

A TOUCHING STORY.

The First Communion of a Heroic Youth and His Vow.

The Symbol of His Purity, a White Cravat, He Always Wore—Pathetic Scene on the Field of Battle—A Soldier's Last Request.

Of all the youths in the parish of St. in Rouen, who, in 1862, were under instruction in preparation for their first communion, George M— was the most edifying. He made his first communion like an angel, and filled the hearts of all who witnessed it with joy and consolation.

The following day George went to the parish priest and showed him his copy-book in which he had written a number of good resolutions; among them was this: "I will always wear, as a symbol of innocence, a white necktie, and will never cease to do so, unless I should have the misfortune to fall into mortal sin." The good old priest had never known a boy to make a resolution of this kind, and did not know what to say to it. George's mother, though pleased to have a fresh evidence of her son's piety, made some objection, fearing that he might appear fantastical. At length, however, she yielded to his earnest pleadings and from that day forward he always wore a little white cravat. Some of the evil-disposed among his school-fellows annoyed him with their raileries, but, as he was far from retaliating, this petty persecution did not last long, and finally they began to respect George and his cravat as much as they admired his virtues and his talents.

During the whole course of his studies our young friend never ceased to wear the symbol of the purity of his soul. On the day when, at eighteen years of age, he passed his examination for his bachelor's degree with brilliant success, all who beheld him were charmed with his noble bearing, so modest, yet so distinguished.

The war of 1870 broke out. George M— was the first to engage himself on the call to arms. He entered a corps of the Papal Zouaves of Charette, and took part in the battle which rendered this valiant legion of Christians illustrious for all time.

On the great day of the battle of Mans, 1871, a body of troops, recoiling suddenly, abandoned some important positions, leaving their artillery on the ground. Generals Coiton and Gougeard saw the danger; the retreat of the army was cut off. Advancing toward the Zouaves, they gave orders for the Papal battalion to charge the enemy, and endeavor to recover the lost positions. The battalion numbered five hundred. George occupied a place in the front rank. The brave men rushed with formidable array through the defile, amid a shower of lead and iron. Nothing arrested their advance. The enemy, alarmed at their daring, recoiled. The victorious Zouaves soon crowned the heights. The combatants now fought man to man. Cannon and artillery were soon recovered, and the Zouaves regained the positions that had been abandoned. But at what a price! Three captains, two lieutenants, and sixty Zouaves were killed, while two hundred were wounded. Among the latter was George M—. They bore him to an adjacent stable, where he passed the night in indescribable pain, borne with a courage and resignation which faith alone can give. The following morning a priest came to console the sufferers, and prepare those who must die.

Stretched on a bed of straw, the dying soldier, with great effort, raised himself to salute the priest as he entered. He begged of him the grace of the last Sacraments. The priest hastened to a neighboring Church, and soon returned with the Bread of Life.

"Monsieur l'Abbe," said the wounded man, "have the goodness to look in my knapsack, and you will find a white cravat and a chaplet. Also be so good as to place them on my arm. They are mementoes of my first communion. It is thus that I would make my last."

The young Zouave commended with as much love and fervor as he did when he first received the Holy Eucharist in his boyhood. The assistants were deeply moved as they beheld his radiant countenance. Soon his breathing became labored, his end drew near.

"We are in Bethlehem—in the manger. The crib is a sweet tomb. There is nothing I regret leaving in this life but my mother. You will console her, Monsieur l'Abbe. Tell her that her son died a Christian, and that his white cravat never received any stain but that of his blood, freely poured out for his unhappy country." Saying this, with a faint cry, the young soldier fell asleep in the arms of the priest, to wake on the Heart of Jesus.

With these touching details of her son's last moments, the chaplain sent his beloved mother, the survivors of his first

communion, so dear to him, and they are to this day preserved by her as precious relics.—Ave-Maria.

Successful Tour of the Irish Envoys.

The Irish envoys, Messrs. Dillon, O'Brien, O'Connor and others, are meeting with brilliant and substantial success in their tour of this country. Their receptions at each place have been cordial and encouraging, and the principal object of their visit, to raise funds for the further advancement of the Irish Home Rule cause, has been more successful than they had hoped for. At each city where they visited large collections were given them.

A Monument to Carlow Heroes.

The committee of the County Carlow Patriotic Association, New York, has forwarded their first instalment towards erecting a suitable monument over the martyred heroes of 1798. The graves in a corner of Carlow Graique Fair Green, where lie the remains of close on 700 brave, united Irishmen—who were slaughtered by British soldiers—the yeomen of 1798, who fell in the attack on Carlow.

FORTY-HOUR DEVOTION.

History of the Present Form of the Beautiful Worship Recalled.

The Forty-Hour Devotion which appeals so strongly to the piety and veneration of the faithful, and which is observed in all the parishes of the country at least once a year, was first introduced in its present form in Milan in the sixteenth century. Prior to that time the Blessed Sacrament was publicly exposed for the veneration of the faithful only on rare occasions; in times of public distress, or in the event of impending public calamity. The arrangement of the forty-hours' exposition in honor of the time that our Divine Saviour spent in the tomb is attributed to Father Joseph, a Capuchin, who died in Milan in 1556. In 1592 Pope Clement VIII. provided for the public and perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altars of the different churches in Rome. The Forty-Hours in one church succeeded to those in another, so that the Blessed Sacrament was exposed in some church the whole year round. The impressive ceremonies and pomp which usually accompany the inauguration of the Forty Hours eminently befit the august character of the devotion. The Church impresses upon our minds the extraordinary privilege granted to the faithful in the later times of the Church in thus permitting this constant exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. To the devoted Catholic, next to assisting at the adorable sacrifice and the Act of Holy Communion, the veneration of the Blessed Sacrament is the most fruitful and cherished spiritual exercise known to the faith. The inevitable spiritual benefits that flow from the practice, with proper disposition, of the devotion of the Forty Hours, cannot be overestimated. To those who believe in the Real Presence of our Divine Redeemer in the Sacrament of the Tabernacle nothing could be clearer than that the intense homage paid to His Infinite Love during the public exposition of His Most Sacred Body upon the altar should be rewarded with the richest blessings and graces of the most precious spiritual order.

