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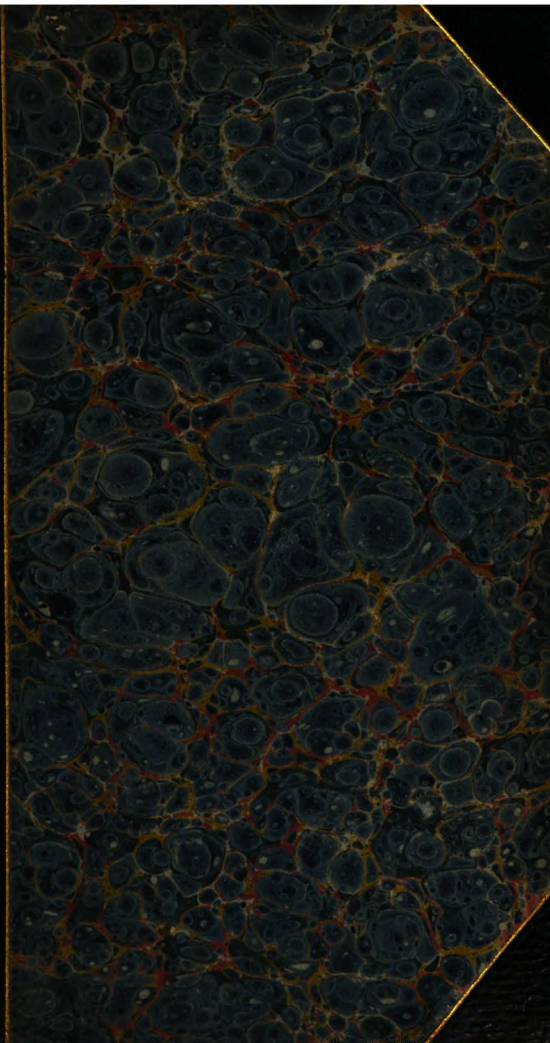
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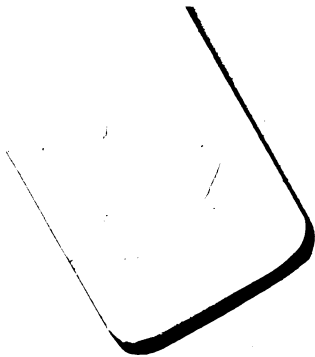
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SOME ACCOUNT
OF THE
Apparition of the Blessed Virgin
AT
LA SALETTE,
IN THE DIOCESE OF GRENOBLE, FRANCE.



LONDON:
Burns and Lambert, 17 Portman Street.

1852.

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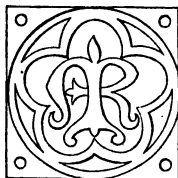
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LONDON :

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THE following pages are intended as a new edition of a little book which was published some time ago, containing a short account of the reported Apparition of the Blessed Virgin to two shepherd children at La Salette in France. The copies which were issued of this former account have been disposed of; and, in consequence of the growing importance which is attached to the miraculous event in question, it has seemed well to prepare for the press another and more complete narrative.

The substance of the present publication will be taken from the "Reports" on the subject by M. Rousselot, Canon of Grenoble and hon. Vicar-general of the diocese, which were drawn up and presented to the Bishop of Grenoble, as the result of the inquiries of the Ecclesiastical Commission which had been appointed to examine the question of the Apparition. Those who are interested to know more than will be found here are referred to these two works of M. Rousselot, in which is

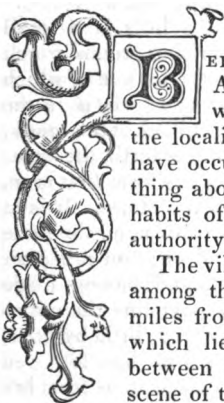
produced every variety of document which incredulity can demand, and all reasonable objections are refuted ; while the unanimous adhesion which has been given to the truth of the story by the whole religious population of France is clearly and simply set forth.

During the past year the children have confided their secrets to the Pope, and the holy Father has not hesitated to express his private conviction of the truth of their recital ; and so general has become the devotion of the Faithful to our Lady of La Salette, that the Bishop of the diocese, after having long thought it his duty to discountenance it, has at length given it his authoritative sanction ; and on the 25th of May in the present year, caused himself, notwithstanding his great age, to be conveyed to the Alpine height where the event took place, and there laid the first stone of a church and of a large building destined for the reception of a community of priests, who are to be established there to serve the altar and to give spiritual assistance to the pilgrims who daily arrive to demand it.

Some account of these circumstances will be given below, as also some portion of the evidence which has been produced in support of the truth of the Apparition.



A. M. D. G.



BEFORE giving an account of the Apparition itself, it will be well to describe in few words the locality in which it is reported to have occurred, and also to say something about the general character and habits of the two children on whose authority the whole relies.

The village of La Salette is situated among the mountains, at about four miles from the little town of Corps, which lies below on the high-road between Grenoble and Gap. The scene of the Apparition is still higher up, and about four miles more from the church of La Salette. Placed in the midst of a circle of mountains, this district is not practicable for carriages; the ascent must be made on foot or on horseback by a path, which is easy as far as the cultivated land extends, but after this point becomes more and more steep and difficult, though not dangerous, until it arrives on the broad flat of the mountain called Sous les Baisses. This level space, formed by three mountains which rise from the same base, and which

do not immediately break off into separate eminences, but grow together, as it were, for a long way up, extends from north to south, and is covered with verdure; as are also the three mountains themselves, which, after their separation and up to their summits, offer to the eye nothing but an extent of short green herbage. Not a stone is to be seen, or the smallest tree or shrub, all round.

In this broad flat among the hills is a small ravine, formed by two lines of rising ground which pass from north and south, at the bottom of which runs the little stream called Sézia. It is in the hollow of this ravine, on the right bank of the brook, and on the spot where now bursts forth the celebrated fountain, that the "fine lady" was first seen, according to the statement of the story. It is at about two or three steps lower down, on the same side, that she spoke to the children; but it is after having crossed the streamlet, and having made twenty-five or thirty steps in ascending the opposite eminence, that she disappeared, little by little, from the eyes of the children, who had followed her, and who were at less than three steps from her when she rose into the air.

In course of time, when the event had begun to attract attention, and was drawing daily crowds of visitors to the place, fourteen crosses were erected along the line which "the lady" traversed, as indicated by the children. Before these crosses a custom has arisen among the strangers of making "the way of the cross;" and on some of them have from time to time been suspended different objects, such as flowers, garlands, crutches, golden chains, jewellery, rings, ear-rings, &c., the gifts of devo-

tion or of gratitude for favours received. The two sides of the little ravine were, before the event, covered with fine green herbage like the rest of the land around. All this grass has, however, long since been worn away; for not only has the spot been trodden by the feet of countless numbers of pilgrims, but it is continually being scraped and torn up by those who are anxious to carry away as relics the blades of grass, some earth, or some morsels of stone. The crosses themselves have not been spared, and are daily cut and hacked by those who wish to take away some pieces of them. The fountain, which before was intermittent, and for some time preceding the Apparition quite dry, has not ceased to flow since that day. The pilgrims hold that its icy water, even when drunk in great quantity and by those in the most profuse perspiration, never produces any bad effects; and it has been sought for with avidity, and carried away and distributed in almost all the countries of Europe. As to the heap of stones on which the children first saw "the lady" sitting, it has entirely disappeared. The people of the neighbourhood and the pilgrims have carried them away as memorials: that stone, however, on which, according to the testimony, "She" was more immediately resting, has come into the possession of the curate of La Salette, who preserves it with respect.

Of the children themselves, the following account was published in the year 1848, in the "Report" of M. Rousselot:—Peter Maximin Giraud was born at Corps, August 27, 1835, of poor parents, who gained their living by the sweat of their brow. His father is a wheelwright.

Maximin is small in size, with a round healthy face; his expression is sweet, and he looks without fear or blushing into the faces of those who interrogate him. He cannot remain an instant without moving his arms and hands. He gesticulates when he talks, and sometimes is so animated that he strikes with his hand any object near him, especially when his interrogator does not seem to agree to what he says. He never gets angry, even when treated as a liar, in the long examinations which he has had to undergo. Sometimes however, exhausted by fatigue and weary of seeing that every word he says is cavilled at, he shews impatience; at least some persons say that they have observed this. But, in truth, on these occasions the poor children had been harassed by a multitude of minute and cavilling objections, which would have embarrassed and even provoked the most reasonable persons. Besides, when Maximin has told his story, and answered the principal difficulties objected to him, he naturally wishes to be gone, and to return to his play. Before the event he never went to school; he could neither read nor write, and was without any education whatever. When taken to church, he often managed to escape in order to go and play with his little companions; so that, devoid of all religious instruction, he was not fit to be admitted among the children whom the curate was preparing for their first communion. His father says that he had great trouble in teaching him to say his "Our Father" and his "Hail Mary," and that it was three or four years before he knew them. It was only in the year 1848, May 7, more than a year

and a half after the event, that he and Mélanie were admitted to make their first communion with the other children of the parish of Corps. Although Maximin has the faults peculiar to his age, he seems to have been always candid and open. Peter Selme, his master at La Salette, when asked by M. Rousselot and the Episcopal Commission what he had remarked in the boy during the few days that he was in his service, replied, "Maximin was an innocent child, without malice and without any forethought. Before he set out to conduct our cows to the mountain we made him eat some soup; then we put into his blouse or bag a supply of food for the day. Well! we have surprised him when he had already on the road eaten all his provisions, having shared them largely with the dog; and when we said to him, 'But what will you eat during the day?' he replied, 'But I am not hungry!'"

