

CHAPTER XVII

DREAMINGS

THE sight of those Crusaders sets one dreaming, beckons one to walk back to other days—to study tombstones in the snug little graveyard topping the cliff, to rummage dusty diaries, musty letters, and faded programmes crumpled with age and soiled with much handling. Niagara's Crusaders of past generations troop across the campus of the imagination, in the days when their hearts were as young as the Crusaders of today. Here is the grave of Mr. Timothy Dowley, C.M., the only Vincentian scholastic buried here. His was the second grave dug in the Holy Ground. A month after David Ryan had sung his Magnificat in '62, he sang the Benedictus over Timothy. Only two years previously this young Crusader had made his vows. He died in the early skirmishes of life. Here is the tomb of Joseph O'Shea, an Irishman straight from the Old Sod who had joined the crusading theologians here to fight the battles of the Lord on American soil. When he died, Nov. 21st, 1901, he had not a relative in the country. One of his fellow seminarians and he had been shooting icicles in the Gorge when a bullet accidentally pierced his heart. Here and there are the graves of five workmen of the Seminary—M. Gleason, P. Mirron, T. Sullivan, who died respectively in '67, '78 and '79; and Denis O'Brien and M. Joyce, both of whom died in '82. The last was a very old man accidentally killed by a fall. They were of that flotsam and jetsam of the world which instinctively ever drift to Catholic institutions. No one knew whence they had come; but everyone felt he knew whither they were going. They may have been only tattered privates in the Crusaders of Calvary, wounded derelicts in their battles with the world; but they had carried the banners of faith;

and the Church Militant gave them in their burial the honors due to Crusaders of Christ the King. Each may have been a Lazarus in the eyes of the worldlings; but now between them and many a Dives there is, no doubt, "a great gulf fixed."

Beneath that mound sleeps John Kane who unto his death here in '97 lived the life of a lay brother, but without vows. His little savings he left to the University to help decorate the Chapel. Under this slab is a Visitation nun, a Sister Mary Weber, who died in '68. She had come on a visit to the Sisters at the Falls; and when soon afterwards she died, the Sisters asked that she be buried here. There is the body of John Miller, who, like John Kane, had lived the vowless life of a lay brother, and died in '72. Shortly after Niagara had celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 1906, Father Grace's niece while riding in her carriage was struck by an automobile and hurled to her death. Her interment here was intended to be but temporary; but her rest has never been disturbed. She rests on the southern rim of the graveyard between those two fir trees, beneath those three rose bushes. No stone is there. On the northern rim, one stone stands unmarked: who is the unknown dead beneath? Between this uninscribed slab and that of Sister Mary Weber, just west of Father Kavanagh's, is the grave of Father John Brady. He was the first novice received after the division of the Province, and the last body buried here. On his way from Baltimore to Muskoka Lake for his vacation he died one night (Oct. 12th, 1929) in the recreation room, while in the chapel after Benediction youthful hearts were singing "Laudate." His blunt, sturdy, rugged, honest, forceful character would have served well for the hero of a story who finds happiness only in the helping of others. He had ever wished to die at Niagara. God heard his prayer. For eighteen years of his priestly life he had given unstinted every ounce of energy for the place he loved. To it he gave his last breath. No stone marks his grave.

There is one grave that we cannot find—that of Brother Thomas. Long, long years he had spent at Niagara. One day

in '92, when he was seventy-five years of age, he tottered away towards the brink of the canyon, thinking, perhaps, like Monk Felix of old, that

*“Time has laid his hand
Upon my heart gently, not smiting it,
But as a harper lays his open palm
Upon his harp, to deaden its vibrations.”*

He never returned. It was thought that maybe he had fallen into the raging river. Both sides of the river to Lake Ontario were watched for a week. Then some days after his disappearance a six and a half foot coffin-like box was hauled to the University door. A crowd of mourning priests, brothers, seminarians and collegians gathered around it. Murmurs and prayers arose. “Poor Brother Tom!” “God rest his soul!” “The water must have swollen his poor body terribly, or it would not have needed so big a box!” But when they opened the box they found that the hands were placed over the face, and the face was far more rotund than that of Brother Tom: the box contained a grandfather’s clock—the gift of Mayor Malloy of Troy. It is the same clock that on the second floor of the Seminary still ticks, “Br’er Tom! Br’er Tom!” Thus tragedy and comedy are ever intertwining in the jungle that we call life. However, no seminarian passing that clock should forget to breathe a prayer for “Br’er Tom” and for all the dead that have died in the Lord.