For Catholics who give one moment's reflection to the meaning and character of the Forty Hours, there is no need at any time to urge the importance of assisting at the solemn and beautiful exercises of the devotion. Their eagerness to avail themselves of the inestimable privileges and graces offered, will not suffer them to omit or neglect so potent and attractive means of sanctification.

The Results in Germany.

The agitation for the recall of the Jesuits continues in Germany. Meetings are being held daily in various parts of the Empire to promote petitions on the subject, and there is good hope that the movement will be successful.

To love God truly one must have three hearts in one; a heart all on fire for God, a heart full of charity for his neighbor, and a heart of flint for himself.

Notes.

The soul should never tire of any combat nor abandon any exercise of piety or prayer, even though she should remain before the cross repeating Jesus, Jesus.

Ludwig Hahn's fiftieth and last volume has just been printed at Berlin. It contains all of ex-Chancellor Bismarck's utterances from 1875 to the time of his retirement from office.

There has been a massacre of Catholic converts in China during a recent Buddhist feast. The massacre was the work of a mob, for the authorities of the empire not only tolerate but protect the missionaries.

Bishop Bradley of Manchester, N. H., contemplates the establishment of a college and seminary for the higher education of the youth of that diocese. It will be conducted by the Benedictine Fathers.

BY SEVERE TESTS.

Geo. de la Motte Obtains the Highest Scholastic Honors.

How Examinations of This Kind are Conducted in the Catholic Church—Requirements of a Candidate and His Studies.

Rev. George de la Motte, the twenty-nine-year-old son of a French army general, who recently passed such flattering examination at public test at Woodstock College, Maryland, and received the highest scholastic honors in the Catholic Church believes he has an especial mission to labor among the Indians, and he will at once prepare to leave for the Rocky Mountains. He gave up high social position and prospects in civil and military life to come across the ocean for his purpose, and he insists upon going to some tribe which is degraded and without civilization. His preliminary studies were made in France, where he attracted great attention, but he came to Woodstock College several years ago to pursue his theological course.

The good showing made by the young man at his examination was especially commended by Cardinal Gibbons, who was present and took a great interest in the test.

His knowledge was shown by severe tests to be complete and at ready command upon every subject bearing upon ecclesiastical education, including branches which have even the slightest connection with it. The requisites for such arduous preparations is as necessary to go through "the grand act," by which name the test is known among Catholic students everywhere, are described to be ability, great capacity for intense study, industry and a powerful constitution. A candidate is given a year to make ready for the last orders, and at the end of that time he prepares a Latin thesis setting forth the whole Catholic faith.

The paper submitted by Mr. de la Motte covered sixty-seven printed pages, in which 278 points were treated. A board of deputation, chosen from the learned men of the Church, is selected with special reference to their skill in argument, and they take issue with the candidate upon statements in his thesis, using every resource to drive him from his position. If the ambitious scholar hesitates or is beaten in discussion his test is considered a failure.

The board which faced Mr. de la Motte was composed of Monsignor Schroeder, professor of dogmatic theology at the Catholic University, who was a pupil of the famous Cardinal Franzlin at Rome; Rev. Henry A. Brann, rector of St. Agnes' church, New York, author of "The Age of Unreason," which was published in the same binding and type as Paine's "Age of Reason," and sold as a refutation to it; Rev. Dr. P. L. Chappelle, of St. Mathew's, Washington; Monsignor de Concilio, of Jersey City; Rev. Nicholas Russo, S. J., of St. Lawrence's, New York; Rev. Luke V. McCabe, of St. Bernard's, Overbrook, Pa., and Rev. Adolph Tanquerey, of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore.

They took their places at 10 o'clock in the fine library-room at the college, sitting at separate tables on either side of a raised dais, where the candidate took his seat alone. In front of him were Cardinal Gibbons, Bishops O'Hara of Scranton, and Curtis of Wilmington, while prominent clergymen from many sections of the country filled the body of the room. All sorts of the most difficult questions were propounded by members of the board of deputation and others. Not once did the central figure of the gathering hesitate or lose his ground. The entire argument was in Latin and he spoke about as readily as native Americans use English.

A Catholic Poet.

Under the head of "Men and Women Who Write," the "Pall Mall Gazette" gives a sketch of Mr. Aubrey De Vere. The writer says: "He is a Catholic of the type (no uncommon one either) of that Howard who led England's fleet against the Armada, and whom Mr. De Vere has glorified in a fine sonnet for his brave resolve that, come what might, no foot of Parma should stain the household floors of England. Thought not a Nationalist, Mr. De Vere has also keen sympathies with Irish character and history—especially religious history."

Study of the Sacred Scriptures.

It is rumored that the Holy Father is occupied in preparing an Encyclical on the necessity of promoting Biblical students, in view, especially of current controversies, in which the authenticity and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures are called in question.

Conferred on His Death Bed.

Sir R. F. Burton, the famous Orientalist and traveler, was received into the Church on his death bed. Sir Richard owed this grace, under God, to his devoted Catholic wife.

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