The boy seems to be simple and truthful. He acknowledges with great ingenuousness the misery of his former condition and the lowness of his occupations. When he was asked, "Where did you live and what did you do before going into service at Peter Selme's?" he answered, "I lived with my parents, and I used to go and pick up dung on the high-road." He goes further still; he avows his faults and his bad inclinations; so when M. Rousselot said to him, "*Maximin, I am told that before the Apparition at La Salette you were a bit of a story-teller,*" the lad, with a smile and an air of candour, replied, "*What they have told you is true; I did tell lies, and I used to swear as I threw stones after my cows when they strayed out of the path.*"

Since the event of September 19, Maximin goes to school at the convent of the Sisters of Providence. He passes the day and takes his meals there. The Superior of the Sisters, a person of strong sense, has, with the consent of the Bishop, taken charge of his education. When asked by the Commission what she had remarked during the past ten months in the child, she answered, "Maximin seems to have but ordinary abilities. We teach him to read and write and to say his catechism. He is tolerably obedient; but unsteady, fond of play, and always on the move. He never talks to us about the affair of La Salette; and we have avoided mentioning it ourselves for fear of giving him notions of self-importance. Never, after the frequent and long interrogatories which he has had to undergo, has he told any one, either of us or of his school-fellows, who it was who had been examining him, and what questions had been put to him. After his numerous walks up to La Salette with visitors, he comes home as simply and naturally as if he were of no consideration in the affair. I have not wished him to receive the money which some of the pilgrims have offered him; but when on some occasions he has been forced to accept it, he has given it faithfully to me, and has not inquired whether it has been spent on himself or on his parents. As to objects of piety, such as books, crosses, rosaries, medals, pictures, which they give him, he makes no account of them: sometimes he gives them to the first of his little companions whom he meets; often he loses or mislays them from his natural heedlessness of character. He is not naturally pious; nevertheless he willingly goes to Mass, and makes his prayers

with good feeling when he is reminded of this duty. In a word, the child does not seem to perceive in any way that he has been for ten months the object of the curiosity and the attention of so great a multitude of persons ; it does not strike him that he is the primary cause of the prodigious movement of strangers to La Salette." Some time afterwards the Superioress said, before the Commission at the Bishop's palace at Grenoble, " Maximin, although employed almost every day during the past year to serve at Mass, has not yet learned to do so well ; nor can Mélanie say perfectly by heart the acts of faith, hope, and charity, although I have made them both repeat them twice a day."

The little girl, Françoise Mélanie Matthieu, was also born at Corps, the 7th of November, 1831, of very poor parents. While very young she was placed out at service to gain her living by taking care of cows. She rarely went to church, because her masters kept her employed on Sundays and feast-days the same as on other days of the week. She had scarcely any knowledge of religion, and her weak memory could not retain two lines of the Catechism, so that she had not been admitted to make her first communion. At the time of the Apparition she was nearly fifteen years old, but was not well-grown, or strong, or developed in proportion to her age. Her expression is sweet and agreeable. There is a great air of modesty in her bearing and in her looks. Although rather timid, she is not distressed or embarrassed in the presence of strangers. During nine months before September 19, she was in the ser-

vice of Baptiste Pra, proprietor of some little land in one of the hamlets into which La Salette is divided. This person, when interrogated about the character of Mélanie, described her as of an excessive timidity, and so heedless, that when she came home in the evening from the mountain soaked with rain, she did not even ask to change her clothes. Sometimes, from the carelessness of her character, she slept in the stable, and at other times, had she not been observed, would have passed the night in the open air. Baptiste Pra also deposed that before the day of the reported Apparition Mélanie was idle, disobedient, and sullen, so that she would not always answer those who spoke to her; but that since that event she had become active and obedient, and was more attentive to her prayers.

Such were the two children whom it is most certainly believed that the Blessed Virgin selected to be the bearers of a warning message to "her people," and to be the depositories of some mysterious secrets.

Mélanie had been already, as we have said, residing in the parish of La Salette for nine months, in quality of cowkeeper to Baptiste Pra. Maximin had only been there for the four days and a half preceding the Saturday, September 19. He had come for a week only to replace the lad who acted as cowherd to Peter Selme, and who was at that time ill. Peter Selme had been to Corps to beg him of his father for that service, and on the Monday went himself to fetch him.

Although born in the same town of Corps, it does not appear that the children were acquainted

with each other ; either because their parents lived at two opposite extremities of it, or because Mélanie, before going into the service of Baptiste Pra, had lived two years as servant at Quet, and two more at Ste. Luce. During the four days and a half which Maximin had passed at La Salette, he seems not to have fallen in with Mélanie until the Friday, the day preceding the Apparition. His employer gives the following account of him during these days, in a declaration drawn up from his dictation by M. Dumanoir, Doctor of Law, and Judge of the Tribunal of Montelimart, who made many journeys to La Salette, passed some time there, and took on the spot the most exact information on all matters relating to the subject. Peter Selme says : " I went to fetch Maximin on Monday, and took him home with me ; he went on that and the following days to look after my four cows in the field which I have on the southern declivity of the mountain Aux Baisses. This declivity is parcelled out in private properties ; the commune of La Salette has the right of pasturage on the broad flat which is on the northern declivity, and on which took place the events of which Mélanie and Maximin speak. As I was afraid that the little boy would not be sufficiently attentive to the cows, which could easily fall into some of the numerous ravines of the mountain, I went to work myself at this field the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday of the same week. I declare that during these days I did not lose sight of him for an instant, it being easy for me to see him in whatever part of the field he might be, because there is no elevation in it which

could conceal him. I should only add, that on the Monday I took him to the broad flat of which I have spoken, to point out to him a little spring in a small ravine to which he was to take the cows to drink. He took them there every day at mid-day, and returned immediately to place himself under my eye. On the Friday I saw him playing with Mélanie, who watched the cows of Baptiste Pra, whose field is next to mine. I never saw them together at the hamlet. On Saturday, September 19, I went as usual to my field with little Maximin. At about half-past eleven o'clock I told him to take the cows to the fountain. The child said, '*I will go and call Mélanie, and we will go together.*' That day he did not come back as usual after having taken my cows to drink : I did not see him until the evening when he had returned home. I said to him, '*Why, Maximin, how is it you did not come back to my field this afternoon ?*' 'Oh,' said he, '*you do not know what has happened.*' '*What has happened ?*' said I; and he answered, '*We found near the stream a beautiful lady, who amused us a long time, and made Mélanie and me talk with her. I was afraid at first, and did not dare to go and fetch my bread, which was lying near her ; but she said, 'Do not be afraid, my children, approach ; I am here to give you some great news,' &c. ; and then he repeated to me the story exactly as he tells it at present.*' The declaration goes on to say : "During the four days and a half that the little boy kept my cows, I never lost sight of him, and I saw no one, priest or layman, approach him. Mélanie went several times to keep her cows in her own master's field

while Maximin was with me. I saw her constantly alone ; and if any one had come to speak to her I must certainly have seen it, since my field and that of Baptiste Pra are alongside of each other, on the same side of the mountain, and they present a level surface, so that any one standing upright can see all over them both."

The acquaintance, then, between the two children being nothing more than we have described, it was simply the accident of their similarity of occupation which, on the morning of September 19, 1846, led them together to the mountain, on the broad flat of which was the pasturage of their cattle. They had under their charge four cows each, besides a goat belonging to the father of Maximin : the day was fine, the sky clear, and the autumnal sun bright and unclouded. Towards midday, which the shepherds knew by the ringing of the Angelus, they took their little stock of provisions and went to drink at the fountain which oozes forth in the hollow of the ravine. After their meal was over, they went down to the little stream which runs along the bottom, and having crossed it, they deposited their provision-bags separately near the source of another intermittent spring, which then was dry ; and afterwards going on a few paces, they lay down, contrary to their usual custom, at some few paces from each other, and fell asleep. The story shall be continued in the words of Mélanie. "I awoke the first, and could not see the cows. I aroused Maximin, and said, '*Come quickly, Maximin ; let us go and look after our cows.*' We crossed the stream, mounted the little ascent in front of us, and saw our cows

lying on the grass on the other side : they were not far off. We turned round and went down to get the little bags which we had left by the stream. I was first; and when I was at about five or six steps from the stream, I saw a shining light, like the sun, and even brighter, but not of the same colour; and I said to Maximin, '*Come quickly; look at the brightness down there;*' and Maximin came down, saying to me, '*Where is it?*' I pointed with my finger towards the little fountain; and when he saw it, he stopped still. Then we saw a lady in the brightness: she was sitting down, and had her head in her hands. We were afraid. I let my stick fall. Then Maximin said to me, '*Keep your stick; if it does anything to us, I will give it a good blow.*' Then this lady rose upright; she crossed her arms, and said to us:

'Come on, my children, do not be afraid; I am here to announce to you some great news.'

Then we passed the stream, and she came forward to the spot where we had been sleeping. She was between us. She wept all the time she was speaking: I plainly saw the tears running down her face.* She said:

'If my people will not submit, I shall be forced to let fall the hand of my Son.'

'It is so strong and so heavy that I can no longer hold it up.'

'How long a time have I been suffering for you!

'If I wish that my Son should not abandon you, I must pray to Him unceasingly.'

'And you, you make no account of this.'

* The children say that they at first thought what they saw was "some woman who had been beaten by her son!"

' You may pray and may do as much as you like, never can you recompense me for what I have done for you.

*' I have given you six days for work ; the seventh I have reserved for myself ; and they will not allow me even that. This it is which so weighs down the hand of my Son.**

' Men swear as they drive their carts, and put my Son's name in their oaths.

' These are the two things which weigh down the arm of my Son.

' If the harvest fails, it is on account of your sins : I let you see this last year by the potatoes ; you paid no attention to it ; on the contrary, when you found the potatoes spoiled, you swore, and put the name of my Son in your oaths : the disease shall continue ; and this year at Christmas there shall be no potatoes at all.'

I did not understand what was meant by 'pommés de terre ;' † I was going to ask Maximin what 'pommés de terre' meant, and then the lady said :

' Ah, my children, you do not understand ; I will speak differently ;' and then she continued in the patois of the country :

' If the potatoes are spoiled, it is from your own fault : I let you see this last year, and you would not attend to it ; on the contrary, when you found

* From the very first the remark was made to the children that this change to the first person did not agree with the rest of the words of the Lady. They contented themselves with replying that they spoke it as they heard it. In truth, this change of the person is the more impressive, and recalls the "I the Lord" in the mouth of Moses.

† At Corps, and in many parts of Dauphiny, potatoes are called "truffes."

the potatoes spoiled, you swore, and put the name of my Son in your oaths.

'The disease shall last; so that this year at Christmas there shall be no potatoes at all.

'If you have any corn, you need not sow it: all that you shall sow shall be eaten by the animals; or, if any does grow up, it shall fall in dust when you thresh it.

'There shall come a great famine.

'Before the coming of the famine, the children below seven years of age shall have convulsions, and shall die in the arms of those who hold them; the rest shall do penance by hunger.

'The nuts shall become bad; the grapes shall rot.

'If men will be converted, the rocks and stones shall be changed into heaps of corn; and potatoes shall be sown all over the land.

'Are you particular in saying your prayers, my children?'

We answered, both of us, *'Not very, madam.'*

'You must be very particular, both morning and evening: when you can do no more, say only a Pater and an Ave; and when you have the time, say more.

