



A Trip to Canada The Flower of the Saint Lawrence

HENRY BORDEAUX, of the French Academy

(Concluded)

From all parts of Canada pilgrims come, and here I am from France. The scenery is charming. The river flowing pleasantly below the monument and Montreal in sight in its amphitheatre of wooded hills. The sun is not too warm. It is good here to muse on the Flower of the Saint Lawrence. Still, what is known of her?

She was born about the middle of the seventeenth century, on the banks of the Mohawk, belonging to the tribe of that name, considered as one of the most fierce of the Iroquois, who were among the most powerful of North-American Indians, and enemies of the French from the time Champlain made an alliance with the Hurons. Tekakwitha's mother was an Algonquin, baptized at Three Rivers, but, when captured, given to a Mohawk warrior. Small-pox carried off father and mother when the child was four years old. She had caught the disease and bore its marks on her face and bodily weakness. Her eyes were sensitive to light and to protect them she never went out without covering her head. She liked the gloom inside of her cabin. It was thus no doubt she came to be thoughtful when young people came only for amusement. She became expert at knitting fringes, coloring skins and

bark. Her uncle and aunts who had taken her in profited by her skill. She took care of the home, but spent little care on herself. She had liking only for a solitary and quiet life and kept cautiously away from the rude ways of her tribe abandoned to the incantations of sorcerers and to the vilest debauchery.

After peace was made between the government of Quebec and the Iroquois, Jesuits started a mission among the Mohawks. The young girl was interested in the missionaries and impressed by their important message, but either her timidity or fear of her relatives, especially of her uncle, kept her from seeking their help, and she thought she was not worthy to approach them. Besides she had already refused the suitor which her aunts had presented to her and this caused scandal. No young girl of their tribe had ever refused marriage. Most of them sought it and did not conceal this. The older women surprised her with a young warrior. She fled and declared she would not come home until he had departed. Her rough uncle thought that one day or other she would be reasoned out of such affectations.

Father de Lamberville finally observed her in his audience. She demanded the grace of

Baptism. Inquiries led him to know her virginal conduct, her modesty and her virtues. He admitted her to the Sacrament and the transport of the young girl was such that she diffused her joy throughout the village.

It was all very fine. Soon, however, there was reaction, caused perhaps by one or other pretending to ignore her, or by her relatives making fun of her. They began to persecute her, stoning and insulting her, calling her 'The Christian.' A young man threatened her with his tomahawk and she knelt for the blow, but the weapon stopped short. Injuries, threats, blows, she met with unflinching meekness.

On the establishment of a Christian Iroquois colony at Magdalene Prairie, not far from Ville Marie, the future Montreal, she decided to go there, leaving the banks of the Mohawk for the shores of the Saint Lawrence. There she would find her co-religionists, with whom as brothers and sisters she could pray in peace. A small group arranged to help her escape in a bark canoe down the Mohawk to a trail in the forest leading to Lake Champlain. Her dreadful uncle pursued her with fierce tribal warriors as once Odile of Alsace was pursued. The fugitives managed to escape him. Together they hid the young girl in the woods and affected innocence. They were hunting; what of that? Free from danger, they took her from the hiding place, traversed Lake Champlain, crossed the woods to the south of the Saint Lawrence and arrived safe and sound with her at La Prairie Mission.

Kateri was received as if sent from heaven. She lived there three years in a state of fervor which enthused her companions. She was not without trials. Even some of the better sort suspected, accused and calumniated her. She did not defend herself and it became necessary to offer her proper apology. She was truly, as they styled it, Lily of the Mohawk, flower of the Saint Lawrence. She was happy with Christ in His Passion, practised se-

vere penance, walked barefoot in the snow, watched, fasted and scourged herself. Even this was not enough, for she wished to suffer the tortures which her tribe had imposed so often on the missionaries and captives and thus expiate the evil of her people. She so afflicted herself that her confessor had to stop her. She died peacefully Wednesday in Holy Week, 17 April, 1680.

A quarter of an hour after her death, writes one of her biographers, Father Leconte: "Her countenance long deformed by small-pox and then by her illness and penances, appeared with a color and with traits of a ravishing beauty, so much so that all the people in the village and the missionaries themselves considered it a miracle. It seemed to them that the happy soul of the departed transfused throughout her virginal body a ray of the glory which she already enjoyed in the eternal courts."

The little picture which is distributed at the Caughnawaga Mission represents her with a wooden cross in her hands folded under a shawl as if she sought to keep from everything impure. The countenance is ecstatic as it was in death, with no trace of disfigurement. The Maiden became beautiful as a stately flower in bloom.

After leaving her tomb at La Prairie and strolling by the Saint Lawrence, I returned to Montreal by the Victoria Bridge, with this charming picture of transformed savagery. She passed twenty-four years of her life disengaged from her body, while her fellow Indians, whether by pleasure or suffering, had knowledge of the body only.

(Concluded.)

ST. MARY'S COLLEGE, SHILLONG, INDIA

"Now, Father, we'd all like to know more about this favored soul which will be helpful to our girls. In this pagan land we grab anything likely to aid us in the spread of the Faith.

"M. ST. CATHERINE."

A message from Rome, January 13, announced that the Congregation of Rites has begun its sessions on the virtues of Tekakwitha.

