

Fairest flower that ever*bloomed among true men*

1938, No. 7

APRIL

Death — Fragrance of Holiness

The inhabitants of the village were absent when Kateri took her last illness. It was the hunting season of 1680. For two months she suffered violent and weakening stomach pains, and she lay in her cabin not altogether neglected, but not as well cared for as she would have been were the people at home. She little heeded the lack of attention so long as she could enjoy the solitude and the opportunity it gave her for prayer. Those who came to visit her entered her cabin as if it were a sanctuary. They came because they felt it was a grace to witness her patience and hear her speak of holy things.

When the sickness became fatal in Holy Week, the missionaries made an exception in her favor by carrying the Viaticum to her cabin instead of having her brought to the chapel to receive it as was customary. The procession from chapel to cabin was a memorable affair, not unlike the ceremony which marked the day of her baptism. Watchers were assigned to remain with her until her death, which occurred the following day, Wednesday, April 17, when she was still fully conscious, clasping her crucifix and repeating: "Jesus, I love You."

Her death was the occasion of extraordinary religious manifestations. It was apparent that all regarded her as a saint. Her mat, blanket and crucifix were regarded as sacred relics. Prayers were offered to her. It was suggested that she be buried not in

the cemetery, but in the chapel. Father Cholenec considered this inadvisable, much as he believed her worthy of the distinction. The Christians from the neighboring village at Laprairie came to the funeral. From the moment of her burial, men, women and children formed the custom of coming to pray at her grave. The French came there as well as the Indians. Soon a cross was erected over it like the one near which she used to pray on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Novenas were made and Masses offered in her honor.

Very soon it became known that prayers to her were answered in a remarkable manner. She appeared twice to Father Chauchetière, the second time bidding him: "Look and do according to the model." The model, as he interpreted it, was Catherine herself and accordingly he painted her image, the only picture extant of an Indian maiden of that day. When the Governor of Canada, M. de Champigny, was cured of throat trouble of two years' standing, after praying at Catherine's grave, his wife had many copies of this image made for distribution in France and among the Indians. Many were the favors granted from heaven by its pious use.

Cures through her intercession became so frequent that Father Cholenec ceased to record them. M. de la Colombière, Canon of the Cathedral Church in Quebec, brother of the famous Blessed Claude de la Colombière, director of Saint Margaret Mary, was cured

THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS

of slow fever and bleeding which had lasted six months. Père Remy of St. Sulpice, Curé of Lachine parish, was disposed to question the marvelous favors granted through Catherine's intercession; but when one of his parishioners came to have him offer a Mass of thanksgiving, for favors obtained through the Indian Maiden, he felt moved to invoke her to bring about his own cure from deafness, and, when his prayer was heard, out of gratitude he wrote a record of the numerous favors attributed to her intercession.

Father Cholenec had at first the same attitude as Remy, but when he witnessed the cure of Claude Caron by the use of Catherine's crucifix, of another named Roanez, a

woman over sixty, by the same means, and of a third, an Indian girl from paralysis and a passion for gambling, he not only changed his mind, but, like Remy, wrote her life three times over, once for the Edifying Letters, again in Latin as a report for his superiors in Rome, and the third for general use. Other missionaries witnessed similar favors, among them Fathers Bruyas and Morain. It has not been the lot of many mortals to have had their lives recorded by such accomplished biographers, Cholenec and Chauchetière, and later by the eminent historian, Charlevoix, eye witnesses and intimate observers, who have kept her memory alive, the latter by brush as well as pen.

A Cumulation of News

Favors through the intercession of Tekakwitha are just as numerous now as they were during the years following her death. In our files alone we have a record of over 3,000 within the last ten years, many of them important enough to report to Rome as apparent miracles, 50 at least, and several of these with the physicians' attestations.

As a means of obtaining favors, both Father Cholenec and Father Remy were accustomed to use earth from the tomb of Tekakwitha. A great many do so still. We have some of this precious earth and we shall be glad to send it to those who request it, with the usual offering of ten cents.

There are some who think that to make novenas is a custom peculiar to our time, forgetting that the custom is as old as the Church, beginning the day after Our Lord's Ascension into Heaven and ending on the feast of the Coming of the Holy Ghost. It is familiar to read that the missionaries of Catherine's time, Cholenec, Chauchetière and Remy, used to recommend novenas in honor

of Tekakwitha to those who were praying for favors.

I wish that our readers could see the petitions we are receiving from Indian Missions in the United States and Canada to go to the Holy See for the Cause of Tekakwitha. Many of them are in sign language. They are in various Indian tongues. Some of the missionaries have to speak as many as five or six Indian languages. Several of these petitions are signed by the Chiefs of the tribe; others by the Indian school children.

In Rome our manner of presenting such petitions is very much admired. Even some of the Indian school children have decorated their petitions. Bound together with white satin ribbon, the sheets are covered in undressed leather with Indian designs.

It is something new to have favors obtained through the Saints reported in daily newspapers. This has frequently been done by devotees of Tekakwitha in New Orleans and vicinity.

THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS

The Postulator of the Cause of Tekakwitha in Rome, Father Charles Miccinelli, writes that the head of the Historical Section of the Congregation of Rites has assured him that early in March he would give a copy of his Presentation of the Cause to his Consultors, and after receiving their opinion, he would prepare another Presentation to submit to Cardinal Laurenti, Prefect of the Congregation.