'No one goes to Mass but a few old women: the rest work during the Sunday all the summer; and in the winter, when they do not know what else to do, the boys go, but only to make a mock at religion. During Lent they go like dogs to the butchers' stalls.

'Have you not seen any of the spoiled corn, my child?'

Maximin answered: *'Oh no, madam.'* I did not know of which of us she asked that question, and I answered very gently, *'No, madam; I have not seen any.'*

'You must have seen some, you my child' (addressing herself to Maximin), 'once at the field called 'the corner,' with your father.

'The owner of the land told your father to go and see his corn that was spoiled. You went both of you to see it. You took two or three ears in your hands, rubbed them, and all fell into dust; afterwards you went back homeward. When you were at about half an hour's distance from Corps, your father gave you a piece of bread, and said to you, 'Take this, my child, you have still bread to eat this year. I do not know who will have any to eat next year, if the wheat continues like that.'*

Maximin answered: 'Oh yes, madam, I remember now; just now I did not remember it.'

After that the lady said to us in French: 'Well, my children, you will let this be known to all my people.'

She crossed the stream, and said to us a second time: 'Well, my children, you will let this be known to all my people.' Then she went up to the spot to which we had gone to look for our cows.

Her feet did not touch the ground: she glided along the tops of the blades of grass. We followed her. I went before the lady, and Maximin a little at the side, two or three paces from her. And then this beautiful lady rose up a little in the air (Mélanie here indicated with her hand the height from the ground which she wished to express,

* When Maximin recounted at home, at Corps, what had happened to him on the hill, his family did not believe him; but when he mentioned the incident narrated above, his father burst into tears, and was convinced that some supernatural being had been speaking to his child.

about two or three feet). Then she looked up to heaven, then down to the earth; then we could not see her head any more; then we could not see her arms; and then we could not see her feet any more. We saw nothing but a brightness in the air; and soon the brightness went away also. And I said to Maximin, 'Perhaps it is a great Saint;' and Maximin said to me, 'If we had known that it was a great Saint, we would have told her to take us with her;' and I said to him, 'Oh, I wish that she were still here!' Then Maximin thrust out his hand to catch a little of the brightness;* but nothing of it was left. And we looked a long time to see if we could not see her any more; and I said, 'She will not let herself be seen, so that we may not see where she goes.' After that we went to look after our cows."

Here Mélanie was asked: Did she not give you a secret?

A. Yes, sir. But she told us not to tell it.

Q. About what did she speak?

A. If I tell you what it is about, you will find out what it is.

Q. When did she tell you this secret?

A. After having spoken about the nuts and grapes; but before she told it to me, it seemed to me that she spoke to Maximin; and I heard nothing of what she said.

Q. Did she tell you your secret in French?

A. No, sir; in patois.

Q. How was she dressed?

A. She had on white shoes, with roses about

* Maximin in his account adds, "and to catch the flowers which were about her feet."

her shoes. The roses were of all colours. Her socks were yellow; her apron yellow; and her gown white, with pearls all over it. She had a white neckerchief with roses round it; a high cap, a little bent in front; a crown round her cap with roses. She had a very small chain, to which was attached a crucifix; on the right were some pincers, on the left a hammer; at the extremities of the cross was another large chain, which fell like the roses round her neckerchief. Her face was white and long. I could not look at it for a very long time, because it dazzled us."

The account which we have given above is more exact than any that has hitherto appeared. It gives word for word that which the children said the first day after the event, and that which they have since so often repeated. They say it now like a lesson which is familiar to them; but the masters of the two children, their parents, the Mayor of La Salette, the inhabitants of Corps and La Salette, as well as a great number of ecclesiastics and distinguished persons, strangers to the neighbourhood, who visited the spot soon after the event, affirm that the children gave from the first exactly the same story, if not with the same volubility and facility, at least without the slightest variation in the substance, or even in the expressions, whether they were questioned separately or together.

In the pamphlet of M. Rousselot the narrative of Maximin is given also as it was taken from himself at his examination before the Episcopal Commission. There are a few verbal differences between it and that of Mélanie; but the whole ac-

count is so nearly the same in substance, and even in phraseology, that it has not appeared necessary to add it to the other.

With respect to the secrets confided to them, they have from the first day to the present time maintained a most impenetrable silence, excepting in the case of the Pope, to whom they have spontaneously revealed their mystery. When "the lady" gave the secret to the one, the other did not hear and saw only her lips move. The secret was given first to Maximin, afterwards to Mélanie; but the one did not know that the other had received a secret. It was only after the vision was over that Maximin said to Mélanie, "She stopped a long time without speaking; I only saw her lips move; what was she saying?" Mélanie answered, "She told me something, but I cannot tell it to you, because she told me not to do so." Maximin immediately answered, "Oh, I am so glad, Mélanie; she told me something also, but I must not tell it to you either." It was thus that they perceived that they were each in possession of a secret.

This is perhaps the place for stating what is known about the transmission of their secrets to the Pope.

During the past year 1851 the children, in the presence of certain persons named by the Bishop of Grenoble, wrote each on a sheet of paper, which was folded and sealed by the writer, the secrets entrusted to them. The Bishop then directed M. Rousselot and another priest to carry these sealed packets to Rome, and deliver them into the hand of the Holy Father. This was done. His

Holiness first broke the seal of the one and read it without making any remark. On perusing the other he walked with it to the window; and after having read it, said, "It is not only France that has sinned, but Germany, Italy—all Europe." When M. Rousselot went to take leave of Cardinal Lambruschini, the Cardinal said, "I know the secret; the Holy Father has confided it to me."

To continue the narrative. The children remained on the hill until it was time to conduct their cows home, which they did as usual; and having placed them in their stalls, they began, in accordance with the instructions which they had received from "the lady," to announce in the village the events of the day. "On Saturday," says Baptiste Pra, in his declaration, "they came both together to tell me what they had seen and heard on the hill. During this and the first few days I attached no credit to the story, and I often urged Mélanie to accept the money that was offered her on condition that she would keep silence on the subject. She persisted in refusing to do so, and was equally insensible to threats and promises of reward. The Mayor of Salette, among others, employed in vain every sort of means to make the little girl contradict herself. He did not succeed. He then offered her money; she refused it, and in reply to his threats said, that she would always repeat everywhere what the Blessed Virgin had said to her. The Mayor interrogated her for a whole hour during the Sunday, September 20."

On the Sunday they were taken to the curate, to whom they told their story. He was a good old man, of great simplicity, who seems to have

believed them immediately, and to have wept with tenderness at their recital. He went so far as to mention it from the pulpit the same day, although from the commotion of his feelings it was with great difficulty that he could speak on the subject. Ten days afterwards he was removed to another cure by the Bishop, and a younger priest appointed to his place.

During the Sunday the whole parish was in movement to the spot. They had of course no means of judging whether the story of the children was true or false; but one thing struck immediately all those who were acquainted with the locality, namely, that the fountain, which the day before and for some time previously had been dry, now sent forth a full body of very pure water, having nothing of the brackish taste of the stream which runs by. This spring has continued to flow ever since; and it is by the use of the water which comes from it that so many wonderful miracles have been wrought confirmatory of the Apparition. It was in the course of this same day that the Mayor of La Salette, whose business it was to suppress such a scandal if the story were a deception, subjected Mélanie to an hour's interrogatory. He offered her a large sum of money, threatened her with the judgment of God, and finally with prison, unless she would tell who it was that had prompted her to this, and unless she would hold her tongue. He some days after sent to Corps for Maximin, and made them both go through the same cross-examination, employing the same harsh or coaxing means to induce them to discover the fraud. He has himself drawn up a declaration to this effect,

and he says that the children always answered him, "We cannot help telling what we have seen and what we have heard; we were ordered to tell it." He adds, that the account which they gave then was the same in every particular as that which they give at present.

Maximin had been taken home to his father at Corps by his master, Peter Selme, during this Sunday morning, as the week for which he had been engaged had expired. Mélanie remained in the service of her employer until near Christmas.

Meanwhile the fame of this event was extending in all directions, and, strengthened by the report that various miracles had been wrought on the spot, and also at a distance, by the use of water from the spring, was bringing to the scene of the Apparition a number of visitors, which every day increased. Finally, the civil authority, in the person of the magistrate of the district, thought it necessary to take cognisance of the affair; and on the 22d of May 1847, eight months after the event, the children were summoned separately, and informed, that being now before a court of justice, they must speak the exact truth. They were then interrogated apart, one after the other; then confronted together, and very seriously threatened with punishment if any contradiction should appear in their statements. Their account varied in no way from that which they gave the first evening, and which they have since given to every interrogator. A report of this examination was drawn up on the spot, forwarded to the king's attorney at Grenoble, and formally produced at the bar of the court of appeal in that city. The magistrate

of Corps, in his letter to the king's attorney, says, "This account differs in no way from that which they gave to their masters on the evening of September 19, after their return from the hill. If there be any difference, it is in the words; the substance is the same."

We will here do no more than allude to the numerous letters which from time to time appeared from ecclesiastics and other persons of distinction who had visited what now began to be called the "Holy Mountain." One most valuable piece of testimony, however, we must give at its full length, both in regard to the eminent character of its author, and also from the very effective and unprejudiced manner in which the whole subject is therein treated.

The present Bishop of Orleans, then so well known in the French Church as M. Dupanloup, thus writes to a friend who had solicited his opinion on the question of the Apparition :

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have followed your counsel and made a visit to La Salette. I have only just returned from my journey. I believe it to be your wish that I should impart to you, in all simplicity, the result of the observations which I have made, and of the impressions which I have received there.

First, I must acknowledge that I undertook this pilgrimage without any favourable inclination; not that I wish to detract in any way from the merit due to the many publications which have appeared on the subject, and which I had care-

fully studied; but the whole tone of enthusiasm and vivacity with which those works are written had inspired me with prejudices against the fact which they were intended to maintain.

I have passed nearly three days between Corps and La Salette: the personal impressions which I have received there have been, I must own, without any charm, almost without any emotion.

I came back as I went, without feeling any attachment to the scene; I would almost say without interest, at least without that interest which springs from enthusiasm. And yet the farther I go from the spot, and the more I reflect on all that I have seen and heard there, the more strong is the conviction which reflection produces in me, and which comes on me in some sort against my will. I cannot refrain from saying to myself continually, 'It cannot be but that the finger of God is here.'