The magazine of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith for January has a full-page picture of Tekakwitha kneeling before a rude cross in the woods. The posture is admirable. The 475,000 subscribers will see it.

The following is taken from the Minutes of the 21st Annual Meeting of the Bishops of the United States:

"Bishop Gibbons moved that the Bishops assembled express gratification for the progress made in the Cause of Kateri Tekakwitha and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Vice-Postulator in her Cause. Seconded by Bishop Boyle, it was so voted without dissent."

✠ EMMET M. WALSH,
Bishop of Charleston.

"I made a promise to Catherine Tekakwitha that if a doctor who was a Free Mason became a Catholic before he died that I would have it published. The doctor became a Catholic and died with a priest at his bedside."

—Sister M. Dolores.

In many churches priest and people pray that Tekakwitha may be declared Blessed and then Saint by adding after the services such as Holy Mass and Benediction the prayer for this pious purpose, an *Our Father*, *Hail Mary* and *Glory Be to the Father*. The pastor of St. Catherine's Church facing her tomb at La Prairie, Canada, sought permission of his bishop to add a brief invocation for his people, and Bishop Forget, who is devoted to the Cause of Tekakwitha, approved of it for every church in his diocese of St. John of Quebec. The invocation of the priest is: "Lord Jesus, glorify thy Servant, Catherine Tekakwitha," the people answering, "We beg of Thee by Thy Holy Cross."

"It is nearly four months since you gave me the pamphlet and picture of Kateri Tekakwitha. It is really wonderful the favors I have received and which started immediately. My business in the past four months has more than doubled, and the future outlook is excellent. You are aware that I am not a member of your faith, but I can truly say that I know my daily prayers to Catherine have been answered. For the benefits and blessings received I am deeply grateful and each week make a donation at your church."

—Seattle, Wash.

UNIQUE NEW YEAR'S GREETING

"TO OUR HOLY FATHER THE POPE
—In order to help us to go to heaven, we think Catherine Tekakwitha has shown us the trail just right, by her holy life she will help us, we know. But we very much desire, if Your Will is so, to see you proclaiming her 'Holy.' All of us hope firmly and will be very glad. With all our heart we say to your Holiness a big thank.

"Your children Loucheux Indians,
ANDRE COYEN (*Chief*).

JOHN KAMEY
PIERRE TAZZIE
ODILA ANDRE
BERNADETTE NORBERT
MARIE LAGUNA
FRANCIS VI'LE
FABIOLA MARIE ROSE CARDINAL
SIMON MODESTE
ANORE JEROME
CAROLINE CARDINAL
ETHEL TAZIE
CAMILLA
ROSALIE
MARIE ZENAIDE MODESTE

—Loucheux Indian Tribe,
Lou Mackenzie, Canada."

"We have our Tekakwitha window placed in the chapel now. It is very beautiful."

—Duluth, Minn.

"For Mrs. H. F. I send two dollars in thanksgiving for improvement from illness of her brother and his wife."—Cincinnati, O.

"I am enclosing \$1.00 thanks offering for a woman who just recovered from a severe case."
—San Antonio, Tex.

"A Mass for the canonization of Catherine Tekakwitha in thanksgiving for a favor received by one of our Sisters."
—Bridgeport, Conn.

"Enclosed, please find a small present, a Christmas present to Kateri Tekakwitha. May she help the Pastor of Mayo and hasten the conversion of his Indians and other people."
—Mayo, Yukon Territory.

"My brother was very ill with dropsy and a liver condition and there was no more hope for him, so I began to invoke Catherine that he would see a priest before the end came, and my prayer was answered."
—Pittsburgh, Pa.

"At the suggestion of a relative, a Sister of Mercy, Merian, Pa., I prayed to Catherine for work for my two nephews who had been long unemployed, and in a short time they both obtained good positions."
—Pittsburgh, Pa.

"In response to my earnest prayers to find some way of obtaining money of which I was much in need, I found I could change my policies so as to gain \$200.00, still remaining insured with greater benefits and less premium yearly."
—Brooklyn, N. Y.

"Please forward four dozen of leaflets telling of the power of intercession of Kateri (Catherine) Tekakwitha. I promised to distribute them and promote her cause if granted a certain favor. It was partially granted and I know she will continue to help me."
—Detroit, Mich.

"No doubt you wonder about the young man I wrote about. Wish to say that although his case is reported as a rapid cancer growth and he was expected to die, he has recovered nicely and is apparently doing fine. I cannot help but think Catherine has been responsible."
—Yonkers, N. Y.

"I am sending you a few dollars towards the Cause of Kateri Tekakwitha. She has answered a prayer. My husband has been ill a long time and after many prayers for his recovery, he is well and back to work. I am now asking for two important requests, and hope to have you hear from me later on."
—Bethesda, Md.

"My brother-in-law injured his back severely. Doctors advised a plaster cast for three months. Absence from his position endangered his position as his age would make it hard to find new employment. I promised to publish should means be found to avoid the plaster cast and speedy recovery assured. Immediately came a change for the better and now he is almost fully recovered and back at work."
—Hicksville, N. Y.

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Pictures, colored, large13 x 10 in., 40c.
" sepia, small5 x 3 in., 5c.
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Kateri, in wood admixed with oak growing when and where she was born, Auriesville, 16565 3/4 x 3 1/4 in., 40c. each

(Prices include postage)

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