

## JANE'S ROSARY.

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

"Mother, let us say the Rosary—then Our Lady will surely bring them and Frank home safe," said little Jane, drawing her beads 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 would shake the house, and the mother would turn her gaze anxiously towards the door for fear it had been beaten in by wind and snow-drift.

Scarcely had the cadence of 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 they 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 no thought of the sugar-loaf. I was afraid for thee, my father. The night is wild—and dark! even now there is 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 flame 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 the 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 hand.

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 maternity, 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, then the father bearing on his shoulders the rude coffin which enclosed all that remained of his beloved child. Supporting himself with a staff the father carried alone and unaided, the precious burden. Behind walked the mother and son and the few dwellers of the mountains. The ground was covered with snow, the air keen and bitter; but those hardy mountaineers walked with heads uncovered in the presence of the silent dead. On and on came the simple procession till it reached the old churchyard, and there was laid to rest the body of the sweet child of the mountains.

Again the years flew by, and again the father bore his dead to the last resting place. Now it was the mother, and the same weird procession wended its way painfully down the mountain side. Henceforth the lonely man and his son must face the dangers of storm and night to return alas! to the deserted fireside of an empty home.

On the other side of a mountain, in a wild, desolate spot, lived a widow and her only child, a crippled boy. The father had died some years before, but the woman from living so long alone shrank from contact with her fellow-man. A strange woman—yes, and made strange by this life of isolation.

Frank and his father often climbed the rugged mountain path, to urge her for the sake of her boy Bernard, to move down into the valley settlement, or, if she preferred the mountain at least to come nearer where they lived.

During these conversations Bernard's eyes would shine and his whole face be lit up with hope. But no, the woman was inflexible, and

Frank's heart would melt with pity as he saw the light fade from the patient eyes, and the poor lad fall wearily on his rude couch.

"I will do something for the boy," was Frank's resolve. But what could he do? True to the teaching of his mother and the example of his little sister, he turned to Our Lady for help. She would show him some way by which he could lighten the burden of pain laid so heavily on the poor lad. The opportunity soon came. The good word spread throughout the country-side that a holy priest, urged on by zeal for souls, had come to this remote region to gather and tend the scattered lambs of the Fold.

Frank's parents, as we know, were devout Catholics, clinging to our Holy Faith with fervor, and implanting the same precious gift in the hearts of their children.

Bernard's mother was nothing; and beyond a little curiosity, no feeling could be aroused in her narrow soul by the advent of the missionary. With Bernard it was different. From the moment Frank had resolved to devote himself to the boy, the one had been master, the other pupil, in the sacred school of Jesus Crucified; and the poor boy found the strength he longed for in the example held up before him, and the love for which his lonely heart craved in the service of Our Lady, in whom he had a true Mother.

Now the Missionary had come. Frank was at last to make his First Communion. Grown man as he was, he had never had that happiness, for when last a 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 his 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 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 break of day they found him. In a few broken sentences he told them that Bernard was safe at home—that he had turned to come back, but that just as he reached the top he felt unable to go farther—that 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 loseth 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.

Protestants are fast lapsing into heathenism. Protestantism no longer represents vital force of appreciable magnitude among the people. The Congregational churches held a convention in Boston in the first week of this month and this is from the report of the committee the condition of the church: "But a small percentage of the people of our agricultural towns now have any connection with religious institutions. They seldom or never attend a religious meeting, unless it be a funeral. They are under no moral or religious instruction. They live outside of all visible influences of faith and worship. In many of our towns not 10 per cent of the nominal Protestant people are ever seen in the church at the Sunday worship. Some statistics taken in New Hampshire and Vermont show that people living a mile from the meeting-house seldom visit it, and those two miles or more away, not one in a hundred. Large districts are thus destitute of all influences which come to the life of men from Christian worship and teaching. A virtual heathenism thus exists in a large portion of rural New England, which the churches are not reaching and by present methods cannot reach."

The will is the home of the affections. It is the seat of that Divine gift, love, which keeps the affections turned on God and on the neighbor for God's sake. It is the furnace of that heavenly fire, which, fanned by faith, and fed by all the forces of religion, shoots upwards to Him who enkindled it, and gaining new strength in His embrace sweeps down and out over land and water, clapping in its bright red arms friends and enemies without distinction, every child of Adam from him who sits in the chair of Peter sending blessings to the nations, to the savage in the jungle voraciously feeding on quivering Christian flesh. Such a faculty needs care, supreme care. Will-culture is pre-eminently the great work of education. Bright intellects in myriads have gone down to hell, a good will never.—Mt. Rev. Dr. Feehan.

