

## THE MOUNTAIN HERO.

BY E. J.

"Pile the wood up higher, child; thy father and brother will be cold when they come home to-night. Ah! sweet Mother, protect them! The wind is rising, and I fear it will be a wild night in the mountain."

"Mother let us say the Rosary—then Our Lady will surely bring father and Frank home safe," said little Jane, drawing her hands from out of the folds of her kerchief.

Mother and child knelt before the fire, and as they prayed, ever and anon a wild blast of furious wind shook the little log house, and the mother would turn her gaze anxiously toward the door for fear it had been beaten in by the wind and snowdrift.

Scarcely had the cadence of the sweet "Salve Regina," sung in Jane's childish treble died away when the rich tones of Frank's voice assured them that all was well.

"A rough night, mother! Here, little one, help the old father get off his boots. Why, child, what is the matter? Why are my lamb's eyes full of tears?"

"Perhaps, father, because you forgot to bring the sugar-loaf from Simon Day's store-house," teased Frank.

"Nay, not so," said the little maid. "I had not thought of the sugar-loaf. I was afraid for these, my father. The night is wild—and, hark! even now is there a wolf at the door!"

Frank seized his gun—"Ah! Frank, do not kill the poor beast. Let him go, but let us thank Our Lady for keeping you safe."

"You make me ashamed, little sister. Yes, let us thank Our Lady."

Around the fire knelt this humble family, the light of the flames illuminating their faces and casting long shadows in the dark room. Again the childish voice was raised in prayer, and the rafters and rough walls of that rude log-cabin framed a picture worthy of a nobler setting. Apparently there was no one to appreciate its beauty, but who can doubt but that Our Lady looked down and smiled as the angel of prayer presented her with those words of thanksgiving changed.

"Into flowers in his hands, Into garlands of purple and red."

The years sped away. Dangers from wind and storm had often imperiled father and son, and as often been ward off by the prayers of the watchers by the fireside.

"Surely, Our Lady protects the mountain," said the mother.

Jane grew to fair maidenhood, and then, just as the pure flower was blooming into maturity, the Master culled the sweet mountain blossom and laid it at the feet of His Mother, Our Lady of the Rosary. Then came the first of those long-remembered events.

The people of the valley were one day awed and surprised to see a weird procession wend its way down the steep mountain path. At its head came a youth carrying a garland of evergreens, and then, just as the pure flower was blooming into maturity, the Master culled the sweet mountain blossom and laid it at the feet of His Mother, Our Lady of the Rosary. Then came the first of those long-remembered events.

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priest had visited the mountain he and Jane were little children, too young to understand. The only drawback to his happiness was that Bernard could not share the same joy.

But love is ingenious and strong; and Frank having gained a tardy and long-deferred permission from the mother, undertook to carry Bernard to the valley, to care for him during the days of instruction, and to bring him back safe after his first communion.

"I fear it is too much for thee, my lad," said the father.

"Our Lady will help me. Do thou but say the Rosary, and all will be well."

And so the feat was accomplished. With many stops and much bravery on both sides the descent was made. For Bernard, it was the first glimpse of the outside world, and he clung trembling to his valiant friend.

"Oh, there are so many people here!" he cried, affrighted. Soon, however, he became accustomed to the people, and the timid hermit-boy blossomed out into a sociable, loving lad.

The time wore on; the instructions were completed, and the great day dawned. I cannot tell you of its simple beauty, nor of the joy of the faithful.

One picture stands out. After all had received our dear Lord, Frank approached the little altar carrying Bernard in his strong, young arms. Laying him tenderly at the feet of the priest, he stooped to support the poor boy's head, and then knelt to receive the Blessed Sacrament.

Can you not imagine the picture? The people said afterwards, that even then they noticed a pale, almost unearthly look on Frank's face.

Later in the day the painful home-journey began. Willing and strong arms were offered to assist.

"I am afraid you would hurt Bernard. He is so timid. And he is used to me," said Frank, with a smile of gratitude.

"Now, you say the Rosary, Bernard," said Frank when the steep, rugged path was reached, "and we will go on bravely."

Up and up they went, till the watchers saw nothing but a speck moving along in the sunshine. Finally that was lost.

All night long the father and the holy missionary waited in the log cabin for Frank's return.

"Perhaps he has concluded to stay over night. Bernard may have been exhausted and needed him," said his father.

"My son," said the missionary, "something tells me we must go in search of him. Come!"