Three circumstances in particular appear to offer strong marks of truth:—Firstly, *The simplicity of character which the children have always maintained.* Secondly, *The numerous answers, absolutely above their age and capacity, which they have made off-hand in the different interrogatories which they have undergone.* Thirdly, *The fidelity with which they have kept the secrets which they say have been confided to them.*

1st, *The unchanged simplicity of character of the children.*

I have seen these two children. The first scrutiny which I gave them made a disagreeable impression on me; the little boy in particular was especially distasteful to me. I have seen many

children in my life, and have met with few or none who have so little attracted me. His manners, his movements, his look,—all his exterior is repulsive, to my eyes at least.

One thing which perhaps added to the bad impression which he gave me was, that he bore a singular resemblance to one of the most disagreeable and worst boys whom I ever had to educate.

In speaking thus of the idea which I formed of this little boy, I do not pretend to attack in any way the more agreeable impressions which he has left on others. I only wish to express my own feelings. At least, if my testimony comes at last to be favourable to these children, it will be without suspicion; certainly it will have been nothing in themselves which seduced me. There is great rudeness in Maximin; his continual restlessness is really extraordinary; he has a disposition singularly light and fantastic, but accompanied with such rudeness and occasional violence, that the first day on which I saw him I was not only saddened, but even disheartened, and said to myself, 'Why have I come so far to see such a child? what a folly I have committed!' I had all the trouble in the world to prevent myself from entertaining the gravest suspicions.

As to the little girl, she also appeared to me in her way very disagreeable. Her manner, however, is, I should say, better than that of the little boy; the eighteen months which she has passed with the Sisters of Providence at Corps have, they say, formed her a little. Notwithstanding that however, she appeared to me to be still a sullen,

slovenly, silent being, never saying any thing when she answered but 'yes' and 'no.' If she does say something more, there is always in her answers a certain stiffness and a timidity which comes from sullenness, and which by no means puts one at ease with her.

In a word, after having seen each of these children many times, I have not found in them any of the charms peculiar to their age; they have not, or at least do not appear to have, any of that piety and that infantine candour which touches and attracts one and inspires confidence.

The little boy especially I have observed long and frequently, more particularly on the day on which he went up to La Salette with me. We passed about fourteen hours together on that occasion. He came to meet me at the inn at five o'clock in the morning; he accompanied me to the mountain of the Apparition, and we did not part from each other until seven o'clock in the evening. Certainly I had full time to look him well over, to study him carefully, and to turn him about as I pleased. And I did my best to do so. There was not a moment, I should say, in which he was not the object of my most attentive scrutiny, and, indeed, of deep distrust. There was not a moment in which he was not distasteful to me; and it was only in the afternoon, when it was getting late, that by degrees, as it were in spite of myself, a favourable impression took hold of me. Almost without being aware of it, and contrary to my personal feelings, as I observed and listened to all I saw and heard, I was forced to exclaim, 'Despite of all that is so repulsive in these children, all they

say, and all I see and hear, is only explicable on the supposition of the truth of their story.'

At Grenoble I had been informed of the manner in which the children would recite to me the incidents of their narrative. I was told that they went through it like a lesson. It was added, that some excuse could be made for them on that score, as during eighteen months they had repeated the same story so many thousand times, that it was not wonderful if it were become for them a mere routine. I was disposed to excuse them on this point, provided that the routine and recitation were not absolutely ridiculous; but the impression on my mind was quite the contrary to that I had anticipated. Although the children did not please me at all before they told their story, and continued to be equally unattractive in my eyes afterwards, I must acknowledge that they went through the recital with a simplicity, a gravity, a seriousness, and a certain religious respect, which, contrasted with the vulgar and habitually rude tone of the little boy and the habitually sullen character of the little girl, struck me particularly.

I should add, that this astonishment was constantly renewed during these two days, especially with regard to the little boy, who passed, as I have already said, a whole day with me. I then put him perfectly at his ease, and let him take any liberty he pleased; all his faults, all his rudeness, then appeared most undisguisedly.

And yet, every time that this rude child was brought back, even in the most sudden manner, to talk of the great event, there was wrought in him a strange, deep, and instantaneous change; and

the same was the case with the young girl. The little boy still retains his disagreeable exterior, but that which was excessive in his rudeness is now quite lost. They become on a sudden so grave and so serious; they assume, as it were involuntarily, something so singularly simple and ingenuous, so full of respect for themselves, as well as for the subject of which they are speaking, that they inspire in those who listen to them, and almost impose on them, a sort of religious awe for the things which they relate, and a sort of respect for their persons. I experienced constantly and very vividly these impressions, without losing for a moment my feelings of aversion for the children personally.

I will make here an observation which has reference to that which I have just remarked. When they speak of the great event of which they profess to have been witnesses, or when they answer the questions addressed to them with reference to it, this singular respect for what they are saying goes so far, that when it happens that they make one of these answers, truly astonishing and perfectly unexpected, which confound their interrogators, cut short all indiscreet questions, and resolve simply, profoundly, and entirely the greatest difficulties, they assume no air of triumph whatever. Their examiners are astounded, but themselves they remain unaffected. The slightest smile never passes for an instant over their lips.

Moreover, they never answer the questions which are addressed them but in the most simple and the shortest manner. Their simplicity is sometimes rustic, but the exactness and precision

of their replies is always extraordinary. As soon as the conversation turns on the great event, they appear to have no more any of the ordinary faults of their age; especially is it observable that they are then by no means prattlers and chatterers. On other occasions Maximin talks a great deal; when he is at his ease, he is a regular little gossip. During the fourteen hours that we passed together he gave me continual proof of this quality in him; he talked to me of every thing with a great flow of words, asking me questions without any restraint, being the first to give me his opinion, and contradicting mine. But with respect to the event of which he speaks, with respect to his own impressions, his fears or his hopes for the future, and all which has reference to the Apparition, he is no longer the same child. On this point he never takes the lead in conversation, or commits any fault whatever against propriety.

He never enters into any detail further than is necessary to reply to the question addressed to him, which he answers with great precision. When he has gone through the account which he has been charged to deliver, and has answered the interrogations put to him, he holds his tongue. One is anxious, one wishes, that he would talk on, would give some details, and would enter into some statement about his own feelings at the time and since the event; but no—not a word does he add beyond the necessary reply. Soon he takes up the thread of the conversation which his story has interrupted, speaks with great freedom on any other subject, or goes away.

It is certain that they have neither the one nor

the other any desire to talk of the event which has made them so famous.

From all that I could learn on the spot, they never talk unnecessarily on the subject with any body, either with their companions, with the Sisters of Providence who bring them up, or with strangers. When they are questioned, they answer; if it be the history of the event which is asked of them, they give it simply; if a difficulty be proposed, they give a plain solution of it; they add nothing superfluous, and at the same time withhold nothing. They never refuse to reply to the questions put to them, but it is quite impossible to make them ever for one moment in what they say lose sight of the just standard of propriety. You may put to them as many indiscreet questions as you please, never is there any indiscretion in their answers. Indeed, discretion, the most difficult of all the virtues, is (on this subject alone) natural to them to an unheard-of degree. Press them as much as you please, you find in them something invincible, which they cannot explain to themselves, which beats down all attacks, and mocks involuntarily and securely at the strongest and most trying temptations.

Whoever is well acquainted with children, and has studied their nature, so light, unsteady, vain, talkative, indiscreet, and prying, and shall make the same experiments that I have done, will share in my wonder and astonishment, and will ask himself, whether it be by the two children that he is baffled, or by some power superior and divine.

I will add, that during the past two years the two children and their parents have remained as

poor as before. This is a fact which I have verified sufficiently for my own satisfaction, and which it is most easy to prove beyond a doubt.

I will set down here one observation which I have made, and that is this : that the two children, and more particularly Maximin, of whom I have seen much more than of the other, seem to have retained, in spite of the honour which they have received and the celebrity which attaches to them, a simplicity and, I will say, a spirit of humility so profound, that these qualities appear quite natural to them, and cannot be called acquired virtues. It seems as if it would be impossible for them to be otherwise than they are ; and all this with a sort of indifferent candour, which is quite astounding when one sees them closely and reflects on their behaviour.

The fact is, that they do not understand the honours which they have received, and seem to have no idea of the interest which attaches to their names. They have seen thousands of pilgrims, 60,000 in one day, come in consequence of their story to the mountain of La Salette. They have given themselves in consequence no airs of importance whatever, or have shewn any assumption in their words and manners. They regard all this without any astonishment, without a thought, or any reference to themselves. And, in a word, if what they say be true, they look on their mission in the same light as that in which the Blessed Virgin herself regarded it. She did not profess to do them an honour ; she professed merely to choose for herself some witnesses who should be above all suspicion, by a simplicity so profound,

so entire, and so extraordinary, that nothing could be comparable to it, and that it could not be explained or understood from natural causes; and she succeeded in her choice.

Such is the first mark of truth which I discover in these children.

2d. *The second mark I find in the numerous replies, altogether above their age and capacity, which they have made off-hand in the different interrogatories to which they have been subjected.*

For it must be remarked, that never in a court of justice have culprits been so harassed with questions about the crime with which they are charged, as these two poor little peasant children have been for two years on the matter of the vision which they narrate. Difficulties often prepared beforehand, sometimes long and insidiously planned, have always received from them ready, precise, and most clear answers. It is palpable that they would be absolutely incapable of such presence of mind if what they say were not true. They have been led like malefactors to the very spot of the Apparition, or of the imposture, if imposture it be, and neither have they been disconcerted by the presence of the most distinguished persons, nor frightened by menaces and abuse, nor seduced by coaxing and caressing, nor fatigued by the longest examinations; moreover, the frequent repetition of all these trials has never caused them to contradict either themselves or each other. It is not possible for two human beings to have less the air of being accomplices in a fraud; and were they really such, they must have a genius such as has never hitherto been

known, to enable them to be so constantly uniform in their account, and in accordance with themselves and with each other, during the two years which have witnessed, without interruption, this strange and rigorous trial. Mingled with all this consistency, is the contrast resulting from their rudeness of manners, impatience, and a certain sullenness of humour, and at the same time, when the Apparition is the subject of the conversation, a sweetness of behaviour, a calmness and presence of mind quite imperturbable, and a reserve and discretion impenetrable to all,—parents, companions, acquaintances, every body who has ever conversed with them.

I will now give you some of the questions and answers with which I am furnished, both by my own personal recollections, and also by the reports drawn up in due form, and deposited at Grenoble, of which I can guarantee the authenticity.

Q. To Mélanie. The lady, then, gave you a secret, and forbade you to tell it. Well and good; but tell me at least if this secret has reference to yourself or to some one else.

Mélanie. Whoever it be to whom it refers, she forbade us to tell it.

