

The Family Circle

BOYHOOD DAYS.

Oh! our merry boyhood days,
When the heart is young,
And through wood and winding ways,
Hope's glad bells are rung;
Then on hill and smiling lea,
Nature's kiss is fair,
Wayward wills go laughing free,
With joy everywhere.

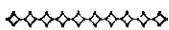
Oh! our blissful boyhood days,
Bright as mountain rill,
That Dawn's fairy-wand arrays,
In gay robes that thrill.
What are hours, or days, or years,
When the skies are blue?
When smiles are undimmed with tears,
And all hearts are true?

Oh! our happy boyhood days,
When time is a dream,
Tinged with brightest rainbow rays,
Fringed with pleasure's gleam;
Then the mountain heights look grand,
Far-off vales smile fair,
And on Life's wide fairy-land,
Falls no shade of care.

Oh! our hopeful boyhood days,
Spent 'mid dreams and fancies,
Fancy's castles then we raise
With cloud-piercing towers.
Though the world has gone all wrong,
Right yet might shall smite,
With our laughter and our song,
We will set all right.

Ah! our bless'd boyhood days,
On Time's true, stern hands,
All too soon we sadly gaze,
At their last gold sands.
Yet those days—best of our years!
Were not lived in vain,
If they through our manhood fears,
Cheer us on again.

—C. JOHN FABER CALLEN.



CATHOLIC CHURCH TO LAST FOREVER.

A non-Catholic correspondent who considered the condition of his own Church shaky recently asked the London *Catholic Times* what is the prospect that the Catholic Church will last for the guidance and instruction of man. "The Testimony of the Fathers on the point," said the *Times*, "is plain and abundant. 'Not for a brief period,' says St. Augustine, 'was the Church to exist on this earth, but the Church will be here till the end of the world. . . . The Church shall not be conquered; shall not be rooted up; nor give way before any trials whatever till the end of this world shall come and out of this temporal dwelling-place we be received into that eternal one.'" "Unbelievers think," he says elsewhere, "that the Christian religion will last for a certain period in the world and will then disappear. But it will remain as long as the sun—as long as the sun rises and sets; that is, as long as the ages of time shall roll, the Church of God, the true Body of Christ on earth, will not disappear." As to the perpetuity of the Catholic Church, our correspondent can make his mind easy."



FLOWERS OF THE DEVOUT LIFE.

THE SCRIBE WITH LIGHT-TIPPED FINGERS.

The lives of Irish saints are remarkably rich in wonders. These very wonders are themselves wonderful in

that they present features which are quite unknown, or, at least, are very rarely to be found in the lives of saints of other lands. A French writer, M. Henry de Varigny, referring recently to the voyages of St. Brendan—who once kept Easter on the back of a whale—says: "Let us take his legend not as being more or less an historical document, but as though it were a text in which is reflected the thought and psychology of the period which gave it birth." These words are very applicable to several incidents in the life of another holy Irish personage, Marianus Scottus, who ended his life at Ratisbon, and notably do they bear on the pretty story we are about to relate. Beneath the embellishments of the legend may be discerned deeds, traditions, habits of life which claim their place in the history of ideas and customs.

Like many another Irish monk, Marianus, who died about 1080, was a most industrious writer. If, even now in our own day, so many great libraries—not only in Ireland and England but also in continental Europe—are possessed of numerous Irish manuscripts, it is the patient labor of these scribes from beyond the sea that this is due.

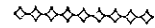
After many wanderings for the love of Christ, Marianus reached Ratisbon to stay for good, and there he became the guest of the nuns of the monastery of the lower town (Niedermunster), who quartered him in a small cell where in peaceful seclusion he spent the rest of his days. For the use of the pious widows of the town he occupied his time in transcribing portable copies of the Psalms—the usual prayer-book of that day—as well as other Biblical texts and liturgical books for the poor clergy of the place.

He worked not only by day but far into the night, and it was the custom, when twilight failed, for a Sister to bring him a lamp for his night work. But once it fell out that the good nun forgot this duty. Marianus, who as a recluse never left his cell, could not go in search of a lamp himself, nor had he a bell or any means whereby he could communicate his plight to other inmates of the convent; but, far from being upset by his misfortune, he quietly went on writing in the dark. Suddenly it occurred to him to raise his left arm by resting the elbow on the table and to open wide his hand. No sooner was this done than the divine mercy permitted three of his fingers to glow and to emit as much light over his worktable "as three lamps could not have done," says his biographer.

The forgetful nun had already gone to bed before she bethought herself of her neglect. She at once arose, and, accompanied by two or three of the Sisters, hurried on tiptoe to the cell of the holy old man. But great was the surprise of them all when through the slit of the door they saw streaming bright rays of light. Still greater was their wonder when they had assured themselves that the light which flooded the cell more brilliantly "than the midday sun" proceeded from the very fingers of Marianus.

The hagiographer who relates this prodigy adds that the nuns, trembling with excitement, went hurriedly to the abbess to report what they beheld, and he further tells us that the news of the miracle spread rapidly on the morrow among the clergy and good town-folk of Ratisbon.

In the Vienna Library is a very fine manuscript of the Epistles of St. Paul written by the hand of Marianus Scottus of Ratisbon. Let us imagine it was over the leaves of this very codex that fell the brilliant light from the scribe's improvised lamp.—L. Gougaud, in the *Catholic Bulletin*.



FACE TO FACE.

If to taste Thee, Lord, is so wondrous sweet,
Through the veils of Faith, as I kneel at Your Feet,
With a throbbing heart and a burning soul,
In the mystic vision of Love's great goal—
If the glimpsing flash of Thy tender grace
Holds me a captive before Thy sweet Face
And Thy glorious Presence so hidden and frail
Sends a flood of joy from the Host's pure veil,
O, how can I dream of the sweetness unfold
When earth's mists have fled and Thy Glory behold,
When I open the arms of my love-thirsty soul
To drink and be filled—not in part, but in whole,
And Thy Smile and Thy Voice, once unseen and unheard,
Envelop me—shroud me—MY LORD AND MY GOD!
—MARGARET L. CUNNINGHAM.