But if Brother Tom’s body lies not among his thirteen confrere brothers and nine priests, his soul must be with them whose bodies lie here: with Fathers Rice, the gentle; Alizeri, the poetic; Talley, the volcanic; Kavanagh, the sturdy; Walters, the imperturbable; Hickey, the decisive; Walsh, the serene; Kilb, the candid; and Brady, the energetic. Crusaders all for the glory of God.

And old manuscripts, faded pictures, limp programmes set one dreaming almost as surely as do tombstones. What memories they bring! On New Year’s Day, '67, the young boy James Durkin is Marcellianus in the play named Sabastian.

At the end of the year in the same play he has improved his condition: he is now "a Christian." Almost forty years ago, twenty-five years after the play was given, the present chronicler witnessed the last pose of the actor, and heard the sad applause of one in the audience. The pose was that of a Vincentian priest holding a chalice in his dead hands as he lay on the catafalque in St. Vincent's Church, Germantown; and the applause was the weird shrieking of his broken-hearted mother aside the coffin.

In the two presentations of that same play in '67 there was another boy—quite a young man. He had fought with the Union soldiers at Chancellorsville, Atlanta and Gettysburg; and at Lookout Mountain had stormed the heights where among the wounded Father Abraham Ryan was ministering. The soldier then did not think that in a few years he himself would join the community the priest had left. In the first part of the year '67 in the play Sabastian he was Morinumica; in the last part, he was the hero. Edward News, the soldier and actor, became a Vincentian, and died a Vincentian in Norfolk in 1915. And at other times in that same year of '67 we find Edward McCarthy and James O'Hare giving original orations, the one on "The Church as a Civilizer," and the other on "Science and Religion." The diocese of Brooklyn afterwards heard for long years many an oration from them both.

In the following year Thomas Harty is Bibulus in the Hidden Gem; some few months afterwards is Severus in the Forty Martyrs; and near the end of the year is the star in Bulwer-Lytton's Richelieu. In the next January he speaks on "Religion and Society," and closes the year by giving the valedictory. He seems to have had a very busy year; but no busier than Father Thomas O'Donohue. We can still in our mind's eye see him bending over his desk as the hands of the clock at the close of '68 move to midnight, and writing in his diary as solemnly as though he were sentencing the old year to its death: "Farewell, dear Old Year! Behold, how short years pass away!"

On an old flyleaf of the Sodality Records of 1870 are the names of the charter members. Among the many are some that are very familiar: Nelson Baker, James Hennelly, William McCormick, Matthew Taylor, Richard Walters, Edward Antill, John Hickey, Matthew Traynor, etc.; and in the records of the old Total Abstinence Society of '71, some of the above, and in addition, Brian Burke, Jeremiah Hartnett, Martin Lee, etc. They are all dead now, save the first three and the last two. Nelson Baker, through his charities centered in Buffalo, has become the Vincent de Paul of the nation. William McCormick is lying on his back in St. Mary's Hospital, Brooklyn; James Hennelly, almost totally blind, is groping his way through the corridors of the Mullanphy Hospital, St. Louis; Martin Lee, like a young mettlesome steed in Medway, Massachusetts, is still prancing through his pastoral work. He seems but little older than he was when at Father Kavanagh's Silver Jubilee in '91 he silver trumpeted his toast to Old Niagara. And as we write these words, Jeremiah Hartnett, eighty-one years of age, is on the high seas to Ireland to see his mother, aged one hundred and ten.

But things were different with them all sixty years ago. As you watch Father Hennelly feel his way along the walls of the hospital you would not think that in '73 he took the girl's part of Nerissa in the Merchant of Venice. Yet his philosophy of life is unchanged from the night he voiced it in the play fifty-eight years ago: "They are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean. Superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer." It is quite a leap from the trim, loquacious Nerissa to the grim, conservative policeman; but Jimmie Hennelly in those days could make the leap: in that same year of '73 we find him as Officer McKeon in His Last Legs.

