

THE LORETTO MAGAZINE.

FIDES, MORES, CULTURA.

VOL. 1.

Loretto Academy, Loretto, Ky., May 15, 1898.

No. 1.

LORETTO.

Enthroned, she sits amid Kentucky's hills,
Our Alma Mater, passing fair is she.
Her youthful grace with sweet maturity
In beauty blends; the peace of Heaven distills
From her calm lips; our wayward hearts and wills
She guides with patience, wisely leaving free
Our joyous mirth, our sportive, wholesome glee,
Nor with cold sternness young affection chills.
With love Loretto rules. From her we learn
To make our own rich, literary spoils,
Culture and art; and more domestic cares
We're taught by her example not to spurn.
To harvest souls for God, she ceaseless toils;
For this, ascends the incense of her prayers.

L. L.

IN OLD KENTUCKY.

(The following article appeared in the Age-Herald last December, immediately after what proved to be Mrs. Davis' final visit to Loretto. Her busy pen is now stilled forever, and Alabama yet mourns the loss of this brilliant young woman whose literary future was so promising. Mrs. Davis urged the publication of a Loretto school paper even when here as a school girl, and now that the project is realized we feel it is but just that she should be represented in the initial number.)

FROM a world full of cares, a hurry and bustle, to the quiet and simplicity of Arcady, is, to say the least of it, a change. From a land of street cars and electricity to a country of solitary stage, which "Old George," a stiff, but veteran bay, has pulled for seventeen years, brings forcibly to mind the fact that we are but a land within a land, and, verily, one half knows not how the other half lives.

Such is the impression borne in upon the mind when leaving Louisville with its noise and bustle, one comes after a while to find himself within sight of Loretto convent. It must be that the atmosphere of the place is different—perhaps it is the white smoke of prayer ascending from the censers of pure hearts that hushes the spirit involuntarily and gives one a sense of curious dissatisfaction with the world outside.

Loretto rests gently on the crest of the hill. It holds its cross aloft to the surrounding country, a heavenward-pointing finger and monitor alike, and the country heeds and does homage.

There are so many buildings one would readily become confused on a first visit to the place. There is the school, large and commodious and modern—in fact, one almost resents the modernness, unless

one views it from the ultra practical-side. Somehow the place looks as though it ought to be dimly lighted by candles in silver brackets, and have immense fire-places, with brass andirons to hold huge logs. Instead, steam-heat and modern gas prevail. The children are better pleased and more comfortable, of course, but the æsthetic side of the monastic picture is spoiled. There seem to be no dungeons, no stone floors, no bread-and-water penance spots, such as the word "convent" sometimes brings to mind.

There is the novitiate, however, with its fascinating glimpses of snow-capped novices, and somehow all the poetry of the place seems to have centered there. Involuntarily, thoughts of broken lives and bruised hearts come to mind, and the visitor remembers all that has been told in song and story anent the "burying in the cloister," because of disappointment in love. It is such a romantic idea—so full of the element tragic—that it appeals to the poetic sense. Filled with this thought, and moralizing thereon, it is with a certain shock that one hears the baker say, as he kneads great piles of brown-bread dough, that he bakes every day and uses on an average at each baking one hundred and twenty pounds of flour.

Surely, there is something wrong about that disappointed-in-love-and-buried-in-the-cloister idea. Clearly, it was not heart trouble that brought these novices there—they eat too much.

Speaking of the romantic-tragic element of convent life brings to mind a story that went the rounds of the press a few weeks ago. William J. Bryan was to speak at Loretto, Ky., a few miles from Loretto station, and the school girls asked and obtained the permission of the mother superior to go over to the station at train time in order to catch a glimpse of the statesman as the train passed through.

Mr. Bryan's genial manners are well known, and when the station was reached, he yielded readily to the enthusiastic requests made by the school girls for a few words.

After he had shaken hands with three or four dozen children, he bowed courteously to the sisters who had chaperoned the crowd, and was about to withdraw into the car, when, to his surprise, he

recognized in one of the Religious, an old playmate, a relative, in fact, and stopped for a moment to exchange greetings with her.

