

Fairest flower that ever*bloomed among true men*

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JANUARY, 1940

Many distinguished pilgrims here visited the birth and burial places of Kateri Tekakwitha at Auriesville on the Mohawk and at La Prairie on the Saint Lawrence; and many distinguished authors have written her Life. One of the latest of such pilgrims and authors is Henry Bordeaux, of the French Academy. Our readers will be pleased to have this account of his visit to Caughnawaga and La Prairie.

A Trip to Canada The Flower of the Saint Lawrence

HENRY BORDEAUX, of the French Academy

"Are there still any Indian Reservations?" I asked at Montreal. "Yes, indeed, and even near here, on the other side of the St. Lawrence, at Caughnawaga. Going by way of La Prairie, you will pass the tomb of a saintly young Iroquois." 'A saintly Iroquois!' "She is called Tekakwitha, meaning one advancing slowly. She was baptized with the name Catherine, or Kateri."

Kateri Tekakwitha is in a way the 'savage' Sister Therese of the Infant Jesus. She lived in the Seventeenth Century, was converted by Jesuits, and died when twenty-four at La Prairie. They called her also "The Lily of the Mohawks," from the river on whose banks she was born and lived before her conversion. She is called also "The Flower of the Saint Lawrence," since she came to La Prairie, where she died. When invoked she works miracles, and the Process for her canonization has been begun in Rome.

These details I got from M. Robert Rumilly, a Frenchman settled in Canada without thought of returning, and writer of the life of the young maiden, in a beautiful volume,

artistically illustrated by Paul Coze. It is one of those affectionate biographies which gives color and lively movement to the narrative. Father Edouard Lecompte had already written this simple history with an exact and minute precision in cold statement of facts. To quote from Charlevoix, one of the first historians of Canada:

"Thus New France, like the capital of Old France, beheld the glory of one, a poor Indian girl, and of another, a shepherdess, shine above that of so many apostolic men martyrs and other saints of all conditions of life. God doubtless wishing for our instruction and the consolation of the humble to glorify His saints in proportion to their having been little and obscure on earth."

This is why, desiring out of curiosity to visit an Indian Village and to see the descendants of the Iroquois, Algonquins and Hurons, of whom I had heard in childhood through Fenimore Cooper, I actually made a

pilgrimage to the tomb of the holy maiden.

We went to Caughnawaga by way of Lachine, a pretty village near Montreal. The St. Lawrence has rapids there that seem eager to swallow the little island of Heron. There we crossed the river and were soon in the Iroquois Village of Caughnawaga. There had been time to notify, very likely by telephone, the great Chief of the tribe, so that he might don his costume. He was ready with his skins and head-feathers. This festive dress is used only for strange visitors. The Indians dress like peasants of the Canadian countryside. They can be recognized by certain traits, not by the red, brown or yellow color of the skin, but by the bony features of the countenance, which resembles that of ancient Montols, or Kalmouks—and did they not come from Asia?—by their heavy muscles and feline movement. Among them are some of mixed Canadian blood, due to their long years of association and inter-marriage.

The village is well built, with scarcely any difference from others. We paid a visit to the pastor. The rectory is very pleasantly situated on the bank of the river. The parish is a Mission of Jesuit priests who have charge of this Indian Reservation. They have learned Iroquois and they preach in it. Better still, one of them is Iroquois, a young man of the village who was always notable for his conduct and piety and who wished to enter, a precious recruit, into the Order. They showed us an Iroquois Grammar in manuscript, which was written—Oh, with what effort!—by a Missionary in the Seventeenth Century. The original language was perfectly articulate with genders, verbs, participles, but it had ceased to be written for many long years. It was necessary to revise it in accordance with present usage. This venerable grammar is in our day the key to the language.

"Do your parishioners learn French?"
"They learn English, but they cling to their

own tongue and this is why we must know it."