Can anyone say on any day that he has done his whole duty, that he has done all that he ought to have done, that he has uttered no hasty word, entertained no wrong thought, or passed no harsh judgment upon his fellow-man? Alas, such is not the experience of many who yet confidently rest in the assurance that they have been God's children, and that no one shall pluck them out of His hand, nor separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. Alas, no; we must confess that we are unprofitable servants, that we are both ignorant and sinful, needing daily and hourly cleansing in the blood shed upon Calvary, and we must continue to do this all through life's journey.

A kind of reaction has already set in against the theory in medicine that many, if not all, of the diseases which human flesh is heir to are caused by minute organisms or their poisonous secretions. As a logical result of this theory, the remedies were sought in substances which would kill the microbes or counteract their pernicious influence, because they are always present in great numbers in diseased tissue. To a large extent treatment still aims at this, but the medical fraternity has come to realize that the destruction of germs is often very difficult, frequently impossible, and at all times so troublesome that if we would have perfect sanitation we must prepare to spend much of our lives in great discomfort. The industrious, untiring microbe hunter has discovered germs everywhere and in everything. Bacteriologists now incline to the belief that microbes, so far from being harmful, are actually beneficial. In other words, microbes, taken in proper doses, assist the natural processes.

Mexico has decreed that train robbers captured in the act shall be shot forthwith at the scene of crime. There may be disadvantages attached to a course so rigorous, but as they all fall to the lot of the bandit it is plainly his duty to come forward and enter what ever protest may be necessary.

## ST. COLMAN.

It may be taken for granted that pious Catholics everywhere make it an important part of their daily devotions to invoke not only their own particular patron Saints, but also those of their parish and diocese. To practice this very simple and useful devotion with pleasure and profit it is evident that some knowledge of the life and virtues of the Saint is desirable, and even necessary. But, unfortunately, it is true to say that regarding the great and venerable men who founded our dioceses, or rather built those churches and monastic houses from which, as from a centre or nucleus, the diocese was in course of time formed and extended, we possess but a very limited amount of accurate historical information. The same thing may be said of the patron Saints of parishes. When one undertakes to write the life of some one or other of those great and holy men who were an honor to Ireland he finds this in many cases authentic records and reliable materials are almost, if not entirely, wanting. In such instances the hagiologist has a difficult task to perform, as he must be on his guard to resist the temptation of drawing on his imagination, while at the same time he must try to supply the reader with interesting and useful information. But while he may lament over the paucity of his facts, he may console himself with the hope that he may be able to make such use of those which, after much labor and research, he has accumulated as to render his narrative both instructive and interesting. Take, for example, St. Colman, first Bishop and patron of the diocese of Down. Taking up the Martyrology of Tallaght we find at June 7, the day on which his Feast is celebrated in the diocese, the following words:—"VII. Idus. Moolochus Dromore Moir." This expression, the meaning of which is obvious to every Gaelic scholar, may be translated—"My dear little Colman of Dromore." Our Catholic forefathers of the early ages evidently loved the man of God and sought a ruin. Now, who is this Colman, where was his birthplace, to what sect or family did he belong, where was he educated, who were his friends and associates; what was his work and mission; and how did he fulfil it? These are some of the questions which we are inclined to ask, and which we wish to see solved.

In the year 1857 Dr. Matthew Kelly, then Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the College of Maynooth, published an edition of the Martyrology of Tallaght. The bald, dry catalogue of the calendar, he thought, would be very uninteresting to most people, and therefore he added brief notices of the patron Saints of Ireland. After giving a few particulars regarding our St. Colman up to the time in which it is believed he founded the monastery, he ends by stating that "no account of his subsequent history or death has been preserved." This assertion, of opinion, being rather disappointing and unwelcome to a client of the Saint, seemed to require investigation. But where was correct information to be obtained? The solution of the question was found by referring to the Acts Sanctorum of the Bollandists. It is generally agreed that those Acts Sanctorum, or Lives of Saints, are exceedingly trustworthy, and are able and carefully written and composed. For research, accuracy, and knowledge obtained from the best sources, no other work of a similar character and dealing with such a subject has ever surpassed those Acts Sanctorum, or Lives of Saints. On referring to the volume containing the June Lives, we find at June 7 a biographical sketch of our Saint with the criticism of the writer on the manuscript materials before him. At the very introduction the critical author lays it down as his belief that the Irish have so many Colmans that they themselves hardly know how to distinguish them. He tells us that little is known of the first Bishop of Dromore except that he was a Saint. This is certainly rather disappointing, but it tends to corroborate the statement of Dr. Kelly. We are informed, also, that up to the 18th century the See of St. Colman was almost unknown. "Sedes Episcopalis nague ad seculum decimum textum penitus ignota." The same authority goes on to say the name (Colman) was vague, the age doubtful, the life full of fables—"Nomen varium, ætas dubia, acta fabulosa." Such severe criticism as this was well calculated to render hopeless the effort to establish the name and fame of our dear Colman on a solid historical basis. It is not to be supposed, however, that there is not a real substratum of truth underlying the stories told about the saint's early training, and wonderful monastic life of Colman as they are found in the Salamancan Manuscript. The difficulty lies in separating the good grain from the chaff, truth from fiction. Colman was certainly descended from some one of

