

### Father Helving's Swan

(By Marion Ames Taggart.)

The holidays were over and the boys had come back to St. Oswald's to face with more or less cheerfulness the longest and hardest part of the school year.

The day was cold, and a knot of the students were standing just on one foot, and then on the other, discussing with no small disgust a new boy who had arrived during their absence.

No one knew whence he had come, not even those who spent holidays at school. All that could be learned was that he was there—a self-evident fact—poor, dull and unsocialable.

He was a pinched lad, his clothes were unmistakably cast off by another, and larger boy, and when he was spoken to he shrank and trembled like a frightened animal, answering incoherently.

He was a mystery, and none of the lads were too well pleased to have added to their numbers, and they treated him with the careless unintentional cruelty that well-fed, healthy boys sometimes show to one who is dull and unable to join in their sports.

There was a rumor about in the school that the secret of his appearance had leaked out, and Jim Davis knew it, hence the group standing in the playground, gathered to hear the tale with all the eagerness a story calls forth.

"Why, he's a perfect dumb skull," Dick Hobson was saying with infinite scorn. "When I asked him if he wanted to have a catch in the corridor, he said: 'Can't play, sir.' Great Scott! can't play ball, and says sir! What's the use of Father Helving telling us to be kind and play with him if the fellow can't play?"

"It's my belief he can't read either," said Ed Willis. "You see he's not in any classes, and I asked him if he wanted one of my books, and he got as red as fire, and just shook his head, and kind of slunk off."

"Oh, he's Dutch!" said Jim Regan, with the note of scorn in his voice which the mention of a foreigner often calls forth in youngsters born on American soil. "Maybe he can't read English letters."

"Well, I'd like to know where Father Helving picked up such a noodle," said Dick Hobson. "We don't want such stuff at St. Oswald's. Jim Davis knows, he'll tell us. And here he comes," added Ed Willis, as a big boy sauntered towards them.

"Yes, I heard where he came from, as much as any one knows," he replied to the questions assailing him as he came up. "I won't tell how I know, but I heard that he was found outside the school gate most starved and frozen, and had not enough clothes to call clothes. And Father Helving took him in, and now he's going to keep him because the fellow has not anyone belonging to him, and Father Helving's going to try to make something of him, but I guess he'll have a lively time trying to do it, for he is the stupidest thing I ever saw, and if the story's true, he's nothing but a beggar."

"Well, I don't mind that," said Dick Hobson, easily, "because he's got a good chance to be president when he stops begging."

"I don't know how you make that out," said Jim Regan, "seems to me it takes a lot of begging to get an office."

"No, it don't; it takes a lot of dicker-ing," said Ed. "You take my money, and I'll take your office, that's what the deal is, and beggars are not in it."

"Oh, bother politics!" broke in Dick. "Don't be so smart, fellows. What I say about is that it is nobody's fault to be poor, and some of our fathers came over here poor enough, goodness knows. But this kid—Hans—he's so dumb and scared that he's not worth his keep, and if Father Helving wants to take a boy for charity I wish he'd take one with something in him, who'd be a credit to St. Oswald's."

In spite of this expression of opinion Hans stayed, and went about the school with the same frightened dullness as at first. He shrank from contact with his fellows, who tried to treat him kindly, as obedience and charity demanded, but the effort was not successful, the boys are not good at concealing their feelings, and, as Dick said, "Hans was so dumb."

But Father Helving saw promise in the delicate face, and dreamy blue eyes, and hoped for the good effort of food and kindness in removing what was evidently to him the result of starvation and cruelty. So persistently he trusted to making something of poor Hans that one of the older boys remarking that Father Helving was looking for his ugly duckling to turn a swan any day, Hans was henceforth called by the school on the sly, "Father Helving's swan."

St. Oswald's was to give a Twelfth Night concert, and great excitement prevailed, for a large audience was promised, and the proceeds were to refurbish the school hall.

If there was one thing the St. Oswald boys gloried in more than another it was their soprano, Will Ford, whose voice was famous in the neighboring city, and who was to sing the solos in a difficult cantata which was to be given on the night of the concert, and for which the boys had been trained by Herr Baumeister, the music teacher, for weeks before the holidays, and every day since their return. What was their horror to learn two days before the concert that Will Ford was down with tonsillitis, and all chance of his singing in the cantata was out

of the question.

The news came while they were at rehearsal, during which no one noticed that Hans, the swan, was present, his cheeks flushed, and eye bright, his whole face transfigured by the music to which he was listening.

