

When he came to again, he was in the field hospital, swathed in bandages from head to foot. A bullet had penetrated the abdomen, another had shattered the knee, while a bayonet had pierced the fleshy part of his right shoulder. He was informed that he had to be moved to Washington and was to start at once.

Oh! that ride to Washington! Day and night his brain was sickened by the cries of his fellow-sufferers. When at last the city was reached, and after he had been hurriedly put to bed in the hospital, his mind gave way, and all was a blank.

After hovering between life and death for weeks, suffering from brain fever, he again grew stronger and soon was able to walk around. A few days afterwards—the day on which Lee surrendered and peace was declared—he was discharged from the hospital and sent back to his regiment, which was then encamped at Hall's Ferry. There being honorably discharged, he departed that night for the South and for—he could not call it—home.

Again day was dawning and the sun was peeping from behind the mountains, as a horseman drew rein before the Birmingham home. The man was Will, come back from the victorious North to his old home once more.

He had ridden across the mountains so as to get there as early as possible; but to his dismay he saw that he was too early. Seating himself upon a decayed stump in the garden, he went over in detail the happenings of his life from the time he left home.

Absorbed in his thoughts, he did not hear the footsteps of a person coming up the gravelled walk.

Awakened from his reverie, he found himself face to face with his father. He started back, then advanced and put out his hand, which was received by the grieving parent, who long ago had repented of treating his son in the manner in which he did four years ago.

'Father,' the boy said.

'My son,' and then he was gathered in a long and loving embrace.

There in the garden, with the melodious songs of hundreds of birds, he was told of the death of his brother.

Two weeks afterward Augusta Wilson and William Birmingham were made man and wife. After the ceremony was over and the guests were having a gay time in the parlors of the house, the bride and groom slipped away to a flower-bestrewn mound in the family cemetery. There they knelt and prayed earnestly to Him Who watches over souls, for the brother who had given up his life for his country.—*Father Dunne's Newsboys' Journal.*

## A MOUNTAIN MONASTERY

### VISIT TO THE GREAT ST. BERNARD

On a Sunday morning of August of last year I found myself on the crest of a mountain range in the Middle Alps, 8120 feet above sea level (said the Very Rev. Canon Sheehy in the course of a lecture, as reported in the *Glasgow Observer*). In those high regions nature is dumb and terrifying. No sweet songster of the air was to be heard pouring forth its soul in melting melody. There was no vegetation, not a tree, nor a flower, not a blade of grass. All around me was wild, grim, sullen, desolate. Look where I would, jagged peaks or snow-capped mountains pierced or touched the clouds which hung like a canopy over and about me. I felt some little difficulty in breathing, for the air in these altitudes is rarefied, and caused me—as it did others—headache. The open season on the Great St. Bernard—for so this mountain range has been named—is short. It lasts from the close of June till about the middle of September. During the other nine months of the year these heights are the home of mist and fog, wind and cloud, hail and snow, storm and flood, blizzard and avalanche. To pass up their dangerous defiles in the wintry season is to carry one's life in his hands.

Only the daring Alpine climber or poor pedlar forced out to sell his wares will face the danger. For the howling tempests, so common during these months

#### Render the Savage Wilderness

more wild, and the awful roar of the falling avalanche strikes terror into the bravest. The little shelters, scooped out of the hard rock, which I passed at intervals, are ominously suggestive. Falling boulders, treacherous avalanches, hidden abysses kill more surely than the dagger of the assassin. During the short summer months, however, this narrow mountain pass is over-run with tourists and pilgrims, who toil their laborious way on foot, or are borne up the steep incline on the Italian side in motors, and on the Swiss side in four-wheelers. Singularly to state, the Swiss authorities permit no motors to ply between Orsieres (the railway terminus) and the various little mountain villages that here and there dot the wayside, unless a horse trots in front to prevent excessive speed. The path up to Mount St. Bernard is steep and winding. It took me ten hours in an open machine under a broiling sun to reach my goal. Tired and powdered with the dust of travel, I found an immense crowd waiting in the Monastery corridors, whilst the guest-master with a sweet courtesy was endeavoring to find room for all. The Hospice stands on a little plateau or plain, almost on the ridge of the mountain. Hard by is the morgue or mortuary chamber, where lie the dead victims of the mountain pass awaiting identification or burial. Ghastly picture postcards, to be had in the Monastery, showing groups of victims, are pathetic proof of the need of the Hospice, and the dangers of the pass. Within recent years a statue of bronze has been raised opposite the Monastery to St. Bernard of Meuthon,

#### Apostle of the Snow.

He it is who has given his name to the two well-known Alpine passes—the Great St. Bernard and the Little St. Bernard. For he it was who, a thousand years ago, conceived and realised the two famous Hospices which crown their summits—oases of charity in a desert of desolation. Bernard of Meuthon—not to be confounded with St. Bernard of Clairvaux—scion of a noble house and Archdeacon of Aosta, in the year 960, on the top of the Great St. Bernard, 'mid the horrors of the blizzard, the avalanche, and the piercing cold of an Arctic climate, founded a Hospice, and encamped a band of Christian heroes, whose chief aim in life was to play the part of the good Samaritan. From that date till now these brave religious have never ceased to mount guard on this citadel of charity, to swoop down from their snowy home, like eagles from an eyrie, despising danger in order to rescue some hapless victim of the storm or precipice, and nurse him back to life and health.

A plain building, solid, not sumptuous, bare even to ruggedness, is their Monastery. It is no hymn or poem set in stone. There are no clustered columns, no gracefully shaped arches, no elegant mouldings, no architectural pretensions, no luxurious surroundings. Yet, simple and plain though it is, it held a charm for me such as the noblest piles elsewhere fail to reveal. Dr. Johnson on one occasion whilst in Scotland said to Boswell: 'I never read of a hermit but in imagination I kiss his feet; never of a monastery, but I could fall on my knees and kiss the pavement.' And surely few can enter the St. Bernard Hospice without a thrill of emotion. Few there must be who would refuse to take off their hats and salute the devoted monks who, just for sweet charity's sake, have made their home for close on a thousand years in almost perpetual snow, have borne unflinchingly the rigors of

#### A Long and Arctic Winter,

have cut themselves adrift from the ordinary pleasures and comforts of the world, have risked their lives, shortened their days, spent themselves and used their means in sheltering pilgrims and strangers by the tens of thousands. These monks don't write themselves up. They are innocent of the modern mania for self-advertisement. Their motto would seem to be taken from the *Imitation*: Love to be unknown and to be accounted as nothing—a rule of life strangely out of date in our