

and her sisters to be confided, when the time came to illuminate their minds with that learning, substantial enough in itself, but neither particularly versatile nor particularly brilliant, which was just becoming the fashion at this time for the young daughters of the *bourgeoisie*? It is almost certain that they were placed in the hands of the Ursulines. At the time of the foundation in Langres of the first convent of the order in 1613, Marguerite, the eldest child, and Jeanne Mance were aged eight and seven years respectively. It was the aim of this order to teach its pupils the elementary rudiments of learning and in addition "to cultivate virtuous pursuits befitting their age and sex." This comprised in contemporary upper class society:—"Handwriting, reading, arithmetic, a little Latin out of the missal, domestic economy, business correspondence, needlework, dressmaking and other household tasks, together with the working of tapestry and lacemaking, among some of the agreeable educational accomplishments."

It can be presumed that Jeanne Mance took her place among the first pupils of the Ursulines, and that she was with them at the time of the arrival of Monseigneur Zamet, the new bishop, in 1615. The latter crossed the threshold of the convent of the sisters of Saint Ursula on the fourth day after his arrival in the town, Tuesday, November 3rd, 1615. There he "heard the Mass sung by Father Bertin of the Oratory, whom he had brought with him from Paris, and visited the convent and the classes where the little girls of the town were, and gave them his blessing."

Who knows if it was not while recalling an edifying sermon heard in the convent or a reading from "The Lives of The Saints" that Jeanne Mance, as Sister Morin relates, "gave and consecrated herself to God by the vow of chastity from the age of six or seven onwards." Sister Morin relies upon her own personal recollection of this confidence and declares further: "She has told me it herself, many times."

In about her twentieth year Jeanne Mance lost her mother. We can in this matter believe the testimony of Sister Morin. She declares that Catherine Emmonot "died several years before her spouse." Charles Mance, we know, died perhaps about 1632, certainly before 1635, as the Abbé Roussel has proved to us.

Here is a novel little quotation from Sister Morin. It lights up for us somewhat those youthful years in which there are many things hidden in the shades.

"She lived," recounts the little sister of religion, "with great religious piety, in her father's house, who never had any differences with her, because of the tender loving-kindness he bore for his daughter; while she on her part conducted herself in all things with prudence and virtue so that she never at any time vexed him with her devotions, which she always adjusted to his convenience."

He is a touching figure, this indulgent and affectionate magistrate-father, indeed. One is conscious of the harmony and balance in him, between a heart that overflowed with goodness, and an upright understanding that sought the golden mean in all things.

As for Jeanne, she never yet dreamed of leaving home, where her growing piety manifested itself with discretion. Who could frown upon a mysticism which neither overcast her spirit, nor drove her to seek solitude, nor made her indifferent to those who sought her companionship or aid?

All too soon Charles Mance was to die, leaving behind him a deserving memory of his mortal sojourn, the image of a magistrate living of his own accord in near-obscurity, there seeking only to increase his understanding and ennoble his spirit.

Presently, as if to distract Jeanne from her sorrow, other great events cast their shadow, to answer her imperious need of service to perform.

A dark page of history was unfolding for Jeanne Mance's own folk. The curtain had rung up on the last act of the Thirty Years War, an act in which France was to play the lead. On the 28th of April, 1635, Louis XIII, recognising once more the correctness of his minister, Cardinal Richelieu's advice, signed a treaty of alliance with Sweden against the Holy Roman Empire. A few weeks later, to be exact on the 19th of May, the King despatched a herald to declare solemn war, not only upon the Empire, but also upon Spain. Within a few weeks the Cardinal had, with incomparable skill, grouped around Louis XIII all that remained of the adversaries of the house of Austria. The real aim of these official moves was, as is well known, much less concerned with the conflict between Protestants and Catholics than with crushing the house of Hapsburg's dreams of European domination.

From now on men were to reckon 17 weary years of war without mercy. It is easy to imagine what, in the course of it, the frontier towns of invaded countries had to suffer.

Moreover, the armies of the time, except those of Sweden, which that genial, blond colossus, Gustavus Adolphus, had raised and disciplined, were composed solely of mercenaries, not of nationals. As to these mercenaries, they are described as "A mob of foreign bandits, mingled with the indigenous bad characters." What was to be expected of such licentious soldiery, whom defeat enraged and victory besotted? "Even in times of peace the passage of a French army through a province of the French kingdom was a calamity," write contemporary French historians. The fact is, there was not a whit to choose between allies and adversaries in their exactions and the atrocities they committed. "The troops must be allowed to amuse themselves," was the cynical remark of Tilly, the imperial General; and he refused to listen to those who condemned such conduct. "But," it has been commented, "even had he wished, he could not have prevented it."

The county of Le Bassigny experienced continual invasion by both sides. In 1636 the Lorrainers burned in that part of the province of Champagne, Fresnay, Montigny-le-roi and Varennes, small towns not far from Langres. They came dangerously near the town itself. "It was a sad sight for the people of Langres," says Regel in his contemporary "History of the Town and Diocese of Langres," "to see from the ramparts of their town-wall the whole horizon in flames." The siege of Langres seemed inevitable, for Charles of Lorraine and his allies were planning to attack either Champagne or Burgundy. But Gallas, the Austrian General, "considering Langres through his spyglass," decided for Burgundy. Nevertheless the misery and anguish were not yet past. For long years the province suffered military occupation. In 1639 the *Langrois* saw Louis XIII and Richelieu appear beneath their walls. They tarried there eight days, "inspected the fortifications of the town and ordered new ones to be thrown up on the south side."

Finally to all these visitations and calamities, "of an incomparable extent in the diocese," during the Thirty Years War, must be added the terrible scourge of the Plague, smouldering since 1630. It followed everywhere in the wake of those deplorable foreign levies and there were numerous victims in Langres, as indeed in the whole diocese.

"Those afflicted," relates Prunel, who has consulted the local municipal archives on this point, "were led away to huts outside the town, and the sound of a hand-bell warned the inhabitants to avert their step. There were more than 300 such hutments in the neighbourhood of Langres; the cemeteries of Brevoine, Saint-Sauveur, La Maladiere and Belle Chapelle were filled and it became necessary to consecrate a new cemetery. In the year 1637 alone . . . 5,500 people were stricken down in Langres and the neighbourhood, whether by pestilence or war."

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