The next step will be to have the Advocate of the Cause, Signor Ferrata, argue before the Cardinals of the Congregation for the formal solemn Introduction of the Cause by the Holy Father. The arguments which he will present are now on their way to Rome and we know that Tekakwitha's clients will pray more than ever.

"Of what use was the Martyrs' blood" is the taunt, even of admirers of their heroism, like the historian Parkman. He and others would cease taunting if they could see the design of the noble memorial which is to be erected at the head of Lake George which Jogues, with an envoy of peace, consecrated to the Blessed Sacrament!

Tekakwitha is an answer to the taunt, but she is only one of the numerous answers for the men and women of her race who in her time cultivated heroic virtue.

Another answer is the devotion in our time of so many Protestants who honor the Martyrs and especially Tekakwitha, as is evident in these pages.

Nothing in regard to Tekakwitha was ever more desirable than a book about her for the young. At last we are going to have one by a writer who has devoted many years of her life training young children. Miss Pember's book, illustrated, will soon be published by Sheed & Ward.

Miss Jeanne Bouvier announces that her film picture with talk and music of Tekakwitha will be ready at Easter-time. Our next number will give details about the presentation of this film.

The new medal of the Martyrs of the Mohawk Valley, Jogues and Goupil and Lalande, is now ready and it is beautiful in every respect, with Jogues on the face and his two companions, clear-cut figures, on the reverse. In aluminum, five cents each.

"Yesterday, I sent a trunk full of beadwork and other samples to the Indian Arts and Crafts Board in Washington, D. C. The Indians brought invaluable relics, many of them from "pre-white" days in this new project to adopt old crafts to modern use. I insured the trunk, but it really is beyond price as the Indians would not sell for any consideration. I pasted Tekakwitha's picture inside the cover on a poster advertising their "Cœur d'Alene Kateri" Club (the Kateris) and am relying upon her to bring all safely back. She should appreciate my little offering to help her Cause, don't you think?"

—De Smet, Idaho.

A song was needed to make Tekakwitha even more popular than she is, especially in our schools. And now we have it from Father Crowe of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Then came a demand for the music, and the March LILY OF THE MOHAWKS contained six compositions, besides the music published in the December number.

The composer of the music on page 4 of the March number is Sister Rita Agnes, not Sister M. Gonzaga.

The image of Tekakwitha in wood, the plaque as it is called, is still the favorite of all the articles we have issued to popularize veneration for her. All who see it express astonishment that her figure should be so clean cut and so appealing.

THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS

THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF TEKAKWITHA

"Everyone I gave a leaflet to got some little favor or other from her. I am doing my best to make her Cause known."

—Tralee, Ireland.

"He had given up hopes of getting his railroad pension; after a year all was settled. He feels he owes much to 'Katherine Tekakwitha.'"

—Lake Linden, Mich.

"On January 10, 1937, I was taken to bed with a temperature of 102. On January 11 my temperature increased another point, and a doctor immediately called. He diagnosed my case as pneumonia. From January 11 to 12 my temperature jumped to 106, and it was discovered I had pneumonia one week before actually discovering it, and was, when temperature rose to 106, in the crisis. Our parish priest was called in, I was anointed and given the last rites of the Church, and given up for dead. A consultation was held on January 12 between my doctor and a specialist from New York, and I was so sick the specialist could not examine or touch me. My father was called home, and other close members of family close by, under the directions of my pastor. Upon my father leaving his place of business, a gentleman, knowing I was seriously ill, presented a Tekakwitha medal to him and asked him to put it on me. Father rushed upstairs, pinned the medal on my sleeping garment (I had no other religious articles on me) and, strange as it may seem,

my temperature dropped one point, carrying me out of danger. I improved from that day on, and weighed seventy-nine pounds when getting out of bed; to-day I weigh 128."

—Glendale, L. I.

"... The dear Indian girl has helped us in a most special way. We are building an Infirmary for infirm, convalescent and also aged women. The old home sponsored by the Third Order was to be closed and we Sisters were to build the new home and take entire charge of it. The proceeds of the sale of the old building the Archbishop decided were to go to the Sisters. Our Community is a new foundation and consists only of nine Sisters. We needed the money in order to be able to start the building. But where would we find a buyer? All who knew about it made some such discouraging remarks: 'It may take years before you will sell the place.' Just then (July 9) your letter about good Kateri arrived. I immediately ordered a novena in her honor and we all prayed fervently to her to ask our dear Lord to send us a buyer. On the last day of the novena a gentleman came to talk over some business matter and during the course of the conversation I learned that he is a real estate man and builder. Like a flash, I realized that this man was sent by Kateri. I told him about the property and well in a week the deal was closed and a week ago the cash paid. I made a promise to dear Kateri. I am now fulfilling it." —Milwaukee, Wis.

Make Tekakwitha Known

The Lily of the Mohawks' Monthly Message... Subscribe at 60c. a year; 2 copies, \$1.00

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Image of Kateri, in wood, with oak from where and when she was born, 5¾ x 3 in., 40c.

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Music, Song to the Lily of the Mohawks, six compositions, eight pages... 25c. a copy

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