Q. Is your secret something which you have to do?

Mélanie. Whether it be something which I have to do or not, that is nobody's business: she forbade us to tell it.

Q. You are not perhaps aware that God has revealed your secret to a holy nun? but I had rather hear it from you, and to assure myself that you speak truth.

Mélanie. Since this nun knows it, she can tell it to you. I will not tell it.

Q. You must, however, tell your secret to your confessor, from whom you should conceal nothing.

Maximin. My secret is not a sin ; in confession one is only obliged to tell one's sins.

Q. Suppose you had to tell your secret or die?

Maximin (firmly). I would die. I would not tell it.

Q. If the Pope were to ask you your secret, you would be obliged to tell him ; for the Pope is greater than the Blessed Virgin.

Maximin. The Pope greater than the Blessed Virgin ! If the Pope does his duty well, he will be a saint, but he will always be less than the Blessed Virgin.

Q. But perhaps it was the devil who gave you your secret ?

Maximin. No, for the devil does not wear a crucifix, and the devil would not forbid blasphemy.

Mélanie (to the same question). The devil can talk well, but I do not think that he can tell secrets like that. He would not forbid swearing, he would not wear a cross, and he would not order people to go to Mass.

Q. I do not wish to ask of you your secret. But this secret regards, without doubt, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. It must be known after your death ; and this is what I advise you to do : write your secret in a letter, which you shall seal yourself, and you shall cause it to be put in the Bishop's bureau. After the death of

the Bishop and of yourself the letter will be read, and you will have kept your secret.

Maximin. But some one may be tempted to unseal my letter. Besides, I do not know those who go to the bureau.

Then said he, putting his hand first on his mouth and afterwards on his heart—‘My best bureau is here.’

To Maximin. You desire to be a priest: well, tell me your secret, and I will take charge of you. I will write to the Bishop, who will bring you through your studies for nothing.

Maximin. If in order to be a priest it should be necessary for me to tell my secret, I shall never be one.

Q. To Mélanie. You did not understand French, and did not go to school; how, then, could you remember what the lady said to you in that language? Did she say it a great many times?

Mélanie. Oh, no; she only said it once, and I remembered it perfectly. Besides, even when I did not understand it exactly myself in repeating what she said to us, those who understood French understood it; that was sufficient, even when I did not understand it myself.

Q. The lady deceived you, Maximin. She predicted a famine, and yet the harvest is good every where.

Maximin. What is that to me? she said so to me; that is her affair.

To this question the children answered on other occasions, ‘But perhaps they have done penance?’

Q. Do you know that the lady whom you saw is safely lodged in the prison at Grenoble?

Maximin. He was a clever man who took her.

Q. The lady you saw was but a bright and shining cloud.

Maximin. But a cloud does not speak.

A Priest. You are a little liar, and I don't believe you.

Maximin. What is that to me? I was charged to tell this to you, not to make you believe it.

Another Priest. Look you, I don't believe you; you are a liar.

Maximin (with vivacity). Then why come so far to question me?

A Priest. The lady disappeared in a cloud.

Mélanie. But there was no cloud.

The Curate insists. But it is very easy to surround oneself with a cloud and to disappear.

Mélanie (with vivacity). Then, sir, surround your own self with a cloud and disappear.

A Priest. Are you not weary of having to repeat every day the same thing?

Maximin. And you, sir, do you grow weary of having to say Mass every day?

Answers still more astonishing have sometimes been given by them.

M. Repellin, priest, wrote on Nov. 19, 1847 :

“ I asked the little girl if the marvellous person whom she had seen might not have been an evil spirit who wished to sow disorder in the Church. She answered me, as she has answered others, ‘ But, sir, the devil does not wear a cross.’ I continued, ‘ But, my child, the devil carried our Lord to the top of the temple and to the summit of a high mountain, and so he could well bear his cross.’ ‘ No, sir,’ said she, with a certain assur-

ance, 'No! God would not allow his cross to be carried like that: *it was on the cross that He died.*' 'But He suffered his own self to be carried.' '*But it was by the cross that He saved the world.*' The assurance of this child, and the deep meaning of this answer, the beauty of which she probably did not perceive, shut my mouth. On another occasion she explained herself still more pointedly. They said to her that the devil had carried our Lord himself. 'Yes,' said she, '*but He was not yet glorified.*'

'Does your angel-guardian know your secret, Mélanie?' 'Yes, sir.' 'There is some one, then, who knows it?' 'But my angel-guardian is not one of the *people.*'"

One of my friends, two days before I made my journey to La Salette, said to Maximin, 'We all owe obedience to the Pope. Well, if the Pope should say to you, *My child, you must believe nothing of all that*, what would you say to him?' The child answered, with the greatest sweetness and respect, 'I would tell him that he will see.'

These are some of the innumerable answers of these children. I do not know if you will judge of them as I do; but they are assuredly, to say the least of it, very astonishing; and this astonishment will be increased after considering the final observations which I made on these children, and which I am going now to set before you.

3d. *I have not been able to keep myself from acknowledging, in the fidelity with which they have kept the secret which they profess to have received, a characteristic sign of truth.*

They are two; possessing each a secret, and

that for nearly two years past. Each having a distinct secret, never has the one boasted of knowing that of the other. Their parents, their masters, their curates, their companions, and thousands of pilgrims, have interrogated them about this secret, and have asked of them some sort of revelation of it: to this end unexampled efforts have been made; but neither reasons of friendship, or self-interest, or promises, or threats, or the civil or ecclesiastical authority,—nothing has in any way been able to affect them on this point; and now, after two years of continual efforts, nothing is known, absolutely nothing.

I myself made the greatest attempts to penetrate into this secret. Some singular circumstances enabled me to pursue my attacks further than others; for a moment I even thought that I had succeeded. It was thus:

I had taken, as I said, the little Maximin to the mountain with me. In spite of the repugnance with which this boy inspired me, I had nevertheless tried to be kind and amiable with him, and I made him all the advances in my power to try to open and to gain his heart. I had not succeeded very well. But on arriving at the top of the mountain, some one who was there gave him two pictures, one of which represented the fight of the 24th of February in the streets of Paris. In the midst of the combatants was a priest who waited on the wounded. The little boy thought that he saw some resemblance between this ecclesiastic and myself; and although I told him that he was altogether mistaken, he was persuaded that I was the person represented, and from that moment he

shewed me the most lively and most rustic friendship. Henceforth he appeared altogether at ease, and was very familiar. I took advantage of this with eagerness, and we became the best friends in the world, without, however, his ceasing to be, at the same time, perfectly disagreeable to me. Now he hung on my arm, and did not quit it during the whole day; so we came down the mountain together. I made him breakfast and dine with me. He talked of every thing with the most careless freedom, of the Republic, the trees of liberty, &c. &c. When I brought back the conversation to the only subject which interested me, he answered, as I have said, briefly and simply; all that referred to the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin was always like something apart in our conversation. He stopped short at once when in the full flow of his chattering. The substance, the expression, the tone, the voice, the precision of what he then said to me, all became on a sudden singularly grave and religious. Then he soon passed on to some other subject with all the freedom of the most familiar and most lively conversation.

Then I recommenced my efforts and most skilful insinuations in order to take advantage of this freedom and openness, and to make him talk of that which interested me, more particularly about his secret, without his perceiving my drift and object. I determined to see clear into this soul, to seize it at fault, and to draw the truth from the bottom of his heart, whether it would or no. But I must confess that from the morning all my attempts had been foiled: at the moment at which I thought that I had obtained something and

gained my end, all my hopes vanished ; all that I thought that I held escaped on a sudden, and an answer of the child sent me back into my uncertainty. This reserve appeared to me so extraordinary in a child, I will say in any human being whatever, that without doing him any moral violence, which would have been repugnant to my conscience, I wished to go as far as possible, and make some last efforts to conquer him in something, and get his secret by surprise. It was the possession of this singular secret which I had so especially at heart. To break on him on this point, I spared no seduction in any measure which appeared to me allowable.

After many efforts and attempts absolutely vain, a circumstance offered me an opportunity which I thought for a moment would be successful.

I had brought with me a travelling-bag, the padlock of which opened and shut by means of a *secret*, which dispensed with the use of a key. As this little boy is very curious, touches every thing, looks at every thing, and always in the most inconsiderate manner, he did not fail to examine my carpet-bag ; and seeing me open it without a key, he asked me how I did it. I answered him that it was a *secret*. He pressed me most urgently to shew it to him. The word *secret* had reminded me of his own mystery ; and in order to take advantage of the circumstance, I said to him, '*My child, this is my secret ; you have not been willing to tell me yours, and I will not tell you mine.*' This was said half in earnest and half in joke.

'*It is not the same thing,*' said he immediately. '*And why not?*' said I. - '*Because I have been*

forbidden to tell my secret, and you have not been forbidden to tell yours.' The answer was to the point. I considered myself foiled; and pretending not to have perfectly understood him, I said to him in the same tone, '*Since you have not been willing to tell me your secret, I will not tell you mine.'* He insisted; I did what I could myself to excite his eagerness and curiosity; I opened and shut my mysterious padlock without his being able to understand my secret. I went so far as to keep him eager, impassioned, and in suspense, during many hours. Ten times during this period the little boy returned impetuously to the charge. '*Very well,*' said I; '*but tell me also your own secret.'*

At these words of temptation the child reappeared in his religious character, and all his curiosity seemed to vanish. Some time afterwards, he pressed me again. I made him the same answer, and found always the same resistance on his part. Seeing him so firm, I said at last, '*But, my child, since you wish me to tell you my secret, tell me at least something about yours. I do not ask you to tell it to me entirely, but tell me, at least, what you can tell about it; tell me, at least, if it be good or bad news—that will not be telling me your secret.'*

'*I cannot,*' was the only answer. Only, as we were such friends, I remarked that there was an expression of regret in his refusal.

I gave in at last, and shewed him the secret of my padlock. He was enchanted; he leaped with joy; he opened and shut the bag many times. '*You see,*' said I, '*I have told you my secret, and*

you have not told me yours.' He appeared afflicted at this new attack, and at the kind of reproach conveyed in my words. I now thought that I ought to make no more attempts; and I remained convinced, as any one would be who is acquainted with human indiscretion, and more particularly the indiscretion of children, that this little boy had just victoriously withstood one of the most violent moral temptations that can be imagined.