This was the sum and substance of the incident, but an enterprising Associated Press correspondent, with a nose for "news," hied him to Louisville and made most of the incident, adding to it such sensational "padding" as was needed to turn it into a palatable morsel.

"Is there a romance of a Black Veil in W. J. Bryan's Life?" was the scare-head under which the article appeared. The incident was highly seasoned, and went the rounds. Mr. Bryan's indignant correction and denial only added snap to the story.

As a matter of fact, the Religious was a relative of Mr. Bryan's, formerly a Miss Haynie, daughter of that General Haynie who conducted the siege and brought about the fall of Corinth, at the close of the late war.

Facts like these, however, have little weight when the press agent holds high carnival, and so the "romance of a black veil" still is read and believed, and the correspondent gloats over his handiwork.

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It was at Loretto that James Lane Allen claimed to have found the material for his "Sister Dolorosa." The truth of the matter is as follows:

In 1888 Allen came to the convent and represented himself as sent by the editor of the Century to gather data for a lengthy article descriptive of the place, such article to be illustrated and used in an early number of the magazine. Acting upon such representations, the Sisters extended to Mr. Allen every courtesy possible, gave him dates and facts, etc., incident to the foundation of the order.

This the honorable gentleman embodied in his silly, mawkish story in such a way as to identify the tale with Loretto. He even described the dress of the order, and went so far as to use in his novel the name of a Religious upon the place.

Comment is unnecessary.

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At Lebanon the visitor was taken to "the university." This was one of the events of the trip.

Imagine, if you can, fifty-four little "niggers"—typical "coons," busily engaged in the mystic art of learning twice two can never be six! The sight was odd and full of ridiculous suggestions. They are taught by one of the Religious and for the entertainment of the visitors she very kindly gave an exhibition of the prowess of each sable knight. There was spelling and writing on the board, there was singing—and, oh! the dancing! Words fail

in the descriptive process. The good sister wisely interspersed lessons with exercise, and on rainy days much of the latter is needed. One by one the dusky students would take the floor and dance, while the rest would pat his accompaniment. Such turns and "sashaying," and jumping Jim Crow and dancing Juba!

Some little timidity was manifested when a song was proposed, but when one of the visitors, taking advantage of the good sister's simplicity, wickedly mentioned "Hot Time In the Old Town," a broad grin spread over the school, the ice was broken and a wave of song rolled out that seemed like an echo of the past—a scene on the old plantation "befo' de wah."

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But even the poet must come from Arcady, and while the world and convent touch bounds, they can never lap. One brings away from the place a certain sense of rest, a curious feeling of having strayed awhile in places where the ground about was holy.

MARGARET E. O'BRIEN-DAVIS.

Class '88.

A CROWN FOR OUR MAY QUEEN.

All hail to thee, O Virgin pure and sweet,
O spotless Queen of May!
Our off'rings fair we lay at thy dear feet,
With joyous hearts to-day!

We'll twine a wreath of flowers rich and rare,
Secured by knots of love,
With here and there a fervent whispered prayer
To see thee crowned above!

The lily white, unmarred by stain or spot,
To offer thee is meet;
Thy crown without the sweet forget-me-not
Would not be quite complete!

In honor of thy fav'rite virtue true,—
Which was so dear to thee—
We'll twine herein the modest violet blue,
For sweet humility.

The rose, in token of that charity
Which filled thy stainless heart—
The snow-drops for thy perfect sanctity
Must in this wreath have part.

The bluebells, sweet, with glist'ning drops of dew
Thy pearly tears portray;
The bleeding heart—for, truly, thine bled too—
We'll in thy crown display.

From all earth's flowers, the fragrance sweet and mild,
As from a censer rare,
We offer thee, sweet Mother undefiled,
As one unending pray'r.

Oh, hear our prayer, sweet Mother, Queen of May!
May it to us be given
To dwell with thee in that Eternal Day
Where thou art crowned in Heaven!