Other items of the programmes of long ago are not so difficult to understand. For instance, you that have known Father William McCormick, C.M., for so many years—what

would you say should have been his part had he acted in the Merchant of Venice? The cry would be unanimous, "The Duke." That is just what he was. We can still hear the measured, sonorous tones from the judge's dais in the court room scene:

*"Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so, too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange, apparent cruelty."*

He who cast those characters, cast them well. But you who can recall so vividly the late Monsignor Nash of Brooklyn would never have thought that back in '76 he was a bootblack in a travesty on William Tell; and shortly afterwards was Verna in the Hidden Gem! Who today listening to Buffalo's celebrated attorney, George H. Kennedy, pleading his cases would think of him as "A Miner" in Father Grace's play of Barney's Promise in '87? Better can you imagine him as he was the next year—the jailer Brackenbury in Richard III. Harder to think of him swigging stage "liquor" from a demi-john, wiping his lips with the back of his hand, and saying, "Them's me sent'ments!" than saying

*"Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours;
Makes the night morning, and the noontide night."*

It is easy to picture the late Nicholas W. Duncan, the banker of La Salle, Ill., discoursing on "Materialism" as he did in '76; and the late Father James Halpin of Herkimer, N. Y., orating on Washington in the same year; and the cultured Buffalo physician, Dr. G. Hanley, speaking on "Religion and Society," as he did in '84; and the late Monsignor Peter Winters of Pittston, Pa., giving his views on "Philosophy in Education" in '86. It is just as easy to picture those scenes as it is to picture the disappointment in '94 of the seminarian, William McCormick, who is now a pastor in Syracuse. He

was ever a lover of fast horses and fat cigars. In those days all forms of tobacco were forbidden the students, and were quite as scarce as evening dress in Eden's garden. The farm paddock could boast of one speed-king that on a windless day, when the road was fast and his condition right, could with the greatest ease do five miles an hour—down Lewiston hill, provided he had a heavy load in the rear. The seminarians had named him Thunderbolt, because you never could tell where or when he would strike the ground—and lie there, imbedded. The Director of Seminarians was then a Father James Sullivan whose saintly mind was far broader than his shoulders; whose eye, kindly but steady, could X-ray a student's soul and could point to the spot where an operation was needed; whose sense of humor seldom brought more than a quiet smile to his dark face; whose heart was of gold; but whose voice resembled a tugboat's whistle gone wrong.

One evening after supper the priest told the seminarian to hitch up Thunderbolt after breakfast on the morrow; and they both would drive to see the priest's brother, a secular clergyman twelve miles away in Thorold, Canada. William, knowing the broadmindedness of his Director, had in some mysterious manner (known but to the esoteric circles of the student body) provided himself with three big, fat cigars, intending that when they should have left the grounds he would ask the Director's permission to throw a smoke screen about the equipage—Indians might be about, for all they knew: reservation only ten miles away! Before he departed for the stables next morning he showed his solicitude for his Director's welfare by anxiously inquiring, "How's your scalp?" That solicitude would instill confidence in the driver—so thoughtful! On his way to the stables he conceived the brilliant idea that the diplomatic way to prepare the mind of the Director for the request was to exhibit the tops of the cigars from the upper left vest pocket, and await the remarks of his fare. The rest would be easy. Wonderfully alert was the student's mind this morning!

Accordingly, when about to mount the seat and take the reins, he stuck out his chest in an imposing, careless manner. The Director's eye for a fraction of a second rested on the upper left vest pocket, registered no surprise, and he said—nothing. All which was a happy augury: the Director was, evidently, in a receptive mood. How could he be otherwise on so glorious a day! Just as they rounded the drive into the roadway, and the seminarian was about to propound the thing nearest his heart, the Director pulled out a rosary, and remarked that it would be fitting to begin their recreation with that form of prayer: he would "lead;" the driver had naught to do but drive and answer. The driver was, of course, agreeable on so beautiful a day of liberty to answer to the "Joyful Mysteries;" he would shelve his request till the end of the "Finding in the Temple." Slowly the Reverend gentleman said the "Hail Marys," and not quite so slowly the driver responded. At the end of the "Fifth Mystery," William straightened up, and protruded his chest again; but the priest just as slowly announced the "Five Sorrowful Mysteries." The driver became suddenly hump-backed and hollow-chested, with mood akin to the meditations. When these had ended and the driver again had straightened up, the priest began the "Five Glorious Mysteries." Well, after all, this glorious liberty would begin at their end—there were no more mysteries to say; but was there really any reason for the priest dwelling so long on each word of the "Hail Mary"?