the leading families of the province of Ulster in the year 1100, and was the founder of many powerful families. The date and place of Colman's birth are unknown, and as such matters are then used in Ireland we have not the pleasure of knowing the names of his father and mother. There is good reason to believe that our Saint was born some time in the second half of the 11th century, while St. Patrick was still living. The general opinion is that St. Colman founded his Monastery in the commencement of the 12th century, the precise date being altogether uncertain. In "Biscuan Ecclesiastical History" the date assigned is 514. St. Myles, Bishop and Patron of Connor, is thought to have died on the 2nd of September of that same year; and, as it was by the advice of that venerable old man Colman was induced to select the site of his intended monastery in Magh Cobha, on the northern bank of the Lough. We may reasonably infer that this important event occurred some time previously to the death.

We are informed that young Colman was sent by his parents to the School of Noendrum, or Inis Mochoil, in Lough Cuan, now Strangford Lough, and entrusted to the care of the learned and saintly Abbot Mochoil, who founded his monastic establishment in a small island near the western shore of the estuary. This little island soon became a great educational centre for the surrounding territory of Dalradia. In the Tripartite Life we were told that St. Patrick, in one of his journeys from Gaul, found the boy Mochoil employed in herding swine. "Patrick preached to him, baptised him, and gave him a Gospel and Mass-chalice." Later on he gave him a crozier which was said to have fallen from Heaven. Stripped of its quaint paraphrase, the story merely tells that the youth was converted and instructed by the Apostle, chosen for the ministry, ordained priest, and later on consecrated Bishop. It is thought that this promising youth, who so readily embraced the Gospel, and under the guidance of St. Patrick soon rose to the highest grade of the sacred ministry, was the grandson of Myles, under whom the future Apostle of Ireland served for six years as a subdeacon. St. Mochoil, or Goghan, as he was also called, presided over his monastery as abbot, was the chief spiritual director of students in his school, and ruled over the surrounding district with episcopal authority. Among the most distinguished men who studied under Mochoil were Columba of Down and Finan of Morville. This island sanctuary, to which many a pilgrim flocked his barque over the waters of Lough Cuan in the days of old when Ireland was the home of sanctity and learning, is now quite forgotten. It is still, indeed, an object of interest to the scholar and the antiquarian, and some traces of the former importance are to be found in the remains of a rotting tower and a triple wall surrounding the foundation of its ancient church. It is highly probable that Colman's parents and St. Mochoil were well acquainted with each other. They were all natives of Dalradia, and may have lived in the same neighborhood. It is likely, then, that the father of our Saint had an intimate acquaintance with St. Mochoil, and well knew the high character of the man to whom he entrusted the education of his son. We are told that the boy made great progress in his studies, and that he was remarkable for his spirit of obedience. One of the objections made by the Bollandist writer to the stories told of the boyhood is the miracle—"puerilis miracula honorata." It is said that on one occasion the Abbot told Colman to break up the rock which stood in the way of the brethren going to pasture, and that in obedience to his master he made the sign of the Cross over the rock which immediately broke up into fragments. The Abbot then told him to cut the plough into the sea, and Colman with the aid of his angels succeeded. The fragments were united into the long isthmus called Colman's rock. It appears that Colman did not finish his studies at Noendrum, but was sent for study the Scriptures under the guidance of the learned St. Illie. Having completed his studies at Enniscorthy, he again for his native Dalradia and paid a visit to his old friend and preceptor at Noendrum. St. Mochoil died in 496, just three years after the death of St. Patrick, and hence we may infer that the visit of St. Colman took place some time previously. As to the circumstances connected with Colman's ordination and consecration we have no reliable information. One of the stories told of him in the Salamancan MS. is that he went three several times to Rome at various seasons, that in Rome he was consecrated Bishop, and that thence he brought back with him some relics of the Apostles. In connection with this story it is said that returning from

Rome he was met by St. Patrick, who was then in Ireland, and that they went together to the site of the future city of Down. The story is, of course, a pure fiction, but it is interesting to note that St. Patrick was still living in the second half of the 11th century, while St. Colman was still living. The general opinion is that St. Colman founded his Monastery in the commencement of the 12th century, the precise date being altogether uncertain. In "Biscuan Ecclesiastical History" the date assigned is 514. St. Myles, Bishop and Patron of Connor, is thought to have died on the 2nd of September of that same year; and, as it was by the advice of that venerable old man Colman was induced to select the site of his intended monastery in Magh Cobha, on the northern bank of the Lough. We may reasonably infer that this important event occurred some time previously to the death.

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