Soon, however, I took up the matter again in a tone still more serious, and made him undergo a fresh assault. This was how it happened:

I had given him some pictures which I had bought at the top of the mountain. He had only a very bad straw hat; I bought another for him as we returned to Corps. Besides this, I offered to give him whatever else he wished; he asked me for a blouse, I told him to go and buy one; it cost fifty-eight sous, which I paid. He went to shew the pictures, the blouse, and the hat to his father, and came back to tell me that his father was very pleased. He had already spoken to me with a certain affection about the misfortunes and troubles of his father. I took advantage also of the recent death of his mother; and although I reproached myself interiorly with making the boy undergo such temptations, I said to him, '*But, my child, if you would only tell what you can tell about your secret, people would do a great deal for your father.*' I went further still, and said to him, '*I myself, my dear child, could procure many things for him, and manage that he should live at home with you in peace and happiness, without wanting any thing. Why are you so obstinate in refusing to*

tell what you can tell about your secret, when that would relieve your father from his troubles and console him?’ In truth, the temptation was a strong one. The child fully believed me, and I was disposed to do for him all that I promised. He saw this clearly; but he answered in a low tone, ‘*No, sir, I cannot.*’

It must be acknowledged that if he had concocted a fable to begin with, it would not now have been difficult for him to feign a second, and to tell me some secret or another in keeping with his story, when so great advantages would have resulted to him from confiding it to me.

I did not, however, look on myself as entirely vanquished; and I pushed the temptation even further, too far perhaps, but certainly to the very utmost limits. You will judge for yourself, and will perhaps blame me.

I had, from accidental causes, a large sum in gold about me. While he was prowling about my room, looking over my luggage, and ransacking every thing, my purse and this gold caught his eye; he seized it eagerly, turned out the money on the table, and began to count the pieces, making them up into several lots; then he amused himself in continually arranging and re-arranging these little heaps of gold. When I saw him so entirely carried away by the sight and the handling of this money, I thought that the moment was come to put him to the trial, and test his veracity most unerringly. I said to him in a friendly tone, ‘*Well, my child, if you would tell me what you might tell about your secret, I would give you all this gold for yourself and for your father. I*

would give you all of it, and immediately: and do not think that I shall want it, for I have more money with which to continue my journey.'

I witnessed then a very singular moral phenomenon, and I am still struck with it as I recount it to you. The child was altogether absorbed by this gold: he delighted to look at it, to touch it, and to count it. All on a sudden at my words he became sad, abruptly quitted the table and the temptation, and said to me, '*Sir, I cannot.*' I insisted, "*And yet there is there wherewith to make your father and yourself happy.*" He answered me once more, '*I cannot;*' and in a manner and with a tone so firm, although very simple, that I felt that I was beaten. However, in order not to appear so, I added, in an affected tone of displeasure, contempt, and irony, '*But perhaps you will not tell your secret because you have none to tell: it is all a joke.*' He did not appear offended by these words, and answered me in a lively way, '*Oh, have I one indeed! but I cannot tell it.*' '*Who forbade you to do so?*' '*The Blessed Virgin.*'

I gave up then a hopeless contest. I felt that the child possessed more moral dignity than I did myself. I put, with friendship and respect, my hand on his head, and making the sign of the cross on his brow, I said to him, '*Adieu, dear child: I hope that the Blessed Virgin will excuse the manner in which I have pressed you. Be all your life faithful to the grace which you have received.*' And a few moments after we parted, to see each other no more.

To similar interrogations and offers the little

girl replied, '*Oh, we have enough: there is no need to be so rich.*'

Such is the third mark of truth which I have observed in these children. And now, what is to be thought of it all? Is it truth, error, or imposture?

All this cannot be explained reasonably but by one of the four following suppositions:

1. Either the supernatural truth of the Apparition, of the story, and the secret of the children must be admitted. But this is very grave, and bringing with it serious consequences. If there should be a deception, which should some day be discovered, practised by these children or by others, of how many religious hearts will not the sincerity have been hurt?

2. Or they have been deceived, and are still the victims of some hallucination. But whoever has made the journey to La Salette, and has examined every thing, will not hesitate to affirm that this supposition is absolutely ridiculous and inadmissible.

3. Or the children are the inventors of this fable, which they have concocted themselves, and which they maintain alone now for two years against every body, without ever contradicting themselves. For my part, I cannot admit for a moment this third supposition. The fable would appear to me more astonishing than the truth.

4. Or suppose, at last, that there has been some contriver of it all, an impostor concealed behind the children, and that they have lent themselves to play the character which he has prepared for them, and which he teaches them each day to

play anew. Without going to the bottom of this question, as M. Rousselot has done, I will only answer that every thing that precedes is repugnant to this supposition. The inventor would appear to me to be, at the same time, very unskilful to choose for actors and witnesses of an imposture so extraordinary such beings as these, and very skilful to teach them how to sustain such a part for two years before two or three hundred thousand successive spectators, observers, investigators, questioners of all kinds, without these children having ever committed themselves in any thing at any one time, without any one having discovered this impostor behind the scenes, without a single indiscretion on the part of the children which could cause any one to be suspected, and without any mark whatever of fraud having appeared up to this time.

There is nothing, then, to be received but the first supposition, namely, of the supernatural truth of the whole ; which is, moreover, very strongly confirmed—

1st. By the character which the children have maintained unchanged.

2d. By the answers, altogether beyond their age and capacity, which they have made in the different interrogatories to which they have been submitted.

3d. By the extraordinary fidelity with which they keep the secret which they say has been confided to them.

If I were obliged to pronounce on this revelation, and to say 'yes' or 'no,' and that I had to be judged on this subject as to the rigorous sin-

cerity of my conscience, I would say 'yes' rather than 'no.' Human and Christian prudence would compel me to say 'yes' rather than 'no;' and I do not think that I should have to fear being condemned at the judgment of God as guilty of imprudence and precipitation.

Yours ever,

DUPANLOUP.

Gap, June 11, 1848.

The letter which has just been given is perhaps the most conclusive piece of evidence which has appeared on the subject of the Apparition. It was written by one known all over France for his great capacity and sobriety of judgment, who went to the spot determined to test the story simply by the rules of human prudence, with prejudices against the children, which remained undissipated, and with a resolve to form his opinion solely from what he should himself see and hear. He states his belief without any sort of enthusiasm; and has been careful to employ, in giving his judgment, the most sober terms.

It will not be necessary to produce extracts from the other numerous letters and publications which have appeared in France and elsewhere on this event; all that now remains to be done is to ascertain if the truth of the children's narrative has in any way been supported by supernatural interposition, that is, if any miracles have been wrought confirmatory of it.

Of miracles in the order of grace it would be easy to cite many instances; such as the sudden conversion of hardened sinners and infidels after

having visited the mountain, or after having taken, against their will, some drops of water from the mysterious spring. One great conversion there is, which is manifest to all; and that is, the entire reform wrought in the whole canton and neighbourhood of Corps by the words of two children, which have been more efficacious than the glowing appeals of zealous pastors and evangelical missionaries. Yes, the whole country has been converted; and their prayers and penances, together with those of the hundreds of thousands of strangers who have visited the spot, have doubtless averted the punishment with which the Blessed Virgin menaced "her people" in case they did not repent.

Of miracles in the order of nature, wrought by the use of water from La Salette, accompanied by a Novena, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at Grenoble have received so many accounts duly authenticated by the testimony of medical men, that a very slight examination is sufficient to set at rest all doubt on this point. Out of the many given in the pamphlet of M. Rousselot, which are merely a selection from the great number which have come to his knowledge, two or three only shall be noticed here, which will be found to carry with them every requisite mark of authenticity.

I.—*Cure of the Sister Saint Charles, of the Convent of St. Joseph, in the town of Avignon.*

The following is the declaration of the Superioress of the convent:—

"The sister St. Charles entered our house at the age of seventeen and a half; her constitution

was very delicate : a short time after her profession her health gave way altogether ; and before her noviciate was over she was reduced to the most afflicting state. Pains in the stomach, frequent spitting of blood, dysentery, and a low and continual fever, kept her more than eight years on her bed of pain. During this period she was several times administered and received the Viaticum. All the physicians who saw her declared her state hopeless. She could only leave her bed very rarely, and then for a very short time ; and she did not assist at the holy sacrifice of the Mass more than five or six times a year at the utmost ; and then the effort which she made was accompanied with so much fatigue that she was thereby reduced to the last extremity.

More than once it was necessary to carry her away in a state of complete insensibility ; so this favour was only accorded her in consideration of her earnest desire, and not to afflict her too much.

In the month of December 1846, her maladies increased much ; and we several times expected to lose her every moment. The inflammation fixed itself in the throat and in the mouth ; she swallowed with great difficulty. This affection presented all the symptoms of an ulcer : there came from it an odour so corrupt that it was almost insupportable ; an abundant expectoration mixed with blood contributed still more to weaken her and render her state lamentable.

From this period to the 16th of April she could not taste bread or any thing solid ; she lived only on broth, or milk and water, which she could only take in very small quantity, although she was

obliged to drink often ; for unless she did so her throat collapsed.

The 14th of February, 1847, she received Extreme Unction, and the Viaticum was administered to her two or three times during the following weeks.

Such was the condition of the sister when the miracles wrought by the use of the water from La Salette began to be talked about. I acknowledge, to my own confusion, that I attached no credit to all these rumours ; but having heard of the cure of a sister of the " Sacred Heart," I felt a confidence arise in me, and I proposed a Novena to our poor invalid.

However great a desire I had of her cure, I had still more in view the glory of the Blessed Virgin, the confirmation of her Apparition to the two little shepherds, and the conversion of sinners. It was from these motives that among our sick sisters, who then happened to be very numerous, I chose the sister St. Charles as the one who, being the best known in consequence of the length of her malady, could best serve the end which I proposed to myself.

I imparted to her my idea : she seemed at first very indifferent, and declared to me that she had no desire of recovering her health, which would only keep her back from eternity, and that she preferred to die, or remain in the state in which she was as long as it should please God.

I made the same propositions to her several times ; but finding her always in the same dispositions, I thought that I ought to use my authority. Having procured a small quantity of the

water from La Salette, I told her that she ought not to consider so much herself as the glory of God, and the increase of devotion towards the Blessed Virgin, which would result from a cure so extraordinary wrought in her favour. I ordered her then to unite herself to the Novena which the community were going to make for her, and to take the water which I brought her. She was persuaded from the beginning that if she made this Novena she should be cured, and she submitted herself to do so from obedience. I made her also point out herself the prayers and exercises to be followed in the Novena.

Every day one of the sisters went to the holy communion in a spirit of reparation for the principal sins which the Blessed Virgin had indicated to the little shepherds, and with the intention of obtaining the conversion of blasphemers and profaners of the Sunday. We fasted also three times with the same intention; and every day we recited the 'Salve Regina,' three Aves, with the invocations, 'O Mary conceived without sin,' &c., and 'Mater admirabilis,' &c.