At the break of day they found him. In a few broken sentences he told them that Bernard was safe at home—that he had reached to come back, but that just as he reached the top of the mountain he suddenly felt unable to go farther—then he knew no more till they came.

A smile was on his face, his Rosary in his hand.

"My son, my son you have given your life," cried his father in despair.

"He that loses his life for My sake shall find it," quoted the priest.

They buried him on the spot where he had died, and in a few months the people, inspired to the thought by the missionary, erected a cross to his memory, and on its base inscribed:

"GREATER LOVE THAN THIS NO MAN HATH THAT HE LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIEND."

John, xv, 13.

Bernard died in a little while, and by his own request was buried by the side of Frank's grave.

You ask, perhaps, could it be possible that such a hero be found in so untaught, so uncivilized a region. Yes, God is all-powerful and all-seeing. He stretches His hand through time and space, and in His wisdom adorns every portion of the fair world with His heroes.—Little Messenger.

Ireland's National Flower.

The shamrock, a trifoliate-leaved plant, like the clover or oxalis, is said to have been the national emblem of Ireland since the fifth century, when St. Patrick one day used it to illustrate a sermon he was preaching upon the Trinity, and which his hearers did not seem to understand. This illustration of three leaves in one was so simple that it removed all their difficulties, and they accepted Christianity, says the Ladies' Home Journal.

Pliny tells us that serpents are never seen upon the trefolium (Shamrock), and that it prevails against the stings of insects and the bites of scorpions. If this be true, St. Patrick could have chosen no more fitting emblem for Ireland, considering that he is said to have driven all such reptiles from this island. Moore says of it:

"A type that blends The good, the friends, Love, Valor, Wit, forever Oh, the shamrock, the green immortal shamrock."

Anecdote of Sherman's Son.

A detachment of soldiers were told off to take charge of young Tom (now Father) Sherman while crossing the pontoon bridge across the Potomac when the armies of the country were coming to Washington take part in the great review there in 1865. He was then about eight years old. One of the men asked him if he expected to grow up as smart a man as his father, the general, and he promptly answered, "No!" "Why?" was the next question. "Well," he replied with the same readiness, "there are plenty other men who have grown up, and why ain't they as smart as my father?"—Philadelphia Times.

Children.

No home with young children in it should be without its "children's hour." The hour after supper cannot be used to better advantage, even by the father and mother, than to give it up to "getting acquainted with the children." Play with them, if that is their mood. What zest it gives to the merriest of papa, shares, or better yet, causes it! Or if stories or quieter games are desired, how happy and profitable may be the hour spent around the table. And then what a famous time for the little knowledge-glenners to ask

## CHRIST'S LIFE IN COLORS.

Beautiful Decorations in a Catholic Church in Chicago.

The Work Done in Oil By an Italian Artist of New Orleans—Pictures of the Church Delicately Treated By the Painter in Work of Original Conception.

Not many Catholic churches in the country and not another church in Chicago are as fortunate as Columbian's, at Paulina and Indiana streets, says the Chicago Sunday Post. This is a fine edifice itself, the pastor, Rev. Father Burke, is a man beloved by his flock, and the congregation is large, thrifty and well-satisfied. These things are of themselves enough to make any church fortunate, but St. Columbian's is especially blessed in that it has, perhaps, as fine mural decorations as exist in the West. For two years an artist of great ability has been at work upon the ceilings and the walls of the church, and he has just left them illuminated and beautified, with a great number of exquisite pictures as admirably done as devotion itself could wish, and as full of feeling and art as criticism could ask.

This artist is A. Peretti, an Italian painter of New Orleans.

The paintings are not frescoes, but are done in oil, and, as is to be expected, illustrate subjects appropriate to the local feeling. On the rounded wall, about the center of the sanctuary, is portrayed the death of the church's patron saint, Columbian, flourished in Ireland in the fourth century, and is one of that nation's favorite holy men. In Peretti's picture the aged saint, clothed in dull gray, almost white, his great snowy beard streaming over his breast, reclines in the arms of a friend, peacefully passing away to the reward of his life's long work. Coming to gather in his soul is a host of angels, crowding by degrees into the background of invisibility.

On the right of this panel tells the birth of the Saviour. There are the stable, the manger, the Mother, the wise men from the East, and the light from the magic star shining through the open portal. The decoration of the panel to the left portrays the first apparition of Christ after His death on the cross. A figure of white light is seen by the startled Magdalen as she turns from her watch of penitence and love at the mouth of the sepulchre, from which the stone has been rolled away.