The priest who did the honors of the Mission took us to see the casket which contains the mortal remains of Kateri Tekakwitha. They were taken from her tomb when the Process of Canonization was begun, so that when she is beatified they will be ready as relics. Then we went into the Church, which appeared to be new, it is so well decorated, with its massive bell-tower. It contains a miniature history of France, for it has an altar given by Louis XIV, another by Charles X, a Ciborium by the Empress Eugenie. Under Louis XIV Canada belonged to France. The Restoration and the Second Empire continued to be interested in this small church, reserved for Indian converts. I should like to have this French continuity attested by some more recent gift.

Leaving Caughnawaga, we went to the village called La Prairie, which is also on the bank of the St. Lawrence, but more scattered, and we came to the empty tomb of the holy maiden. It is a cenotaph of carved granite, enclosed by an iron grill, covered, and surmounted by a great cross in which a relic is encased. It bears this inscription, in Iroquois and in French:

KATERI TEKAKWITHA

April 17, 1680

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FAIREST FLOWER THAT EVER BLOOMED
AMONG TRUE MEN

(To be concluded.)

Caughnawaga, Canada, where the relics of Tekakwitha are kept under seal while the Cause for her beatification is in process, has already become a place of pilgrimage. On Sundays, from spring to autumn, groups from the parishes of the dioceses of St. John of Quebec, and on some Sundays from the Archdiocese of Montreal, visited there and also St. Catherine of La Prairie nearby, where the site of her tomb is.

As the New Year of Our Lord 1940 begins, it is needless to tell our readers we trust it will be for them a happy and prosperous one. This is the prayer of the V. Postulator for the Cause daily at the Altar.

At the annual Conference of the Hierarchy in November, all present agreed to express to our Holy Father their gratification at the favorable progress of the Cause for the Canonization of Tekakwitha.

The new four-page Tekakwitha leaflet is quite different from former leaflets in that it contains entirely new reports of favors attributed to the Indian Maiden, some of the thousands of answers to prayer which were received during the year 1939.

Word comes from Patna, India, of so much interest there in the life and virtues of Tekakwitha that 5,000 of the new leaflets and 1,000 pictures of the Indian Maiden are needed. In Transvaal, South Africa, there is similar interest in Tekakwitha.

"The plaque you sent some time ago has been in the yard all summer to bring rain to this dry section of the country—we have had more rain than usual. We have also had some answers to our prayers for financial aid. I send a small offering for the Cause of Kateri Tekakwitha." —Laredo, Tex.

IN GOOD HUMOR

"Enclosed please find two dollars which my housekeeper promised for the Cause of Kateri Tekakwitha if she would rid us of the pest of rats which came this fall. They seemed to have disappeared altogether and I did not send the check right away. Now there are some other indications of their return to the premises, but I feel that Kateri is waiting for the promise to be fulfilled. So enclosed find the check as promised." —Merrill, Mich.

What is now needed for Tekakwitha's Cause is prayer that evidence of miracles due to her intercession be thoroughly satisfactory.

A BOOK OF ENLIVENING STORIES

True to his mission as representative of the Holy See, our Apostolic Delegate has just done what was so dear to the heart of the Sovereign Pontiff who appointed him, Pius XI, and what is likewise dear to his successor, Pius XII gloriously reigning, *viz.*, the cultivation of holiness among the faithful and exalting to the honor of our altars Servants of God whose holiness was heroic.

In *Sanctity in America*, His Excellency Monsignor Cicognani gives most engaging sketches of seventeen who in our land were renowned for holiness of life, men and women, bishops, priests, sisters, and our Indian Maiden, Tekakwitha. With each sketch is a picture of the Servant of God, and Tekakwitha's picture is besides on the jacket.

It is a spirited record of our beginnings, of adventure, daring, courage, self-sacrifice; of pioneers blazing the pathway of the faith among savages in desolate wilderness and fast-growing city.

St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J., publishes the book at only \$1.00 a copy.