At the close of the last mystery, the driver adjusted his seat, threw out his arms, and told the prancing steed to bestir itself—its speed had seemed synchronous with the prayers. With a quizzical smile he turned to ask the Director the solicitous question anent his scalp, when the latter spoke of the poor souls in purgatory; and since they on the drive had nothing else to do, why not help the holy souls by prayer? Of course, he that was studying for the priesthood would be only too willing, etc., etc. The student for the priesthood acquiesced: was he not included among those who would

benefit by the prayer? What more suffering soul than his? So fifteen more decades followed. When they had finished the priest thought of all those that were in their last agony; and fifteen more decades followed for them. And the driver felt himself included among those, also. There surely after this could be no more to pray for! But there were: there were those in the midst of temptation (with whom the driver could sympathize); and those in the world this very minute that, perhaps, had murder in their hearts (and the seminarian could well understand how that might well be: he would not even trust his hand upon his pocket knife just now). And there were "those whose shoulders were burdened with too heavy a cross," etc. The driver had never heard of so many intentions. When they pulled up at the rectory in Thorold, he was sure there were no more intentions left.

He resolved to seek the coveted permission before or after dinner. But before, during and after dinner the two saintly brothers talked only on the things of God. In relating the incident three years ago Father McCormick said that the scene was like that famous meeting between Saints Benedict and Scholastica—only it wasn't raining. The seminarian had not the hardihood to obtrude into so holy a discussion so profane a subject as cigars; it would have been as profane as injecting baseball into litanies. But he resolved to make up for lost time on his way home. He was getting desperate. He would smoke all three cigars faster than the horse could trot. But all the way home there were more "intentions." Intentions to help all those studying for the priesthood, to sanctify careless priests, to bring the love of the cross into hearts of the worldly, etc., etc. When they had returned to the Seminary gate, Father Sullivan gently extended his hand. The seminarian was about to grasp it and acknowledge the priest's congratulations for patience preserved, when the priest smilingly said, "Mr. McCormick, I'll take charge of those cigars till you are returning home for your vacation." When vacation had come the Director remembered the promised restora-

tion; but the goods restored were as dry as his humor. The good priest knew more about rubrics than humidors.

What memories glad and sad, sweet and curious, whimsical and tragic hang around Old Niagara. Her sons never forget them or her. Pictures of the past become golden-hazed in the vista of years. Smiling is not difficult for the old alumnus when he sees again the seminarians Richard Walters and James Lefevre on the stage of '71 and '72 singing their solos; or listens to Ed Antill "trumpeting" as he did in '73. But it is somewhat difficult for one of the next generation to picture Father J. T. Landry on the stage shrilling his solo on a flute! We can picture him with a violin—but with a flute! No doubt, he was as earnest with that flute solo in '70 as he was with the most intricate problem of psychology, with the highest parabola of calculus, or with his dullest pupil in first year Latin stumbling over the ablative absolute. Many an aged priest today, many a bishop, banker, judge, lawyer, doctor, merchant, financier thinks of him today as unqualifiedly the best teacher he ever had—the sternest and the kindest. The heart of a boy beat in the breast of the iron-willed, eagle-eyed drillmaster. Everyone feared him in the classroom and loved him outside it. But no one loved him more, methinks, than John Drumgoole of New York City, the future Newsboys' Friend.

