

them by an accusation of diabolical agency, but yet they are not converted, for their hardness of heart has found another refuge, and they say "these things are done by trickery." It matters not how open may be the manner of the performance, or how impossible it would be for deceit to be practised, "the age of miracles is passed, if, indeed, it ever existed," they cry, "and these things must needs be false, however they are brought about." Thus it is with the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, although thousands who yearly behold it are ready, at all hazards, to testify to its truth, and so are explained the wonderful cures performed by the water from the world-renowned grotto of Lourdes. Nevertheless, the marvellous works of God continue to be made visible, and though many in their folly laugh them to scorn, to others they are the means of conversion and of deep edification.

Some eight or ten years ago—we write from memory and guided by recollections of a cursory notice read here and there in Catholic newspapers alone—in a humble village of Belgium, called Bois d'Haine, and lying between the towns of Mons and Charleroi, a young girl, named Louise Lateau, was supposed to be dying. She was in nothing remarkable, except for goodness. She was of lowly birth, and her life had been passed in the labors usual amongst the peasantry of her native place; but her kindness of heart was proverbial, and in a recent visitation of cholera to the village, she had distinguished herself by self-sacrificing attendance on the sick. Her neighbours were therefore much grieved at the thoughts of losing her; and when it became known that, after all, it was probable she might recover, there was general rejoicing amongst them. She did recover, and then commenced the wonderful life which she has since led.

At first, if we recollect aright, she noticed that, on every Friday, blood issued from a certain spot upon her side, corresponding with that where in pictures of the Crucifixion the spear is seen to pierce our Blessed Lord. This she communicated to her confessor, and was by him desired to say nothing of it but to conceal it as well as she could. She did so as long as it was possible, but soon the blood began to flow from her hands and feet, as well as from her side, and it became apparent to all about her that she had been chosen to receive the marks of our Blessed Saviour's stigmata, as had St. Paul the Apostle, St. Francis, of Assisi, and, in our own day, the Augustinian nun, Anne Catherine Emmerich, of Westphalia, and certain holy women of the Tyrol and Italy.

The matter speedily was noised abroad; inquiries were not shunned, and members of the medical profession came from far and near to examine into the case. Many of these were men of eminence and European reputation, and amongst them some who had hitherto been infidels were converted, notably Dr. Klapp, of Hanover, while all seem to have agreed that the matter lay beyond the reach of their science, and could not have been accomplished by natural means.

As years passed by, the phenomena observed in the favored being of whom we write, appear to have increased in number and intensity, for, in addition to what has been already mentioned, of late we have read of a circle around her head and a wound upon her shoulder, answering to the impress of our most holy Redeemer's crown of thorns, and the bruise He received from the Cross borne by Him to Calvary. The bleeding of the stigmata has also been attended for some time with excessive agony, so that it is painful even to look upon the sufferer, for her affliction is most evident; but this finds relief in ecstasies, of which wonderful things are related, and during which she is unconscious of all that takes place around her as well as of pain. Moreover, as certain of the saints have done, she is said to have abstained for years from food, the blessed Sacrament alone having been received by her during that period.

Although our knowledge of them is very imperfect, we have thought it right to give this short account of these marvellous things, in order to draw the attention of our readers to them; for if God works such wonders in our day, it is evident He mercifully considers our weakness, and affords us means of strengthening our faith, by contemplating the visible signs of His presence in the Church. The world may laugh at the supernatural, but the supernatural is in our midst, and the arguments of unbelievers will no more remove it from amongst us, than the levers of Archimedes, potent though they were in their proper sphere, could have turned away the universe from its appointed course.

A CATHOLIC ARTIST'S WORK.

THE London 'Weekly Register' says: "A Catholic artist of the highest genius, Miss Elizabeth Thompson, already famous as the painter of 'The Roll Call' and 'Quatre Bras,' has now on view in London, at 148 New Bond street, what we do not hesitate to call, at once, her masterpiece. The subject of this noble work of art is the most splendid piece of heroism in the history of modern warfare. It is that charge of the Light Brigade which has already, in our time, inspired both the poet and the annalist. Alexander Kinglake in describing it, has risen to the height of Plutarch, while Alfred Tennyson has embalmed the memory of it in the noblest war-song given to the world since Campbell penned his 'Hohenlinden.' Quite of a piece with the prose of Kinglake and with the poetry of Tennyson is the picture just now completed by Miss Thompson. It is as pathetic and tragical a record as ever artist's hand has rendered visible on canvas, not of the "pride, pomp and circumstance" of glorious war, but of the cruelty, horror and agony of battle. The central figure upon the canvas is nothing less than a creation. It is a representation of a dismounted trooper in the costume of Lord Cardigan's horsemen stalking across the scene like an apparition, his sword—dripping from the tip with blood—yet grasped convulsively in his right hand, his eyes glaring in vacancy like those of one utterly dazed and bewildered, the bloody finger marks all over his breast of the Russian foes who have grappled with him, and whom he has shaken off—dead. There is the

lust of homicide in his every lineament—in the clenched jaws and dilated nostrils, and contracted brows—as he moves on, blind to all around him, and deaf to the voices of the comrades who are calling to him to stop. The scene represented is that of the return to the heights, after all is over, of the shattered remnant of the Six Hundred, who have come back as 'from the jaws of death,' or 'from the mouth of hell.' The picture is full of incident. The horses are as wonderfully painted as the men. It is significant of the havoc caused in this terrible feat of arms among the officers of the Light Cavalry that all the survivors here portrayed are either non-commissioned officers or troopers. The work is conspicuously a work of genius, and one that marks a distinct advance in the career so suddenly opened, only three years ago, before the great artist."

