

ABPARE BIO AE. a/1

THE LIFE OF BLESSED JULIE BILLIART Foundress of the Institute of Sisters of Notre Dame



B·JULIA BILLIART·VIRGO·CONGREGATIONIS
A DOMINA NOSTRA NUNCUPATAE
FUNDATRIX ET PARENS

By a Member of the Same Society. *Sr Mary Xavier,
SND (Mount Pleasant)*
Edited by the late
Father James Clare S.J.
Paptridge?

“Mulierem fortem quis inveniet?
Filiae ejus surrexerunt, et beatissimam
praedicaverunt.” Prov. xxxj

Sands and Company,
21 Hanover St, Edinburgh; and 15 King St,
Covent Garden, London.
1909

church on Sundays.* Père Sellier, S.J., whose relations with Blessed Julie will be noticed later on, mentions in connexion with this period of her life a detail worth noting here. Mme. Hérault de Séchelles, to whom the manor of Cuvilly belonged, came every year to spend the summer months in her château there. She was quick to remark the virtues and superior qualities of Julie, and made her the confidante of her good works and the distributor of her alms. But this little distinction, so flattering for her, only rendered Julie more modest and retiring. She had other friends too. Her skill in church embroidery, to which we have already alluded, took her from time to time to the Carmelite Convent at Compiègne, renowned at that time through all the countryside for its strict observance and the holy lives of its inmates. Thus she formed an intimacy with that band of noble women who, a few years later, were one and all to win the martyr's palm; and the annals of her life note that their saintly conversation fanned to yet brighter flame her ardour in the service of God. Surely it was not a mere chance, but rather God's eternal seal upon that friendship, that eight days after the hand of Pius X had placed the coronet of the Blessed on the brows of the Virgin of Cuvilly, it

*This purse is now in the possession of the Sisters of Notre-Dame at Namur. It is worked with the arms of the family of Pont-l'Abbé of Gournay-sur-Aronde.

was lifted again to set it on those of the martyrs of Compiègne.

Unremitting toil and the exercises of active charity were now to be exchanged for intense suffering and complete inactivity. The scanty food, the incessant labour, the constant exposure to extremes of heat and cold, gradually told upon the girl's hitherto robust constitution. She began to suffer from violent toothache, and an ophthalmic affection soon threatened her with total blindness. To obtain the cure of her eyes the whole family went on a pilgrimage to Montreuil, where a copy of the Holy Face of Rome, sent to a Cistercian Convent by Pope Innocent IV, was held in great veneration, and was visited specially by those suffering from diseases of this nature. Julie's faith and devotion were rewarded by the complete restoration of her sight. Her elder sister Madeleine, who had been blind, if not from infancy, at least for many years, obtained a similar cure on the same spot. The Servant of God never lost the memory of this double favour, and many years after related the event to encourage one of her spiritual daughters to address herself to the Holy Face for the cure of her eyes.

But to fulfil the designs of God she had to advance further yet along the "King's Highway of the Holy Cross." In relieving and consoling her parents there was much natural and innocent