John Drumgoole, born in Longford, Ireland, six months after Bishop Lynch, was a mature man when he entered Niagara in '65 to study for the priesthood. He had come to New York City eight years of age, and afterwards learned the shoemakers' trade to support his widowed mother. In '44 he became sexton of St. Mary's Church; and, as an additional means of livelihood, opened a little book store, and snatched every hour available to educate himself. In '63 he began his preliminary higher studies in St. Francis', and afterwards in St. John's College. Previous to his advent at Niagara he had been sexton for twenty years. His heart had ever ached for the poor, especially for the bedraggled urchins that lived in the

city's streets and screeched their sad songs of "Py-pers! All about d' moider! Read d' fire in ten'ment Thoity-Thoid St. and Sixt' A'nue!—Want py-per, mister?" What chance had they in life? Many of them were orphans (or worse off) who after dodging horses and policemen all day, nestled at night in the cellarways uptown or in the deep windows around the Battery. They were the makings of future criminals; yet, had they a chance, they might become the noblest citizens. Before each newsboy John Drumgoole stood as had stood Michelangelo before the unhewn block of marble. Michelangelo had said, "There is an angel imprisoned in that stone! I will get my mallet and my chisel and set that angel free!" Drumgoole gazed upon the rags and filth of the street gamin, saying, "There is a man imprisoned there! I will use my hand and heart to set that manhood free!"

The means he resolved to use was to work as a priest among them. But long years from books had made his mind quite incapable of grasping the speculative niceties of mental training. His mind was one eminently practical. He grasped facts better than principles. But he had a great heart; and a heart working with God can do what the keenest intellects without Him find impossible. When he came to Niagara he knew little more than the rudiments of Latin. His textbooks being in that language made him almost despair. But Father Landry did not take long to discern that here was a special vocation. He adopted him as a private pupil, helped him in his translations, drilled the principles of theology into him, and in four years recommended him for ordination. None foresaw the brilliant future, but Fathers Landry and O'Donohue did foresee something beyond the ordinary. On May 22nd of '69, Bishop Ryan in the little chapel ordained him; and the sexton immediately went back to his old parish as curate. As he departed, Father O'Donohue wrote in his diary: "In going away, as ever while here, his whole manner showed what real love he bore for our Lady of Angels with her faculty and boys. Father Landry who particularly did so much

in preparing Mr. Drumgoole for the priesthood left after dinner to assist Father John at his first Mass."

The newly ordained at once took up the work for the out-cast boys. The St. Vincent de Paul Society of his parish had grown discouraged and their work had languished. He volunteered to take up the work. In three years he had built the Newsboys' Home, and had started the "St. Joseph's Union," a paper to help finance it. In October five years later at Saratoga we find the sages of the "Social Science Convention" listening to him as to a master. They might not be of his religion, but they recognized that he had something they lacked, as he boldly told them: "If you want good and valiant soldiers, cultivate the heart. If you want honest voters, politicians and legislators who will faithfully perform their duties, and in their actions be governed more by the justice of God and the welfare of their country than by temporal gain, then, I say, cultivate the heart of the child..... I find that with proper care all boys can be reclaimed. I have had boys who were some of the worst characters in New York, who, after a few months were entirely reclaimed. They are now holding situations of trust, being highly respected by their employers for their honesty and industry."

When in '82 he had moved to his new quarters on Staten Island, the sages saw buildings, costing more than a million dollars, erected through one man's devotion to St. Joseph, the Father of the Poor—buildings that would annually care for two thousand destitute children. How had this one man done such wondrous work? By adopting the methods of St. Vincent de Paul, the greatest sociologist of the last three hundred years, who had but one teacher and one textbook, and who professed to know naught else but this Teacher and this text—Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And when the Newsboys' Friend had died in '88 it was his old Vincentian friend, Father Landry, who sang his requiem.

A few weeks after Mr. Drumgoole, the sexton, had left Niagara a priest, another man, an accountant, entered. The

former was from the eastern part of the state, the latter from the western—from Buffalo. The Buffalo accountant was destined for even a greater work. In the Monsignor Baker of 1931 you would hardly suspect the Nelson Baker of 1870. True, he is among the charter members of the olden Total Abstinence Society, and one of the first prefects of the Sodality; but he is, also, one of the rollicking black-faced comedians of the minstrel shows, Dick Dawson in Handy Andy, and the irrepressible singer of Irish "Come-All-Ye's." From an old diary of John Mollen (whoever he was: Monsignor Baker may remember, if anyone has the courage to ask him) we learn that Nelson Baker's Irish songs once almost wrecked the staid decorum of the seminary and college. It seems that the faculty had resolved to give a higher tone to the musicales. Classicism was to reign supreme. St. Patrick's night, '71, was chosen to inaugurate the higher standards. Had the faculty chosen the feast of the slaying of St. Stephen, or of the Forty Martyrs, or of St. Cecilia, or even Mary Magdalene, the audience might have been in a more penitential, or, at least, a more receptive mood. But of all times when Irish audiences feel least classical it is on St. Patrick's night.