The Blessed Virgin seemed to put our confidence to the proof, for our poor sister was always very sick and suffering. On the Thursday, the seventh day of the Novena, she had a fainting fit, followed by an abundant expectoration of purulent matter mixed with blood. This accident alarmed us much. Seeing her in this state, I said to her, 'I think that the Blessed Virgin will cure you by taking you to heaven.' She answered, 'My maladies do not weaken my confidence, and as I have only three more days to suffer, I beg my

good Mother not to spare me ; and I have great hopes that I shall be able to go on Saturday to the holy Mass and to communicate.' In a word, she made all the necessary arrangements for so doing, and begged that her clothes might be brought to her, and her veil, of which she had made no use for a long time. The Friday, April 16, after having passed a very bad night, she still spat blood in the morning. Monseigneur de Prilly, the Bishop of Châlons, was to celebrate Mass in our chapel at seven o'clock. In order to gain the indulgences attached to the Mass of the prelate, I put forward by one day the general communion, which was to have been on the Saturday, for the termination of the Novena. This change greatly distressed my sister St. Charles, who was much pained at not being able to unite herself that day with the community, and was afraid that she should be alone at her communion on the morrow, which would, she firmly believed, be the day of her cure. While we were assisting at Mass she was making her plans, and proposed to ask our confessor for another general communion, so that she might be able to present herself at the holy table with all her sisters, and be more certainly accepted by God. Her mind was quite filled with this idea, when on a sudden she perceived that an entire change had taken place in herself. All her ills suddenly ceased, 'as if an invisible hand had taken them away : ' such was her own expression ; she scarcely knew herself any more, and could hardly believe what she experienced. She tried herself in various ways, so as to be quite sure that she was not suffering from an illusion ;

and perceiving that she had entirely recovered her strength, she did not hesitate to believe that she had received the grace for which she had asked, and cried out, 'I am cured.' The sister St. Joseph, who was in bed in the same room, did not understand what she said, and thought, on the contrary, that she was becoming worse; she was the more alarmed, as she was alone at this moment, and too ill herself to go and help her. The sister St. Charles hearing her weep, quitted her own bed and went herself to console her. She did the same to the portress, who looked after the convent during Mass, and was terribly frightened at hearing some one running about in the room in which she had only left sick people in bed. She came rushing in quite out of breath and feeling quite ill. The sister St. Charles calmed her, gave her something to drink, as well as to the sister St. Joseph, and assured them that she was cured.

They were just at the gospel of the Mass. The sister dressed herself in all haste, and went to the ante-chapel, where she heard the rest of the Mass on her knees, and without any support.

When we left the choir, she came to meet me to embrace me. I told her that she must begin by returning thanks to her heavenly benefactress. She answered me that she had already done so, having heard a great part of the Mass and having recited the 'Te Deum,' but that she much wanted something to eat, as she had a great appetite. I hastened my step and told her to follow me, in order to try her strength; she walked firmly, and went down stairs as quickly as I did. I gave her a piece of biscuit, which she ate almost with

avidity. Afterwards she went into the hall of the community to embrace the sisters, who were astonished at this wonder, and to receive the benediction of Monseigneur de Prilly. This holy prelate exhorted her to shew her gratitude to God and to his blessed Mother, and to be very faithful to the duties of our holy state.

In the morning, she rested on her knees in prayer for an hour, after which she went to work, ironed linen for a considerable time, followed at once all the observances of the house, and went to the refectory, where she ate the ordinary dinner of the community. The same day, remembering that they had prepared for her some meat-broth, which was no longer necessary, she asked my permission to take it to a poor sick woman who was within our walls, and whom we assisted. To go to her, it was necessary to mount a long and inconvenient ladder; the sister did this with great facility. The fame of this event, which was soon spread abroad in the town, drew to our convent a multitude of persons, who wished to ascertain for themselves the truth of so extraordinary a fact. Our parlours were crowded during many days; and the fatigue which so many visits must have caused the sister was not in itself a small trial of her strength. She supported all this in a manner which astonished us, and was in no way incommoded by it, although she was obliged to talk almost all day long.

The medical men especially could not believe their eyes. One of them who came the most frequently, and had followed the progress of the sister's malady, had often said to me, '*At the mo-*

ment at which you least expect it, you will see her expire, for I do not know what it can be that keeps her alive.' I spoke to him of the Novena which we were making, and asked him if he would not make an attestation in the case of our prayers being accepted. 'If a cure be wrought,' replied he, 'I will give you a thousand attestations, for it is all over with her.'

I hastened to apprise him of all that had happened; and I will let him recount himself, in his attestation, what was his surprise, his wonder, and the trials to which he put the sister so as to be quite sure of the cure.

As the sister St. Charles had only been able to unite herself to the Novena in part, she had promised to fast for three days when she should be healed; she performed her vow a few days afterwards, without experiencing the slightest fatigue. She also made the fasts of the ember-days and of the jubilee, which came on at the same time.

It is now fifteen months since this cure was wrought; and since that time the sister St. Charles continues to follow the exercises of the community, rises at five in the morning, and enjoys a state of health as good as could be desired, considering the habitual delicacy of her constitution.

I desire that this relation may contribute to the glory of God, to the increase of faith, and may be an eternal monument of our gratitude towards our glorious benefactress, who has accorded to our community so touching a proof of her powerful protection.

It is with this confidence that I sign this recital,

certifying that there is in it nothing which is not conformable to the most exact truth.

J. PINEAU,

Superioress of the Sisters of St. Joseph."

To this letter are added the attestations of two physicians who had been in constant attendance on the sister St. Charles, and consequently had been long acquainted with her case. The one gives a detailed scientific account of her disorder, and declares her cure to be contrary to the laws of nature. The attestation of the other is thus worded :

"The undersigned doctor of medicine, honorary chief physician of the hospital of Avignon, after thirty-six years of active service, declares that the unforeseen and unexpected recovery from a condition considered, according to the laws of medicine, mortal, in the person of the sister St. Charles above named, to a state of perfect health with respect to all her organs and functions, was wrought instantaneously, without the intervention of any application of art, and that therefore it is of the nature of a prodigy.

ROCHE, D.M."

During the vacancy in the see of Avignon caused by the death of the Archbishop, the three Vicars-general who then directed the affairs of the diocese, on being applied to by the Bishop of Grenoble for their opinion on the subject of the reported cure of the sister St. Charles, answered as follows :

"1. The cure of this sister, as complete as it

was sudden, was wrought April 16th, 1847, the eighth day of a Novena which the community were making in honour of Our Lady of La Salette, in order to obtain this grace.

2. The two doctors of medicine who had attended the sister during her illness, and have since given an account of it and of her recovery, are worthy of all credit.

3. The late Archbishop of Avignon was fully persuaded that the sister had been cured by miracle.

4. The sister St. Charles continues to enjoy good health, and follows the ordinary rules of the community.

Avignon, June 23, 1848."

II. At Avallon, in the diocese of Sens, occurred a remarkable instance of cure, after a Novena made to Our Lady of La Salette, which has since been authoritatively declared miraculous by the Bishop. The doctor of medicine who attended her has made a long and detailed declaration respecting her malady and subsequent cure. His concluding statements are as follow :

1. For seventeen years A. Bollenat threw up everything solid which she ate, and could with difficulty digest some spoonfuls of milk or of meat soup. The last three months preceding November 21 she digested nothing at all.

2. For three years A. Bollenat had never walked; she had remained on her back, being scarcely able to make some slight movement of her lower extremities.

1. The 21st November, at six o'clock in the evening, without any transition whatever, without the manifestation of any crisis, she ate and digested a strong soup, vegetables, and fruits.

2. The 21st November A. Bollenat rose from bed, dressed herself, and walked about her room.

3. For ten years A. Bollenat had been unable to lie on her left side; she was also almost entirely deprived of sleep.

4. For nineteen years the pains in the stomach, which were at last become insupportable, had never ceased.

5. For seventeen years an enormous tumour had existed on her side, and for a long time I had employed no sort of remedy either to heal this tumour or to stop its development.

6. The 19th Nov. 1847 Antoinette Bollenat presented all the signs of approaching death.

3. The 21st November A. Bollenat lay on her left side, and slept all the night through.

4. The 21st November there remained no internal pain whatever in any part of her body.

5. The 21st November the tumour had completely disappeared; no crisis had taken place, nor had there been any running of liquid matter of any sort from the tumour in any way, internally or externally.

6. The 21st November and the following days I saw her full of health.

GAGNIARD, D.M.

The ecclesiastical authorities of the diocese took cognisance of this case; and after the most minute examination of it, the Archbishop issued a declaration on the subject, in which he says:

“After having considered the evidence of the various witnesses and of the physician; after having examined the report presented by the Commission charged to examine the case; after having taken advice of the Episcopal Council, and having invoked the holy name of God,

We declare, for the glory of God, the honour of the most Blessed Virgin, and the edification of the Faithful, that the cure of Antoinette Bollenat, wrought the 21st of November, 1847, after a Novena to the most Blessed Virgin Mother of God, invoked under the name of ‘Our Lady of La

Salette,' presents all the conditions and all the characters of a miraculous cure, and constitutes a miracle of the third order.

Given at Sens, under our hand, the seal of our arms, and the counter-seal of our Vicar-general and private Secretary, the 4th of March of the year of grace 1849.

(Signed) ✠ MELLON, Archbishop of Sens."

III. At the great seminary of the diocese of Verdun was wrought another astonishing cure on the person of one of the students. The Bishop directed him to draw up an account of his case, his malady, and his cure. In it he shews how, in the opinion of his physicians, his whole constitution had been destroyed, partly by the terrible nervous attacks and pains in all his joints to which he had been subject, and partly by the medicines which he had taken for relief. He had been twice obliged to leave the seminary, and having obtained at home some little amelioration of his sufferings, had returned for the third time. He continues :

"I returned on the appointed day ; but new and more terrible trials awaited me at the seminary. From the 7th of March, my pains, instead of diminishing, rapidly increased. I was continually forcing myself to restrain a cry of despair, and the thought of Mary alone stopped it. I conjured her to recall vividly to my mind the sufferings of her Son, and to hide me in his wounds.

I saw the physician : I shewed him my diminished leg, which was in a state of atrophy, and as stiff as a bar of iron ; proved to him that I could not make a step without the most cruel suffering,

and that the pain mounted up to my reins, and through my spine to the head. He said to me, for all consolation, 'Well, my friend, we must wait for the warm weather; then I will employ aromatic alkaline baths; then, if that does no good, something else; and if that too should fail, why, sir, then good-bye to you.'