Over the altar of the Virgin, at one side of the main altar, is a painting of the Annunciation. There is the angel, with uplifted hand, speaking to the maiden Mary the words that have come down so far through the centuries: "Ave Maria Gratia plena!" On the other side of the main altar, over the altar St. Joseph, is the story, in color, of the flight into Egypt, a subject essayed by artists of all nations and all times since the story of Christ has been known—the hurried departure of Joseph and Mary with the child carried in the little cart drawn by the ass. This is one of the delicately-treated pictures in the Church.

In the center of the ceiling is Peretti's largest and best piece. It is the ascension into heaven of Christ, with the Apostles looking up at the glorified figure from below. The dimensions of this piece is 20 feet by 24 feet. The artist has handled his light and shade with consummate skill in this piece. At the four corners of the ceiling are the figures of the four Evangelists—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

A very fine painting indeed, is that of the agony in the garden. The attitude of the figure is that of the real agony, the lines of the face are those of real pain, and the entire study has in it so much truth, so much honesty, so much real force and quality of genius that its beauties grow the more the longer it is regarded.

In the forefront of the ceiling is the representation of the Apostles in the room when the spirit descends to them. This picture is the weakest one in the collection. It is quite large, 15 by 28 feet, and the artist seems to have fallen a trifle from the high standard expressed in the other works.

At the east of the ceiling is seen St. Peter and St. John in act of performing their first miraculous cure on the body of the cripple. The opposite piece is the stoning of St. Stephen, who was the first martyr in the cause of Christianity. About the organ loft are the figures of the six saints—Patrick, Catherine of Siena, Barbara, Cecilia, Rose of Lima and St. Thomas. The face of the latter is a likeness of Father Burke, the pastor.

Peretti's work is original in conception. He has not borrowed from the other or greater painters in the delineation of his subjects—so many or, in fact, all of them so old and so widely dealt in by hundreds of artists in Europe. The church, with its new addition of art, has now a notable interior. The cost of the work was \$10,000.

The Immaculate Heart of Mary.

We can only dream and picture, and faintly imagine the wondrous simplicity of life within that holy house of Nazareth. Angels have not dared to whisper; never can it be written in human words; the pens of the Evangelists have failed before the task of telling in detail how Jesus grew in wisdom and in age, and in grace with God and men. And yet it has been written—and written for our instruction in the volume that was worthy of such a record—it was written upon the Immaculate Heart of Mary. "His Mother," says the Evangelist, when he was about to leave unwritten the story of the life of Nazareth, "His Mother," he adds as if to show where the deficiency might be supplied, "His Mother kept all these words in her heart."

Christian Marriage.

Christian marriages, as the world has known it, is the creation of the Catholic Church, taught by her divine founder. Typifying the union of Christ and His Church, matrimony, raised to a sacrament, rose above the marriage of the heathen, and far above the ideas of marriage that prevailed among the most cultivated of heathen nations. By Christian marriage women were exalted from the position of a slave or a chattel to a higher and nobler status.

## SHE SAVED DAMIETTA.

Courage of the Wife of the Saintly Louis IX.

When Louis IX. of France, the saintly king, was 19 years of age, his mother chose for him, according to the custom of the time, a wife in the person of the Princess Margaret, daughter of the Count of Provence, a girl herself of about 15 years. The marriage was celebrated with greatest rejoicings, and, which is not always the case in royal weddings, was to prove a holy and happy union.

Louis loved his girl-wife most tenderly, and she found in him the sum of her earthly desires and admiration. She was a girl educated with more care than most princesses of her time, but no record of extraordinary talents possessed by her has come down to us; her reputation is solely that of a devoted mother, the worthy helpmeet of a saint.

When the great Crusade was preached the king took the cross, and Margaret prepared to follow her husband to the Holy Land. She was at Damietta, which town the king had entrusted to her government, when St. Louis was taken prisoner at Saint John d'Arce. Damietta was besieged by the Saracens, the king a prisoner, and Margaret was in agony of terror; for this town was the king's last stronghold, and if it were lost not only would his last resource be cut off, but what would become of her if she fell into the hands of the infidel? There remained near her an old chevalier, nearly 80 years of age, and one day when her hopes of holding out seemed vain, Margaret fell on her knees before him, praying him to grant her a request. The old knight swore to do so. "Sir Chevalier," said the queen, "by the faith you owe me, I conjure you to cut off my head if Damietta is taken by the Saracens."

