardinal Archbishop will be present. We are to have a Triduum before the feast, and it is thought the ceremony will be very imposing.

SECRETARY.

Barrie.

Four new circles were admitted on the first Sunday of the month of the Holy Rosary. This brings our number of circles up to twenty.

There is no lack of zeal in our Very Rev. Local Director, who is ever urging the members to help to bring all under the banner of the Sacred Heart, and to adopt for their motto: "Thy kingdom come."

PROMOTER.

IN THANKSGIVING.

OTTAWA.—In fulfilment of my promise, I write to record a favor received from the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I feel I cannot be thankful enough to the Sacred Hert.

BARRIE.—I write to return thanks to the Sacred Heart for a favor obtained by an Associate.

KINGSTON.—I wish to return thanks to the Sacred Heart for a temporal favor obtained in August.

TORONTO.—Thanks are returned for a temporal favor, the second obtained within three months.

OTTAWA.—Thanks are returned for three children providentially preserved from perversion, also for a family saved from a serious misfortune.

Cornwall, St. Columban's.

Sunday, Oct. 11th, was the closing day of a Triduum in St. Columban's church. The missionary had come to gather the after-harvest of the late mission and to renew its salutary impressions. Every evening there was a full attendance at the sermon, and the number who received the sacraments fell little short of a thousand. It was a most edifying spectacle to see the concourse that thronged the church four times on Sunday.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon it was filled by the children of the Convent of the Congregation and the separate schools. With the greatest enthusiasm all embraced the Three Degrees and other practices of the Juvenile League. The boys stood up in a solid row, and together lifted the hand as a pledge to the Sacred Heart against the use of intoxicants and tobacco.

The Associates of the Men's League held their meeting and renewal of promises after High Mass. About two hundred were present, and new members were received.

The most imposing ceremony of all, namely, the bestowal of the diploma and cross on the promoters, took place in the evening. The church was filled long before the appointed hour. Ninety promoters were to be decorated, all heads of circles of fifteen. The activity displayed by the Cornwall Council is really marvellous. Not only had the town been ransacked for associates, but there was not a village, hamlet, or cluster of houses for miles and miles around that had not its promoter and circle. All came to take part in the ceremony to be decorated, and return home in the soft moonlight. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Central Director, who, after a rapid historical sketch of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, spoke in praise of the League of Cornwall, explained the significance of the diploma and cross, and hoped that they

would be received not only as reward of past services but as an incentive to constant and enlightened zeal. After the solemn blessing, the promoters advanced in double file, and having received the diploma were decorated on bended knees by the Rev. Father Corbett, the Local Director. During the solemn benediction of the Blessed Sacrament which followed, he also read the Act of Consecration. The altar was richly adorned and appeared in a blaze of lights. The choir of St. Columban's with rich variety of voice and instrument contributed immensely to the impressiveness of the ceremony.

PROMOTER.

St. Catharines, Ont.

Through the zealous exertions of the Rev. Father Director, the League of the Sacred Heart, established in the month of June, 1890, has progressed in a most satisfactory manner. We have fifty promoters and seven hundred and fifty members. The monthly communions, which are held on the first Friday and third Sunday, number three hundred and thirty, not including the children attending the schools of the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St. Joseph, among whom there are many members. On the first Friday evening of each month Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given, followed by a short conference of promoters.

On the evening of the third Sunday of June last, there was a reception of promoters in the handsome parish church. The Very Rev. Dean Harris conferred the cross and diploma on fifty young ladies, each of whom represented a following of fifteen members. The ceremony, imposing in itself, received additional interest from a very appropriate address given by Rev. Father Smith, our Director. All the promoters showed great appreciation of the efforts made for their encouragement and sanctification, and are discharging their duties with renewed zeal and fidelity.

ASSOCIATE.

PROMOTERS' PAGE.

Besides the general intention named by the Holy Father, the Holy League is ever sending up a chorus of prayers for the *particular intentions* of the Associates. These intentions may be sent straight to the Central Director, especially if there be no intention box at the door of the church, or they may be given to the Local Secretary or Promoter for transmission. Promoters willingly take charge of the intentions of Associates, especially when the latter cannot write, and will have them recommended.

Where the Holy League is canonically established, the simplest way of recommending intentions is to write them on a slip of paper, which is dropped without envelope into the *intention-box* at the door of the church or school. Names should not be written, for God reads the heart. This writing of intentions and dropping them into the box for recommendation to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord and to the prayers of the Associates is a beautiful exercise of faith, and tends wonderfully to add to our confidence and earnestness in prayer. No wonder so many intentions thus recommended should receive extraordinary if not miraculous answers!

The written intentions are taken out of the box by the Rev. Local Director, who holds the key, and are summed up on an intention blank furnished from the office on application. It is laid on the altar by the Local Director during his mass on the first Friday of the month, and read out at the general meeting of all the Associates. Then it is transmitted to the Central Director, who likewise offers the Holy Sacrifice on the first Friday for the intentions of the Canadian Associates. He also, besides sending them to the Director General, has them printed on the Rosary tickets and in the *Messenger* for recommendation to the prayers of all the Canadian Associates.



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