I went to my director to console me in my pains; for consolation was necessary for me. I was happy to hear him express an idea which I had long entertained, but which I was determined not to be the first to mention: he proposed a Novena to Our Lady of La Salette. The next day I wrote to the confraternity of Notre Dame des Victoires at Paris, of which I was a member, to beg their prayers.

The 1st of April, Palm Sunday, our Novena commenced by the offering of the holy sacrifice, which many priests of the town applied to me. Many communions were offered for my intention by many charitable persons of the different communities of Verdun, who invoked especially Our Lady of La Salette. Meantime my sufferings continued as before. On that day, as on the preceding ones, in order to keep the rule, I went to pass the recreation-time in the place to which the rest of the community went. I descended the stairs with extreme pain, supported on the arm of a fellow-student, to whom I owe a debt of eternal gratitude for his kindness to me. After a quarter of an hour of most painful exercise, I experienced fatigue all over my body. I had to make great efforts to remount the staircase. I went to the chapel.

I could only stay there five or six minutes. It was not there that God was waiting for me, but in that poor cell in which I had so much suffered. At last I arrived there, and threw myself before the image of Mary, to which I had so often turned my eyes. Full of confidence in Mary, I seized her picture, and fell on my knees without being aware of it. For a long time it had been impossible for me to bend my stiff leg. Then seizing my little flask of water from La Salette, I pressed it to my lips, and, contemplating the picture of Mary, I cried out, 'O Mary! O my mother! yes, you will heal me, and I will consecrate myself to you.' Then I fell down in a state of entire stupefaction, thinking of nothing, not knowing what I said; I was as it were crushed under the divine action, which, however, I did not feel. This state lasted for about six or eight minutes; and afterwards, recovering from this kind of insensibility, and without feeling the change which had been wrought in me, I rushed down a long staircase to say once more to my fellow-student, 'Be of good confidence, I shall be cured.' Later on, this excellent friend, who had so tended me during my illness, assured me that my firm step and confident expression had strangely surprised him; that he did not understand my words, and that he said in a low tone to himself, 'You will be cured? But you are already.' I went on without attending to him, but shortly after met another student, who seized me and cried out, 'You are cured.' It was only then that I perceived the change which had been wrought in me. I realised my happiness, and went about proclaiming my

cure, not as about to be wrought, but as having actually happened. I was not far from the chapel where just now I had been unable to pray: now I felt myself irresistibly impelled thither. During the quarter of an hour which I passed at the foot of the altar on my knees, without feeling the slightest pain, I do not know what I said, or what prayer I addressed to my Saviour.

I went to shew myself first to my director, who clasped me in his arms; then to the superior, who refused to believe me, until he heard the word 'La Salette.' I then went to the refectory so fast, that two fellow-students could not keep pace with me. My stomach, greatly debilitated by so much illness and such sufferings, received without distaste and digested easily my food, which it has since continued to do. On leaving the refectory, I was surrounded by the community, who made me give all the proofs of a complete cure. I ran, I bent my leg, I struck my foot violently against the ground, and did all that they required of me during the whole recreation, which I passed among my fellow-students as if I had never been ill. The day after, a walk of five hours did not fatigue me in the least. This same day, three persons examined my leg, and convinced themselves that it had recovered the vitality which it had lost. I can affirm that before my cure it was at least two-thirds less than the other.

MARTIN, Clerk in Minor Orders.

Great Seminary of Verdun, July 26th, 1849."

This relation, when submitted to the physician, was declared by him to be exact in all its points.

The superior and professors of the seminary have made a declaration on the case, in which they conclude by saying :

“ This cure has produced the most vivid impression all through the seminary, composed of more than a hundred students. The seminarists consider it as a prodigy, the miraculous nature of which admits of no doubt. We ourselves having examined and carefully considered the circumstances of this event, cannot see how it can be explained by causes purely natural.”

The Bishop of Verdun, in an official notice of the cure, says,

“ We have seen without surprise the students of our seminary attribute the cure unanimously to a supernatural intervention of the Blessed Virgin.

✠ LOUIS, Bishop of Verdun.

Given at Verdun, at the Episcopal Palace, Aug. 1st, 1849.”

IV. The last miracle which shall be noticed is that whereby the cure of a revenue-officer at Calais was effected through a Novena made to Our Lady of La Salette.

M. Delattignant, revenue-officer at Calais, forty-two years of age, deposed as follows :

“ In the month of May 1848 I found that I was no longer able to sleep regularly ; in the month of June I could not sleep at all,—a state which lasted until the Monday in Easter-week, 1849. I was in a continual state of suffering, without knowing the cause. I consulted physicians, who bled me, and ordered me refreshing draughts, but without any satisfactory results. The idea of suicide was continually present to my mind, and weighing on

me. I was in such a state of nervous agitation, that at times I had no power over my limbs. I wished to see nobody. When they talked of patience and resignation to the will of God, I became exasperated, persuaded that I could not recover; besides, I was disgusted with life, and several times I opened my knife to stab myself, which I was only restrained from doing by the thoughts of my wife and children. Perhaps I owe my preservation to my prayers, which I never ceased to make. One of my friends coming to visit me to encourage me to have confidence in God, 'God,' said I, in my exasperation, 'is there a good God? If there were, would He make me suffer like this?' Then I began to weep. I had altogether lost my memory, and could scarcely perform the duties of my office. I wrote no more to my family. My moral faculties were gone. I had no longer any affection even for my wife and children. If any one had offered me a considerable fortune or elevated rank, such would have been nothing in my eyes. My whole being was annihilated.

Of physical pain I felt none in one part more than in another; but my body performed its functions with difficulty. My stomach was greatly distended. I had an extraordinary and insatiable appetite; nothing did me any harm, and I ate like four people. One day such a crisis came on me as I ate, that I left the impression of my teeth on the spoon. I remained thirty-six hours without eating, without being well able to explain my motive in doing so, but hoping thus to make myself die of hunger.

At the suggestion of a pious ecclesiastic I made

a Novena to Our Lady of La Salette, but without any result. I then began another; my wife and children made a communion for my intention. At the end of this Novena, on the Monday in Easter-week, I assisted in a mechanical way at Mass, and that day I fell into such a state of irritation that I wished to destroy myself; my wife cast herself into my arms, we wept together, and from that instant I was cured. I have not had a single sad or sleepless moment since. I am as well as I could wish to be. My memory and my moral faculties have returned to me. My cure was instantaneous, and without any transition whatever. I do not attribute my cure to any human remedy; for excepting some refreshing draughts, I had for several months rejected all medical aid. I thank God and his blessed Mother for my cure.

DELATTAIGNANT.

Calais, June 2, 1849."

The truth of this deposition is certified by thirty-six signatures, all affixed in legal form before the Mayor of Calais, with the seal of the town. Among these signatures are those of seven priests.

It would be easy to multiply to a great number examples of miraculous cure as remarkable as any of those which have been mentioned above. This, however, will scarcely be considered necessary; the question of the Apparition is no longer an open subject of discussion to be proved by evidence. The Church has pronounced on it; and all that the reader will now require will be some account of the manner in which this authoritative recognition of its truth has been made.

On the 1st of May, 1852, the Bishop of Grenoble published a pastoral letter, in which, after stating the universal acceptation in France, Belgium, England, Germany, and Italy, which had been accorded to a former letter which he had issued on the 19th of September of the previous year, wherein the truth of the Apparition was declared by him, he announced that it was then his duty to forward in every way the erection of a church and presbytery at Salette, and fixed May 25th for laying the first stone.

This event took place accordingly on the day appointed. In the number of the *Univers* for June 1, 1852, is the following extract from the local paper of the department :

“ Yesterday took place the ceremony of laying the first stone of the sanctuary of La Salette. It was a magnificent solemnity, although the weather was rather unpropitious. On the eve a great number of pilgrims arrived on the scene of the Apparition, and passed the night there. At one o'clock in the morning there had already been 2000 communicants; there were not priests enough to satisfy the eagerness of the Faithful. But when the day came, the spectacle was still more imposing. From all sides issued forth files of pilgrims, who appeared as though they came out of the very mountain itself. Nothing could be, at the same time, grander and more picturesque than these processions, which arrived with banners displayed, and singing pious hymns. The number of strangers who had come to this ceremony was estimated at more than 15,000.

The most lively enthusiasm was manifested among the multitude when they saw the Bishop of Gre-

noble arrive, who, notwithstanding his great age, had not hesitated to undertake the painful fatigues of such a journey in order to preside over this ceremony. The whole assembled company went to meet the venerable prelate, and received him with expressions of the deepest respect and joy; a thousand voices were raised to welcome him. This was a most touching moment. The face of Mgr. de Bruillard betrayed the deep emotions of his soul. Afterwards the ceremony commenced amidst the profound attention of all.

The recollection of this holy and imposing ceremony will never be effaced from the memory of those who witnessed it."

This is not the only church about to be raised under the patronage of Our Lady of La Salette: one in Brittany and another in Belgium have already been announced as being in course of construction.

We think that we have now said enough to furnish the reader with a clear statement of the circumstances attendant on the Apparition itself, and also with sufficient proofs in support of its credibility. Since its public recognition by the Bishop of Grenoble, it is unnecessary to accumulate evidence in its favour. It has been for more than five years subjected to every variety of objection, not only from the infidel writers of France, but also from those who were most anxious to believe it true, but who thought it their duty to yield to nothing but a certainty.

All opposition, however, is now silent; it is now a fact approved by the Church, that the Blessed Virgin did select these two shepherd-children to

be the bearers of a message to "her people," menacing them with coming vengeance on the part of her Son if they did not repent; and it is also the belief of all, which the Bishop in his pastoral letter acknowledges, that the prayers and penances, and reformed life, which have so largely resulted from this event, have been the means of staying the arm of our Lord and averting the threatened punishment. Indeed it is scarcely possible to consider the trials through which France has passed since the year of the Apparition, 1846, without noting the elements of disorder and confusion which have been every where perceptible, and without at the same time clearly recognising the presence of some mysterious influence, which has hitherto calmed the formidable excitement and turned all to good. The Mother of God is the *Mater misericordiæ*, the Mother of mercy; her visible interpositions, of which several instances are recorded in ecclesiastical history, have never been considered as foreboding ill, but rather as significant of some approaching time of acceptance; and it is in such light that her glorious Apparition at La Salette has been hitherto regarded by the Faithful.

THE END.

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