"I intended to do so," replied the chevalier, looking up may well believe with admiration as well as respect on his young queen, who knew so well how to prefer death to such a fate as awaited her at the hands of the brutal enemy.

It was not many hours after this that Louis was born to the queen, whom she called Tristram, because of the sorrow into which he was born.

Margaret by her courage preserved Damietta for the king, and it was through her that the ransom of Saint Louis was finally effected.

After the king's and queen's return to France Margaret devoted herself to religious duties, built convents and made pilgrimages, and made France her debtor by persuading the saint king to remain on the throne when he desired to become a monk, for a monarch such as he the country could not have easily replaced.

She outlived her husband and all of her children but four, and died at the age of 66 in the convent of the Cordeliers de Saint Clare, which she herself founded.

It is interesting to learn that the great king, the St. Louis whom France loves to honor, had for a mother and wife women whose strength and piety must have so increased his own, such a mother as Blanche of Castile, and for a wife Margaret of Provence.—Irish Catholic Dublin.

Our Catholic Youth.

The position occupied by the Catholic youth is one of great temptation. The children of the world are wise in their generation, and many are the snares laid by them to entrap those who seek to walk in the narrow pathway. The Catholic religion is not a religion of ease; it is the religion of activity, of zeal of labor, ceaseless and untiring. The Saviour wore the crown of thorns—why should we seek the roses? To-morrow, the strenuous day of repentance, give to-day to pleasures; to-morrow devote to religion. "Now is the day of salvation," says the inspired volume. Which will ye follow, men, and maidens, the sublime and beautiful faith of your fathers, that faith which bears in it the seal of heaven, that faith which is eternal as its Founder, or will ye still continue to worship the pleasures, the riches, the honors of this world—idols, all of them, perishable and fleeting?—Chimes.

Be Always Beginning.

Never think that you can relax, or that you have attained the end. If we think ourselves more than beginners, it is a sign that we have hardly yet begun. There is no security for perseverance except in always advancing. To stand still is impossible. The past is no guarantee for the future. All the justice of the just man is gone in the day in which he falls, and all his past obedience is no security against present transgression. Only present fidelity from moment to moment is security for the future. What we have done as yet is little compared with what remains to do. Let us hear how an Apostle speaks of perseverance: "Brethren, forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth to those that are before, I press towards the mark, to the prize of the supernatural vocation of God in Christ Jesus."

Baptisms of Saints in Ireland.

Dr. Healy points out that many instances might be given from the lives of Irish saints to show that it was customary from the earliest times to baptize the faithful in the wells near the churches, which thus not unnaturally acquired a character of special sanctity. For instance, the great St. Columba was baptised at Temple Douglas, that is, the Church of the Black Stream—it was sometimes darkened by the floods which flowed quite near the sacred edifice. We are told in like manner that St. Finnian of Clonard, the "tutor of the saints of Ireland," was baptised by St. Alban at the place where the streams of two fountains met and on account of the limpid purity of the water, he was baptised by the name of Finnach, the Child of the Limpid Fountain, and so on.

Lecturers Most in Demand.

The good effect of the Catholic summer school, that was held in New London last August, is seen in the increased number of Catholic lectures that have been given this winter in various cities. The lecturers most in demand are persons who took a prominent part in making the summer school the success it proved to be at the first gathering.

True Valor.

He's truly valiant that can suffer The worst that man breathe, and make his wrongs His outcries—to wear them like his raiment carelessly.

And never prefer his injuries to his heart, To bring it into danger. —Shakespeare.

True Friendship.

He is the truest friendship whose high calm hath relieved his dark face, and who upborne by his strong presence thins our weariness. Then after silence and the soothing balm of blessed tears, he best with thee may mourn To love once down. Go on thy lonely way, Turn thee a face of smiles to the world's gaze Or else sink down upon life's thorns and die When love goes by. —Kate Field's Washington.

When Love Goes By.

When love goes by what does it leave? Is there no prayer to pray, no suit to sue? Is there he be fed beyond the wintry sea, Will not his errand steps come back to me? Will not his answer to my heart's low cry, Though he goes by?

Nay, sweet, upon thy yearning lips command The seal of silence. Reach no asking hand To love once down. Go on thy lonely way, Turn thee a face of smiles to the world's gaze Or else sink down upon life's thorns and die When love goes by. —Kate Field's Washington.

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