When the messenger announcing Will's illness had delivered his tidings, Herr Baumeister struck a false chord with his left hand, and his right clutched his hair tragically. "Tis no use, no use," he exclaimed. "Oh, what luck!"

The boys sat with speechless horror, taking in the fact that their entertainment was ruined. No one observed Hans creeping towards the piano, his head erect, his cheeks crimson. "I can, mein Herr," he said simply.

"You can, you can what?" asked the big German, in his booming bass.

"Sing Will's part. I heard you play it," replied Hans.

The boys laughed, in spite of their despair, but the professor frowned. "Vere haf you dis music face bidden?" he asked, raising his hand for silence, and surveying with experienced eye the boy's altered visage, recognizing the look it bore.

"You can sing? Goot! Begin!" he struck the opening chord of Will's first solo.

A little timidly, but gaining courage as he went on in the delight of the melody, Hans began. Such a voice, high and true and sweet, with a quality quite indescribable, but which made even the boys who were not musical wish they were where they could cry unseem.

The song ended, a murmur of applause arose, and the boys remarked that Will Ford was not in it with this ugly duckling of Father Helving's, who was not merely turning out a swan, but a nightingale.

As to Herr Baumeister, being a German, and not ashamed of emotion, and a musician who most necessarily feels the tears run down into his big beard, and taking Hans in his arms he kissed him on both cheeks, breaking into enthusiastic praise in German, English not only being too cold but quite unattainable in the excitement of the moment.

And so Hans sang at the concert, and everyone found words inadequate for the praise of his marvellous voice. There was one thing the wait could do, and do well, with something like genius, for in his slender frame had been lodged the divine gift of music.

Stimulated by the admiration he received, Hans came out of his shell of shyness, and he proved he could do many other things besides sing, though he was above all things a musician.

People flocked on Sunday afternoons to St. Oswald's chapel at Vespers to hear the boy's soprano, and his mates became more proud of him than even of the pitcher of the nine, or their crack oarsman, although one could send in such curves, and the other could pull a stroke that could not be beaten.

And Father Helving was well pleased that his charity had been so well disposed, and he smiled with satisfaction over Hans' appropriate nickname, "Father Helving's swan."

### LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR.

The First Reception of Members Into the Community in This Country.

Rev. Bishop McDonnell, of Brooklyn, officiated last Monday, the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, at the first ceremony ever performed in the United States of the reception of postulants into the order of the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Heretofore all candidates for this order have been compelled to go to France for their reception of the habit and it was at the mother house in France that they underwent their novitiate. The provincial house in the Brooklyn diocese, at Bushwick and DeKalb avenues, has been considered the mother house here, although not officially bearing that title. On the same grounds are the buildings for the Home for the Aged. It was in one of these buildings, the little brick chapel, that Bishop McDonnell officiated last Monday.

Only the inmates of the home, 400 white-haired men and women, many over 90 years of age, were permitted to be present besides the 20 black-robed nuns of the order. The ceremonies, which lasted two hours, were most impressive. At their conclusion the eleven postulants prostrated themselves on the floor before the altar. Four sisters of the order appeared carrying a large black robe and spread it over the eleven postulants. While the latter lay beneath the robe, shut out from the world, they repeated their vows, and the 20 sisters present chanted Latin prayers.

Bishop McDonnell made an address explaining how the Pope had granted special permission to have the ceremony performed here.

### BISHOP SWEENEY, OF ST. JOHN, N. B. DEAD.

The Right Rev. John Sweeney, D. D., Bishop of St. John, N. B., and dean of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Canada, is dead at St. John. He was born in Clones, County Monaghan, Ireland, on May 12, 1821, and in his youth went with his parents to St. John, where he began his education at the grammar school. He commenced his ecclesiastical studies at St. Andrew's College, Prince Edward Island, and completed them at Laval University, Quebec, where he was ordained in September, 1844. On April 15, 1860, he was consecrated Bishop of St. John.

## GREAT GUNS AT PAN-AMERICAN

### Uncle Sam Will Show Mammoth Coast Defenders at the Buffalo Exposition.

It has sometimes been said by unthinking people that the seacoast cities of the United States are not well defended. A flood of new light will be let into such gloomy minds by the Ordnance exhibit of the War Department at the Pan-American Exposition. When the Exposition opens for its six months' season at Buffalo on May 1 of this year, the early visitor will find the largest and most powerful guardians of our seacoasts ever exhibited by the United States Government. Even the smaller of the two great new guns in the Government exhibit at the Exposition will be larger than any ever before displayed by our Uncle Samuel.

