

isolated themselves voluntarily from the world and gladly accepted all the risks of nursing the stricken patient is but one of a thousand modern instances which show that in the nineteenth century, as in the fourteenth and the seventh and the fifth, the charity of the Church, whether in private woe or in public disaster, is of the kind that 'never falleth away.' This unfailing charity is the gulf that separates Christianity from any and every sort of paganism. The rationalist LECKY admits that the Church effected a revolution in very deed when she taught her children to regard the poor and afflicted as the representatives of CHRIST, and made the love of Him and the love of man for His sake the solid groundwork principle of charity. 'No achievements of the Church,' says the same writer in his *History of European Morals*, 'are more truly great than those which it has effected in the sphere of charity.' 'For the first time in the history of mankind,' he adds, 'it has inspired many thousands of men and women, at the sacrifice of all worldly interests, and often under circumstances of extreme discomfort or danger, to devote their entire lives to the single object of assuaging the sufferings of humanity.'

The Protestant author LEIBNITZ, in his *System of Theology*, aptly calls those Catholic Religious Orders of charity 'Heaven's army on earth.' The name is well bestowed. They have searched out and fought every variety of human suffering. And never, in the long history of the Church, have their numbers been so great, their activities so varied, and their resources for good so plentiful as at the present time. But the same spirit has been working all through, from the days when the Apostles sent up the collects of the faithful to the suffering poor in Jerusalem. When, in the fifth century, GENSERIC conquered Africa, he cut off Italy from its barley-loaf and wheaten bread. The political economy of the day was not equal to the problem of this sudden cutting off of food supplies, and there ensued long years of appalling famine and pestilence. 'But everywhere,' says LECKY, 'amid the chaos of dissolution we may detect the majestic form of the Christian priest mediating between the hostile forces, straining every nerve to lighten the calamities around him.' And 'as time rolled on,' he adds, 'charity assumed many forms and every monastery became a centre from which it radiated.' In the sixth century, St. TEILO, of Llandaff, and his monks wrought with the most self-sacrificing heroism among the victims of the Yellow Plague, which broke out in North Wales and wrought fearful havoc with human life all over the country. A century later we find St. LANDRY, Bishop of Paris, earning the title of 'Father of the Poor' for his labours and the efforts of his priests and monks among the starved and pestilence-stricken people of his diocese. SS. FROILANUS and ATTILANUS led their regiments of 'Heaven's army on earth' in Leon in the tenth century when the marauding Saracens had 'lifted' the cattle and 'commandeered' the supplies of grain and destroyed what they could not comfortably carry away. Means of transport were difficult, often dangerous, in those days before the locomotive and the marine engine were dreamed of, and local famines were often both long-lived and acute. And thus it was that the people of Leon were stricken with dire famine, and its usual accompaniment, disease. In the century that followed, the abbots and monks of Dijon and Verdun (France) stripped their monasteries and sold their lands to save the sick and starving people. A little later we find priests dying by the score in the service of their flocks during the historic and fearful three years' famine and famine-fever that swept over the south-east of France. One of the most notable instances of organised charity of the middle ages was the Brotherhood of Pity—a lay association—which was founded about 1240 and is still in full and beneficent operation in the city of Florence (Italy). It has distinguished itself in an altogether singular way by what we may term its reckless contempt of danger during the pestilences which swept the city in 1326, 1340, 1348, 1495, 1498, 1522, 1528, 1630, 1633, and the cholera epidemic of 1855. Their charity is boundless, and meets nearly every form of human ill. 'Anyone can give money,' says a Protestant writer in the *English Illustrated Magazine* for June, 1898, 'but the Brethren [of Pity] give personal fatigue, and are often exposed to infection. No winter snow or burning summer sun stops the devoted band.'

The same story runs like a thread of burnished gold through the warp of the history of all the centuries of our era. MANZONI has immortalised in his *Betrothed* the story of the labours of St. CHARLES BORROMEO and his priests during the great plague of Milan in the sixteenth century. Once, as we stood upon the scene of his labours—the Lazaretto outside the walls of that fine old Lombard city—a candid and intelligent English Protestant remarked to us: 'I don't hold with you in belief, but I lift my hat to the Church that has produced a CHARLES BORROMEO.' The sixteenth century witnessed the noble and heroic work of Father PETER FOURIER during the dread pestilence which war and famine had left as their joint legacy to Lorraine in 1632. And who needs to be told of the ten long years of famine-fighting done by St. VINCENT DE PAUL and his Sisters of Charity in Picardy in the same century, and the splendid legacy which he has left to the Catholic Church and to suffering humanity in the wearers of the white cornette, who are still to be found in every place where sickness and suffering require their aid? The famines in Italy in 1766, and in Sardinia in 1780 led to similar evidences of charity on the part of the clergy and the Religious Orders. And what shall we say of the noble services rendered to suffering humanity by MARY AIKENHEAD, foundress of the Irish Sisters of Charity, during the cholera epidemic of 1832; by the Catholic priesthood and Religious Orders of men and women during the long agony of the famine and famine-fever of 1846 and 1847 in Ireland; by the brave priests who gave up their lives for love of the poor when the cholera swept down upon Liverpool fifty-one years ago; by the Catholic Sisterhoods when the cholera again visited Dublin, Liverpool, Palermo, Southern France, Spain, and Hamburg in the eighties; by the Sisters of Mercy and others who, as a non-Catholic writer said, 'went down before the reaper Death like ripened grain' when the yellow fever seized New Orleans and Memphis in 1873, 1878, and 1879; by Sister Elisabeth, of the Order of the Holy Cross, who, with others, gave up her life for the victims of the bubonic plague in India; by Father BEGUETI and the Salesian nuns who for seven deadly months nursed and tended the victims of small-pox in Venezuela a few years ago; by Father REGG, the priest of Dalibrog, South Uist, who, in 1897, nursed, single-handed, a typhus-stricken family, cooked for them, performed for them all the disagreeable menial services incidental to such cases, and when his work was done died, as a Scottish non-Catholic paper said, 'a martyr to charity'; by ROSE HAWTHORNE, Lathrop—the convert daughter of NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE—who last year founded a community for the nursing of cancer patients; by Father DAMIEN and the priests and nuns who have banished themselves from society to devote their lives and energies to the care of the lepers in India, Burmah, the Seychelles Islands, British Guiana, and Ione Molokai; by the Sisters of St. JOHN of GOD, the Sisters of Nazareth, the Little Sisters of the Poor, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, and the scores of other Religious Orders of both sexes who freely give themselves, without fee or reward, to the service of their suffering neighbours of every creed and colour, for CHRIST'S sweet sake alone. These and such-like are the people who are now being hounded down in our midst as irredeemable reprobates by an unfrocked priest and a vulgar female impostor who probably never in their lives nursed a fever-stricken patient or relieved the pangs of a famine-stricken child. It is so much easier and cheaper for this class of adventurer to attack, traduce, and belie those true servants of GOD, the latchet of whose shoes the SLATTERYS are not worthy to loose.

The attention of parents and guardians is directed to the advertisement of the New Zealand Clothing Factory, which has the largest stock of boys' clothing of any house in the Colony. Particular attention is given to the manufacture of this class of goods, especially to the fit and finish. The material and lining are specially suited for rough and tumble wear, whilst the prices are such as to meet the requirements of all classes of customers.—\*.\*

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