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

The 'Army and Navy Gazette' says: "We believe that the French army, in spite of what has been written in this country on the subject, is making great progress in every way. Work is being done silently and well. We have just seen the letter of an accomplished French officer, stating that the work until a few days ago was really too hard, and dwelling on the extra amount of duty necessitated by the training of reservists. We see that in Paris the cavalry regiments are being drilled to take the rail at night time, and by the lantern dimly burning a squadron rides up to the station, dismounts, piles arms, unsaddles, installs its chargers in the railway boxes, packs up hay and corn, and takes its place in the carriages. Once ready for a start, orders are taken to disembark, and man and steed are broken to this new service—conveyance of cavalry. An important measure of unification in the armament of the German army is about to be effected. The Bavarian, General Podewils, inventor of a system of muzzle-loading rifles formerly in use with Bavarian troops, has just constructed a metal cartridge fitting both the regulation Werder (Bavarian) and the Mauser (Prussian) rifles. This cartridge has been issued already to the Bavarian troops, and is likely to be adopted also in Prussia."

Rev. Robert Wilson, in the 'Popular Science Monthly,' describes a natural basin on the "Woodboo" plantation, about forty miles from Charlestown. Walking towards a clump of tall cypresses, you suddenly find yourself on the brink of a miniature lake, the ground being firm up to the water's edge. An irregular basin, about fifty yards long by a dozen wide, is hollowed out in the blue limestone rock which underlies the soil but a few inches from the surface, and this is filled to the brim with slightly opaline yet perfectly clear water. The bottom slopes abruptly from either side to the middle, where it is fully twelve feet deep, and there exists an irregular fissure extending the whole length of the basin, and varying from two to six inches (apparently) in width. The basin swarms with fish of every variety common to the waters of the region, and of every size. Schools of fry keep near the edge, hundreds in number, while in the deep waters may be seen full-grown perch and bream, catfish, black bass, pike and alewives. Watch the bottom for a while, and you will see these fish issuing from the fissure in the rock, the larger bass (four to eight pounders) never venturing far from it, and darting into it at the least alarm. I well remember a pike nearly three feet long, which I have often struck with a fishing cane, but which I never could capture. The largest fish will not take the hook, on account of the exposure to view; but the smaller bream, perch and bass bite with great eagerness, and I have often caught from twenty to sixty in an afternoon, selecting the best fish by sight, and placing the baits at their very mouths. Sometimes the basin is almost empty of fish; an hour afterwards enough will be visible to overstock a dozen ponds of equal size. By day, eels are rarely visible, and you may stir up all the patches of grass along the bed without discovering one; at night they are frequently caught, the negroes sometimes "gigging" them of the largest size. The temperature of the water is the same winter and summer—about 62 deg.—and the fish bite best in the coldest weather.

A singular phenomenon can now be seen in Clarion County, Pa., on a small stream known as Catfish Run. For a long time inhabitants of that locality have noticed a commotion on the surface of the water, like that made by gas bubbling to the surface. These bubbles have been seen for many years, but no particular notice was taken of them until recently, when the quantity of escaping gas increased, and the surface of the stream for several rods was covered with bubbles. A strong smell of gas also impregnated the air in the vicinity. Last month the place was visited by several gentlemen who had heard of the phenomenon. They became convinced that it was gas, and determined to test its burning qualities. A bunch of rags was obtained at a farmhouse and thoroughly saturated with kerosene. To this a match was applied, and the burning ball thrown into the stream. Before it reached the surface of the water, the gas ignited and a slight explosion followed. In a few moments the body of the gas burned steadily, and in every portion of the stream small flames sprang up where the gas escaped in moderate quantities. Since that day the gas has continued to burn, and the area of the stream covered by it has increased until now the fires extend a quarter of a mile up and down the run. Catfish Run is a sluggish stream, bounded on either side by steep wooded bluffs. At night the scene along the burning stream is magnificent. The fires light up the dark forests, and sparkle on the waters, making a spectacle rarely witnessed. This stream is contiguous to oil territory, and the only satisfactory theory of the source of the gas is that it rises from petroleum deposits beneath the water, as the same phenomenon, although the gas was in less quantity, has been noticed in Oil Creek.—Oil City Letter to New York 'Sun.'