Captain Peter C. Harris, who represents the War Department, in charge of the entire war exhibit, has been engaged actively for months upon his great work of collecting the newest display of the kind ever made in this country. It was an absurd question perhaps that I asked when I inquired if his exhibits would be ready on May 1, as though there were any other alternative for a soldier. The Captain looked reprovingly at me.

But of the guns—great guns, indeed; big around as a locomotive boiler, thirty odd feet long, with a more savage muzzle than ever coughed destruction upon any hostile fleet; built with the accuracy of a watch; so delicate in adjustment that a little finger may traverse the gun, thus moving a weight of nearly half a million pounds, yet a machine to spout a volcano blast and to create an earthquake at the will of man!

The big gun of which I speak is a United States Army twelve-inch breech-loading rifle, model of 1895, mounted upon a disappearing carriage. Its weight, stripped of everything, even the breech block, is 115,000 pounds. Its total length is 36 88-100 feet. The maximum diameter at the breech is 44.5 inches. It throws an armor piercing shot weighing 1,000 pounds, the length of which is three and one-half feet. It also throws a projectile, an armor piercing shell weighing 1,000 pounds, four feet long, carrying a bursting charge of 39.4 pounds of gun cotton. The charge of powder is 240 pounds of smokeless or 490 pounds of brown prismatic powder. The muzzle velocity of the projectiles under the above conditions is 2,300 feet per second, with a maximum pressure per square inch of 37,000 pounds. The muzzle energy is 38,071 foot tons. The muzzle is 30.9 inches, at 1,000 yards 28.5 inches, at 2,500 yards 25.5 inches and at 3,500 yards 23.5 inches. The total weight of the gun and carriage is 477,959 pounds. The carriage is twenty-five feet in diameter at the base, and the gun when in firing position is seventeen feet above the base of the carriage. When the shot is fired, the recoil causes the mechanism to lower the gun seven and one-half feet, behind the parapet. The gun has an accuracy of aim for about eight miles, and the extreme range is about double that distance.

As I have said, guns of this type have never before been exhibited by the United States Government, and

States have been engaged.

The Ordnance exhibit will show the historical development of ordnance in the United States, a gun representing every type adopted by the United States and showing the evolution of guns, mortars and howitzers. Among the howitzers will be one made in 1733. There will also be thirty or forty trophy guns, displayed according to period of capture. A novel feature will be a trophy fountain, representing a bursting shell, with water spouting from its crevices. This will be mounted on a pile of projectiles, surrounded by trophy guns.

The largest guns mounted in any of our seacoast batteries during the war of 1812 were twenty-four pounders, the diameter of bore being less than six inches and the weight of guns 5,500 pounds. They were a little over ten feet long, and the powder charge was six and eight pounds of black powder. They were mounted upon wooden carriages. In 1820 the thirty-two pounder, with a caliber of 6.41 inches, using a charge of eight to ten pounds of black powder, was adopted, and in 1831 the forty-two pounder, with a caliber of seven inches and using ten to fourteen pounds of black powder, came into use. In 1844 the eight and ten inch Columbiads fired a shot weighing sixty-five pounds and used a charge of ten to fifteen pounds of black powder. The ten-inch shot weighed 120 pounds, and the powder charge was eighteen and twenty pounds.

In 1861 the first fifteen-inch Rodman gun was cast. These guns were smoothbores of cast iron. The process of manufacture was evolved by General Rodman, who, to prevent injuries from strains produced by cooling castings from the exterior, cast these guns on a hollow core and cooled by a stream of water or air passing through the core. Rodman's fifteen-inch gun fired a shot weighing 428 pounds with a charge of forty pounds of black powder and was the first great gun introduced in modern times in any service. Just before the Civil War rifled muskets and guns began to displace smoothbores. Captain Parrott's rifle

was in operation at all times during the Exposition, one station being located at the Government building on the grounds and the other station some miles away, probably at Fort Porter.

The Military Academy at West Point has never been represented at any previous exposition. A very complete and interesting exhibit, showing history, curriculum, plant of the Academy, its work and workings, will constitute a part of the War Department exhibit. The enclosure of the West Point exhibit will have the form and appearance of regular cadet barracks, the top of the partition showing battlements, with a tower at each corner. A committee of professors of the Military Academy has been appointed by the superintendent of the Academy to prepare this exhibit. C. W. Larned, Professor of Drawing, who is a member of the committee, has recently sent Captain Harris a plan of this feature.