The President, Father Rice, was in his room; but in the audience the faculty contained such names as O'Donohue, O'Keefe, Maloney and Murphy (a Vincentian seminarian), Carroll, Cavanagh and Kavanagh, Hickey, Burns and Shaw. The other names smack not so soundly of Hibernian blood. The audience, seminarians, collegians and townsfolk were, possibly, ninety per cent of Hibernian lineage. Father Kavanagh was Prefect of Discipline. We are not sure, but we fancy that the Prefect could not really distinguish between classic melange and lemon meringue, save for the fact that the former lasted longer. But most of the audience could, and, unfortunately, did. After listening patiently to three or four numbers from the grand old masters, the audience had a sudden attack of eczematic feet that, like Rachel, refused to be comforted. The next number released a perfect beehive

throughout the hall—a buzzing punctuated with coughs from throats which had unexpectedly become tubercular. But the singer was brave; microbes could not scare the music from his starched shirt. A few improvised snores conclusively proved that man, tired man, can drop to dreamland in the twinkling of an eye. The snores brought the massive form of the Prefect to his feet. That music in the rear certainly was not classical: no one need dare try to fool him on that. His gaze slew all the bees, soothed all the feet, awoke the sleepers and assuaged the throats. But soon after he had sat down, the foci of infection became virulent, and from endemic became epidemic. Just then Nelson Baker appeared on the stage, and began a song with an “uummyah” to it. The Prefect was forced to recognize the sociological principle that, for eliciting mass interest and quelling mob mutterings, “uummyah’s” from a platform are stronger than “ahem’s” from a Prefect. The little accountant had done what the giant Prefect had not—had restored perfect quiet, restored it at least till he had bowed himself off the stage. Then the audience went wild for an encore. He again appeared with more “uummyah’s”, retired; and the audience went wilder. A third time he came with still more “uummyah’s.” Pandemonium reigned. He seemed to have an endless string of “Come-All-Ye’s,” and the audience wanted the whole string. However, several classics remained yet to be delivered; but every time he stopped and the next artist hesitatingly appeared, the audience yelled, “We want Baker! We want Baker!” The Prefect rose again, but they all continued to tell him their desires. He put up his hand slowly; but they, evidently, could not see it on account of the noise. Then he thundered “Silence!”, but they could not hear it. For once he was powerless. Disorder had burst all bounds, and seemed to defy all control. An “SOS” to the President’s room brought Father Rice. The spare form and the placid face brought quiet. He scarcely more than whispered his astonishment at their conduct; and, besides—it was time to go to bed. No one that night thought

that the happy singer would be the one to bring songs of cheer to countless broken hearts throughout the country, life to thousands of dying babes, hope to age forsaken by its children, and courage to youthful breasts battered by the world's cruel blows.

In '74, May, still a seminarian, he started for Europe, bearing to Pius IX the tribute of Niagara's sons. On St. Joseph's day, '76, in the old Cathedral of St. Joseph, Buffalo, he was ordained, and came back to Niagara to say his first Mass in the Seminary Chapel. Then he began his life work of charity; but his charity began at home: in November he supplied the chairs for the seminarians' recreation rooms; and almost every year since then he has come to make his retreat in the place he long ago learned to love.

Who would suspect that one little man could do all that he has done for the poor, not only of Buffalo, but of the whole country. Of the broken-hearted unfortunate from the middle west no questions are asked. The old man abandoned by his children, the young babe abandoned by its mother, the tattered waif seeking sustenance from the garbage in the alleys—all are taken in, and no mention made of money. They are clothed, fed, cheered. The young are taught a trade, are educated and after years are sent out into the world, with their chins high in air, faith and hope in their hearts.