"You may be interested to know that Kateri Tekakwitha together with St. Joseph is my Procurator. Her picture is right over the safe here in my room, so that when anything goes in, she is commissioned to watch over it, and when anything comes out, it is her duty to replace it, and she does very well indeed. I pray that your efforts on behalf of her beatification may soon be crowned with success." —Mindanao, Philippine Islands.

The Tekakwitha Club of Rochester, N. Y., has sent us a photo of a cake made by a member of the Club, for their picnic. It appears to be two feet high, surmounted by a statuette of Kateri.

"Two dollars from our non-Catholic friend, and one dollar from me to meet the expense for the Cause." —Terre Haute, Ind.

"The holder of the old mortgage without any pressure decided to let the mortgage stand and even paid any expense I had been put to in trying to obtain a new mortgage."

—Trenton, N. J.

"Some time ago, I promised Kateri Tekakwitha that if I were to receive a certain bonus, culminating a successful sales period, I would donate 5% of such bonus for her Cause. I was moderately successful therein and accordingly I am enclosing this as payment in part."

—Pittsburgh, Pa.

"It is hard to put my feelings in words. I am home now four days with my dear little baby boy. My first pleasure is to tell you how grateful we are to Our Lord—and to our wonderful 'Nurse'—Kateri, for we know it was her special care that gave us our lovely baby, born on the Feast of Christ the King."

"In January of this year, through the intercession of Kateri we sold a property in town for cash and had a High Mass offered in her honor and in July we found a suitable place in the country and had another High Mass offered in her honor." —Fremont, O.

"The lady, who is up in years, has had a little business place here in Homestead for years. She told me she was to be sheriff-sold within a few weeks and did not know what to do. I gave her a picture of Catherine Tekakwitha and told her to put it in the store; also gave her a prayer to say. She made the Novena and the bank promised to carry her over for two years."

—Homestead, Pa.

Life, by Wynne, 64 pages, 3 illustrations, containing in detail reports of recent favors.....15c. a copy

Leaflets with prayer and remarkable favors
5c. each; 25c. a doz.; \$1.50 a 100

Novena.....5c. each; 25c. a doz.

Medals.....Oxid. silver, 15c.; aluminum, 50c. a doz.

(Prices include postage)

"A short time ago I had financial worries; I prayed to Catherine, and a few weeks later my husband won a large sum of money. My prayers are nearly always answered. Other favors were: two painless childbirths—my own being one; a sudden change for the better in a child threatened with pneumonia—a child cured of croup—and a man spared from a serious operation." —Scranton, Pa.

"I needed some money to pay important bills. People from whom I never expected to get what was due me came forward and paid me. Being a widow, I was desperate. I collected a thousand dollars. Thanks to Catherine's help.

"My father, 94 years, was scalded from knee to tip of toes. Fever had set in, followed by toxine poisoning. For weeks we despaired of his life and worse still his mind. Some members of the family wanted to put him in a sanatorium. I, being the oldest, objected because of his age. I got all down to prayer and made a triduum to the dear Lily of the Mohawks for his mind to be restored. Today he is normal. This was a marvelous cure."—R. A. E., Chaptico, Md.

OBITUARY

Mrs. Agnes Smith, Philadelphia, Pa.

PETITIONS

Cures	80	Relief in Distress	14
Positions	54	Sale of Property	9
Financial Aid	44	Conversion	1
Spiritual	2	Not Specified	176

ADDITIONAL FAVORS

Cures	21	Spiritual	1
Positions	9	Relief in Distress	9
Financial Aid	21	Sale of Property	2

Pictures, colored, large13 x 10 in., 40c.
" sepia, small5 x 3 in., 5c.

Pictures, colored, silk applied to her relics, 5 x 3 in., 10c.

Kateri, in wood admixed with oak growing when and where she was born, Auriesville, 1656
5 3/4 x 3 3/4 in., 40c. each

REV. JOHN J. WYNNE, S.J., V. Postulator of Her Cause
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