In the Quartermaster's section will be shown paintings, photographs and drawings illustrating the Army Transport service. Uniforms of the army at different periods from the Revolution to the present day will be exhibited on about forty lay figures.

The entire exhibit of the War Department under Captain Harris will be of a most entertaining character, as the Captain has visited all the arsenals of the country, gathering such things as to him seemed of public interest and value in order to make an entirely new and attractive exhibit.

### FRENCH MISSIONARIES.

Proof of the Vigorous Survival of Religion in France.

They are everywhere—in Turkey and China, in farther Asia and in Africa, in Madagascar and in Egypt, in Palestine and Persia, wherever the name of Christ is preached.

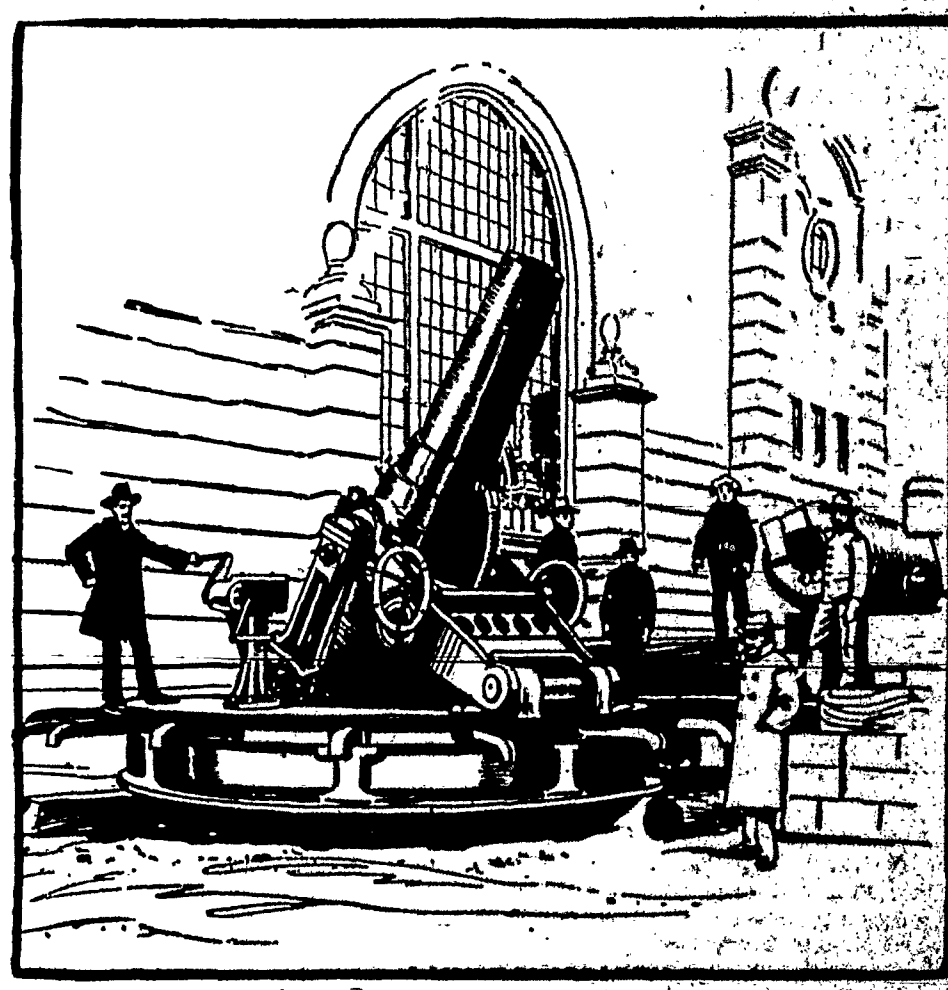
The Society for Foreign Missions at Paris, (Société des Missions Étrangères) rightly opens this glorious catalogue of martyrs designated with 1,200 priests, nearly all laboring in India, Indo-China, China, Japan, Corea and Thibet. Founded in 1663, long before the thought of foreign missions had entered the heart of Protestantism, this noble institution has sent, since 1660, more than 10,000 priests to the Orient. Seventy martyrs are written on its Sacred Book, and of these two were canonized by formal sentences for the crime of being Christians. Yet it counts 349 young clerics in the famous seminary in Rue du Bac, Paris, who will take the place of those who the whirlwind of pagan revolution in China has lately destroyed. The society has twenty-eight great prelates and thirty-three Archbishops and Bishops. Are not these figures enough to prove the vigorous survival of religion in France? Here is the material for some writer of genius who will write us a Catholic work after the style of "People of Michel," and show us what marvelous power the great heart of France is still capable of. These missionaries are men "born in the purple." They are plain men of France. But they know how to labor, to love, and to die the highest good of humanity. Soul, the future, their sacrifice, the two that profane men would never return to this high realm of the nations of the earth. The field of Louis Remy de la France, in the field of the Oriental missions, service at Combarieu, and in China, in the province of Szechuan, where they have been 70 establishments, with a large priory.