His plant on the outskirts of Buffalo resembles more a little town than a section of a great city. There we see a farm, a dairy, printing and industrial trade schools and a parochial school; a foundling asylum, an orphanage now running for fifty years; a home for destitute and wayward boys, now operating for sixty years; a working boys' home, thirty years in existence; a hospital for women and children; clinics for the poor; a maternity hospital for unfortunate girls, housing three hundred babes, many of whom have been saved from being murdered before birth; a home for the aged; and a national basilica to Our Blessed Mother which cost almost two million dollars to build. He constantly cares for more than

two thousand boys. Since he started his gigantic charities possibly more than half a million boys have come under his care. An army of them have become printers, plumbers, painters, carpenters and merchants. Hundreds of them have become lawyers, doctors, clergymen and aspirants to Congressional honors. And at what an expense! His hospital for unfortunate girls alone costs him \$60,000 a year to run. For all his institutions his bills for simply groceries, meat, milk, and ice amount to more than \$160,000 a year; and his total expenses nigh unto half a million.

How has this little, bent, spare, blind, penniless man accomplished all this? By his devotion to the Mother of God. The faithful throughout the country have recognized that here is a modern Vincent de Paul, and have helped him to help the poor. "Sell what thou hast and give to the poor," said his Master of old. And the little priest sold not only what he had, but all that he was—has spent his time, talent and energies for them whom Christ called blessed. He has drawn all his strength from the font of the Tabernacle, the well with its water "springing up into life everlasting." For years it has been his habit at night never to retire to rest till he has prayed an hour before his Lord on the altar. It might be past midnight when he returns home, after dragging his tired body through the streets in the cause of poverty; no matter; he must tell his Lord all the happenings of the day, and seek from Him strength for the morrow.

Little children instinctively recognize the spirit of the Saviour in this tottering wizened form. On the street they run to him and encircle him. Though he cannot well see them, he knows that their hearts are the hearts of them of whom Jesus said, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me." Daily three hundred of them (not they who are the objects of his charity, but they who attend his parochial school) three hundred of them daily receive Holy Communion. Mistake not: they do not do so under any coercion or undue persuasion, but under the sweet desire to be with Him whom Father

Baker loves. And to them he furnishes gratuitously daily rolls and coffee before they enter the classroom. Not long ago we asked him: "But how do you stand the expenses of these daily breakfasts?" He answered, "Dear, dear, dear! You don't have to worry about expenses when you are drawing children to God. He takes care of that."

Wonderful souls—Baker and Drumgoole! On the east and the west you are balancing the charities of your state. Niagara is prouder of you than she is of her statesmen that have thronged the halls of Congress, or of her warriors that have carved paths of glory on the battlefields within the South or beyond the seas. Prouder of you than of her judges that have sat upon the seats of the mighty; or of her doctors that have eased the pains of countless millions; or of her financiers that have raised stacks of gold in guarded vaults; or of her countless priests that have stood in the embassies and have weekly proclaimed their message from Christ their King; or of her bishops that have stood as angels of the churches of the nation, proclaiming in the name of God, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come unto him." Niagara is proud of them all; but prouder of you because you have learned so well the doctrine of St. Vincent de Paul, and have been so rich in your poverty, so loyal to lowliness, so tender to the bruised reed, and gentle with the smoking flax. Because you have taught to the rich the lesson they have so sorely needed—that they can hope to save their souls only by helping the poor. And every alumnus, be he warrior or banker, statesman or judge, priest or bishop will, we feel sure, echo our words. We fear not to speak thus because Drumgoole's dead ears cannot hear what we say, and Baker's blind eyes cannot read what we write. To what Henry A. Meyers, the young collegiate editor of the Index wrote of the latter two years ago we all can well subscribe:

*“He breathes the best who breathes a heartfelt sigh;
Who pities mankind troubled and forlorn;
Throws wide his arms to some mysterious sky,
And is a shrine—an edifice that will not die.”*

