

under which to function. She drafted one and altered it somewhat and then it was submitted to the King and the Archbishop of Paris; it only remained for it to have the approval of Parliament when it was found to have been lost. Louise was in the habit of regarding this as the intervention of Providence for, when revising the document, St. Vincent had transferred the authority over the foundation from the Priest of the mission and the Superior of the Sisters of Charity to the Archbishop of Paris and the priests. In the new constitution Mlle. le Gras insisted that this alteration should be done away with and her persistence in this matter has been a great heritage to her successors as Superiors of the Sisters of Charity and the sound judgment and clear vision that went to the drafting of the constitution is shown by the fact that the Sisters of Charity are still governed by its rule. It is to be remembered that Sisters of Charity are not nuns. St. Vincent saw that a greater freedom was required for their work than the vows of the Church would permit and Mlle. le Gras was in the habit of telling them that they took their cloister about with them. After long probation she took her vows as a Sister of Charity for one year on the 25th March, 1634, and it has been the custom always for the sisters to do so on the same date of each year after serving their probation. Very few indeed fail to renew those vows when the 25th March comes round, but they are free to go if they wish.

But her untiring energy and incessant labour were not without their effect upon the health of Mlle. le Gras; indeed she had never been robust and St. Vincent more than once stated his belief that she had been supernaturally kept alive for many years before her last illness. He said "One would think she had risen from the grave so pale and weak she is, but God alone knows the strength of her soul." Such was St. Louise de Marillac. She would have made her mark in any sphere of life gifted as she was in literature and art and with an observation that carried with it intuitive knowledge of values; she might have moved, had she so wished, as a leader in the political and social life of Paris; she chose to be a servant, "a servant of the poor" she claimed to be so and regarded it as a high calling. But the striking point to note is how sound was her judgment in her enthusiasm for benevolent work, how balanced were her faculties of thinking, feeling and will. Some of the prayers used still by the Sisters are believed to have been composed by the first great Mother of the Order while many of her sayings are treasured and meditated upon by the Sisters in all parts of the world and they give evidence of literary gifts of high order.

In her seventieth year St. Louise, from her deathbed, sent a request to St. Vincent de Paul, that he should send her some last message, no doubt one to be meditated upon in her last hours. But St. Vincent de Paul felt that his great collaborator could pass through the valley of the shadow by her own strength alone and unafraid; she needed no support from him, and so he sent her the simple message, "You are going before; soon I shall see you again—in heaven." She died soon after with a prayer on her lips that her "daughters," as she called them, might all be true sisters of charity. She was buried in the church of St. Lawrence, but the Sisters longed to possess the remains of their "Mother," and these were re-interred about a hundred years later in the chapel of the Motherhouse at Faubourg St. Denis. At the Revolution the Sisters bore the casket containing the relics to a place of safety for a time and so it is now placed over the altar in the chapel of the present Motherhouse at Rue de Bac in Paris.

Two hundred and seventy years after her death Louise de Marillac was canonized on March 11th, 1934. The Pope discoursed for about an hour on the three-fold miracle: "*The Miracle of her Life, the Miracle of her Works and the Miracle of her Posterity.*" He spoke of her many sidedness

and of how she devoted herself to so many varieties of work, intellectual and social. He spoke of her "tireless energy" and characterized her as "a wise legislator" and a "skilled educator." His Holiness referred also to a prediction of St. Vincent de Paul that the Sisters of Charity might be compared to a snowball rolling on to become an avalanche and of the continents into which they would carry their mission. His prediction has indeed been fulfilled, for to-day there are more than 40,000 Sisters of Charity and 4,000 houses. The Pope also said that reflection upon the organisation of the Sisters of Charity and its achievements brought to light many miracles and he considers that the greatest that has been handed down is that it has been "guarded so well and maintained with so much loyalty and devotion." Such is the answer to the dying prayer of St. Louise de Marillac.

THE RAMBLERS' CLUB AT THE GUILDHALL.

"The Ramblers" added considerably to their knowledge of the City of London when they gathered at the Guildhall, the civic palace of the Lord Mayor, on February 6th. In every respect it was a pilgrimage into the antiquities of London, for traces of the Guildhall are to be found in the records of the Hustings Court as far back as 1212, then a second Guildhall was raised on the same site in 1326 and the present building, although a good deal of it had to be renewed after the Great Fire, was erected in 1411. It has in its time been used by the citizens in many ways, primarily, of course, for assemblies of the Guilds and for the election of the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, and others. Secondly, it was to some extent a court of justice and it has for long been used as a banqueting hall for the entertainment of distinguished citizens and visitors. Sad enough have been some of the incidents that have been played out in the Guildhall, and perhaps the most pathetic of all was the trial of Lady Jane Grey.

We admired the glorious timbered roof and the magnificent stained glass windows while the giants, Gog and Magog, gazed down from their conspicuous position "like playthings for the children of giants." We explored the Alderman's court with its fine painted ceiling and the Chamber of the Common Council as well as the beautiful crypt. Next we ascended to the library and later spent a long time examining the entrancing and varied collection in the City Museum, consisting of hundreds of relics of old London life, back into the days of the Roman invasion; many of these were really beautiful, others were suggestive of events, both grave and gay, in the lives of our ancestors. There were several articles interesting from a nursing point of view, especially those described as "instruments of restraint" which were used once in Bedlam.

After our visit to the Guildhall was over we repaired to St. Ethelburga's Church, one of the oldest in London; it was dedicated originally to the daughter of King Ethelbert whose husband was the first King of Essex. References to it appear in the 14th century writings and it is indeed a very precious piece of mediæval London, this strange old church, crowded so unostentatiously into the line of city street. In the church hall we were entertained by Mrs. Geikie Cobb and enjoyed a most delicious tea, all the more acceptable for the dreariness of the streets on a winter afternoon, and then we admired the beauties of the old world church and its memorials to Hudson who, with his sailors, took communion at St. Ethelburga's, before he set out to find the North West Passage. Everyone expressed themselves as having greatly enjoyed their exploration among relics of old London, and the civic habits and customs of long ago, and begged us to arrange some similar ramble for no very distant date.

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