The Christian Brothers, who characterized the school of the day as ragtime evidently meant to Protestant music, and right. All real church work was done by Catholic missionaries, and only by Catholic missionaries.

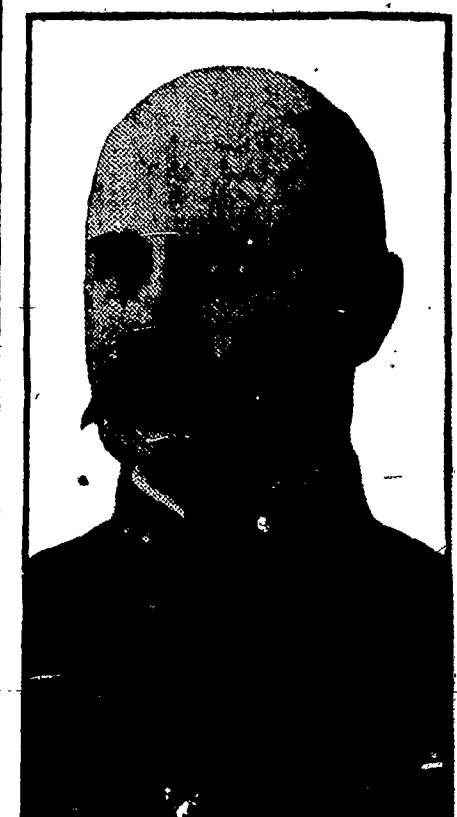
Cardinal Chigi, who has been lately elected to the papacy, his friend, Archbishop of Palermo, the ceremony will take place at the Cathedral of that city.

The St. Louis Exposition, Ohio, has paid a large sum of money to the Society for Foreign Missions, and will pay another on April 1.

The St. Louis Exposition, Ohio, has paid a large sum of money to the Society for Foreign Missions, and will pay another on April 1.



MORTAR IN FRONT OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BUILDING, PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION.



CAPTAIN PETER C. HARRIS, U. S. A. [Superintendent of Ordnance Exhibit at Pan-American Exposition.]

The Endicott Board on Ordnance and Fortifications a number of years ago decided in favor of the disappearing carriage, and the department has been laboring to obtain a satisfactory one. The one shown at the Pan-American Exposition is considered the most perfect in the world.

The ten-inch breech-loading rifle is from the model of 1895 and weighs 66,700 pounds. Its total length is 80.76 feet, and the diameter of the breech is thirty-five inches. The projectile is an armor piercing shot or shell. The shell carries a bursting charge of 22.4 pounds of gun cotton and weighs 575 pounds, having a length of four feet. The solid shot is three and one-half feet long. The powder charge is 140 pounds of smokeless powder, and the muzzle velocity of the projectile is 2,300 feet in a second. The maximum pressure per square inch is 37,000 pounds. The muzzle energy with the charge of smokeless powder is 21,086 foot tons. The gun has a penetrating power of twenty inches in steel at 2,500 yards.

At the right of the ten-inch gun a twelve-inch mortar has been mounted, and it is no small affair. Farther to the right is a five-inch rapid-fire gun. The right is a five-inch rapid-fire gun. The right is a five-inch rapid-fire gun. The right is a five-inch rapid-fire gun.

To the left of the great twelve-inch disappearing gun will be exhibited the old seacoast ordnance of the United States, arranged in a historical series, the twelve-inch gun itself representing the climax. Near the small building specially constructed for this purpose will be displayed the mountain field and siege guns of the present day, together with types of old guns used in the different wars in which the United