Through Monsignor Baker's blind eyes we can look back to the days when he first felt the embrace of Niagara's arms. She was but a child then—only fourteen years of age, and he was twice her age. What changes since those days! More than sixty years have gone. He is very old; and she is younger than ever. His future lies in the glories of eternity: hers, under the blessing of God, lies for many years yet on the lap of earth. In the last three-quarters of a century, thousands of alumni and professors have silently folded

*“Their tents like the Arab,
And have silently stolen away”*

unto the shadows of the valley of death. But what of the future? On this beautiful May morning as we pen these words on the heights of the dancing river, while the sun is kissing the apple blossoms back to life, and the thrush is gushing threnodies from yonder oak, and scores of sturdy robins are standing on the lawn with their heads cocked sidewise, listening for the faintest vibration of the squirming creatures 'neath the sod, or are standing on “tip-toes” and tugging them unto the sunlight—on such a morn as this one feels like playing the prophet. That front line of buildings which stretch like an arc for more than a quarter mile along the greensward scintillates in a warm haze, like distant palaces of dreamland, too beautiful to be true. The changes at Niagara since the Golden Jubilee have been so phenomenal that they urge one to picture what Niagara will be at the Centenary. One fears not to prophesy, because at the Centenary the “seer” will be dead, and will not hear the taunt, “Art thou the prophet!” A stadium will encircle the athletic field. Three more dormitory buildings will stretch eastward towards the railroad. A science building will parallel the pres-

ent Library on the south. The present Library building will extend to the engine house, and the whole addition with the present Library will be used as an auditorium, except that a portion thereof on the second story will serve as a big sacristy for the main chapel. The new Library will be an entire building arching the present ravine south of the cemetery, and overlooking the gorge. But the most superb location is still unoccupied—the twelve acres north of the cemetery above the river. At the Centenary the Vincentian academic department now at Princeton will have been separated from the collegiate and will occupy that site. A mile back from the river near Military Road will stand the Vincentian theological department, forced from its Germantown home because of its congested condition in a big city. Thus most of the Vincentian activities will be centralized on the most glorious spot in the world. Fantastic this? Not so fantastic as he would have been considered who twenty-five years ago had prophesied the present Niagara.

But of one thing this "seer" feels assured: when that Centenary shall have come, one thing will be found unchanged—the spirit of Old Niagara. All her Alumni have felt it, and but few have grown weary in voicing it—the same spirit that breathes in the following letter received last year by the President:

245 Thworloow Building,
Melrose, Mass., Sept. 1st, 1930.

The Rev. John O'Byrne, C.M.

Niagara University, Niagara Falls, N. Y.

Dear Reverend Sir:—

Father Kilb some time before his death asked me to write a song to replace "her rocks and rivers" one. He thought that the latter was too lugubrious. He said that Mr. Sousa had promised to write the music for him if he should supply the words. I began the song a long while ago; then forgot all about it. The other day I came across the copy, and enclose it herewith.

I am sure that Mr. Sousa would be delighted to take the rapids of the river that laves your campus as a stirring theme. There is no better composer in the country for that kind of composition. I am told that you are a musician: you know these things better than I. The marching rapids are as a marching phalanx; and the "March King" is the best to do it justice. I am sure that if you transfer this letter with your request, and give him time, he will give you something that will make your blood tingle.

It always seemed to me that the life of a place is a great deal conditioned by its environment: the river sings the spirit of Niagara University. I still can see myself standing upon the bank, and gazing for hours upon the happy "battle" below. It always entranced me. You have your college song right there. You want something with a march in it, and a laugh-in-battle spirit—something that will trail off readily into a college yell at the end: stirring beauty, ushering in rampant vigor. Mr. Sousa will give you "stir and beauty" as an interpretation of the river; your stalwarts will supply the vigor.

Father Kilb said something about wishing to incorporate it in a volume commemorating your Centenary (sic). That would be a good way to disseminate it—music and words. Have the words printed also on slips of paper for handing around at your Alumni meetings. Your college band, with the collegians singing, would, after a turn or two, bring all the members into the Sousa spirit.

I have not been at an Alumni meeting for nigh thirty years. Rather lukewarm alumnus? No, not that. There is no place I love so well as Old N. U. I am glad to do this for the institution that has done so much for

Yours,

L. I. B. Madden.